

informATIOn

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Number 2

ATIO Steps Up to Meet the Future

By Nancy McInnis, C. Tran., President

There were two major topics of discussion at the Annual General Meeting this year: community interpreting and the certification examination in translation.

Let's talk about community interpreting first. After briefly presenting its reasons, the Board asked the membership for a mandate to explore amending the *ATIO Act* for a number of reasons, including to seek protection of the title of Certified Community Interpreter in order to eventually include community interpreters under the ATIO umbrella. Feedback has been generally positive over the last couple of years, so it came as no surprise that those who moved to the microphones to express their opinions were overwhelmingly in favour of the motion. And in fact, it passed without so much as a whimper of opposition.

The first steps in this lengthy process will be to amend the *ATIO Act* and reserve the title of Certified Community Interpreter. If you are interested in volunteering to help out, please let the office know. You can email them at info@atio.on.ca or send a letter to 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1202, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B7. Please outline your experience with community, court or conference interpreting. We are looking for people with a strong background in management, scheduling, training, etc. We are also looking for experience in drafting legislation. Applications must be received no later than July 31, 2009.

The other major topic of discussion was the certification examination in translation. In recent years, there has been a growing level of frustration surrounding the exam. No one ever wants to believe that his or her best is not good enough. Who would? But the purpose of the exam is not to pass everyone. It is intended to protect the public by recognizing the working professional, the translator who can take a tough text and translate it skillfully and

smoothly so that it conveys the same message as the original.

Admittedly there have been problems with the exam. Some texts may have been less than ideal. Comments that markers provided to some failed candidates may not have been detailed or specific enough.

These were some of the reasons behind Mr. Edward Liu's, C. Tran., recent survey of ATIO members, and his motion at the AGM to establish a committee to look into the certification process. The motion was very narrowly defeated, and Board members were among those who voted against it. But let's be clear about why. The Board voted against the motion simply because the problem is already being explored, and setting up a committee would be redundant.

The Board is well aware of concerns about the exam and continues to address the issue with CTTIC. The certification exam is a thorny and multi-faceted problem, but change will come from frank discussions such as these.

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Panel on Standards at the ATIO 2009 AGM

By Barbara Collishaw, C. Tran., Director, Salaried Translators

The moderator for the panel was David Lowe and the panelists were Denis-Louis Bousquet, Ken Larose and Donald Barabé.

Denis Bousquet is a member of the ATIO board and President of CTTIC. He began by describing the process that leads to the creation of standards, such as CGSB and ISO standards. The impetus for standards can come from an industry, government or consumers. In this case, it was the industry, in particular, AILIA (the Language Industry Association), which focuses on translation as a business. The standard-making process is precise and complex, and standardization can have great benefits for providers of goods and services and for the public.

The primary benefits of standards, in general, are these:

- Standards are a means for organizations of all types and sizes to demonstrate their business practices.
- Standards provide businesses with tools to better manage risk. Not only are organizations increasingly adhering to standards, they are seeking suppliers who do the same.
- Standards can make business more efficient and cost-effective.
- Standards contribute to the development of a global language for products and services.
- Conformance to national or international standards can ease the entry of products and services into foreign and domestic markets as well as reducing barriers to trade.
- Conformance to standards can positively impact public perception and increase consumer and client confidence.

The new Canadian standard was based on EN 15038, the European standard for Translation Services, and adapted to reflect the Canadian perspective and situation. The process took about a year.

Ken Larose, former ATIO President, former CTTIC President, gave us the insider's view, since he attended the preliminary meetings as President of CTTIC. The process appears to have begun at the FIT congress in Finland. Interestingly, the head of translation for the European Union questions the basis for such a standard: why is it about the quality of the process and not about the quality of the product? The European Union has a dynamic evaluation process that ensures that quality remains consistently high.

This is the first CGSB standard that concerns itself with people, especially professionals. Why has it come about? Because AILIA pushed for it. Why was it done so quickly? Because AILIA was in a hurry. Usually, it can take years of detail-filled meetings to develop a standard; this one was done in less than a year. AILIA has received \$10 million in government funding to promote the "Language Industry." Companies are seeking "branding," and wish to be able to say they are "certified" according to a standard. (Internationally, "certified" is the word applied to companies or products that meet standards, e.g., ISO 9000 certified. This, of course, causes confusion with our reserved titles of Certified Translator, Certified Interpreter, etc.).

What are the dangers for ATIO members and translators in general? What if the Translation Bureau/PWGSC requires all its suppliers to meet this standard? It is a costly process and not particularly relevant to individuals and small companies. PWGSC tends to prefer big suppliers, preferably one big supplier. Is translation the next industry to go this way? Will PWGSC listen to ATIO and the other associations?

Donald Barabé is Vice-President of Professional Services at the Translation Bureau. He asked why the government wants standards, and his answer was that other countries have standards, or are acquiring them, and therefore, we need them too. The title of his talk, "Regulated Client, Unregulated Industry—A Wall Street Waiting to Happen" gives us another clue to the Bureau's reasoning. This threat was touched on briefly.

Another danger is commoditization, where translation is seen as a commodity that is non-specialized and can be produced by anyone, even machines. This causes prices to drop. Why are we here on a nice Saturday? Because associations are important. They promote our professional image.

What will the impact be on Translation Bureau contracts? International translation service providers (TSPs) would have to meet Canadian standards, and Canadian TSPs would be more able to go abroad for work.

Compare the situation to accountants. The Canadian standard was harmonized with the international standard a long time ago, but the U.S. is only getting there now. It does not prevent single-person companies from operating.

The Bureau intends to apply the new standard.

Continued on next page

Questions and Answers

1. **Paul (?):** As an example, one big translation firm takes a contract for millions of words but has only one Certified Translator in that specialty: what is the Bureau's response?

Donald Barabé: This is a question of ethics. Suppliers must have a BA in Translation or be certified by a professional association. There is a push on for the Bureau to hire only association members. The Bureau has a requirement that suppliers have sufficient, appropriate resources to do the work.

The questioner was satisfied to hear that, and congratulated the Bureau on its good practice.

2. **Julien Marquis:** *Mr. Marquis congratulated Ken on working with committees and asking good questions. AILIA should be self-supporting, but it has received lots of federal money and then spent it on this process of producing a standard. Can AILIA justify its existence, its funding and its spending?*

When Julien was president of CTTIC, a protocol was signed, but it is not being applied. Why does the Bureau want a standard that is not obligatory?

Donald Barabé: A BA or certification is a standard for translators. He has argued for certification as the sole qualification and this may come. An industry standard is part of the process. He deplores the fact that Bureau translators are not certified members of an association, and is pushing for that.

3. **Edward Liu:** *Mr. Liu did a survey among ATIO members, and this led him to ask two questions. The first had many parts: concerns about an unregulated industry; federal government not requiring certified translators; that CTTIC should advocate to employers on behalf of members; lack of regulations; ATIO having a deficit because of a lack of members.*

Denis Bousquet pointed out that this question had nothing to do with the topic at hand, which was standards.

Second question: According to D. Barabé's presentation, demand for our services is high, and the Bureau is promoting certification and professionalism, but does the Bureau not recognize certification for non-official languages? (Otherwise, people have to create a very large dossier.)

Answer: There are not enough certified translators in many languages. The rules should be the same as for official languages, namely, that certification is a complete qualification.

4. **A Russian translator** *told a story about inventors needing to get a patent. The point was: just how good is the certification process?*

Ken Larose: CTTIC is working on improvements, and could be working much more effectively if it had some of the money that AILIA has been getting.

5. **Question:** How much official languages and non-official languages (multilingual) translation is there in the Bureau?

Donald Barabé: The proportion is about 98% official languages and 2% other.

Second question: There are definite shortcomings in the standard—it is about the process only, not about quality. The Standard says a BA or certification is needed, but what percentage of the translators in a business should be certified, according to the standard?

Answer: Since it is not stated, it must be 100%.

Comments: The Translation Bureau now focuses on quantity, not quality.

Donald Barabé responded.

6. **Gerald Yan:** The Translation Bureau has an inventory of qualified translators. He is in it. Why is he not getting any work?

Donald Barabé *asked him to talk to him later.*

Questions and Answers

7. **Barbara Schultz:** *Ms. Schultz is a multilingual translator at the Bureau and also works freelance. We are focusing on the certification of individual translators, but this standard is about certification of the process. Who is AILIA and what are they doing?*

Ken Larose: AILIA was founded as part of the Language Industry Initiative by Industry Canada to create a “sector council” such as other industries have. It needed to be broader than just translation, so the technical suppliers and schools were also included. It had five years of funding, which ended in May 2008. The large companies wanted a foot in the door.

8. **Question:** What is ATIO doing about the standard in order to protect members and help clients make the right choices?

Ken Larose: Yes, there is confusion. “Certification” is the word used by the CGSB for its standards, but it has been ATIO’s word since the act was passed. He has done a lot of yelling at the meetings.

Second question: What about the relative positions of AILIA and ATIO in all of this?

Ken Larose: There are a few things that can be done: ATIO could withdraw from AILIA; there may be a need for a grandfather clause to stay on Bureau lists without certification to the new standard. ATIO will keep making noise.

9. **Antonio Sanz Moral:** There is an increasing focus on speed in translation. Perhaps a “sight translation” should be added to the exam.

Answer: that question is not relevant to the discussion of the standard, and should be directed to the ATIO AGM, to be forwarded to CTTIC committee.

Your New Board for 2009-2010

*By Catherine Bertholet
Translation Lise Cloutier, C. Tran.*

On April 25, 2009, ATIO held its Annual General Meeting and elected a new Board of Directors.

The newly elected Board members are:

Nancy McInnis	President
Yuri Geifman	Vice-President
Marco Fiola	Secretary-Treasurer
Barbara Collishaw	Director, Salaried Translators
Denis Bousquet	Director, Independent Translators
Dorothy Charbonneau	Director, Conference Interpreters
Marco Fiola	Director, Terminologists
Yuri Geifman	Director, Court Interpreters
Elisa Paoletti	Director, Foreign Languages

Congratulations to all!

Salute to 25-Year Members

The following members joined ATIO in 1984 and have seen the Association through the ensuing quarter-century.

Congratulations!

Denis Bastien, *Translator*
André Côté, *Translator*
Louise Côté Limbos, *Conference Interpreter and Translator*
Margaret Craig-Bourdin, *Translator*
Marici Dillon, *Translator*
Nicole Frederick, *Translator*
Catherine Gautry, *Translator*
Frédérique Herel, *Translator*
Christine Klein-Lataud, *Translator*
Sharon Winkler Moren, *Translator*
Elizabeth Rahman, *Translator*
Barbara Schultz, *Translator*
Lucy Segatti, *Translator*
Marguerite Séguin, *Translator*
Josée Vidal, *Translator*

The CAN/CGSB 131 Translation Services Standard—A Freelancer’s Perspective

By Alexandra Scott, C. Tran.

Many of you will have noticed that one of the topics addressed at the recent ATIO AGM was the new national standard for translation services in Canada, namely, CAN/CGSB- 131.10 – 2008. If you happen to be one of the hundred or so ATIO members that took the opportunity to attend the AGM, you will recall the interesting and informative presentations on the subject of the standard, delivered by Denis Bousquet, CTTIC President, Ken Larose, former President of both ATIO and CTTIC, and Donald Barabé, Vice-President, Professional Services of the Translation Bureau, and the panel discussion that followed.

These presentations drove home the fact that this new standard may result in unwelcome developments in our profession.

In order to learn more about the standard, I attended a post-conference workshop at Translation World, a conference held mid-May in Toronto. The workshop was presented by representatives from Orion Assessment Services of Canada Inc., the company that was selected by Language Industry Association/*Association de l’industrie de la langue* (more commonly referred to as AILIA), to conduct the certification of companies and individuals under the standard.

As pointed out by Ken Larose at the ATIO AGM, this use of the word “certification” is rather unfortunate, as it threatens to lead to confusion in the marketplace between certified translators, on the one hand, and companies that obtain certification under the standard, on the other.

The standard does not require translation services to be provided by certified translators. Section 3.2 of the standard describes the “competences” that translators are required to have, to comply with the standard. These are:

- a. linguistic and textual competence in the source language and the target language
- b. research competence
- c. cultural competence and
- d. technical competence

These “competences” are further described in the relevant section, which continues, at subsection 3.2.2, to state the following:

“The above competences shall be acquired through one or more of the following, unless otherwise specified ... :

- a. an undergraduate or higher degree in translation
- b. Professional designation as a certified translator”

Since the criteria above may be met by a translator with either a degree or certification, it is clear that the standard does not support the system of certifying translators under the ATIO process, which requires a degree or a combination of a translation degree or degree in another field plus a number of years of experience, and successful completion of the exam set by CTTIC.

One of the stated goals of the AILIA standardization drive was to overcome the fragmentation of the translation market. However, the skills required under subsection 3.2.2. may be waived if the agreement between the supplier and client so specifies. The rationale behind this loophole is that it reflects the lack of certified translators in Canada, especially for rare language combinations. In practice however it will allow companies to assert that their services comply with an objective standard while allowing them to avoid complying with the central requirement under subsection 3.2.2. It is clear that one of the main goals in developing and promoting the standard is to provide translation service providers with a competitive advantage that may well be illusory.

One of the most alarming aspects of the promotion of this standard is the fact that the largest federal government department, namely Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), is required to adhere to Canadian standards if they exist. If forced to adopt CAN/CGSB- 131.10 – 2008, PWGSC would then require suppliers, including individual translators, to obtain certification at a cost of at least \$2,300. Since the loophole described above is evidence that certified translators that are ATIO members will not be on a level playing field with companies that obtain certification under the standard, we should ensure that ATIO-certified translators are exempt from any such PWGSC requirement, and in a spirit of solidarity, encourage certified translators in other provinces to obtain exemption as well.

The Creighton Douglas Bursary Fund

By *Hélène Gélinas-Surprenant, C. Tran., C. Term. ATIO Foundation Vice President*
Translation *Ken Larose, C. Tran.*

Following the death of Creighton Douglas in 2005, the ATIO Foundation established a bursary in tribute to the memory of a language professional who devoted so many hours of his time over the years to ATIO and CTTIC affairs. The Foundation's intent was to create an endowment fund that would generate enough interest to become self-sustaining.

However, for the Foundation to be exempt from a Canada Revenue Agency requirement for 80% of all donations received during any given year to be disbursed, donors must sign a form that allows the Foundation to invest the money received for a minimum period of ten (10) years. This would allow the Foundation to accumulate enough funds to generate the amounts needed to award the Creighton Douglas bursaries in perpetuity. Otherwise, almost the full amount of donations would have to be given out in the year they are received.

The ATIO Foundation therefore needs instructions from every donor to the Creighton Douglas Bursary Fund in order to meet the Canada Revenue Agency requirement. Past donors receiving the CRA form are asked to complete it and send it as soon as possible to the ATIO Foundation¹. Beginning in 2010, this form will be sent along with the ATIO membership renewal documents and donors will simply need to mail the completed signed form along with their donation.

The Foundation is grateful to ATIO members for their contributions to its bursary and award programs, including the Creighton Douglas Bursary. Your generosity contributes to our support of future generations of language professionals.

¹ ATIO Foundation, 1 Nicholas St., Suite 1202,
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7

Calendar of Events

✓ JULY 2009

July 9-10, 2009: 3rd Conference of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS)

Mediation and Conflict: Translation and Culture in a Global Context

Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

Information: <http://www.foxevents.com.au/Current-Events/2009-Events/IATIS-Conference/Default.asp>

✓ AUGUST 2009

August 18-20, 2009: 12th International Conference on Translation Malaysia

Penang, Malaysia

Information: <http://www.ppm-mta.com/portal/>

✓ SEPTEMBER 2009

September 11-13, 2009: Conference "Interpreting the Future"

Berlin, Germany

Information: <http://www.uebersetzen-in-die-zukunft.de/>

September 14-16, 2009: Conference and exhibition of the Globalization and Localization Association

Cancun, Mexico

Information: <http://www.gala-global.org/>



**The Board of Directors
of the Association of
Translators and Interpreters
of Ontario regrettably
announces the death of**

Louise Perry

ATIO certified member
(conference interpreting)
since 1990

**The Board of Directors
of the Association of
Translators and Interpreters
of Ontario regrettably
announces the death of**

Manon Pineault

ATIO certified member
(translation)
since 1999

ATIO Presents at the Translation Bureau's NeXus Roundtable on the Professionalization of Translation

By Elisa Paoletti, C. Tran., Director, Foreign Translators

Last year, NeXus, the youth network of the Translation Bureau (TB), launched a series of talks revolving around the theme "The Professionalization of Translation."

The first presentation was given by Stephen Baker, a former TB vice-president, who emphasized the idea that professionalization has to come from us, the people who make up the profession.

Later, Donald Barabé, Vice-President of Professional Services, detailed the actions that the TB has been undertaking to boost the image of translators as professionals. He admitted that our status is not as high as that of doctors, accountants and lawyers. He also said that we have to make the public aware of the risks involved in assigning a translation to someone who is not properly qualified.

In the third presentation, Jocelyne Doyle-Rodrigue, Vice-President of Client Services, detailed a few of the strategies that the TB is implementing to increase the perception of professionalization among clients, such as having dedicated translators working at the client's site.

Finally, on April 21, 2009, the series closed with a roundtable to which the professional associations were especially invited. They were represented by Barbara Collishaw, ATIO Director of Salaried Translators and a TB reviser at Parliamentary Debates, and OTTIAQ President Anne-Marie De Vos.

Both representatives first gave an overview of each association, with emphasis on translators. Barbara Collishaw also said that ATIO members are professionals by law, as stated in the *ATIO Act*. ATIO's admission requirements and other elements, such as the Code of Ethics and the Discipline Committee, ensure that members have the utmost professional competence. Anne-Marie De Vos later shared with us anecdotes of people approaching OTTIAQ wanting to know how they can become translators without having the basic skills required. She pointed out a brochure that OTTIAQ has

developed to inform people and colleagues what being a certified translator involves.

A lively question-and-answer period ensued:

Q: Most salaried translators are not certified. Why should they be since it is not a requirement for employment?

A: Certification enhances your professionalism and, regardless of the employer requirements, it is something you take with you; it proves your credentials and standing in the profession.

Q: As a certified salaried translator, why should I keep my membership as, again, it is not required by the employer and dues have to be paid by the employee?

A: As said before, certification is yours to keep; it shows you have pride in the profession, and it can help you find other job opportunities later on.

Q: What is the difference between being a member of OTTIAQ and a member of ATIO?

A: The main differences are in the admission requirements: OTTIAQ admits members by dossier only, while ATIO offers both exam and on-dossier admission. Also, ATIO dues are lower than OTTIAQ's. There are members who belong to both and pay dues to each of them.

After having attended all these presentations, I would like to add that we, as language professionals, are perfectly aware that knowing two or more languages is not enough to perform our job, but as we sadly witness time and again, this is not a view shared by the general public. Being a certified member, promoting certification and educating others about our profession are definitely sound steps towards earning professional recognition from the general public.

Ethics 101

By Michel Trahan, C. Tran.

Translation Carole Dolan, C. Tran.

As a language professional, do you know your limits? Sometimes, disclosing information is clearly inappropriate: for example, a court interpreter assigned to a case held behind closed doors cannot discuss what is going on or being said as though it were a simple conversation on a Byward Market patio over drinks with a few friends. Similarly, you may be translating an interesting document for a private company and burning to discuss its details during a conversation on the same topic, but hold back, especially if the information is confidential or even more sensitive than that. A competitor might be nearby and could use what you say against your client.

If you find yourself translating a document that forces you to look up every other word, it may be that the topic is simply not suitable for you. Before you agreed to take it on, perhaps you could have looked it over to determine whether it should be assigned to someone more familiar with the field.

Do not claim to be something you are not. If you have not been certified through an examination or file review, do not try to imply otherwise. Certified members are very proud of their status and definitely take issue with people who use a title they have not earned. Furthermore, certification in English to French translation does not mean you can use your title to translate in the other direction.

In every case, you must apply professional ethics and logic. Exercise your profession honestly, showing respect for your clients and colleagues. If you are self-employed, clearly spell out your terms and conditions at the outset. Avoid springing any unpleasant surprises on your clients (such as unplanned costs) or they might not be yours for long, and the image that results will reflect negatively on you and your colleagues.

As members of ATIO, you must set an example. Whenever you send an email for any reason to anyone, whether or not they know who you are, be sure that your message is free of mistakes, especially if you include your title. Although for me this is a matter of personal pride, the image of my profession is also at stake.

What about the ATIO seal? The written word lasts, and seals last too. The ATIO seal may not be affixed to a translation performed by anyone other than the seal holder. If you have a seal, keep it in your possession, locked up if necessary.

Are you in a conflict of interest? If you are self-employed and sleep in the same bed as a person who supplies you with work, you may be. What do you think? Even the outward appearance of a conflict of interest is reason enough to correct the situation.

Lastly, when new translators or students turn to you for advice or answers to questions, do not try to avoid them. Do not run away. At the least, do your best to pass on your knowledge. All they ask is to benefit from your experience, and the lesson will not be wasted.

**ATIO takes this opportunity to thank the
sponsor of the 2009 Annual General Meeting
and Professional Development Day**



Insurance

Meloche Monnex

CERTIFIED THROUGH CTIC TRANSLATION EXAMINATION

English-French
Braud, Raphaël

CERTIFIED ON DOSSIER IN TRANSLATION

English-French
Lévesque, Lise

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ATIO Secretariat Summer Hours

From June 26 to August 28, 2009, the office will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

A Few Words on Court Interpreting

By Yuri Geifman, C. Tran., C. Crt. Int., Vice-President, Director, Court Interpreters

For the benefit of those who do not understand the difference between translating and interpreting: a translator works with written language, while an interpreter works with the spoken word. The basic requirements are the same—proficiency in both the source and the target languages, knowledge of the subject matter, ability to focus and formulate one's thoughts clearly and concisely, etc., but this is where the similarities end. Where translators have all the time in the world to research an unfamiliar term or polish their style (obviously, I'm not talking about crazy deadlines and fingers worn down to the bone from frantic typing), interpreters must think on their feet, sometimes demonstrating mental agility that can only be compared to a life-or-death fencing match or a world-class ping pong game.

The ethical requirements in translation and interpreting are also similar—both the translator and the interpreter have to render the meaning of the source material in the target language faithfully, both have to be competent professionals, know the subject matter, never undertake something they are not competent enough to handle, protect the confidentiality of the material and the privacy of their client, etc.

An additional requirement for court interpreters is to be familiar with the legal jargon to the extent that they are able to provide a whispered simultaneous interpretation of testimony or of lawyers' submissions so that the client is always aware of what is going on in the courtroom. Court interpreters must also be familiar with court etiquette and procedures and know how to handle themselves in any situation. This is especially true in criminal court where the accused often tend to look at the interpreter as their friend, since the interpreter might be the first person they have come in contact with in a long time who understands their language. In family court, especially when people are fighting over custody of their children, tempers flare and emotional stress skyrockets, yet the court interpreter must remain cool, focused and alert in the middle of any storm. Often overlooked and underappreciated, mostly overworked and underpaid, we are a small but crucial wheel in the Ontario justice system, which is only made conspicuous by its absence—or when someone lacking the proper skills and professional qualifications tries to do our job.