



National Register of  
Public Service Interpreters



National Register of  
Public Service Translators

# Future of Interpreting Standards

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Executive Director & Registrar  
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Registered  
and Regulated  
Interpreter

# Future of Interpreting Standards



- What has changed
- What has stayed the same in the last few decades
- What has changed during the pandemic
- What are the next big changes, their risks and possible benefits:
  - Remote interpreting
  - Technology assisted translation
  - Offshoring
  - Review of Outsourcing

# Future of Interpreting Standards



What this changing landscape means for:

- Standards: why bother with them
- Ethics: Code of Professional Conduct
- Regulation: protection of standards
- Oversight of Regulatory Body: voluntary or statutory
- Public Service Interpreting in 2030: what might it look like

# Occupation or Profession: Standards



Landscape Gardener: 1929

Doctor: 1858

State Registered Nurse: 1919

Teacher: 1998

London Taxi Driver: 1662

Personal Trainer: 1921

Director of a listed company

# Standards: what hasn't changed



## Lord Bellamy

### The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice

...the right to translation and interpretation services is a right at common law and integral to the right of a fair trial

...enshrined in Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which deals with the police station, and Article 6, which deals with the fair trial point

...neither of those are affected by the present retained EU law Bill so the substance of the domestic provisions will continue

# Occupation or Profession...



Serious professions need standards and some form of regulation

Three essential pillars in an effective regulatory structure protecting standards

The definition of an occupation focuses on regular activity performed to earn daily bread. Professionals clearly have to do this but there is much more to being a professional than earning money in a specific field of activity

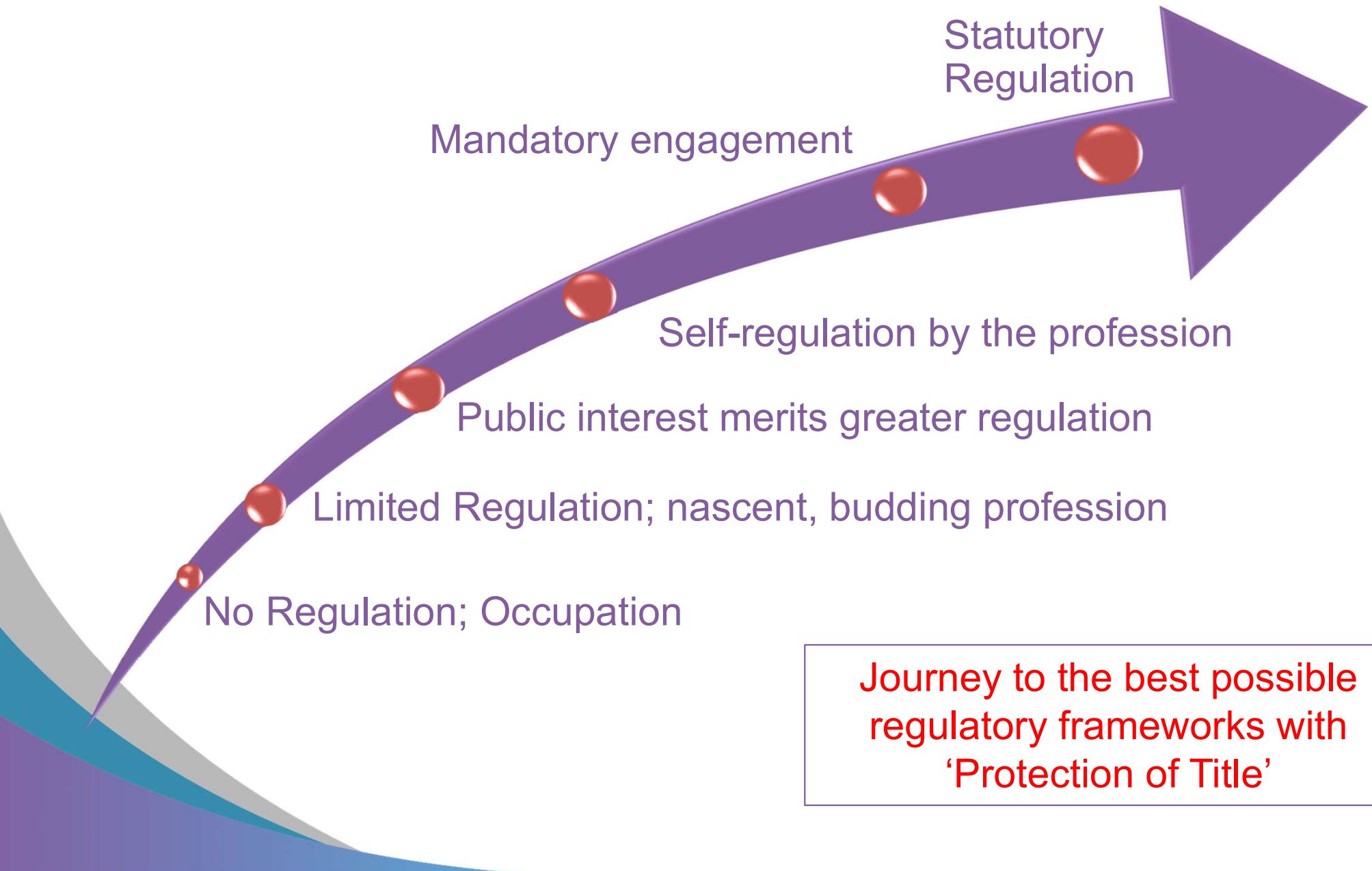
A profession requires:

- A high degree of knowledge and expertise in a specific field
- Continuously expanding knowledge and expertise
- Recognition and trusted accreditation of professional practitioners' competencies

# Changes...



Registered and  
Regulated Interpreter



Mandatory engagement

Statutory  
Regulation

Self-regulation by the profession

Public interest merits greater regulation

Limited Regulation; nascent, budding profession

No Regulation; Occupation

**Journey to the best possible  
regulatory frameworks with  
'Protection of Title'**

# What NRPSI is not....



## Not:

- An agency...
- A union...
- An examining body...
- A regulator of examinations...

According to PARN there are approximately 400 professional bodies in the UK...

Representing most professionals in the UK...

- Professional associations and societies acting for members
- Learned institutes driving professions and acting for members
- Regulatory bodies with qualifying Registrants protecting the public and overseeing agreed professional standards



# Not a Job but a Profession



A profession has a need to minimise, diminish and alleviate risk through:

- Protecting the public
- Setting, maintaining, developing and promoting standards
- Confirming relevant vocational qualifications
- Accrediting competencies gained through experience
- Measuring degrees of competence: PACTT\* fitness to practise
- Protecting the qualifying professional practitioners
- Promoting a Code of Professional Conduct focusing on integrity and impartiality
- Managing effective PCC/ DC/ Appeals processes
- Lobbying for Protection of Title for professional practitioners
- Supporting the regulator and register of professionals, be it voluntary or statutory
- Ensuring visibility of accredited Registrants as professional practitioners

\*Proportionate, Accountable, Consistent, Transparent, Targeted

# Regulated or Unregulated



A profession has a *governing body* when the complexity of service-delivery has *risk* which needs to be minimalised and mitigated

*Regulated professions* ensure accountability of professional service delivery by those who are registered and regulated, protecting standards

# The History Bit...



## **NRPSI Launch in 1994**

The 1993 Runciman Royal Commission recommended the establishment of a register of public service interpreters so that only trained and qualified interpreters, governed by a Code of Professional Conduct, should be engaged by public sector organisations

In 1994 NRPSI was established by the then Institute of Linguists (now the CIOL). NRPSI became an independent body in 2011

The core activities of NRPSI remain as relevant now as when it was founded in 1994. Still voluntary, requiring the engagement of both interpreters themselves and the users of their services

# Statutory or Self-Regulating



*Self-regulation* of PSI has been worked out within the ecosystem, having been negotiated with a wide range of stakeholders over many years, and has been promoted to extend the influence of how *'fit-to-practise'* is measured

Balancing...

- Standards
  - Cost and supply of professionals
  - External factors such as the pandemic
  - Levels of risk
  - Political necessity
- ...will drive government action in the future, gaining protection of title and statutory regulation

# Post Pandemic...



## The importance of professional practitioners in spoken language public sector language services reaffirmed through and post pandemic

- Population of over 67.33 million in the UK in 2021
- Multicultural society notwithstanding Brexit
- Over 4.2 million have a language other than English as main language (2011 Census data)
- 27 per cent of these regard their English skills as 'non-proficient' (2011 Census data)
  
- The UK issued 277,069 work-related visas in the year ending March 2022
- This is a 129 per cent increase on the year ending March 2021; not a surprise
- Surprisingly 50 per cent higher than in the year ending March 2020 (Home Office stats)

Proud to be a public service interpreting professional?

Become NRPSI registered and stand out from the crowd.

**NRPSI** National Register of Public Service Interpreters

Go to [www.nrpsi.org.uk](http://www.nrpsi.org.uk)

# Where Are We Today...

- NHS
- Ministry of Justice
- Home Office
- Police
  - NCA
  - PAIT
  - London Met
- Frameworks
  - ESPO
  - CCS

In need of a trusted public service interpreter?

- ✓ I am proud to be a NRPSI regulated Registered Public Service Interpreter.
- ✓ I am a certified professional public service interpreter.
- ✓ My qualifications, experience and security vetting have been independently verified.
- ✓ I have signed up to the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct and am accountable.

Check my credentials.

Find me listed on the free-to-access online National Register of Public Service Interpreters at [www.nrpsi.org.uk](http://www.nrpsi.org.uk).



**YOU WOULDN'T ACCEPT AN UNREGULATED AND UNREGISTERED DOCTOR OR LAWYER, SO DON'T ACCEPT AN UNREGULATED AND UNREGISTERED PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETER.**



# Where Are We Today...

Level 6 Regulation & Registration

Level 3 Regulation & Registration?

Unprofessional/ pseudo interpreters

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# The Future...



There is a continuing and increasing need for standards and professionalism in public sector spoken language services

Ensuring effective regulation of those acting as interpreters and translators in potentially life-changing interactions with the public services has never been more important



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# The Future...



So...Self-regulation will continue, accountable to the *profession*, operating and promulgating standards which have been designed to ensure quality practices, and to accredit those fit to practise

The extent to which the state has an interest in regulation of professional PSIs, and how these practitioners are regulated, depends on *political necessity*...and the *levels of risk* which need to be addressed by government

# The Future...



What are the next big changes, their risks and possible benefits:

- Remote interpreting
- Technology assisted translation
- Offshoring
- Review of Outsourcing

# The Future...



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Public Service Interpreters

“ Meet the NRPSI board



“ Both our goal and our main challenge is to get our profession properly recognised, which would include protection of title – meaning that only registered and regulated professionals would be able to call themselves a public service interpreter.

---

Phil Muriel, Practitioner Board Member

# The Future...



## NRPSI's Goals

- Secure protection of title for public service language professionals
- Lobby for statutory regulation for public service language professionals
- Lobby to obtain appropriate remuneration, terms and conditions, commensurate with the qualifications and experience of registered, regulated practitioners
- Establish NRPST and grow NRPSI
- Build on our regular conversations with Registrants
- Increase effectively our use of media platforms
- Become active across all areas of public service interpreting and translating, matching levels of attainment to the complexity of work
- Continue effective dialogue with public sector organisations
- Develop dialogue with executive and legislative functions across the UK

# NRPSI Responsibility...



National Register of  
Public Service Interpreters

“ Meet the NRPSI board



“ Being registered and regulated entails being skilled to a high professional standard, complying with a code of professional conduct, and respecting the associated disciplinary procedures.

---

Madeleine Lee, Practitioner Board Member



# NRPSI Responsibility...

Code of Professional Conduct  
Professional Conduct Committee  
Disciplinary Committee  
Appeals Committee

Protects the Public

Protects Public Services

Protects the PSI Profession

Protects the Practitioner

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# NRPSI Responsibility...



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“ Meet the NRPSI board



“ Our qualifications and accountability as professional public service interpreters are what separate us from those working as interpreters who are not qualified or accountable.

---

Eulália Pessoa-White, Practitioner Board Member

# Inexorable Inevitability...



**This happens, when management thinks anybody can do any work.**





# Journey to 2030



Registered  
and Regulated  
Interpreter

Step  
1

OCCUPATION



Step  
2

NASCENT BUDDING  
PROFESSION



Step  
3

SELF REGULATING  
PROFESSION



Step  
4

WIDER STAKEHOLDER  
GROUPS ACCEPT NEED  
FOR REGULATION



Step  
5

CONTROL OF SUPPLY AND  
COST CONSIDERATIONS



Step  
6

RISK AND EXPOSURE  
DEMANDS GOVERNMENT  
INVOLVEMENT



Step  
7

STATUTORY PROFESSION;  
PROTECTION OF TITLE



# Journey to 2030



National Register of  
Public Service Interpreters

“ Meet the NRPSI board



“ I want NRPSI and our Registrants to be recognised and accepted as the definitive mark of quality in public service interpreting.

---

Alan Kershaw, Chair

# Contacts and Links



- [mike@nrpsi.org.uk](mailto:mike@nrpsi.org.uk)
- [www.nrpsi.org.uk](http://www.nrpsi.org.uk)
- [www.nrpst.org.uk](http://www.nrpst.org.uk)
- [www.linkedin.com/company/2134408/admin/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/2134408/admin/)
- [www.linkedin.com/in/orlovmike/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/orlovmike/)

NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct:

<http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-clients-of-interpreters/code-of-professional-conduct.html>

History of the National Register:

<http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/Access-to-Justice-A-Report-of-the-Nuffield-Interpreter-Project-1993.html>

Criteria for entry to NRPSI:

<http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/for-interpreters/join-the-register.html>



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