

BC Video Relay Services Committee - BCVRS

CRTC Video Relay Services Hearing

Gatineau, Quebec

October 24, 2013



Introduction

- **Thank you** – for having us here. Thank you to Deaf Community of BC also those across Canada who shared their lives with the BCVRS.
- **Introductions**– Nigel Howard, Lisa Anderson-Kellett, Ava Hawkins, are here presenting in Gatineau. At Vancouver CRTC are: Jodi Birley, Susan Masters, Kimberly Wood, and David Macdonald are present.
- **Grassroots** – wholly volunteer-based committee of Deaf people and their allies since 2008, we represent the views of Deaf British Columbians. We, in BC, experienced VRS for 18 months.

Our position

1. Provision of VRS in American Sign Language (ASL) and Langue des Signes Quebécoise (LSQ) by all telecommunications providers.
2. The choice of using any accessible VRS communication technologies which are currently available and/or may become so in the future.

Our position

3. That consumers have the ability to choose in the marketplace a variety of VRS products and services.
4. Mandatory involvement and opportunities for employment for Deaf Persons in the consultation, governance involved in the implementation and operations of the Canadian VRS industry.

Social and Economic Benefits of VRS

Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind Canadians, as do other Canadians, aspire to be productive, contributing to the economic, social and cultural development of their community and country. Accessible information and communication is essential to participating in the Canadian economy.



Social and Economic Benefits of VRS

Employment opportunities possible

Job Advancement available

Complex information is relayed more efficiently

Independence is enhanced

Family dynamics are strengthened



Social and Economic Benefits of VRS

Without VRS, many Deaf citizens will continue to miss an opportunity to be partners in the economy -- as an employee, as an employer, as a consumer, as a first-class citizen. Often,

Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons are overlooked for employment opportunities, even if they are well qualified in all respects except for the ability to easily access spoken communication through the phone. VRS removes this barrier.

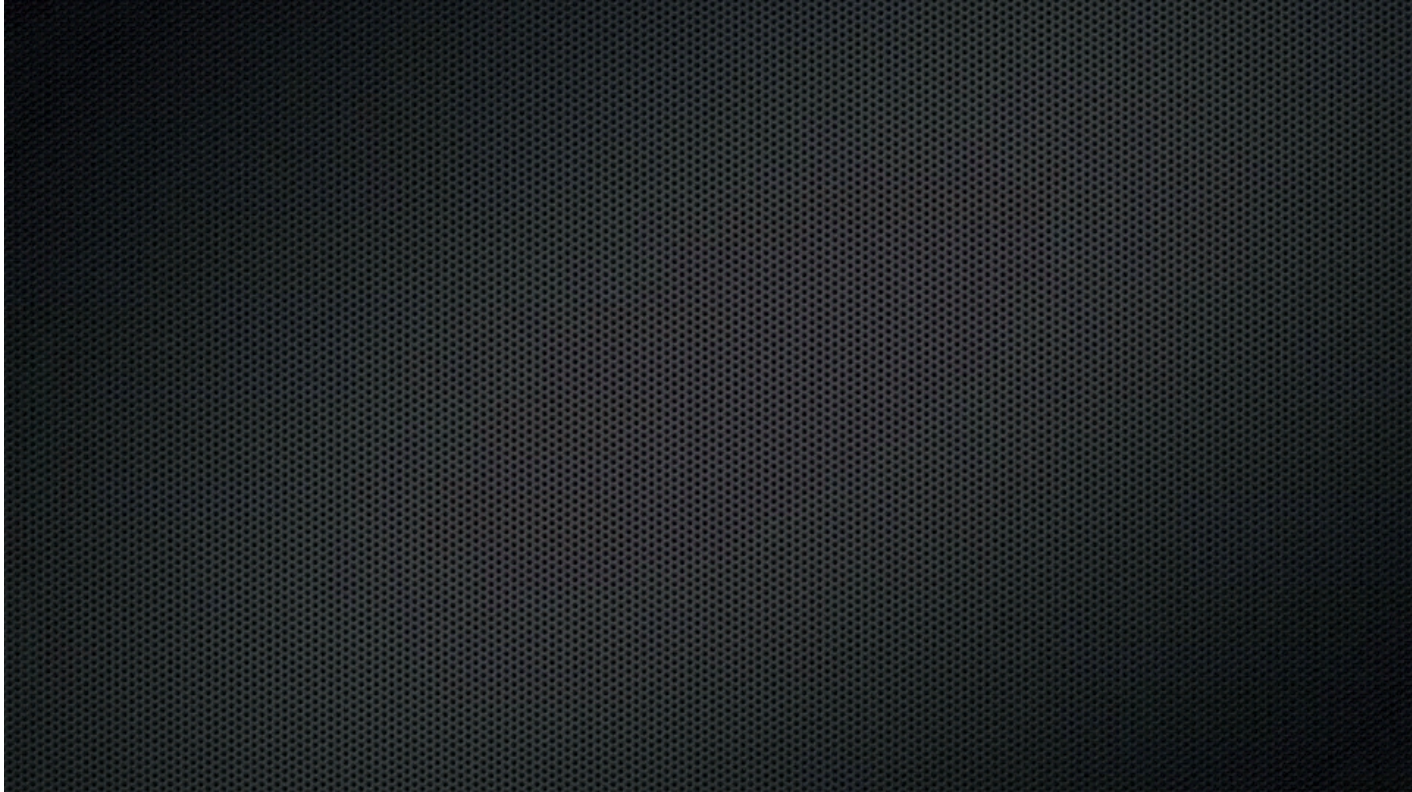
Many Community members have told BCVRS that they are stuck at an entry level in their employment because they cannot take on phone duties, therefore missing the chance to advance.

Why VRS?

- Improves quality of communication.
- ASL is natural and native language of the Deaf.
- Deaf immigrants arrive and learn ASL first before English. Written English is their weakest language.
- VRS interpreters operate at real time.



What if...



DVD



Now what?

Don't forget us, Deaf Canadians, to consult in the implementation of VRS in Canada. After all, we will be the consumers of this new future telecommunications service industry.

Say Yes to VRS in Canada!



ALL



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