

TAG
Registered charity number 1051222

Annual Report for the year to 31 December, 2008

TAG is constituted by adoption of a Constitution and registered as Charity No 1051222. Its address is 36 Victoria Street, Wetherby, Yorkshire LS22 6RE. This is the fourth full year of operating under its new name (it was formerly the Telecommunications Action Group until 27 October 2004) and under the revised aims which embrace all forms of electronic communications, including both telecommunications and broadcasting, to reflect the legislative changes introduced by the Communications Act 2003 and the setting up of the regulator, Ofcom.

The charity trustees during the year to 31 December, 2008 were:

Mrs Ruth Myers	Chairman
Mr Bill Pechey	Vice Chairman
Mr R Ross Trotter	Secretary
Mr David M Myers	Treasurer

The Honorary Officers are the Trustees of TAG, they hold office for two years and are eligible for re-election bi-annually in rotation.

The member organisations of TAG during 2008 were British Deaf Association, Deaf Broadcasting Council, Deafness Support Network, deafPLUS, Hearing Concern, LINK (Hearing Concern and LINK merged as Hearing Concern LINK in September 2008), National Association of Deafened People, National Deaf Children's Society, Royal Association in Aid of Deaf People, RNID and Sense.

TAG's mission is to promote equality of access to electronic communications, including telecommunications and broadcasting, for deaf, deafened, hard-of-hearing, deafblind people and sign language users, especially in terms of function and cost. TAG continues to work with industry, regulators and other organisations in the field of electronic communications, and has good working relationships with Ofcom, BERR, PhoneAbility, BT Consumer Affairs and Inclusion and other bodies. TAG is represented on the Consumer Forum on Communications and the Consumer Expert Group, and is a member of the United Kingdom Council on Deafness. TAG responds to relevant documents and consultations, and during 2008 has contributed responses to the EU Framework Directives consultations, and to various Ofcom consultations such as those on Alternative Dispute Resolution and Mobile Citizens, Mobile Consumers. TAG also endeavours to attend as many events as possible to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing people have a 'visible voice' on electronic communications topics, examples in 2008 included conferences on Next Generation Broadband and events such as the City Lit Deaf Day.

Only one issue of TAG's newsletter, *Sequel*, which is distributed to approx 400 opinion formers and service providers, was produced in 2008. The magazine carried article on the TAG Relay campaign, changes in signed programming and new technology such as the Slingbox. *Sequel* is created by an editorial team led by Stephen Fleming, and TAG appreciates their work. It can only be produced when funding is available for the purpose, which is why it has not been possible to produce further issues during the year. The newsletter complements TAG's website at www.tagcomm.org.uk. This also needs to be renewed, but work cannot be progressed unless funding is found for the purpose. Copies of TAG's 21st anniversary booklet, released in 2007, continued to be distributed during 2008.

The main focus of TAG's work during 2008 has been a campaign to lobby for access to modernised and alternative relay services, such as captioned telephone and video relay. This has been led by a campaign subgroup which has met several times. A series of press releases has been issued and the campaign has been featured on both the BBC News website and in the Guardian newspaper. It was also featured in an edition of the See Hear programme on BBC television in the autumn. In October 2008 a very well attended and successful Parliamentary Reception was held at Portcullis House which was hosted by Malcolm Bruce, MP. Various TAG members have written to or met their own MPs and have encouraged others to do so in support of the campaign. Further work on the campaign, including putting a series of Parliamentary Questions will continue during 2009. TAG has the support of both the Consumer Forum on Communications and the Communications Consumer Panel, and has been working closely with Ofcom to achieve the much needed improvements. Meetings have also been held with BERR and BT.

Work on access services, especially subtitling and signing, is ongoing, both to ensure that the targets for these services continue to increase without a drop in quality, and also that they are properly monitored. TAG continues to meet with relevant personnel at Ofcom and to attend various meetings on this subject, both concerning the access service targets and revision of the guidelines for how they are delivered. TAG continues to be represented at the Channel 4 Deaf Organisations meetings.

The TAG Officers meet regularly with BT Consumer Affairs and Inclusion) and the Product Manager of BT TextDirect. TAG's Vice Chairman also attends meetings of the Orange TACT Forum. TAG has continued to take up issues of relevance to deaf customers with both fixed line and mobile telecommunication providers.

The Trustees appreciate the help and support given by member organisations and organisations with which we are in contact and the expertise provided by TAG's co-opted members.

Declaration – I declare, in my capacity of charity trustee, that:

- the trustees have approved the report above; and
- have authorised me to sign it on their behalf.

Signed:

Full name:

Position:

Date: