

BROADCASTING OF AUSLAN INTERPRETER ON BROADCAST AND DIGITAL NETWORKS

PURPOSE	Deaf Australia’s Position Statement on “ Broadcasting of Auslan Interpreter on Broadcast and Digital Networks ” aims to promote a clear and consistent use in accessing information, through Auslan and captioning, while broadcasted on-air and online for deaf and hard of hearing people.
OVERVIEW	<p>Situations arise when Auslan interpreter/s are available to be included on-screen, the broadcasters crop the Auslan interpreters out of the screen which effectively cuts off vital access to important information for Auslan users.</p> <p>Public Announcements of significant emergency and non-emergency events (e.g. public interest, community notifications, sporting events or others) are often broadcasted live and are inaccessible for deaf and hard of hearing people when outside the comfort of their premise (e.g. home).</p> <p>While captions are useful and is a legislative requirement for the TV broadcasters to provide captions during these announcements, Auslan users are still unable to access captions on internet or when in the public domain or at other locations where captions are not available, turned on, or the captioning service provider is unable to caption information quickly, the amount of missing captions, delay of captions or misspelling are more noticeable during live broadcasting of the announcement.</p> <p>Auslan users rely on information that can be easily be understood as Auslan is a primary language for many deaf people. Use of Auslan interpreter provides Auslan users direct and immediate access to information on any digital platforms.</p>
POSITION STATEMENT	<p>Where official sign language interpreters are provided, for example, at major news conferences (both public and emergency), community or sporting events, broadcasters should aim to keep those interpreters clearly visible onscreen during any sequence where audio comments are used, and to preserve this approach if the material is subjected to later editing on all digital platforms.</p> <p>Where sign language interpreters are not provided at important announcements and community events, a best practice approach will see networks show an Auslan interpreter in an insert box on television (insert box must be at least 1/3 of the screen on either side).</p> <p>All emergency announcements must include interpreters in its entirety.</p>

SCOPE Commonwealth, state and territory governments, Emergency Services, broadcasters and media, Auslan interpreters and relevant service providers.

RESOLUTIONS Optimal practice for including deaf and hard of hearing individuals in all public announcement (including emergency announcement) are provided here.

This checklist is intended to provide guidance to broadcasters with providing access to information for deaf and hard of hearing people. This guideline promotes minimum standards and is not meant to be exhaustive.

- Establish protocol for immediate access to qualified Auslan interpreters during all press briefings through a collaborative effort involving the relevant community, government and emergency agencies;
- Ensure that the Auslan interpreter secured for the press conference is visible on television at all times during the broadcast. The News Directors should monitor to ensure that on all stations broadcasting the press conference, the Auslan interpreter's face, body, arms and hands are visible on the television screen at all times. If a broadcaster needs to show any other graphics or video feed, the video with interpreter must remain visible on the screen at all times;
- Ensure that live captioning is quality assured; and
- Ensure that all online contents are fully accessible including with captioning and Auslan interpreting.

GUIDELINES **1. Broadcast of Emergency and Public Announcement and Press Briefing**

Issue:

All Emergency and Public Announcement and press briefing must be accessible to all deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Consequently, closed (or open) captioned during live broadcast are mandated by Commonwealth Law to meet the needs of many deaf and hard of hearing people, but must be done with high quality captioning service providers to ensure that live captioning comports with Commonwealth's Captioning Standards. However, captioning alone is not enough for many deaf and hard of hearing people to understand important information. Providing Auslan interpreters helps this underserved segment of the population to receive adequate information to make educated decisions.

There are issues with the quality or display of captioning or Auslan interpreter during press briefings and public announcements. These includes:

- Use of unqualified or unskilled sign language interpreter and/or unqualified captioning service providers;
- The captioning may be unduly delayed;
- The captioning is improperly placed and blocks the full view of the Auslan interpreter; and

- Interpreters are forced out of view of the camera 'shot', obstructed, or viewed in an angle that is counterproductive for effective communication.

Deaf Australia considers that legal responsibility on broadcasters and government agencies to provide fully accessible media may be found in the following legal documents:

- The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (Cth);
- State, Territory and Federal anti-discrimination legislation; and
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, 2008.

2. Broadcast of community events (non-emergency events)

Issues:

Many events may provide interpreters during the program, e.g., Christmas carol, national anthems, and others, are considered 'community' programs and is not considered a requirement for broadcasters to broadcast interpreters for these events. This practice means that Auslan users are excluded from being part of the community which is counterproductive to an inclusive and equitable society and is seen as discriminatory.

Best Practices:

The following practices should be implemented in all public service announcements and video broadcasts:

- a. All communications provided through sign language interpreters and closed captioning must meet community and national standards. In advance of all emergency broadcasts and public service announcements, all interpreting and captioning service providers should be screened and approved in advance by members of the deaf and hard of hearing members. Care must be taken to ensure the interpreters and captioning service providers are trained for emergency situations and familiar with emergency management terminology.
- b. All interpreters must be certified (qualified) in accordance with National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI);
- c. Make sure a highly skilled sign language interpreter is visible at all times in the broadcast next to the official;
 - i. At all times during the video broadcast, a Medium 2 Shot should be used of both the public official and the sign language interpreter standing to each other in the video frame.
 - ii. At all times during the video broadcast, the speaking official should not block the interpreter and the interpreter should not block the speaking official.
 - iii. At all times during the video broadcast, the interpreter should stand slightly in front of the podium and to the side of the presenter.

- iv. The interpreter should possess any and all licensure and/or qualification required by the state/ territory law in the state/ territory where the broadcast is occurring.
- v. It is worth noting that interpreter is a paid position providing a service that has been sub-contracted through an agency, and therefore it would be appropriate to expect the interpreter not to advertise or display branding of the agency or interpreting service in accordance with sub-contracting terms.
- d. At all time during the video broadcast, provide a high-quality captioning and ensure that it does not conflict or cover the interpreter or other text such as scrolling marquee, crawl, or infographics placed on the lower-third onscreen (or vice-versa).
- e. In advance of all emergency and public announcement broadcasts and during such broadcasts, broadcast media, emergency management, interpreters, and advocate from the deaf and hard of hearing community should be working together to ensure the diverse needs of all deaf and hard of hearing individuals are met during such broadcasts.
- f. Whenever possible to ensure the broadcast is understandable to every segment of the population, use image and maps to illustrate what people should be doing or where people should be going during emergencies.
- g. Ensure that all captioning and interpreting are clearly visible and not distorted in all re-broadcasts and Internet broadcasts of the same production. For any media displayed on the Internet:
 - i. Embed subtitles and sign language interpreter into a single video so caption or interpreter cannot be cut-out in re-broadcasts or Internet streaming.
 - ii. In the alternative, provide XML files (Flash videos) or VTT (HTML5 videos) with the caption file copied.
- h. Any oversight in not including the interpreter in the screenshot is not an acceptable practice or an excuse, therefore, it is the responsibility for broadcasters to ensure inclusion of interpreter in the screen shot at all times.

KEY WORDS Broadcast Networks, Media, Interpreter.

REFERENCES National Disability Strategy 2010-20 (Cth);
 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (1998);
 Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 (Cth);
The Broadcasting Services ACT 1992 (Cth) – Section 130ZZB: Emergency Warnings requires free-to-air television broadcasters to; (a) transmit the whole of emergency warning in: (i) the form of text, and (ii) the form of speech; and (b) if it is reasonably practicable to do so, provide a captioning service for the emergency warning.

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Related Policy, Procedure and Guidelines	Auslan Policy, Terminology
Policy Superseded by this Policy	None