

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses Congrégation chrétienne des Témoins de Jéhovah



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October 28, 2014

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Recommending convention speakers and interpreters

Dear Brothers:

We would like your assistance in recommending elders serving in your congregation who may qualify to be considered for convention parts. You are also being asked to recommend brothers and sisters who could effectively serve as interpreters at a convention. These recommendations should be **sent to your circuit overseer—not to the branch office**—using the *Speaker and Interpreter Ratings (S-315)* form. Please fill out the form completely, being sure to include the date of birth and date of baptism of each person listed. Use the “Language” field to indicate in which language the person is being recommended to serve as a speaker or an interpreter.

Review process: The coordinator of the body of elders, the Theocratic Ministry School overseer, and the auxiliary counselor (or another respected elder if the auxiliary counselor is the coordinator of the body of elders) should prayerfully review the abilities and the example of each elder who has been approved by the body of elders to give outgoing public talks. If a brother does not have a good reputation as a speaker in the congregation, then there is no need to list him on the *Speaker and Interpreter Ratings (S-315)* form. Other questions to be considered before listing him as a recommended speaker are the following: Does he have a reputation for being opinionated and dogmatic? Is he known as one who is harsh in judgment? Does he view his own opinion on matters as the final word? Does he procrastinate or handle assignments in a cavalier fashion? Are there questions about his dress or grooming? If you have answered yes to any of the questions listed above, then you should not recommend the brother at this time. However, you should endeavor to help the brother with his weakness so that he may qualify in the future.

If you know that using a certain brother could be offensive to some in the audience because of past problems or family difficulties, it would be best not to recommend him.

Rating speakers: There are six categories in which to rate each speaker: (1) INV—Can effectively handle talk including interviews; (2) DEM—Can effectively handle talk including demonstrations; (3) DRA—Can effectively oversee drama and is available to do so; (4) TLK—Can effectively develop and give outline talk; (5) INP—Can effectively interpret a talk; and (6) MSS—Effective as a manuscript reader/Can memorize a scripted discussion. Please rate each brother using “A,” “B,” or “C” to indicate his ability in each category. In addition, you can use “+” or “-” to give the rating a finer distinction. Those rated “A” would be superior speakers at a convention in your area. Those rated “B” would be above-average speakers at a convention in your area. Those rated “C” would be average speakers at a convention in your area. If a brother does not qualify in a specific category, such as DRA, then indicate that by writing “NR.” Only recommend for dramas brothers who are well-organized *and* have the time necessary to care for the assignment.

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Please note that the ratings for a brother should reflect his speaking ability at a *convention level*. It has been reported that some recommendations from congregations could more accurately reflect the speaker's ability. For example, a number of congregations have rated all their elders as "A" speakers, even those who had never even given a part on the circuit level. We request that you be careful when rating speakers so that your recommendations reflect a balanced and realistic evaluation. In addition, when a member of the group that rates speakers is being discussed, he should step out of the room while the other two brothers rate him. Upon his return, generally there should be no discussion, change, or adjustment to the ratings that have been agreed upon by the other two brothers.

Additionally, please include in the "Additional Clarifying Remarks" section of each brother information regarding his teaching ability and circumstances. (1) Give a description of his ability as a speaker. For example, what is his style or manner of delivery and tone of voice? Is his delivery intellectual or heartfelt? Is he warm and enthusiastic when speaking? Can he clearly explain the Scriptures? Is he logical and coherent in his delivery? Is he articulate and fluent? Could he handle a talk on a complex subject? (2) Give comments on the brother himself. Is he known as a humble, reasonable, and balanced man? Is he zealous in the ministry? (3) Describe his family. Are he and his family well-respected and a good example for others to follow? If he has children and they live at home, list their ages. Does he have grown children who no longer live at home? If so, how are they doing spiritually? Mention specifically if you recommend the brother to care for a part on family life. If you do, the *entire* family, including his wife, should be recognized as good examples of Christian living by all in the congregation. A brother who has grown children not living at home may also be recommended if his children continue to serve Jehovah and have a good reputation.

When recommending a brother in a language other than the language of the congregation, comments on his ability to speak the target language should discreetly be obtained from elders who can speak the target language, preferably native speakers.

Rating interpreters: Currently, we only need a list of recommended interpreters for the Hungarian language. Such ratings should be entered in the "INP" column of the *Speaker and Interpreter Ratings* (S-315) form using the guidelines stated above.

When it comes to rating interpreters, spiritual qualifications are of foremost importance. Each brother or sister recommended as an interpreter must be an exemplary Christian publisher. Accurate knowledge of the truth of God's Word is required in order to interpret Scriptural thoughts correctly into another language. Good comprehension of the language being translated is essential. One cannot interpret a message one does not fully understand. Having many years of experience speaking a language is not the only qualifying factor. Interpreters also need to understand the interpreting process. Usually a word-for-word translation fails to convey the speaker's thoughts faithfully. Interpreting requires comprehension of thoughts. Thus, interpreters should concentrate on what is being said from the platform and endeavor to convey such thoughts clearly, accurately, and completely while keeping up with the speaker. Comments on the interpreting ability of those recommended should discreetly be obtained from elders who can speak the target language, preferably native speakers. (With regard to interpreting only, if no qualified brothers are available, comments may discreetly be obtained from mature and well-qualified sisters.)

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Submitting your recommendation: Please fill out the *Speaker and Interpreter Ratings* (S-315) form listing the speakers or interpreters you wish to recommend. Send the form to the circuit overseer **no later than December 1.**

Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,
*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

cc: Circuit overseers