

# SLIANZ

Sign Language Interpreters Association of New Zealand  
Te Rōpū o Ngā Kaiwhakamārama Reo Turi o Aotearoa

## Presidents report 2018/2019

Dear members,

At the end of another busy year, I am pleased to report on what has been achieved by your committee on your behalf. Much of our work has already been reported on at the SLIANZ Regional meetings which were held in May of this year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our small but dedicated committee and all our members who have contributed to the organisation this year.

### **Membership**

Membership has been steady. After a sudden increase a number of years ago due to the support of organisations and interpreter providers requiring SLIANZ membership, we are now seeing a much slower gradual rise in the number of Ordinary members especial.. We currently have 106 Ordinary members, 4 Honorary members, 8 Associate members and 2 Corporate Associate members.

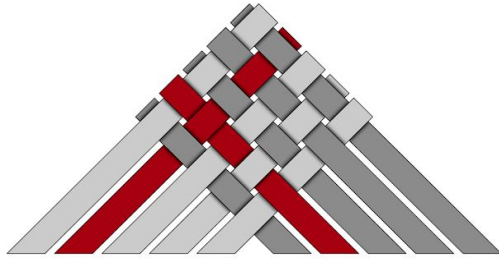
It has to be acknowledged that membership administration has become a larger task due to these increased numbers, including processing membership renewal payments and receipts, ID cards, the Directory, and PD points.

### **Interpreting standards and registration**

The first task for your new committee was to provide a summary of the discussions at the 2018 AGM around whether SLIANZ should be a registration body. The summary we submitted to Tricia Fitzgerald was included in its entirety in her report to the ODI. In addition to the committee reports for the AGM, you will find a timeline provided by the ODI of activities around interpreter registration. The NZSL Board are currently taking a step back from implementing an interpreter registration system and are instead considering the possibility of shared administration support for SLIANZ, NZSLTA and the Sign Language Proficiency Interview, to manage membership / directory / assessment records, and to report high level data to the NZSL Board on an annual basis. Wenda Walton is carrying out work to scope this possibility. If members agree, then this proposal will be discussed at the AGM.

### **Website, logo and e-pamphlet**

A few projects initiated by the previous committee came to final fruition this year. First of all, the new logo, designed by James Bichan, was formally adopted once the Te Reo Māori name for our organisation was finalised. Secondly, Noreen Smith put the final touches on the 'e-pamphlet' videos on platform interpreting, adding captioning and voiceover. Due to a delay in the third project - the



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new website launch - it was decided to distribute the e-pamphlet via our YouTube channel and Facebook group in the first instance.

The new website was launched in March and has been put to good use already, with a relaunch of the Directory, an easier way of logging professional development points, a resource area for members and information and registration for our annual conference. A huge thank you to Matthew Bloomfield for his work setting up a Wordpress site and providing us with very clear instruction videos. Thanks are also due to Dale Thomas and Kimberley Olivecrona for their earlier work on restructuring the information on the site.

### **Newsletter and communications**

This year saw the re-introduction of a SLIANZ newsletter. We issued two newsletters and a committee update. Thank you to our able editor Shizue Sameshima and to Fiona Love, Mark Hodgson and Cheryl Astley for helping to put the newsletter together. We have heard from members that the newsletter is an important part of membership communications and that it is more likely to be read than web blogs or social media posts.

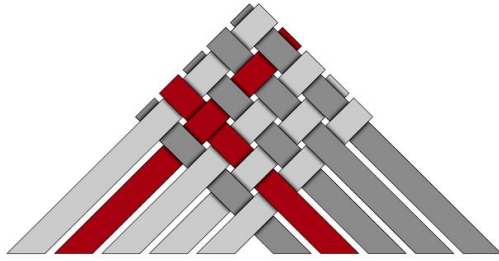
We maintain two Facebook groups and a Facebook page, but are currently considering Slack as an alternative. Slack is a communication/collaboration platform where you can have a mixture of direct messaging, group communications, and collaborative documents (it integrates with things like Google Drive, Dropbox, various email programmes and calendars). It can be used on mobile or desktop and it's free Open Source software. We hope to trial this at the conference.

We have invested in a Zoom licence which will hopefully enable us to deliver more professional development online we have started to hold some of our regional meetings via Zoom. Our committee meetings are now also run via Zoom. Especially for regional interpreters, this has proven to be a great platform.

### **Liaison / relationships**

I have had regular meetings with a number of individuals and organisations with whom SLIANZ has long-standing relationships.

We signed a joint statement with Deaf Aotearoa in 2013, modelled on a cooperation agreement by the international organisations WFD and WASLI of which DANZ and SLIANZ are respective members. Following changes to this WFD-WASLI agreement, we have decided to follow suit and we our agreement at the AGM, where the DANZ President and a member of the Deaf Aotearoa board will be present to sign the new document.



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In August last year, I wrote a letter to iSign regarding the continued use of communicators. I was invited to a meeting to discuss this further and since then iSign have updated their policy and have taken steps to mark communicators more clearly on their website. I was also invited to a further meeting with Mark Crooke, together with other stakeholders, to discuss a future interpreter skills assessment framework.

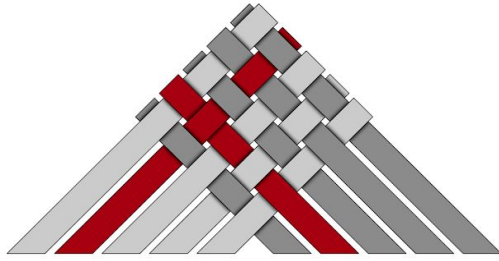
Kimberley Olivecrona represented SLIANZ at monthly NZSTI meetings until she stepped down from the SLIANZ committee. We are currently looking for a replacement.

I have had regular online meetings with ASLIA Chair Julie Judd, in which we discussed PD opportunities, indemnity insurance, and the impact of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) on Australian interpreters. We are very pleased to welcome Julie as the keynote speaker for our conference this year.

We have met and had discussions with Deaf Interpreting NZ around training and whether qualified Deaf interpreters could join SLIANZ as ordinary members. Two of our committee members attended a DINZ planning meeting, and a DINZ representative attended the SLIANZ Face-to-face committee meeting.

Of course we maintain strong links with the interpreter training program at AUT and I have had regular meetings with George Major. Dale Thomas visited night classes to promote the AUT programme and visited AUT students to promote SLIANZ. We have also worked together on the tuakana teina programme.

I was invited by MBIE to comment on the review of the Relay service, including the video interpreting service, which took place this year. MBIE also organised an online meeting with interpreters at short notice. Based on comments made at this meeting, we made a submission to the review which is now available from <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/it-communications-and-broadband/our-role-in-the-ict-sector/telecommunications-relay-service/summary-of-submissions-proposed-changes-to-the->



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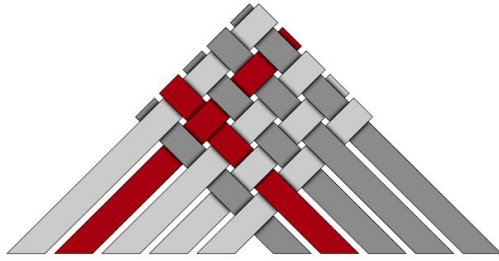
[nzsl-video-interpreting-and-relay-services/](#)).

Following this submission, I was contacted by CDS, the current providers of the NZ video interpreting service, and we had a very productive discussion around the submission and future service provision.

We were anticipating that a focus for this year would be the transformation of disability support systems in New Zealand under the principles of Enabling Good Lives. Sarah Billing, who works and lives in the mid Central area where a prototype of the new system is being run, agreed to as EGL liaison person for SLIANZ. Sarah and myself met with Sacha O’Dea (Systems Transformation national programme lead) in September last year. I also attended a meeting in Palmerston North about engaging with the Deaf community about the prototype. although the prototype is still undergoing significant changes and it has not always been easy to find out information on its progress, it is likely that preparation for the coming changes will still be a key focus for SLIANZ in the coming term.

## **WFD Congress bid and WASLI**

In January this year, Deaf Aotearoa announced their bid to host the WFD Congress in 2023. This congress is held every four years and attracts a very large number of Deaf people from all corners of the world. Since the establishment of the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI), the WFD Congress has traditionally been preceded by the WASLI conference and general meeting in the same host country. If the New Zealand bid is successful, this will therefore also bring the WASLI conference to our shores. We have been very fortunate to obtain the support from Tourism New Zealand to prepare for this, including a feasibility report and funding for me to attend the WASLI conference in Paris in July this year to promote the bid. I have worked closely with Deaf Aotearoa throughout. Following a site inspection, the WFD committee has released a very positive report on New Zealand’s capacity to host the Congress. We wish Deaf Aotearoa all the best for their presentation in Paris - fingers crossed!



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Writing this report makes me realise again how much work your committee achieves every year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing Secretary Tarsha Cutelli, Treasurer Louise Hackshaw, committee members Dale Thomas and Shiz Sameshima, as well as committee members who stepped down earlier in the year Deborah Lynch and Kimberley Oivecrona, co-opted member Ruth Sullivan-Whyte, and tuakana teina coordinator Rose Butler-Stoney.

Thanks also to our hardworking Wellington conference organising committee: Jenn Gilbert, Rachel Tate, Melissa Sutton, Alan Wendt and Rosie Henley. You took a huge weight of the committee's shoulders.

For the better part of this year, we have had to manage with a reduced committee and this has taken its toll. Each year, it is becoming more difficult to reconcile our work and personal commitments with a busy voluntary role. Due to this, we will propose at the AGM to devote some of our surplus funds to providing paid administration support for the committee. I hope you will support this proposal and that we are able to spread the load in the coming term to sustain the organisation.