**Captioning - Behind the Scenes - Transcript**

Voiceover: This video has been created to show viewers how captions are made behind the scenes.

Captioning makes television meaningful. At least one in six Australians is hard of hearing.

Captioning is the text version of speech and other sounds. It allows viewers who are deaf and hard of hearing, or who have the sound turned off the television, to read what is being said and understand when sounds occur while watching television.

Let’s take a look at how captions are made.

Captions are created by people. They can be prepared earlier and added to the television program as it goes to air, or created live at the time that the program is broadcast, or captions can be a mixture of both pre-prepared and live.

The time when the captions are created determines whether the captions appear in a block or scrolled across the screen.

*Cate (Stenocaptioner): With the advancement of like voice technology I think a lot of people think it is more of a mechanical process, but in actual fact there is a lot of human involvement.*

*Adam (Captioner): There is a lot more to captioning than people realise. When you tell people you are a captioner they’ll often ask if you are a really fast typist, which we all are because that’s something that we do, but especially with live captioning there is often ten or more things that we do at once.*

*William (Live Respeaker):*

*You are listening, and talking and reading all at the same time. We have to change the colour every time there’s a new speaker to indicate someone else is speaking. We also have to manually insert sound effects, the cheering of a crowd, for instance.*

*Melissa (Stenocaptioner Manager):*

*We need to change the position of the captions, either to the top or the bottom, depending on where important information is on the screen, and we need to insert punctuation.*

*Cate: The big thing is really to provide the context, we’re typing how it is being said, is it a joke, is it serious.*

*William: So there is a lot going on, it is a very dynamic environment.*

Voiceover: There are three different types of captioning: typing, respeaking or stenography.

Respeaking requires the captioner to hear what is being said and then speak into the microphone connected to computer software which then types out the words. [Respeaking takes place].

The captioner will then need to edit the text and change colour for different speakers before the text is displayed on the screen.

A stenocaptioner uses a steno machine to type out the words being said. The machine is hooked up to a computer that translates the shorthand into readable English text. A stenocaptioner will also edit the text and change colour for different speakers and then the text is displayed on the screen.

Captioners face challenges when there are multiple speakers, fast speakers, unfamiliar and complex words, strong accents and background noise. It is not always possible to reproduce all of the dialogue in a timely way without some reduction or paraphrasing.

**Voiceover: Why can’t Australian broadcasters use overseas captions?**

*Rohan (Product Manager):*

*Sometimes we can use the overseas caption files, but sometimes they are missing some content, or they might be in the wrong format.*

*Adrian (Live Captioning Service Delivery Manager):*

*Often there are rights issues, intellectual property rights issues, so the files can’t be transferred between users. The cost and the time that play into acquiring those files just make it cheaper and easier to do it again.*

**Voiceover: Why are live captions used on pre-recorded programs?**

*Adrian: Sometimes we have to use live captions on pre-recorded shows just because they are delivered so close to the broadcast time, and there just simply isn’t time to carry out the processes needed to produce the captions and deliver them to the network in time for them to use them. The actual process of captioning can take up to eight hours, for an hour of program content.*

**Voiceover: Can captioners fix errors if they see them?**

*Rohan: Captioners can fix errors if they see them, but it does take time and can cause some delay, so the captioner needs to make sure they only fix the important errors.*

*Cate: If they are larger errors, say we put the wrong person’s name out or something like that, we will correct the errors, because that will affect understanding.*

*Adam: Often little words that won’t make much difference to the understanding for the viewer. We might have to skip to keep up pace with the programming, because we don’t want the viewer to miss out on anything, but we will just be mindful of what the viewer can understand, and that’s the most important thing.*

Voiceover: For further information about captioning and the captioning obligations of broadcasters and subscription television licensees in Australia please visit acma.gov.au.