

Working conditions applicable to tests related to remote interpreting

The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC),

and

The Council of Europe,

(hereinafter referred to as the "Parties")

HAVING REGARD to the Agreement governing the employment conditions of conference interpreters paid by the day concluded by the Parties on 19 March 2014 (hereinafter referred to as the "Agreement") and in particular to its article 12.1,

HAVING REGARD to the consultations between the Council of Europe and AIIC on remote interpreting

RECOGNISING the need to test RSI in real situations

RECOGNISING that the test situation has an impact on the cognitive load for interpreters assigned to provide remote interpreting

HAVE AGREED the following conditions applicable throughout the test phase starting on Nov 13-15, 2019, without prejudice to the outcome of the consultations on remote interpreting:

I - Definition:

Remote interpreting:

Interpreting in which interpreters are not physically present in the same room as the participants in the meeting and have no direct view of the meeting room, in accordance with applicable standards.

II - Scope

The forms of remote interpreting covered by these rules are those where:

In bilingual meetings the booth is located in a different venue from that where the meeting takes place (distal remote interpreting); or

In bilingual meetings the booth is connected remotely to a virtual meeting room (virtual remote interpreting).

III – General Provisions

The following conditions shall apply:

- 1) Every real-life test shall lead to close consultations between the head of the interpreting department and AIIC's representatives.
- 2) Where there is a request for remote interpreting, an agreement laying down detailed conditions shall be signed between the head of the department organising the meeting and the head of the interpreting department.
- 3) Interpreters shall be informed that remote interpreting shall be required at the time of recruitment, or as soon as the interpreting service has been informed of and approved this mode of interpreting. The interpreter may refuse a contract which would require remote interpreting.
- 4) In order to allow for the coordination of the team of interpreters, all interpreters assigned to the same meeting shall work in booths located in the same room.
- 5) An interpreter required to work in remote shall not be assigned to another meeting on the same day.
- 6) In addition to the team of interpreters, there shall be a person with the primary responsibility of ensuring coordination between the interpreters working remotely and the meeting organisers.
- 7) Exclusion: any meeting where CoE texts, soft or binding instruments are drafted**
- 8) A questionnaire shall be drawn up jointly with AIIC representatives in order to collect feedback from interpreters participating in the tests.

IV - Daily remuneration

- 1) An interpreter required to work in remote interpreting shall always be remunerated at the higher rate I + an allowance equivalent to 25% of the basic rate, unless additional reinforcement is made to the team of interpreters.

- 2) The derogation applying to PECO countries remains applicable for the duration of the tests.

V - Definition of the working day

1. Remote interpreting work shall be restricted to:
 - a) A single session of a maximum duration of 3 hours and 30 minutes
 - b) Two sessions of a maximum duration of 2 hours and 30 minutes, with a break of at least 1 hour and 30 minutes between the two sessions.
2. Where the duration exceeds that set out in paragraph 1(b) above, without exceeding two sessions of 3 hours and 30 minutes, with a break of at least 1 hour and 30 minutes between the two sessions, the team of interpreters shall be reinforced by an additional interpreter per booth.
3. Where the duration exceeds that set out in paragraph 1(a) or in paragraph 2 above, the team shall be replaced by a relief team.

VI - Composition of teams

The minimum number of interpreters assigned to a meeting in a bilingual meeting is 2.

It shall vary according to the duration of the meeting and the particular difficulties (such as scientific and technical meetings or the systematic interpretation of documents read out, time difference).

The exact composition shall be agreed between the head of the interpreting department and AIIC representatives (see III (1))

VII - Liability and responsibility

Liability for any disruption of the interpreting caused by technical conditions remains with the meeting organisers.

VIII - Technical conditions

Real-life tests shall be carried out having due regard to the conditions laid down in ISO/PAS/24019, in its draft version until the final text is adopted. Platforms shall be chosen on the basis of their ability to comply with ISO/PAS/24019.

The choice of soft or hard consoles and of screens shall be made jointly for each test.

The Council of Europe undertakes to make all necessary technical arrangements in order to protect the hearing of the interpreters participating in the tests.

IX - Follow-up

A joint meeting with AIIC representatives shall be organised after each test in order to analyse the replies to the questionnaire.

A joint analysis of all tests, including a typology of meetings shall be made with AIIC's representatives before agreeing on rules applicable to RSI to be approved by both Parties.