

These are notes from Bob Segalman for his meeting with Dane Snowden and Erica Myers at the FCC on 8/19/02

Thank you for meeting with me

Looking for direction from FCC staff as to how I can foster increased call volume and increase quality of service. A large proportion of potential consumers have multiple disabilities making it impossible for them to advocate for such improvements.

A. Some CAs have inadequate training and don't know how to revoice. Also many STS services do not provide adequate amplification so users with voice disabilities can not be heard. Consumers with mild hearing disabilities cannot hear CAs. I would urge the FCC to do practice calls using a consumer with a speech disability. I'll gladly assist with this in any way that you'd like.

Sometimes CAs refuse to revoice once the call is made.

Many CAs speak a different dialect that consumers and so communication is impossible. For example, CAs in Virginia who can't understand Hawaiian "pidgin" serve Hawaii.

B. Review of monthly outbound STS call volumes  
Ballpark figures: CA 6k, MD 0.5k, MN 1K, WA 0.4k

We now have about 500 users nationally with potentially 500,000 users

Solutions

A. Can FCC regulations or NECA procedures be altered to make increased TRS usage more profitable to TRS providers? Many consumers would respond to an NPRM that focused on that issue.

B. Claude Stout and I have discussed encouraging national legislation to increase TRS outreach and training. Unfortunately, legislation is a long and tedious process and should be a last resort.

C. For STS itself, we have other options:

1. Finding large advertising agencies to make and distribute PSA's about STS. College interns majoring in media studies may also be willing to help.

2. Working with college student interns in speech pathology programs.

3. Urging residents of each state to write their PUCs requesting the establishment of STS outreach services.

Last year I found about 10 people in each of 20 states to write such letters. Unfortunately, even when state PUCs and TRS providers responded, only minimal funding was granted. Generally such programs were funded to reach 5% of potential users in most states.

Urging the establishment of STS outreach services is still a one man job to a large extent. I have had trouble recruiting help as most potential STS consumers have other disabilities which prevent them from becoming advocates.

Most agencies serving such consumers have many other longstanding priorities which supercede STS.

It's challanging for me to make progress as I often depend on volunteers to help me and they are not always reliable.