

CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSIONERS
AND CONTRACTING GOVERNMENTS
IWC.CCG.318

Chair's decision on the use of simultaneous translation at IWC/55

You will recall that during a private meeting of Commissioners in Shimonoseki, it was agreed that the use of simultaneous translation to improve communication at Annual Meetings should be explored. Noting the high budgetary implications if the Commission was to provide full simultaneous translation facilities, i.e. both the technical facilities (interpretation booths, ear-pieces, multi-channel listening devices etc.) and the interpreters, it was agreed that the Secretariat should investigate the costs and other implications of the Commission providing only the technical facilities with a view to implementation at IWC/55. Engaging and paying for interpreters would continue to be the responsibility of those delegations requiring them. The Commissioners delegated responsibility for making a final decision on the provision of simultaneous translation facilities for IWC/55 to the Chair in consultation with the Advisory Committee.

Contracting Governments were requested to indicate their interest in using simultaneous translation facilities via Circular Communication IWC.CCG.291 of 20 November 2002. Three Contracting Governments expressed such an interest.

In view of: (1) the relatively high cost of providing the technical facilities required (based on estimates developed by the Secretariat) and (2) the relatively low level of interest in using simultaneous translation expressed by Contracting Governments; and after consultation with the Advisory Committee, the Chair has decided that further discussions within the Commission are necessary before making such facilities available.

A document providing information on costs and Contracting Government's interest in using simultaneous translation will be available as a basis for discussions of the Finance and Administration Committee in Berlin (see item 3.1.4 of the F&A Committee Draft Agenda included with Circular Communication IWC.CCG.316 of 7 March 2003).

As a result of the Chair's decision, the existing system of consecutive translation will be used for IWC/55.

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Secretary to the Commission