

WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Thursday 25 April 2013

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Language Services Framework Agreement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Mrs Helen Grant):

Today, the Government responded to the Justice Committee report “Interpreting and translation services and the Applied Language Solutions contract”. This sets out some of the work which has already taken place and some which is planned in order to bring about improvements to the contract and the associated Framework Agreement for the justice sector.

Part of this work was to review the current terms and conditions for interpreters under the contract in discussion with Capita and taking into account the feedback from groups of interpreters. I can announce that several changes will come into effect in May this year which will have a direct impact on take-home pay for interpreters. We are confident that these measures are affordable for the taxpayer, but will also have a direct effect on performance levels by attracting more interpreters to register to work, as well as encourage those already registered to undertake more bookings.

The changes address a number of concerns that interpreters have raised with the Department and Capita and include paying interpreters at their qualified tier and in 15 minute blocks, extending the use of mileage payments and introducing cancellation fees where the hearing is cancelled or runs significantly shorter than expected through no fault of the interpreter. We are also introducing a fee to cover incidental costs that the interpreter might incur.

Other work is ongoing in our challenge to Capita to improve performance under the contract.

Copies are available in the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office.