

# Sign Languages and Information Accessibility

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# Who are Deaf Athletes?



# Deaf Athletes at Sports Events

- Deaf athletes do not know when they are called.
- Deaf athletes do not follow the starting signal.
- Deaf athletes do not understand the signals and instructions of the hearing referee.
- Deaf athletes cannot respond to interviews.
- Deaf athletes have difficulty interacting with non-Deaf athletes.

# Well-known Facts in the Deaf Communities

- Deaf athletes tend to achieve their best records in sporting competitions in which only Deaf athletes compete.
- Communication primarily through **Sign Language**.
- **Visual** information accessibility
- **Deaf cultural** environment



# Deaf Athletes at Sports Events

- Deaf athletes **will** know when they are called.
- Deaf athletes **will** follow the starting signal.
- Deaf athletes **will** understand the signals and instructions of the hearing referee.
- Deaf athletes **will** respond to interviews.
- Deaf athletes have **no** difficulty interacting with non-Deaf athletes.

Visual Information  
Systems

Availability of Sign  
Language interpreters

Improvement of  
communication skills

Promotion of  
understanding of Deaf

# OPTICAL STARTING SYSTEM



\* Starting blocks are available separately.

**NMS472** Optical Starting System Full Set

Made by Order



\* Appearance and specifications may change.

## On Your Marks



First grip

Red lamp lights up when starter presses grip button once.

## Set



Second grip

Yellow lamp lights up when starter presses grip button twice.

## Bang!



Interlocked with pistol signal

White lamp lights up, interlocked with pistol signal.

# What the Governments should do to Ensure a Stress-free Environment for Deaf Athletes

- Legal recognition of national sign languages as the natural language of Deaf persons
- Promoting education and training in national sign languages of the ESCAP region
- Development of the Sign Language Interpreting System
- Enactment of legislation to improve information accessibility

**Recommendations for governments in the ESCAP region**

# Sign Language Acts in the ESCAP Region

|                         |             |                                      |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>New Zealand</b>      | <b>2006</b> | <b>New Zealand Sign Language Act</b> |
| <b>Rebulic of Korea</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>Korean Sign Language Act</b>      |
| <b>Philippines</b>      | <b>2018</b> | <b>Philipino Sign Language Act</b>   |



# New Zealand Sign Language Act

1. NZSL becomes **an official language** of New Zealand
2. Right to use NZSL in legal proceedings (“where the person’s first or preferred language is NZSL”)
3. Principles to guide government departments to be **accessible in NZSL** and to consult with **the Deaf community** on matters relating to NZSL
4. Review the Act after 3 years
5. A power to make **regulations for competency standards for interpreters** or any other matter necessary to give effect to the Act

*While the NZSL Act itself has limited powers, activity following legal recognition has **raised societal awareness of NZSL**, opened **formal dialogue between policymakers and the NZSL community**, and created a basis for more strategic language policy and planning.*

from “**Sign Language - What Is It?: A Guide for Legal Recognition of Sign Languages in Asia and the Pacific**”

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