

# informatics

July 2012

Number 2

## President's notes

By Barbara Collishaw, C. Tran.

After the successful AGM in Toronto, we have been working in the background, by telephone and email, to stay on top of all issues of importance to the profession.

At our executive meeting on May 28, we noted that the financial situation is satisfactory, but that a membership dues increase will be needed to keep things operating smoothly in coming years.

The discipline committee's panel continues to deal with a complaint. This is a long, expensive process. Another anonymous complaint has been received, but ATIO does not act on anonymous complaints.

The Community Interpretation subcommittee continues its work, coordinating with other interested associations and government agencies, and establishing an outline of a basic framework for certification standards. There has been little progress so far on updating the ATIO Act.

I attended the Editors Association of Canada conference held in Ottawa from June 1 to 3 and met quite a few ATIO members and other translators there. It was a great conference.

On November 17 and 18, ATIO will be hosting the annual council meeting of CTTIC, the Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council. CTTIC council and staff will set their own agenda and make their own accommodations arrangements, but I hope ATIO members can be involved in a social event, such as a dinner or even a show. (We had a great bilingual show in New Brunswick one year.) If you have any suggestions or wish to volunteer on a special social committee, let me know.

### CERTIFIED THROUGH CTTIC TRANSLATION EXAMINATION

#### *English-French*

Campbell, Yann  
Ceriello, Eleonora  
Chénier, Carole  
Corbeil, André  
Lavoie, Caroline  
Muller Mazet, Hélène  
Thériault, Tania

#### *English-Italian*

Ceriello, Eleonora

#### *English-Japanese*

Takeshita, Koichi (Ken)

#### *English-Russian*

Bekker, Tatiana  
Maslov, Igor  
Severskaya, Galina

#### *English-Spanish*

Celis, Violeta Patricia  
Pellegrineschi, Karina  
Silvia

#### *German-English*

Albishausen, Dirk

#### *Portuguese-English*

Silva, Fernando

#### *French-English*

Bazinet, Lise  
Charest, Pascale

#### *French-Spanish*

Celis, Violeta Patricia

#### *English-German*

Albishausen, Dirk  
Reinhard, Maria

### CERTIFIED ON DOSSIER IN TRANSLATION

#### *English-French*

Clément, Marie-Christine

### SPECIALIZATION RECOGNITION

#### *Medical Pharmacology*

Olivier-Bonfils, Delphine

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# Highlights of the 2012 AGM

By Barbara Collishaw, C. Tran., President

This year's AGM featured thoughtful questions and innovative suggestions.

## OTTIAQ reciprocal half-price membership:

**Q.** What was the purpose of the reciprocal half-price membership agreement with OTTIAQ, if not to attract more members?

**A.** It was OTTIAQ's idea since ATIO members living and working in Quebec were required to join OTTIAQ in order to call themselves "certified" translators.

**Q.** What is the impact of the lower membership fees for OTTIAQ members?

**A.** We can't be sure until the end of the fiscal year, but so far it has not had much impact.

## Examinations and other ways of qualifying for certification:

**Q.** Will it ever be possible to use computers and electronic dictionaries during examinations?

**A.** The Board has not discussed this issue lately, but suggestions are welcome; they will be passed on to CTTIC, which sets the examinations.

Denis Bousquet (former CTTIC President) indicated that electronic examinations were very complex; the American Translators Association (ATA) has been working on a project for 5 years, at considerable cost. The prevention of cheating is a challenge. A room must be rented, different keyboards and dictionaries must be available, which are both costly and complex. Cloud computing will perhaps lead to a cheaper solution, involving registration on a secure site on a subscription basis. Perhaps we would be able to obtain a licence from the system eventually developed by ATA.

**Q.** Anne de Thy indicated that since OTTIAQ, for example, no longer uses the examination process perhaps we should change our model to eliminate entrance/certification examinations, and perhaps use a mentorship system.

**A.** Marco Fiola indicated that a six-month mentorship process is required with OTTIAQ, involving an ethics program, and that the

CTTIC examination is much more demanding, and requires a higher mark to pass. The issue of protecting the public was mentioned; more stringent criteria mean that CTTIC's certification has more value to the public.

**Q.** There was a complaint about the time it takes to mark exams.

**A.** CTTIC has recently upgraded its exam process and improvements are expected this year. Suggestions from members about the CTTIC exam are welcome.

## Membership Fees:

A discussion was held on the issue of raising membership fees, which have not been raised since 1999. Proposals were made to increase membership fees by the inflation rate, or by 10%, perhaps divided over two years, at 5% per year. The favoured option was to increase the fees by a lump sum of \$25 for certified members, and \$10 for candidates and retired members. A **postal vote** will be held on the issue. Please vote!

Elizabeth Abraham asked how ATIO fees compare with the fees of other provinces. Nancy McInnis indicated that it was not really possible to make a comparison as most provinces have much smaller organizations. The level of the fees should support our operations.

Andrew Clifford stated that community interpreters should be taken into consideration when considering the level of fees, since their rates have stayed the same for 20 years. It is a sensitive issue.

The question of the importance of membership dues to ATIO's revenues was discussed. It was asked whether the Board has considered other ways to earn revenue such as webinars, which would help members that cannot travel to take advantage of professional development opportunities. Barbara mentioned the standard seminars that ATIO offers. [CTTIC-edu](#) now offers 10 courses—seven in French and three in English; there will be around 30 by March 2013. Setting up these courses has been complex and costly, but it has been funded by the federal government's Canadian Language Sector Enhancement Program (CLSEP).

**Q.** Will Translation Bureau members be joining ATIO at the Bureau's expense?

**A.** The recession had resulted in this idea being set aside for the time being. The federal engineers' case is still pending, which may have an impact on our situation. Since we do not have exclusivity of title, it may not be possible to leverage the results of the engineers' case.

## Foreign Languages

A member had been encouraging colleagues to join ATIO but noted that the organization was not doing anything for foreign-language translators. The member was encouraged to speak up, provide feedback and give opinions. Gerald Yang indicated that an invitation to establish a committee had been sent to foreign language members but only three people responded. Our association is a two-way street, and foreign-language translators need to make themselves heard. An inaugural meeting of foreign-language translators should be convened soon.

## Client relations issues

The differential in taxes between Quebec and Ontario was discussed. The provincial portion in Ontario is 8% versus only 5% in Quebec since there is no provincial tax on translation in Quebec. Could ATIO could request feedback from the Competition Bureau?

The issue of clients such as the City of Ottawa imposing a preferential rate requirement, with a reimbursement of the difference demanded, was discussed, and whether this is a legal requirement. Denis Bousquet indicated that the City of Ottawa is free to impose this type of requirement. Members are encouraged to respond to such requests to suppliers by indicating that this business practice is not appreciated.

One member had been asked to sign an agreement governed by Swiss law. Other members reported this was normal in international contracts. Members are free to refuse work governed by the law of other jurisdictions if they wish.

## Innovations:

### *Student Committee*

The introduction of a Student Committee was discussed, and reaction was positive. Matthew McCarthy, who had made the suggestion, addressed the meeting. He spoke of identifying ways of engaging students, such as using social media to address questions on

certification. The Board welcomed his suggestions and will discuss ways to get students more involved.

### *Seminar suggestion*

Someone suggested holding a seminar on translation memory software presented by software developers.

### *Social (and other) media*

A discussion was held on the possibility of using a LinkedIn group as an online forum, and about seeking discounts for software tools and so on for members.

Other means of raising public awareness were discussed. Members were encouraged to voice their opinion in public forums, such as letters to newspaper editors.

Entitlement is no longer guaranteed for translators and interpreters. There is a large market for translation services. Promotion is therefore essential. The next generation must leverage new modes of communication. Globalization means that there are more opportunities, but the rates are lower. Mentoring the new generation is essential.

### *State of the Profession report*

An annual report on the state of the profession would be useful, and could be added to the agenda for next year's AGM.

There are many changes coming to the Canadian translation industry. Viewing of the Translation Bureau CEO's webinar indicated a shift away from a focus on bilingualism.

## ATIO Board of Directors for 2012-2013

Barbara Collishaw	President
Yuri Geifman	Vice-President
Alexandra Scott	Secretary
Alana Hardy	Treasurer
Veronica Cappella	Director, Salaried Translators
Tom Ellett	Director, Independent Translators
Dorothy Charbonneau	Director, Conference Interpreters
Yuri Geifman	Director, Court Interpreters
Jianhua (Gerald) Yang	Director, Foreign Languages

# Salaried Translators' Committee: Updates for 2012-2013

By Veronica Cappella, C. Tran., Director Salaried Translators

## Who we are

The ATIO Salaried Translators' Committee was established in the fall of 2011. The committee currently consists of four members: Veronica Cappella (chair), Sharon Locke, David Lowe and Anne de Thy.

## Accomplishments for 2012

In April 2012, the committee sent a survey to all salaried translators with the objective of creating an updated outlook of the language industry and the particular working conditions of salaried translators. The committee is currently analyzing the results, and we expect to have them ready for publication on ATIO's website and in *InformATIO* this summer. We will be looking at what the survey results tell us about the current labour market, and we will also be comparing results with the previous survey, which was conducted in 2007. Our goal is to determine what has changed in the past five years and what the needs and concerns of salaried translators are right now.

## Goals for 2012-2013

The ATIO Salaried Translators' Committee has a number of goals that it wishes to accomplish this coming year.

- Networking

We will be working on improving networking opportunities for salaried translators. We are considering options for enabling members to network with other salaried translators, both in person and through online formats. We will be

looking into how we can create networks and links among salaried translators using social media sites, such as LinkedIn or Facebook, which would give members an opportunity to share translation questions and expertise.

- Training

We are also looking at how we can leverage the experience of long-term members and how we can encourage members to share their expertise and knowledge.

- Value of ATIO certification

Another major goal that we are hoping to accomplish this year is a one-page document setting out the advantages of being a certified member of ATIO. This document would be available on the website and could be used as a tool in promoting the association among employers and to show the value added of hiring certified members.

## Acknowledgements and Thank yous

The committee would like to thank Sébastien Kabacinski, who unfortunately had to resign from the committee in February 2012, for his work and support.

## How you can get involved

We are currently in need of English-French translators on the committee to make it more balanced. In addition, we welcome your feedback and comments.

# Introducing Your New Director, Independent Translators

By Tom Ellett, C. Tran., Director, Independent Translators

I am honoured to have been elected to the ATIO Board as Director, Independent Translators. I should like to thank my predecessor, Denis Bousquet, for his work over the past few years and for encouraging me to take on the role. My thanks also to John Coakley and Al Daigen for formally nominating me.

To briefly introduce myself, I have been in business as a full-time freelance translator since 1996, working for a mixture of translation agencies and direct clients. I translate from Swedish, Norwegian and German to English, specializing in publication-quality work that straddles the boundary between translation and copywriting. Originally from the UK, I immigrated to Canada in 2007 and now live in Guelph, Ontario, with my wife and four cats.

As an ATIO member for the past five years, I have perceived a need for the association to become more relevant and responsive to its independent translator members, especially those working mainly with non-government clients. Independent translators make up more than half the ATIO membership (726 of 1,357 members), and just over half (372) of those 726 independent translators work in language pairs other than English<>French.

We are now seeing the emergence of two very distinct translation markets. One is characterized by high volumes, low rates, poor quality and increasing use of automation. At the other end of the scale, we have the premium market: providing carefully crafted translations to informed clients who appreciate the value of well-written words.

As the first translators' association in the world whose certified members were deemed professionals by law, ATIO is particularly well placed to help its members position themselves in this premium segment of the market.

As a Board member, I intend to promote the following initiatives:

- **Client outreach:** Educating Ontario businesses and key client groups on the benefits of working

directly with certified translators rather than through agencies

- **Member outreach:** Using social media tools (e-newsletter, interactive website, blog, LinkedIn, Twitter) to foster dialogue with ATIO's membership and deliver professional development opportunities relevant to the needs of independent translators
- **Interprofessional outreach:** Exploring opportunities for cooperation (on training, client education, cross-referral, etc.) with other freelance professions such as copywriting and web design

My first priority is to seek the Board's approval for an e-newsletter or blog and a LinkedIn group as a way of improving communication with, and participation by, ATIO's membership. In the meantime, please feel free to email me with any bright ideas, comments or suggestions you may have. I look forward to your input and to representing you on the Board.

Contact Tom at 519-341-4343 or [tom@atiomail.ca](mailto:tom@atiomail.ca)

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# A Computer-Administered Certification Exam? There's hope!

By Denis Louis Bousquet, C. Tran.  
Translation Katalin Poor, C. Tran.

**I**t's nothing new, but it does keep coming up, whether in conversations with colleagues, at the ATIO AGM or in exchanges with other organizations in Canada and abroad.

In an effort to update myself with the latest, I asked the President of CTTIC whether computer-administered exams happened to show up in her crystal ball. She could not have been more direct: No, for the time being, CTTIC is not planning any computer-administered exams. They are too bloody complicated. And on that point, I completely agree with her. Having said that, the co-chair of the CTTIC certification committee also answered my questions and, according to her, computer-administered exams are among the many items under review.

## A two-pronged issue

First, you have to consider the technical side of things. The purpose of the certification exam is to check on the candidates' knowledge in the area of translation. This means that you have to bypass several Internet features, such as search engines, machine translation modules, and many others. We are not interested in whether you know how to run a search for a word online, but rather in how you translate it using your brain (not how thousands of Internet users translated it). This raises major technical problems, requiring advanced knowledge in the area. Which means having to rely on experts who can stickhandle the project in accordance with the guidelines and criteria established by the certification committee. We are talking about a major and extremely time-consuming undertaking.

And then you need the money. As things now stand, CTTIC really doesn't have the means to take on such a project. For its initial application to the CLSEP, CTTIC had worked out three components: one for professional development (which was approved

and financed by the CLSEP – [cttic-edu.ca](http://cttic-edu.ca)), one to promote the language professions (AILIA was the big winner here) and one to develop a national certification program (where we simply lost). For CTTIC to properly take on such a project, it would need at least \$100,000, and in order to recover that investment, exam fees would have to rise significantly. And therein lies the rub, because people want to have it all, but without having to pay for it.

Having said that, there may be a solution, and it involves a joint effort between CTTIC and the American Translators Association (ATA). ATA has been working for at least six years on developing a computer-administered certification exam. I have attended many of their information sessions since the very beginning and have stayed in touch with the officials in charge of the project. ATA has invested an enormous amount of money in this project, and it appears to be getting close to a solution. Here is a very bare-bones explanation of how the system would work. There would be three main elements: a local computer (the candidate's laptop), a computer for the exam (in the computing cloud), configured with keyboards in different languages and running the exam software—candidates would see the text to be translated on the left side of the screen and would type their translation on the right side of the screen—and finally the server, with which all of the exam computers would communicate, and where the candidate's final translation would be uploaded and forwarded for correction.

Two highly encouraging conclusions emerged from my discussions with the officials in charge of the project: CTTIC might be able to run a test exam in collaboration with ATA. And once ATA has fully tested and introduced the computer-administered exam, CTTIC could negotiate a user licence, which would prevent CTTIC from having to reinvent the wheel and invest huge amounts of money that it does not have.

So now you know. There's hope.

# Everything You Always Wanted to Know About HST But Were Afraid to Ask

By Tom Ellett, C. Tran., Director, Independent Translators

From the article in the previous issue of *InformATIO* and some of the questions at the recent AGM, it is clear that the harmonized sales tax remains a source of confusion and misconceptions. Let me try to set the record straight on three frequently asked questions.

**Q:** My annual revenue is below the \$30,000 threshold for mandatory GST/HST registration. Should I still register voluntarily?

**A:** There are several advantages to voluntary registration:

1. It makes you look more professional. If you're dealing predominantly with business clients (end-clients or translation agencies), the net cost of your services to them will be the same because they are able to claim an input tax credit for the HST you charge them.
2. You don't suddenly find yourself having to register if your total revenue for the last four quarters passes the \$30,000 mark.
3. You can claim an input tax credit equivalent to the GST/HST paid on all your business expenses, including internet and phone services, IT equipment, office supplies, dictionaries. By not registering, you're effectively inflating your costs by 13% (in Ontario). For me, that's the clincher!

**Q:** I perform all my commercial translation work under my registered business name, and charge HST on it, but I also translate literature under my own name. Do I need to charge the publisher HST on this work too?

**A:** It depends on whether your commercial translation business is incorporated. If it is, then no, the literary translation work performed under your own name would not be subject to HST (unless you are also HST-registered as an individual).

However, if—like most independent translators—you are a sole proprietor, then you and your business (whatever its registered operating name) are one and the same legal entity. In this case you, the individual, are the HST registrant, and you have to charge HST on *all* work you perform—whether it's under your own name or a business name.

This applies even to work that's completely unrelated to your principal business activity, so if you make some extra cash by cutting lawns while your translation clients are on vacation, you should be remitting HST on this income as well.

**Q:** I know I have to charge 13% HST to clients in Ontario, but what about clients in other provinces and countries?

**A:** In the case of international clients, the answer is simple: Exports of services are zero-rated, so no GST/HST is payable if your client is located outside Canada.

For clients in other Canadian provinces, the Canada Revenue Agency's place-of-supply rules apply. To decipher these, you need to be a certified translator of bureaucratese, but the cardinal rule is that the *client's* location determines the rate of GST/HST payable. So, a translation supplied to an oil exploration company in Alberta would be subject to 5% GST, while a job for a shipbroker in Halifax would attract Nova Scotia HST of 15%.

In the case of work for translation agencies, your business transaction is with the agency, and GST/HST on your fee is payable at the rate applicable to the agency's location – irrespective of where the end-client is located. Don't let agencies try to tell you otherwise!

In the unlikely event that you don't know a Canadian client's business or home address (but you need that to send the bill, right?), you should remit GST/HST at the rate applicable to *your* location (13% HST in Ontario).

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**For more information, see the Canada Revenue Agency website:**

[www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/gst-tps/menu-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/gst-tps/menu-eng.html)  
(English)

[www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/gst-tps/menu-fra.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/gst-tps/menu-fra.html)  
(French)

**Further reading:**

[www.northernontariobusiness.com/columns/bissonette/Peeling-back-the-layers-of-HST-regulations.aspx](http://www.northernontariobusiness.com/columns/bissonette/Peeling-back-the-layers-of-HST-regulations.aspx)

# Salute to 25-Year Members

The following members joined **ATIO** in 1987 and have seen the Association through the ensuing quarter-century.

## *Congratulations!*

Carmen Bourbonnais, *Translator*

Michèle Campeau, *Translator*

Chantal Clermont, *Translator*

Gérald Fortier, *Translator*

Claire Gagné, *Translator*

Louise Lacombe, *Conference Interpreter*

Michèle Lejars, *Translator*

Margaret Moriarty, *Translator*

Jozef Nowosielski, *Translator*

Danièle Ouanès, *Translator*

Monique Perrin d'Arloz, *Translator*

Nathalie Poulin, *Translator*

**ATIO** takes this opportunity to thank the sponsor  
of the 2012 Annual General Meeting



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