

**AFTER** an attempted murder trial was delayed for a second time last week, the useless Capita-owned firm Applied Language Solutions (ALS – see *Eyes passim*) was billed by the judge for failing to supply a court interpreter.

The wasted costs order was issued at Bradford crown court following a second adjournment because no interpreter was available for Czech defendant Karel Novotny. His lawyer quipped that it might be quicker for him to learn Czech than wait for ALS to send anyone along.

The order follows a letter from attorney general Dominic Grieve to Labour MP Emily Thornberry saying that as ALS's failure to provide interpreters "does not seem to fall within the law of contempt", it was "best addressed by wasted costs [orders]". A previous wasted costs application at Snaresbrook crown court was rejected when the judge put ALS's problems down to "teething troubles", but patience is now wearing thin and the legal press reports that many more solicitors intend to apply for such orders if their cases suffer further delays.

The whole interpreting contract could become costly for ALS, but it's also working out to be pretty pricey for the court service too. Last Friday a retrial had to be ordered at a cost of £25,000 after a four-day hearing in a burglary case – also at Snaresbrook – was wrecked by an ALS Romanian interpreter who muddled the words "bitten" and "beaten" and didn't realise the mistake until it came up in cross-examination.