



Association of  
Visual Language Interpreters  
of Canada

## News Release

For Immediate Release  
October 21, 2013

### **AVLIC urges the CRTC to implement Video Relay Services (VRS) in Canada.**

Squamish, BC (October 21, 2013) - The Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) fully supports the implementation of permanent Video Relay Services (VRS) in Canada. Following the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's (CRTC) *Issues related to the feasibility of establishing a VRS* hearing this week (Oct 21-25, 2013) in Gatineau, Québec, we urge the CRTC to move forward with the provision of VRS in Canada without delay.

AVLIC will be responding to Notice 2013-155 on issues related to the feasibility of implementing a national VRS on October 22, 2013. AVLIC President Christie Reaume and First Vice President Jocelyn Mark Blanchet will be making the presentation to support mandating VRS in Canada. To view information on AVLIC's involvement leading up to the hearing, position on VRS in Canada, letters of submission to the CRTC and a written transcript of the presentation, visit [http://www.avlic.ca/CRTC\\_Hearing](http://www.avlic.ca/CRTC_Hearing).

The CRTC's own 3-year plan (2013-2016) outlines that "Canadians are at the centre of the communication system and should have access to a world-class system in which they are reflected, that promotes innovation and contributes to enriching their lives as citizens, creators and consumers."

In response to the CRTC's plan, AVLIC President Christie Reaume says, "The time is now to mandate VRS in Canada. With current innovations in technology there's no reason that all Canadians, including Deaf and hard of hearing people, should not have full and functionally equitable access to telecommunications through VRS. With over 10 years of advocacy from Deaf community groups, research conducted by the CRTC, and now with a feasibility study concluded, AVLIC urges the CRTC to move forward with VRS."

Arguments put forward by advocacy groups, by Deaf community organizations, by over 3,150 individuals who submitted a response to the CRTC and by AVLIC cite The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on issues of human rights. Also noted are the elimination of language barriers related to the use of a text-based relay services, greater and more beneficial use of 9-1-1 services, improved employment opportunities for Deaf and hard of hearing Canadians, and equity for Deaf and hard of hearing children.

From the hundreds of requests to appear before the Commission, 30 presenters will share their personal and professional experiences and insights this week; AVLIC is honoured to be amongst those selected to appear. The presentation and anticipated questions & answers will assist the CRTC in better understanding the current state of interpreting in Canada as well as reaffirming issues related to equity in access for Deaf and hard of hearing people.

For more information on VRS in Canada, please contact a local Deaf association or the British Columbia VRS Committee. For information on visual language interpreting, Canadian standards, education, membership or certification, contact AVLIC.

--- end of release ---

**About AVLIC:**

The Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) is a non-profit, professional association for interpreters whose working languages include a sign language. AVLIC was incorporated in 1979 and has eight Affiliate Chapters across the country. AVLIC is the only certifying body for ASL-English interpreters in Canada through the means of our Canadian Evaluation System. Among a variety of services, we offer a Dispute Resolution Process to maintain quality and accountability to the field of interpreting. For more information, visit [www.avlic.ca](http://www.avlic.ca)

**AVLIC Contact:**

Email: [avlic@avlic.ca](mailto:avlic@avlic.ca)  
Phone: 604.617.8502