

DOSSIER OF EVIDENCE

VOLUME 2

Capita Translation and Interpreting (TI)

(Formerly Applied Language Solutions)

Instances of failure to supply interpreters or to comply
with the Ministry of Justice contract and
Framework Agreement

Volume 2: 1st February – 30 September 2013
Volume 1 (01/02/12 – 31/01/13) is available on request

Prepared by

involvis
empowering communities

Background

The reports contained within this dossier describe justice sector interpreting failures from 1st February 2013. This is the second year of the Ministry of Justice's Framework Agreement and contract with Capita Translation and Interpreting (formerly Applied Language Solutions) and the variety of failures reported span the following complaints:

- Failing to supply an interpreter
- Supplying under-qualified interpreters
- Providing interpreters with no legal or criminal experience
- Providing interpreters without assessments
- Providing interpreters with inappropriate Tier allocations
- Providing interpreters without CRB checks
- Unethical practices by CapitaTI and its linguists
- Breaches of the Ministry of Justice Framework Agreement (FWA)

Evidence has been compiled from various sources including:

- Online at <http://rpsi.name/default>
- Online at <http://www.linguistlounge.org>
- Via Twitter.com
- The Professional Interpreters against MoJ outsourcing in GB [Facebook Group](#)
- Witnessed reports by public service interpreters present at court hearings
- Reports passed on by members of professional interpreters' representative bodies, including APCI, SPSI and PIA
- Reports from solicitors, barristers, judges
- Court correspondents and press articles

Further Information

If you would like any more information regarding the cases discussed within this dossier please contact:

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September 2013

24/09/2013

Carlisle County Court

Details (from Twitter): Polish-English interpreter Carlisle, anyone? Help! Carlisle County Court [interpreter] hasn't turned up, legally-aided 2-day civil hearing.

20/09/2013

Thames Magistrate Court:

Details (from Twitter) 'Interpreter' at Thames Magistrates had to be told 4 times to interpret what was being said. Oh and now a 5th time!

20/09/2013

Canterbury Crown Court

Details: Call from Canterbury Crown Court this afternoon (19 September) for attendance tomorrow 20th of Sept 2013.

Accepted booking. The NRPSI has come to their rescue again.

18/09/2013

Court tbc

Details: A Youth sex offence TRIAL has not been able to proceed as no interpreter present. Witnesses & lawyers sent on their way!

16/09/2013

Swindon Magistrates Court

Details: Client at PS with Polish interpreter. Charged and remanded to Court. No interpreter booked. Court tries to get one from Capita. None available. Client remanded in custody as could not take instructions to make bail application. Next day, interpreter attended but client not produced from prison. Back again tomorrow. Trying again.

16th September 2013 - first hearing

17th September 2013 - failure to produce

16/09/2013

Swindon Magistrates' Court

Details: For the 2nd time in 2 weeks, Capita fail to sort interpreter for Defendant at Court in custody. 2 remanded due to Gov cutback. Not rare languages either, Lithuanian and Polish. Cheapest is seldom best but HMG don't give a damn when it comes to criminal justice.

14/09/2013

Leeds Crown Court

Details: I interpreted recently for a CPS witness at Leeds Crown Court whose evidence was torn into pieces by the defence barrister because he had given his original statement to the police in English without an interpreter. The statement was taken by the police in West Yorkshire. West Yorkshire Police have been using ALS/Capita for interpreting and translation services for almost two years now.

The defence barrister said he would refuse to accept the witness's account unless he gave it in English. So I was asked to step down and let the witness talk to him and the jury in English which did not work for a second. His English was so basic; he could understand some of the questions but was unable to say a word in English. Still the police thought his English was good enough to give a statement without an interpreter. It also became clear that although he spoke some basic English, he could not read or write English at all. It turned out the police literally wrote up a statement for him and asked him to sign it. He admitted he could not read what he had signed and he also said he had asked for an interpreter but they had to rearrange the appointment 3 times because of lack of an interpreter so in the end he agreed to do it without one.

11/09/2013

Winchester Crown Court

Case: R v Bagocuis & Gribenas

Listed for a video link preliminary hearing and bail application

The court had failed to book an interpreter.

Delayed until 17/9 and further remanded in custody.

10/09/2013

City of London Magistrates'

Details: Waiting for an interpreter..... When my interpreter finally arrived she was rude and failed to interpret! Anyone know how I can make a formal complaint to Capita? Shouted that she didn't work for the defence then walked away without interpreting! It's just the sheer lack of understanding of the court system that I find so infuriating!!

09/09/2013

Dartford Magistrates' Court

Details: NRPSI Kurdish interpreter booked by CPS attended Dartford Magistrates' Court for a trial in May 2013, which was adjourned because the Slovak Capita interpreter did not show up. The case was re-listed for trial on 09/09/13 at 9:30 am. All were present and ready on the morning in question, including the Slovak Capita interpreter. However, the trial could not proceed as the Capita interpreter told the court at 10am that she had to attend another case at Fox Court. She left at lunch time, giving the court no option but to adjourn again – this time to 20/01/14. Savings? None whatsoever.

05/09/2013

Lincoln Crown Court

Details: Case: Aleksandrs Meduneckis, T20137169

A Russian interpreter didn't turn up for a preliminary hearing for a case of a serious allegation of rape. The defendant in custody had to follow court proceedings via a video link without an interpreter. The defence was unable to communicate with the client properly so he was unable to indicate a plea. As there was no interpreter in court, the judge agreed that at the next hearing the defendant may still exercise his right to full credit if he pleads guilty.

The account was narrated by a legal representative from CDA Solicitors in Boston. I attended Lincoln Prison with them today to interpret for their client and explain what had happened at the hearing.

05/09/2013

Plymouth Magistrates Court

Details:

"I have just been chatting with a solicitor from Plymouth who advised me that - for the third time - they (i.e. Magistrates Court in Plymouth, solicitors etc.) were waiting for an Arabic interpreter and for the third time nobody turned up this morning.

Previously they were more "successful" - they had interpreters from Wales and Birmingham (in Plymouth)!

05/09/2013

Portsmouth

I WAS OFFERED TO ATTEND PORTSMOUTH MAGISTRATES COURT BY WESSEX TRANSLATIONS

03/09/2013

ILCC

Details: Two interpreters needed (one for each side), neither attended, trial adjourned from Sep till Jan – vulnerable witnesses and defendant in custody.

02/09/2013

Bradford Crown Court

Details: Today, no interpreter for trial until 2pm. Following conferences with 2 Defendants, no court time so adj to tomorrow. Not available till 2. Which means no evidence called today so I don't get a trial fee; and whole day of court time, and half day tomorrow wasted (reported by Counsel).

August 2013

30/08/2013

Northampton Crown Court

Details: Slovakian man in court. No interpreter here (of course). Judge speaking VERY loudly and VERY slowly. Worked a treat

30/08/2013

Derby Crown Court

Details: Court requested interpreter for 10am hearing. Told interpreter not available until 12.15pm. Two members of YOT and myself all waiting.

30/08/2013

Location tbc

Details: 5th occasion in single serious case when interpreter booked but didn't attend. 3 ineffective PCMHs & 2 ineffective sentences. Counsel unable to claim loss of earnings entirely thru fault of Capita or the c£600 wasted travel costs rendering the brief worse than worthless. I am now paying for the privilege of wasted days.

30/08/2013

Canterbury Crown Court

Details: Canterbury CC booked interpreter outside of contract (direct booking) for hearing on 02/09/2013. They did have a Capita interpreter present at the court (from Birmingham!) for the previous hearing – they refused to go down with the barrister because they were only going to get paid for the 15 minute hearing. The judge got angry and told the interpreter that if they were to leave the court building without having helped the barrister they would bve arrested!

29/08/2013

Principal registry of the family division

Details: In my case today 3 interpreters turned up for one client. Two had to be discharged. This Capita court interpreter thing is working a treat.

29/08/2013

Principal Registry of the Family Division

Details: Two court appointed Capita interpreters turned up for same case (which was listed under two case numbers). Client already had an interpreter arranged by her solicitor so we had three in total for one client.

28/08/2013

Bradford Tribunal

Details: Capita unable to provide Polish interpreter for Bradford today. Tribunals Panel ringing professional interpreters to bail them out.

28/08/2013

Police Station, North Yorkshire

Details: I am sitting at a police station in North Yorkshire at the moment - guy has been arrested because he did not have an interpreter in court and did not understand that he was put on the register of sex offenders for 7 years (me and his solicitor just explained it to him, he did not even know what the register was) and subsequently he had no idea that he would have had to attend a police station to sign on. Many cases are now heard without an interpreter. But is it really saving money when it leads to misunderstanding, further arrests and complications and potentially puts other people at risk?

25/08/2013

Trinity Road Police Station, Bristol

Details: A PC from Trinity Road Police Station in Bristol called me on Sunday 25th August/Monday 26th August (BH) around midnight to book an interpreter for the following morning (BH Monday 26th) for the court appearance. I asked them why they had to book an interpreter directly (and not Capita). They advised that they book interpreters directly for all detainees who are remanded to appear in court the following day. I asked them who would be responsible for the payment but they were not sure (but said that I should turn up with the police claim form and just ask the court staff to sign). Does it mean that the police is paying for interpreters when Capita is unable to provide one?

22/08/2013

Burnley Crown Court

Details: Booked to interpret for the solicitor for a sentencing hearing. Court interpreter did not turn up. They don't know if they asked for one. I was asked to interpret. I refused and explained to the barrister the reasons why who in turn explained to the judge. They both expressed their understanding

22/08/2013

Location tbc (Central Bedfordshire)

Details: 1st time in court w/ an able & efficient barrister. Managed to remove the lousy court interpreter for more competent one. Interesting experience.

22/08/2013

Lincoln County Court

Details: Two Portuguese interpreters booked by court for a 2 day care case. Supplied by ALS. 1 interpreter very good; 1 poor and could not cope with interpreting evidence. He was eventually sent away. Both interpreters had been booked by ALS only for the 1st day and had other commitments on the 2nd. ALS asked to supply an alternative for day 2. Failed to do so (court informed about 10am on day 2). Case therefore could not finish on day 2 and had to go into the following day, when an interpreter was available.

20/08/2013

Location tbc

Details: No interpreter for part heard trial so they took my interpreter from client in police station waiting for virtual court. New one booked 1.45

20/08/2013

Kingston Crown Court

Details: Two day Robbery trial with an Afghan Defendant. No Pashtun Interpreter arrived for the first day and the victim was told he only needed to attend on the second day. A whole day wasted! On day 2, the Interpreter arrived at 10:45!

15/08/2013

Chatham Magistrates Court

Details: Court called me at 9.30am to attend the same day by noon

15/08/2013

Leicester Crown Court

Details: Had the nightmare yesterday of Gujarati interp translating Defendant's English into English. I kid you not. When will this end !!!

15/08/2013

Leicester Crown Court

Details: 2pm hearing. No Hungarian interpreter. Four defendants, four counsel, judge all waiting. Apparently she is running late and due at 1500.

14/08/2013

Kent Police

Details: Czech defendant produced having been remanded by @kentpoliceshp. No interpreter despite @kentpoliceshp arranging one with #ALS.

13/08/2013

Westminster Magistrates' Court

Details: A Lithuanian interpreter was required – one was present for the first hearing in March, but none has attended for hearings subsequently, in May and in June. These hearings have had to be explained to the Defendant via telephone thanks to a Lithuanian speaker in the solicitors' offices. An interpreter was booked for today, but by 2.30pm had still not attended when the case was called on. The court clerk contacted the interpreter section in the admin office and we waited in court for 15 minutes for an update, but none could be obtained since Capita were not answering the phone! Since a conference and a 1 hour hearing were required, it was decided not to waste any more time today and to adjourn. The next available date is in October. The client remains on stringent bail conditions which are restricting his ability to travel, and the hours in which he seeks work.

12/08/2013

North Kent Magistrates'

Details: I had a call on 12th of August from North Kent Magistrates for a booking on the same day at 2pm. I live 1 hour and 30 min away

12/08/2013

Exeter Magistrates' Court

Details: Capita were unable to provide an interpreter so the court called me directly

09/08/2013

St Anne Street Police Station, Liverpool

Details: Client arrested for minor public order offence Friday evening 2015hrs. Sgt advises Capita cannot send Tamil interpreter until 11am the next day! When one does arrive he does not speak same dialect.

09/08/2013

St Albans Crown Court

Details: Judge HHJ Gullick (case number T20127398). We are on day 15 of a trial. The regular interpreter was unable to attend. Yesterday (at about 2pm) Capita asked to send replacement Albanian interpreter. One not provided. Unable to proceed with trial. Capita called an hour after jury sent away and said they could now get an interpreter to court.

05/08/2013

Grimsby Crown Court

Details: Romanian interpreter booked for 9am still hadn't turned up by 4pm

02/08/ 2013

Croydon Magistrates Court

Details: No interpreter had attended for sentence, court had to arrange an interpreter, did not arrive at court until 2pm.

July 2013

31/07/2013

Guildford Magistrates' Court

Details: The defendant, a 13 year old charged with sexual offences, is Bulgarian. The court had, in error, booked a Hungarian interpreter. A Bulgarian interpreter could not be found before lunch so the trial was adjourned (reported by Barrister).

30/07/2013

Chelmsford Magistrates' Court

Details: Interpreter supposed to attend for trial to start at 12 noon. Interpreter informed court couldn't get there till 2pm. In fact turned up at 2.24pm. (reported by solicitor)

30/07/2013

Aylesbury Crown Court

Details: Sex trial hearing aborted as no interpreter. Day 2 of 2nd listing interpreter fails to attend: "dental appt". Victim in mid evidence. Outrage (reported by lawyer)

30/07/2013

Westminster

Details: Court delays: so far, we've only been waiting for an interpreter since 2pm. Capita sent an Albanian interpreter rather than Italian. Oops.

30/07/2013

Leicester Crown Court

Details: No hungarian interpreter yesterday. None this morning (reported by Counsel)

29/07/2013

Croydon Magistrates' Court

Details: Case adjourned because there was no Portuguese interpreter

29/07/2013

Bristol Civil Justice Centre

Details: Urdu court interpreter didn't show up for court hearing at 2pm - court were informed that morning that the interpreter would not be attending but no replacement was available

26/07/2013

Leicester Crown Court

Details: No afghan interpreter. None available (reported by Barrister)

25/07/2013

Harrow Crown Court

Details: No interpreter attended. Defendant does not understand any English. Told no interpreter asked for because the case was only listed for mention, albeit defendant was required to attend.

25/07/2013

Croydon Magistrates' Court

Details: Capita sends Tamil Interpreter to local Magistrates' Court for breach of bail, arrives 5pm, 24 hour time limit expired, released. Serious offence.

24/07/2013

Portsmouth Crown Court

Details: R v Addey. 3 x Crown Witnesses, Defendant, 2 barristers, judge, court staff and jury in waiting all ready to go. No interpreter despite one being booked by the court and it being double checked by Defence. So the whole day was wasted while we waited for one to come. Meanwhile the barristers tried to agree evidence, and explored other ways of the case being shortened by way of alternative pleas.

In the end a two day case was turned into a three day case, purely because of no interpreter.

22/07/2013

Central Criminal Court

Details: Preliminary Hearing – Pre-con booked for 10am. Interpreter turns up at 10.30am. Says Court booked her for 10.30am. Hearing went ahead before had a chance to speak to client. This was his first ever Crown Court experience in a serious money laundering case.

22/07/2013

Southwark Crown Court

Details: A solicitor told me that an interpreter translated 'i want to tell the truth' as 'i want to plead guilty'. (Reported by Barrister)

22/07/2013

Peterborough Magistrates' Court

Details: Just had a call from Peterborough M/C as Capita couldn't provide a Tamil interpreter.

22/07/2013

Isleworth Crown Court

Details: Still waiting for an interpreter at Isleworth CC.....interpreter eventually arrived 2.00pm but then had to share him with another court - a case that was listed 1015 concluded 1600

16/07/2013

Kingston Crown Court

Details: Diogo Barbosa - Court 12. Capita Portuguese interpreter could not interpret properly for defence witness so trial had to be delayed for Court to find a qualified interpreter. Listing office called at 12 o'clock asking me to be in court at 2:00 pm. Listing officer, usher and judge were "extremely grateful that I could attend at such short notice". Witness was delighted that a "proper" interpreter was able to attend.

15/07/2013

Exeter Magistrates' Court

Details: Case of Damian Filipek - I was booked by CPS to interpret for a domestic violence victim. As the victim was giving evidence from behind the screen, we could hear the defendant making comments about the victim to the Capita interpreter. They were also chatting about it. Moreover, the defendant was making threatening comments to the victim. Capita interpreter did not interpret or alert the court about any of that

12/07/2013

Canterbury Crown Court

Details: Canterbury Crown Court was trying to book Janine Wood, RPSI 11773 directly, on Friday 12.07.13 for a fixed trial (Death by dangerous driving) to start on 15.07.13. Janine was not in a position to take the job.

10/07/2013

London Crown Court

Details: We have been continuously using an interpreter in London CC from Barnsley, because we either got no one or a shambolic situation not worth mentioning ... "Really prudent saving by the system" (reported by criminal lawyer)

09/07/2013

Leamington Spa Crown Court

Details: Defendant in robbery trial not produced from custody. Then no Punjabi interpreter for witness. Capita claim on telephone to CPS that no booking has been made. This is clearly not correct, because they later send an e-mail giving the exact details of the booking as the subject heading! They say they only have 2 Punjabi interpreters, one of whom is busy and the other cannot be found (!). It is suggested that the interpreter cannot attend before 12 noon the following day because he/she is based 100 miles away. Options offered are that the interpreter could be available at "around 12" the following day or else a possibility that another could be found who might be available for 10.15am.
Identity of defendant withheld – case not concluded.

08/07/2013

St Albans Crown Court

Details: Romanian interpreter booked for two courts at same time. This was a PVL case with the normal 15 minute slots. The slot was missed and the court stood idle for at least 20 minutes.

When the interpreter became available for my case some 45 minutes after the slot was due to start, the delay getting in to court was over 50 minutes. At this time the court list was very busy and following the delay the judge refused to hear the sentence until the next day. So interpreter required for next day and court time lost plus next day's list busier than it should be.

08/07/2013

Doncaster Crown Court

Details: Still no interpreter in Doncaster. Witnesses have travelled from Bristol and Swansea, can't start the trial. Breaking for an early lunch. I was prosecuting a trial. The trial was due to start at 10am and was the only case listed in our court. Had the case started on time, it may have run into the afternoon but certainly would have finished comfortably within one day. Both parties were ready to begin promptly at 10am, but the Italian interpreter simply did not arrive. We were never told why.

Eventually the court booked another interpreter, and in fairness the second interpreter arrived very quickly after being contacted and did an excellent job when she arrived. Unfortunately, she did not arrive until 2:30pm and we were unable to finish the trial, which is now part heard. (reported by Barrister)

05/07/2013

Truro Crown Court

Details: (R v Skucas) Lithuanian Interpreter failed to attend PCMH. Court they were attending in the morning over ran. Luckily plea was still taken and adjourned for trial. Client unsure as to exactly what happened. No time lost, just an unhappy client (reported by Solicitor)

05/07/2013

Derby Crown Court

Details: A Czech interpreter for a defendant in cells was not available on two occasions both today and a week earlier.

04/07/2013

Feltham Magistrates' Court

Details: ASAP request for a Polish interpreter received from Feltham Magistrates' Court at 10.50am.

04/07/2013

Wood Green Crown Court

Details: Listed 2pm for sentence for rape and kidnapping. Judge to consider dangerousness. Court notified Capita, 1 month ago, to provide an interpreter for Albanian language. At 1.30 pm no interpreter arrived so informed List office. No information from Capita so the court finds independent interpreter and pays for her to attend court from 'court funds'. Interpreter arrives at 3.30 pm, after 1 hour journey, but has to leave by 4pm so there was no time to do case which was adjourned to end July. By 4.15pm no explanation from Capita. Counsel receive payment as follows; Prosecution £46 gross. Defence counsel x2 £0 – also gross.

04/07/2013

Medway Magistrates' Court

Details: No Punjabi interpreter. Accura translations doing the job looking for an interpreter.

04/07/2013

Woolwich Crown Court

Details: Big human trafficking case requiring a Slovak interpreter. Day 1, case adjourned as no interpreter. Day 2, interpreter booked for 10.30. At 11.50 court calls him, he says he's experiencing train problems at London Bridge. Judge furious: Nobody has reported any train problems coming in this morning and most people use London Bridge to go to Woolwich. Meanwhile the court has decided to go ahead with the case without an interpreter, or at least to cover admin bits that aren't desperately relevant to the defendants (time tables, missing bits of the files etc.) One of the defendants who speaks English is asked to act as an interpreter for the other(s). Yes, you read that correctly.

Interpreter arrives very late (can't remember what time) and the Judge says: "Aha! The Interpreter. I'll deal with you in a moment." Then they finish the admin discussion and the officer leaves the room so he couldn't tell me how the judge dealt with the interpreter.

02/07/2013

Basildon Crown Court

Details: Trial at Basildon adjourned today as no Lithuanian interpreters available: 3 required, all Defendants in custody.

01/07/2013

Isleworth Crown Court

Details: R v Miah. Listed at 10.30am for committal for sentence. Defence wrote to the court 10 days earlier to inform of need for Bengali interpreter for the defendant. At 11.15 we were informed that Capita were 'still trying to book an interpreter'. At 12 noon we were informed that one would be at court for 2pm. Interpreter arrived at 2.15pm (booked I believe through a different agency in the end).

The trial behind us was late starting in the morning as a result, and then lost the first 1 1/4 hours approx. of their afternoon when we finally did the sentence. Two counsel, a defendant, and the complainant who had attended to see the sentence had to wait 4 hours to start the hearing.

01/07/2013

Court TBC

Details: One (interpreter) turned up at 10.15, the other at 10.45 - not particularly great considering both advocates at court for 9.30. Mine did not know i might want to see mine before trial started, asked some very silly questions - asked me in front of client whether the member of the jury would be the same throughout the whole trial or whether there would be different jurors each day and then did not know how to translate "crowbar" so I had to resort to drawing a picture for the client so he understood what i was talking about.... that and don't get me started on the failure to translate word for work.

June 2013

29/06/2013

Camberwell Green Magistrates' Court

Details: Case was a first appearance. Client was Romanian and did not speak English. He had been uncooperative at the police station and refused to be interviewed. He was eventually seen by a solicitor and an interpreter but had been charged before then owing to time limits. When I arrived at court and collected the papers I enquired with the police liaison officer whether an interpreter had been booked. The reply came that the defendant had shown such command of English profanity (I paraphrase) in the police station that the police decided he would not require an interpreter at court.

I saw the client in the cells and of course he could barely speak any English. I explained the position to the bench and the matter had to be adjourned until Tuesday as the client was to be taken to another part of the country on Monday in any case to answer a charge there. Luckily the client also spoke some Italian and one of the bench spoke fluent Italian and could explain to him what would happen.

28/06/2013

Southwark Crown Court

Details: R -v- Loaiza Gomes, Preliminary Hearing. Court had booked an interpreter but none attended. In the event the delay was only about 1.5 hours because (i) the CPS had not prepared an indictment so no progress could be made in any event and (ii) the defendant's family assisted in translation: however, had the hearing been a PCMH it would had to be adjourned.

28/06/13

Basildon Crown Court

Details: R v Zelenas. Case had been adjourned from the 24.06.13 when the defendant was produced in custody but no interpreter was provided. This time the interpreter was provided but the def was not produced from custody.

28/06/2013

Exeter Magistrates' Court

Details: Capita yet again were not able to provide a Polish interpreter for the court for 10am (the defendant had spent 2 days in custody by then) so the listing officer called me at approx. 11.40am to request my services (RPSI)

27/06/2013

Blackfriars Crown Court

Details: Court 3. 27th June. Trial part heard last night to continue at 10.00 this morning. Interpreter fails to reappear. Enquiries reveal he's double booked and gone to the magistrates' somewhere. Replacement interpreter arrives at 12.00!

27/06/2013

Snaresbrook Crown Court.

Details: R v Miah (S.18 GBH). Case listed at 11.30am. Interpreter did not attend until 2pm. This was the 2nd listing for PCMH. At the last hearing no interpreter had been booked by the court. Waiting time 21/2 hrs (case listed at 10am adjourned at 12.30pm).

26/06/2013

Isleworth Crown Court

Details: (Reported by Counsel) Serious case listed for Preliminary hearing (these hearings are largely formalities and on average last 10 minutes maximum). Attended Court at 10.30am for 11 am hearing to be told that the "Hindi interpreter who had been booked had taken an earlier booking which had over run. The court was looking for another interpreter and would book an independent one if necessary". An hour later - when I could not speak to my client save in the most basic terms - mostly about the delay in getting a Hindi speaker. He certainly understood that there wasn't one - the Court informs me that a new Hindi interpreter has been found and will attend at 1.30pm for 2 pm.

I had in the meanwhile asked everyone I could think of at court if they were Hindi speakers in order to see if we could have the hearing dealt with promptly. No-one was able to assist. I mention this only because I was not confident that a Hindi speaking interpreter would be found at short notice.

25/06/2013

Southwark Crown Court

Details: R v Facuna. Two aborted PCMHs due to no interpreter. Credit for delayed guilty plea may be an issue

25/06/2013

Cardiff Crown Court

Details: Multi-complainant rape case in Cardiff Crown Court. Originally listed for five days this trial lasted nine days due to fact that three interpreters supplied were totally inadequate. One broke down on tears in the dock proclaiming he was only a shop keeper. Eventually one was found – a tier one interpreter – not supplied by capita. The trial was nearly aborted due to this. The Defendant eventually received a sentence of life imprisonment.

25/06/2013

Aylesbury Crown Court

Details: Plea and Case Management Hearing (PCMH) at Aylesbury CC listed at 9.45am – Somali client. Interpreter arrives 10.45 having gone to the County Court by mistake – She showed me her booking form from the ‘centralized agency’ which simply gives the address of the court (‘County Hall’ – which is the address of the Crown Court) rather than instructions to attend the Crown Court.

25/06/2013

Maidstone Crown Court

Details: R v Bains at Maidstone Crown Court – at least two hearings where no interpreter attended, including on the day of trial when the booked interpreters did not attend for either the defendants or the alleged victim.

25/06/2013

Cardiff Crown Court

Details: multi-complainant rape case in Cardiff Crown Court. Originally listed for five days this trial lasted nine days due to fact that three interpreters supplied were totally inadequate. One broke down on tears in the dock proclaiming he was only a shop keeper. Eventually one was found – a tier one interpreter – not supplied by capita. The trial was nearly aborted due to this. The Defendant eventually received a sentence of life imprisonment.

24/06/2013

St Albans Crown Court

Details: Case: R v Sabev – no Bulgarian interpreter. PCMH adjourned to another date. 1/2 hr wasted time for Judge & court staff in trying to find out what was happening and then re-bailing the defendant.

24/06/13

Chelmsford Crown Court

Details: R v Gonzales and ORS PCMH. Case listed 11.30
Both interpreters (two) fail to attend. Court arranges for 1 replacement. Case not able to be heard until 14.30. Five counsel, police officer and Judge all kept waiting

24/06/2013

South Tyneside Magistrates'

Details: Defendant name, Krall. Listed for bail application. Produced from prison (no video link) No Hungarian interpreter arrived. Case adjourned for further production on 24 June
Cost of production entirely wasted

24/06/2013

Maidstone Crown Court

Details: Waiting for interpreter to arrive from Birmingham (!) for Vietnamese client who was produced from custody (£800 per production). She arrived at 12pm and was Chinese
Case adjourned a week.

24/06/2013

Oxford Magistrates' Court

Details: Case: R v Suman. Matter due for plea today. Two-handed case adjourned 3 weeks due to lack of interpreter and one defendant now on holiday.

24/06/2013

Blackfriars Crown Court

Details: Case of R v Patel (2 sexual assaults). Listed for trial at 10.30am. Started tannoying for interpreter at 10am. No response. Told by court clerk just before 10.30 that Capita were not sending anyone. Court then booked one through old list and on NRPSI. Delay 1 hour 30 mins.

23/06/2013

Basildon Crown Court

Details: R v Zelenas. Listed for committal for sentence. Interpreter requested by court but none had been provided by capita. Defendant unrepresented. Sentence could not proceed without interpreter. Case had to be adjourned for 4 days to obtain an interpreter.

20/06/2013

City of London Magistrates' Court

Details: I attended City of London Magistrates' Court to represent a Turkish client who had been refused bail at the police station and had attended in custody. At court I met with the officer in the case who asked me if I would ask the client to sign a document relating to the money that was seized from him on arrest. Officer asked court if there was an interpreter coming and they informed that there was not. Court staff said that they had called Capita and they said they were unable to provide a Turkish interpreter. The officer was not happy at all as he was hoping not to have to stay in court for long. His supervisor was not happy about him being at court and needed him elsewhere. The officer asked the court staff where he could make a complaint and the court staff said they had no idea.

The officer then called the interpreter service used by the police who were told that they could get someone to court for 2pm (The court had also called an independent interpreter service who had said they could get someone to court for 3pm). The interpreter arrived at court at 2.30pm. It was not until this time that I could have a conference with client as his English was very poor. The case was eventually heard at 3pm.

17/06/2013

Hatfield Magistrates' Court

Details: I attended Hatfield Magistrates' Court to represent a Romanian defendant who had been refused bail from the police station and who attended court in custody. On arrival at court I was informed that there was no interpreter present. The defendant had a co-defendant whose representative had also attended the police station to represent his client. He informed me that the interpreter who had attended the police station had been asked by police if she could attend the magistrates' court in the morning. She informed them that she couldn't because the court service had to book someone through Capita. Eventually the court informed us that the interpreter would be there at 12pm. The interpreter turned up at about 12.30pm and she was the same interpreter who had been at the police station the night before. She informed me that she suspected she would be asked to attend Hatfield but could not assume until she had been formally requested.

She did not receive a call until Monday morning after she had had to accept another job. She accepted a job at Bexley Heath magistrates and had to finish that before she was able to attend Hatfield Mags. The court had called Capita and they were unable to provide any interpreter. The court then had to call an independent interpreter and that was the one who had eventually attended. The case did not get on until after 3pm as we has gone to the back of the list. I was not able to see the client until 12.30 as he could appeal no English at all.

17/06/2013

Loughborough Court

Details: Videolink booked for 3.15pm at Loughborough Court. Client speaks no English. Interpreter fails to attend. Case bounced over until tomorrow morning - but to be produced at Hinckley as no videolink. Therefore non-attendance not only wasted court time, our time,

and keeps client in limbo without knowing what is going on, but now going to cost £800 to get him to court and more court time and our time. Capita organised interpreter for tomorrow, but they were an hour and 15 minutes late.

03/06/2013

Luton Crown Court

Detail: R -v Adrian Buchert (Polish defendant). Interpreter failed to attend – The only reason why the trial did not have to be aborted was because defendant pleaded guilty and had sufficient understanding of English to do that although he could not have managed a trial without an interpreter.

May 2013

31/05/2013

Guildford Crown Court

Details:

Case listed for sentence. Prosecution & defence counsel, defendant and both complainants were all in attendance by 9.45am. However, the Arabic speaking interpreter was nowhere to be seen.

Capita sent a telephone message via a note to the judge at 10.40am. It explained that the assigned interpreter "had informed Capita last night that he would not be able to attend as he was double booked". Capita left a telephone message that it would be able to provide an interpreter for 2.30pm, some 5 hours after the due time. The defendant was left to wait in custody.

There was no explanation as to:

- i. how the double booking had occurred,
- ii. why the system did not detect it
- iii. why Capita had waited until 10.40am the following morning to make arrangements to provide an interpreter ...

Reported by Barrister, Old Bailey Chambers

31/05/2013

Gloucester Crown Court

Details: 3 Romanian nationals for adjourned PCMH. No interpreter. His Honour Judge Tabor QC was scathing in his comments about Capita.

Reported by Solicitors

31/05/2013 – reported by Barrister

Details: I currently represent a Greek national on serious drugs charges. On four occasions (so far) no interpreter has appeared. I assisted twice but have since refused to be the paper for the cracks in the system. On the 5th occasion Capita failed to provide a Greek (not some obscure Mali dialect) interpreter the court then went direct to an independent one. Obviously the delays and aborted hearings cost more than employing an interpreter now for a whole year full time!

I can also supply details re a Turkish client (attempted murder) where the Capita interpreter had never even been to a court before, had received no training and didn't appreciate they needed to translate everything. I don't know of a single barrister who doesn't think the new system is utterly useless and that standards have fallen with either obvious delays or less obvious slower-running cases.

30/05/2013

Reading Crown Court

Details: A local man who was arrested 6 months after an incident of sexual assault on a train between Maidenhead and Langley denied that he was suspect shown on CCTV in two interviews.

However the official interpreter provided to the police by Applied Language Solutions (now 'Capita') mistranslated his answers leading to the police and the crown prosecution service to believe that he had admitted being the person shown on the footage.

The mistranslation only came to light when defence solicitors, Taylor Street, were able to obtain an independent translation of the interviews.

Where he had said; "That looks like my photograph but I have not done that at all. I wasn't there." The interpreter translates "Obviously I am on the photograph". "It looks like me" became "Correct, that's me". Other denials and explanations were not even translated, leaving the police officer with the impression that this man was admitting being at the scene rather than trying to say he was being mistaken for somebody else.

The appellant, who had no previous convictions, had already completed the custodial sentence imposed by the Magistrates Court. (Reported by Counsel)

29/05/2013

Wolverhampton Crown Court

Details: Listed for PCMH on 29th May on eight handed case. Nine advocates present, some from London. No interpreters attend despite court confirming they were booked. PCMH relisted for 13th June.

29/05/2013

Birmingham Crown Court

Details: Court 1 - sitting at 12:00 PM (The Honourable Mrs Justice Cox DBE) Trial (Part Heard) T20127199 KREZOLEK Mariusz 20CV0147212 (LUCZAK Magdalena)

20CV0147212

Case delayed as polish interpreter not provided by Capita for a child murder trial.

29/05/2013

Guildford Crown Court

Details: Capita have failed to arrange Vietnamese interpreter for PCMH at Guildford today. Case has to be adjourned. Waste of court time/public money. Judge very angry with Capita and says he will demand a written explanation and financial penalty.

[Reported by Barrister]

29/05/2013

Leeds Magistrates Court

Details: Trial at Leeds Mags aborted due to lack of Polish interpreter. Booked last month. Defendant had come from Poland for trial; witnesses from Slough.

[Reported by Barrister]

29/05/2013

Derby Crown Court

Details: Case of R v Thang Vu – Vietnamese interpreter booked through Capita
Barrister reports: “None attended but we all waited all day for one to appear. ALS/Capita contacted several times by the court but no interpreter. Defendants in custody. Case put off to next day. Court booked their own interpreter and we got on the next day.’

28/05/2013

Norwich Crown Court

Details: Case: R v Morkūnas T20127248

The above case was listed at 9.30 for custody time limit (CTL) hearing. A Lithuanian interpreter (booked through Capita) should have been there for a conference at 9.00 but did not arrive until 10.30. The learned Judge did not appear to believe the explanation of the interpreter being booked for 10.30 and said enquiries would be made.

The case was called on twice but the court could not proceed as no interpreter was present. The defendant had to have a conference with the instructing solicitor in English. The solicitor, having had many hours in conference with the defendant, was able - just - to adapt to his limited vocabulary.

The explanation given by Capita was that she, the interpreter, had been booked for 10.30. No member of the Norwich CC staff would have made a booking for 10.30 as it is established over many years that CTL hearings are at 9.30 and need to be preceded by a conference. The knock-on effect was that the trial, in which I, Defence Counsel, was committed in an adjoining court, was delayed. Under the old system there were a number of

excellent Lithuanian interpreters who lived within 40 minutes of the court, were familiar with its practises, and have never, in my experience, been late.

(Reported by Defence Barrister)

24/05/2013

Newport Crown Court

Details: Vietnamese Defendant not able to be sentenced as no interpreter arrived at court.
(Reported by Criminal Barrister from Cardiff, via Twitter @Andjones1000)

24/05/2013

Crewe Magistrates' Court

Details: Capita unable to provide Indonesian interpreter for man in custody case adjourned until next Tuesday (reported by Solicitors)

24/05/2013

Newport Crown Court

Details: "Vietnamese Defendant not able to be sentenced as no interpreter arrived at court. Efficiency???"

23/05/2013

**Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court
Court Room 10**

Details:

Case Name: O'Reilly + 11: T20127262; T20127250; T20120479; T20127269; T20127660;
T20127381; T20127253;
T20120636.

Andrew Stephen O Reilly; Byron James Milne; Ceri Wilmot; Edwin Gorlee; Jason Lee Seale; Michael John Connolly; Sam Omid; Steven John Petrie; Theodorus Van-Gelder; Wayne Braund

Two-day sentencing hearing listed to start on 23 May at 10.30am. Ten defendants (one of which needed a Dutch interpreter) and eleven barristers left waiting in court packed with public and press as Capita fail to provide Dutch interpreter. "This is what happens when you sell off services to the cheapest bidder", says barrister.

The Capita-booked interpreter was 'on holiday' and there had been a diary error. The Judge requested Capita come to court at 2pm to explain what had happened, but they didn't and he described the situation as 'outrageous'. Capita appeared before the Judge the next day.

Further Background:

11th March 2013: case dates fixed; 15th March - court requests interpreter originally for 24 May only; 9th May 2013 - court spots error and realises two days are required and sends Capita amended request; Case marked on court system as accepted only on 22 May 2013 - court has no idea why so late; reason given for no interpreter on today's date is that the interpreter was on holiday until 22/05/13; case went ahead without interpreter.

20/05/2013

Wolverhampton Crown Court

Details: Solicitor-Advocate Malcolm Fowler (Dennings Solicitors) reports: "Problems on stilts with, in particular, Wolverhampton Crown Court one, with one case from Friday put off for Capita to show cause within 14 days as to why they should not show cause over no Vietnamese interpreter.

Today, no Polish interpreters for a two handed case put off until tomorrow and the Judge calling on Capita for wasted costs or at least to show cause.

Before the Resident Judge at the same court there was no Vietnamese interpreters for five defendants which has caused a trial due to start today to have to be adjourned."

17/05/2013

Not interpreting as required

Details: Barrister Mary Prior (@mary_prior) tweets that an interpreter was not interpreting what the judge said. Why? They didn't know they had to because they had only done NHS work before. Language was Konkane.

17/05/2013

Details: Barrister tweets '3 cases waiting until 11am for earliest arrival of interpreter'.

17/07/2013

Stratford YC

Details: Barrister tweets 'Held at court because my interpreter doesn't speak enough English to explain proceedings'. Soon he won't have a lawyer either #whereisjustice
So bored 2 hours sat waiting. I can do my job but YOTS, bench and interpreter causing unnecessary delays #notopct #saveukjustice

16/05/2013

Mistrial

Details: on Twitter: "Saw a mistrial (day 12 of trial!) due to interpreter chatting to witnesses about other evidence in the café."

16/05/2013

Thames Magistrates Court

Details: "No papers, no interpreter, just another day at Thames Magistrates Court."
(Reported by solicitor)

15/05/2013

Caernarfon Crown Court

(this case was raised by Greg Bull QC at a Ministry of Justice meeting in Cardiff on Wednesday 15 May where he told them 3 days were wasted in court this week due to lack of interpreter)

Details: the case of R –v- Hecko at Caernarfon Crown Court. Slovakian interpreters are required for the Defendant. When the case was listed for Preliminary Hearing, Capita failed to provide any interpreter. Then when the case was listed for hearing on Monday (13 May), Capita provided three different interpreters, none of whom were Slovakian. The case was then moved to Wednesday (15 May), and exactly the same thing occurred, of the 3 interpreters sent by Capita, none were Slovakian. Effectively, this resulted in the loss of three Court days, and the wasted time of Judges, QCs and barristers.

[Reported by Solicitors]

15/05/2013

Leeds Crown Court

Details: No Capita Hungarian interpreter. They might send one for 14.00hrs today but can definitely NOT supply one for tomorrow.

13/05/2013

Kent Magistrates Court

Details: No Capita Lithuanian interpreter. Defendant in custody since 10 May. Solicitor going in and out of dock with a phone

Reported by interpreter

10/05/2013

Nottingham / Northampton Crown Court

Details: 2pm case: allegation of quadruple murder. PCMH listed at Nottingham Crown Court before Mr Justice Flaux. We requested a later date as PCMH could not be effective and instructed counsel not available. The date remained. Counsel (briefed only for that hearing) and solicitor travelled from London to Nottingham early to meet client (who speaks no English) in cells. Interpreter required but none arrive. Client produced from HMP Woodhill (Milton Keynes).

The interpreting service had wrongly booked interpreter to go to Northampton. The interpreter told them the day before it was Nottingham. Interpreting service- Capita- refused to pay her public transport fees to Nottingham so she could not attend. Case called on at 2pm, no interpreter so hearing vacated and adjourned 6 weeks.

10/05/2013

Huddersfield Magistrates Court

Details: "Can't get Czech interpreters for love nor money. Had a case adjourned twice now."
(Reported by defence lawyer)

10/05/2013

Nottingham Crown Court

Details: a hearing was postponed in a quadruple murder case when a Mandarin interpreter booked for defendant Anxiang Du didn't arrive, prompting High Court Judge Justice Julian Flaux to label the outsourcing company 'an absolute disgrace' and Northampton North MP Michael Ellis to say it showed the service was 'out of control'. He has asked Secretary of State Chris Grayling to look into the matter.

Du, aged 54, who was formally arrested in February after being extradited to the UK from Morocco, is yet to enter a plea to the charges. He is accused of the murder of Jifeng 'Jeff' Ding, his wife Ge 'Helen' Chui and their two daughters, Alice, 12, and Xing, 18, who were found at their home in Pioneer Close, Wootton, in May 2011.

Mr Justice Flaux said his clerk had been told it was 'not worthwhile' for an interpreter to turn up for the hearing because they would 'not make enough money'.

Adjourning the hearing for two months, Mr Justice Flaux said: "I will be asking for a written explanation to explain what had happened. It is a complete disgrace."

The provisional trial date has been moved from August 5 to November 12. Mr Du was remanded into custody to next appear at Northampton Crown Court on July 19.

07/5/2013

Isleworth Crown Court

Details: Sitting as Recorder at Isleworth Crown, trial listed (cannot recall name - see daily list) delayed half a day because Urdu interpreter unsatisfactory. Replacement fine but on 10/5 (trial part heard) lost further 45 minutes because Agency sent same interpreter to cover 2 different courtrooms at Isleworth.

07/05/2013

Rotherham Crown Court

Details: No show for Vietnamese interpreter. Case adjourned until tomorrow

07/05/2013

Bristol Crown Court

Details: Lost over £200 today as trial could not go ahead as interpreter booked for an hour rather than for a week!

[Reported by Criminal Barrister at Garden Court Chambers.]

07/05/2013

St Albans Crown Court

Details: ALS fails to provide Cantonese interpreter at St Albans today. Hearing aborted (T20130220YEE Chee L41E12046513). Court only informed at 9:15 this morning of non-availability for 10:15 hearing. Hearing fixed three weeks ago. Judge orders wasted costs against Capita in the sum of £150 noting it is ironic that extra funds have recently been given to the company over and above the contract price.

[Reported by Barrister]

07/05

Shrewsbury Crown Court

Details: a case had to be adjourned twice after a translator could not be found. Judge Peter Barrie apologised to the defendant.

[Reported by the Shropshire Star newspaper.]

03/05/2013

Hendon Magistrates' Court

Details: No interpreter for AM hearing, none available till pm; CC sentence adjourned as CPS have no details re compensation.

03/05/2013

Canterbury Crown Court

Details: Yet another delay at Canterbury CC due to a Swahili interpreter not attending. So far 20 min of court time & adjourned. Reported via Twitter).

03/05/2013

Sheffield Magistrates' Court

Details: Sheffield Mags today - client came ready for trial at 2pm, but Capita rang court to say the Pashtun interpreter wouldn't be there till 3.30. All casual, you know, like this is totally acceptable and normal. Newsflash [Capita] it isn't. Reported via Twitter.

02/05/2013

Shrewsbury Crown Court

Details: a three-day-trial due to be held at the crown court had to be adjourned for the second time in a week because an interpreter that had been booked for the defendant was

not available. Judge Peter Barrie apologised to the defendant and witnesses and said that because of centralisation of services, the courts were no longer able to approach translators directly.

Barristers Mr Ian Ball and Mr David Munro, said the difficulties were indicative of the government's shake-up of the criminal justice system.

02/05/2013

Bristol Crown Court

Details: Three Polish defendants, Rafal Nowak, Anna Lagwinowicz and Tadevsz Dmytryszyn, accused of murdering Catherine Wells-Burr, 23 were in the dock today. At 11.16, Andrew Langdon (defending Anna Lagwinowicz) said that the witness, Peter Kolack, had not had the benefit of an interpreter when the police took a statement from him in Willow Way on September 12, which he said was an important consideration because Mr Kolack's English is limited.

01/05/2013

Woolwich Crown Court

Details: A friend told me that he went to Woolwich Crown Court to interpret for a CPS witness. There was a Capita / ALS interpreter for the defendant. The judge asked the ALS / Capita interpreter: "are you a qualified interpreter? The ALS / Capita interpreter replied: "I am from Capita".

The Defendant said (from the dock): I can speak better English than this interpreter. The honourable Judge then released the interpreter and did not use him. In fact the defendant did not want [the interpreter] to interpret for him.

April 2013

30/04/2013

Milton Keynes Magistrates' Court

Details: On 22nd April [a neighbour] went to Milton Keynes Magistrates' Court. He was waiting there all day long, from 9 am until 4 pm and his case was adjourned because Capita did not provide a Russian interpreter.

He said: "I was very upset by such an attitude. The duty solicitor did not want to take my case because there was no interpreter. I consider it was some form of discrimination and no one would like to be treated like this. I would prefer to work very hard all day long rather than sit near the court door for so many hours with people going constantly backwards and forwards. I felt sick and morally humiliated. I had so many questions to ask about my bail conditions. I wanted to go back to Lithuania. I felt something was very wrong about this situation in the court".

29/04/2013

Court tbc

Details: In my court this morning a Lithuanian interpreter has turned up for a Slovakian prisoner. Just as well they both speak Polish [reported by Barrister, via Twitter]

26/04/2013

Hutton Cross Immigration Tribunals

Details: [Reported by interpreter present] I'm at Hutton Cross Immigration Tribunals near Heathrow airport. The case before mine required a Farsi interpreter (booked by Capita TI). He just rang to cancel and no other Farsi speaker on site.

The tribunal staff had to ring the agency when the Farsi interpreter hadn't arrived by 10:30-10:45 (the hearing was due to start at 10 a.m.). The agency staff said the interpreter had rung up to say he wasn't going to attend earlier that same morning. No reason was given by interpreter but also the agency staff didn't even have the courtesy to call the tribunal to inform them when their linguist cancelled at the last moment. Further, the case was listed for FOUR hours and had been repeatedly re-scheduled.

The appellant was understandably upset as was her legal representative. The judge was rather scathing about this interpreter and the agency. On the form for the case to be re-listed, the judge wrote that the interpreter had cancelled on the morning the hearing was due, without giving an explanation. He also said the interpreter cancelling at the last minute left the court no time to get a replacement via Loughborough, not even for a 2 pm slot as the case was listed for 4 hours. He also refused to let the appellant try to undergo cross-examination despite her English being not too bad. According to him, a short cross-examination or a long one might be detrimental to her case if she found she couldn't answer, or had miss-understood, a question. He said he'd prefer the case to be re-listed.

26/04/2013

Newcastle Crown Court

Details: Vietnamese interpreters failed to turn up for 3rd time. Another success for BVT - well done the MOJ.

26/04/2013

Northampton Crown Court

Details: Two Romanian cases in court today, in different courts, at the same time. One Romanian interpreter here. It seems it's a case of sharing her.

25/04/2013

Nottingham Crown Court

Details: Today at Nottingham CC - no interpreter for Kurdish appellant. Asked for by court but not provided. Adjourned until next week.

24/04/13

Chesterfield Magistrates' Court

Details: 3 defendants: one in custody, two first appearance, none on remand from the day before. Capita TI could not provide an interpreter.

23/04/2013

Leeds Bridewell / York Magistrates' Court

Details: I am a bit puzzled. Got two phone calls today. One from Leeds Bridewell - they were looking for a Polish interpreter because Capita could not provide one and then another call from York Magistrates because Capita failed to provide. I am puzzled because for over a year I have had no direct phone calls and it looked like Capita did not have any problems with the lack of Polish interpreters.

23/04/2013

Watford Crown Court

Details: A colleague who previously worked for Capita informed me that this case, which had already been adjourned on several occasions, was listed today in Watford... I wanted to know what would happen on this occasion so I travelled to Watford which is not far from me. As I arrived at the Court I received a desperate phone call from the court asking if I was available to assist them. I informed them that I was on the premises but that I was not prepared to help them out as second option and told them to get the message to the MOJ that this new system is not working.

The case was called. The usher informed the magistrates that I was present in Court and when asked by the bench as to my position, I politely informed them that I was there as an observer and was not prepared to assist under the current farcical arrangements. The magistrates were then informed that on 12 March the case had been adjourned until 19 March for an interpreter to attend. Capita interpreter called in sick at the last moment and case was adjourned again until today, 23 April. Once again the Capita interpreter called in sick at the last moment.

The magistrates asked the clerk what they could do and were told that as the hearing was for sentencing, the defendant having already pleaded guilty, they would have to adjourn the case again until 4th June to get an interpreter.

Outside the court in answer to my question as to whether he had understood the Capita interpreter before, the defendant answered "hardly". I told him that it was his right to understand everything and suggested that if the same thing reoccurred he should inform the court of the difficulty he was having.

23/04/2013

Swindon Crown Court

Details: A man who left a drinker needing surgery on a fractured eye socket in a barroom assault has had his sentence adjourned because an interpreter failed to turn up at court.

Marciej Stadnik, of School Lane, Staverton, was due to learn his fate at Swindon Crown Court after admitting carrying out the assault at Lloyds Bar in Swindon last year.

But the 27-year-old does not speak well enough for him to understand proceedings without it being translated into Polish. Recorder Michael Selfe adjourned the case so an interpreter can appear, and released the defendant on bail.

23/04/13

Hatton Cross Immigration Tribunal

Details: I was told I'm now the only interpreter for Mauritian Creole (the other person passed away 2 or so months ago). Apparently, tribunals now contact Capita TI directly but revert to Interpreter Bookings in Loughborough when Capita can't fulfil their obligation. The Bookings Team approach me directly in any event for any jobs for this language. They are still going strong in Loughborough despite being told it was going to shut in May, July, September. They are now increasingly busy with requests from Tribunals to provide interpreters

22/04/2013

Lewes Crown Court

Details: Defendant spoke Lingala (Congolese dialect). Interpreter faithfully swore to translate into Bengali.

22/04/2013

Milton Keynes Magistrates' Court

Details: On 22nd April there was a case at Milton Keynes Magistrates Court which was adjourned because the defendant did not have an interpreter. To be more precise Capita was unable to provide a Russian interpreter at all during the day. He was waiting from 9 am - 4 pm.

He said: "I was very upset by such an attitude. The duty solicitor did not want to take my case because there was no interpreter. I consider it was some form of discrimination and no one would like to be treated like this. I would prefer to work very hard all day long rather than sit near the court door for so many hours with people going constantly backwards and forwards. I felt sick and morally humiliated. I had so many questions to ask about my bail conditions. I wanted to go back to Lithuania. I felt something was very wrong about this situation in the court".

19/04/2013

Court tbc

Details: Court today, adjourned PCMH from 4weeks ago. Adjourned then because no interpreter - today same. Capita say no Slovak speakers on books [Reported by Matthew Buckland on Twitter @thebarwithmb]

16/04/2013

Court TBC (London)

Details: Sex trial failed to proceed coz interpreter failed to attend. Waste £10k. Devastated witnesses [reported by Charles Faulk on Twitter @FalkCharlie

15/04/2013

Cheltenham Magistrates' Court

Details: I had a Slovak interpreter in Cheltenham Magistrates' on Monday. At 3pm for a 10am hearing

15/04/2013

Bristol Crown Court

Details: 3rd trip to Bristol to attempt PCMH in serious case. 3rd ALS failure to send interpreter. Frightening future of privatised CJS. Then Capita lied to the Court and said the interpreter had 'forgotten'. He confirmed he had never been booked

13/04/2013

Derby Magistrates Court

Details: [Case: Laszlo Steflik] I understand from the defendant that no interpreter turned up for this hearing, he was released but did not understand anything from the proceedings.

11/04/2013

Blackfriars Crown Court

Details: (Court 7) I was there for defence witnesses. Just before 10.30 there was a case (A20130032 case of UDILA DUMITRU) appealing against his sentence. He was brought from Pentonville Prison and no Romanian Interpreter was available. His counsel could not communicate with him at all. Court tried for couple of hours but could not get one for two days. So he could not understand what was going on. Judge asked how long he has been in Pentonville? One week, two weeks or a month? he could not reply. Case adjourned to 18th April 2013. No one asked for costs etc? It seems everyone is accepting Capita's incompetence.

10/04/2013

Reading Crown Court

Details: [Reported by Solicitor] Meanwhile in sunny Reading.... We had a Pole in the cells on Monday for breach of bail. He had been away from home in his curfew time and his tag had mysteriously come off his leg. No interpreter. So with my bad Polish (he was lucky I was duty perhaps - my Polish is basic but improving) I talked to him on my own. What is "tag" in Polish? No idea, pocket dictionary was no help. I said "it's like a label (metka) which is round your leg". Predictably, he did not remember much due to excessive alcohol, but he did know what I was asking about. The court office had been told that an interpreter would arrive for 2 p.m. At 2.30 I asked them to make another phone call, and they were told that since the agency was under the impression that the interpreter would not be required until 3 p.m. - and

I can't believe anyone in the court office or police station would have told them that - so the person who was booked to come had decided to cancel!

It was breach of Crown Court bail for a serious offence and I thought his own solicitors ought to be there and of course an interpreter, so he got remanded for one day. At least I was able to tell him what was happening. Otherwise he would have been terrified out of his wits. It is just not good enough!!

10/04/2013

Haverford west Magistrates' Court

Details: [Received from a solicitor]. I represented a Latvian national yesterday and today in Haverford west Magistrates. He was produced in custody yesterday morning. His English was limited. No Latvian interpreter could be found, the DJ remanded him over night - "insufficient info" - until today for interpreter to be sorted. 3.00pm today we conclude the case, no interpreter, I did the hearing at the same time as typing into Google translate! The alternative would have been further deprivation of his liberty (he was fined £205 including surcharge and costs for the offences before the court)."

A good example of what price competitive tendering does to the quality of a service!

09/04/2013

Bodmin Magistrates' Court

Details: Received a call at 1pm to ask whether I would be available for an interpreting assignment the next day (2pm was a cut off and they needed to wait for ALS to cancel the booking - the court was sure they would and wanted to line up available interpreters for the trial!

08/04/2013

Milton Keynes Magistrates' Court

Details: No interpreter (Tamil) and the sentencing adjourned (Case Kandasamy Pathmanathan).

06/04/2013

Chesterfield Magistrates' Court

Details: Stuck at Chesterfield Magistrates' Court because the interpreter turned up late..... Bloody interpreter getting lost. Would have been quicker with Google Translate (reported by Joe Harvey, Solicitor Advocate via Twitter @joerv007)

05/04/2013

Spalding Magistrates' Court

Details: Spalding magistrates have adjourned proceedings for a second time because the courts service has failed to find a Slovakian interpreter. Julius Ziga (35) is accused of driving while disqualified and without insurance in Halmer Gate, Spalding. He appeared in court on March 21, when no interpreter was present, and again on Thursday. Ziga, of Baulkins Drove,

Sutton St James, has not been able to enter pleas because he does not understand English well enough.

His case has now been adjourned to April 18.

04/04/2013

London tbc

Details: No Punjabi interpreters in London so the court one comes from Derby, 5 hours late and leaves before we can see client in cells after hearing.

04/04/2013

Spalding Magistrates' Court

Details: A woman veterinary nurse was hurt on her way home to Spalding when another car drove into the back of hers. Rebecca Ritson, prosecuting, said the impact spun the woman's car around 360 degrees and the silver Audi that hit her – driven by Viktoras Jackunas – ended up sideways on in a ditch. Miss Ritson said Jackunas provided a positive roadside breath test, but failed to give an evidential test at the police station. Solicitor Mike Alexander, mitigating, said Jackunas had lung problems but he had managed to give the roadside test and, therefore, should have been able to give the test at the police station.

A police officer was telling him to "blow" but an interpreter translated that as "breathe" and Jackunas was breathing into the machine rather than blowing.

March 2013

27/03/2013

Aylesbury Crown Court

Details: I am in Aylesbury Crown ct for a witness. No interpreter for the defendant so far! Ct staff running around asking me 'are you for the defendant'?

Finally a Capita Interpreter popped in 2.30 and the case adjourned. I had a chat with court staff, it was the usual stuff about capita...he told me that these new interpreters struggle to understand even a normal conversation let alone the legal jargon...

My witness did not turn up unfortunately and as the clerk was asking me 'as your witness did not turn up is it possible for you to interpret for the defendant' ? and I was trying explain I won't, there he was the Capita interpreter popped up...I had a chat with him too! He wasn't a happy fella as you can imagine. He said he was in court in the region for a morning job and had a call to come here...That's why he agreed...

I told him you should stop working for Capita...he said I only take if there are 2 jobs in a day....

back to the court staff...he said an interpreter travelled all the way from Edinburgh to Aylesbury for a one hour hearing...that's a whopping 373 mile and over 12.5 hrs of travel time...

the dossier is only tip of an iceberg....the chaos created/being created by Capita much wider and deeper..."

26/03/13

Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court

Details: Case of Olga Garcia accused of shoplifting. 3rd hearing of the case. Listings complained it was hard to find Portuguese interpreter. Court 172 miles/4 hours drive (each way) away from where I live.

26/03/2013

Leeds (Police Station)

Details: (Reported by Ela Okurowska) Went to a local police station in Leeds. I was booked not by the police but a different organisation who used police custody for their suspects. Anyway on the custody wall there was a big poster reading more or less this message: "Not happy with ALS interpreters because your interpreter did not come on time, did not come at all or was sent an interpreter who speaks the wrong language. Please send an e-mail to Interpreter mailbox. We are not the only FORCE experiencing problems with this company and their performance is closely monitored."

25/03/2013

Crawley Magistrates' Court

Details: No Romanian interpreter in Crawley Magistrates' Court today. The defendant was left in custody. The same court rang Latvian RPSIs direct

25/03/2013

North Wiltshire Magistrates' Court

Details: In the Court cells today 2 Romanians and 1 Russian - ALS can't get any interpreters here today for any of them. Pretty poor show (reported by Gordon Hotson, Criminal Defence reporter)

22/03/2013

Bodmin Magistrates Court

Details: (Case number 1300039026) I was contacted by the listing officer on Friday 22/03/2013 (pm) as yet again ALS cancelled their request for a Polish interpreter for Monday 25/03/2013 at 11am.

22/03/2013

Court TBC

Details: Two people in court today need interpreters. They were informed last night that interpreters would be required. They have not been allocated. ALS say they cannot get anyone to deal with my custody case... What a useless system this is (reported by Steve Brint, criminal defence solicitor)

21/03/2013

Old Bailey

Details: At court I fall into conversation with a Capita interpreter. She is North African and does Arabic. Prepared to do French too but only in simple cases. She tells Capita this but still gets sent to do a job at Bailey. The judge was French speaker and, she said, corrected her translation several times. She was greatly embarrassed and told Capita they shouldn't have sent her. They told her that she should withdraw her name for French in that case. But they knew she wasn't qualified for French, yet sent her to the court that deals with the most serious criminal matters.

She says that the admin staff at Capita didn't have a clue what they were doing. She seemed very unhappy with her "employers".

21/03/2013

West Midlands

Details: I had a call from a solicitor's office offering me a job in a magistrates' court in West Midlands last week. Unaware that a court would resort to booking an interpreter through the appellant, I agreed to take up the job. On arrival at the court, I realised that I was going to interpret for an appeal and the appellant was asked to book the interpreter. The respondent, I was told, did not have any objections to this and the court did not give a damn about the all important principle of impartiality. The appellant told me: "You need to give me a hand when I am stuck" and I told him categorically that I have to be impartial although I have been booked by you.

When I dug a little deeper, I found out that the Capita interpreter was late for the previous hearing turning up at 2.00pm for a 10.00am hearing. During my chat with one of the ushers, whom I knew through previous assignments, he told me that Capita was summoned to a Crown court in the region in relation to problems with interpreters and got away with it. I thought about refusing to interpret for the court but this was an important hearing for the appellant after years of waiting and he was funding his solicitors privately thousands of pounds.

On separate occasion, I was asked by another client I was interpreting for in Hertfordshire: "why don't you attend courts as I had to wait until 2.00pm for the interpreter to arrive for my hearing".

18/03/2013

Cardiff Crown Court

Details: R-v- Goran Kamal Ahmad at Cardiff Crown Court, listed for trial 18th March 2013 with a time estimate of five days. It finished on 28th March lasting nine days and was 'a complete farce with interpreters, with Court having to go off contract, and use a tier one interpreter, in fact trial nearly aborted'. The case was a multi-complainant rape case where the defendant was eventually convicted and sentenced to life.

The delays were all caused by interpreter issues.

[Case reported by Barrister.]

17/03/2013

Birmingham Crown Court

Details: Earlier this month I worked at one of my local police stations (they are not with Capita). The duty solicitor was appalled by the quality of Capita interpreters. He told me that apparently those who are Tier 3 cannot speak English, one Capita interpreter sent his brother-in-law to Birmingham Crown Court for a trial, because he couldn't make it himself... I got the impression that the brother-in-law wasn't even an interpreter. Apparently the judge was furious, as you can imagine.

It seems it's old news, but it doesn't show any change either. The solicitor also confirmed that Tier 3 interpreters are still being sent to courts. He added how easy it was working with a professional interpreter. He covers West Midlands Police too. This is Capita territory and he said that the last Capita interpreter he came across there, just "didn't have a clue".

13/03/2013

Court TBC

Details: Waiting since yesterday morning for a Czech or Slovakian interpreter. Client remanded in custody last night when Capita promised to deliver. [update] By 16.00 there was still no interpreter & Capita could not say whether one might be here by tomorrow. Client already in custody for 2 days.

13/3/13

Uxbridge Magistrates' Court

Details: Another direct call, defendant spent last night in custody - no interpreter (Bulgarian). Case adjourned three times now.

13/03/2013

North East

Details: Sat in court - first hearing can't go ahead as there is no interpreter - adjourned off and hearing with 3 advocates wasted [Reported by Chris Rose, Barrister at New Park Court Chambers]

13/03/2013

Hull Magistrates' Court

Details: On 13th March ALS Latvian interpreter attended Hull Magistrates Court. She sent me a text on the same day telling that the defendant had been kept in custody for 3 days due to interpreter's non attendance. When I asked her what the solicitor said about it she said: nothing much. Unlawful detention due to interpreter's non attendance is a normal thing nowadays.

12/03/2013

Canterbury Crown Court

Details: No Czech interpreter for Canterbury Crown Court. To be fair they organised a Tamil interpreter... From Scotland!

12/03/2013

Derby Magistrates' Court

Details: At the end of last month I went to my local Derby Magistrates' Court to interpret for a CPS witness, the defendant had a Capita interpreter. The funny thing was she was open-mouthed listening to what I was interpreting to my witness and forgot to interpret for the defendant. The legal adviser spotted it and asked her to interpret a summary of the case so from then on she did start interpreting for him.

When we had a break, she came up to me and said that this case was taking long (a trial), I told her that trials most of the time were long, then she said that normally it took 15 min, when you get driving offences. I just shook my shoulders and she asked me if I was new in courts. I told her that I used to be there all the time, but I've been boycotting Capita for a year now. She asked me if it was because of payment, I replied that it was partially about payment, but also because of unfair treatment of interpreters who spent money on getting qualifications, had to be vetted etc, but now no one cares and that in the first place no one wanted to speak with interpreters or interpreting bodies about the situation directly instead completely ignoring our opinion. She moaned back to me saying that she was in the same situation as she cannot register on the National Register as she only has partial DPSI and that Capita had more cuts in payment. At that point I had to move on and I wished her good luck.

11/03/13

Burton Magistrates' Court

Details: <http://www.burtonmail.co.uk/News/Case-delayed-against-illegal-fag-duo-after-Mail-probe-20130312121723.htm>

"... the case has been adjourned for an interpreter to attend."

11/03/2013

Reported by Solicitor

Details: We had to suspend a police interview yesterday as my interpreter was worse than bad. Never had to do it before and felt bad about it but the detectives agreed and want a report from me with my comments in order to file it with capita...

08/03/13

Macclesfield Police Station

Details: Carlos Tevez (Manchester City footballer) was bailed because there was no interpreter at Macclesfield Police Station. He is to return there on Tuesday.

08/03/2013

Maidstone Crown Court

Details: A man accused of committing a murder in the early hours of New Year's Day will stand trial later this year after denying the charge today. Jurijs Popovs is alleged to have killed 21-year-old Dmitrijs Titovs, who suffered stab wounds outside a block of flats in Henley Place, London Road, Teynham, near Sittingbourne. Popovs, of Henley Place, entered the plea despite the non-appearance of a Russian interpreter.

06/03/2013

Northampton Crown Court

Details: Judge Richard Bray branded Capita "hopelessly incompetent" after he was unable to sentence and expedite deportation proceedings against a Vietnamese drug king because no interpreter arrived at Northampton Crown Court.

04/03/13

Plymouth Magistrates Court

Details: Listing Officer called me around 10am asking whether I could assist (same day booking - Case No: 1300032218 - 2pm). ALS have been calling me with this job offer for some time by then including the morning of 04/03/13 - they did not inform the court they did not have an interpreter until 10am the same day.

02/03/2013

Kirklees Magistrates' Court

Details: Sofane Yakr appeared before Kirklees magistrates yesterday in custody. He faces four charges of stealing phones from women attending bars on King Street on November 10. Magistrates heard that he spoke no English and needed an Arabic interpreter. When magistrates discovered that he understood some French, *prosecutor* Julian Briggs helped progress the proceeding.

01/03/13

Police Station

Details: Yesterday I attended at police station to represent an Eastern European suspect for theft. The client had been in custody for 22 hours without interview, I had previously made representations with regards to delay. I was informed that the police had difficulties locating an interpreter to attend.

I was then informed that the interview and consultation will be conducted in the Doctors room as a telephone was required in order for a representative of language line to translate the consultation and subsequent interview! I made further representations about requiring private consultation but was assured that "this 'procedure' has been used a number of time in the past". The a/p statement had not even been obtained; the police had one independent witness statement after 22 hours! How can I possibly be sure that a police telephone line is private? I then advised a no comment interview and expressed my concerns at the start of the interview. Before the officer had even got to ask any questions,

client began to cry and stated that she was very unwell..... By this point there was under an hour left on the clock.

The officer suspended the interview, left the room and spoke to CS. He then returned and confirmed interview was terminated.

February 2013

26/02/2013

Crown Court (tbc)

Details: Another sign of "marked improvement". A solicitor has got in touch asking whether I've been booked by a crown court for his client next week (we'd done a prison visit together). When I explained the court has to use CapitaTI to book interpreters, he wrote back saying "It was adjourned last week as NO INTERPETER attended and has been rearranged to [date]". I wonder how much it's already cost MoJ in transport and security alone, taking him to and from prison, let alone all the other wasted costs of adjournment!

21/02/2013

Highbury Court

Details: Two Munich (football) fans accused of a racially aggravated offence remanded in custody as no German interpreter was available. Interpreter arrived at court next day (22nd) defendants plead guilty – fine deemed served due to excessive time served in custody and they were released!

21/02/2013

Anchorage House (tribunal)

Details: Report from a colleague: I went to Anchorage house today to look around tribunal the service. Spoke to a Somali interpreter who travelled 45 minutes by car. He paid £3.50 for parking and his case finished within 30 mins. He was so angry. He said the whole thing was s*** and that all the ALS were thieves and B***ards. He said he will receive £20 from ALS and his own calculation is that he will earn £12.00 today. When I reminded him that he needs to make an allowance for tax he said he will never come here again!

16/02/2013 and 18/02/2013

South Tyneside Magistrates' Court

Details: A Vietnamese man accused of being behind the biggest cannabis farm found in South Tyneside has been remanded in custody after a translator was not supplied – twice - for the hearing. Nguyen, 19, was charged with producing a Class B drug and appeared at court on 16/02/13. But without an interpreter to translate to the non-English speaking Vietnamese, the case could not proceed. It was adjourned until Feb 18th, and Nguyen, of no fixed abode, was remanded in custody. He was back before magistrates on the 18th but for a second time, no interpreter was available.

16/02/2013

Uxbridge Court

Details: One client had an interpreter in interview but none arranged for court (reported on Twitter).

15/02/2013

Court tbc

Details: No interpreter for two Romanian defendants. One of the barristers speaks Romanian so he's interpreting for them!

15/02/2013

Peterborough Crown Court

Details: Interpreter booked for 9.30am, so they fax the Court 11pm the night before to say won't be here until 2pm.

14/02/2013

Snaresbrook Crown Court

Details: I was called directly by Snaresbrook Crown Court yesterday morning to interpret for a trial which would last for 2 days. When I arrived, there was already an interpreter who was booked by Witness Care service. Apparently the defence counsel used her in the consultation with his client (not knowing that she was not booked by the court) and for this reason the court decided to use this interpreter for the trial, not the NRPSI interpreter they themselves booked directly.

I then spoke to the Listings Office, explaining the situation; they were aghast and said never before an interpreter for Witness Care service was used as the official interpreter in a crown court trial.

14/02/2013

Nottingham Magistrates' Court

Details: Yesterday/ 14th Feb, I was on a CPS assignment in Nottingham Magistrates. Interpreter for the defence never turned up and hence MoJ realized further savings by wasting Court's time, police's time and condemning the witnesses and defendants to further strain and misery.

13/02/2013

Nottingham Crown Court

Details: Crown Court today interpreters required 3 interpreters showing up 1 - Judge slams ALS

13/02/2013

Swindon Crown Court

Details: No charge was formally put to a 33-year-old accused of sexual assault and he did not enter a plea during a brief appearance at Swindon Crown Court as there was no Hindi interpreter to translate proceedings for him. Conditional bail granted and hearing adjourned until April 19th.

13/02/2013

Court tbc

Details: Report from Twitter: Defence advocate says defendant should speak Russian or Lithuanian they r not sure which! Let's toss a coin should we? It gets better-not only does defence not know the language but the interpreter went AWOL after they helped probation with the report

11/02/2013

Crown Court (Yorkshire)

Details: A Crown Court trial in Yorkshire has just been postponed due to lack of rare language interpreter. The language was Polish.

11/02/2013

Willesden Magistrates' Court

Details: Reported on Twitter by Laura Hockers (Criminal Defence Solicitor) Waiting for a Latvian interpreter. The court has found one who is on her way. From Leamington Spa!!!

08/02/2013

Email exchange between ALS linguist and Capita TI

Details: Capita refuse to pay rates as agreed at the time of booking... see below exchange:

[From ALS Linguist]

I am writing to you in connection with the above assignment (ref). I have queried it via the linguist lounge portal but for some reason my payment changed status from 'queried' to 'new' without any reply from your payments department.

As per my query, it seems that you calculated the travel supplement using the new mileage rate. Please be advised that I had accepted this job before you changed your payment terms (and my understanding was, as per your message displayed each time I accepted a booking and entered into contract with you, that "By accepting the job, you accept the payment rates of the assignment as detailed in the 'Estimated Payments' section."). I would have cancelled this job had I known that you were going to pay me the new rate. Could you please amend the travel supplement amount?

[From Karen Hampshire]

Many thanks for your payment query. Any jobs that were offered and assigned to you before the 8th January would have still been under the "old rates" however as the job was completed and accepted after the "new rates" this will automatically reduce to 20 per mile. If you would like to look discuss this matter further please contact legal@capita-ti.com.

[From ALS Linguist]

I have just checked my emails and I have found a confirmation email from 5th Dec 2012 (the day when I accepted this assignment). Does that mean that I should have been paid for travel under the "old rates"?

[From Karen Hampshire]

I am writing to confirm that the booking was accepted and assigned on the 5th December, however the job was closed on the 18th January (3 days after the booking). Hope this helps.

[From ALS Linguist]

Just to clarify, the job was closed on 18th January (3 days after the completion date) but I do not believe that this is relevant to my query. My understanding was that when I accepted this booking I entered into a binding contract between myself and Capita to provide you with my services and by accepting the job, I accepted the payment rates of the assignment (as detailed in the 'Estimated Payments' section at the time). In my opinion you cannot expect us to accept retroactive terms and conditions that change the (already entered by us) agreement.

As I have a couple of bookings (which I accepted before 8th January) let, I would be grateful if you could clearly present your position on payments for jobs accepted before the 8th January (but completed after that date).

[From Karen Hampshire]

Thank you for e-mail. Unfortunately I am unable to make any amendments regarding your query as we have to adhere to the rules regarding changes in the terms & condition. I apologise if this doesn't seem very helpful. What I can suggest is that all queries relating to the changes can be discussed with our Legal Department. "

07/02/2013

South Tyneside Magistrate's Court

Detail: A man accused of being behind a £100,000 South Tyneside drugs farm has appeared in court.

Hung Nguyen was arrested after police smashed a 100-plant farm in Mortimer Road on Thursday night.

The 23-year-old, of no fixed abode, is accused of growing the plants in the loft of the flat.

The Vietnamese man – who cannot speak English – was at South Tyneside Magistrates' Court yesterday facing a charge of producing the Class B drug.

However, there was no interpreter at the court and the case could not go ahead.

Hung was remanded in custody until Monday when an interpreter is expected at the court.

07/02/2013

Snaresbrook Crown Court

Details: Court 6, Snaresbrook Crown Court, before HH Judge J Korner CMG QC (Ref. T20127378). Based on a dispute over interpretation (Sylhetti language), judge Joana Koner abandoned the trial and gave direction to the CPS expressly "do not hire any interpreter who is not on the National register".

06/02/2013

Caernarfon Magistrates Court

Details: One case had to be adjourned four times because an interpreter failed to turn up. Solicitor Jim Connod said: "The case involved an eastern European defendant who could not speak English. After the fourth occasion the judge ordered the company to attend court to explain the delay."

On Monday a case was held up until an Italian speaking interpreter arrived from Manchester.

On another occasion a Lithuanian man had to spend an additional night in custody when no interpreter arrived.

Lawyers said there have been difficulties obtaining translators for Chinese and Vietnamese defendants and witnesses.

04/02/2013

Boston Court

Details: I was in Boston court today with CPS. The Latvian defendant was told to come back at 2 o'clock as the Russian interpreter could come only at 2.00. The Polish defendant was told that his case had to be adjourned until 22nd Feb as no interpreter was available.

The colleague had a quick chat with a Lithuanian Capita interpreter. She said that with their new system if two interpreters accept the same job, then the closest one gets the job, and the other one is left with nothing.

02/02/2013

Probation Hearing

Details: At my recent Probation booking a defendant asked a Probation officer to clarify his sentence because the interpreter he had in court told him that he had to do 15 (!) hours of unpaid work and sign in at a local police station on a weekly basis. The Probation officer checked his file and said that his sentence was 150 hours of unpaid work and 12 months of supervision!