Appendix A - RID CERTIFICATION INFORMATION
(REGISTRY OF INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF)

Tips From The Raters

Many candidates have expressed concerns regarding what it is, exactly, that the certification raters are looking for. Quite simply the raters are looking at everything the candidate does to ensure that each candidate has the minimum skills necessary to professionally interpret. These minimal skill levels were determined by the members who attended the St. Paul national RID convention in 1987. Here are some suggestions from the Raters of both the CI and CT tests.

What is "Transliteration" As Required For Performance Testing?

Critical areas:

Message - make sure that your interpretations do not add information, delete information, or alter the essential meaning of the original message. Be confident in your work. Do not produce messages with uncertainty or doubt unless the original message was produced in this way.

Production - speak or sign clearly in grammatically correct constructions for the task you are performing. Do not produce distracting information (e.g. "um, er, you know" or back and forth weaving while signing).

Task - know which test you are taking. Do not perform "transliteration" when the test is for interpreting. Do not perform interpreting when the test is for "transliteration." The transliteration task for the test is not one of manual English coding. It is conceptually correct signing with English words mouthed on the lips.

Less critical areas:

You will be simulating platform interpreting. Make sure you are dressed appropriately for the task. Do not be noisy in your signing style. Be sure to speak with enough volume to be clearly recorded. In short, behave as you normally would for a real interpreting performance.

What Is "Transliteration" As Required For Performance Testing?

Many candidates for the Transliteration Performance Examination have requested guidance for understanding what the goal of the English-to-sign portion of the test is. The raters have reviewed the minimum standard and the performances of passing and failing candidates and have agreed upon the following definition of "Transliteration." Three categories of variables have been defined: Grammar and Vocabulary, Processing, and Mouth Movement Patterns.

Grammar and Vocabulary

Use of space for role taking (characterization)
Use of space for subject-object agreement and verb inflections
Conceptually correct sign choices (based on meaning rather than form)
Some amount of "initialization" but only to the extent that initialization is used by deaf adults (not to the extent of Manual English Codes).

Processing

Lexical to phrasal levels of processing, e.g. word meaning for word meaning with some restructuring or paraphrasing for clearer conveyance of meaning.
Some additions of ASL signs which enhance the clarity of the visual message (Modals such as CAN, classifier constructions, indexing, and listing structures)
Detailed English morphology (e.g. manual English coding of "ing," "ed," and the copula) is conveyed on the mouth but not with manual signs.

Mouth Movement Patterns

Cohesive English sentences are visibly presented on the lips, either as exact words from the original text or as English paraphrasing of the original text.
Overriding all of these details is the requirement that the target message resulting from the transliteration process remains true and accurate with regard to the source text. There should be no substitutions (missing a concept from the original and replacing it with a different concept) and no significant omissions (all of the main points and nearly all of the supporting details of the source text should be reflected in the target text).

Working into Spoken English

For the Transliteration Performance Exams, candidates should create a grammatically correct and coherent English text which remains true and accurate with regard to the source text. There should be no substitutions and very few (if any) omissions.

What is "Interpretation" As Required For Performance Testing?

Many candidates for the Interpretation Performance Examination have requested guidance for understanding what the target production of the English-to-sign portion of the test should look like. The raters have reviewed the minimum standard and the performances of passing and failing candidates and have agreed upon the following definition of "Interpretation" as applied to the RID Performance Examinations. Three categories of variables have been defined: ASL Grammar and Vocabulary, Processing, and Mouth Movement Patterns.

ASL Grammar and Vocabulary (English to ASL Interpreting)

Use of appropriate ASL grammar (use of space for characterization, subject-object agreement and verb inflections; facial grammatical forms for questions, topics, commands, etc.)
Semantically correct sign choices used appropriately for ASL syntax.
Limited amounts of "initialization" are acceptable.

Processing

The minimum acceptable level of processing is at the phrasal to sentential levels. Word for word processing will not pass the certification examination.

Some syntactic influences of the original text may appear in the interpretation, but only so long as the interpretation remains clear and makes "visual sense."

Mouth Movement Patterns

Mouth patterns should reflect appropriate adult ASL usage.

Mouth movements which only represent exact English word order will not pass the test.

Overriding all of these details is the requirement that the target message resulting from the interpretation process remains true and accurate with regard to the source text. There should be no substitutions (missing a concept from the original and replacing it with a different concept) and no significant omissions (all of the main points and nearly all of the supporting details of the source text should be reflected in the target text).

Working into Spoken English

For the Interpretation Performance Exams, candidates should create a grammatically correct and coherent English text which remains true and accurate with regard to the source text. There should be no substitutions. Extended periods of silence (processing time) are acceptable so long as there are no significant omissions.

Description of the RID CI and CT Rating Scales

RID's rating system for the Certificates of Interpretation and Transliteration is based on a set of 13 items, which we refer to as behaviorally anchored scales. These items represent key behaviors an interpreter must demonstrate in order to be awarded certification. The 13 behaviors are scored on a 1-5 Likert-type scale, with one being low and five being high. They are weighted according to criticality and importance to the task in order to correspond to the St. Paul standard voted on by the certified membership in 1987. There are seven scales/behaviors for the Voice-to-Sign (V-S) section, and six for the Sign-to-Voice (S-V) section. These 13 scales (items) are duplicated for the One-to-One section of the test as the candidate does both V-S and S-V. therefore a candidate for certification is rated on 26 scales. There are three categories of raters: Deaf consumers, hearing consumers, and certified interpreters. A candidate's tape of their performance is sent to a rater in each of the three categories.

This information co-exists with the raters description of "What is Interpretation?" and "What is Transliteration?" Although all RID tests continue to be non-diagnostic in nature, these documents will prove beneficial for those preparing for the performance exams.

A general description of the seven scales for the Voice-to-Sign segment are:
1) Sign Parameters - correct and consistent production of sign parameters (handshape, palm orientation, location and movement).
2) Flow - comfort level of sign flow; Example - smooth, comfortable for viewing, not choppy with few false starts and unnecessary pauses, not over smooth without appropriate pauses
3) Message Equivalence - message completion with regard to factual information, register and cultural/linguistic adjustments with few minor miscues (omissions/substitutions, additions, and intrusions)
4) Target Language - uses appropriate target language (e.g. signed English for the transliteration test and ASL for the interpretation test)
5) Affect - consistency of facial grammar and affect to source language
6) Vocabulary Choice - conceptually correct sign choices based on meaning rather than form
7) Sentence Boundaries - clear and consistent identification of sentence types and topic boundaries which match source language

A general description of the six scales for the Sign-to-Voice segment are:
8) Enunciation - clarity and consistency throughout task
9) Flow - comfort level for listening; example: few false starts, pauses, and non-linguistic behaviors (distracting mannerisms - uh, um, etc.), not over smooth without appropriate pauses
10) Message Equivalence - message completion with regard to factual information, register and cultural/linguistic adjustments with few minor miscues (omissions/substitutions, additions, and intrusions)
11) Inflection - consistency of inflection to source language
12) Vocabulary Choice - conceptually correct sign choices based on meaning rather than form
13) Sentence Boundaries - clear and consistent identification of sentence types and topic boundaries which match source language

Scales 1-13 are repeated for the One-to-One section of the exam.