

Kimberley Interpreting Service

www.wn.com.au/mirima

NAATI Interpreters for Aboriginal Languages

Tel: 08 9169 3161

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KIS interpreter at Argyle Diamond Mines Community Negotiations

KIS supplies interpreter at Community Negotiations Meeting at Argyle Diamond Mine

Argyle Diamond Mine (ADM) booked a KIS interpreter for a large community meeting at the Argyle Diamond Mine on Thursday 27 Sept. KIS interpreter Annette Chunama travelled to Argyle Diamond Mine to interpret for General Manager for ADM Operations, Brendan Hammond, and an audience of over sixty members of the nearby communities such as Doon Doon Station, Warmun, Bow River, Halls Creek and others. This meeting was the first step towards negotiating a new comprehensive agreement between ADM and local traditional owners. The large community meeting witnessed Argyle and the KLC sign a Memorandum of Understanding, which sets out the steps and time frame for this agreement process.

The Argyle Diamond Mine has recently extended the life of its open pit operation to 2007 and is assessing the potential for a longer-term underground operation beyond that date. Mr Hammond said: We want to bring a range of benefits, jobs and opportunities for traditional owners and other local Aboriginal people, as well as the East Kimberley economy in general."

KIS Project Officer Tea Dietterich welcomed the move by ADM to use interpreters for their community negotiations and KIS is looking forward to working together with ADM.

KIS seeks funding from ATSIIC

Kis is still trying to secure ongoing funding for their operation

KIS is currently seeking funding from ATSIIC to continue the Kimberley Interpreting Service as part of the Promotion, Maintenance, Revival and Reclamation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages output. Mirima Chairperson David Newry and KIS Project Officer Tea Dietterich are giving a presentation of KIS to the Wunan Regional Council on October 11 at the Regional Council Meeting in Kununurra.

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NAIDOC WEEK IN KUNUNURRA

7 - 11 August 2001 was Naidoc Week in Kununurra. KIS together with Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring had an information stand at White Gum Park in Kununurra on Tuesday 7 August. It was a great day with a lot of interested people coming along, checking our videos about Cross Cultural Awareness and Aboriginal Interpreters and information about KIS.



KIS Project Officer Tea Dietterich at KIS/Mirima information stand

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KIS seeks funding from ATSIC

The Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS) is an initiative of Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre, Kununurra and the Kimberley Language and Resource Centre (KLRC) in Halls Creek. It was established following the recommendations of a feasibility study conducted in Kununurra in 1999. The study found that many accredited interpreters across the Kimberley were not being utilised, and yet most government agencies (including the police service, courts, Centrelink and the hospital) expressed a need for Aboriginal language interpreters on a regular basis.

The Kimberley Interpreting Service promotes the contemporary use and maintenance of Aboriginal languages in day-to-day situations. Professional Development courses for Interpreters are held on a regular basis teaching specific terminology in Aboriginal languages and English, thus ensuring these languages remain current and able to deal with modern communication contexts. The use of interpreters also means Aboriginal people (particularly older people) can feel confident in using their traditional language and do not feel coerced into speaking English in order to communicate effectively.

KIS encourages young Indigenous people to maintain their traditional languages. Young people can clearly see that it is not only useful to know the English language but it is also important to have a good working knowledge of their traditional language as this is a vital tool for the interpreter profession. This knowledge of traditional languages increases their employment opportunities.

KIS is regularly sending new interpreting candidates to formal training to obtain the Diploma of Interpreting and gain recognition by NAATI.

KIS has been actively raising awareness of Kimberley languages and the importance of using interpreters for those who do not have a sufficient command of the English language. Colour brochures with detailed information about Aboriginal languages and interpreters are being distributed to government departments, community organisations and private enterprise. A quarterly newsletter informs the wider Australian public about activities that KIS has been involved with, and includes general information articles about interpreters and Australian languages.

Workshops are being planned to inform potential "users" of KIS about Aboriginal languages, to train them how to use Aboriginal interpreters and teach about cross-cultural differences.

Constant liaison fosters close collaboration with

language authorities such as the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT), TAFE, Commonwealth Translation and Interpreter Services (TIS) in Perth, Melbourne and NSW and private Translation Agencies. KIS also has close links with the Aboriginal Interpreting Service in the Northern Territory and was recently able to supply an interpreter on their behalf for a court case in Darwin. A comprehensive website (www.wn.com.au/mirima) has been developed allowing national and international access to information.

Performance Measures

KIS has accredited interpreters in the following languages: Kriol, Jaru, Kija, Walmajarri and Kukatja. Interpreters are currently being trained for Gooniyandi, Bunuba and Nyikina. Informal training has been provided for Mangala and Ngarinyin. KIS is lobbying for Accreditation tests for more Aboriginal languages and will continue to recruit new candidates for testing.

A **Client Feedback Form** has been developed to monitor interpreter performance to ensure interpreters are consistently working to a high standard.

The **KIS website** has a comprehensive **statistics counter**. Through the counter we can monitor interest in KIS language issues, traffic, where they come from and how they found KIS. Visitors to the website can register online for a newsletter or book an interpreter online. Our website reports measure exactly the online activity of KIS.

The report of our last PD Courses for Aboriginal Interpreters in the Kimberley also included a questionnaire for interpreters. Opinions and recommendations of the interpreters are being recorded to monitor the level of satisfaction among the Aboriginal language professionals.

Aboriginal Interpreters in Broome Wanted!!!

If you are from the Broome Area, Dampier Peninsula or surrounds and you speak an Aboriginal language, why not become an interpreter?

Find out more and call KIS on 91693161!!

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Ansett Collapse affects Fitzroy Interpreter Students

Four intrepid ladies from Fitzroy Crossing...

Our interpreter candidates studying for the Diploma of Interpreting at Batchelor have faced a few challenges with Ansett collapsing. First, their travel itineraries were changed several times, they were forced to wait for long hours during their trip from Fitzroy Crossing in the West Kimberley to Batchelor in the NT and finally they had to travel by bus all the way from Batchelor to Fitzroy! But that has not discouraged our motivated ladies. This week again they are up in the NT on another interpreter workshop. Well done, Ladies! Now KIS tries to treat them with lunch and a day use room at the Country Club Hotel in Kununurra, to ease their travel.



Students are Charlie Djordila, Arnhemland, Lynette Birriran Arnhemland,. The Fitzroy students are Topsy Chestnut, Doreen Street and Gracie Mulligan who will be finishing the Diploma next year. All the students in the Diploma have to do legal interpreting as part of the Diploma.



NT ABORIGINAL INTERPRETER SERVICE (AIS)

The NT AIS offers a central booking service for government and non-government agencies that require on-site Aboriginal language interpreters. AIS utilizes and maintains a Register of Aboriginal languages Interpreters in the NT. Currently, 284 interpreters are registered with the NT AIS covering more than 104 Aboriginal languages/dialects. 140 interpreters are used on a regular basis and between 70 and 80 interpreters are NAATI accredited at this stage. NT AIS is now concentrating on interpreter training, so a large proportion of their interpreters will obtain NAATI accreditation. NT AIS is funded by the NT and Commonwealth Governments and is part of the Office of Aboriginal Development (OAD), Division: Co-ordination and Research.

KIS has maintained from the very beginning a close relationship with its counterpart in the NT. Regular meetings have fostered the relationship and Colleen Rosas, NT AIS Co-ordinator, and Barbara Weiss, Manager Co-ordination and Research, OAD, are planning a trip to the Kimberley soon.

Duty Interpreters

In addition to specific bookings there are a number of standing block bookings arrangements in place in various legal and health settings around the NT. Under this arrangement Interpreters are booked to reflect the dominant languages in particular situations at particular times, generally on a rolling roster basis. These Duty Interpreters provided ad hoc services for health professionals and legal practitioners who are dealing with clients who were not "booked ahead". Duty Interpreters are particularly useful for accidents and emergency (health) and bail and arrest days in court. These arrangements are booked by various agencies and exist for:

- Royal Darwin Hospital (4 interpreters)
- Tennant Creek Hospital
- Nhulunbuy Hospital
- Katherine Hospital
- Darwin Magistrates Court
- Alice Springs Magistrates Courts
- All NT Bush Courts

NT interpreters now have their own interpreter room in Magistrate Courts in Darwin and Alice Springs.

NT AIS can be contacted on Tel: 08 89515576

New KIS Brochures and Videos

Our colour brochures have been very popular. Please let us know if you need brochures and we will send you some straight away. Simply call us on 91693161 or send an email to:

kis@wn.com.au

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War of Words can be overcome with interpreters (by Keeley Palmer)

I was not instantly inspired to read *When Warriors Lie Down and Die* by Richard Trudgen when I first heard of its release. The title put me in mind of a Daisy Bates style analysis of the regrettable, but inevitable demise of the traditional aboriginal people of Australia. A few months later, the book was recommended to me because of its particular references to language issues, and I was pleasantly surprised by the clear and accurate arguments put forward by the author.

Trudgen's book is an attempt to understand the crisis facing Aboriginal people living in communities across the top end of Australia: ill health, unemployment, drug abuse, domestic violence, homicide and suicide, and is influenced by his experience living and working with Yolngu in Arnhem Land since 1973. Trudgen examines the problems from the Yolngu side of the cross-cultural / cross-language divide and is in a unique position to present this view to the wider public through his knowledge of Yolngu Matha languages.

In the chapters that deal specifically with language and communication Trudgen includes many examples of the difficulties that arise when people are not speaking the same language: what the author refers to as a 'war of words'. In hospitals and in meetings, Yolngu are constantly disempowered because they don't fully understand English. Even those who grasp the grammar and vocabulary of English can have problems because they dream in Yolngu Matha; that is they construct knowledge in their minds in Yolngu Matha and are therefore having to process the concepts expressed in English into their own language, which is exhausting.

In order to overcome this problem Trudgen argues for continued linguistic research into traditional languages to analyse their concepts completely and fully.

In this way, the words could be found to truly explain the Balanda (whitefella) way to Yolngu, using the language they understand. In his concluding chapter Trudgen's number one factor to create 'Yolngu friendly' environments is *take people's language seriously*, and in order to do this he calls for well funded language research, indigenous language media outlets, and language teaching for people from the dominant culture working with Yolngu.

In the meantime, the book presents arguments that encourage the use of interpreters and is a useful and interesting introduction to the basic issues facing speakers of indigenous languages throughout Australia.

When Warriors Lie Down and Die by Richard Trudgen is published by Aboriginal Resource and Development Services, Darwin (www.ards.com.au) and all proceeds from the sale of the book will be used for community development and community education work.

Minister for Indigenous Affairs visits KIS at Mirima Language Centre

Minister for Indigenous Affairs, the Hon. Alan Carpenter MLA, recently visited KIS at the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre. He congratulated KIS to their successful year and promised his support. He also stressed that the Department for Indigenous Affairs (DIA) is not a funding body, but Anna Moulton from the Regional DIA Office in Kununurra has been most helpful so far in our search for on-going funding. Now all hopes are set with ATSIC....

Industry Developments

KIS always endeavours to be involved and up-to-date with industry developments.

NAATI:

You may have heard that NAATI is currently conducting a review of its accreditation system. They plan to abolish the paraprofessional level and offer one single level of accreditation in future. This would have a devastating impact on interpreters for indigenous languages and some other migrant languages. KIS is strongly opposing this move.

Industry Advisory Committee:

The WA Industry Advisory Committee (Interpreting) held their last meeting on 24 September at Central TAFE in Perth. Video Conferencing was arranged by Chairperson Dagmar Dixon and this enabled Committee member Tea Dietterich (KIS) to participate. Among some of the topics discussed were the new curriculum for the Paraprofessional Interpreter Course, training in remote areas, feedback on courses in 2001 (Dagmar talked about Aboriginal interpreter training in the Goldfields, they are currently training in prison), NAATI developments and KIS. Members of the Advisory Committee are representatives from Ministry of Justice, WA Health Department/Multicultural Access, Centrelink, TIS, Auslan, Central TAFE, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Fremantle Hospital, Albany Legal Service, WA Polic, Office of Citizenship and Multicultural Interests, Kimberley Interpreting Serviv and other organizations. If you would like to know more about the last meeting, pls contact us.

AUSIT:

Check this months AUSIT newsletter! You will find an article about KIS interpreter Annette Chunama, being the first Aboriginal member of the Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters (AUSIT). AUSIT is the professional association of interpreters and translators in Australia.