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STUDY GROUP 16

RAPPORTEUR GROUP MEETING

Q26/16

ACCESSIBILITY TO MULTIMEDIA SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

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>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, everyone. We are about to start shortly. So if everybody could take your seats and thank you.

Thank you, everyone. I apologize for the late start but we are now ready to go. My name is John Lee. I'm the Rapporteur of Question 26, Study Group 16 at the ITU. I'd like to thank both Christian Vogler of Gallaudet and Claude Stout of TDI for helping us organize and host this meeting for us.

This meeting is being organized specifically to further some of the work we have been doing in relay, and that is part of the reason why we sent out our invitation specifically for what is available in the relay services. So we want to thank you for coming and attending and contributing to this meeting.

Part of the way we do our work is through contributions of our members. I was asked this question, so I'll clarify. Typically we have ITU members attending the meeting, whether they are state or industry members. But for the purpose of this meeting, you do not require a membership as this is a Rapporteur's meeting. And, effectively, you are attending this meeting as an invited guest for the purpose of furthering this particular document.

The ITU is currently based in Geneva, and is the telecommunication branch of the UN. And our work is trying to further the area of telecommunication. And more specifically in Question 26, that of media accessibility. So we thank you for your attendance.

So I'd like to move things along very quickly. But one of the things I'd like to do is to my right is Christian Vogler from Gallaudet, who is our host and is also an expert member who attends Question 26 meetings regularly and is also one of the editors of this document.

And to my left is Andrea Saks, who is the special convenor of the -- well, I'll let her do that herself.

>> ANDREA SAKS: My name ils Andrea Saks. I'm the convenor of the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors also for IGF, the Dynamic Coalition on Accessibility and Disability. And my dad, some of you know, is one of the founders of TTY many, many years ago. So I've grown up with two deaf parents. And I know a lot of you in the room, and it's really a pleasure to see this work progress into the world it should be being worked in.

Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Andrea. Christian, would you like to say a word as well?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Hello, everyone. My name is Christian Vogler. I won't take a lot of your time, but I want to thank everyone for coming today.

I just wanted to mention that this has both local and remote participants who will be signing. So this is an experiment for us, this kind of format.

And it is going to allow is to increase the scale of the meeting. So if anything -- if we have any hitches through the technology or anything else, please bear with us. But I just wanted to let everybody know that we have remote participants and local participants and it's so important that we be very careful about our turn taking.

So I'll ask you, if you're going to communicate in American Sign Language, please come up to the spot where I'm standing right now. If you're hearing and you're going to be communicating in English, please come up to the same place and an interpreter will be standing in this place, in this spot, and will be signing for you. And it's really important that we're all able to communicate.

Correction, the interpretation, the hearing people can stay wherever they would like, but wait until an interpreter takes the spot where I'm standing right now, before you begin your contribution.

Thank you, everyone.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Christian.

So one of the things that we have with this current set up is if you would like to speak, we ask that you identify yourself. And when you're recognized, if you could come up to the podium and speak into the microphone, that way everybody can hear, including those on the phone right now. So this way what this will allow us to do is make sure that everybody is ready to interpret as needed.

Also, before you start speaking, just identify your name and your and your association, for captioning purposes as well as to recognize who you are.

So, one of the things I will ask -- we unfortunately can't go around the room, as that would take up a little too much time. But we do have quite a few people on the phone. And I was wondering if those on the phone could first identify themselves, so we know who you are in the room. And then once you've done your introduction, if you can mute yourself so we can continue with the meeting.

Thank you.

So if we have people online, could you... Please identify yourselves, so that we know who you are.

(Background noises)

>> JOHN LEE: And also mute, please.

(Background noises from the phone connection)

Excuse me.

Whoever is online, if you could either mute yourself or introduce yourself, please, so that we can start our meeting.

(Background noises from the phone)

>> CONNIE PHELPS: This the Connie Phelps from the State of Montana. I'm the Chair of NASRA.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Connie. Is anybody else online?

Is Christopher Jones online?

Okay. It may -- he may not be online now, but he will be on later. Christopher Jones is the other coeditor of this document. He is based in the UK and has not been able to travel to be with us. But he will call in. And he has worked on some of the updates that we have in the document. He is also the co-convenor of the Joint Activity on Accessibility.

So thank you.

As we get started, we will pull up the agenda and just do an approval of the agenda. If there are any issues with the way the agenda is currently scheduled, I've listed the organization and what the presentation is, beside each of the things. I realized that I should have done this previously. My apologies if your version didn't have that.

So if we could just quickly go over the agenda, approve it, so we can get started, that would be very much appreciated.

Are there any thoughts regarding the agenda?

>> MARK HILL: I added WAS-09 to the list of documents, but I don't see it here so I'm wondering what happened to that document.

>> JOHN LEE: WAS 09 is currently scheduled for the afternoon today at 3:40.

And if you could just identify yourself for everyone.

>> MARK HILL: Actually, no. I did find it. My name it Mark Hill. And I'm representing the cerebral palsy and deaf organizations. Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, my friend. Nice to meet you.

So are there any other thoughts or comments related to this current agenda as it stands?

So just quickly, we have just a few -- we have the agenda agreement, then we have some hosts remarks this morning, then we will go over the ITU resolution 70 as well as the -- and then we will have a quick coffee break. Then we will have some remarks from the FCC. And then we will break for lunch.

And when we return, we will introduce the F. Series technical paper, relay services for People with Disabilities, then go over some of the edits that were submitted related to that.

In the afternoon, we will start with a session on emergency services, a statement on captioned relay services, then a review of some TRS statement from the consumer groups.

Then tomorrow morning we will reconvene to discuss a few other contributions that have been made. Then after the coffee break we will be reviewing all the edits and changes that we proposed to the F. Series technical paper.

Then there will be a demonstration -- sorry. Not a demonstration. There will be an overview of the CAP from Gallaudet. Then the afternoon session also calls for some performance of captioned telephone relay services. And then a demonstration of the conversation at that point, before the break.

And then we will go through an F. Relay document which is the companion document to what we're reviewing. Then any other business and closing remarks.

If there are no thoughts behind that, we will move ahead and consider this agenda approved.

So there are a few formalities that are conducted at Rapporteurs' and ITU meetings. We won't review the liaison statements or the work programme which are typically conducted at these meetings, so we will move this meeting forward. And I don't think that everybody here would quite appreciate what that is, so I streamlined the agenda so we delve directly into the documents as they have been given to us, so that we will -- things will move a little quicker.

So at this point I'd like to call Claude up so that he can give us some remarks and introduce some things. So, Claude, if you would.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Hello, everyone.

I want to thank all of you for your attendance today at the ITU meeting. And joining us in working on the technical paper on relay services.

Several months ago, ITU was looking for a host, and Gallaudet and TDI together raised their hand to be able to host. We wanted to take this opportunity to have representatives from Government and representatives from consumer group, like TDI, National Association of the Deaf, from the VRS industry, speech-to-speech, TextRelay, all gathering together, including all those nongovernmental entities working together to have an opportunity to work with the ITU.

You know, usually to start a fire, you need three things. Heat. Fuel. And oxygen. If one ingredient is absent, you cannot have a fire.

So I want you to know that I consider all three groups, consumer group, Government, and industry, all required to keep the fire burning for a quality of relay services. So thank you all for your attendance.

(Applause)

I'd like to introduce some of the sponsors who contributed financial support for this meeting. Gallaudet, anything I'd like to add as one of the hosts?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: No. That's all right. I made my comments earlier. Thank you.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Paul Kershisnik? would you like to say a few words to talk about Sorenson?

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: We're just happy --

>> ANDREA SAKS: You have to use the microphone.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: This is Paul. You got my last name correct, it's amazing.

We're very happy --

>> ANDREA SAKS: Microphone on.

>> JOHN LEE: Microphone up.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: Here we go. Paul from Sorenson. We're happy to be here this morning. There is a limited amount of time on the agenda so I'll jump in. I'm not a technical person. I'm in charge of marketing and regulatory affairs for the company. So I like Claude's analogy of the three things you need for a fire. In this world, of relay, you need technology, you need consumers to be actively involved. And you also need the funding mechanism so that relay services can begin and flourish. And so I'll probably be represented more of that angle, the side of the need of an adequate and sustainable funding mechanisms so that relay can really take off.

Thanks.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Thank you, Paul, with Sorenson.

Then I'd like to introduce you to Jenny Buechner from Hamilton Relay.

>> JENNY BUECHNER: Hi. I'm Jenny. It's really nice to be here today. Hamilton Relay is very happy to be able to contribute with a we know to the relay discussion. As Claude mentioned, the industry is important as one of the three components to our fire. We can't do this on our own. It's important for all of us. Hamilton really has been involved in relay services for many years in different types of services as well. So we're very happy to contribute today.

Thank you.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Angie Officer with Sprint Relay is supposed to be in attendance to give her remarks. We will give her an opportunity later this afternoon, if it's all right with Mr. Lee.

And last, but definitely not least, I'm pleased to introduce you to Mr. Everett Puckett, representative from the Communication Accessibility Group.

>> EVERETT PUCKETT: Up here?

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Yes.

>> EVERETT PUCKETT: Good morning everyone, Everett Puckett with CAG and CAG VRS. We are excited to be here and be a part of this technical paper and to be a part of a changing industry with a lot of leaders and experts who really led the way. And we're just excited to be here. Thanks.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: That concludes our host remarks.

Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Claude.

And we would like to thank you, too, for helping us host this meeting and with the organization that it took to get this meeting started.

So at this point we would like to move on to the agenda, document 24, which is the ITU-T resolution 70. An introduction to some of the basis of why the ITU is so focused on doing this work. At this point I'd like to pass this on to Andrea Saks.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Thank you, John.

Resolution 70, this is a revision of one that was passed in WTSA meeting, and it's the World Telecommunications Standard Assembly. And every four years we have to readjust our Study Groups, our chairmen, our Vice Chairs, even our Rapporteurs, and even the questions that are studied within study groups, and how we do things.

Resolution 70 was the first resolution in the ITU that actually included Persons with Disabilities. I had the pleasure of working with -- I always get emotional -- Cynthia Waddell, who just passed away, a Juris Doctor, profoundly deaf, and also worked with the original group that created the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, helped us write this. So it was a joint effort between her and myself and several other people. But this was like before the situation is developed now to where it is. There just wasn't anything except me running around screaming and yelling and Cynthia helping me back it up.

So this is the second version. And we had the WTSA meeting in Dubai this year, in 2012. It was a two-week meeting. And lo and behold, this little effort expanded into the longest resolution that we have in the ITU. And Brazil and Argentina got more bits and pieces into it than we ever hoped would be there.

Now, the ITU-T is where we work for standards. It is different from the ITU-D, which is the development sector for developing countries, and the ITU-R, which is traditionally called the radio sector. The radio sector has yet to make a resolution. But the ITU-D based resolution 57, and they have the World Development Telecommunication Convention -- Conference. They have their own sort of like WTSA to determine their question, their chairmen, and their questions of study. And there is a question called question 20, which is for Persons with Disabilities and Access for not only Persons with Disabilities, but older persons with age-related disabilities, which we took out the word "elderly" because nobody wants to be called "Elderly." And I'm elderly, but I don't like to be called elderly.

So we have different problems that happen because we get older and the parts wear out. So they elaborated and made another resolution called resolution 57.

And then we had what was called the plenipotentiary, which determines the elected officials who then run the ITU. That is the Secretary-General, those are the directors of the ITU different sectors, the radio sector, D and T sectors, they are elected. And it also has resolutions. And Cynthia Waddell again with the different group, which was also Canadians, it's a group of the America, CTEL and other organization, Mexico, Canada, and also Australia, contributed to a resolution which we refer to as PP 10, which was planning for potentiary 175, which again made it more possible for accessibility to be funded. That meant fellowships for Persons with Disabilities to be able to attend, sign language, captioning, all sorts of things that we have been fighting for.

We're still not there, because I'll tell you about something else that is coming up next week. And the reason I'm giving you background is that of the UN organizations, the one that has advanced the most is the ITU. And that is because we have a very strong group of people, John, for instance, is a Rapporteur specifically dealing with Accessibility and Human Factors. I won't go into all the different breakdowns of the other questions that apply, but since this is question 26, we also have a focus group, which is another area. And John is on that as well.

But resolution 70 had to be updated, because it didn't recognize, for instance, PP 10 175, which elevated and gave us more rights to ask for money.

But there is more to that than that. So what I wanted to kind of point out, it's actually resolution 58, not 57, I made an error in the number -- do you have it up on the board? Okay. Great.

What it does, it basically identifies the areas of where we work. It also recognizes the resolution 175, without putting in all the details of what it is. So you kind of have to go into the different areas and look at them.

But it -- the work that I carry out, the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility, was then expanded. Which means I can work with outside groups who are not necessarily members, and also with all the UN agencies. And what we do, and this is where this particular resolution is important, is we tell the right hand what the left hand is doing. Because often people work in isolation in organizations and don't tell anybody.

So we want to make sure that all the people who work on standards, and one of them, for instance, in the radio sector, was about hearing aids. And needing a frequency that would make these hearing aids not only work in the country of their origin, but in Europe and other places since we are in the States I'll use it that way. But also perhaps when announcements are given in places like airports, that it would also work like a loop. But we have to petition and make some kind of a recommendation where it is recognized and a frequency is assigned.

That is probably one of the most difficult things we have ever tried to undertake because you're dealing at treaty level. So what is here is that the Joint Coordination Activity oversees and tries to tell everyone, by having many meetings, who is doing what, where, when.

There is another question there, which is question 4, which deals with human factors. Now, not everybody has to be a Persons with Disabilities to have a human factor. It can be a child who is not a Persons with Disabilities, or an older person who is not a, technically, a Person with Disabilities. So human factors can deal with other things, like the size of something. How a person might use that. It's not always the same. So, it overlaps, but it's not the same.

We cannot, as a group, write a standard or make any edicts, all we can do is communicate. And there is an old English expression, there is an English gentleman here, he will appreciate that. That I may not know how to do that, or I may not know all the information, but I know a man who does.

Usually it was done in context of wanting to buy something, perhaps, on the black market during the war, where that expression came out. Like I don't have one, but I know a man who does.

So what we try and do is put people in touch with the people they need to speak to. And to see that all standards are mainstreaming, accessibility features, not accessibility standards. Though some of them can be applicable and exist, because we need to, like maybe unifying captioning for television and radio, which is now going to be worked on by the radio sector that handles broadcasting.

So you can see it's -- we have got loads of different kinds of areas of work that are going on in different parts of the ITU. The development sector has another problem in the fact that they don't have access to broadband. They have situations where the economic structure is very poor. They have situations where the ethnic culture, perhaps, does not support the concept of helping Persons with Disabilities. There are horror stories, but they have an awareness programme in question 20.

So what this does is that this is a focal point organization within an organization. It's as its name said "Joint coordinating." I coordinate and Christopher Jones, who is profoundly deaf, who hopefully just joined us, because I heard somebody come in, is a co-convenor. And we have another gentleman, Mr. Van Neis, we meet several times a year and we invite people within or outside of the ITU who are doing work to come and tell us about it and a report is produced.

So when this particular resolution was passed, in a way it gave us more power to actually create and do things that have never been done within the UN agency before.

Hopefully this particular resolution will become a model for other UN agencies to provide the same kind of awareness and work. It doesn't mean we're there yet. We still have lots of problems with funding, and I'll just close with that aspect.

In resolution PP 10 175, we created a fund, because there is no budget that has been created at ITU that funds this stuff. It's robbing Peter to pay Paul. In the Study Group, we get captioning and sign language through interpretation. But it's not classically funded as an accessibility mechanism.

We need to update the building. We need lots of different things, including getting accessible toilets, which I've taken on as a mission. You'd be surprised what has been put on my plate.

But the problem is that a lot of of the executions that are given for not providing and the ignorance that exists within even the ITU is because they just don't have a training programme, which also will tell people about accessibility awareness, and we're trying to get that. But it has to be funded.

So next week, after this week, I have got a position paper in with the US State Department, because of this work. That was all done through the US State Department, which has been supporting, telling the ITU with this resolution, with an International Treaty Article that also includes Persons with Disabilities, that we need to have a budget point in the ITU that is properly funded by the membership fees that are given for people to join the ITU. And that is a complicated structure. But that's the next step.

So it's a recognized part of expense in the normal budget, so no one can say -- they can say we don't have enough money, but there is a budget there. And therefore you must provide for meetings, and for meetings that are within ITU, what is needed for Persons with Disabilities to attend, and including fellowship. Because we do know that it's difficult for Persons with Disabilities and their organizations to fly to Geneva to do the work. Or somewhere else in the world where the work is being done. Because the work isn't always done in Geneva.

With that, I think I probably covered it. Is there anything that you want to add, John, about resolution 70 and all the other things I touched on?

>> JOHN LEE: You touched on the funding.

>> ANDREA SAKS: I touched on the funding.

>> JOHN LEE: No.

>> ANDREA SAKS: You have a copy of resolution 70. WCIT, we can provide the copy of the first Treaty. And that's also a historic event, that a Treaty for Telecommunications includes Persons with Disabilities. If you want these documents, these templates, or you want to read them to see what on earth they provide and what they are going to help us accomplish in the future -- because without it being in a resolution or in a Treaty, we can't ask for anything. It's a large bunch of red tape -- I'll be happy to provide all of that information so people can get an idea of all the wording and work. And I do want to salute Cynthia Waddell, who is no -- because she is no longer on the planet, for all the work she helped us go do to get there.

Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Andrea. That was a very good introduction to the ITU-T resolution 70.

So at this point, there was a few things that I needed to cover that I forgot to do at the beginning.

One was just an IPR statement, in that one of the things that the -- the way the ITU works is it works on different terms. So if there are any contributions with IPR, there needs to be a declaration made. Given that this meeting is slightly irregular, we can have that decision later on. So if you believe that there are IPR issues, contact me directly and we will deal with that.

Then one of the things I wanted to go over as well is, Andrea touched on this, but the ITU structure. So we're -- we report to Study Group 16, which is the general Study Group on media.

And they are -- they have work under question 26 to further that work. And that is the reason why this relay service work is included in that. So if there are any things related to that that you'd like to forward, we are more than happy to respond to that.

At this point, the agenda is -- it seems to call for a break. It is really early. But does anybody have any questions or anything that was presented at this point? If not, one of the things I'll do is I'll actually bring up the introduction to the paper forward to now, so that we can just quickly introduce that, then have the break, and then the FCC will present.

So this is document number 5. So all of you have received -- 5. Yes. Correct.

All of you have received the previous version of the technical paper or F. Series technical paper on relay services for Persons with Disabilities. So what we have here is a slightly updated version, which was made available as version 5, that I wanted to go over.

One of the things that we need to understand is that this is a service level description of relay services. There is a companion document, which is the F. relay document, which goes into the technical requirements on enabling relay services. So one of the things that we want to make sure is if you have any contributions for either document, we are very much open to receiving them.

Some of the updates in this document was made with comments that were received from the last meeting related to this, which occurred in January, in Geneva. And updated here you'll see all the editors that are currently working on this document. So any document you submit will be sent to the editorial team for further updates.

There has been some changes to the definitions. We still need definitions, so that area is still open. And I believe there were some contributions related to new definitions that need to be added, and we will go over those as we review the documents.

Then there was some updates with some of the wording. These were more editorial updates. Then the architecture still needs to be worked on. There are some drawings that are required as well as further enhancement of the text.

The types of services under 6.2 was thought to be a little lacking, and we received several comments stating that we should be looking at expanding this list. So I saw a few of the contributions to this meeting, which had a few recommendations. If there are any others, we would gladly welcome that as well.

And obviously a few of these are empty, such as relay, which if anybody has thoughts or a way of describing them, it would be very much appreciated.

The list of KPIs were discussed at the last meeting. I don't believe this was in the version that you had reviewed. What this involves is the basic targets in terms of performance of relay. This was reviewed and approved at the last meeting. But one of the things we are looking for is confirmation. If anybody would like to review these.

So they described how a relay should function from a key performance indicator, and set up targets on what those are. So things like emergency, captioned relay calls to be answered in five seconds, there is a requirement on that as a key performance indicator.

These were -- are -- were presented to us, and as I said if anybody believes that there is an update that is required on these KPIs, we will gladly welcome that.

Obviously some of these other relay services, as you can tell from 6.2.6 to 6.2.12, which are other types of relay services, still require a significant amount of work. And I have noticed that some of the contributions did have a few more language to further that work.

So if you could -- if you have a chance to review that, it would be very much appreciated.

And that was just a quick introduction to this document.

So one of the goals of this particular meeting was to further this work and given the contributions that we have received, we are definitely along that way. I do not believe we are quite ready to move to consent or even a final draft, probably by the end of this meeting, but hopefully you'd be able to help us get there once we finish the meeting.

All right. So that was the introduction. And Andrea would like to say something.

>> ANDREA SAKS: There is going to be another opportunity during Study Group 16 meeting question 26, which is in October, to further the work, also.

And I just wanted to point out that a technical paper is not a recommendation. A technical paper is basically an information document. So all, by the way, all recommendations are voluntary at this moment in time. They're not mandatory for any organization to actually implement. But what we want to see is something on a piece of paper where everybody agrees that this could be the way things should be.

And I'm going to throw -- can I throw my Spanner into the work? I like to throw things in.

Some of the things that I noticed, since I work on an International stage, is that International relay is not there. When video relay first came out, everybody from England went balmy. They found the numbers and they were able to call through the American relay services to be able to use sign.

Well, Governments and companies put a stop to it for economic reasons and possibly Treaty reasons, and it's a great shame. And I'm hoping the next goal that we go to is if we can continue to work together, maybe not always agree on everything, but we can get to that goal. Because I still maintain that if the telephone can reach any telephone, that relay services should be able to interact and work together so that Persons with Disabilities can actually use relay services. Because it's not just the deaf, it's people who don't have the ability to speak.

And one of the most important aspects, and I'm learning about, because I'm very happy Randy is here, I never worked with the deaf-blind community. And I'm learning about how -- I've been visiting deaf-blind schools for babies in Europe, which is phenomenal. What these children have to work towards in their future and not have a relay service, which they need? So I want to throw these ideas out for the future.

So this is a baseline for us with what we have and what we could do. But the future is also something we need to think about. So this is one step. This is not the end. This is not "The document." This is the beginning. But if the communities, Internationally can join forces, and I mean the Persons with Disabilities and the providers and the organizations, can come up with a document that they accept and agree with, we will have made a major breakthrough in communicating to the world that we need interoperability for relay services.

Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Andrea.

And as Andrea mentioned, interoperability is definitely a very important area. And, again, if there are any thoughts on how that can be achieved, we would welcome any contributions to that.

So are there any questions related to this document or thoughts at this time?

Okay.

I don't quite want to launch into the edits that were submitted, as the timing would throw a few people off related to that. So it's 10:05 right now. Are there any -- anybody would like to present earlier at this point? As it's still half an hour before the break. And, unfortunately, I guess the timing was thrown off a bit.

Okay.

Yes, Andrea, you didn't talk enough.

(Chuckles)

Okay. Well, in that case, I will call for a break early. Just because -- Andrea.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Sorry, we have some name tags. I think they are on the table. I've seen one of them on and I didn't get one on. Could everybody fill out a name tag? Because I don't know everybody's name and I'd like to learn them. And put it on yourself.

And the other thing is I'm going to pass a paper around for everybody to sign, which is an attendance thing. Because we didn't have you introduce -- actually, we have time. We could have people introduce each other, instead of having the break early. What do you think about that? Why don't we do this -- I just took over your meeting. Sorry. I do this all the time.

>> JOHN LEE: It's expected.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Why don't we pass -- we know who Claude is. And Mark has spoken. Maybe different people here, we can just pass the microphone around for those who wish to speak. And for those who wish to sign, please come up to the podium and we can start introducing ourselves.

Well, not everybody is going to use the mic. So, who would like to start -- shall we start at this end?

I think we can do it from our seats? Okay.

>> MARK HILL: Good morning. I'm Mark Hill. I'm the President of the Cerebral Palsy and Deaf Organization. Hello everyone.

>> MICHELE MULLIGAN: Hi. I'm Michele Mulligan. I'm also representing the Cerebral Palsy and Deaf Organization. I came to work with Mark today.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Can everybody see me okay? Good morning, everyone. I apologize for being a bit late. Traffic was quite horrible because of two accidents this morning. I think somebody was really trying to test my patience.

It's good to be here. I'm Angie Officer. And I'm with Sprint Relay. So welcome to the Sprint multi-purpose room here at Gallaudet. It's nice to see our name on the room. I haven't been here in a long time. It's great to be here.

It's okay if I give a little bit of my remarks from earlier?

Thank you, Claude. I want to personally thank the ITU for inviting Sprint Relay to participate in this room and providing our input into the technical paper. We're looking forward to providing International opportunities in the future.

Sprint Relay has been offering relay services for 21 years. We're the only one that includes VRS, VRI, RCC, CapTel, IP-Relay, a variety of services. And we're looking forward to providing quality services to an International community.

Right now, we are providing International services in New Zealand and through federal relay to Puerto Rico and 32 other States. I do have a flier that explains -- a fact sheet about Sprint Relay. And it includes all the different products and our Web addresses as well.

So thank you again, and I look forward to meeting you all and having some great input and ideas together.

Thank you again.

>> DAVID: Hi. I'm David. I'm here representing Convo relay.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Right now? Hi. I think I've been asked to introduce myself. I'm Karen Peltz Strauss, from the Federal Communications Commission.

Thank you.

>> GREG HLIBOK: Good morning everyone. I'm Greg Hibok. I'm from the federal communications Commission, office on disabilities.

I know there are some differences that we will discuss between how relay services are done in the European Union and here in the States.

I want to thank Christian and Claude for bringing the ITU closer to home, because the ITU always seems quite faraway. And so thank you for bringing them closer.

>> ELAINE GARDNER: Hi. I'm Elaine Gardner. I'm also with the FCC, Disability Rights Office. I'm an attorney there.

>> JENNY BUECHNER: Hi. I'm Jenny Buechner, with Hamilton Relay. Good to be here.

>> KELBY BRICK: Hello. Good morning, everyone. I'm Kelby Brick, from Purple Communications. I think I know almost everyone in the room. Looking forward to spending the next two days with you.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: And this is Paul again, Paul Kershisnik, from Sorenson Communications.

>> EVERETT PUCKETT: Hi. And this is Everett Puckett again with CAG.

>> SHARON HAYES: Hi. Good morning. I'm Sharon Hayes. I'm with the Video Relay Service Consumers Agency or Association.

We represent people all over the United States who use Video Relay Services. I'm really happy to be here with all of you, to learn and to share some information from the consumers' view, who use Video Relay Services.

I want to thank the ITU and especially Claude for always thinking of us at VRS CA.

>> LISE HAMLIN: I'm Lise Hamlin. I'm from Hearing Loss Association of America, and I want to thanks you all, also, Claude and Christian and all of you, for inviting us as well.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Hi. I'm John Martin from Purple Communications. I'm new to Purple. I've only been with the company for a month. But I've been working with -- in the VRS sector for eight years and in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing sector for the last 18. Hopefully I can bring a bit of a European feel to the proceedings over the next two days.

>> PAULA TUCKER: I'm Paula Tucker, and I'm one of the research associates in the Technology Access Program at Gallaudet.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Christian, and thank you everyone for introducing yourselves. I'm sure we will get time to chat and to get more acquainted with each other.

So at this time actually it's a pretty good time -- sorry my apologies.

Would you like to introduce yourself?

>> RANDALL POPE: Hello everyone. My name is Randall Pope. I go by Randy. I'm from the American Association of Deaf-blind.

I really want to thank Claude for inviting us to participate, as well as all of our hosts, to be involved in this critical discussion with the Rapporteur. Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much. Okay. We will try to do this again. Are the people that are online, if you could introduce yourselves, as we didn't quite get a chance to catch you this morning.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Hello. This is Christopher Jones here from the UK. Can you hear me?

>> JOHN LEE: Hello. Christopher, we can hear you. Thank you. Glad to have you.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: I'm deaf and I need a sign language interpreter, and I would like to say hello to America.

I do know some of you, but not all of you. But I do hope this is going to be a very good meeting.

We have been waiting for this for a couple of years. And I must say I'm really so glad that it's happening now. I think it's very important to tell the world about all the wonderful relay services that are available. Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Christopher. And Christopher is a co-convenor no the JCA Human Factors. He is one of the co-authors of this document that we have been working on. Thank you for calling us at this time.

Curious, who else is on the line who would like to introduce themselves? Okay.

If not, we have two more people in the room that would like to introduce themselves as well.

>> MICHELLE LAPIDES: Hello. Good morning everyone. I'm Michelle Lapides with Sprint Relay. I'm here with Angie and I'm sure she already covered our history. Thank you. Glad to be with you today.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Michelle.

Introductions.

>> CHERYL HEPPNER: Good morning. I'm Cheryl Heppner, here, representing the Association of Late-deafened Adults and Hard-of-hearing Advocacy Network.

And I've been fighting with traffic for three hours.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Cheryl. I imagine traffic this morning was not very pleasant.

But thank you, everyone, for introducing yourselves. So at this point I'd like to call for a break so that everybody can -- actually, you know what? We will do the introductions of the translators as well, so that we can get to know who is helping us out.

So... my apology. Interpreters.

>> INTERPRETER: Hi. I'm Paul Harrelson, who is currently signing.

Mark Holmes is currently on the microphone. Seated next to him is Ellen Schein. And next to her is Adam Bartley.

>> JOHN LEE: And if our captioner would like to introduce herself as well.

>> PAT GRAVES: I'm Pat Graves.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Caption First.

>> JOHN LEE: We have Pat Graves from Caption First here. Thank you. And thank you everyone for being here again.

So at this point I'd like to call for a break. And we will reconvene at 10:-- let's call it 10:45, which will give us a good time to get everything else started and gives us time to meet each other and chat over the coffee that was graciously provided through Gallaudet. At this point let's have a break until 10:45.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Don't forget to get your name tags, please.

(Break until 10:45 ET)

>> JOHN LEE: So if everybody could go back to their seats. We will get started again shortly.

I'll be standing here because I'll hand off the mic. At this time we have we have the FCC giving us a presentation related to the relay service document and some of the guides that are available. So I'm just handing it off to Karen.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Hi. This is Karen Peltz Strauss. I'm the Deputy Bureau Chief of the Federal Communication Commissions Consumer and Government Affairs Bureau. And I have with me two other distinguished officials from the FCC. That I'd like to introduce. Greg Hibok, who is the head of the FCC's Disability Rights Office. And we will be sharing the presentation of the slides with me. And Elaine Gardner, an attorney adviser in the Disability Rights Office as well. And both individuals have literally decades of experience on disability access issues. So, I'm in good company and you're all in good company. And I want to thank publicly Elaine and Gregg for putting together this PowerPoint. They did a -- Elaine really did the initial draft. Gregg contributed. And they did a fantastic job.

So next slide. I'll give you an overview initially -- next slide.

Thank you.

-- of Telecommunications Relay Services, and then Greg is going to chime in as well to tell about the different kinds of services there are and the funding mechanisms.

You know know that relay services are used for people who have disabilities, hearing or speech, or are deaf-blind, but also they are useful for people to make calls to people who have disabilities. And the goal of these services, as originally intended in Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act, was to connect people with other people, to improve productivity, independence and privacy.

Next slide.

In the United States, TRS, which is our nickname for it, is available in all 50 States, in the District of Columbia, in Puerto Rico, and the US territories. We cover all kinds of calls, local and long distance, and I'll skip over the funding because Greg will cover that in more depth. But the important point here is that there is ongoing funding for this service. We don't have to go back to Congress or any Government state for funding. And the relay leg for the call has always been free for People with Disabilities.

The role of the Federal Communications Commission is to oversee these services. For the first ten years, it was kind of a quiet role. That was when there was only one kind of service, the text-based service over the regular telephone network. Again Greg will talk about the kinds of services. But this role has increased in scope and intensity over the last ten years, since Internet-based forms of services have become available. And we have people in, let's say, three or four of our bureaus who are constantly analyzing how best to provide this service, how its funding should take place, and how to prevent fraud, waste and abuse. We will talk about it later. Unfortunately, wherever you have any kind of federal funding for a service, fraud tends to follow. Because there are unscrupulous people that want to take advantage of the free funding.

So it's been an effort over the last few years to try to make sure that this service goes specifically to people for whom it was intended, and not get sidetracked by any abuse.

So next slide.

How does TRS work? We have the term "relay assistants" up there. Let me just add that we made a contribution to your paper on this issue, and that the slides that we are talking about today parallel that paper. One of the things that we had noticed was that the original document used the term "Relay assistants," so we have the term "Relay assistant" here, but we will switch to our term, which is communication assistant or CA.

The CA is designed to facilitate telephone calls between people and other individuals.

The important point here is that it used to be that our definition in the Americans with Disabilities Act, which is the law that first authorized relay service, the definition used to say that a relay service was a transmission, telephone transmission service between somebody with a disability and a hearing person.

It no longer says that. The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, which was enacted in 2010, changed that and made very clear that it could be between two users of relay services. So a call can be completely between two people that have disabilities, and the reason that we have this, as you'll see from Greg's presentation, is that we have different kinds of relay services. And somebody who is hard-of-hearing or has some hearing loss may want to talk to somebody who is deaf and somebody who is deaf may want to talk to somebody who has a speech disability. In that case you might need two relay operators or two CAs, and so we now allow calls between and among different people using different kinds of relay services.

And, again, calls can be initiated by a person with a disability or someone without a disability, and they can call, as I said, any other person.

The only thing that we don't allow is calls -- with the exception of captioned telephone, because that's a very specific type of service -- we don't allow a call between two people of the same type of service. So you couldn't have a VRS call, Video Relay Service call, to another VRS user or a text-based call to another text-based user.

Next slide.

And now I'll turn it over to Greg.

>> GREG HLIBOK: At the FCC we have been very fortunate that several International visitors have come to visit us, from Italy, from France, Korea, South Africa, and typically they ask two burning questions. There seems to be a common need for information on funding of the programmes. What funding mechanisms are available? And privacy issues. Because you're involving a third-party, how do you maintain privacy within that communication?

The funding mechanism here in the United States at first, for the first ten years, it was pretty much straightforward. There was one type of service. TRS. Now we have a host of services, and the funding mechanisms for each are as divergent as the services themselves.

As the ADA required, and it recognized the separation of cost for intrastate and interstate, and the funding burden intrastate is on the states whereas interstate is federally funded, which is the interstate TRS fund.

For intrastate, it's really up to the state to determine how those are funded. Most are done by a surcharge on monthly bills. And if the state so determines that they're using a common carrier, the cost is typically passed on to the consumers on their bill as a line item on their statement. And it's typically labeled as TRS, and that language must not be offensive, that it's for TRS reimbursement of services, not for the use of services or taking advantage of the service. Not for disadvantaged people or any offensive terms.

Now, for interstate, the FCC supervises that fund. That money comes from the common carriers who contribute to the fund on an annual basis. Previously, when the ADA first established that fund, it was based on the publicly switched telephone network, telephone providers. And recently they added Voice over Internet Protocol providers and IP-based telecommunications service who must also contribute to that fund as well.

Next slide.

Since the recognition of IP-based services in March of 2000, the March of 2000 order really expanded the types of services that are needed for specific consumers, creating the need for functional equivalences, which then required different funding mechanisms, and some collaboration between the interstate TRS fund and the Internet Protocol.

Then speaking of the rate structure, those services are pay per minute. And that's really true now for all types of services. We pay providers for the cost of operations, of handling calls, based on a per-minute basis. There is a calculation of rate per minute that varies by the type of services. For 2012 and 2013, we do a determination of rate by year, typically July 1 through June 30. The rates for our current period through the end of this June for TTY are $2.03 per minute. And you can see the line items here.

Currently we have a tiered rate structure. So the companies are reimbursed based on the size of the company. The larger companies can handle a smaller reimbursement rate per minute. Those that have high volume over 500,000 minutes receive $5.07 per minute. Where smaller providers from zero to 500,000 minutes have between $6.23 and $6.24 per minute.

And there is a delineation in that zero to 500,000 that are here collapsed into one tier, because the difference between $6.23 and $6.24 per minute is so small.

The reimbursement for speech-to-speech services recognizing those speech-to-speech services, the consumer rate is rather flat. So we're hoping that we're increasing the amount of reimbursement there, to try and help find those new users through advertising. We haven't had that much success in that area as of yet.

For Captioned Telephone Services, we're at a $1.77 per minute. And that is the same for IP Captioned Telephone Services.

Next slide.

As I mentioned, since March of 2000, the order determined that the scope of TRS was not restricted to TTYs only. And that went along with the idea of new advancements in technology, trying to keep up with those technological advancements. The language in the ADA said the Commission should not determine rules that discourage or impair technology developments within TRS. And that's why we recognized several new types of services, including TTY relay. IP-Relay functions the same as TTY relay, but uses the Internet rather than a specific device.

The services for unique populations, such as Voice Carry Over and Hearing Carry Over, Voice Carry Over really is a benefit for the population of people who can speak for themselves but are experiencing hearing loss, so they can read a text message and speak on their own.

Hearing Carry Over is the opposite of Voice Carry Over. It's for individuals who cannot speak for themselves, but can hear. So they hear a message and then type their response.

Video Relay Services, of course, is a very popular type of service. It requires a broadband Internet connection of high speed, generally your megabytes per second for most effective have to be at least 1 megabyte per second, upload and download. Other countries require -- they call it sign language relay, but here we call it video relay.

Our FCC rules here in the United States state that the communication assistant must be an interpreter, but does not require certification.

The standard itself requires effective, accurate, and impartial interpretation, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

There are another type of VRS services, ASL to Spanish VRS, which was added as a part of VRS services in 2005. There is a large Spanish speaking population who sign American Sign Language, and so this serves them.

Once there was a determination to offer that by a company, they must offer it 24/7, as they do with their ASL to English based VRS services. And recognizing the need for video mail, which is a voice mail message service that you can leave a message via video.

Before I move on, the challenge that we face for IP-based services, there is no longer reliance upon States. When there was PSTN based services, rate was determined by each individual state. They selected a provider through a competitive bid process within each state. So there was a base rate set within each state, based on the state's determined cost. And then the FCC determined a rate for interstate services.

And the rates were relatively similar. It was based on looking at the consumer base. For IP-based services, which include VRS and IP-Relay, there is no cost base to work with, so we relied on providers' submissions, their calculations of cost of operations. So there was no way to really be able to measure anything against anything else. So it had been a struggle that the FCC experienced for some time.

Being able to trace down those costs based on location or individual was easy with PSTN as opposed to IP-based services. It's difficult to trace down to the call originating location in those services. So some users had attempted to mask their identity in an attempt to abuse services. And that can only be true in IP-Relay services.

Another abuse that the FCC has acknowledged and emphasized in their work with organizations is that VRS cannot be used for Video Remote Interpreting services, because VRS is funded by the telephone companies, and VRS is intended to be used as a telephone service, not for a replacement of interpreting services. And that is an important distinction with other countries. Some countries don't make that distinction because of different funding paradigms.

Speech-to-speech relay services are a unique population, but they have the potential for growth in that area, where some don't have the ability to speak as fluently for themselves and rely on a third-party, a communications assistant, to speak for the caller. Using a regular telephone they need no special device. The communication assistants must be trained to listen and then respeak. The number of users per minute is pretty much static.

For Captioned Telephone Services, it includes both PSTN and IP-based services, but the growth in IP services has grown significantly because of general quality improvements in IP services.

It does use specialized equipment, a telephone that comes with a built-in screen or monitor for reading text. That is connected to a communications assistant that can revoice using voice recognition technology to relay the message between the device and the CA. It's good for individuals who have some hearing or are hard-of-hearing and speak for themselves, or who speak for themselves but can't hear very well. It enables them to speak directly to the hearing party and read the other party's message, and also hear their voice at the same time. I've touched on most of them.

This has a similar function in IP as it does in PSTN.

However, at the beginning of this year, back in January, the FCC released an interim order, an emergency order, to try and take some control of the growth in IP Captioned Telephone Services. It caught everyone by surprise, the increase in demand being so sudden. So trying to ensure that the growth is legitimate, not due to some unorthodox practices or market practices. The growth should be based on the actual demand and legitimate demand that people are in need of the service. So we took that temporary measure for six months.

The specific measures that are in those interim rules include no rewards or incentives for signing up new customers.

User certification to determine whether the user actually needs the service to be able to communicate over the phone, not because they want an added benefit. But because they need the services.

There are two certifications, self certification, the individual States they have a hearing loss, require the service, and understand that the service is provided by a  live relay assistant. And that the cost of the service is funded via the TRS fund. That it's not just a free service.

Like watching TV. The general population can watch TV and enjoy captions, and assume that someone's paying for it. But this service is federally funded. It's not a free service.

The second certification requires that if an individual receives equipment for free, there must be professional certification that recognizes the individual has a hearing loss that requires the use of the service. Individuals who purchase the equipment for more than $75 can self certify and don't require a professional certification.

Those temporary measures require that captions be turned off by default. Previous to the order, all equipment had captions defaulted on at all times, so as soon as you picked up the phone captions were always on. If it happened that a hearing child within the household picked up the phone, captions would be streamed on. So it required an automatic connection to the communication assistant to do the revoicing at all times.

This temporary measure recognized the reverse to be true. That if you want to use caption services, you must turn them on and affirm the use the service. Consumers need to use that confirmation of services for each call. The FCC has received some complaints, and issues related to this. It has been very concerning. But it's an interim measure for six months, as we take an opportunity to improve the situation and get a clearer picture of what has been going on within that line of business.

A large percent of consumers are older Americans, senior citizens who are not accustomed to change in procedures, so they pick up the phone and there aren't captions, and that's why there has been a series of complaints.

There may be less awareness of these types of relay services, but they are significant for the populations they serve. That 2000 order recognized VRS services, speech-to-speech service, and shared nonEnglish language services. So they're relaying between two nonEnglish languages. So the interstate fund requires that companies provide those Spanish to Spanish services, but intrastate, it's up to the individual States to determine whether that is provided or not.

Louisiana has a large French speaking population, and so they encourage providers to provide French language spoken interpreting services.

And now I'll turn it back over.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Is this on? Yes, now it is.

So I'm now going to cover functional equivalency. And this is the cornerstone of the obligation in the United States for relay services to be provided in a manner that is as close as possible in terms of function to what hearing people have when they talk over the telephone.

We created this concept back in 1990, when the ADA, the Americans with Disabilities Act, first included relay services as a mandate. And again, the goal was that reaching a CA, a communications assistant, and making a call through a communications assistant is basically -- should be as close as possible to getting a dial tone and making a call over the regular telephone.

So what the Commission did, based on various obligations that were contained in the Americans with Disabilities Act, it established something called mandatory minimum standards of service.

Next slide. What I'll do is go through these, and hopefully there will be time at the end if there are any questions. But these are some of the standard minimum standards, most of them.

The first is that individuals using relay should be able to choose the gender of the communications assistant. Also, the communications assistant should stay on the call for a minimum of at least ten minutes, and that is so that there is a good conversational flow. Because you don't want the communications assistant having to leave very frequently during a call.

For speech-to-speech users, it's 15 minutes. And we actually have been asked by the speech-to-speech community to extend that to 20 minutes. Because for people that have difficult to understand speech, it takes even longer sometimes for the communication assistant to figure out the speech patterns of that individual. And so rather than have the communications assistant constantly change, if you have a longer period of time that the communications assistant stays on the line, the call will go faster and more smoothly.

We have specific requirements on the handling of emergency calls, because that's critically important to this population, especially because right now there is no direct means of getting access to our emergency services other than through relay. There is a requirement for TTY access, but very few people use TTY anymore. So as a consequence, most people are using relay.

We have a proceeding, just so you know, at the FCC to require text, the ability to send text to an emergency authority, and that proceeding is moving very well. In fact, we have a voluntary commitment from the four major wireless carriers in America to roll out text to 9-1-1 by May of 2014. So we do think that that is going to be a possibility in the future. But it is not at least initially going to be realtime access. It's going to be via texting on cell phones.

Next slide.

We have a lot of different requirements for communication assistants to achieve functional equivalence. You have to be able to type 60 words per minute. You have to have competence in grammar, spelling, as well as typewritten ASL. This was a more important requirement before we had video relay. Again we started with TTY based or text-based relay. And at that time people that used ASL, American Sign Language, that is, typically would type. But now most people use their own signs. So that requirement probably isn't used very much.

But in general, communication assistants need to be familiar with hearing and speech disability cultures. They have to be transparent. So they are not supposed to intervene in a conversation. They are not supposed to alter a conversation. They are not supposed to shorten a conversation or abbreviate it. They are supposed to be conveying the words literally verbatim to the extent possible.

They can't keep records of the conversation. It has to be kept confidential. They have to -- there is a limited exception, however, for speech-to-speech users, because sometimes speech-to-speech users will convey something and tell the communication assistant that they want to convey the same thing in a subsequent call, and so there is a very limited exception for speech-to-speech users to hold on to some of their information upon their request.

If you're a communication assistant that is signing for an individual, you have to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially. And this standard actually comes from the Americans with Disabilities Act. It's used for interpreters that are needed for communications with state and local Government, or in state and local Government, and also private entities, such as doctors' offices, lawyers offices, and other public accommodations.

And also, the communications assistant has to use any necessary specialized vocabulary. Again this is a standard from the ADA.

Next slide.

So again, the call content, as I mentioned before, must be verbatim. It also must be in realtime. In other words, you can't take a message and then send it along afterwards. It has to be conveyed as it's received. And calls must be kept confidential.

The goal of this was to make people that are using this service comfortable about using it, and not have to -- they don't have to worry that somebody is so-called listening in on their phone call. This intermediary, again, is really supposed to be like a transparent telephone wire.

Next slide.

So the functional equivalence also requires that services in the United States be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And that is required for nearly all of our relay services. Right now, IP captioned telephone I don't think has that requirement. But where it's a PSTN based service -- and I don't think actually the PSTN based CTS captioned telephone service necessarily has that requirement, because those are not required services. But, basically, all other kinds of relay services, I believe, have the 24/7 requirement.

Also, calls must be answered within a specific time period from when they come into the Relay Center, and that is within ten seconds, 85 percent of the time measured daily.

In effect, what the goal here was to have people be able to pick up their phone and get connected just like everybody else is connected. And I think it's worked pretty well. For Video Relay Service, a greater amount of time is in our rule, 120 seconds, 80 percent of the time, and measured monthly. But now we are contemplating a change to that, to tighten up the speed of answer. In practice, however, the speed of answer is much faster. All of the video relay providers have very, very fast response times.

Next slide.

So we were asked also to present on interactive voice response systems. And these are the menu systems that you dial up a telephone number and you press 1 to, let's say, get information, press 2 for hours, press 3 for reaching specific people.

The IVR rules are really not used that much anymore, because most people that use relay now are using a much faster, more effectively realtime version of the service. So, for example, people who sign are using VRS and you can access an IVR system very quickly with VRS, and you can also access it pretty quickly with captioned telephone service.

The reason that the IVR rules were first put into place is because when you use TextRelay, there is a very long delay. The individual who is using the relay has to type and then has to wait until the communications assistant gets that message, and then the communication assistant has to read or type back to the individual what the interactive voice menu is saying. And between all of that time -- and then the user, again, has to tell the communications assistant what number they want to press. There is no -- there is not enough time for that using text-based relay.

So years ago, the Commission, the FCC, put into place a series of requirements to make sure that if you were using a relay system, you could still effectively use a menu system and that these are there cannot be extra charges if you have to redial. The relay service must record the digit sequence and navigate back to where the call left off if they do leave off the call because there wasn't enough time.

The communication assistant has to respond to a user's request for live assistance. And where possible, a user should be able to enter the digits directly without CA help. That is more prevalent now with, for example, some forms of captioned telephone.

And, finally, you have to be able to -- the operator or the communications assistant has to send back automated messages to the user that the IVR assistant -- that they have reached an IVR, so the user has knowledge that they reached a menu system and they are put on notice. And so, again, no additional calls for these charges must be made. I imagine that this occurs in some instances, but I think not many at this point, with the relay services that we have.

The next slide has to do with emergency handling. All of our relay services have to handle emergency calls. For all kinds, you have to automatically and immediately transfer the emergency call to at appropriate public safety answering point. That is what we call them here in the United States. That is the American call center. We happen to use 9-1-1. I know that other countries use a different number.

And all IP-based relay operators or communications assistants, that is including text-based or sign language based, must prioritize emergency calls over all nonemergency calls. So if a 9-1-1 call comes in, it has to be taken first.

In addition, when these Commissions assistants are talking to the emergency personnel who answer the call, they must provide the name -- certain information, including the name of the user making the call, the person making the call. They have to have that caller's registered location. That means where they are calling from.

If the caller is calling on a mobile phone and they can get the new location, they have to provide the name of who they are working for, what provider. They have to give a call back number because sometimes calls are dropped. And if they are dropped, then the emergency authority might have to call back. And they have to provide their identification number, so that it can be traced.

And I'll mention right here that having them convey all of this information is extremely helpful and is particularly helpful because of something that unfortunately started here in the United States. It's called Swatting. Where people unfortunately are making fake phone calls to 9-1-1 centers, or emergency center, where they are sending -- asking for emergency personnel to go out to somebody else's home that doesn't truly have an emergency.

So they are using the anonymity of relay services to fraudulently require or ask for an emergency authority to go to someone's home that didn't ask for emergency services, which is dangerous on so many levels. Because, first of all, you're using emergency personnel for something that they shouldn't be doing. And it's also very dangerous for the person who suddenly has people show up at their home and didn't ask for those people to show up at their home.

Having the communications assistant provide all of this information has enabled us to trace back some of these calls for relay service, and that's how we even figured out that it was occurring.

So just a word of caution to any relay providers in the room, we already alerted you to the fact that this is happening. And we're hoping that you work with your teams to make sure that you can curtail these calls when they come in. It's hard to tell if a call is authentic or it isn't.

And if disconnected, the CA is supposed to reconnect the call.

Next slide. So we have what we call certification in the United States. In order to provide relay services, again, we have kind of a bifurcated system. A state versus federal level system. Our state programmes are operated in the 50 States in the United States and some of the territories, and what they do is that they request certification from the Commission to operate their own programmes. And the reason that this came about is because before the 19906 Americans with Disabilities Act came about, various States had their own programmes. As many of you know, a lot of people in this room have been around as long as that, and they had their own programmes. And when the ADA came around, we said well we don't really want to do what the FCC wants. We would like to continue our own programs. We want the autonomy. So we developed this certification process. And they send in information to us that confirms that they are meeting all of our applicable technical, functional and mandatory standards and that they have procedures and remedies for enforcing any other requirements in their state programmes. They must meet our minimum standards. They can't just do what they want. They can, however, exceed our standards. That's fine.

And the certifications are given on a five-year cycle. And we are just right now at the end of a five-year cycle, ready to begin this one. So just this year Greg and his team reviewed all of the 50 plus state applications for renewed certification. And we are getting ready to issue a public notice that will renew those certifications.

Next slide.

Then we have a second certification process for IP, or Internet Protocol, based companies. And one of the things that is interesting about what has happened in the United States is that when the ADA was first enacted, the requirement is on the telephone companies to provide relay. And so the States, when they are providing relay, they are not obligated to provide relay. It's not the States that are required, it's the telephone companies. Because there were so many telephone companies in each state, each state decided to Act on behalf of all of those companies.

So let's take the State of New York, for example. If the State of New York had 30 companies, the state itself acted on behalf of those companies or acts still on behalf of those companies in developing a programme and getting certification and providing services on behalf of those companies.

However, when we went to an IP version -- when relay services went to an IP version, what happened was not only telephone companies started entering this industry, we got all kind of companies entering this industry. And so, unfortunately, this happened very quickly and there was a proliferation of companies without significant oversight by the FCC, or without substantial or sufficient oversight.

And so over the last few years, what -- well, we had a certification process. Over the last few years we have been beefing up that certification process and looking very carefully at applications and conducting on-site inspections of companies as well, before we grant full certification.

So I just want to go through a few of the things that we're looking at. And again, we mention this, because other countries that are interested in starting relay services can hopefully learn from -- I don't want to say our mistakes, because over all this has been a phenomenal programme, but maybe a few bumps in the road that we had, and you can glide over them without having to go through them like we did.

So, again, certification is for five years. And the companies can apply for renewal.

The companies have to attest that they meet all of the operational, technical and functional mandatory minimum standards, but they also have to provide a lot of documentation. For example, they have to show evidence that they have call centers, that they have the technology and the equipment to support call center functions.

Next slide.

They have to be willing to submit to onsite inspections, and we have conducted many of these to date. They have to explain to us who owns the companies, we want full disclosure of their ownership. Any sponsorship arrangements, we have a lot of companies that engage in a lot of outside activities, and we want to understand what those are, marketing and advertising and other sponsorship arrangements, to make sure there are no conflicts of interest and make sure that there is no abuse of the programme.

We want to know the number of employees, divided up into the types of employee, such as people that are involved in providing the phone call as well as marketing and sponsorship.

And we have a lot of other different requirements, but that's all I want to say right now about certification. Suffice it to say that our rules are very, very detailed on this. And we have painstakingly gone over each of the applications to make sure that they are what they need to be.

Next slide. So, over the year, again, you know, you heard us mention throughout this presentation of fraud, waste and abuse. It's something that we have looked carefully at, and over the last few years have adopted rules to prevent it.

The fund grew, the first few years it was 70 million and now it's projected to be over 1 billion. So you can see -- the good news is that there is a lot of usage of this programme, which is what the goal is. But it has also attracted a lot more attention and concern, because when a fund grows to that size, there is going to be greater need for accountability.

I do want to mention, though, that the concept of relay services was to even things out, to create a level playing field. This was not perceived, when it was first designed, as a charity. It's not a charity. It's not a social service. It was conceived of as a civil right. And that is the way those of us who are working in the disability rights office still perceive this programme.

So it's very important to us to make sure that the people that are supposed to benefit continue to be able to benefit from it.

So one of the things that we have done to prevent fraud, waste and abuse in 2011, in April, we adopted a new set of rules that place a number of prohibitions on what relay providers may do.

For example, they cannot relay calls from home. Now we have gotten a petition on that and reviewing it, whether it's permissible to have a limited exception for overnight. And we're still considering that.

But right now, you cannot relay any calls from home.

You can't tie the number of minutes or calls to the compensation for communication assistants. This was occurring with increasing frequency. And so what was happening is that communications assistants had every reason to make phone calls that weren't real phone calls so they could get paid more, so we put a prohibition on that. We had conditions on when you can make VRS calls from outside the United States. You have to notify your provider of when and for how long you'll be outside of the United States.

We don't allow any calls from outside of the United States for IP-Relay calls. I'd say that probably the biggest amount of fraud that we have experienced has to do with IP-Relay calls, and it's because it is an anonymous service and anybody can make a call using an IP-Relay service without the person receiving the call knowing that that person is using relay.

Unfortunately, what this has led to in the past are fake calls to retail establishments, ordering mega amounts of equipment or materials, and the retail purchaser doesn't realize that the person making the phone call is fraudulent. So those calls have originated largely from outside the United States, and that's why we terminated those calls.

If the remote -- if the provider is involved in remote training, the provider cannot get paid for calls related to that training. We were finding that some providers were creating training sessions, just to have extra minutes.

Relay providers cannot allow their relay -- their communications assistants to use privacy screens, visual privacy screens, from a certain -- because when they did, you didn't know what the relay operator was doing behind the privacy screen.

Individuals who are making the calls can still use privacy screens, but not the communications assistants.

The relay providers have to automate the record keeping of their minutes so it's accurate. For a while people were doing it manually. They would start handling a call and then in the middle of the call they said I forgot to press the button that the call started at a certain time and they figured out when the call started. So we put an end to that. Again, the providers have to report on the location and staffing of their call centers.

They have to disclose who they are in public materials. For a while providers had a lot of subcontractors that were not known to us, and not known to outside users, and so we want everybody to know whose service they are using.

They can't have revenue sharing arrangements with entities that are not eligible for compensation.

Per minute compensation for marketing and outreach by subcontractors using VRS is also prohibited.

And, finally, we have put together requirements for whistleblower protections. So that what this means is that if a communications assistant or anybody working in a company or even outside of a company, maybe a subcontractor, has knowledge that there is some wrongdoing going on, they should come to us and they cannot be fired for it. They have protection.

So next slide.

So both Greg and I mentioned a number of what we call relay threats. Again we see this as a civil right and it's a threat to the civil right, whether it's perpetrating fraud, placing false emergency calls, or other schemes. And we are acting to prevent these. We have taken, again, the last three years, I'd say at least 50 percent of our time has been devoted to just Curbing fraud and abuse. We would rather spend our time expanding access. We did that, too, but it's unfortunate that there is so much fraud and abuse that we have to run after.

So that concludes our PowerPoint presentation. I did want to mention that we submitted as contributions a series of compliance consumer guides, and I can just run through these quickly just so that you know you have them.

There is one on 7-1-1. 7-1-1 is a telephone number that we use throughout the United States. I don't think I mentioned that. I don't think that is mentioned, right?

Okay.

So 7-1-1 years and years ago, before we had the IP version of relay, we had different states, again, providing relay service. And each state had its own telephone number. So -- sometimes they had more than one number. They would have one for voice, they had one for TTY, one for Voice Carry Over, et cetera. If you traveled from state to state, it was impossible to figure out what the relay number was. And so several of us at that time, years ago, when I actually worked here at Gallaudet, we filed a petition with the FCC. And it took the FCC only ten years to get it done. But they did eventually. And Canada beat us. They caught on to our idea for 7-1-1 uniform dialing access and they got it done in about a year. We were embarrassed, but we eventually got it done.

So by the time we got it done, which basically allows anybody to dial 7-1-1 anywhere in the country and access a relay operator on what is called the public switch telephone network, the telephone network, by the time we got it done IP came along and so hardly anybody uses the public switch telephone service. But there was a small period of time when it was used.

So in other countries, if you are considering relay service, it's very important to have a uniform number. Otherwise it's difficult.

We have a consumer guide on what is telecommunications relay service. It goes through the different kinds.

We have one on the use of toll free numbers. I don't want to go too much into that. But there was a period of time when a couple of the providers were using numbers, toll free numbers, for relay -- for Video Relay Service. And that is only allowed if a person pays for a toll free number at this point.

We have a guide on ten-digit numbering. We have requirements in the United States for IP-based operators or rather relay providers to give everybody a telephone number, to make it easier to have interoperability across relay services and also to be able to receive calls. Because for a very long-time it was very hard for people using IP versions of the service to receive calls from hearing people. So now everybody has a telephone number. We call it ten-digit because it has ten digits.

Nobody uses pay phones anymore in America, and so just file this one. But to make a long story short, we don't cover TRS calls from pay phones when using coins, because it was impossible to do. So it's doubly not necessary.

We gave you a consumer guide on our national Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, I believe. And that is a programme that takes $10 million from the relay fund that is used for equipment to be distributed to people who are deaf-blind around the country. Any kind of telecommunications or information service equipment, it can include computers, laptops, tablets, cell phones, Braille displays. It's designed to access telecommunications information services or advanced communication services. It is covered. This is a side programme that was adopted by Congress in 2010, as part of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, and it is being implemented. It went into effect July of 2012 and people are now getting equipment. So we're very proud of that programme.

I think we gave you a consumer guide on use of TTY devices with digital phones. That's all I'm going to say about that one.

And I think -- let see. We gave you a guide on frequently asked questions on new ten-digit numbering requirements, those are the requirements I just mentioned. There is another one consumer advisory on ten-digit numbering -- sorry, I forgot to mention this. Ten-digit numbering is critical for 9-1-1 calls as well, because it gives the emergency authority a ten-digit number that can be conveyed to the emergency authority. So it helps identify who is calling.

We gave you a guide on speech-to-speech relay services. And our Rapporteur is quickly pulling these up at an amazing speed.

Finally, on IP captioned telephone service. So you have a lot of background that can fill you in if you didn't catch anything that we covered today.

Finally, we also made a contribution to your technical paper. And that again parallels the PowerPoint. And again I want to thank Elaine.

Did you want to mention something? And I understand that you're going to go through that, the technical paper, later on, but we just wanted to mention that the PowerPoint parallels that effort.

So that pretty much concludes our prepared material, and are we allowed to open this up for questions? Okay. So we open it up for questions for anybody on the line or anybody in the room.

>> JOHN MARTIN: This is John Martin from Purple. Hopefully, Karen, you can help me with a couple of issues. It's one of the areas that we discussed in Europe and especially with OFCOM and some of the other regulatory authorities around Europe.

And, specifically, I guess about four questions. It might help if I come around to you. And then we can share the microphone.

So the first point was you might have -- you made a comment about swatting, and it inducing fraud. Can you comment a bit more about that and why is that fraudulent activity, rather than just a malevolent activity?

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Well, it depends on how you want to term it. It depends on whether you call fraud fraud by the provider only. This is not fraud by the provider. It is a malevolent activity. You could probably say it's more -- it's misuse and abuse by other individuals of the system.

So you may be right, that it's a better to call it that, rather than fraud, which is fraud on the -- usually when we use "fraud," we use it to describe what providers might do on the system.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Okay. Thank you.

>> GREG HLIBOK: Just a quick comment. There are instances where fraud was involved in swatting. The individual who initiated the swatting call stole someone else's identity, and was putting the person into a bad light. So I would categorize this as fraud as well.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Okay. Thank you. The second question, why does working from home for a CA imply fraud?

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: So when we prohibited this, it was at a time that there were approximately 50 to 60 small companies working for larger companies that had certification, with the Federal Communications Commission. What had happened -- this was only in VRS. And what happened was the larger companies subcontracted out with the smaller entities, but the smaller entities were not subject at all, they should have been, but they were not subject at all to our oversight. And as a consequence, abusive and fraudulent practices started to proliferate. Amongst the schemes that were designed were things like people literally taking a book and reading from a book through a relay operator to somebody else.

There were also schemes where one relay operator spoke directly to another relay operator. Just the scope and breadth of the fraudulent schemes was staggering.

And so in order to get better control over the system, we felt at the time that it was necessary to prohibit any situation that did not have direct managerial oversight. So that was part of it.

The other reason that we prohibited it is that we were concerned -- there were actually three reasons. That one was one. Number two, we were concerned about confidentiality. Because we had heard of situations where communications assistants were not blocked off from the rest of their home. And we didn't want children entering a room if a parent was telecommuting.

And, third, we have the other mandatory minimum standards and we were concerned that, again, without direct managerial oversight onsite in a call center, that there would not be sufficient oversight. So those were the three Things, the three reasons.

Greg, do you want to add anything? Okay.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Just to comment that on how that perhaps is different from the language, spoken language relay industry, which is often -- which often works from home, is that something that perhaps --

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Okay. There is a big difference. The spoken language industry, people pay for. So this is a free service that is paid for by the Government. It's a free flowing amount of money.

So that is -- that's the main difference.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Thank you. So the third question. When does revenue sharing stop and paying a third-party provider stop? Where we're used to paying the Telcos per minute, when does that stop and revenue share stop?

>> GREG HLIBOK: Really, it's all in the April 2011 fraud order. I don't know the exact language, but revenue sharing arrangements are prohibited for all types of contractual arrangements, with the exception that the contract doesn't involve supporting of relay services. So janitorial services or window cleaning services are not relevant to relay services. Those are quite fine.

But if it's anything related to the provision of the platform or the actual relay services, or the communication assistants that are required for the operation of relay services, those are what are prohibited.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Right. And I just do also want to mention, and I had not mentioned this before, but I know that most of the people in the room are aware that the FCC is considering a major restructuring of relay services that has not yet been released. But it may affect some of the dynamics and structure of VRS.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Thank you. So the final question, and it relates back to one of your answers, if the users were paying for the calls, rather than paying for the interpreter time, but to pay for the actual telephone minutes of the call?

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Some people believe that that is the case. In the United States, Congress, when it adopted the Americans with Disabilities Act, made it very clear that users of the service are not to pay anything beyond what the call would otherwise have cost. But for the relay service, from the point of origination to the point of destination. So the goal was that in order to have functional equivalence, you don't pay for the access. You pay for the -- you do still pay for the call from the beginning to the end.

What has happened over time is that without long distance charges, there is not -- at this point people don't necessarily pay very much for a call. They pay a set fee. So they pay a one-time charge, monthly charge, for all local and long distance calls over the traditional network or the broadband service. Some people believe that because people are not paying anything for the use of the calls that are connected to relay, that that has become a problem.

However, Congress was very clear that, again, access, in America, access is a civil right. And so you don't pay for the access. You pay -- you still have to pay the broadband fee, you still have to pay the cost of a telephone line. But you don't pay for the access.

And if you look at the Americans with Disabilities Act, you don't pay for interpreters, you don't pay for Braille menus, you don't pay for ramps. So this is, you know, if you look at it as a ramp onto the telecommunications network, you don't pay for the ramp. Once you're on the network then you have to pay for it. That has always been the philosophy of American disability law.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Okay. Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much for that. And I believe Christopher Jones online has a comment and a question. So if we could -- Christopher?

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Hello, this is Christopher here. Christopher Jones.

I have a question for Karen. Karen gave an excellent presentation of the ITU in Geneva two years ago that was, and that focused on a few issues. One of them was third person -- third-party. I think that we need to change the concept to conduit, and I think that's very important to the world to grasp, really. We have communication assistants and sign language interpreters, and they are conduits when they are being used as telephone calls. And I think that's an important concept.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Christopher. We have time for a few more. So Angie Officer.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Hello again. I'm Angie Officer with Sprint Relay. First of all, Greg and Karen, very nice job on your presentation.

Greg mentioned, related to the speech-to-speech, it's a very stable number. I'm curious why speech-to-speech is so flat and the minutes -- I'd like to see the minutes in that improve. And I'd love your feedback on speech-to-speech for the community.

>> GREG HLIBOK: Good question.

What we're trying to figure out, the speech-to-speech community is led by Dr. Bob Segalman. You may know him. And he -- since 2006, he has proposed several times that many speech-to-speech potential users are isolated. Really, there isn't a speech-to-speech disability community. They're all living in isolation. So it's difficult to find them, capture them. They may have multiple disabilities or mobility issues, cognitive issues. Maybe they just returned from the war. So it's a challenge.

And the cost to be able to identify them, there is a cost to seek them out. So that advertising, to be able to convince them -- and that's part of the reason we haven't seen much growth in speech-to-speech.

That increase in reimbursement has not seemed to do much to increase the minutes. It hasn't provided that much of an incentive.

So another idea is to provide a video assistant with speech-to-speech may capture more potential users. But we are actively looking at that now under this current administration.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: That was really good feedback. Thank you.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: It was Elaine Gardner that put together the PowerPoint. And I want to mention that Elaine and I used to work here at Gallaudet for -- for me, about more than a decade, and you were here for 20 years. So anyway, it's really like a reunion for us to come back here. But I just wanted to point that out. So thank you, Angie, for your compliment on the PowerPoint.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Karen, and thank you for the question, Angie.

We have ten minutes so we have time for another two questions or so. So...

>> LISE HAMLIN: This is Lise Hamlin from Hearing Loss Association.

I was looking through the rules and prepping for this and I do notice that you mentioned in your talk about looking at the rules talk about people -- and it's mostly with VRS. But I think it's across the board, and correct me if I'm wrong, about interpreting effectively, accurately and impartially. What I'm thinking about, and I think about this for CTS, for example, I'm wondering if we need more standards so we can figure out how to monitor that. Or how a consumer can complain if -- are there -- are there ways already in place or do we need to add to the rules to see that when something isn't provided accurately or effectively or even impartially, that there is a way for a consumer to come back to you Guys and say hey, what can we do to make this better?

>> JOHN LEE: I feel like a game show host doing this.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: Thank you. First of all, I want to clarify that those rules are only in place for VRS. So that requirement doesn't actually exist for the other kinds of communications assistants, although the other kinds of communications assistants are under a very clear obligation to relay verbatim and to not alter content. So if a CA is altering content, and not relaying verbatim, they're not supposed to summarize unless they are asked to do so. So if that's occcurring, they can file -- anybody can file a complaint with our office and we would investigate the complaint.

And we have been -- the office has been fairly aggressive in recent years in terms of trying to enforce our laws.

>> JOHN LEE: Actually, I have a follow-up to that question, in terms of quality. Specifically, I guess VRS and video quality, is there anything mandated in terms of the codec level quality of videos that are used?

>> GREG HLIBOK: The FCC at this time doesn't have a rule in place that specifically requires video standards at all. With the growth of VRS it has been largely due to the competitive environment and each provider having their own hardware or application of their choice. And consumers can base their decision to use a service based on the quality of the technology or the interpreters.

So there are no specific standards defined.

>> JOHN LEE: Okay. Thank you. I believe that --

>> GREG HLIBOK: I did also want to add the FCC does recognize issues related to interoperability between those different video products.

In some cases, they are interoperable, where in others they're not. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that regardless of what video product a consumer is using, they can call anyone using any other video product, just like with voice calls. So we're working towards that. And it is requiring cooperation between the VRS providers and enabling the use of off-the-shelf products. Some of those aren't interoperable.

I went to Germany just last week and it was interesting that many deaf people there have several video accounts. They have a Skype, an ooVoo, an IM account, a Google hang out account. And they agree in advance which video account they are going to use, and they call on that account based on prior agreement. They're not doing that here in the States. They're calling using a VRS product.

So we have that edge here. But it doesn't mean it's not an opportunity for the future towards interoperability Internationally.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Greg. And as we work towards global interobjectrability, it would be nice to be able to explore those questions at a later time.

I believe that Mark Hill had a comment or question.

>> MARK HILL: I'd like to respond to Greg's comments about why the speech-to-speech minutes have been relatively flat. There is the same issue in the deaf community with people that have mobility impairments, because of access to the technology and technological limitations and isolation. I think it's also important that we have a sign-to-sign relay service, because it's also important for people with mobility issues.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. With that, I believe Claude had a comment at this point as well, unless you wanted to respond. Okay. Claude? My apologies.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: I'd like to make a brief comment. This is related to the technical paper on telecommunications services, but I'd like to really applaud the FCC, because they are exhibiting a model for federal agencies in terms of promoting, making things happen in terms of accessibility. I've worked with TDI for 16 or 17 years, and the FCC has been very open and engaged with the consumer groups and other industry groups in looking for feedback before making determinations, and while they're making decisions and during those processes have been very open in this whole process for VRS. And I don't think we could ask for a better partnership or collaboration process than we have with the FCC. If you look at other countries and other Government agencies in those countries, I think they should absolutely look to the FCC as a model. If other countries want to provide quality services, they have to pay attention to consumer groups and consumer issues. And not only issues and technical issues, but aspiration, they have to look at consumer organizations to find out what they want. And so I really want to applaud the FCC and all of their work.

Finally, I have a question for Karen. When we're talking about IP-Relay, if I travel in Europe and I use IP-Relay, I can inform the provider or the FCC that I'm going to be in Europe for a month. If I stay longer than a month, actually, let me restate that. If I'm there up to four weeks, then I can travel and still use IP-Relay while I'm traveling, because I have a ten-digit number. If I pass that one-month mark, then I have to get special permission. I'd like, actually, Karen, to clarify that Regulation and just make that more clear to those in the room.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: So, to first clarify, it's -- you're not allowed to make any calls via IP-Relay from outside of the United States. But you can make VRS calls from outside of the United States.

And you do have to register, first, with your provider. And I think you have to tell them where you are going. I think you have to tell them where you're going. It's been a while since I looked at this rule. And if you pass the period of time, you have to then notify your provider again.

So there can be a way to notify the provider from overseas. But again, the goal here is -- and we recognize that this is somewhat burdensome. But what we have had to do over the last few years is balance the burden with the benefits of being able to offer the service. And so in order to not cut off the service entirely, we came up with this middle ground to make sure that fraudsters are not engaging in calls from overseas. So you can reregister from overseas, but you have to notify the provider that you're staying longer and notify the provider that you're moving around.

And Greg wants to add something.

>> GREG HLIBOK: Actually, if I may. We are looking at two different kind of compliance. It's nice to have the compliance to see what is going on out there. Lise mentioned talking about the quality of the captioned telephone service and we received some complaints about the quality of the service provided over captioned telephones. We also looked at the complaints for IP-Relay or International calls, and we haven't gotten complaints like that.

And I think that the reason is when people travel overseas, they don't generally have the ability to carry the device and connect that way.

Most often when deaf people travel Internationally, they use text messages, and so that they communicate that way. That has been my observation so far.

The number of IP-Relay users is substantially lower than it used to be. We received some complaints about VRS, we have received some complaints about that service. But none for the IP-Relay service.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. So at this time we have time for one last comment so we will let Andrea and I believe Karen wanted ending remarks.

>> ANDREA SAKS: I just have a couple questions for Karen and Greg. You know I want to see International relay services be open eventually in the future and I appreciate the fraud thing. There is an analogy that I have about it. We have e-mail. It doesn't stop people in Nigeria from doing fraud, but we don't prevent people from using e-mail from Nigeria. There must be a way that we can evolve into a space where we can do something about that. I just want to make that point.

The second point is that we do carry equipment with us. I still pack my TTY, my little tiny compact. The fact is, an iPad is a valuable piece of equipment that everybody is pretty adept at using.

And the restriction on IP is really unfortunate. So I'm hoping that we can open up that as a kind of a place in this document, as a research project. I don't know how we will do this, but it could be for future study, where we can evolve into a space. And that's kind of my comment.

And I don't know, Karen, how we could overcome temporarily or any ideas coming from the FCC where we could open up the IP. It's like registering, where you tell the credit card company you're going overseas. Is there a way that we can work toward something where we can have International IP?

>> JOHN LEE: I'll let Karen respond and some concluding remarks.

>> KAREN PELTZ STRAUSS: So right now, the culture in the United States is very concerned about the rapid and extreme growth of the fund. Again it's mushroomed over the last year or so. It's very unlikely that any expansion of IP-Relay would occur at this time, given that that is probably, when looking at all the forms of relay, the one that has been most subject to abuse. So there would have to be some means of sealing shut that abuse.

You know, again, you know, there were some people that think that relay services should -- that there should be costs to users, that that might prevent fraud, because people have to pay for it. Then they are less likely to commit fraud. It goes against the grain of what the original concept of relay service was. So I can tell you personally, not -- I can't speak for the Commission on this issue, but I have real concerns if we open up that door.

You know, it's not something that is closed perhaps sealed shut forever, but right now, I just don't see it as happening, to be really honest.

I did want to mention -- first of all, I want to tell you that it's a delight to be able to participate. As Chris mentioned, I participated in this group's meeting, actually it was a few more years than you remember, Chris, it was in October of 2009. In fact, I did it on behalf of the RERC on Telecommunications Access, working with some of the people that put together this event with the ITU.

I also wanted to mention that on Wednesday we have briefings at the FCC. I realize that those of you who are connecting remotely will not be able to attend, but we have briefings on the FCC about all of our disability rules. I think many of you are already coming.

And if those of you are not aware, on Thursday and Friday, we have the M-Enabling Conference, which is the next leg of this conference. It actually started at the FCC in December of 2011, I believe. And we're having I believe 400 to 450 people from over 30 countries come to exchange ideas about wireless technologies. And many of the questions -- some of the questions that were raised here about interoperability and other things may be addressed at that, including emergency access, applications for healthcare. All kinds of issues relating to disability access to mobile wireless services.

So I just wanted to mention that that is occurring.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to present.

>> GREG HLIBOK: Andrea, you asked a critical question about the possibility of opening IP-Relay to international use. And I think there are two parts to it. First, if you're talking about Americans using IP-Relay from anywhere in the world, well, if we have a state of the art technology that can track the individual who needs IP-Relay around the world, then potentially. But only with that technology.

But if you're suggesting IP-Relay be opened up for anyone, including NonAmericans to use, that question is much bigger than the FCC. And it's not for us to answer. That's for Congress to answer. It's really a much bigger question than we can handle.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. I realized that there's one more comment. We are running a little over time. Well, if it's quick. Because we do need to wrap up.

>> KELBY BRICK: Just to make a statement that I've been on record several times providing concerns from consumers who can't access VRS Internationally if they're traveling for a long period of time. I don't get that many complaints on the IP-Relay issue, but for VRS, there have been complaints of the time limit. I think there is a limitation of a month, and then after that some people who are staying longer, maybe six months, maybe a year, really are cut off. They are still paying taxes, they are still American citizens, and they're really cut off from American services, and that upsets them a great deal.

So I think it's more the type of complaint we get than users of IP-Relay.

So often we refer those individuals to the FCC, that it's the rules that are in place.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. So at this time I'd like to close this session and break for lunch.

And thank you very much, Karen and Greg, and for helping us out with this. And it's good to get this perspective.

So thank you very much. So at this point I pass the floor to -- that was a blank, to Christian, to talk about where there are lunch opportunity for us to go and eat.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Hello again everyone. I'm Christian.

There are two easy options for lunch. The first being just downstairs from here, it's a place that we call the marketplace. It's not really fancy food, but it's relatively inexpensive.

And the second is over at the Kellogg conference center. There is a Bistro there that is fancier and the food is a bit better. Those are your primary options. We will continue again at 1:45.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much. So I'll see you all at 1:45.

(Break for lunch)

>> The restrooms, go out of the room and go down the hallway, they are on the left. There is another restroom out the door to your left and make a left at the end of the Hall.

Any other questions? See you again at 1:45.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: We are going to disconnect the conference for an hour and we will rejoin at end of the break.

(End of morning session)

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FINISHED TRANSCRIPT

ITU-T

STUDY GROUP 16

RAPPORTEUR GROUP MEETING

Q26/16

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>> JOHN LEE: Hello, Christopher, we can hear you. If you just put us on mute, we will be getting started soon.

>> JOHN LEE: Hello, Christopher. We can hear you. If you can just put us on mute, we will be getting started soon.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Christopher.

>> JOHN LEE: Well, thank you, everyone. My apology for the slight delay. So we can get started again. I hope everyone had a good lunch.

This afternoon we have three edits and suggestions to the technical paper under discussion. And we will end off this session with a presentation by Sorenson related to the economic models of doing VRS. Then we will have a quick coffee break and then we will go into a presentation about emergency services. Then the Captioned Telephone Services from the HLAA. And finally we will close out the day with the consumer groups' VRS statements that I believe Claude will be presenting.

So if nobody has any thoughts or additions you would like to add at this point, we will get started.

First off is the document number 12, which is the Gallaudet submission on the F. Series technical paper on relay services for People with Disabilities.

My apology, it appears that people on the online can't quite hear us. So we will try to figure that out right now, before we launch into the document.

>> JOHN LEE: Christian? Our apologies. It seems that somebody on the remote meeting is having difficulty connecting. So we will allow them to connect first before we get going. Okay. Well, I guess we could come back to Christopher then.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Christopher can see the captioning.

>> JOHN LEE: I'll just rearrange the schedule a bit so we give Christopher some time. So instead of starting with Christopher at this point, could we start with the Sprint submissions?

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Sure.

>> JOHN LEE: Okay. So I'll just pull that up. That is document 18.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Should I start or wait a little longer?

>> JOHN LEE: Just one second.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Let me know and I'll be ready. Everybody have a good lunch? I did, too, I had a good salad.

>> JOHN LEE: We can get started then. So if you would, Angie.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Excellent. No problem. My pleasure.

Hello, my name is Angie Officer. I'm with Sprint Relay and I want to thank, again, ITU for inviting us to participate and to provide our input.

This has really been a team effort, the Sprint Relay offices, including a team that included myself, our technical reps, our legal counsel, all ofth us looked over this. And we looked at the FCC as really a model. I have to agree with Claude's statements and second his statement that they have really established a great system for reporting and for getting all of the editorial input from the FCC resources to answer all of the questions.

Sprint Relay feels that we should be neutral positionally in terms of -- as a provider of relay service when discussing International services, because there are rules that were modeled after the system here in the United States. And so we want to be sure that we would have systems that are compatible for all kinds of relay services and for all of the different constituency; interoperability is important.

And Greg's comments, speaking to the importance of International uniform interoperability, speaks to the truth. We absolutely have problems with that at present.

So, John, how do you want me to handle this? Do you want me to just go through the document itself? Section by section? Basically, we pulled all of the edits from the FCC website to plug into the answers for the questions.

>> JOHN LEE: Oh, if possible, since we have already gone through the overview of the documentation, if you could just go to the specific areas where you have contributed an update to the document, and just discuss those.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Okay. Certainly.

To answer your Question, John, we pulled all of the input from the FCC website and we didn't put any opinions or individual commentary into the document. We actually cited the information on the FCC website, so that it would be more generally readable for the International audience.

>> JOHN LEE: Okay. I mean, I've gone through it and it seems like you do have quite a bit that is in there related to some of the services in the U.S. And if there are any differences from what has been presented until now, specifically mentioned in this document, if you could just give us an overview of that.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Okay.

The FCC gave a presentation in which they said that the terminology of relay assistants and communication assistants were points that needed feedback. And our feedback is that we need to consider in the technical paper that the group surveyed, all of the contract Administrators as well as community members -- and they all preferred the term "Operator" as opposed to "Communication assistant" or "relay assistant." And that minimizes the incidence of hang ups on the receiving end of the call. So I think it's important to look to the International communities and see what important terminology would improve acceptance of the calls and reduce the incidence of hang ups.

So with that, Sprint Relay has provided the service for 23 years now, and with the most expertise in different sorts of services, be they be VRS, CapTel and VRI. So one of the important things that we offer is the Federal Relay Service. Federal Relay is not under the FCC standards and rules. It's called a GSA. General service Administration.

The GSA designed the contract under which we're housed and designed the rules, requirements, and the specifications for it, and then it's then funded by Government agency as well as the GSA.

Some 15 years ago, actually some 10 years ago, the GSA directly paid for the services for the Government agencies, and now that model has been changed to direct billing to the agency using it.

So now we provide all of the services, including CapTel, VRI, and actually the most popular feature currently is called Video Remote Interpreting. VRI.

And I would strongly recommend that the International community look to providing VRI services, because of the number of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who have been communicating by written text back and forth with their bosses.

For example, in an employment situation, this has a direct impact on their employability and career success. We would like to see solutions provided for them, so that if their boss or coworker were to enter their office to engage in any sorts of conversation related to the workplace, they could immediately connect via VRI and they would have communication accessibility almost instantly.

Now, one story I feel really illustrates this, it's the story of a person I met just a couple weeks ago. A deaf engineer who had very limited English skills, and had difficulty in using written communication back and forth with their boss. So they were able to use VRI. In fact, the boss had no idea how brilliant his employee was, until he was able to communicate using his own language, American Sign Language.

The employer thought for some time that this was one of the lesser capable employees he had, and now they have a 30 minute meeting every morning, and the employee received an advancement in the workplace because of this. So VRI has had a direct impact on this. And this technology has made a huge difference for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in terms of being able to exhibit improved job performance.

And RCR is not part of the FCC -- RCC is not part of the FCC requirement, that is the relay captioning service. This is a a very important service for Deaf and Hard of Hearing and hearing consumers as well.

The way this works is if there is a staff meeting or a conference room, you simply bring a laptop and you would be able to read the CART transcription. Now, I don't want you to get confused between actual CART services, which you are seeing right now with the live CART services as provided here.

The relay caption conference includes -- allows Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to be involved, despite the fact that we have no live CART transcriptionist in the room. Nor any live interpreter.

They simply are able to read the text just as you're reading the text on this screen, but they read it on the side of their laptop. At the end of that meeting, they are left with a transcription that they can hold on to from that meeting.

And so many Deaf and Hard of Hearing people will experience difficulty in trying to simultaneously engage in the message and reading the message from the participants in the meeting and take notes.

That's why this is so beneficial. RCC as a service is highly recommended, especially when considering the International audience.

And the -- then also that includes the other battery of services that Greg mentioned, CapTel, VRI and TTY services. But this is one of our most popular services.

VRI is one of the most popular services in 33 States. And so there are -- I'm sure that there are a number of International people out there who would be able to use the -- who are using analog lines as opposed to Internet Protocol lines.

So this has been an ongoing issue with us over the last 22 years. We still have some people using TTYs on analog devices, and that has never been resolved and likely never will, because we have to respect the use of the services, but we have to look at how this impacts the International use of these services.

And I hope that helps.

Again, all of the information and edits and inputs were taken directly from information on the FCC's work.

So I think the International action would be well served by looking to the FCC's ground rules and reporting. And if we didn't have these Regulations, it would likely be a mess.

>> JOHN LEE: Yes, thank you, Angie.

One of the questions I did have related to that was you talked about the International perspective and things that would be beneficial from the International perspective. One of the things that we do have to contend with from the International perspective is the differences in the languages that are used, both for signing and for speaking and hearing. And I'm just wondering if you have any thoughts related to that and how that could be implemented in our report, so that at least that area is covered.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Indeed. Absolutely. Right now, we have, in New Zealand, one of our International centers. We have implemented and worked with the New Zealand Center, which has been a challenge, because there is a difference in language. So we had to do a lot of prework, if you will, to make sure that we had a number of interpreters who were familiar with New Zealand, who had experience with relay, and so there was a lot of preparatory work. A lot of work involved in the funding mechanisms and research and looking at the forecast for number of calls, call volume.

At that time we weren't sure whether it was worthwhile to set up the Relay Center there, but we wanted to be sure that Deaf and Hard of Hearing people there had the equipment. If they hadn't the equipment, then what purpose would there be in setting up the Relay Center?

To our surprise, most of the people there were using TTYs. And they didn't have a lot of sophisticated equipment on hand as America does. So we had to work with them and work with the United States Government to set up an ERP programme to be sure that they had the different call types, that they wouldn't be limited solely to TTY calls. We wanted to be sure that they had computers that they could make IP-based calls, to be sure that they had Web enabled cameras that would allow connection to VRS calls. And, you know, they have been very happy to work with Sprint Relay to make it work.

And then we were able to set up an RFP and work with them more directly. We developed, then, a contract. And it has worked out great. And now they're using IP-Relay there and they have just recently established a CapTel call center. And I'm excited to share that the CapTel call center was in fact -- reached capacity, which means we now have to hire more captionists, because a great number of people are using the CapTel phones. And a lot of people are also using the VRS service. And they are using Skype to connect to VRS, and that's the only way it's able to work there currently.

So my suggestion for the International arena is that it would be important to research the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities and what resources they have, what systems they have, to be sure that the right equipment is in hand for the number of different call types, like IP-Relay, VRS, et cetera.

So I think it's critical that we encounter each these International communities individually, and select a point of contact wherein you can design and write the contract and lay out the information on who will provide the funding.

So that would be my suggestion, in order to maximize the opportunity.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Angela. It sounds like you have had a lot of experience in this. And one of the things that may be beneficial for us at this point is if, if it's something that you can share, to write down those experiences so that we can actually share it through our perspective to the various governments that attend the ITU, and that may be beneficial for some of the Governments who may be thinking about creating such a system.

>> Christopher has something to add.

>> JOHN LEE: Christopher, go ahead. Christopher, go right ahead.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Yes, this is Christopher Jones speaking.

I'm interested in the area of communication support for meetings, which is very different from relay services, particularly for the telephone.

One issue is that the FCC says that the employer has to cover the costs of the VRI. But what about meetings, church meetings, for example, social meetings, and charities, too. People who may volunteer in such settings, who is going to pay for those settings?

Thank you.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Thank you. Excellent Question, Christopher. Right now, we offer Video Remote Interpreting services to the Government and Government employees only. We do not offer those services to churches, nonprofits, or social organizations or events. Unfortunately, we don't currently do that, because the General Services Administration, the GSA, does make it a contractual requirement that we provide VRI. Therefore, the GSA or the Government agencies will directly fund the VRI services.

So right now, as of this date, we do not currently provide VRI for any of those organizations that you mentioned, churches, charities, et cetera. Solely for business purposes directly related to the Government. I hope that answers your Question.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Yes, it does.

>> JOHN LEE: Great. Thank you. Christian has --

>> ANGIE OFFICER: This is Angela. I wanted to ask John Lee, you asked a moment ago if Sprint Relay could give you a summary based on our experiences in New Zealand, correct?

>> JOHN LEE: Correct.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Okay.

So we couldn't find anyplace where we could find a White Paper that would be appropriate for us to bring that input to from New Zealand. So my understanding is that you want a separate document that will speak to our experiences there in New Zealand, but not as part of the White Paper, correct?

>> JOHN LEE: Correct. It would Act as a stand-alone paper to be submitted to the ITU where we would review it and it can be transferred back to the ITU-D, which is the development sector, where all countries attend. And this would allow for a broader view of what the challenges are of implementing such services.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Absolutely, John, that won't be a problem at all. We would be happy to do that. Just because we couldn't find a place within the technical paper that was appropriate for the New Zealand experience. But we would be happy to develop a summary document that does speak to the summarization of the experiences and how we were able to establish a relay there in New Zealand. No problem at all. We are happy to do that.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much; appreciate it.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: My pleasure. And I hope I answered your questions.

>> JOHN LEE: Yes. And I believe Christopher had a comment or Question?

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Yes, just a quick comment here. I think what we need is the New Zealand experience to be incorporated into Q of E, which is quality of experience.

And that perhaps should go to Study Group 2, John? That's just a question.

>> JOHN LEE: Well, it wouldn't be -- we wouldn't be talking about the Q of E of this. It would be rather the implementation. And it would typically go to Study Group 12.

But let's not get over that detail. This is a discussion that we can have afterwards with Angela, yourself and myself, to determine the appropriate place for such a report.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Okay. John. Thank you.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. So I believe Christian had something.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Yes, this is Christian Vogler speaking now.

Now, Christopher brought up a great point, an important point about meetings and conferences. So I would say that today, this is a great example of how complex this actually gets.

We probably several years ago couldn't have had a conference of this sort where we have somebody calling through a PSTN and connecting on the audio line, also, in between all of the other technologies and telephone communication technologies that are at play today. We have the PTSN, we have wireless network, we have VoIP over the Internet. We have all of these different communication technologies. But the definition of relay services has not yet caught up to all of these rapidly changing technologies. So I would like to see some way to incorporate all of these forms into it. But it's certainly not a simple task.

>> ANGIE OFFICER: This is Angie Officer. And I wholeheartedly agree with your statement.

Are you familiar with an organization called ATIS?

Now, I forgot what the acronym actually stands for, but I apologize for giving you the acronym without its full title. But this is an organization that is designed for -- that links all telephone companies to be sure that they are adhering to industry standards. Meaning that they must have interoperability for carrier of choice. They must have long distance to the customer's preference. And these -- these are ways in which they ensure interoperability among the different carriers.

The PTSN lines, for example, one building may have a great number of different PTSN lines going through in the various offices there, so this organization really provides great, great technical foundational information for all of these telephone companies to be able to work together and be sure that they are adhering to those industry standards.

So, Christopher, I'm really glad you brought that up, because I think that is another great document that we could reference here in the technical paper, in the White Paper. Because we are working to International industry standards, as opposed to solely United States industry standards.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Would you believe it doesn't say what it stands for? But I believe it stands for American Telephone Industry Standards, I think, is correct. It's a terrible Web Page. I have to talk to them about this.

Anyway, I wanted to say something anyway. I agree with what has been said about -- I think the whole definition of relay service needs to be redefined. And this particular document we have a section called "User needs" don't we? And this is an area where you can have fantasy time. You can basically say what you need. It isn't necessarily what the definition is now. It says what you need. And if we need interpretive services for churches, for business meetings, for people in conferences where we have conferencing tools that will enable us to have more than one person be able to communicate on a video link where we have one interpreter and many people who understand that particular kind of language that is being signed, would be something that is definitely -- we're relaying it, so why not include that in the definition.

So I'm wondering if we should expand the user needs called future considerations. Maybe we could have a new category. But they are talking to Christian.

>> JOHN LEE: I'm shaking my head yes, yes.

>> ANDREA SAKS: So you have a fantasy section that lists what you think and what you want. So don't let that limit your thinking.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. Any other questions or comments related to anything that Angela has provided to us?

>> LISE HAMLIN: I just wanted to support what Andrea just said. Because when I went to this document, I didn't see a place to put in conferencing. And for people who are hard of hearing, trying to get CTS altogether at the workplace is a huge gap. Because you need a dedicated line for captioned telephones, at this point.

And I would like to see that, that piece of it, conferencing and captioned telephones on your desk, much easier. Because a lot of people can't get a dedicated line at their workplace.

So a section like that I would definitely have provided more input into. So I appreciate that.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. And if at the end of this meeting you still have some comments that you'd like to add, then you're more than welcome to send it to us.

So at this point, if there are no other comments, thank you very much Angela.

We very much appreciate your --

>> ANGIE OFFICER: Again, I want to thank you so much for inviting Sprint Relay to be involved. It's been our pleasure. Thank you. Thank you, John.

>> JOHN LEE: So at this point I'd like to go back on to the agenda and just switch the two. And we will move on to document 12, which is the Gallaudet submission on -- which I believe is already open. Your submission. 12.

Okay. Christian, if you'd like to take over.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Okay. Christian Vogler speaking.

And first of all, these are changes that I submitted a year ago to the conference in London. And unfortunately, though, ran out of time at that point. So I have repeated the offering of the summarization here and I'm happy to summarize some of the points here.

These were specific changes to the document and some completely changing certain areas, but most of it relating directly to the content that was already there; looking to the concerns about privacy as it relates to relay. First of all, speaking to that, this is paramount. privacy is paramount in relay services. And I hear of a number of people who are reticent about using relay services because of the concerns about privacy in allowing a third-party to be involved in the communication. And they are unwilling to use it because of that.

And I've encountered this problem in my country in Germany, in my hometown, where a relay service was set up, a video relay service, but deaf people, when calling the doctor, almost refused to accept the call because the law in Germany is so strict as it regards medical information. So doctors will almost never accept a call from a deaf person via a third-party. So some of the --

And so there are documents that have finally been promulgated and disseminated among the medical community so that they are aware that this particular kind of third-party is acceptable in the release of information. So that those documents have now been sent to the -- white papers have been sent to the medical community so that they will then accept the Video Relay Services. But it's not functional equivalency at this point because no hearing person has to have a White Paper sent to their doctors to get a call accepted.

And so any time a video relay service is established anywhere in the world, privacy will be a paramount concern, absolute privacy.

Okay. So now moving on to two other issues that are related to privacy. The first being one that I refer to as operational and the second is technical. The first, operational, is both procedural and policies as they relate to relay services. Go right there. Stop. Pause. Thank you.

Okay.

So, for example, operational privacy refers to the relay operator taking a call and they are housed in a call center in an office, so that nobody else can walk into or overhear or oversee the conversation as it's taking place.

The second issue there relates to the notion of, for example, if I were using Voice Carry Over, VCO, so there is a question there of the video relay operator understanding my voice so that -- and

>> INTERPRETER: Correction on the interpretation.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Hearing and overhearing my voice. So the ability to block that operator from hearing my voice part of the conversation, so that I only hear theirs.

So if, for example, I will hear myself, and the other party will, and the relay operator can then voice for me. But the person at the far end would not typically hear that voice.

Okay. We're going to backtrack and clarify for the sake of the interpretation.

So if I'm a VCO user and I'm voicing for myself, and the interpreter is signing, I'm watching the interpreter sign for the other party on the call, though I'm voicing for myself directly to the other person I'm calling.

The question is whether or not the relay operator would be able to hear my voice as I'm uttering my own communication.

And that's not necessarily -- that's not necessary for them to hear my voice. So it actually lessens the amount that the third-party is involved in the communication or the turn taking. But it does mitigate the privacy concerns.

So very often when I call through Video Relay Services, I will have to give credit card information, for example. And I have to ask the interpreter, who may have written down that information on a white board, to erase that immediately. It's referred to as DMTF. So I can digitally erase it immediately. But some relay services don't have that digital white board, if you will, capability. And so as it relates to privacy, I would recommend that all Video Relay Services have the DMTF capability. So that allows for communication that the third-party doesn't access.

So these are the concerns and I should stress that these should be optional services for the consumer so I can determine what level of privacy I wish to engage with.

For one example, if my speech is less intelligible, I may ask the relay operator to respeak, restate whatever I have spoken. And so that I have then determined what level of service I'll be receiving.

I think it's very important that the relay providers be sure that the choice of service is the choice of the consumer and determines the level of privacy that they have been speaking with.

So now I'll turn to the technological concerns with privacy. And this is something that has bothered me for a very long time. As one example, using wireless communications, these have encryption in them. So that when a hearing person calls another person, the technology is there to allow it to be secure. There are some issues, but generally speaking it's quite good. A hearing person calling another hearing person is assured of a secure correction.

But now when we involve the Video Relay Services, I'm not aware of any service that provides a comparably secure connection. So the call has clearly gone through the Internet and the third-party there has then now had -- could potentially glom on to the video connection that we are using to connect to the interpreter and siphon off that information and have access to seeing it. So we don't have anything that is functionally equivalent and comparable to the security of people using a voice line to call each other directly.

Now, if you could go further down the screen for me.

Okay. Now, to speak to IVR. The integrated voice recognition -- response system.

>> INTERPRETER: Correction, the interpretation.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: This is the draft I've given and it comes from the FCC Regulations and recommendations.

And for the purpose of the International paper, I have included that information as it relates to the IVR capacities.

The only addition that I would make to that is from the comments made by our FCC representatives in attendance this morning, I would add that IVR has been a very frustrating experience for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people generally speaking. Sometimes when you see one of these Voice Response Systems, you simply do anything you can to fish around for a live agent, immediately. I think the experience is improving. There are more options now with VRS and captioned phones. So the problem is somewhat mitigated. But I think it's very important, and if we're aiming for functional equivalency, that no matter what we do, IVR and IVR systems cannot result in a cost greater for the deaf user than that of the hearing user.

Okay? Now, if you'll go further down for me on the screen.

Okay. Now, in this section, this speaks to the question of relay services very often having additional services. One example, call recordings. Answering machines, and we have an extensive wish list that is not yet complete, but I do hope to add more things into this wish list, if you will, of supplementary services. But the first and very, very critical point to make is a mailbox in which messages can be left. So that if I call somebody and have left a message, that that person can then call me back and leave a message for me.

So currently, here in the United States, Video Relay Services do offer that service. If a hearing person makes a call to me and wishes to leave a message, they can do so, which is great. But ironicically, if two deaf people call each other and leave a message then there are still technical issues that come into play there. And some of the VRS companies integrated the voice mail services well and others clearly have room for improvement.

The next that I'd leak to is toll free numbers. A hearing person can set up an 800 number, a toll free number, pretty easily. But they have to pay for that number. We can set up a toll free number so somebody can call me and that is paid for by the individual end-user.

And the third issue I'm going to speak to is -- has actually become worse more recently. If somebody calls me, the signal that I have that indicates that I have a call is quite a problem now if it's on the computer or my wireless device. It's going to be very different. I won't be able to hear the ring on the wireless device. So at home I can use the Video Relay Service because it will flash my lamp light or the room light, something of the sort. But we need some way to be sure that a call makes it to me and to the signaling device which I use. So that any call that comes to the mobile device will also signal the signaling devices.

Again the next point I'll speak to is not as significant, not as major.

Having the capacity for an address book that can be dialed directly from. Hearing persons using the phone or a wireless device can have an address book that is easily accessible there, but not is transferable to our mobile devices. So I would like to see the ability to share an address book between more -- multiple devices for a single individual.

The next issue concerns people calling a person back. And so if I have called somebody, and I want the option then to be transferred -- to transfer them to another number. It's quite easy on a voice to voice phone call to be transferred. It's not nearly so easy to do so using video services at present.

So now the next thing I'd speak to is the issue of collect calls, wherein I am paying for a call that was made to me. That's something that hasn't been addressed and needs to be.

The next issue is that here in the United States we're quite fortunate because VRS is established, and we have VideoPhones that can call a specific number and that will connect to an interpreter. And the interpreter already knows the number that I wish to call. The end point of the call. And that's pretty standard. So when I connect to the Video Relay Service, I don't have to then give them the number that I don't want to give. I want something that is functionally equivalent so that the number is automatically dialed.

It's important, also, to have access to the DMTF touch tone services.

And the last one here in this category, is in the past we made phone calls that simply were voice to voice, two parties. But now we have multiple parties involved in a single phone call these days. And the world has engaged three-way calling rapidly and widely.

With Video Relay Services, this is still in its infancy and has a great deal further to develop. With the ultimate goal of all three of us being able to communicate regardless of the technology we use, whether that be VideoPhone, whether that be CapTel so that they can all be integrated and see each other and all communicate at the same time interoperably.

Okay. Is there anything else there that I need to speak to?

>> JOHN LEE: So thank you very much, Christian.

Christopher has a comment he would like to make. So Christopher?

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Hello, Chris here.

I totally agree with you, particularly when you're talking about encryption. I use Sprint, too. That immediately encrypts all communication. Suddenly I realize the importance of that, really.

I think perhaps the ITU needs to stress the importance of that for all the other types of relay services and relay calls. That's my first point.

One more thing, perhaps you'd like to respond to that first.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Christian speaking.

I agree. With regards to the issue of encryption, it's critical. And, unfortunately, so far this has been an issue that has been widely neglected. And there is a great deal of focus on video quality and other issues, which are important, but privacy is equally as important.

>> JOHN LEE: All right. Christopher, your second point?

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Yes. In terms of IVR, sometimes it's not very clear as to whether I'm actually talking to a real live agent or a computerized voice. And that will make a very big difference, I think, particularly in terms of privacy. It's not very clear at the moment. I can't hear whether that is a computerized voice that I'm speaking to or with. And I think perhaps we need to be informed which it is. Am I speaking to a live agent or to a computer? That is a concern of mine, too.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Christian speaking now.

Good point. Good point. And I'm going to double-check the document. I'm pretty sure that is in there, but I also know that the FCC guidelines say that the operator should announce whether or not it's a live person or a computer. But certainly I agree.

So Christopher go right ahead if you have anything else.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Yes, one more point, actually.

This is linked to privacy. Sorry. Can you hear me?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Hold on one moment. That happens sometimes.

>> JOHN LEE: We can hear you.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Okay. Yes, I just wanted to talk about privacy. I just wanted to reflect on what you had mentioned about perhaps the client only listening to half the conversation, whether it be a communication or an interpreter. I have a slight concern about an interpreter only hearing half of the conversation. In terms of fully expressing the person who is speaking, I just believe that perhaps the quality or the percentage of accuracy in the phone call would be higher if they were listening to both sections of the conversation.

Maybe we could give the caller an option as to whether they could listen to the communication -- the communication assistant could listen to both people speaking or just one.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Christian speaking. And I agree with that take on that. And remember, as I stated, that the most critical point here is that there is consumer choice, imagining that I would be able to determine the level of privacy that I wish, and so that is much more important. And so then that third-party could be left out of that part of the conversation should I so choose.

>> JOHN LEE: Great. Thank you, Christopher. I believe that Donna Platts would like to speak. So Donna, if you'd like to take over.

>> DONNA PLATTS: Should I go ahead? My question is for you, Christian. I think we already have the 800 toll free numbers and messaging. I don't know exactly what you call that in other countries. But what about 900 series numbers? Do other countries use those? And I note that in the United States, some relay services will not accept any calls coming from one of those numbers.

I'm not sure whether or not that could potentially change through the FCC. What do you see happening?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: This is Christian here.

Thank you, Donna. An excellent point. I'm glad you brought that up. And I don't have a good answer right now. I don't have an answer for Germany, either. But I do agree that for functional equivalency, that means you have to be offered everything that everyone else is. If 900 series numbers can be dialed for a pay per minute services, then callers using the relay should have functional equivalency and be able to do that as well. And they should be able to set up a 900 number that others can call and pay them per minute for a service provided. That would be functional equivalent.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Donna.

Thank you.

So, if -- yes. This will be the last question on this point, as we do have to move on.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Christian, just a point on the encryption. While I fully accept that encrypted calls make a lot of sense, have you got instances where people's calls have been intercepted?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Christian speaking.

And I'm not aware of any. But let's suppose for a moment that I establish a tech company and my software is very valuable. It's worth a good deal of money, because it's my intellectual property and I take a risk in communicating the information about that via relay service, because a foreign Government or entity would be very interested in being able to get access to that information.

And Norman has added that some federal agencies have an absolute demand that there is complete encryption on any calls. And if you don't support that encryption, then you're not able to contract with those agencies.

>> JOHN LEE: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very much, Christian.

So at this point I'd like to move on in the agenda. And the next item I have listed is document 11. We have had to switch around one of the documents.

So Sorenson, and I believe it's a modeling, economic modeling.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: This is Paul from Sorenson Communications. And I have to admit, I'm a novice at this ITU, in this ITU world. And so even when I submitted the document to this body, I wasn't exactly sure what I was signing myself up for. So I apologize for, A, being a novice. And, B, potentially not being quite as well prepared to do a presentation on this as I might otherwise be.

And, Christopher, in England, he and I met some years ago while I was doing some work in the UK. And as I make these remarks, I can just see him on the other side of the pond asking himself doesn't this guy ever talk about anything else other than the economic model? So it's a recurring theme for us when it comes to establishing relay services.

And one other thing I think I would have done differently in my document is some people might read it and feel that it -- there may be political angles to it, so I might try and fix that a little bit more in the future. Because my sense, even though I'm surrouned by some competitors, I think we would probably be in fairly strong agreement on this whole area. Even though we have disagreements about funding inside the United States among ourselves and with the FCC, I think if any of us had the chance to start relay services in another country, from scratch, my guess is that there would be quite a bit of agreement among us about certain aspects of how it would develop, particularly as it relates to the funding mechanism.

And so I might say this things here that might not be entirely appropriate, but that is okay.

First off, the whole idea of having relay services from my perspective is that you have to start from the point that it's functionally equivalent. The FCC said that and we are talking about a model here that it's the same as what a hearing person experiences. And anything less than that, I wouldn't say it's not worth talking about, but it's a model that is flawed for a whole host of reasons. Because unless we're talking about functional equivalence, we are telling People with Disabilities that they only deserve something that is a little bit better than what they have today. But they certainly don't deserve anything that is as good as what hearing people have. And I obviously don't buy into that; I don't think anyone in this room buys into that, either.

So defining what functional equivalence really means is a very very critical point.

Because as I've done work in other countries, that is always the sticking point. Everybody loves the idea of our ability to communicate freely, but when it comes to providing services for people who are deaf or who have hearing loss, and that it's going to cost more than it costs for hearing people, then suddenly all that excitement starts to evaporate and everybody starts focusing more and more and more on the costs of providing that service. And they really could care less about whether it's equal, whether it's even good or anything like that.

And so from a hierarchy perspective, just getting functionally equivalent access to telecoms in any country would be a huge, huge victory. Because there is only one country in the world that provides it, and we're in it right now, having the meeting in it.

There is not a single country anywhere else on the world that provides functionally equivalent access to telecoms to their Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizenry. Yes, they have VRS, yes, they have IP-Relay and stuff. But it's always restricted. It's always limited, and there are a whole host of other things that make it far less than equal for the users. So that would be a huge win in and of itself, let alone the ability to have extremely high levels of interoperability between countries, which in my mind is a great, great goal. But something down the road.

I would have to say that the hero in all of this is -- isn't the regulatory body, it isn't a provider of the service. The hero in the United States of all of this is the law. It's the ADA. That is the thing upon which everything hinges for the provision of relay services in the United States, in the way that it is provisioned. We are legally required to basically do it this way and provide it this way. And because we have that legal mandate, it takes a lot of the wiggle room out of the discussion, both from a regulatory perspective and from a provider perspective, because it's a legal mandate and we have to do it.

In countries that don't have as tight a framework, then it becomes a lot more difficult. Because at the end of the day, if you don't have to, many people, many Governments feel that, well, then I just don't need to. So defining that level of functional equivalence I think is critical.

The second thing is, and we're starting to see signs of it here in the United States, if we were to have had this meeting three years ago, two years ago, we would have a different discussion about it. But since we're having this meeting today, sort of the elephant in the room now is that considerations about the provision of access is becoming more and more an economic discussion than it is a civil rights discussion.

In other words, it's becoming increasingly important to the regulator, the bill for this is becoming increasingly important. More important, actually, than the access of these services. And that's not -- I'm not saying that to criticize the FCC. It's just an observation, that there are more and more discussions today about how much this costs. Maybe people who shouldn't be using this are using it. Those kinds of conversations are -- those are the kind of conversations that we're having now. Those aren't the kinds of conversations that were happening some years ago. You don't have to go very far back into the past.

But it raises a very interesting point. At some point -- even the ADA doesn't mandate that these services be provided no matter what it costs. All right? So there are some limits even here in the United States. But you get to those discussions Internationally really fast. You get to those discussions before you've even started the service, whereas in the United States we're ten years down the road before we're starting to have those serious discussions about are we getting to a point where providing this kind of access is getting too expensive?

And I don't know if any of my colleagues from other providers would feel differently about that, but that's sort of how I'm seeing it and I'm sort of seeing from your body language that you're starting to sense some of the same things.

Karen said something very diplomatic this morning. She said you guys have the opportunity to take advantage of the things that we have done in the United States that have been successful and then she was about to say use the word "Failure" on the other side, and she sort of corrected herself. But I think it would be appropriate to say we have had successes and failures here in the United States. And you'll have those anywhere when you start anything in any particular country.

So I have to say that one of the major successes that we have here in the United States, obviously, is the legal foundation of the ADA, I already said that.

But the second huge success that we have here in the United States that is being challenged today, and it's interesting to see how it plays out, is that we have a financial model through the TRS fund. We have a funding mechanism by which providers can be compensated for the provision of this service, in a way that allows them to grow access, in a way that allows them to invest in technology so that they -- so that we try as best we can to stay as on top of the technology for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as the rest of the country is on top of for hearing people.

Purple wouldn't be here, CAG, Congo, Sorenson and the other providers in the United States who are represented today wouldn't be here if we didn't have a funding mechanism. It's not the technology that is the issue. We have the technology to introduce VRS or any other form of relay I suspect in any country on earth. I don't know that there is a single country on earth that we couldn't provision relay services in, technically. But functionally, that's a whole different story.

And so the thrust I think of the comments that I submitted to the ITU were around this notion that as important as the technology is, and it's critically important, you can't say enough about how important it is, and I think it's great that you guys are trying to get ahead of it so that as these things grow Internationally there is a common standard. And a lot of the issues that we deal with here in the United States can be avoided because you're getting ahead of the things technologically. But as wonderful as all of that is, there has to be, I believe, a concurrent set of efforts against this whole notion of embracing a financial model that allows relay services to be established and to grow and flourish in a country in such a way that the citizens of that country can access them as freely as the hearing people in those countries can do it.

It's critically important to have organizations like the FCC who provide the kind of regulatory oversight that ensures that the integrity of the fund is maintained. That's critical. Because there is a trust there, right? Because when you talk to the FCC about this, they will say often that this is different than a normal business because it's really the Government paying for this.

And so you have to have that level of regulatory oversight so that compliance is extremely high and so that questions about the integrity of the fund are few and far between and that most of your energy is placed around how do you make this thing bigger or better? Not so much around how do you make this thing safer from fraud? That's a very practical and important considerstion, but unfortunately one that gets too much attention than one would like.

So in a nutshell I don't have much else to add to what I already said. But my whole point for making this submission was that losing sight of the funding and how that's going to work in a country will always set you back, because relay services will never go anywhere unless the money is not there to develop the human resource that is providing all the interpreting for meetings like this, and all the interpreting and communication assistants that is going to be required on a relay call.

And I think there is just one last point I would make that I didn't make in the paper, that while there is a technical aspect of this, there is -- as I have already said, there has to be a financial aspect of this.

And the third leg of that stool, and there may be more legs, I don't mind if it's a five or six legged stool. But at least a third leg to that stool is a greater degree of organized activism around the world, because the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities are organized extremely well here in the United States. I would say they are organized extremely less well and they are less cohesive in other parts of the world. And that is going to be another critical element. Because at the end of the day, this service, however you define it, is going to cost money. And so it's really important that the primary user, and I know it's not just Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who use this service, it's also hearing people.

But the organization of those communities is a critical component of helping the political leaders and financial leaders under the relevance of these kinds of services in whatever country you happen to be talking about.

And I think that's it.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Paul.

So there are already quite a few questions. But before I get to the question, I just wanted to mention that economic models are very important and we hope it becomes important within the report. Some of the countries that are looking at implementing services, this is going to be the first question that comes to mind. How do you fund some of this? So it's very important so thank you for that submission.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: I can't remember how many months ago it was, it wasn't too long ago, I was reviewing basically an RFP for Australia. And this was provision of services nationwide. And the Government was willing to put in I think it was somewhere in the neighborhood of $2 million to fund Video Relay Service nationwide. And we all know that Australia is a big country, but it's not a very populated country. But $2 million wouldn't scratch the service. But they were excited about this whole opportunity in in Australia. A great opportunity to come to waste providers' time to come to Australia and say yes, after I'm done with month one or week one, then what are you going to reimburse us? There is a huge level of misunderstanding even in countries that are beginning to provide the services. There is just the willingness of people that you must find a way to make these things work.

So...

>> JOHN LEE: Great. Thank you. I believe there are already two questions.

>> JOHN MARTIN: It wasn't really a question, more of a point, actually, to emphasize Paul's point, I think, on this and to bring up another concept. It's an ugly concept, I'm afraid, but it's one that gets thrown back at us regularly, and it's the concept of proportionality. And I'm sure Paul heard that and Christopher would have heard that from OFCOM many times. It's a very ugly concept of being able to assign a fiscal value to the provision of a benefit.

And it's often expressed in terms of road traffic accidents as an example of the way to bring this to point, where the cost of adding a new set of traffic lights to a junction is used to outweigh the cost of a death at that junction. And so they put a figure of a certain amount on the price of a life and what it would cost to put the traffic lights in, and this is a proportional expense. And this gets thrown at us regularly, from many different angles, both in terms of regulators and in terms of Governments, to try and dissuade the argument for services. And it's -- it's a thorny subject that is very difficult to, I think, fix.

And I think it emphasizes Paul's point about the fiscal issues becoming a far bigger part of people's thinking on this subject.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Paul. And we hope that once this paper is published, you could point back to this and say well, work has been done. You should review it before you start to come and talk about this. Because there is information that is available. And since the ITU publications are available to anybody, really, it becomes a very good resource.

So I believe Andrea was next and then Christian.

>> ANDREA SAKS: Paul, I just wanted to kind of put another view in about European involvement of people who are Persons with Disabilities. Governments aren't listening to them. They're pretty organized, they just can't get anything done. And part of the problem is the legislation or regulations are not in place. So while the FCC has got a negative situation on one hand, there is a positive situation. And I hate to say this, but without Regulation, nothing moves.

So the problem in England, because I live there, is that OFCOM changed when it became OFCOM instead of OFTEL. And OFTEL, when I first worked with them, had a wonderful Chairman called Brian Cardberg who compared deaf communications to rural communications. This was before we had the ADA. It was before we had the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we only had just started the deaf telephone network.

And this was in the '70s. And what he said, and I sometimes throw this out at some of the people, and I just say this chap got it right the first time, and he said that we don't expect the rural area to pay the same rate of cost as we expect the urban area. The urban area subsidizes the rural area. And the same principle ought to be applied to Persons with Disabilities.

So I use that often as a comparison and I'd like all of you to adopt that. Because it's not like for like. It's basically comparable does not mean the same. And so when OFCOM became OFCOM, and there is also political situations which I'm sure all of you are aware of, we have them in this country -- I am, incidentally, even though I live in England, I'm a dual. My mother was raised in the UK and I was born over here and my father was from New York City.

So the other problem is a lot of deaf organizations like the World Federation for the Deaf is a very powerful movement, but they represent lots of deaf people in lots of different countries. And then there is the Union of the Deaf over there as well. They cannot get Governments to do anything, unless there is some kind of an economic benefit or a plus that makes somebody look great or it's a political boon to do that. Or we find somebody in a family that has a problem.

So you have to find the hook. It isn't that they are not organized, they're just not being heard and they're not being acted upon.

So that model has helped me a lot. In other words, you would expect rural areas can't support broadband, and people think the United States has great broadband. I've got news, no. They don't. You go to rural areas in the United States, you're still on dial up. You have not got broadband in this country.

In fact, the UK has better broadband coverage than you have, as a country. Not necessarily per square feet. But it's a big problem. And almost as big of a problem as it is in some parts of Africa. So the thing is you have to take everything in the perspective.

So the problem is that we need to get a strategy. And I don't know, it just occurred to me when you were saying that People with Disabilities in foreign countries, if you go to Africa, you're 100 percent correct in what you said. But now South Africa is about to do the biggest symposium this year, and the reason they're able to do that is that the Treaty I described last, when I first spoke, from the World Conference on International Treaties, we call it the WCIT, and I said the first time that the Persons with Disabilities was actually given an Article, not a resolution, but an actual Article in the Treaty, he was the guy who swung it. This guy named Posa. He is a huge man. And he was able to say I need this Treaty because there were people in our countries saying we're not going to have this Treaty, because we think it should be a resolution, we don't want to impose cost, do this or that. And he said I need this Treaty. In America you have the ADA. You are ahead of us and your western country, you have some legislation. We don't have anything if I go home without this Treaty. Now, this Treaty exists for us as well, in developing, -- in developed countries.

There is a Treaty that says it has to be done. It has to be promoted, that you have to give access. It's an International telecommunications Treaty. And it just happened in December last December, 2012.

Now, I'm sorry to say that the US didn't sign it. But I got my Treaty in any way, my section, and everybody on the delegation wanted that to pass. And it was a political situation, just like the same political situation where the US did not sign the UN -- or ratify. They signed it, Ambassador Rice signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, but it was not ratified, because of a few political situations where there was a block, where if it had been ratified we would have far more power than what we have now.

But it will happen. And the same thing will happen with this Treaty. So I want to make you aware of this Treaty, because it is a very important Treaty. And even though the U.S. didn't sign it, it passed. Because most of the developing world signed it. Only 57 countries did not sign it. There were 120 countries that are in the UN. So I just wanted to give you that information.

So use the tools. Because I have the stuff in my head; I need to get it out on paper. And it's on paper because Pat is typing it away.

So just remember the biggest thing you can say is that the rural areas don't pay for having equivalence. So why should Persons with Disabilities have to pay for people who are not disabled to have equivalence. Does that make sense?

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Andrea. I realize we're over time. So just -- no. It's okay. Just quickly. I will let Christian make a quick comment. And then we will wrap up for a quick break.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Christian Vogler speaking.

And I don't want to go on at length, so I'm going to try to keep this as succinct as possible.

Speaking to proportionality, I have to admit that that has bothered me, because I believe that that argument gets us into trouble. And we need to look at this from a different angle. Remember our guests from the FCC spoke this morning about the notion of functional equivalency as civil right. So this notion of it being as a civil right should be primary. And then cost is no longer the primary factor. The civil right is. And so more and more countries adopt this, saying that People with Disabilities have the right to engage in society the same as anybody who does not. So I want to see the emphasis put on that more so than cost.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much. Paul, did you have any comment back? Great. At this time I'd like to call for a break. It's currently 3:20. We could probably take about a 20-minute break so everyone can go to the washroom or pick up more drinks. And we will reconvene at 3:40, at which time we will have a quick presentation by Donna Platts.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Christian here.

We do expect some refreshments, cookies, and sodas, to be delivered here shortly. They should actually already be here. But at any rate they should be here at any moment now.

>> JOHN LEE: I believe Donna was signing something. Go ahead, Donna.

>> DONNA PLATTS: Yes. Oh, not at all. Nope. Okay.

>> JOHN LEE: So we will come back and you're the first to present when we get back from break. And then we will have Lise Hamlin with an update as well as the captioned telephone. Then the TRS statement from TDI.

So see you in about 20 minutes.

(Break. Resume at 3:40 p.m. ET)

>> JOHN LEE: Whoever is on the line, please put yourselves on mute.

(Please stand by. We will resume momentarily)

>> JOHN LEE: Okay. Everyone, if everybody could go back to their seat, we will start again. Slightly late. My apologies. Andrea, if you wouldn't mind.

Andrea?

Andrea, would you mind?

>> ANDREA SAKS: I'm coming. I'm coming.

>> JOHN LEE: Well, it sounds like this break brought on a lot of side conversations, and I think this is great.

So one of the things that we will do is I'll try to find some time tomorrow where we can actually have a general discussion where we just talk about some of the issues that were brought up today before we get started. And then that way some of the discussions can be also captured and shared with everybody.

So thank you very much.

So we have the -- we're now at the last session, which hopefully will go just as well. We will start off with Richard Ray and Donna Platts. They will be giving us some views on emergency calls via relay services. Then we will have Lise Hamlin talk about -- well, first, present some of the edits to the document. And then tell us something about captioned telephone. Then we will finish off with Claude -- I'm not sure if it's Claude or Cheryl who will be doing that presentation. But they will be giving us information about TRS statements from consumer groups.

>> Both of us.

>> JOHN LEE: Okay. And then we will wrapping up for the day and we will reconvene tomorrow.

So I'd like to give the floor to Donna or Richard. I'm not sure who is presenting. But you guys can take it away.

>> RICHARD RAY: Okay. I'm ready to start then. First of all, thank you so much. It's very exciting to be here. I'm sure Donna is similarly excited.

>> DONNA PLATTS: Yes. I am.

>> RICHARD RAY: First of all, I want to thank all of you on the panel and the Committee for the invitation for us to join this very important project.

And we are very pleased to have been able to submit some documents, and these are drafts that were submitted. And since that submittal, we have found additional information that should be incorporated into that document.

For the purposes of this discussion, I will cover a number of areas that I believe should command our attention. For example, first of all, we have several recommendations that include specific points regarding average speed of answer, ASA, as well as transfer of calls to the appropriate PSAP for emergency lines.

Also, intensive agent training, as well as specialization tracks for -- specialization for shared call centers.

Also, we want to look at next-generation emergency call centers, and the rules and regulations forthwith. And I believe Donna has some comments to bring to bear on that.

>> DONNA PLATTS: Yes, I want to emphasize that each country has their own sign languages, law, policies, technology, and Internet access. So their technological architecture is different as well as the funding sources.

So we are going to be talking about what we're seeing in the United States, and we would like to talk about what crucial pieces can apply Internationally.

>> RICHARD RAY: So given those talking points, I'd like to start off first with ASA, average speed of answer. In the United States, there has been a standard average speed of answer that has been required for emergency calls, allowing up to ten seconds for answering. And within 20 seconds during peak times.

So in looking at the systems, before they get to the appropriate PSAP, we want to make sure that there is no more than a 20-second gap before that happens.

Within the United States, it is also mandated that there be web-based calls as well as IP capable phone services. So we have referred to this as CTS. And we want to see a 10-second ASA there. Within the VRS industry there is a 120 second or two minute ASA, and then in traditional relay services for TTYs, VCO call, HCO calls, as well as speech-to-speech, which is happening through analog phone lines, and the older telephone systems, we see the numbers vary by region. But, generally, less than ten seconds.

Now, the average speed of answer for connecting is based on the technology. And when connecting to the emergency PSAPs, however, the emergency information that is shared should be a priority for the next-generation of available services and agents for the next relay agents to be able to answer before another call is put into the queue. They should be put to the top of the queue when there are emergencies.

So for VRS relay service, we have had test calls that we have done. And in those test calls, the number of test calls that have gone through VRS, both IP-based and Video Relay Services, have been done over the past five years. And of those tests, revealed that the average connection time to the end-user, the PSAP, is between three and seven minutes. The result of this is that the emergency situation, having gone through IP and Video Relay Services, seems to be the same regardless of the difference between that and how TTY calls were handled in the past.

So a few minutes delay can have a great impact. And I can show you that -- it can be shown that this can even lead to death. Every second counts. Not every minute, but every second counts.

And so now I'm going to turn the floor over to Donna to speak to transmission calls to emergency lines.

>> DONNA PLATTS: So when an emergency call is made, that call goes through -- and when I say an emergency call is made, that means that somebody has dialed 9-1-1, regardless of where they are. They have dialed 9-1-1 or 211, depending on if they are in Europe or not. That call then goes through an emergency line. It's not -- it doesn't go through a business line or the nonemergency lines. It goes through the emergency line.

Now, there are various operators that have contracts with vendors, so that they can actually route those services. Those vendors come with a cost and those costs are tiered, depending on what types of services are chosen.

So sometimes there is an automatic connection. Sometimes there is a manual connection, where the operator actually makes that connection manually from the end-user to the PSAP. So we don't have any standard out there right now.

In theory, when a call is routed, the caller should be automatically connected to the appropriate PSAP or emergency call center.

In addition, the caller information should automatically and electronically be transmitted to that emergency line. So that in the PSAP center that information actually shows up on the screen. So actually the automatic number identification and automatic location identification information, which means the caller's address, phone number, and so forth, actually comes up on a computer screen. And this should all be transmitted through the emergency line.

Now, the person who is communicating at the PSAP actually has the emergency calls prioritized, so those calls are handled first and then nonessential business is handled at a later time. So clearly those nonemergency situations will be delayed and the emergency calls will be prioritized and answered first.

But we get more nonessential nonemergency calls than we do emergency calls.

Now, when we're talking about mobile devices, this is something that the population uses on a daily basis. And we recommend the establishment of a system where you can electronically send information, so that the longitudinal and latituninal information of where this person is located actually appears at the PSAP. That is not something that is currently available, but it is our recommendation for the future.

Now I'm going to go ahead and turn the floor back over to Richard Ray.

>> RICHARD RAY: So I would like to speak briefly now about the training component for relay agents. Each relay provider has their own policies, procedures, and practices for their relay agents to be able to handle emergency calls. There is currently no standard for all call centers, and this results in many agents being insufficiently able and insufficiently trained to confidently and effectively handle an emergency call.

And it is critical that all relay agents who handle emergency calls be intensively trained, that they have a thorough training programme. So with that I'll turn it back over to Donna.

>> DONNA PLATTS: Thank you. Now, many relay agents actually work for relay service providers and are required to handle emergency calls, regardless of whether they feel they have sufficient training, or whether they know and feel confident in handling emergency call, they are still required to take those calls. And so our suggestion is that we -- a separate call center is established to handle emergency calls only. In that situation, those relay operators would be intensely trained and equipped to handle those emergency calls.

And back over to you, Richard, to talk about the next-generation eCalls.

>> RICHARD RAY: Some of you may have heard of the next-generation, and I'd like to tell you a bit more about what that refers to now. The purpose of the next-generation emergency call centers is to allow for the acceptance of any kind of call at all, such as a video call, a text message, a voice call, a data call, and also includes snapshot photographs that can be identified from various parts of video clips, portions of a video communication.

So this would all take place through the network system in-house, within the center. So there are a number of downloadable video apps that could be used for -- regardless of hearing status.

The next-generation that will be disseminated will allow for anyone to call a PSAP directly using any of those programmes that they are comfortable using on a day-to-day basis.

People that need to have assistance in their communication should not be limited by the relay service providers, because of the device that they use.

So now this also ties directly into the establishment of rules and Regulations, whether or not this should be mandated.

And with that I'll turn it back over to Donna.

>> DONNA PLATTS: So right now, as it stands, relay operators are required to follow all these Regulations and are required to take these emergency calls and connect the caller with a PSAP. And they are required to do this as quick as possible.

Now, the Next Generation is coming up in the near future, we hope. And the question then is: Are these relay operators, are users going to need to actually register in advance? And do they need to situate whether they have been communicating through voice or text or whatnot? But right now we have more and more video calls, text capability and various modes of communicating, and people should have that option depending on their situation, and be able to communicate directly, regardless of whether they registered or not. So anybody who has a disability should have equal access to 9-1-1, regardless of whether they registered or not, and should have all those options available to them for communication purposes.

Now, for those who may speak a different language or may be from other countries, they should have the ability to also call 9-1-1. And if the communication assistant or the user notices that they are using a different language, then the capability for conferencing with interpreters who can interpret that language should be available.

Now, that actually is available for hearing people right now who speak different languages. And if that is available to them, that should also be made available to those who have disabilities, without actually having to register.

So we should have accessibility to various databases for various calls. So maybe one service provider is trying to talk about different device, medical devices and so forth, if there is some sort of accident and they need to call the call center and need to use the various medical equipment devices, they should still be able to do this through the relay system.

So there are a number of new databases that actually have various users and subscribers that users can actually purchase their services for.

So, for example, I may buy a specific service or product in regard to communication, and I am always required to register for that device. Why wouldn't that same type of registration be there for language and communication preferences for emergency purposes?

So options should be available rather than having one standard requirement. And these databases should be available for the public. So everybody should be able to directly connect to a PSAP and to the emergency call centers. So people should be able to call directly to the person that they are calling, whether it's a Deaf, hard-of-hearing or deaf-blind person, and should be able to contract with a specific call center, whether it's communication assistant or an interpreter who may work there, they should have those options to choose what their preference is.

And then there was also one part, maybe Richard you want to talk about the two pieces. Go ahead and you take over, Richard.

>> RICHARD RAY: Okay. In order to establish and implement a call center in the next-generation environment, it's important that we focus on the call centers themselves and that they have specialist interpreters or communication assistants. Because in using a video phone, I would then be able to call directly to the center and then that would bink me to the appropriate PSAP. However, when the next-generation environment deploys, then those call centers are going to be changing their policies and procedures. And they will be redirecting all calls to the specialist PSAP. At that point, if the communication is needed between the agent and the deaf person or hard-of-hearing person, they would then be able to patch in the call center interpreter or communication assistant. And this would allow for a three-way video connection on the call. So that communication access is fully implemented among all three parties.

Okay? So those are some of our goals for these next-generation call centers. And they will have these two components, the implementation and acceptance of calls directly in the next-generation environment, once implemented. And that then the second phase would involve a shift to redirecting all such calls to the PSAP directly, so that it no longer goes first to the intermediary party but first to the PSAP and then it patches in that intermediary.

And I'm happy to respond -- in fact, Donna and I are happy to respond to any questions that you might have at this point.

And I would also like to ask if we are able to consider working on adding to the prior submission that we had to the document, so that we can submit some of our further ideas to the team.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Richard and Donna. Very good presentation.

And before we open the floor for questions, yes, you can update the files and send it back to us, and I will make sure that the repository is updated with the latest update that you send me.

They will be -- they will be updated on the FTP site. But the official submission that goes through to the ITU will likely be included in the technical paper.

At this point I'd like to open the floor for any questions or comments related to document 9, which is emergency services.

Christian?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: First of all, thank you both very much. Hello.

And it's not really a question but more of a comment for everyone's information.

First Richard Ray and Donna, and the four of us have actually worked together extensively on these next-generation issues, and so I'm quite familiar with some of these concerns.

So now to my comment. I want to emphasize that here in America, we have already had experiences of emergency calls being routed. And the problem that we find there is that the initial routing to the interpreter, then the PSAP, simply doesn't work. So we now have an opportunity in the International arena to be sure that we have learned the lessons that America has to offer from the mistakes that we made.

Because here in America we have currently seen this concept of calls being routed first to the intermediary and then to the emergency call center. And so we would strongly advocate that we don't want to do that. We don't want to involve the relay service in that routing, but rather that -- simply to echo what Richard Ray and Donna have said. Based on the experience that we have had in the States, and my personal experience, an experience where we were in a wreck and we tried to call 9-1-1 using a mobile device, when my wife tried to make that call, that video call, it took some ten minutes of wrangling before we were able to establish a connection with 911. Imagine had that been a heart attack or something of that sort. You simply don't have ten minutes.

So, again, I want to emphasize that this is an excellent opportunity for all of us to learn from the mistakes that we made here in America and some of the successes. And so I strongly support the notion of directly communicating with the 9-1-1 operator, and then pulling in the interpreters as needed.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, Christian.

So I see two hands raised. And -- I'll first start here and then... yes.

>> JOHN MARTIN: Hi. This is John Martin again. I'd like to add my vote for that. The work we did in the project in Europe tried a number of different models of communicating with the PSAP, and we found that the one that everybody seemed to appreciate the best was to connect the call initially to the PSAP operator, using whatever media the caller was using, and then to bring in the interpreter as and when required. Because in some instances, actually, the interpreter isn't required. And a perfectly acceptable call can be conducted using what video service and text, in a number of situations. And it got the most immediate access to the PSAT operator.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. Does either Richard or Donna have a response? If not, I'll move on. Okay.

So Paul?

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: This is Paul from Sorenson. Are you responding? -- to the last comment?

>> RICHARD RAY: That's fine. I can wait, please.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: I had two questions. If I understood it right, your thought was that the interpreters involved in emergency calls should be a specialized group of interpreters? Is that correct? As opposed to just a general?

>> DONNA PLATTS: Yes, that is correct.

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: I heard that before, and one of the criticisms that I heard about it is that imagine an interpreter spending all their time only handling emergency calls. That that would be an extremely difficult job for an interpreter if all they did was handle emergency calls. That is number one.

So that is just -- I'm interested in your reaction to that. I'm not being critical, I'm just interested in your reaction.

And the second one is if you have specialized interpreting centers for emergency calls, you have to consider the challenges that that would raise of redundancy, if there is an emergency -- tornados, hurricanes, whatever, when you don't have access to a national sort of network of interpreters. So I'm just interested in those -- your comments about that.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, so Donna or Richard, do you have some response?

>> RICHARD RAY: Yes, I have two comments to respond to that.

I want, first, to respond to the first two points you made. First of all, as regards training, the agents themselves do have to go through intensive training or would have to do so and in fact psychological testing as well, to ensure that they are able to process an emergency call and also through intensive training in having a range of six- to nine-month training period plus an observation period, in which they are supervised for two years to ensure that these telecommunication agents are absolutely qualified to handle an emergency appropriately.

And based on the number of test calls that I have made, I have seen that, by and large, most of these agents are not psychologically prepared to interpret for an emergency call.

You can see the fear in their eyes from the very first moment that they accept a 9-1-1 call. And that's not something you see when you connect to an agent normally.

Now, in terms of the language interpreters or the communication assistants going through training, this would then enable them to be able to accept and process these calls with ease, without any fear.

Today, in our current environment, interpreters by and large are fearful and overwhelmed the moment they hear that they have a 9-1-1 call. Panic sets in. They freak out and they're not psychologically prepared to process the call. And based on my dialog with a number of interpreters who are interpreting in the community, this has been a strong recommendation from the interpreting community that there be specialized call centers, where they handle emergency calls only.

Donna?

>> DONNA PLATTS: I just wanted to add to that. Christian also mentioned that the four of us have been working together on the next-generation emergency calls. And through the FCC emergency access advisory Committee, we have been writing a White Paper to make a recommendation on it's called multi-communication line services. And that actually explicitly talks about the next-generation of emergency calls and our recommendations. So there is one Article also that talks about this type of communication. And the most difficult part of interpreters' jobs in video relay are the emergency calls. And it has shown that they are much more comfortable with other types of calls and they are nervous about those emergency calls.

In addition, we are depending on call centers to communicate policies to the PSAPs and the providers. They are communicating this emergency information. So it's much more important to have the direct communication, so that the PSAPs have that information directly.

So the VRS interpreters need to absolutely be trained to handle these emergency calls.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Donna and Richard.

>> RICHARD RAY: I'd like too speak to a third point there, if I may, if we haven't answered the second point fully.

Now, with the call center, we also would have redundant backups. I would not expect to see us set up a single specialized call center. I would envision that we have multiple call centers, for the sake of redundancy. Were one call center to fail, we would then have a backup that the call would automatically be routed so. So it would be critical to have more than two so that calls could be routed as needed.

And this ensures that we can convey critical information with PSAPs as needed.

>> JOHN LEE: Donna, you have your hand up. But there is another comment and I'll give you the floor to close out. So Christian will be the last comment. And I'll let you, Donna, respond to whatever you had.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Just briefly. First of all, I was noting the captions there and I want to correct one error in the captions.

It had there that Donna mentioned the paper from the Emergency Access Advisory Committee, and the name of that paper is actually Media Line Communication Services. Okay? That was the first thing, that correction.

And then, secondly, I wanted to briefly respond to those two points that were brought up moments ago. And in addition to Richard Ray and Donna's comments, I would say that there is also the need to have more than one call center to ensure that you have a virtual call center,

>> INTERPRETER: Correction.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: It's possible to have a virtual call center where there are trained interpreters that are not physically located there.

so there is no one way to answer this question. It's critical that we have a large pool of trained interpreters, though. In terms of how we achieve that and create a reliable system, that is something that we're going to have to figure out along the way.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Christian.

Just one second, Donna, does that answer your question, Paul?

>> PAUL KERSHISNIK: Yes, it does. And again, I am not trying to be argumentative, but this type of idea is -- it's -- it's requiring a specialized interpreter who spends all their time only handling 9-1-1 calls. So when they don't have any 9-1-1 calls coming in, they're just sitting in their Chair, staring at the ceiling.

And so it creates a challenge for those interpreters to handle other -- I mean, just from a cost perspective, I'm just suggesting to you that if all they do is 9-1-1, that's going to be an extremely expensive solution when we already know there are a lot cost pressures on Video Relay Service and relay in general. I'm not being critical, just something to think about.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you. I believe Donna had something to say as well.

>> DONNA PLATTS: Yes, I just wanted to say, absolutely, Paul, you are correct. And that has been part of our dialog thus far. Absolutely you want to remember that there are over 100 call centers, and really of those 100 call centers, there are a variety of procedures and policies and a variety of ways of handling emergencies. And so we're talking about setting up maybe three or maybe four or five of these specialized call centers around the United States.

And in terms of fund, really, it is parallel to the concept of the PSAP contracting with larger services -- excuse me, language services.

So those States are funding those language services for emergency purposes. So that is something just to consider.

Now, we have also written two documents that I would recommend taking a look at. One is the MCLC -- I'm not sure what that stands for. My apology. But that paper. And then also the National Emergency Number Association. And that is in regard to -- it's an organization of PSAPs talking about these operators. And so these papers are addressing these same issues.

And then also we have all of that, there are links on the Web site to those papers. So thank you for giving me the opportunity to present today.

>> JOHN LEE: Great. Thank you Donna and Richard.

>> RICHARD RAY: If I could respond to Paul, quickly. I do appreciate your comment. I very much a appreciate your comment that you shared with us. It's thought provoking and it's a concern that we have been addressing. And we will continue to consider as we continue to write this document.

We know that a very large number of emergency calls occur every week. Donna and I have access to the statistical information on this, and we don't see significant downtime at play for the interpreters, given this scenario.

>> JOHN LEE: Great. Thank you.

>> RICHARD RAY: They will be busy.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you.

So at this time I would like to call a close on discussion of this document. Thank very much for joining us and presenting your paper. And, of course, if you do have any updates, you're more than welcome to send it back to us and we will make sure that the update it there.

So at this time we will move onto the next document, which is Lise Hamlin of HLAA. I'm right behind you.

>> LISE HAMLIN: Okay. Thank you.

Okay. This is Lise Hamlin. I'm going to switch the order in which I had been set up to go through the documents that we provided. I'm going to talk first about the general captioned telephone document and then talk about our contributions, because I think it will just make more sense.

I'm also, it's getting to be toward the end of the day and falling asleep time. So I'm not going to go through every single piece of what I wrote on either document. Most of it -- mostly because some of it has been provided already, some of the FCC discussions, we included information on emergency alerting and so forth, and that's been well covered by others. So I'm not going to repeat.

But what I do want to emphasize is for people who are -- have a hearing loss that is significant, and depend on CTS, Captioned Telephone Service, it's a huge, huge benefit and it makes a lot of sense. And even though it's not mandated here in the United States, to me it's an -- it absolutely should be part of any document, a forward looking document, that talks about what can you do to provide services to everybody who needs them, telecommunication services?

So for people who are hard-of-hearing, it's really a service that truly meets the needs of people who are hard-of-hearing, who can voice for themselves, who have residual hearing and can hear some of what is going on on the phone line, but also needs to have those captions to capture the things that they do miss online.

Now, there are still three types of phones, analog, CTS is still very much here. I think with Delaware they just adopted a law recently to adopt CTS. But they don't have a lot of access to Internet lines, and that happens in rural America, too. And that is going to happen in areas that just don't have really good broadband services. So we are going to need it for a while.

(Clearing throat)

I love IP CTS. I love it. It's a way to get access when you do have Internet access. Because the advantage of that is it's easy for both incoming and outgoing calls, and it is more intuitively like a phone call that somebody who as a hearing person has used and might grow up in. As they age with hearing loss, they can use it. Analog doesn't have that ability. The outgoing calls are captioned, but incoming calls have to go through either an 800 line that connects you to your operator or your CA, or you have two-line where you have to -- the consumer then has to put in a second phone line in their home in order to get that incoming call.

The third one is not hugely adopted yet, it's not around a lot.

But I see a potential here, it's mobile CTS. I think that's the wave of the future. That's the way we are going to go and it should be a part of any kind of documentation that we use. People are more -- more and more people are abandoning land lines and we will need to look forward to see what is going to happen in order to be able to provide access to people who need it on the move.

Some of the standards that we feel that should be part of CTS, the same standards that are part of TRS, no cost to consumer, 24-hours a day, every day, code of ethics, standards of certification. All those things should also apply to CTS.

But we need separate kinds of standards for -- one of the things I just wanted to mention. We had some discussion this morning about International calls and it's not available on CTS. If I have mobile CTS, then I don't see why I shouldn't have access to international calls. And I think that is something that should be also considered, standards for International, the ability to use International calls.

And you're thinking of future thinking, instead of dreaming of what could happen in the future, I would love to see an International body that created -- that it was easy to get relay calls through this body rather than having to worry about your home CTS -- your home TRS services. That is probably really a dream. I don't know if that would ever happen. But we need something to support.

So it's not a problem when I'm overseaS, when I'm somewhere else, and not my country of origin that I can get access to any kind of TRS service that I need.

The privacy issue, when Christian was talking about privacy, I was going to ask him but I'll ask him later. To me, I'm beginning to hear more people talk about the issue of privacy, not just for the individual who is making the call, but for the party who is being called. There are people who tell me -- well, there are people who tell me, who have a significant hearing loss, who are hesitant to use it because they are afraid of having that third-party on the line, even though we know the code of ethics, and so forth, he doesn't want to see a third-party on the line for his call. But he is also concerned about the other side. It should be revealed, especially with CTS, where it's not obvious that there is another -- there is a call or assistant on the line unless you tell them.

So from our perspective of the Hearing Loss Association, we feel that it's the consumer's responsibility. It shouldn't be -- there was a movement in California a while back that said that every call should have an automatic response that basically said there is a third-party on the line. And, you know, that to me is a really bad idea. Because once you say there is a third-party on the line, then people start hanging up or feeling weird about their calls.

What does it mean? It's not an easy thing to explain. But if I'm a person with hearing loss and I want to make sure that the other person knows -- and I do, when I use CTS, I say look, I'm on a CTS call. I need -- there is some delay or I'll need you to slow down or whatever it is, I reveal that. But I think it's up to the person who has a hearing loss to reveal it, not to the state or the regulatory body.

When I look through the documents that the FCC puts together, they talk about speed of transcription, they talk about, again, the kind of reliability and accuracy. But there is no real standards to measure that against.

And from my perspective, I know that I get consumers complaining all the time with CTS about the error rate. They get worried about the delay. Those are two big issues, standards issues, that I don't think is directly discussed in any of the documents that I've seen. Now again, this morning, that's why I asked Karen about setting standards and quality standards. And I think she said she is open to taking those kinds of responses. But I think it needs to be clear, so you know okay, well, how much? How much of an accuracy rate does there need to be? We cannot expect people to be 100 percent accurate, but what can we expect? When we're talking about technology and is the technology better, should we set a standard at 95 percent accuracy rate? Should we set it at 98 percent? What is the accuracy rate and what should we do about that? I think that needs to be part of the discussion.

Delay is also a huge problem for people with hearing loss. I just got a comment recently, they were on a phone call where they were put on hold and there was a long advertisement. It was I think a doctor's office telling them what wonderful things they could get. By the time the nurse came back on the line, the person who was doing the transcription kept on talking about the advertisement. It was scrolling down. And the nurse was trying to talk. The nurse hears dead air. She is not aware that the person is on the line. The nurse hangs up. She said -- the woman who contacted us said we should be able to alert the CA when we don't want to hear the advertisement. But from my perspective, if the delay wasn't there she would be able to talk to the person immediately without having to worry about whatever advertisement.

So those kinds of standards, and what is an acceptable delay or what is not acceptable? The only way we can complain properly, you say it should be accurate and complete, but there is no mention of a delay. How do we get those standards in there? And I think they should be in there.

There is a question in my mind, too, one of the things that we have to talk about, we talk about innovation and motivation to get providers to include innovation as part of what they do. But somebody asked me recently, well, you know, I see, you know, I see my Siri and it's doing good on voice transcription and I see it on this service and that service. Why can't we get it better? Are the providers using the most updated version of whatever service that they are using to do your voice transcription? And I said gee, I don't know.

There comes a question in my mind, should that also be part of the standards, that in fact you're not just saying go innovate, but you're saying what or how often do you innovate? Or how long is it not acceptable? Is it not acceptable to leave your software at a certain level? Do you have to provide show and report back how often you're innovating and how often you're coming up to speed? Whatever the technology is, VRS, or CTS, whatever it is, you need to be able to increase the -- show that you're actually working for the consumers to make it better than what it has been.

The other thing that is not discussed at all and hasn't been discussed and I think needs to be, and in fact I didn't include it and I'll include it, but I was thinking about it later, is the audio aspect of a CTS phone. For people with hearing loss, it makes a huge difference to be able to have the best quality audio that they can. And we're seeing now, with specialty phones, they are just beginning -- TIA is going to start working on it, is my understanding, standards for wide band audio, which would make it much easier for somebody to capture the words that they can hear. So those kinds of standards should also be brought forward in CTS phones. Any kind of phone where you can depend somewhat on your hearing to hear it.

But there should be also other things. We know that the CTS phones also have gain control. You can pump up the volume when you need to. I had a really good experience with the phones I've had. But shouldn't that be part of the standard? Shouldn't it nr fby a basic part of what we're doing, and also be able to regulate the frequency, called the tone control? So that each these features are a part of the standards.

And one of the things I think we also wanted to talk about, also, in making standards, is talking about how the captions come on and off.

Is it intuitive? Can you see how it's done? Is it something that it's easy to get to in the middle of a call? I have gone on and off of captions, if I don't -- if I no longer need it, it turns out to be my son and I'm hearing, I'll turn the captions off. I don't need to be able to do it every time, but I have to get to the menu or get to the button, whatever it is.

The other thing that also should be part of the standards is the control of what font, what size, what color for people with vision loss as well. That could make a big difference in being able to use CTS as opposed to any other kinds of phones.

I'll talk about the standards for providers. We want to make sure that our assistants are qualified and trained, and we want to make sure that they have complete and accurate rendering of the conversation. So we need standards to make sure that those caller assistants are up to speed, just the same way we have the interpreters.

I have noticed an issue with breaks. The standards -- there isn't any, as far as I can see, any standards for caller assistants on CTS calls. But it would seem to me -- whatever the standards are, maybe the industry should come to us and talk to us. Look, voicing for 15 minutes is too long. Voicing for ten minutes is too long. How often do they need it? Maybe 20 minutes is just fine. We just need to look at each different kinds of TRS and see them independently and say this is what makes sense, and work together to make a standard that makes sentence for all of us.

And another issue that is true is that we do need to look at innovations in marketing and outreach. One of the things that happened with CTS early on was it was really -- from my perspective, it was poorly marketed. The States did not really push out -- when it started, the States were not pushing it. They just didn't, for whatever reason. The word was not getting out. I think that innovating marketing should be encouraged and supported, not turned off.

I think there are some really good innovations, like coming in and installing phones for a lot of people who are seniors and are older. This was a huge thing to tell them. And I know for a fact that people were absolutely thrilled to have people say yes, we will come in and install them.

Hiring the people with hearing loss who actually understood how the phones -- how it made an impact on their own lives was another way to approach getting out there.

I think all of these things helped move forward and getting into the homes these services that were really, really needed by a large segment of the population.

I'm going to move on to looking at the issues. The issue -- I know the FCC wants to talk about fraud, and I really do support -- we do not want to have TRS even hurt a little, because that hurts us all. But I really worry that there is too much emphasis on fraud and not enough emphasis on ensuring that people get the services that they need. And I feel like it's a balance we have to make. We have to say it's good to take care of the funds. It's not good to just strangle or throttle the ability of people to get access to any form of TRS. So -- but I think on our side, we still have to, as consumers, we have to look at it and say what can we do to help the situation? How do we assure that people who are worried about where the bucks are going, the people who are getting it really are eligible.

So I think the consumers need to brainstorm ways that really are acceptable to consumers through access. I never want to see someone not get the access that they need.

And we were in a sidebar conversation, we were talking about stories. I know for certain I know of a woman who did not have access to her captioned telephone, was not comfortable -- she didn't know sign language, she couldn't use TRS. She was from China and moved here, so she wasn't comfortable using a TTY. So what she used when she was looking for a job was her sister. Her sister answered the phone calls. The employer would say I want to interview your sister for a job and she said well, you have to talk to me. And the employer was like why do I want to hire you? Do you have to hire both of you? It makes no sense to not talk to the person I want to hire. So I know for sure this woman lost at least one job and maybe others because she couldn't take the phone interviews.

We want to see TRS facilitate to get people to get jobs, to work, and be part of the society that otherwise would be barred to them. Part of what we have to accept is that we have to accept that consumers should be educated, should understand what their responsibilities are, and how it's a real system that you spend real money on. And so it should not be misused even a bit. Family members who don't need it shouldn't be turning it on. Whatever it is, you must take responsibility as consumers.

So the question of whether we really achieve functional equivalency with TRS, I think we're getting there. I think we still need to work at captioning that is I actually accurate. We have many, many mistakes. It's a problem. And I think that's a problem with the software. And I hope technology gets to the point where we won't need to have so many mistakes. But we're not there yet. The delay is a problem.

I think the other big issue, and I mentioned this a bit before, is we really need greater access to captioned calls at work. And that's a technical issue I think that has to be solved. Not everyone has the ability to go to their boss and say I need a dedicated line for a captioned phone.

So we need to have it integrated. There is one company that provides software with some phones to allow you to see the captions on the phones. That is integrated as part of the office. And that's great. But that is the only one I've heard of. I'd really like to see that address the technical issues to get phones more available. We need access to conference calls; use the CTS or through the relay altogether. Somebody earlier added about Sprint was talking about how to make sure that you have conference calling. You have to make sure that you have text for people who use text and video for people using sign language. You need it accessible on every level.

And I think -- in conclusion, I really think what we need are the rules must keep up with the environment. The rules must be changed with them. They should be encouraging access. They should not be throttling access. And they should be looking toward finding ways to encourage innovation and upgrading technology, not leaving old technology behind.

So those are my general comments and I just actually only have a few comments, because again, a lot of what our comments were, when we provided them for the document itself, was -- we really looked to the FCC definitions for much of this and refer to that. But I would say that what I did include, and if you want to switch over to the document we're working on, to page 8, okay. And my comment 23. And this -- that's page 6. We will go up to page 8. Yes.

Okay. All I wanted to do is this is where I put in, under service requirements, I added "standard should apply to CTS, covering issues including accuracy of transcript, delay between speech and text, hardware and software that allows the consumer, the user, to turn the PGS a captions on and off in one step. Those are the kinds of things that should be included.

But I would, you know, widen that also to making sure we also have things like conferencing using CTS. Because that is really, it's a huge problem for people at work, and having the support for captioned telephones to be at work altogether.

And I think, really, the other -- actually, I skipped, the page before I also talk about where do we want to put in -- where do we want to talk about applications? One of the other ways to get applications in -- I was just talking to somebody who said what they really want is to have their captioned phone be able to go to their glasses, so they could read the captions as they're walking around. I mean, they are in the future. We could see all kind of applications with captioned phones. So we don't want to stifle that. We want to make this -- and I don't want to make language so narrow that it just applies to now. But we want to be able to see where will we go next? What are we going to do and how can we support different kinds of innovations that will help consumers communicate with anybody that they need to at any time?

So... I'm happy to take any questions.

>> JOHN LEE: Great, thank you very much, Lise.

So I can quickly open the floor for any questions or comments. We do have to move quickly. So are there any thoughts, questions, or comments related to either of these contributions?

Yes, Andrea?

>> ANDREA SAKS: Just a quickie.

I just want you to know I just sent an e-mail off to my contact in TIA who I used to work with who helped in the beginning of accessibility to ask him to give me as much information about this broadband Codec. So as soon as I find out, I think we ought to start an e-mail reflector on this group and let people know what that outcome was like. But when you told me that this morning, I meant to find out. So, do you -- if you have any other contact details, we should just chase them. Yes?

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: So, in regard to TIA and audio, us here at the Technology Access Program have been working with them. So we have somebody here, Linda Cosma, who recently joined the TIA conference, to talk specifically about that issue. So TIA has agreed to include that in their testing, to change the standards. So we are very confident that they are going to take on that responsibility and achieve that.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Christian. I believe there is somebody on -- Connie Phelps has a comment. Go ahead, Connie.

>> CONNIE PHELPS: Thank you. I am representing the National Association for State Relay Administration, and I found your comments to be very interesting. One of the things you mentioned were that the States didn't seem to be getting word out about captioned telephone. And that is a subject we discussed at great length. And I will tell you that we have relay Administrators who do get the word out and we have those who say it's not a mandate and therefore we don't. So I think that is one of the reasons you haven't seen every state embrace it and be very proactive in advertising captioned telephones.

The other thing is a question and a comment at the same time. The NASRA board and the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Programme, TEPA, met with the FCC in April and then just recently we had a phone conference with them. We were very excited because this is not -- this has not happened in a number of years that we have had a dialog. And many of the things we have heard today are the exact things we discussed with the FCC.

But one of the concerns for Relay Administrators that we brought up is not only talking about people having access to captioned telephones at work, but people are being denied access because if they do not have an IP caption telephone, they may not have access because of the phone lines are changing. More VoIP phones and the captioned phone doesn't work with that.

Has anybody addressed that?

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Connie. So I'll just let Lise respond.

>> LISE HAMLIN: It's my understanding -- this is Lise Hamlin. It's my understanding that an analog captioned phone would not work with VoIP. But I'm here to tell you that the IP captioned phone does work with VoIP.

What the -- I mean, we do have to look at these issues, because I just heard recently in New York where there are areas that have been torn up by hurricane sandy that Verizon is putting in something that they call voice link, which is ee sengly it sound to me a VoIP type of service. And so the analog captioned telephone users are being left behind. That is a problem.

But -- \* but in general, if somebody is using an IP-Relay, they should be able to use VoIP. I don't know why they wouldn't be able to.

>> CONNIE PHELPS: Thank you, Lise, THIS is Connie again. And absolutely, that has been our experience with the state equipment programmes is that the IP phone will work. But I believe it was Angela who said today that we are far behind in our Internet service.

And I will tell you as the relay Administrator for the State of Montana, there are many places in our state that don't have access to the broadband, to the high speed Internet, so they have to use an  analog phone. And more and more we're seeing the phone companies going to VoIP services, and therefore these people are being denied access to their captioned telephones. And I was just wondering if that was a concern for this group.

>> JOHN LEE: Well, that definitely is a concern. In terms of this particular paper, however, I don't know if we do have a section for that as of now. But I believe Christian has a response to that. So I'll let him respond and then we will move onto the next paper.

And there is a question, Donna, and then we will move on.

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Okay. Christian speaking.

The issue of VoIP is actually a huge concern. And all of us are very concerned about it. Because the basic problem is that the way that analog captioned telephones work is quite similar to that of a TTY. And we all know that TTYs do not work over VoIP. And there is a lot of problems with that. So currently, in the United States, we're transitioning over to VoIP and really dropping the PSTN lines and going over to VoIP. And so there is a lot of concern and worry about that. But we are working with the phone companies as well as the FCC to make sure that we done just abandon those people who need access.

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you, Christian.

Donna, if you want to add something?

>> DONNA PLATTS: Hi Lise, this is Donna. Thank you very much for your talk and your comments.

There are many issues, but I just want to address one concern. And that is about calling 9-1-1 or making an emergency call. That is an area of concern, because most PSAPs as they currently stand are analog. So they are not ready to transition into the digital age and, you know, the next-generation.

So there are many areas that we are including in that paper, and I can e-mail that to you to give you some more information. I do think that that is a crucial piece.

My co-leader for the FCC Emergency Access Advisory Committee has worked on this paper as well. It's the NCLA. And this person actually uses a captioned phone a lot. And so we have had a lots of conversations about this. But I will e-mail and talk with you offline about that and share that paper with you.

>> JOHN LEE: Great.

Chris, I realize that you would like to make a comment. We are running out of time. So if you can keep it very quick, you can go ahead.

>> CHRISTOPHER JONES: Yes, hello.

I think that in terms of captioned telephony, and it being used with a meeting, that is very interesting. I think we have another ITU document that we haven't started yet in terms of remote captioning. We might need Lise's input in that.

>> JOHN LEE: Definitely. And we will keep in touch with Lise when we are in the swing of trying to get that document to a draft level.

At this time I want to close the discussion of this paper. Thank you very much, Lise.

I'd like to move onto the last paper today, which is from Claude and Cheryl. So if you'd like to -- how would you like to do this? Do you want to stay there or...

>> CLAUDE STOUT: I'll stand at the front and Cheryl will stay at her seat and use the microphone.

Now, is it okay if I take this jacket off for my sign presentation or do you need it for contrast to see me more clearly? Okay.

When I give presentation, I tend to work up a sweat. So it's one of my issues, sorry. If it's all right with all of you, I'd rather be a little cooler for it. So now, if you wouldn't mind.

If if you could load up the PowerPoint for Christian. So now the PowerPoint will help us to go back and forth between the presentation and see the reference document.

And, Donna, can you see me all right? I know I tend to dance in place a bit.

>> DONNA PLATTS: I can see you just fine.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Great. Thank you very much.

Now, our presentation is about consumer groups, and the TRS policy statement.

There are a number of us that have worked over the past two years on this document, and we just finished that work in April of 2010. So just one year ago. I must emphasize that ITU must know that when we say TRS, we mean Telecommunications Relay Services. In saying TRS, we want to make sure that we don't think of that as only one form of telecommunications relay, that we -- that there are in fact a whole host of different forms of relay services here in the U.S. I believe we have, what, six, seven, maybe eight different forms of TRS.

And I'm -- and I must also emphasize that among the consumer groups, they want the FCC, the industry, and the general public to be aware that if we do have a number of forms of TRS, that is because these satisfy the needs, interests and desires of diverse peoples. Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, people that are deaf-blind, people with speech disabilities that may or may not be deaf. And so they all need the choice, the options, in order to meet their specific needs.

So Cheryl and I will present this afternoon on this topic. And if you can move to the next slide.

The nine consumer groups that I mentioned earlier that worked together on the production of this document are listed here on the screen before you.

And in my talk or in Cheryl's talk, we will not focus solely on VRS, speech-to-speech, IP-Relay or any of these products, we will speak much more generally. And Cheryl and I will share remarks that can apply to any of the forms of TRS.

Now, tomorrow, you'll also hear from Lise about some of the hard-of-hearing people who have commented and shared commentary with her, and their thoughts about using TRS, what sorts of challenges they have specifically. And you'll also hear tomorrow from NAD, the National Association for the Deaf, and their commentary on TRS, what they are quite satisfied with in the service and what they are not. You'll also hear from Mark Hill on his perspective on deaf people who also have mobility impairment disabilities or CP or any of these things, and what sorts of forms of TRS are appropriate to them. You'll hear also from Randy about deaf-blind persons and their use of TRS.

So I think it's best that Cheryl and I only give you a more broad brush stroke overview; and that they will fill in the fine details tomorrow.

Next slide.

Now, I was quite interested this morning to see the FCC's definition of functional equivalence. I think the consumer groups would take that definition a step further. The FCC is actually lagging behind us. They are, in fact, listening to us and gaining greater understanding of what the consumer groups want to see as the definition of functional equivalence. And to be quite honest with you, it's not about -- it's not about getting a dial tone. Functional equivalence really boils down to the notion of having a normal telephone conversation.

And that actually made me check Google and see what it had to say. Now, in deafness, for example, or hearing loss, they define that as something that separates people from other people. Because people in the past didn't necessarily identify as people with hearing loss, hard-of-hearing, and they were sort of all lumped together. And then they say blindness separates people from things. And deaf people -- deafness separates people from people. But I'm not sure that is true. We have to examine how that is.

To be honest, I grew up in a home where no one interpreted for me. But we had my parents, dorm counselors, that I would sign to and then they would make a phone call to me. I would be left wondering what was happening on the other end of the call and I'd get a summary and oh, everything is good, and no explanation of anything on the other end.

And so today, we now have Video Relay Services. And now my choice among the menu options would be Video Relay Service primarily as well as captioned telephones. Now, I do use VRS I would say primarily. Now, for people who are unable to understand my voice, I would then use VRS. And people are happy to get my calls, because I can sign two words a minute and people can speak at least, you know --

>> INTERPRETER: Correction.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: 200 words a minute and people can speak at that rate, too. My daughter says I want to hear your voice, I don't like hearing the interpreter's voice because it's so monotone. So given that, she tells me that my voice is the thing that connects her to her dad. So in that case I would use a different product. And I would call her using the captioned telephone. The point there is that we look to this definition. We look to this definition, and I as a Deaf and Hard of Hearing person communicating with another hearing person, we are communicating, talking about something that may be very emotional or very intense or very important. Functional equivalency may relate to, in a medical situation, differently than a familial situation or a business situation. In any of these, or in an emergency, any of these, we need to look to this definition and look at what the common context is among all of them for functional equivalency.

The next slide.

Now, I'll turn the floor over to Cheryl for a moment to talk about functional equivalence and talk about that specifically in terms of policy for TRS services.

>> CHERYL HEPPNER: I'm back here if you need to find me.

In a conversation among consumer group members, that may be the way we describe functional equivalency is supposed to be. It's just not the same concept that the FCC has.

So we started talking about how can functional equivalence for us be equal to a call between two people who are hearing? How do we get that? And we try to break it down by the elements that we're doing. First is that TRS must provide full benefit to all parties on a call. We call this the complexity or the cost.

Then we have the TRS experience for an individual who is deaf or hard-of-hearing or deaf-blind or speech disabled. And that's at the minimum, be equivalent to a call between two hearing persons on a telephone that would go over the Internet.

Third was that TRS must be offering the ability to provide high quality services using mainstream products and services.

It's like having unlimited choice in equipment, as opposed to saying my husband, he goes out and buys an iPhone.

Also, the needs of individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled, and interoperable communication must be readily available to anyone, any time, anywhere.

Next slide, please.

So let me see.

Vendors must be motivated to bring products to the market. And they have to continually improve the relay experience.

What we were looking for there was that, you know, this year's Samsung will be better than last year's Samsung. And you want the coolest, best new thing. And that's what we want with services. We want a wide variety of options in equipment services.

And we want a variety of TRS services, so we can pick the one that we are most interested in having, the one that works best for us.

In addition, when an emergency call -- sorry. We are on another page.

Let's see, core principles.

Okay.

Emergency calls made through TRS should fully satisfy the safety and security of TRS users. The TRS users should receive prompt, comprehensive customer care services from the relay provider in their preferred communication modality.

And a commitment to uphold the integrity of the TRS fund. So that's fully maintained.

Back to Claude.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Let's check the slides to make sure we didn't miss anything.

Cheryl, anything else there?

>> CHERYL HEPPNER: 23 years of progress.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Well, I'll talk about the work we're doing now. I just want to make sure that you adequately covered the ten principles.

>> CHERYL HEPPNER: Yes, go ahead.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Okay.

So now the 23 years of progress.

Among the consumer groups, we have communicated with industry and the FCC as well, and interestingly working with TDI for some 17 years, out of their 23 years working nationwide with TRS services, and Cheryl has been working much longer than this on many of these national programmes for some of the 23 years they have been involved in, so we see a number of us involved who have been involved for a great many years.

And I have made statements to the FCC repeatedly that we see the problems becoming less and less problematic, over time.

We have had a shift in the people running the programmes there at the FCC. And we feel that the FCC has been responding to issues on a relative basis. We want to see the FCC respond to issues or make plans on a proactive basis. And we want to see the TRS programme work as a programme, as a whole. We want to be able to see the FCC give more attention, more full-time attention to the programme.

And so that is what we came up with this policy statement within the document, the working paper. And this is only a voluntary document. The FCC is not mandated to do it all. We have simply made the recommendation in hopes that the FCC would follow through with that.

So now we have told the FCC that, in the 23 years they have made commendable progress, and we have about seven or eight different forms of TRS now at the end of the day. The problems, though, some of which still remain, are, first off, that we see a lack in the TRS programmes, specifically, in terms of awareness among hearing people about the call that they're receiving. And nor do they often know how to make a call to us. And so we would like to see more marketing, more outreach --

>> INTERPRETER: Correction, the interpretation.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: More outreach work. So we have been frustrated time and again with some of the fraudulent activities that occurred.

I don't believe that the FCC shoulders the blame for those. Those who did it have gotten caught and had to pay due, and the FCC has some oversight on that. But whether the FCC should look at and go forward with the fraud as opposed to catching the people who played the game wrong and focus on that.

Because in the last 23 years we have had a great deal of progress, and that is also affecting consumers negatively in a number of different constituencies.

Lise spoke about the notion of captions versus the spoken word. I would say that a two-second lag is quite something. Hard at work, working on fraud at the FCC and catching fraudulent practitioners, but three or four staff in the past were working on that, and now they have some 15 staff working to support the programmes. We want to support the FCC in looking at the areas in which they could improve.

And people often forget that relay is not simply for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. It's not. It's not. I tell you. In fact, it's quite important for hearing people. And for everyone, for every Deaf and Hard of Hearing person living in America.

So every one of those people has four or five close friends that they are going to contact quite often. They have relatives that are hearing and they have coworkers and the like. So it's quite important that we have these services.

And this creates an environment where people are less isolated. People are more productive. And we can be quite involved in the community and in our careers and workforce, and we can be much more involved in the community.

But this really does require that the Government do a good job in its outreach to hearing community members. And also, in terms of looking at International communications --

>> INTERPRETER: Sorry.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: And I would agree with the statements made by many of you today that, you know, it was quite difficult just to get a call from the neighboring town. And now we can call interstate and, you know, and over the -- these years, you know, I have seen calls now come from other countries to somebody here.

So if a deaf person is working for Google, or Apple, or any other company that is doing business on a worldwide stage, I wouldn't have been able to get a job with them because I wouldn't be able to make those International calls, and to be stymied because of that.

The FCC has done and needs to do more work to create greater awareness, so that we can make these International calls.

Also, we can look at the achievements of the programmes and the accountability of these programmes.

The FCC, this morning, talked -- talked about their model for disability access services. But because of a couple of errors that have been made in that, the Congress does have the power to take away much of the progress that we have made. So we want to be sure that we bolster the FCC by commending the good work that they are doing and making the work that they do in the future better and better.

And the FCC is accountable, is responsible, not to us solely, though, but to Congress. They need to do better in their research, outreach and programme management so that if Congress calls them to task, they stand ready to defend their practices. They stand ready with the documents in hand.

So we don't want Congress to play fast and lose with our TRS programmes. We want to be sure that they are present here and into the future and we're quite concerned. We want to be sure that Congress doesn't inappropriately interfere with the access that we have.

The fifth statement I want to make regards the importance of looking at VRS as being equally as important as any of the other services, IP-Relay, CapTel, speech-to-speech. Each of these are important to the communities they serve. Whether they are deaf people with mobility impairments or whatever the case, the individual products are important so that each of the constituencies have their needs met.

So in putting together this document, we have defined -- we didn't merely define functional equivalency, but we came up with ten principles for functional equivalency. And we have proposed that the FCC work to adopt these principles and improve in five specific areas.

Interoperability and quality standards.

Outreach education and marketing.

Research and development.

Competition and choices.

And fifth, management, staffing, and resources.

The consumer groups have proposed this in this document, because one fact is always -- has always held true for us. No matter what Congress does, we know that the FCC will always be the place that pays the bills for relay services. They have always held that responsibility throughout the evolution of the programme.

Now, Cheryl, you have more to add now?

>> CHERYL HEPPNER: Great.

So I'm going to talk a little about the key objectives that we proposed with the FCC that Claude stated.

That first one was for what we hope the FCC would do to increase interoperability and quality standards.

And we want these to be applied to universal design for voice, video and text equipment. And this is my personal opinion. I could accept a good hologram.

We also wanted to see International communications capabilities, not just for the calls that we make in this country but for those International calls.

We wanted to see training and certification for communication assistants so that they are the quality that we need to be able to communicate the best we can.

And we wanted to ensure greater protection for the TRS users, safety, life, health and property.

Next slide, please.

Some of the key objectives that we proposed to the FCC for outreach, education and marketing, were to do these things.

To reach unserved and underserved individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech disabled. For all Americans, whether TRS users or not, to be familiar and accept TRS nationwide.

For the public and private sectors, to fulfill legal responsibilities in making and receiving TRS calls.

And for employers to do training activities on TRS for their employees, as part of their workplace accommodation.

Next slide, please.

Next slide, please.

Can you go back to slide ten, please.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: I'm not sure of the title on slide ten. They are not numbered here.

>> CHERYL HEPPNER: It's the key objective proposed to the FCC for research and development.

Yes. Thank you.

We talked about meeting the congressional mandate to support technological innovation for TRS. And we talked about raising the bar in technological design and operations efficiency.

Supporting consumer demand for innovation with TRS choosing operations.

And ensuring the supply of communication assistants to meet the demand for TRS services with high quality performance standards.

Next slide, please.

I may have some extra slides in here.

Okay. For competition and choices, we talked about healthy, evolving yet competitive TRS industry. And credible national certification process for current and future vendors.

And an array of services and features to meet diverse communication needs.

And prompt comprehensive customer care and service for TRS users.

Next slide, please.

Thank you.

We also proposed to the FCC these -- I'm sorry.

It's not funny. I'm trying to be funny.

We proposed these key objectives to the FCC for management, staffing and resources.

They included full-time and contract positions in administration, Disability Access policy, call center operations, marketing, outreach and education, research and engineering, and economics.

And most of you were here today, and you heard from Greg and Karen. You know that some of this is already underway and it's been very nice to see that.

We also proposed that the FCC do more to have adequate support and resources for operations efficiency and service quality. And have full accountability in fulfilling the promise and potential of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Next slide, please.

Claude.

>> CLAUDE STOUT: Okay.

Now, we have two slides remaining here. And I want you all to know that the FCC has -- well, actually, another positive note I have to share is that in my 17 years here, I have seen that anything happening with TDI and our sister organizations, we can see that one of the best things that happens is that that is then copied around the world in other organizations. And so while there may be some particular wrangling among organizations, when we file with the FCC or anything else, we speak with a unified voice. We are working hand in hand and we know the value of working together to propose one joint filing with the unified voice. And it makes the work of the FCC so much easier.

And we're able to settle many issues along the way before the filing. And the FCC doesn't merely read our consumer groups' reports and recommendations for policy. We also gather and file hundreds and hundreds of filings every year, not only on relay service, also on Internet captioning, emergency access, broadband access, et cetera, et cetera.

And we see other countries imitating our attempts. Pro bono law firms often are reaching out to Government and looking to the equivalence of the FCC in their own countries. So it really pays to have continuous discussions with the FCC, with your sister organizations. And we see that leaders do come and go, and that can be one source of frustration, and every four years much of the staff comes through the revolving door. But we do have some of the staff, Karen and others, in the disability rights office who stay and persist.

And we see that the consumer groups are able to continue working with them. And some of the industry areas have stable membership and some are more rapidly changing.

And because of our involvement, because of our feedback with the FCC and that input into the decision-making process, that allows us to fully bring that voice to the FCC.

And we are looking at some of the actions that we have taken. We have taken the IP CTS equipment, based on eligibility, based on income. We have also looked at evaluation of getting a more -- we want more economists, not just attorneys there, we want more varied people in various positions. Because we need not merely a business model. But we have at VRS, we have TRS, and these are issues not merely of business, but of civil rights. So we want to be sure that we have good national TRS programmes.

But we have Karen and Greg and a number of them who have done great work in the last several years. And the FCC has about, I believe, seven or eight different bureaus, and within the FCC there are different bureaus with different areas of concentration.

The ten digit system number, ten digit number system, has a particular bureau working with it, in fact, several of them.

The mobile VRS, mobile issue, IP-Relay, they're working with the wireless bureau.

Let's see, and the last point here is one that I've already mentioned, the FCC has kept after and sought to catch the fraudulent practitioners and recover the money. And so we would like to see a little less perseverance on the fraudulence, continue to work on it, but transfer some of that energy to the outreach and other programme needs, like research, for example.

If we could advance to the next slide. Get his attention, please. Could you advance to the next slide?

So, last slide.

I don't want to preempt the FCC on this, but I do want to posit several possibilities here. We hope that the FCC will follow through with these as soon as possible. Based on our conversations with the FCC in the past, we feel that they will. We feel that the FCC does want to deal with some of the problems with the various VRS providers... and the interoperability of those providers.

And not -- and not an elimination of branding or anything like that, but make sure that the base platform is interoperable. So you can have additional offerings, but that all of the programmes can use the same foundation so they can communicate with each other so there is an interoperable platform.

And we are delighted to see that item number two on the screen may be on the move. The FCC does seem to have agreed with that, that the current state of affairs with the TRS fund advisory council receives contributions from the telephone companies, from the VoIP providers that goes to this particular fund. And so the IP provider, the VRS providers, are paid from that fund. So that collection process shouldn't only include those two types of organizations. We should include a number of other organizations. And if we see that, then I think we would see more consumer groups and user members and their voice reaching the decision makers.

And we won't just address the rate issue, but a number of the other issues at play and that we will see increased research.

We want to see issues like competency addressed as well. And so the third and fourth points here, bullets on the screen that you see are a desire to see increased marketing and increased research projects. Not only for any particular form of TRS but for any and all of the forms of TRS.

And that now concludes Cheryl and I's presentation.

Thank you.

(Applause)

>> JOHN LEE: Thank you very much, cloud. Very much appreciate it. So are there thoughts or comments related to this presentation on the floor?

Okay.

Seeing none. Thank you very much, Cheryl, thank you very much, Claude.

At this time, I'd like to bring today's meeting to a close. I know it's getting to be a late hour and people are looking to get home.

Just a slight change for tomorrow morning. Given the prevalence of the discussion that occurred in the back, one of the things I thought we would do is we would start with a discussion, where we will open the floor for anyone who wishes to talk. We will ask them to come up and chat and we will review what we did today, I'll have 15 or 20 nints in the morning for that. So I'll start at 9. So if you have thoughts about what happened today, just reflect on that and let us know tomorrow. So I think that would be very useful, just to further this discussion along.

So we will start again tomorrow morning at 9. And, Christian, do you have something that you'd like to add?

>> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Okay. Thank you to everyone here. And also I want to thank all of you for coming tomorrow.

Be here, breakfast will be available at 8.

>> JOHN LEE: Yes, breakfast is important. Thank you, everyone. And we will see you all tomorrow.

(Applause)

(End of session 5:40 p.m. ET)

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