# 2023 ICRC Survey Report

In April 2023, the Process Improvement unit was contacted by the DRS ICRC unit to initiate a public online survey targeting ICRC interpreters, members of the DHH community, ITP program students, and other interested parties. A short survey seeking input on the ICRC certification process was designed and distribution began via e-mail, social media posts, and a post on the ICRC website in May of 2023. The survey closed on June 9, 2023, with 75 responses. The question comments are presented verbatim without redactions or corrections for spelling/grammar. Extra hard returns in comments were removed for accessibility.

## Which group \*best\* describes you

| Answer Choices | Percentage | Count |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ICRC Certified Interpreter | 85.33% | 64 |
| Member of the DHH Community | 5.33% | 4 |
| ITP Program Student | 0.00% | 0 |
| Other (please specify) | 9.33% | 7 |
| Answered | 100.0% | 75 |

Other:

* Interested in interpreting
* Interpreter Coordinator
* NIC interpreter, professor
* Previously ICRC certified, Current NIC
* Otherwise certified interpreter
* National
* Deaf person

## which state testing system would you prefer?

| Answer Choices | Percentage | Count |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Replace the current dual certification system (interpreting/transliterating) with a single certification with five levels. | 36.00% | 27 |
| Current Oklahoma QAST I-V levels in interpreting and transliterating system | 33.33% | 25 |
| Eliminate an Oklahoma testing system and rely on other testing systems that are not regulated by the State of Oklahoma (this would require amending the current Oklahoma state statute). | 14.67% | 11 |
| I am not sure or have no opinion. | 9.33% | 7 |
| Other (please specify) | 6.67% | 5 |
| Answered | 100.0% | 75 |

Other:

* Current is good but the fact that it expires needs to be changed.
* If we are to keep QAST, I prefer the single certification. I’m also ok with eliminating QAST and relying on other testing systems
* State certification is okay, if we reform testing integrity and high standard of skill. Educate about level of limitations , should be well known + agencies need to honor Deaf consumer feedback and opinion.
* One certification with less than 5 levels. Find a better minimum skill required.
* Single certification system with a different levels structure

## What resources would be helpful for the Interpreter Certification Resource Center (ICRC) to provide to assist candidates in preparing for their skill-based performance testing? (select all that apply)

| Answer Choices | Percentage | Count |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Mock ICRC testing | 81.08% | 60 |
| Workshops | 71.62% | 53 |
| Mentoring | 68.92% | 51 |
| Other (please specify) | 8.11% | 6 |
| Answered | 100.0% | 74 |

Other:

* Study guides
* Deaf mentors for language development
* I would like to have a live panel/interpreting situation for the 4/5 test and the videos for 1-3 testing. I think with younger interpreters, the live panels would be too nerve-wracking considering that they do not have much experience in the field, but a live panel/interpreting session for the 4/5 test would allow for better quality feedback and a more accurate representation of an interpreter's skill level and ethics.
* More consistent and detailed feedback on how to improve based on testing results. Eliminate the two tests (I-III and IV-V). The whole system is confusing and doesn't match accurate interpreter skills. One test would be much simpler.
* Outside of ICRC, better education options are needed.
* WE NEED MORE WORKSHOPS BY BIPOC DEAF PRESENTERS. WE NEED MORE SOCIAL JUSTICE WITHIN INTERPRETING PROGRAMS. WE NEED TO BE DIRECT ABOUT THIS THAT THE INTERPRETING PROGRAMS ACROSS THE OKLAHOMA FAILED US. YEP. FAILED. WE MUST DISCUSS ABOUT THIS.

## What ongoing vlogs or resources would be helpful for the ICRC to provide to ICRC-certified interpreters? (select all that apply)

| Answer Choices | Percentage | Count |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Skill Building Workshops | 86.30% | 63 |
| Specific Terminology Training (for example, real estate, foreclosures, banking, pharmacy) | 83.56% | 61 |
| Medical Workshops | 68.49% | 50 |
| Mental Health Workshops | 65.75% | 48 |
| Deaf Culture Workshops | 52.05% | 38 |
| Policy Updates | 49.32% | 36 |
| Legal Workshops | 45.21% | 33 |
| Round Table Discussions | 41.10% | 30 |
| ICRC Grievance Procedures | 36.99% | 27 |
| Other (please specify) | 9.59% | 7 |
| Answered | 100.0% | 73 |

Other:

* Educational (K-12) related workshops
* Detailed explanation of the testing process and scoring from ICRC's perspective.
* Professional and dress code
* Deaf heart - deaf leaders + decision makers
* What kind question is this? ALL. WE NEED ALL. ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL, NOT SELECTIVE SOME. NO. ALL.
* LGBTQ/Cannabis
* Specialized training in k-12 interpreting in depth

## Open comments: (Please do not put personal information in the comments)

* This process is a bit difficult. I am having difficulty, but hope I can figure it out soon. I think when I start getting the ball rolling, it'll be okay. Right now I'm doing research on what I need to do and what my game plan is.
* I think ICRC is doing a wonderful job preparing candidates for the test and evaluating interpreters.
* I would like to have a live panel/interpreting situation for the 4/5 test and the videos for 1-3 testing. I think with younger interpreters, the live panels would be too nerve-wracking considering that they do not have much experience in the field, but a live panel/interpreting session for the 4/5 test would allow for better quality feedback and a more accurate representation of an interpreter's skill level and ethics.
* The test feedback does not feel like they are trying to grow interpreters. It is mostly negative and vague. There should be feedback and not all of it will be positive; that is understood. What if you see mistakes and then offer a specific workshop or mentoring opportunity that would help build skill? The testing results are subjective. It is defeating. The finish line keeps moving just out of reach. If you are a 2/3 you can only take level 2 jobs. Makes no sense. It should be ASL was a 2 so you accept jobs that would be that level of work. The 3 in transliterating would mean accepting assignments that require level 3 skill. The current set up makes absolutely no sense. People want to pursue other tests that they can feel a sense of accomplishment with. Meaning tests other than QAST. That’s not good.
* I think it should be more difficult for a certification level to expire, especially if the interpreter is working on improving their skills and is testing. For example, if an interpreter holds a 3/3 and is taking the 4/5 test and does not level up but achieves a certain score (possibly such as 70%) then the interpreter's 3/3 certification time period should be extended so that the certification does not expire. Something that may go along with this is if the interpreter is working with an ICRC approved mentor then that can be factored into the expiration (or rather the extension) of their certification. With the demand of interpreters being greater than the supply (for the most part), I think this would be in the best interest of all parties involved. I do believe there still needs to be an expiration because it helps less skilled interpreters to be motivated to improve and level up, and also for those who don't stay committed to testing and leveling up but I think the policy needs some adjustment.
I like the idea of ICRC helping to provide mentors for interpreters. I especially think that all new ITP graduates should be paired with a mentor to continue their skill building.
I understand that the videos used for testing provides for some uniformity and ease of administering the test but it does not accurately portray an actual interpreting assignment. The timing/pauses between the speaker and signer is not always appropriate and there is no opportunity to ask for clarification, etc. Because of that, the full range of skills the interpreter possesses is not always seen. I'm not sure if this is something that can be improved on or exactly how but it can be discussed.
* Question 2 cannot be adequately answered without more information. Would doing away with, or amending the current system, would people certified under that system be grandfathered in, or would their credentials be null and void?
* I understand the goal of the policy instituting an expiration date on level Vs, but interpreters who held a V before the policy change should be grandfathered in as lifetime as was the case when the level V was earned.
* I do not agree with the changes to the limitations of levels that went into effect September of 2023. We have a dual testing system (Interpreting AND Transliterating), and therefore Certified interpreters should be able to accept jobs that match the clients' language needs rather than be required to have a certain level in BOTH areas (Interpreting AND Transliterating) in order to accept certain jobs. Our limitations of levels do not reflect the dual certifications of our testing system.
* I would love to see specific trainings that are level specific and include common settings and related practices.
* I think it would be best to have skills evaluated by trained evaluators outside the state of oklahoma instead of local members.
* Mock tests seem to be the most helpful option. Some people are put off by the notion that many interpreters fail the QAST on the first try, then do well on the next. Mock tests would address that problem. It may also be worthwhile to provide scholarship options. It is difficult to pay out money for a test they are expected to fail the first time and off puts some from taking it.
* Some of the problem is a few bad apples are spoiling the bunch for everyone. You are either an ethical interpreter or not. No amount of workshops or changes to the levels of limitations will change that. You either have a “deaf heart” or you don’t.
* I feel ICRC/QAST needs a revamp with new faces, new testing system, etc., but I also feel there are not enough people willing to jump in and take over/volunteer to make it happen. SOMETHING needs to happen, though. Whether that be revamping QAST or eliminating it altogether.
* Interpreters need to learn to work with deaf people asl or pse or/ and various sign language to able communication for deaf people need
* There is not enough information for the testing system question to make a decision. It would be great if we could get more specifics for each option before being asked to decide. Thank you for doing this!
* We need to be open and discuss this. I found this link through a peer from Oklahoma. I realize this isn't being promoted on Facebook or any social media. THIS HAS TO PROMOTE EVERYWHERE TO GET BETTER RESULTS. WHY STAY AND HIDE? NAH. COME OUT AND DISCUSS THE FAILED INTERPRETING PROGRAMS ACROSS OKLAHOMA. PERIOD.
* Who might be providing any ICRC instruction, workshops, mentoring, etc.???
* Please consider removing 5/5 to ve lifetime and going back to just needing a 5 in either ITP or TL to be lifetime!
* Please consider accepting the BEI. It is a fair assessment.
The QAST is rated by interpreters who personally know the candidates. There is no way not to have bias, either for or against. The raters should be from a different geographical area to reduce the possibility of the rater knowing the candidate.
* I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback.
In accordance with my previous response...
I hope ICRC looks at what type of system we actually need for us in Oklahoma. Just because we have always had 5 levels doesn't me we should. Texas moved from 5 to 3, Utah has 2, Mississippi has 3.
The 5 levels provides far to broad a range and is leading to people who don't have adequate skills to being "certified", and the recent changes to the levels precludes some who do have novice skills from being able to work in any real life settings.
One idea is a "novice" and "profession" level, like Utah. Novice is a temporary credential which provides both a stepping stone to enter the profession, and limits on scope of practice. Professional is a permanent credential with a broader scope, but there are still limits for things like Legal.
Other states also have a low level "provisional" credential that must be supervised by a fully credentialed interpreter to work.
There are many other options rather than just the 5 level system.
One other comment is that I hope ICRC will consider utilizing available technology for communication in the future and reducing their dependence on mailed communication and paper records.
* I like that QAST serves as a stepping stone for interpreters not yet ready for NIC. However, it is used by some as an end all, and they don't pursue other higher certifications. I have concerns that ICRC has created a test with no validity or reliability and amends the LoL too freely, which has caused it to lose credibility. I would like to see Oklahoma consider BEI, as it has levels for novice and experienced interpreters, and was professionally developed. If QAST is kept, more conversations need to be had with stakeholders regarding alterations to the LoL rather than depending solelyon the opinions of staff. EIPA is also an option for educational interpreters, and ICRC could create a specific certification based on those scores.