

RID Government Affairs Program Highlights

June 2010

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RID participates in NENA Conference 2010: GAP was represented at the National Emergency Number Association Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, which brought together Emergency Communications Professionals from across the nation. Janet Bailey participated on the panel, “VRS & IP Relay & PSAP Interaction Part II: Emergency Call Handling for Everyone.” The panel followed a session where Richard Ray (CA) and Donna Platt (WA) hosted a live Demonstration of both IP and Relay Emergency calls. Their demonstration showed that in both instances connection to the PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point) and the 911 staff took more than 5 minutes.

REMINDER!!! (Nudge) Re: State Interpreter Laws.

Check with your AC Board and urge them to send us information on your state’s laws & regulations.

We have: AK, DC, MD, MI, MS, NJ, PA, TX, and WI...

IS YOUR STATE MISSING?

RID shared comments pulled from member input and made strong recommendations that included:

1. Minimum standards (credentials, years of experience and training) for E911 interpreters.
2. Introductory and On-going training
3. Consumer Education
4. Interpreter Support (EAP counseling, teaming, breaks etc)
5. Emergency Services to be separated from VRS guidelines with special rules or exceptions to support this very special emergency setting:
 - a. Only trained and experienced interpreters should receive calls;
 - b. VRI allowed until a covered entity (hospital, police station) takes over and provides interpreting services under other legislative mandates).
 - c. Consistent interpreter – when possible, interpreter should stay with the consumer throughout the call; and if a call is dropped that interpreter should be re-connected to save time and provide a more successful experience.
 - d. Interpreters should be able to assist the communication in providing a timely connection to the PSAP and ultimate help. As a result of this exception, protections will need to be in place to assure that the interpreter is protected for ‘doing the right thing.’

It was a great meeting. Representatives of PSAPs, DOJ and FCC were in attendance.

RID is also involved in the NENA Accessibility Committee, where Janet Bailey is currently co-chairing, with Stephanie Buell (WI), a working group tasked with revising the NENA Video Relay Service & IP Relay Service PSAP interaction Operations Information Document (OID).

Members interested in serving as Content Experts for GAP activities are urged to contact us at govtaffairs@rid.org

1st North American Summit on Interpreting

Sponsored by InterpretAmerica, LLC

Tina Schultz attended the Summit which was held on June 17, 2010. The summit focused on the global profession of interpreting, including community, conference, medical, legal, military and signed language interpreting. There were about 150 attendees with a handful representing the signed language interpreting contingency.

As a result of our attendance, RID has been invited, along with all other interpreter organizations, to form a “coalition” of sorts to stay in touch and discuss common concerns, challenges, issues so that perhaps we can have coordinated efforts on some similar issues.

The results from a study that was commissioned by InterpreterAmerica, LLC, was reported, which provided insight into the interpreting marketplace. The study included a comprehensive survey of interpreters from all sectors. 20% of respondents were signed language, however, the results that were reported geared more toward spoken than sign language, but it was an interesting presentation. For example, the language services market globally is a \$26 billion market...North America is \$12.77 billion alone! The study also showed high fragmentation of the market. The study showed there is a “graying” of the interpreting market...that more effort needs to be spent on building up the market for future strength.

MICHIGAN: Dept. of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH) Continues to Draft Proposed Rules-

The DODHH met with the Rules and Regulations Committee on Friday June 11, 2010. This meeting was to share information on the process to date and the decisions made on public comments. They reserved decision on some of the RID certification issues until they could review the RID report presented to them. It is our understanding that the Director will continue the final work of determining the rules, whereupon they will be submitted to the state. We will update you on further developments and information about the Public Comment meetings which are anticipated to be held in the fall.

Region V Conference:

GAP held a forum at the Region V conference on Sunday, June 20, 2010. In an interactive forum, Janet Bailey provided attendees with an overview of GAP’s work since the program was started at the end of 2009. Included in the presentation were some of the highlights and results of the GAP membership survey which outlines priorities areas of focus for the program.

UPCOMING Events of Interest-

GAP will be on the schedule at all of the Region Conferences:

July 21 – 24, 2010 – Region III – Bloomington, MN

July 29 - August 1, 2010 – Region II – Chattanooga, TN

August 5-8, 2010 – Region IV - Omaha, NE

August 13-15, 2010 – Region I – Albany, NY