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**Inter-Agency Meeting on Language Arrangements,
Documentation and Publications**

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Item 3(a) of the provisional agenda

Working Group on Translation

Chairman: Anthony Pitt (ITU)

A. SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. At its meeting at UNOV in Vienna in 2002, IAMLADP decided to maintain its Working Group on Translation, with Anthony Pitt (ITU) as chairman. The Working Group was mandated to consider, in particular, two longstanding translation issues, namely workload standards (including the possibility of establishing harmonized standards), and quality control mechanisms.
2. The Working Group held two one-day meetings, on 5 December 2002 and 11 April 2003, both in Geneva. The meetings were planned and held in close coordination with the Working Group on Documentation. A consolidated list of participants who attended one or both of the meetings of the Working Group on Translation appears in **Annex 1**. A list of all the documents considered by the Working Group is provided in **Annex 2**.

B. WORKLOAD STANDARDS FOR TRANSLATION

Results of survey on workload standards

3. At its December meeting, the Working Group had before it the results of a survey on workload standards conducted by the chairman in 2002 by means of a questionnaire.
4. It was evident from the survey that all organizations recognized the need for production and/or productivity standards or criteria for the purposes of planning, budgeting and in many cases performance

appraisal. However, it was equally apparent that practices, calculation methods and even individual understandings of the basic concepts differed considerably from organization to organization. Moreover, in addition to the obvious differences in size, language combinations, budgets and structures in the different organizations, working methods also varied enormously.

5. The survey revealed that, although some organizations did not recognize self-revision as a valid concept¹, self-revision was increasingly used, for both in-house and outsourced work. All organizations had recourse to outsourcing, but to varying extents. Similarly, the mix between dictation, self-typing and the emerging technology of voice recognition differed significantly.

6. Participants also stressed the importance for workload standards of factors associated with the translation process such as pre-referencing, pre-editing and the quality of original texts, and that it would be increasingly necessary to assess the potential implications of computer-aided translation (CAT) tools.

Harmonized unit of measurement

7. As had indeed been suggested at IAMLADP-02, the Working Group agreed that one of the first steps towards the ultimate harmonization of standards should be the adoption of a common unit of measurement. After some discussion, while acknowledging that a few organizations used other units and that for certain languages a conversion factor might need to be applied, the Working Group decided to recommend to IAMLADP that the preferred basic unit of measurement for translation texts and any ensuing standards should be *words of text in the source language*.

8. In conclusion of the debate on workload standards, the Working Group agreed, with a view to further consideration at the April meeting: (1) to continue to collect, update and where possible harmonize the numerical data on workload standards; (2) to try to develop definitions of the basic terms used in connection with workload standards (3) to identify a list of factors which could have an impact on workload standards; (4) to consider in particular the potential impact of CAT tools.

9. At its April meeting, the Working Group considered various inputs from the chairman and rapporteurs on the above items.

Definitions

10. With respect to definitions, in order to assist in achieving better harmonization of practices within IAMLADP organizations for the future, the Working Group considered and agreed to recommend to IAMLADP a number of definitions for terms relating to workload standards drawn up by a small sub-group led by Ms Frances Papazafiroopoulos (ILO). The proposed definitions are contained in **Annex 3**. These definitions should help to ensure that in their discussions on the translation process, IAMLADP organizations would use consistent terminology.

Publication of workload standards

11. With respect to the specific data collected from the organizations on workload standards, after lengthy discussion the majority of participants considered that it would not be feasible to harmonize the figures for direct comparability, in view of the many factors involved and the wide range of organizational

¹ One participant observed that, when talking about self-revision, the basic distinction being made was between output requiring revision and the authoritative output of an experienced translator on his or her own responsibility. The hilarity with which the term "self-revision" is sometimes greeted suggested the term failed to get this distinction across effectively. "Autonomous translation" was proposed as one possible alternative.

situations. For this reason, however, if the figures were taken in isolation, they could be somewhat misleading. Nonetheless, even in this somewhat raw form the information would be very useful for translation managers in the IAMLADP organizations. It was therefore agreed to submit the figures to IAMLADP, with a clear rider stipulating that the data were provided for information only, were not directly comparable and could only be interpreted in the context of various other important factors. The data are contained in **Annex 4**, preceded by a note to that effect.

Broader consideration of factors affecting translation workload standards

12. Recognizing therefore that the translation function is more complex than can be expressed in raw figures alone, and that it is vitally important, especially when using numerical data for budgeting, planning and performance measurement, that all other relevant factors be taken into account², the Working Group focused considerable attention on the broader list of tasks carried out by translators, and on the organizational features, working methods and contextual factors which have an impact on standards. As a first step, the Working Group considered and adopted a tentative list of tasks that might be included in the translator's job description and a list of other key factors, also drawn up by the small sub-group. For lack of time, no detailed consideration of each factor and its impact was undertaken, with the exception of a brief discussion on the relative merits of dictation, self-typing and voice recognition.

13. The list of tasks undertaken by translators and the list of other factors are submitted to IAMLADP in **Annex 5**. If so agreed, the Working Group could study each of them in detail in the coming period, and possibly, where appropriate and feasible, endeavour to evaluate their potential impact on production/productivity standards. Such information would be invaluable for translation managers as a complement to numerical standards and in their dealings with senior management and budgetary authorities.

Impact of IT tools

14. Finally, the Working Group considered some initial input and thoughts on the impact of CAT on workload standards from Ms Marie-Josée de Saint-Robert (UNOG/JIAMCATT), and recognized that it could be expected that the introduction and use of such tools would have significant implications. For example, how would the word count for a translation - the basis for production, productivity and even payment - be affected when part of the text was extracted from a translation memory and provided to the translator as an aid or a reference? The meeting was informed that the issue was to be discussed at JIAMCATT, and it was agreed that the JIAMCATT Chair would report to the Working Group at its next meeting. It is therefore proposed, if IAMLADP so agrees, that this subject be taken up further in the coming period.

Conclusion

15. The Working Group hopes that, by combining the various elements above, it may eventually be the required numerical data, but also other key information for managers on all aspects of the translation process and their impact on standards and efficiency.

C. Quality control

Results of survey on quality control

² The Working Group was informed, for example, that UN New York estimates that such additional tasks account for some 18% of a translator's time.

16. On this item also, at its December meeting the Working Group had before it brief descriptions of quality control mechanisms collected through a survey conducted by the chairman in 2002 by means of a questionnaire.

17. From its discussion of the information, the Working Group came to the inescapable conclusion that as work pressure on the translation services increased, quality control in all its forms became less frequent and less rigorous; translation services faced a constant and increasingly difficult trade-off between quality, speed and cost. The traditional means of quality control, namely revision, was giving way to increasing self-revision, and spot-checking rather than systematic review was emerging as a common mechanism.

18. Even if, in applying the above-mentioned trade-offs in a pragmatic manner, different documents were *de facto* given different levels of treatment, many participants felt strongly that a single level of quality should remain the norm, especially since texts that start out as drafts or information documents often end up having a long shelf-life, and may be widely distributed on the web. Similarly, participants felt that, despite pressures to the contrary, the language services should remain the custodians of quality, while of course taking due account of and indeed being driven by client needs and feedback.

19. The summary information on quality control mechanisms gathered from the survey was expanded and updated throughout the year, and is contained in **Annex 6**.

A new approach: "Quality Management"

20. At the December meeting, the Working Group considered with great interest a document submitted by Mr David Chambers (WIPO) suggesting a broader, "holistic" approach to the difficult question of quality. Rather than focusing merely on quality control of output, language services should look at quality throughout the whole process, starting upstream: contacts with translation schools, recruitment, training, reviser feedback, discussion groups, guidelines and manuals, references, databases, IT tools, etc. The document suggests that it is necessary to define an acceptable quality level (AQL), and describes a practical project to that end under implementation in WIPO-PCT.

21. Following an oral update on the status of the project at the April meeting, the Working Group suggested that, if IAMLADP so agreed, the quality management approach should be further explored in the coming period with a view, if possible, to establishing a best practice that could be adopted by other organizations. The WIPO document is attached for the information of IAMLADP as **Annex 7**.

22. It was also pointed out that the training component implicit in the suggested quality management approach would be of interest to the Working Group on Training, and the training scheme undertaken in WIPO might serve as an example or as a pilot project on the training of revisers, which has already been identified as a potential priority training area.

Example of a formalized quality control mechanism for outsourced translation

23. At the December meeting, noting the growing importance of outsourcing of translation work as a means of meeting the dual challenge of workload and costs, and the particular quality issues this raised, the Working Group was informed orally of a systematic and formal inter-institutional quality control and evaluation mechanism already in place and under constant refinement in the European institutions.

24. This mechanism having elicited considerable interest, at the April meeting Ms Rebecca West (European Parliament) submitted and introduced a detailed documentation package on the common quality control mechanism. External translation in the European organizations represented well over EUR 30

million, and contracts were awarded on the basis of calls for bids. The formal evaluation process was therefore necessary for the selection of contractors, for verifying compliance with contractual obligations, for establishing a dynamic ranking of quality (acceptable, unacceptable, exceptional), and for the imposition of penalties where applicable, although it also proved useful for the evaluation of in-house translation and for recruitment.

25. The mechanism provided a common system among European institutions for assessing translations on the basis of well-defined agreed criteria. All translations were evaluated using a uniform assessment sheet; guidelines were provided for assessors, who also received appropriate training; contractual obligations based on the criteria were signified to suppliers; and the mechanism was overseen by an Inter-institutional Committee for the Evaluation of External Translation Quality (CIEQ). Selected extracts from the documentation submitted to the Working Group are set out in **Annex 8**.

26. The Working Group, while recognizing that such an elaborate mechanism was designed for a very large organization with a very large workload, and entailed significant investment to develop and operate, considered that the general approach and assessment criteria could be adapted to other organizations or groups of organizations and perhaps form the basis for a best-practice recommendation to IAMLADP. If IAMLADP so wishes, during the coming period the Working Group could endeavour to draw up a comprehensive document to that end.

D. Other items

Improving the performance of the UN Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services

27. At the December meeting, the Working Group heard an excellent presentation by Mr Stephen Sekel (UNHQ) of a recent report (A/57/289) of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on improving the performance of the UN Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. The report contains a vast amount of very relevant and interesting information, including measures to enhance the translation services within the DGAACS.

Charging mechanisms

28. At the December meeting, Ms Corinne Foote (IAEA) suggested that the Working Group might consider practices in the different organizations in respect of internal charging systems for translation work. At the April meeting it transpired that of those represented, only FAO and WHO had some system of charging customers directly. It was decided that under those circumstances it was not worth conducting a survey. Subsequent contacts between Ms Foote and Mr McCarey (WHO) clarified that at WHO customers are only charged for translations that are not done in-house. Further Contacts between Ms Foote and Mr Ben Ameur (FAO) indicated that FAO is currently the only organization using a comprehensive charge back system to customers covering both in-house and outsourced translation. Ms Foote would be interested in hearing from any other organizations that have systems for direct internal charging of customers.

Exchanges of views on specific subjects

29. During the discussions at the two meetings, often prompted by a request for information or assistance from an interested organization, the Working Group also touched upon and exchanged views and experiences on a number of other subjects of interest to the translation process, such as telework, finding and recruiting staff of the requisite quality, student placements, and other matters. These exchanges, and also e-mail and other communications between meetings, were very valuable to individual members of the Working Group facing common problems in the translation field.

E. Future work

Possible items for future study

30. As indicated above, during the next period IAMLADP may wish, in addition to any other items it might itself identify, to entrust the Working Group with continued study of:

- the different factors affecting the translation process, having particular reference to their impact on workload standards;
- the impact of CAT tools on workload standards;
- further refinement of the quality management approach as a possible best practice;
- compilation of a document on the European quality control mechanism as a possible best practice; and
- a survey of charging systems for translation.

Structure and organizational matters

31. The meetings of the Working group were closely coordinated with those of the Working Group on Documentation, and many participants attended both groups. Inevitably, some of the issues discussed were relevant to both groups, given the close linkage between the documentation and translation functions. It was thus suggested that IAMLADP reflect on the most efficient arrangement for continuation of the valuable work at working group level on both translation and documentation.

F. Closing remarks

32. The activities of the Working Group were not confined to the two meetings. Much work was also done between meetings by individual members and small groups, and the Working Group's documentation was distributed electronically to an extensive distribution list. Individual and collective exchanges took place by e-mail and other media. The feedback received appears to confirm that participants have found the Working Group's activities relevant and useful.

33. The chairman wishes to thank all organizations that responded to the questionnaire, and all participants for their very positive and valuable contributions. Particular thanks go the rapporteurs who agreed to take on study of various items, not least Frances Papazafiroopoulos (ILO) on factors affecting the translation process, David Chambers (WIPO) on quality management, Rebecca West (European Parliament) on quality control in the European institutions, Marie-José de Saint-Robert (UNOG/JIAMCATT) on CAT tools and Corinne Foote (IAEA) on charging mechanisms. The chairman is also indebted to Ms Claude Briand (ITU) who drafted the minutes of the Working Group's meetings.

34. Any IAMLADP participant wishing to be added to the distribution list or to receive any further documentation of the Working Group on any particular item should contact the chairman at: anthony.pitt@itu.int.

Annexes: 8

ANNEX 1

List of participants

Court of Justice of the European Communities:	Maria Letizia Lombardi
European Central Bank:	Sarah Johns
European Parliament:	Rebecca West
European Space Agency:	Paul Reilly
Food and Agriculture Organization:	Sergio Ferraro Ahmed Ben Ameer
International Atomic Energy Agency:	Corinne Foote
International Committee of the Red Cross:	Margarita Billon
International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia:	Maja Ruzic Christina Zoric
International Fund for Agricultural Development:	Guido Orlandini
International Labour Organization:	Anis Hassanein Frances Papazafirooulos
International Telecommunication Union:	Anthony Pitt (Chairman) Claude Briand (Rapporteur)
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons:	Loreto Bravo de Urquia
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization:	Alexander Vorobiev
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization:	Jennifer Pearson
United Nations Headquarters:	Stephen Sekel
United Nations Office at Geneva:	Brian Hooley Marie-Josée de Saint Robert
United Nations Office at Vienna:	Alexandre Agaiants Sally Reading
World Food Programme:	Marie-Françoise Perez

World Health Organization:

Peter McCarey

World Intellectual Property Organization:

David Chambers

Henry Valarino

Bernard Dondenne

Francisco Vales

World Meteorological Organization:

Valerie Mitchell

World Trade Organization:

Neil Johnstone

ANNEX 2

List of documents considered by the Working Group on Translation³

Document No.	Title/Subject
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/001	Agenda - Meeting of 5 December 2002
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/002	Results of the survey on workload standards <i>(see also Annex 4 to this document)</i>
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/003	Results of the survey on quality control mechanisms <i>(see also Annex 6 to this document)</i>
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/004	WIPO - How's your QM? <i>(reproduced in Annex 7 to this document)</i>
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/005	Compte rendu de la réunion du 5 décembre 2002
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/006	Agenda - Meeting of 11 April 2003
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/007	Brief report of the subgroup on definitions and "other factors" <i>(reflected in Annexes 3 and 5 to this document)</i>
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/008	Common system for assessing translations supplied by external contractors <i>(reproduced in Annex 8 to this document)</i>
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/009	Some informal notes on translation activities in the Secretariat of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol
IAMLADP/WG-Tr/010	Compte rendu de la réunion du 11 avril 2003

³ This list relates only to formal documents. Several informal documents and conference room papers were also distributed.

ANNEX 3

Definitions of terms relating to workload standards for translation

a) *Workload standards*

The Working Group feels that the term *workload standards* used historically in IAMLADP as a generic term is probably somewhat of a misnomer; however, since it is an established concept in IAMLADP circles, and given that its purpose is rather as a descriptive generic title for this activity, the group concluded that we may continue to use it, while endeavouring however to use the more specific definitions for particular concepts outlined below.

A *standard* reflects a benchmark or target, and not necessarily an actual output.

b) *Workload*

Volume of work entrusted to a translation service over a given period of time.

Possible unit: Number of words per year

c) *Capacity*

Theoretical amount of work a translation service can handle over a given period of time.

Possible unit: Number of words per year.

d) *Output (synonym: production)*

Actual work produced by a translation service over a given period of time.

Possible unit: Number of words per year

e) *Productivity*

Amount of output per translator over a given period of time.

Possible unit: Number of words per translator per work day.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Naturally, for all of the above concepts, the parameters can be changed according to the purpose for which the statistical indicators are required. The unit of measurement used for the amount of work should always be words of translation (since this is almost entirely unambiguous, in contrast with other non-standardized units such as pages), based on the source text⁴. The level of aggregation can be varied, e.g. individual (translator); single language section; all language sections taken together; etc. Finally, the integration period can be one day, month or year.

⁴ For certain languages, a conversion factor may be necessary.

ANNEX 4

Data on translation workload standards

IMPORTANT NOTE

The attached raw data and information were collected from organizations in response to a survey conducted in 2002/2003 by the IAMLADP Working Group on Translation.

The figures presented in these tables are provided for information only. They correspond to standards used in language services in different organizations for different purposes and calculated on very different bases.

The data do not relate to any harmonized approach or common denominator, and cannot therefore in any way be used for comparison.

The Working Group wishes to emphasize that any interpretation or usage of these data must take into account the many organizational features and other factors affecting the translation process, which vary very widely indeed from organization to organization

Abbreviations used in the tables:

UNHQ:	United Nations Headquarters, New York
UNOG:	United Nations Office at Geneva
UNOV:	United Nations Office at Vienna
ESCAP:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ECA:	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ESCWA:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
ICAO:	International Civil Aviation Organization
WHO:	World Health Organization
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WMO:	World Meteorological Organization
ILO:	International Labour Organization
UPU:	Universal Postal Union
WIPO:	World Intellectual Property Organization
ITU:	International Telecommunication Union
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
IAEA:	International Atomic Energy Agency
IFAD:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
WTO:	World Trade Organization
ICTY:	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
WFP:	World Food Programme
CoE:	Council of Europe
EC-CDT:	Translation Centre for Bodies of the EU
OPCW:	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
Eurocontrol:	European Organization for Safety of Air Navigation
EPO:	European Patent Office
IDB:	Inter-American Development Bank
World Bank:	World Bank
UNFMS:	Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol
OECD:	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
IMF:	International Monetary Fund

Translation: workload standards (2003)

(Number of words per translator per work/day)

	UNHQ	UNOG	UNOV	ESCAP	ECA	ESCWA	ICAO	WHO	UNESCO	WMO	ILO	UPU	WIPO ¹⁰⁾	WIPO Language Service	
														E,F,S	A,C,R
TRANSLATION	1 650	1 650	1 650	1 650	1 980-2 640	1 650 ⁶⁾	1 600-1 800		1 944 ¹⁾		1 500	1400-2 350 ⁸⁾	1 500	1 500	1 300
SELF-REVISION	1 815	1 815	1 815	1 420	1 650	1 320 ⁷⁾	1 300-1 400	1 560		1 200	1 250			1 500	1 300
REVISION	3 960	3 960	3 960	4 950	4 950	3 330 ⁶⁾	4 400-5 000	3 120	3 888	2 400	3 000	3 375 – 5 625 ⁸⁾		3 750	3 250

	ITU	FAO	IAEA	IFAD	WTO	ICTY	WFP	CoE	EC-CDT	OPCW ¹²⁾	Euro-control	EPO	IDB	OECD	IMF	World ¹¹⁾ Bank	UNMFS ¹³⁾
TRANSLATION	1 650	1 800	1 650	1 650	1 650	1 650	1 750	344k wds/yr	4 pages	5 pages	²⁾	5 pages ³⁾	7 mio wds/yr	1 500 ⁵⁾	2 337 ⁹⁾	N/A	N/A
SELF-REVISION	1 650	1 800	1 650	1 500	1 400		1 750			5 pages			2.33 mio wds/yr		2 337 ⁹⁾	N/A	N/A
REVISION	4 950	5 000	3 300	4 000	4 950	5 800	4 500	688k wds/yr	20 pages	15 pages	²⁾	10 pages ³⁾	2.7 mio wds/yr	2 250 ⁵⁾	4 674 ⁹⁾	N/A	N/A

1) Arabic: 1 460; Chinese: 1 135

2) Ensure demand is met

3) 1 page = 25 lines of 55 characters

4) Total workload in 2001. Average daily production for translation = 2 200 words

5) Minimum expected output – actually usually much higher

6) Arabic

7) English

8) Range (\pm 25% from median) according to difficulty

9) IMF has no fixed standards; production/productivity standards used as norm.

10) PCT section

11) World Bank does not measure productivity using these criteria as it regards them outdated. As the World Bank model continues to promote and strengthen outsourcing, vendor development and vendor support, productivity is being measured as “total combined output” (words managed plus words translated/revised/proofread) per year. Depending on several factors the output target lies between 350k words and 700k words per person per year.

12) No formal standard: “rule of thumb”

13) All work instances

Translation : Other data (2003)

	UNHQ	UNOG	UNOV	ESCAP	ECA	ESCWA	ICAO	WHO	UNESCO	WMO
Outsourcing <i>In-house</i> <i>Outsourced</i>	80% 20%	93% 7%	85% 15%	98% 2%	90% 10%	56% 44%	76% 24%	75% 25%	65% ⁴⁾ 35% ⁴⁾	60% 40%
Revision <i>Revised</i> <i>Self-revised</i> <i>Unrevised</i>	42% 58% -	53% 47% -	43% 57% -	35% 65% -	85% 10% 5%	78% 22% -	15% 85% -	10% 90% -	⁴ ⁴	- 100% -
Revision (outsourced) <i>Revised</i> <i>Self-revised</i> <i>Unrevised</i>	- 100% -	- 100% -	- 100% -	- 100% -	95% 3% 2%	- 100% -	- 100% -	40% 60%	⁴ ⁴	5% 90% 5%
On-screen work <i>Dictation</i> <i>Self-typing</i> <i>Voice-recognition</i> <i>Other</i>	58% 30% 7% 5%	62% 19% 19% -	70% 28% 2% -	85% 10% 5% -	40% 55% 5 -	40% 60% - -	80% 20% - -	-65% 35% - -	⁴ ⁴ -	70% 30% - -
CAT/MT	Trados Wordfast	<u>Testing</u> Trados Multitrans	No, awaiting UNHQ	Trados (trial)	No Some indiv. use of Globalink	No	Limited use of Trados	Limited: Tr. Wkbench Engspan	No	<u>Testing:</u> MultiTrans MetaRead <u>Tested:</u> Sysran L&Hpower Langensch. T1
Other IT tools	UNTERM dtSearch e-Folder LEO	Terminol. Refs. Search Transmission	VINTARS Databases dtSearch Internet Indexes Docs. etc	Terminol. Databases Search Internet E-mail for remote wk.	Terminol. Refs Search Transmission	Terminol. Intranet Internet E-mail	Terminol. Databases Search	Terminol. Databases Search dtSearch	Terminol. Databases Docs	Meteoterm Terminol Databases dtSearch Dragon VR purchased

- 1) Digital Dictaphone
2) PCT Section
3) Over 50% by contractuales in house

- 4) Varies considerably by language
5) Self-revision not a recognized concept

Translation : Other data (2003) (continued)

	ITU	FAO	IAEA	IFAD	WTO	ICTY	WFP	COE		EU-CDT	Eurocontrol
								E	F		
Outsourcing <i>In-house</i> <i>Outsourced</i>	70% ⁴⁾ 30% ⁴⁾	40% 60%	91% 8%	50% 50%	70% 30%	80% 20%	40% 60%	80% 20%	55% 45%	45-60- 55-40%	84% 16%
Revision <i>Revised</i> <i>Self-revised</i> <i>Unrevised</i>	50% 50% -	20% 80% -	Most revised or "self-revised"	30% 70% -	40% 55% 5%	77% 3% 20%		50% ⁵⁾ 50%	10% ⁵⁾ 90%	15% 100% 85%	86% 6% 8%
Revision (outsourced) <i>Revised</i> <i>Self-revised</i> <i>Unrevised</i>	60% 40% -	70% - 30%		20% 70% 10%	40% 55% 5%	10% 90% -	70% ⁶⁾ 30% -	50% ⁵⁾ 50%	10% ⁵⁾ 90%	100% - -	86% - 14%
On-screen work <i>Dictation</i> <i>Self-typing</i> <i>Voice-recognition</i> <i>Other</i>	75% 25% - -	80% 20% Experimental	~ 100% ~3%	100%	45% 10% 45% ¹⁾ -	-100% - -	5% 95% - -	10% 80% 10% -	35% 60% 5% -	-100% Testing -	-95% 5% -
CAT/MT	Engspan trial Various tests	Trados (limited)	Trados	Trados ISYS DT Search	TAS Trados	Trados pilot project	Trados	Limited use of Trados		Translation memory (75%) Trans.mem + automatic (100% trademarks)	Trados Limited use of Systran
Other IT tools	TERMITE Terminol. Databases Search Internet etc. Documentum	Outlook Internet Database (ISYS6) Intranet	Electronic Dic+gloss. ISYS search Internet Multiterm	Terminol. Databases Search Internet Intranet e-mail Glossaries	TAS Electronic transmission DMS e-mail	Internet Intranet	ISYS Internet Termium	Extensive use of IT support tools		Multiterm IATE Databases on Oracle Internet E-mail: Lotus Workflow: Oracle + Lotus	Dragon VR for Italian Multiterm Search Internet

Translation : Other data (2003) (continued)

	EPO	IDB	OECD	IMF	World Bank	ILO	UPU	WIPO ²⁾	WIPO Language Service	UNMFS
Outsourcing <i>In-house</i> Outsourced	Majority Only peaks	33% 67%	55% 45%	55% 45%	70% 30%	70% 30%	92% 8%	98% ³⁾ --	91% 9%	99% 1%
Revision <i>Revised</i> Self-revised <i>Unrevised</i>	80% - 20%	100% 100% -	~5-10% 5 ~90 - 95%	30% 40% 30%	90%	80% 10% 10%	45% 55% -		30% 50% 20%	
Revision (outsourced) <i>Revised</i> Self-revised <i>Unrevised</i>		58% - 42%	20% 5 80%	30% 50% 20% -	0%	95% - 5%	100% - -	50% 50% -	20% 80% -	- 100% -
On-screen work <i>Dictation</i> Self-typing <i>Voice-recognition</i> Other	-100% - -	-89% 11% -	(Both (used - Some typing outsourced)	-80-85% 15-20% -	75% 25% -	90% 10% - -	-100% - -	14% 80% 6% -	90% 10% - -	100% - -
CAT/MT	Trados (limited but plan to expand)	No	Pilot project: Multitrans	<u>Pilot studies</u> Trados Multitrans	Globalsight PAHO Engspan (pilot), Multicorpora Multitrans (pilot)	No	Trados Workbench Multiterm	MultiTrans MultiTerm	Trados MultiTerm	None in-house. Some freelancers appear to be using it.
Other IT tools	Multiterm Electronic transmission	DtSearch Déjà vu Internet	Terminol. dbases (Access) dtSearch Doc retrieval Job tracking, etc.	Multiterm All functions computerized	Globalsight Global Translation Management System; Globalsight Termbase, ISYS, Dragon Dictate, Deltaview	Various	Termium JIAMCATT Eurodicautom Internet	Inktomi (Intranet) Xanadu (Internet) Internet-based resources	Metaread ISI View	Technical terminology available - Word

- 1) Digital Dictaphone
2) PCT Section
5) Self-revision not a recognized concept

- 3) Over 50% by contractuels in-house
4) Varies considerably by language
6) 100% parliamentary documentation revised

ANNEX 5

Translation function and associated factors affecting workload standards

1. List of tasks that may be included in the "translator" post description:

- translation:
 - internal and external documents,
 - general, technical and legal translation;
- self-revision;
- revision of work by freelancers;
- quality assurance of third-party translation;
- checking of outsourced translation;
- assistance to external translators;
- linguistic help to colleagues;
- tutoring;
- training;
- testing, selection and development of information technology for translators;
- referencing;
- production and updating of terminological databases;
- production of glossaries;
- proof-reading;
- précis-writing;
- interpreting;
- editing (especially of documents by non-mother-tongue authors);
- language review of originals;
- administrative and management tasks;
- managing teams of external non-local and remote translators;
- consultation with clients to assess needs and expectations ;
- at team leader level, coordination of all aspects of translation process of publications and documents (including any editorial changes, quality assurance, vendor management and vendor development etc.) to ensure consistency of style and terminology in final products).
- terminology, databases, seeking authoritative sources.

2. List of other factors

Obviously, even if all definitions and concepts were standardized and a common understanding was reached system-wide, the actual figures generated would only be fully comparable if all other prevailing conditions or contingencies were equal. We know this not to be the case; indeed, there are significant variations in a whole range of parameters impinging on the translation process in the different organizations. A draft list of these factors is given below, in no particular order.

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Pre-editing | • Level of experience of translators |
| • Referencing | • Dictation/typing |
| • Quality of original / State of manuscripts | • Preparation of glossaries |
| • Level of difficulty/technicality/urgency | • Electronic submission |
| • Other language-related tasks | • Size of service |
| • Tools available | • Range of languages covered |
| • Training | • Structure of service (core, temp, outsource) |
| • Motivation / Job satisfaction | • Quality level of output |

ANNEX 6
Quality control mechanisms

UNHQ	UNOG	UNOV	ECA	ESCWA	UNESCO	WMO	ILO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spot-checking by chiefs of translation services Each service has a full-time training officer responsible for quality control and training of junior staff A coordinator is designated for lengthy documents shared among several translators to guarantee consistency and accuracy Quality of contractual translation work checked and evaluated by random sampling by the translation services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision Spot-checking by chief of section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision Spot-checking of jobs by more experienced staff Selective reviews by section chiefs <u>Outsourcing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Done by Contractual Service Unit All jobs submitted to chief of translation section (after completion) for checking 10-100% of jobs checked Sensitive docs./new contractors/on request of chief, submitted for control before issuance Chief's feedback to CSU registered to evaluate contractors Consistently poor performers removed from roster No. of senior in-house posts determines possible volume of outsourcing Single level of quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision by revisers and chief of section Outsourced work reviewed for quality and assessment (depending on level of contractor) Organization has formal different levels of quality, depending on nature of text and deadline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision by revisers and spot-checking by chief of conference services Publications submitted to authors for feedback and approval Outsourced work: evaluation sheet completed after spot-checking by in-house staff Quality control affected by shortage of human resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility of chief of unit Mainly by revision Occasionally by originators of texts, authors, etc Quality varies greatly depending on circumstances and original Outsourced work self-revised, but chief of unit endeavours to reread (definitely beneficial, but not always possible due to short deadlines) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision for new or junior translators only New translators selected by evaluating CVs, tests, etc Work outsourced to regular self-revised translators familiar with WMO terminology and documentation Sensitive, high-profile or complex texts assigned to most experienced, reliable translators (not usually revised) Plans to strengthen revision function due to increasing amount of outsourcing, including under pressure during sessions Some quality control of outsourced work done at proofreading stage (e.g. detecting omissions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality control for major documents submitted to important meetings Documents of lesser importance spot-checked Outsourced work in F, S, A, C, G and R revised whenever possible Translations into English revised only for junior translators Attempt made to retain only translators up to ILO standards on roster Other outsourced work into English (replies to questionnaires, report forms, etc) reviewed by technical units Distinction made between documents for information and publication

ANNEX 6
Quality control mechanisms (continued)

IFAD	IAEA	WTO	ICTY	CoE	EU-CDT	Eurocontrol	EPO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outsourced work revised internally for correct use of terminology, references, phraseology, house style and format • Quality control serves to add value to translated text and provide a standard product and coherent organizational message and style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision is normal means of quality control • Hope that Trados Workbench will improve consistency • On occasion, draft translations requested for information only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control implemented through revision and feedback from final users • User feedback essential in WTO since large proportion of documents are negotiating papers for meetings • Both in-house and outsourced work subject to quality control • Single level of quality (although sensitive documents undergo more thorough revision process) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control through revision on hard copy by the four revisers • In-house revisers do random quality control on outsourced work • Single level of quality for all types of text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control by revisers and heads of translation services • No distinction between in-house and external • Different quality standards applied de facto to different types of text, on the basis of judgment, especially by heads of translation. • No quality control exercised (other than occasional feedback from customer departments) for languages other than E and F (no in-house expertise) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control integrated in workflow system: indication of need for cross-checking, mandatory completion of evaluation sheet, feedback to external translators, re-ranking system foreseen in contracts • Texts for publication always checked by a second translator • Translation metric under discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All in-house translation work revised • Outsourced work similarly revised where necessary, with feedback to freelance translator • Freelance performance monitored and future contracts decided accordingly • Outsourced languages with no in-house capability are not revised: quality control depends on client feedback • Single level of quality, although in emergencies clients may be offered unrevised work • MT used on occasion as "pre-processing" stage to identify parts of texts worth handling by "human" translation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most work revised and returned to translator who checks final product before dispatch • Additional concordance check for particularly important and sensitive jobs • Documents with legal implications checked with a lawyer • Translation unit increasingly asked to check quality of originals for prestige publications

ANNEX 6

Quality control mechanisms (continued)

ICAO	OPCW	UNMFS	WIPO LANGUAGE SERVICE	UPU	FAO	IDB	IMF	WIPO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision: Revision of sensitive material by Chief of Section • Comments from users encouraged • User comments evaluated and incorporated if valid • Outsourced work: All external translators/contractors checked a priori for quality on ICAO texts • Translations initially checked but thereafter spot-checked • Chief of section has to sign for each job as satisfactorily completed before payment is authorized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-house: New translators selected on basis of tests and trial short-term contracts • All texts pre-edited and pre-referenced • Substantive officers can be consulted • External: Outsourcing to self-revised translators familiar with OPCW work • All texts pre-edited and pre-referenced • Spot-checking 	<p>Virtually all work outsourced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control activities are limited by tight deadlines • Virtually all work is for meeting documents and is out-sourced to translators who are expected to self-revise • On receipt checking of paragraph numbers, figures, headers takes place. As far as is possible technical terminology is checked. If many errors are spotted the document is sent back to the translator • More thorough checking of final reports takes place after the meeting by the translation coordinator (not a reviser) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision and feedback from end users. • Revision is followed by a common review between reviser and translator • Spot-checking or selective reviews by more experienced staff or section heads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific quality control mechanism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outsourced work reviewed in house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External translations revised or at least checked for quality when possible • Owing to limited capacity, work of experienced contractors not checked during peak periods • Revisions often marked in "track changes" mode and sent to translators for feedback, with a relevant message • Efforts under way to introduce more systematic evaluation of external translation (currently too many errors) • External translations done too fast, because income proportionate to quantity. • Some material (Web and "non-mandatory" documents) not revised or thoroughly checked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation support service (five staff) provides cross-referencing, cross-reading, cross-checking and proof-reading services to translators, as well as formatting and final quality control (paragraph and page numbering verification, table of contents, etc) • Different de facto levels of quality control, determined by capacity and time constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality control routinely performed on in-house work by revisers and supervisors • On a random basis, quality control questionnaire sent out to 15 requesters every month • Work outsourced to new contractors fully revised • For regular contractors: normally read out between two translators or proofreaders (if deadline permits), and periodically revised • Outsourced jobs dispatched unrevised to requestors accompanied by a disclaimer and request for feedback • Two quality levels offered: regular and draft translations services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A priori: briefings, demonstrations, provision of reference materials, guidelines for translation • A posteriori: revision with one-to-one feedback, particularly for new translators • Individual consultation and occasional small-group discussion of translation problems

ANNEX 7

WIPO



WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

GENEVA

IAMLADP Working Group on Translation

How's your QM?

December, 2002

D. Chambers

Introduction

Much has been said and written about ensuring quality of translations in the translation services of the International Organisations. It has been a recurring topic at IAMLADP for a number of years, and is currently being examined in more detail as part of the mandate of the IAMLADP Working Group on Translation.

A questionnaire issued by that Working Group addressed the subject of quality control mechanisms. The responses received suggest that virtually the only mechanism of quality control is revision or self-revision. It may be noted in passing that this same Working Group has on occasion classed self-revision as a euphemism for no revision. "Quality control" and "Revision" therefore appear to be synonymous, and interchangeable, as terms.

The aim of this paper is to suggest that "Quality Control is not enough", and that the issue of Control be viewed in the far wider context of Quality Management, or QM.

Some Definitions

What is quality? Before it is controlled, it would be advisable to know exactly what it is. What is acceptable quality? This assumes that the necessary metrics and reporting systems are in place so that quality is assessed in the same way by all, and that results are homogeneous, and comparable.

Literature provides an array of definitions on quality matters. Although quality standards exist in various fields, in the particular field of translation, quality is a very difficult concept to define, let alone assess. The ISO 9000 series of standards, and in particular ISO 9002, and also the DIN 2345 standard aim to define quality standards for services, but both stop short of the actual quality of the content of documents, in our case translations. The DIN standard goes slightly further than ISO in identifying key aspects of requirements for translation contracts and establishes a framework for producing translations. But it does not attempt to define quality within the translations themselves, even though it stresses the importance of revision.

Taking the "ISO 9000 Definitions Translated into Plain English" (<http://praxiom.com>), it may be deduced that:

Quality is a set of characteristics of an entity.

Some of those characteristics in the case of translations would be accuracy, dependability, completeness, intelligibility, readability, suitability, usability, uniformity across languages...

This provides an idea of what should be controlled, but does not specify any uniform means of effecting the controls or making an assessment, nor does it give any indication of how to achieve the specified characteristics.

It is for this reason that quality control should be viewed as one component of a much larger concept, that of Quality Management. In any production cycle, considerable effort is put into designing a product and fine-tuning its method of manufacture before the end result is checked in a standardised manner on a production line. Similarly, considerable input must be made into the translation process itself before the end result can be effectively assessed.

Again, inspiration has been sought from literature for defining quality management and associated concepts as they might apply to translation work.

Quality Management (QM): A structured approach to ensuring, and improving, the quality of work done, through the implementation of policies and procedures. It implies the involvement of all staff members.

Quality Assurance (QA): The procedures, i.e. the planned and systematic actions, implemented with a view to ensuring that work meets requirements.

Quality Control (QC): Actions taken to check that procedures are applied and requirements are met, and to measure results.

In this scenario, therefore, the entire process of achieving quality is being managed, and in the final stage the quality achieved is being controlled. Hence the process of actually achieving quality is considered important, in other words building quality into the translation process itself, at as early a stage as possible, with a view to achieving an Acceptable Quality Level (AQL).

A Practical Approach

Ascertaining an AQL

Having defined the concepts, it was felt that actual requirements had to be ascertained, in other words an Acceptable Quality Level had to be defined. In the case under consideration, this exercise related to a single document type translated into English, and consequently avoided the complications of different AQLs for different documents and different target languages.

The task of defining the AQL was therefore embarked upon by bringing together the staff members responsible for assessing quality, in other words the revisers. In our case, we do not have any clearly identifiable end users. It was felt also that end users may well consider a translated text acceptable but may not be able to evaluate the quality of the translation itself (little knowledge of source language).

In the absence of any readily apparent definition of an AQL, a procedure for reaching agreement on what should be considered as acceptable quality was adopted:

- Creation of a representative batch of texts and translations for each language
- Revision of same batch of texts by all revisers for language concerned
- Establishment of correction categorisation table for recording corrections made
- Discussion among revisers on each of corrections made
- Agreement on harmonised revision approach
- Deduction of acceptable quality level.

Each reviser was expected to revise in the normal manner in a normal time frame and then note the number of corrections made in each of the predefined categories. These categories were established by the Head of Section in discussion with the senior reviser for each of the languages, and consisted of Technical Content, Patent Content, Omissions, Additions, English Usage/Clarity, Form and Format, Comprehension. In addition to the number of actual corrections, the number of suggestions made by the reviser was also noted for each category.

The ensuing discussions were time-consuming, but revealed a marked difference in the approach of the individual revisers. This had been expected, but the results showed the divergence to be far greater than anticipated. An immediate conclusion could be drawn that quality control measures applied in an isolated, uncoordinated manner were giving totally disparate results, rendering their value highly questionable.

Within the course of discussions, a number of problems of categorisation assignments were identified and therefore the breakdown and definition of the correction categories will need some review.

As an outcome of the discussions, all revisers agreed that they had a far better feel for what constituted a uniform approach and what might be classed as the Acceptable Quality Level. A written definition may serve as a starting point:

- The translation should convey correctly, in the appropriate technical field, the technical and legal meaning of the source text; the technical terms should have been carefully searched for and selected; the technical and legal arguments should have been understood and clearly conveyed;
- The translation should be written in a clear, readable, grammatically correct and readily comprehensible manner in the target language.

However, the “feel” for an acceptable quality was considered essential.

Making the translator AQL aware

The next stage in the process was to make the translators aware of the quality level required of them. This is currently under way, and is being achieved by having several revisers work closely with a small number of translators, revising all their work but not performing any duplicate revision. Discussion with the translators should further enhance this “feel” for an AQL, and at the same time pinpoint problems that the translator must address.

Next Steps

Other phases of the process will follow and will be reported on at a later stage. In particular, a quality grid will be established for uniformly monitoring the work of translators and highlighting areas requiring attention.

Parallel measures

Quality assurance has been referred to above as the planned and systematic actions implemented with a view to ensuring that work meets requirements. Revision is just one of those actions. There are many others.

Building quality into the translation process starts at the recruitment phase itself, and even before recruitment if arrangements can be made with translation schools likely to provide suitable candidates. Other approaches must also be considered, such as in-house training, regular one-to-one feedback from revisers, discussion groups, translation guidelines relating to house style and terminology, readily accessible resources such as dictionaries and reference material, terminology databases, translation memories, sharing of resources among experienced and less experienced translators, maintaining job satisfaction and motivation. The “quality of source documents” also enters in to the translation quality equation, but that’s another story!

This list does not claim to be complete, but serves to identify factors which often receive no mention when examining quality control mechanisms.

Conclusion

Work is on-going and there is no conclusion as yet, other than the conviction that much still has to be done and that a holistic approach, in line with the concept of quality management, is needed.

ANNEX 8

EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

**Proposal
of the sub-committee on external translation
for a**

**COMMON SYSTEM
FOR ASSESSING
TRANSLATIONS SUPPLIED BY EXTERNAL
CONTRACTORS**

- In addition, the cultural approach to quality control varies not only from institution to institution but also within any one institution. Differences in approach between different nationalities further contribute to the absence of a systematic methodology in this field.

Guidelines for assessors

In a first step towards ensuring a coherent approach to assessing translation work carried out by external contractors, the working group, in accordance with the fourth priority defined in its work programme, has drafted basic guidelines for assessors (**Annex II**). It is proposed that these guidelines, currently available in English and French and which will be translated into all official languages by the members of CIEQ, should be made available via the Intranet to all translation staff required to assess freelance translations throughout the institutions. These guidelines will be updated as necessary by the sub-committee on external translation. The ITC is asked to approve these guidelines and to publish them on its Intranet site.

Next steps

Once the assessment sheet has been approved by the ITC, the working group will examine ways of developing a **quality metric** based on the error types, their level of relevance and the frequency of their occurrence. This metric, which would be used to calculate the acceptability or otherwise of translations, would be specific to the assessment of translations carried out for the institutions and bodies of the European Union.

In parallel, the working group will, with the assistance of an external consultant, devise a **system of random sampling** for checking the quality of translations supplied by external contractors (as approved by the ITC at its 10 October 2001 meeting.)

"Fitness for purpose"

In its debate on the "definition of quality requirements" at its 10 October meeting, the ITC expressed concern that there was no mention of "fitness for purpose" in the definition. This issue has subsequently been much discussed by the working group and in particular by the various authorising officers. The conclusion has been reached that, since it is not always possible to specify the exact purpose of a translation, any explicit mention of "fitness for purpose" in the definition itself (which is intended to be used in the publication of tender specifications and in contracts) should be avoided. Instead, this element is taken into account in the guidelines for assessors and explicitly stipulated in the CIEQs internal rules of procedure. The ITC is therefore asked to formally approve the definition of quality requirements as originally presented at 10 October 2001 meeting (**Annex III**).

Annex II

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSORS OF TRANSLATIONS CARRIED OUT BY EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS

1. The basic principles

The aim of the evaluation is to:

- a) assure the authorising officer of the institution that the work has been carried out in accordance with the instructions contained in the framework contract, which read as follows: "the translation shall be carried out in full accordance with the specific instructions contained in the order form and shall be complete and accurate. The onus is on the Contractor to carry out a thorough check of the entire translation to ensure that it can be used as it stands without further revision by the [name of the Institution or body]. He shall pay particular attention to ensuring that all references to documents already published have been checked and quoted correctly, that any reference documents supplied have been consulted, and that terminology is used consistently throughout the text"
- b) give the CIEQ elements which will allow it to make the appropriate recommendations to the authorising department as regards further steps to be taken, and
- c) give the contractor the appropriate information to enable him to understand why the authorising department's decision is justified (written warning, cancellation of all or part of the contract, financial penalties, etc.), and to bear it in mind in any future work for the institutions.

You should therefore not be approaching evaluation as a revision job. First, it relates only to part of the translation (around 5 pages), which may be selected at random¹. Revision as such should only follow afterwards, if it is needed to meet the requirements of the service.

The time spent on evaluation should therefore be substantially less than that spent on a full revision.

2. What should I be doing?

- a) In the TL text, underline any errors you find, and in the margin mark the corresponding code and an indication of the seriousness (+, in really bad cases ++), e.g. OM, OM+, or even OM++ (see below).

Errors of grammar (GR), spelling (SP) or punctuation (PT) should be circled in the text, again with the corresponding code in the margin. Use your own judgement for the seriousness, applying the criteria set out below.

For error types SENS or TERM, please supply the correct rendering, legibly. For type OM, indicate the quantity of text missing (e.g. 3 words).

The aim is to make clear how significant the errors are, to facilitate any subsequent revision and, should any dispute arise, to serve as evidence.

- b) Add up the various error types and put the totals in the corresponding boxes of the evaluation table (e.g. 3 OM in the "Low Relevance" column and 5 OM+ in the "High Relevance" column).
- c) Indicate in the appropriate box whether the translation is "acceptable" or "unacceptable" (See section 5, below, Acceptability)

¹ The ITC has instructed the working group to look into the development of a sampling system for the quality evaluation of external translation

3. Seriousness of errors

Broadly, failure to transfer an essential element of the message, or incorrect transfer whose effect is the opposite of, or significantly alters, an essential element of the message, are serious errors.

As a rule, a transfer error is serious if a word or passage entirely misleads the reader or sends him off on a false trail when the context does not enable him to correct the error mentally.

A gross fundamental error of lexis or syntax in the target language also counts as serious.

4. Using the codes and degrees of seriousness

SENS+	Translation error, usually a serious error in transfer, which changes the meaning of the original or reads misleadingly in the target language; Includes in particular mistranslations, nonsense, word-for-word and literal translations which are meaningless in the context, and additions which change the meaning of the text.
SENS	Translation error not affecting the general understandability of the text. Misreadings, clumsy transposition in the target language or pointless additions.
OM+	Omission: part of the original (paragraph, phrase, line, table, figure, etc.) omitted or left in the original language. A word or words whose omission alters the sense of a phrase or deprives it of a significant part of its intended meaning. The marking OM++ can be used if justified by the importance of the omitted elements.
OM	Omission not affecting the general understandability of the text.
TERM+	Failure to use appropriate terminology, in particular Community usage.
TERM	Lexically correct terminology wrongly used in the context.
GR+	Grammatical error indicating inadequate command of target language; error capable of giving rise to an interpretation other than that intended.
GR	Minor error not affecting the general understandability of the original message.
SP+	Spelling mistake capable of giving rise to an interpretation other than that intended.
SP	Minor misspelling, typo.
PT+	Punctuation error, serious if capable of giving rise to an interpretation other than that intended.
PT	Minor punctuation error.
RD+	Failure to use reference documents supplied or available (e.g. quoted text incorrectly transposed or not used, retranslation of existing titles, failure to use lexis of reference document capable of giving rise to confusion (Cf. TERM+). Failure to follow Interinstitutional Style Guide.
RD	Minor and insignificant error in the transcription of a quotation or reference with no consequences.
CL+	Drafting error affecting the clarity and intelligibility of the target language.
CL	Drafting errors e.g. tautology, <u>gallicism</u> , clumsiness. Minor if they do not affect the intelligibility of the text.

5. Acceptability

An "acceptable" translation is one which is of adequate quality, i.e. which complies with the specifications of the invitation to tender and the Institution's order for the job (see 1. a)).

Annex III

QUALITY REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSLATION SERVICES CARRIED OUT BY EXTERNAL SUPPLIERS

These quality requirements have been drawn up by the Working Group "Quality assurance and quality evaluation" (a working group of the Interinstitutional Sub-Committee on External Translation) and are presented for adoption to the Interinstitutional Committee on Translation at its meeting of 10 October 2001. The following documents were consulted and provided inspiration: the technical specifications and contracts of the various calls for tender carried out for translation services by the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Translation Centre for the bodies of the European Union; the rules of internal procedure of the interinstitutional committee for the evaluation of quality (CIEQ); DIN 2435; the contracts used by ISO for requisitioning translation services.

Contractual context

The external translation supplier carries full responsibility for the quality of the service he provides - acceptance of the order form for a specific assignment constitutes a legally binding acceptance of this responsibility. The onus is hence on the supplier to ensure that he is capable of providing the service requisitioned by the institution/body concerned prior to acceptance of the order form.

Contractual definition of quality expected

The translation assignment must be usable as it stands without revision by the institution's services.

Qualitative elements

Three basic elements, defined as follows, shall be taken into account when assessing the quality of translation services carried out by external suppliers:

1. Deadline:

Respect of the deadline negotiated with the supplier at the moment of requisition and confirmed accepted on acceptance of the order form.

2. Compliance with technical requirements:

Compliance with any specific instructions contained in the order form
Correct formatting
Presentation of document in electronic format requested
Translation into the target language requested

3. Intrinsic quality of the translation:

Accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling
Accurate quotation of previously published documents
Adequate command of target language and use of appropriate register
Appropriate use of Community language and terminology
Completeness (including tables, graphs, etc.)

Consistency of terminology
Correct understanding of source text
Use of reference material supplied/consultation of reference sources indicated

Compliance with contractual definition of quality expected

The above quantitative elements must be assessed in order to ascertain whether or not the translation supplied is indeed "usable as it stands without revision by the institution's/body's services".

In the case of the first qualitative element, assessment is simple - the deadline is met, or not.

In the case of the second, and to an even greater extent the third, qualitative element, assessment is more complex since the relative importance of the various sub-elements must be taken into account.

Firstly, for each sub-element, the relative importance of any shortcoming in each category must be decided upon (minor/major).

Secondly, the number of minor and/or major shortcomings permissible before the translation can be considered to fall short of the quality requirements must be decided upon.

To ensure a truly coherent approach among assessors, a standard assessment metric should be drawn up.

Once the definition of quality requirements for translation services carried out by external suppliers has been adopted, the Working Group will develop an assessment system to be used at interinstitutional level.
