TRANSLATION SERVICES

DESCRIPTION

Translation services convert written materials and oral presentations from English to other languages.

REQUIRED ACTIVITY?

No.

MAKING IT WORK

WHEN TO USE

Translation services can be used anytime you need them. While preparing the *Community Involvement Plan*, determine if translation services will benefit the affected community. Because there will be some situations where only a small number of people may benefit from translated documents, work with CIOC to decide when this service may be cost prohibitive.

Based on a recent survey conducted by CIOC, timeliness and accuracy are the two most significant factors in using translated outreach materials. Establishing arrangements in advance will help you to address timeliness and accuracy issues. Advance planning for a translation project allows you to choose between the Department of State's service and local resources.

HOW TO USE

Generally, printed materials are the main subject of translation services. However, using local resources to provide oral or American Sign Language interpretations at community meetings or news briefings can be a powerful tool. Some Regions use contractors, community groups, and college students in language programs as resources. Using community groups or college students can help to further community involvement. Also, these resources can help when materials are required on short turn-around.

In addition to local resources, CIOC has established a centralized translation service through an inter-agency agreement with the Department of State's Office of Translation Services. By accurately completing the Translation Checklist submission form, the Department of State can return documents as follows:

DOCUMENT LENGTH	MAXIMUM TIME FRAME
1 to 5 pages	One week
6 to 15 pages	Two to three weeks
Over 15 pages	Need to discuss individually

Locally

Resource information can be obtained while you are preparing your *Community Involvement Plan*. Determine what local resources, such as community groups, religious institutions, or colleges are interested in helping.

Regionally

Three regions use contractors for translation services on an as-needed basis. Seven regions rely on in-house staff when available; two have used community groups to provide translations

for site-specific information. Contact the appropriate EPA regional procurement officer to find translation services used in the past.

Nationally

If local resources are not available, you can use the Department of State's translation services. Outreach materials can be translated relatively quickly through the Department of State's Office of Translation Services. The more time you have, the increased likelihood that the Department of State can meet your needs. When in doubt, call CIOC.

The Department of State's Office of Translation Services is highly experienced in producing accurate translations. Their accuracy is dependent on the description of the targeted community. Be thorough when completing the submission form so the Department of State can match up the dialect of the translation with that of the targeted community.

Tips

- Superfund documents may be available in foreign languages:
    - *This is Superfund* and *Risk Assessment* are currently translated into Spanish.
    - Check with your CIOC contact for the names of any additional translated documents.
- Be creative with your available translation services. When appropriate, use them for site signs, maps, flyers, and public meeting notices.
- Get familiar with available local resources, such as:
    - Local community groups;
    - Colleges and universities; and
    - In-house resources.
- Plan ahead whenever possible:
    - Submit translation requests early; and
    - Talk with your headquarters contact to check on scheduling conflicts.
- Provide a formatted English version to expedite your turnaround time.
- Know what information you need, when you need it, and what you will do with it.
- Distinguish between various dialects of a given language. For instance, it is important to know if a Spanish speaking community is Puerto Rican, Mexican, or of another dialect.
- Consider the use of sign language interpreters or closed captioning when appropriate.
- Beware of software translating packages; they are context sensitive and may prove to be less accurate and reliable than professional translators.

- *Internet* Resources: The American Translators Association provides a searchable professional services directory on their *Internet* site: *www.ncata.org/*.

Related Tools/Resources in the Toolkit

- Community Involvement Plans, Tab 7
- Internet, Tab 10