

RID Video Interpreting Committee Update
Video Relay Service Standard Practice Paper
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The Video Relay Service Standard Practice Paper will be available for review and comment this month and sent out for mail referendum later this spring. This Standard Practice Paper was designed with a year long process of membership feedback and input in order to address membership needs.

The Process

The Video Interpreting Committee (VIC) solicited feedback from RID members through 12 forums held at conferences across the country over a one year period. The forums allowed members from a variety of interpreting constituencies to supply comments on the existing Standard Practice paper. Constituencies included working VRS interpreters, traditional face-to-face interpreters, interpreting organizations representing interpreters of color, and interpreter educators. In addition, we corresponded with members via e-mail, distribution lists, and through the RID web site. The committee also sought comments from Deaf organizations and Deaf blind organizations through the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Action network (DHHCAN). This coalition of Deaf organizations represents a cross section of Deaf organizations including NAD, TDI, among others. As a side note, the committee is a member of the DHHCAN and works collaboratively to address concerns of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf Blind people with telecommunications issues. Issues related to interpreting in VRS settings are also relayed at this meeting.

After deliberating on comments regarding the paper, the first decision was to have separate Standard Practice Papers for *Video Relay Service*ⁱ and *Video Remote Interpreting*ⁱⁱ. Due to the heavy involvement of the FCC, some issues are specific to VRS. Also, Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) is currently gaining momentum in areas such as legal, medical, business, and educational settings. If the Video Relay Service Standard Practice Paper meets membership approval, the Video Interpreting Committee will start work on the Video Remote Interpreting Standard Practice Paper during the next RID committee year (September 2007).

This year, the committee has been working to synthesize comments from the year long process as mentioned above. The goal is to create a paper which follows traditional guidelines for Standard Practice Papers while addressing concerns of the membership. The information has been synthesized into a SPP document which is below the 4 page limit. In addition, an additional detailed document is available on the RID website this spring to address the needs for advocacy with VRS providers as well as for knowledge building. This document is an expansion of the SPP with details and references.

In addition, we will have information on the enhanced RID website which tells members how to stay informed about FCC actions and call for comments, as well as the procedure

for submitting comments. The upcoming interactive RID web site will allow for greater flexibility with information sharing between the committee and the membership.

Timelines:

The Standard Practice Paper will be complete during March 2007. A one month comment period will then allow for additional feedback with the final document ready for voting by the end of April. This time line allows for mail referendum voting prior to the RID biennial conference this summer.

The committee will next focus on Video Remote Interpreting and will go through a similar process to develop a VRI Standard Practice Paper. If the motion to adopt the VRS Standard Practice Paper passes, we will devote the time in San Francisco during the Video Interpreting Committee forum to gather comments for the development of the VRI Standard Practice Paper. In addition, there will be a cyclical process of updating the Standard Practice Papers. We have seen rapid changes within VRS over the last several years. Part of the challenge with rewriting the SPP for VRS is that information can become quickly dated. Thus, we have seen that we need to address overarching principles and concepts with details only at a level that it will not quickly become outdated as well as have a realistic updating process for keeping information current. A process of two year cycles of first creating the documents, then updating the documents will be established to keep information current. In addition through use of the web, electronic documents can more easily be modified.

The committee appreciates the many comments of members who participated in one or more of the 12 forums held last year. We welcome additional comments as we prepare the Video Relay Service Standard Practice Paper for mail referendum.

Warmly,

Mary Henry Lightfoot, CI & CT
RID Video Interpreting Committee Chair
2005-2007

ⁱ Video Relay Service Interpreting (VRS) – VRS is a free service for telephone communication. The Deaf and Hearing participants *must* be in separate locations. Video Relay Service (VRS) interpreting is a form of Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) and is regulated by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). Interpreters are mandated to be *qualified*.

Definition taken from: *Close Encounters of the 2-D Kind*, Mary Henry Lightfoot, RID VIEWS, Vol. 22, Issue 6, June 2005.

ⁱⁱ Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) – VRI is a fee-based interpreting situation where at least one person is at a distance. This could be the interpreter(s), the deaf participant(s), or the hearing participant(s). Often, the deaf participant and hearing participant are in the same room with the interpreter working off site remotely and connected through a high-speed internet connection. VRI is an unregulated form of interpreting service.

Video Remote Interpreting occurs in two modes: appointment based, and on-demand services.

Definition adopted from: *Close Encounters of the 2-D Kind*, Mary Henry Lightfoot, RID VIEWS, Vol. 22, Issue 6, June 2005.