



EITI Limited
half-year report
2004

Whatever the language, leave it to us





Key personnel



Dawn Bowes
Operations Manager



Carolyn Burgess
Chief Executive



Martin Burgess
IT Manager



Carol Cooper
Managing Director



Sue Daddy
Operations Team



Sherri Daly
Operations Team



Nina Derham
Operations Team



Graham Jones
Company Secretary



Jeanne Kingdom
Operations Team



Neil Moor
Operations Team



Carolann Roberts
Operations Team



Bev Williams
Accounts Manager

Contents

Key personnel	2
<hr/>	
Message from the Chief Executive	3
<hr/>	
News headlines, January-June 2004	4
<hr/>	
Training and assessment	5
<hr/>	
Case study: Scottish Refugee Council	7
<hr/>	
Case study: Kingston Council	8
<hr/>	
EITI's top 10 languages	9
<hr/>	
A brief history of EITI	10
<hr/>	
Contact details	10
<hr/>	
Operational statistics	11
<hr/>	

This half-year report was approved by the Board of Directors on 19 July 2004.

Telephone interpreting conference calls may be monitored for quality purposes.



Message from the Chief Executive

In the first six months of 2004 EITI has continued to help public authorities across the UK deliver high quality services to members of the community who speak little or no English.

Our three core services - telephone interpreting, face to face interpreting and written translation - are now widely used throughout the NHS, local government, the police service and the criminal justice sector.

There are two principal reasons why increasing numbers of public service providers are using EITI.

The first reason is that people who work within the public sector are strongly committed to reaching out to all sections of their local community. Quality assured interpreting and translation services such as EITI's are therefore becoming a fundamental part of the communications strategies for public authorities.

The second reason is that public sector staff face enormous pressures in terms of their professional time and the funding available to them. We have developed EITI's services in a way that helps to reduce these pressures.

Any of our services can be accessed 24 hours-a-day through a single phone call to a freephone number. Our reputation for friendly, straightforward and professional customer service continues to grow. We do not charge any set-up fees or subscription charges and a recent report found that our simple 'flat rate' price structure represented 'best value' within the UK.

This year we carried out a major survey of attitudes within the public sector towards interpreting and translation, particularly the training and assessment of linguists. We hope that the results of this survey, which are contained within this report, are a useful addition to the growing debate over interpreter training and evaluation.

On behalf of everyone at EITI, I would like to thank our customers for their ongoing support. I would also like to say 'thank you' to our interpreters and translators for their continued dedication and professionalism.



Carolyn Burgess





News headlines, January-June 2004

New freephone number for interpreting and translation services

EITI launched its new freephone number: 0800 731 7878. This number can be used for accessing any of EITI's services, including telephone interpreting, face to face interpreting and written translation.

Reduced prices for telephone interpreting

It was announced that EITI had extended its 'flat rate' charges for telephone interpreting. All 2-way and 3-way calls are now charged at £2.00 per minute, with no premium rates, set-up fees or subscription charges. These prices apply 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week, including all public holidays.

'Best value' telephone interpreting

A report by BWM, a Cambridgeshire-based market research firm, found that EITI offered 'best value' among UK telephone interpreting providers. BWM's report was based on quotes provided by the "three major national telephone-interpreting services" listed in *Guidance on Developing Local Communication Support Services and Strategies* (Department of Health: The Equality and Human Rights Group, 2004).

EITI in the community

It was announced that EITI had signed a three-year contract to become the official sponsor of its local football team, Goole AFC, which is part of the Northern Counties East Premier League. The deal will help the club to develop its community activities, including a youth academy for children aged between 7 and 12. It will also enable the club, for the first time, to enter a side in FA Youth Cup for under-18 teams. Goole AFC Chairman Des O'Hearne said, "This is great news for the local community."

Point to your language

EITI's popular 'Mondrian-style' language ID card, which features 30 of the most commonly spoken 'community languages' in the UK, was re-launched in the form of mouse mats (as shown on the right), wallet cards and coasters. The card is also available as posters, postcards and A4 folders.





Training and assessment

Quality and reliability are the most important considerations for public sector personnel when obtaining interpreting and translation services. But there is a growing debate over how interpreters should be trained and assessed.

These are two of the findings from EITI's national interpreting and translation survey 2004, which ran from March to May and involved 140 public service providers from across the country. The results support some of the latest thinking among researchers and tutors on interpreter training and evaluation.

"To the uninitiated, it may seem the case that an interpreter is an interpreter and that any differences in approach could be little more than superficial," says Helen Cottington, the Head of English & Other Languages at the Mary Ward Centre, a specialist adult education college in London, which sometimes asks EITI to recommend assessors. "Indeed, that is what I would have said until I decided to offer training courses in community interpreting."

Helen was one of the UK's participants at Critical Link 4, an international conference organised by Critical Link Canada: National Council for the Development of Community Interpreting. The theme of the conference, which was held in Stockholm in May 2004, was the professionalisation of community interpreting, with topics on professional standards and interpreter training.

EITI's survey involved a wide range of public authorities (see fig 1), with contributions being received from both managers and 'frontline staff' (see fig 2). Within the healthcare sector, for example, participants [CONTINUED ON PAGE 6]

Training and assessment: figs 1 to 3

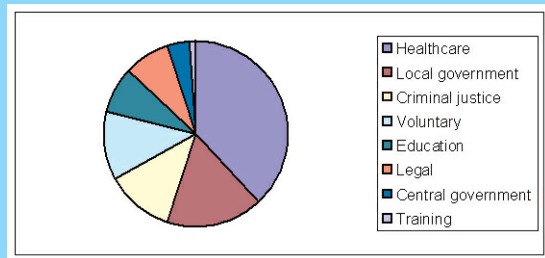


Fig 1. Participants were asked, "In which areas of the public sector do you operate?"

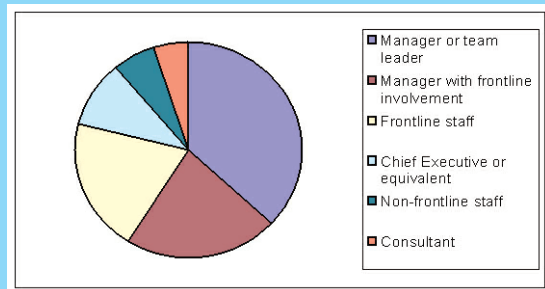


Fig 2. Participants were asked, "Which of the following best describes your role? For the purposes of this survey, 'frontline staff' means a public service provider who spends a substantial proportion of the working day in direct contact with members of the public."

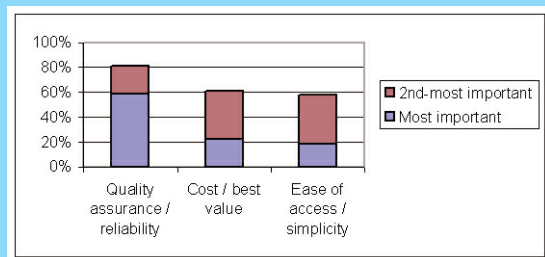


Fig 3. Participants were asked, "Which of the following factors would you rank as the most important to you or your organisation when obtaining interpreting and translation services? Which would you rank as the second-most important?"

Training and assessment: fig 4

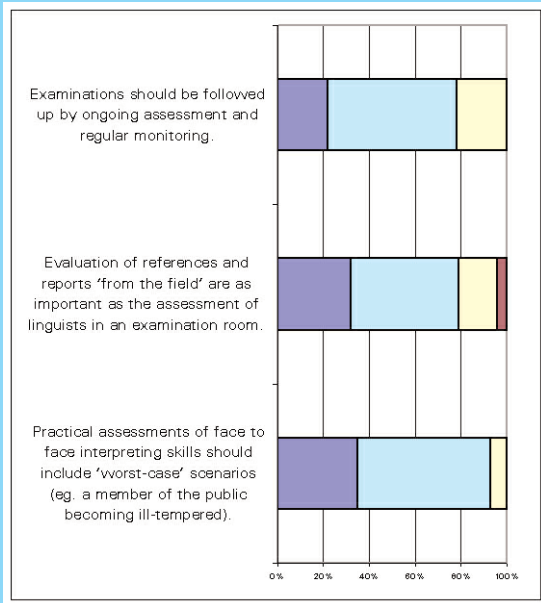


Fig 4. Respondents were asked, "Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with these statements."

Key (from left to right):

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Useful links

The Mary Ward Centre
www.marywardcentre.ac.uk

The Critical Link
www.criticallink.org

The Institute of Linguists
www.iol.org.uk

Training and assessment (continued from page 5)

ranged from directors of PCTs to hospital consultants to staff nurses. Within the criminal justice sector, participants ranged from prison governors to police constables to probation officers. Local government and the voluntary sector were also well represented.

More than half of the participants rated quality assurance and reliability as being the most important factors when choosing interpreting and translation services (see fig 3).

Significantly, a large majority of participants thought that examinations for interpreters working within the public sector should be followed up with ongoing assessment and regular monitoring (see fig 4). There was also widespread support for the principle of including references and reports 'from the field' in the evaluation of interpreters. Elements such as these are not included in many of the better-known examinations and accredited courses, such as the Institute of Linguists Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI).

There is also a growing debate within the interpreting community on the approach taken by awarding bodies such as the Institute of Linguists. "There are two distinct approaches or models of interpreting which are used in the field of public service interpreting," says Helen.

"The first is a linguistic model, in which the emphasis is on the development of the language skills needed to work in any given context. In this model, the interpreter enables the parties to communicate by acting as a language transmitter. Courses such as the DPSI take this approach."

Helen agrees that the linguistic model works well if the client is familiar with the public service being accessed and is articulate, confident and aware of his or her rights. However, she highlights difficulties faced by newly-arrived non-English speakers such as refugees [CONTINUED ON PAGE 9]

Case study: Scottish Refugee Council

"By the time the government's dispersal programme comes to an end, there will be 11,000 refugees living in Glasgow. You could say that it's the biggest social engineering project in the history of this city."

Mick Doyle brims with passion and commitment as he shows visitors around the new headquarters of the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) in Glasgow city centre. Mick is the SRC's Community Development Team Leader, helping refugees to take an active role in the development of themselves and their communities. His job is made particularly challenging by the implementation of the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999), which led to a dramatic increase in the number of asylum seekers being dispersed to Scotland and raised major issues of settlement and integration for those who will never be able to return to their home countries.



Interpreting and translation is fundamental to Mick's strategic plans. "Our work is all about taking away barriers to participation in civic life," he enthuses, "and you can't have integration without communication."

For telephone interpreting and written translation, the SRC works closely with EITI. "We use EITI because we trust them and because, well, they're unfailingly cheerful and helpful, even under pressure," says Mick.

Telephone interpreting is a key resource for the SRC's One Stop Service, which is funded through a grant agreement with the Home Office and is part of a nationwide, interagency group providing assistance to dispersed and newly-arrived asylum seekers. EITI sets up more than 4,000 telephone interpreting conference calls for the One Stop Service every year.

In April 2004 the SRC and EITI completed a £36,000 written translation project for the Community Response Co-ordination Group (CRCG), which was funded by the Scottish Executive.

Mick is bursting with ideas and plans for the future, all of which will continue to depend on interpreting and translation. "We're trying to improve the services that underpin people's quality of life," he explains excitedly. "For us, language is the cement that holds all the bricks together."





Case study: Kingston Council



The career paths of people working in the public sector can take unexpected twists and turns. Just ask Barbara Morton. A few years ago she was working part-time for Kingston Council designing posters for Black History Month. She then became involved with the Council's language service. Now she is about to launch one of the country's most ambitious multi-agency interpreting and translation programmes.

"A lot of people still think of Kingston as being just a leafy suburb," says Barbara. "But these days it has become a very cosmopolitan place."

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, which is shown in blue in the above map of London's boroughs, is one of three Royal Boroughs in England. It is common to hear Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Tamil, Arabic, Chinese and Bengali being spoken in and around Kingston's bustling shops and markets and, surprisingly, the town is home to the largest Korean community outside the Korean peninsula.

"I was completely new to the world of interpreting and translation," reflects Barbara, "which meant that I came into it with a very open mind. I tested all of the available services and I went out and met with all the community and religious leaders."

Barbara reached two conclusions. Firstly, she determined that using local interpreters and translators was good for the community and worked well. "However, there are times when you need to have an instant and reliable source and for that we use EITI."

This twin-track approach underpins the strategy of the new Kingston Interpreting Service (KIS), which Barbara and her team have been piloting since January. KIS is a visionary and far-reaching project involving the Council and six local hospital trusts and primary care trusts.

"A lot of the work that has been done with GPs in the past is now really out of date," Barbara explains. "We're putting together a new set of protocols and guidelines to help service providers make the best use of the available resources. For example, for an emergency situation in an A&E ward, we will use EITI's telephone interpreting service."



EITI's top 10 languages

Rank	First-half 2004	2003
1)	Turkish	Turkish
2)	Bengali	Arabic
3)	Somali	Bengali
4)	Arabic	Somali
5)	Portuguese	Kurdish
6)	Chinese	Portuguese
7)	Kurdish	Albanian
8)	Farsi	Farsi
9)	French	French
10)	Albanian	Spanish

EITI's top 10 languages are based on the number of requests received from UK public authorities for face to face or telephone interpreters. Shown above are the rankings for the first six months of 2004 and the whole of 2003. A monthly version of the top 10 is published on EITI's web site.

The rankings for the first-half of 2004 are largely unchanged from 2003, with Turkish, Bengali, Somali and Arabic continuing to fill the top four positions. Portuguese has moved up to fifth and Chinese has entered the list at number six.

Training and assessment (cont from p 6)

and asylum seekers, who have to deal with an alien system, and public service providers, who are likely to be unaware of their client's cultural background.

A different approach is taken by the community interpreting model, which, in the rest of Europe, is sometimes referred to as cultural mediation or cultural brokerage. "This model grew from the needs of the community," explains Helen, who was part of a group (including the Workers Educational Association, Croydon Continuing Education and Training Service and Sussex Interpreting Services) that developed a 60-hour community interpreting course accredited by the London Open College Network.

"In this model, the interpreter works to bridge the gap between a client and a public service provider where there is an imbalance in power. The community interpreter is expected to have knowledge of the cultural background of the clients and knowledge of the system of public services, as well as the language skills. They are also expected to be prepared to use intervention skills to ensure that the best interests of all parties are served."

According to Helen, the community interpreting model is rapidly gaining credibility and was the hottest topic of conversation at Critical Link 4.

The debate over the training and assessment of linguists will continue to involve public authorities, academic institutions and service providers such as EITI. In the mean time, it is widely expected that the demand for high quality interpreting and translation services will continue to grow.



A brief history of EITI

The company was formed in 1992 by Fardis Nejad, the former Chairman of the London Interpreting Project and a trustee of the human rights charity The Medical Foundation.

EITI, which was originally called Essential Interpreters and Translators International, was based in Slough until 2001, when it relocated all its operations to Howden, a small market town in East Yorkshire.

Later that year, the company completed the construction of a purpose-built operations centre; the new building was officially opened by the Rt Hon David Davis MP, the then Chairman of the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee.

Today, EITI provides services to more than 500 organisations throughout the UK, including hospital trusts, primary care trusts, mental health trusts, police forces, local authorities and a wide range of businesses, law firms and charities.

EITI Limited was incorporated in 1997.

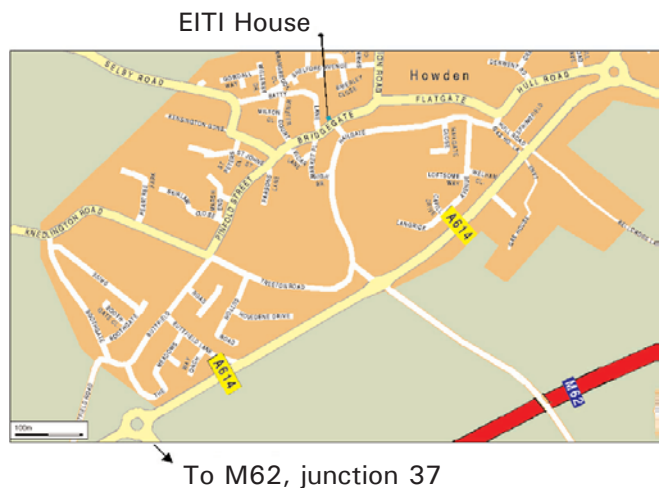
Below: EITI's operations centre in Howden, East Yorkshire.



Contact details

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A financial summary for the year-ended 31.12.03 was included in EITI's Annual Report 2003. Further financial information may be obtained from Andy Pratt at Whitmarsh Sterland Chartered Accountants.

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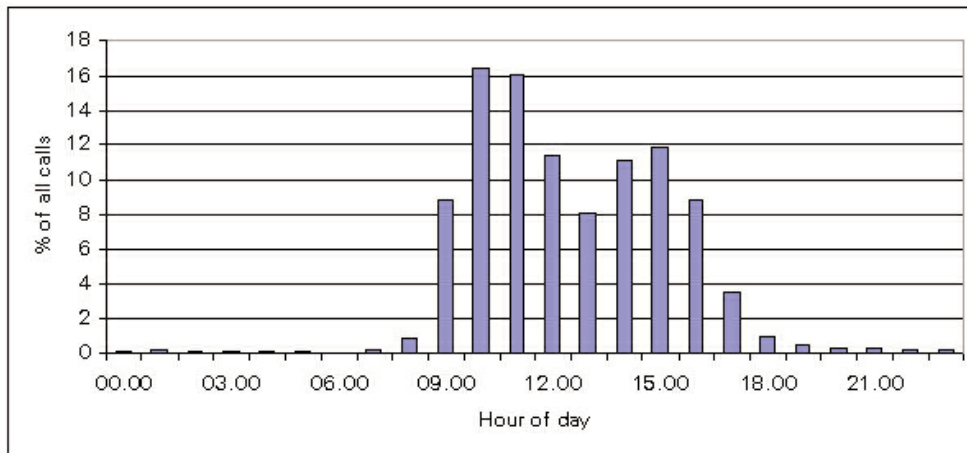
Operational statistics



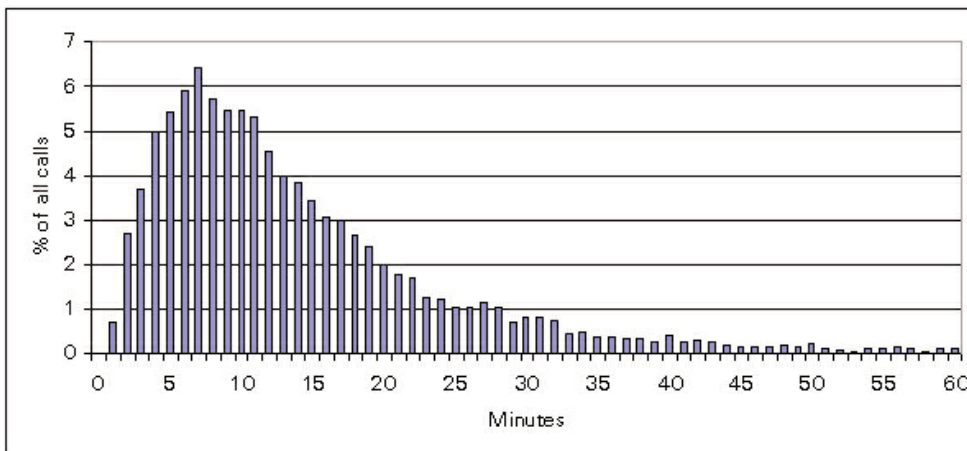
Numbers of assignments, half-year ended 30.06.04

<i>Telephone interpreting</i>	<i>Face to face interpreting</i>	<i>Written translation</i>
6,790	4,002	1,009

Distribution of telephone interpreting conference calls throughout the day



Duration of telephone interpreting conference calls



POSTSCRIPT

A student of mine found an old man who said, "Yes, I speak Baré" - an Amazonian language that we thought was extinct. I checked that he knew the few Baré words I knew, then I sat down and talked with him for two months. Senhor Candelário was a great man. He would tell hunting stories, and stories about his life.

His mother had been the only person he could speak Baré with. After she died he kept it alive by talking to himself when he was drunk. So the language had been almost literally pickled in alcohol until I recorded it. When I left we both said: "See you again". Six months later I got news that he had died.

Alexandra Aikhenvald, New Scientist Vol 181 No 2432 P 44 (31.01.2004)

