



Official Languages within Crown Corporations
and Other Institutions Subject to the
Official Languages Act



Official
Languages
An Integral Part of
Decision Making

Implementation
Guide

March 2000

Canada

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Task Force on the Visibility of Official Languages within
Crown Corporations and Other Institutions Subject to
the *Official Languages Act*

Crown Corporations Advisory Committee on Official Languages
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Official Languages: An Integral Part of Decision Making



**My mandate:
To make official languages
an integral part
of decision making.**

We must not see ourselves as a small country of 30 million people, floundering in a large land mass. We are among the healthiest, best-educated people in the world, with great natural riches. We have two of the world's great languages.

Her Excellency the Right Honourable
Adrienne Clarkson
Governor General of Canada

Extract from her installation speech,
Thursday, October 7, 1999

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Message from the President

The Government is an unwavering proponent of linguistic duality, a deep-rooted value of our country that is at the very heart of Canadian society. As President of the Treasury Board, I believe that your role as "official languages champion" within your organization is an essential step in fulfilling the Government's commitment to Canadians. We all know that respect for both our official languages, throughout Canada, is an essential condition for our country's social harmony.

As you know, the *Official Languages Act* contains specific provisions for federal institutions governing service to the public, language of work, equitable participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians and support for the development of the official language minority communities. The visible and sustained commitment of all levels of management in the organization is essential to successful implementation of Canadian policy on official languages. That is why it is important for you, as an official languages champion, to disseminate and promote widely the activities described in this guide.

As a champion of official languages, you are called on to provide leadership, particularly among members of your institution's senior management committee, to ensure that decisions take into account official languages obligations.

This guide has been prepared for you in particular, but the personnel of your institution can also use it. It describes some strategic activities designed to promote integration of official languages in all decisions concerning your organization's functional and statutory activities in headquarters and the regions.

Allow me to thank you for your tangible contribution to the advancement of official languages in your organization. I hope that you will find this guide useful as you carry out your responsibilities, to the end that all aspects of official languages will be enhanced in all the activities of your institution.



Lucienne Robillard
President of the Treasury Board



Introduction

In 1999, two reports were produced. *No Turning Back: Official Languages in the Face of Government Transformations*, by the Task Force on Government Transformations and Official Languages, was submitted to the President of the Treasury Board, the Hon. Marcel Massé; while *Official Language Minority Communities: Promoting Government Objectives*, by consultant Donald Savoie, was submitted to key federal departments responsible for official languages.

These two reports and a Treasury Board decision of March 1998 enjoin institutions subject to the *Official Languages Act* (the OLA or the Act), including Crown corporations and all other institutions to which the Act applies, to take the necessary steps to enhance the visibility of official languages within their organizations. The appointment of official languages champions supports that objective.

A task force was set up under the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Crown Corporations Advisory Committee on Official Languages to prepare a guide for official languages champions. This guide can also be used by all personnel in the institutions to promote the integration of official languages in the decisions related to the functional and statutory activities of Crown corporations and other institutions subject to the OLA.

At the front of the document you will find a checklist for official languages champion. It contains ten significant results to guide the action of the official languages champions with respect to their colleagues on the senior management committee. To help attain the desired results, the document then suggests 35 strategic activities, grouped around the following four themes: promotion of official languages, info-training for executives and personnel, optimization of official languages, and management of official languages. So readers can obtain further information, each activity is followed by an abbreviation corresponding to the name of the institution and a resource person, as applicable. The list of resource persons is in Appendix I, while Appendix II lists the Task Force members who participated in the preparation of this guide.



Official Languages: An Integral Part of Decision Making





Official Languages **Champion's** Checklist



Official Languages Champion's Checklist

As a result of my efforts and actions, particularly with senior management committee members, have the following results been attained?

	Yes	No
1 Does the senior management committee maintain that respecting the language rights of the public and the employees is part of sound business management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Does the senior management committee set an example by holding its meetings in both official languages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Do senior management committee members and all sectors ensure that comparable quality services (under the OLA and its Regulations) are provided to the public in both official languages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Are senior management committee members and all sectors promoting a work environment conducive to the effective use of both official languages (under the OLA and related Treasury Board policy)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Is documentation regularly disseminated to executives, managers and employees to inform them about the Official Languages Program (activities, language rights and obligations)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Are mechanisms in place for consultation with official language minority communities to optimize the impact of the institution's decisions on them, in terms of service quality and support for their development?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Yes No

7 Where applicable, are mechanisms in place to ensure that all aspects of official languages are taken into account:
a) in research, strategic planning and program design;
b) in memoranda to Cabinet, submissions to the Treasury Board, federal-provincial agreements, institutional transformations and partnership agreements?

8 Has an official languages component been included in internal audits and program evaluations?

9 In institutions where applicable, have appropriate language clauses been included in grant approval letters and contribution agreements to voluntary non-governmental organizations, in accordance with the spirit of Treasury Board policy?

10 Does the organizational structure have sufficient human and financial resources in place, at national and regional levels, to permit effective management of the official languages obligations?

(Detachable checklist enclosed)



Official Languages: An Integral Part of Decision Making



Proposed Strategic Activities

- A Promotion of official languages
- B Info-training for executives and personnel
- C Optimization of official languages
- D Management of official languages

Promotion of official languages

- Include, in the institution's statement of objectives, a commitment to Canada's linguistic duality as a fundamental value of our society.
(cf. AIR, CBC, FCC and NCC)
- Ensure that the chief executive officer promotes this commitment in his/her speeches and messages to staff and the public. *(cf. CBC, FCC and NCC)*
- Use both official languages in senior management committee communications, and in all meetings involving participants of both official language groups (under the OLA and its Regulations).
(cf. BNK and NCC)
- Ensure that members of the senior management committee, as well as the managers of all sectors concerned, support the effective integration of official languages considerations into their operational and statutory activities. *(cf. FCC, NAR and NCC)*
- Establish an institutional program to recognize official languages initiatives.
- Promote the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Official Languages Award of Distinction by encouraging employee nominations. *(cf. TBD)*

- Take advantage of special events, such as the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, the Games of La Francophonie and the Commonwealth Games to organize activities that encourage employee participation and stress the importance of both official languages. *(cf. CBC, NAR and NCC)*
- Report regularly to the senior management committee on the institution's official languages performance (service to the public, language of work, equitable participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians, and support for the development of official language minority communities). *(cf. AIR, BNK, FCC and NCC)*
- Highlight the added value of effectively using both official languages for clients and employees. *(cf. FCC and NCC)*
- Post your institution's official languages annual report on the Intranet/Internet site. *(cf. BNK and CBC)*



Info-training for executives and personnel

- Provide training modules to respond to specific needs of the institution's staff (executives, managers, employees) particularly regarding:
 - the institution's obligations to serve the public in both official languages (where required under the OLA and its Regulations) — publish the list of offices obligated to do so;
 - managerial obligations and employee rights concerning language of work (where applicable);
 - institutional objectives concerning the participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians; and
 - developmental needs of official language minority communities (Anglophone in Quebec and Francophone outside Quebec), by identifying institutional objectives and activities that will respond to those needs, based on the institution's mandate.
(cf. AIR, FCC, NAR, NCC, PSC, REH and TBD)

- Present major OLA components in orientation sessions for new employees, in one-on-one meetings with new recruits, in internal training activities for executives, managers and employees and in all other forums, where appropriate.

(cf. AIR, CBC, DIC, FCC, NAR, NCC and RCM)

- Take advantage of existing means (bulletins, news flashes, employee newsletters, the Intranet site) to promote official languages regarding:
 - the obligation to serve the public in both official languages in designated bilingual offices (including promotional tools, flyers, the Internet, information booths, service to the travelling public, service provided by third parties, public events of national and international scope, and services related to health, safety and security);
 - language rights of employees in designated bilingual regions as well as the related requirements of managers; and
 - support for the development of official language minority communities.

(cf. AIR, CBC, CPO, FCC, NAR and NCC)



- Produce, adapt and disseminate documents on language of work (managers' obligations, employees' rights, and creation of an environment conducive to the effective use of both official languages) and on service to the public (active offer and service delivery). (*cf. AIR, BNK, COL, CPO, NCC, RCM and TBD*)
- Introduce activities to maintain or develop the second language (for employees who have already attained a given language level) and language training activities (for employees who wish to learn the other official language, even though they are not in bilingual positions). (*cf. AIR, BNK, CBC, NAR and NCC*)



Optimization of official languages

- Introduce a mechanism to ensure memoranda to Cabinet and submissions to the Treasury Board, as applicable, are systematically analysed to optimize their effects on institutional bilingualism (service to the public, language of work and participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians), and on support for the development of official language minority communities. *(cf. TBD)*
- Introduce a mechanism to ensure institutional initiatives (alternative service delivery, institutional transformations, partnerships and federal-provincial agreements), as applicable, are systematically analysed to optimize their effects on institutional bilingualism (service to the public, language of work and participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians), and on support for the development of official language minority communities. *(cf. NAR, NCC, RCM and TBD)*
- Ensure that the institution's strategic planning processes take into consideration all aspects of official languages. *(cf. BNK, CBC, NAR and NCC)*

- Encourage consultation with official language minority communities, in terms of service quality and support for their development, to optimize the impact of decisions on them, relating to research, policies, programs, services (including alternative service delivery) and initiatives (including institutional transformations, partnerships and federal-provincial agreements). *(cf. CBC, RCM and REH)*
- Ensure that institutional standards for quality of service to the public or staff, where applicable, promote the organization's commitment to service of comparable quality in both official languages as a fundamental value of the institution and a best practice for human resources and business management. *(cf. AIR and NCC)*
- Include an official languages component in all internal audits and program evaluations. *(cf. AIR, BNK, CBC, NAR and NCC)*
- Ensure the institution's statutory policies, where applicable, consider official languages in service to the public, language of work, participation of Canada's Anglophones and Francophones, and support for development of official language minority communities. *(cf. CBC and NCC)*

- Incorporate data requirements related to the support for development of official language minority communities into research plans, as applicable.
- In institutions where applicable, ensure compliance with the spirit of Treasury Board policy on grants and contributions to voluntary non-governmental organizations serving members of both official language communities. (*cf. NCC*)



Management of official languages

- Prepare an official languages plan on the obligations concerning service to the public, the language of work and participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians.
(cf. BNK, FCC, NAR and NCC)
- Prepare a progress report by sector, where applicable, on the degree to which official languages objectives have been met, and, where necessary, prepare a plan to remedy any discrepancies in performance as identified in progress reports, internal and external audits, studies by the Commissioner of Official languages, or others. *(cf. FCC and NAR)*
- Prepare an action plan and report on achievements in implementing Section 41 of the Act for institutions as designated in the government's August 1994 accountability framework. *(cf. PCH)*
- Ensure the institution has an organizational structure, including human resources and operating budgets, sufficient to effectively manage official languages at national and regional levels.
(cf. AIR, BNK, CBC, DIC, NAR and NCC)
- Set up an intra-institutional network or committee (between headquarters and/or regions) to ensure that the official languages objectives are being met.
(cf. NAR, NRC and REH)

D

Management

- See that the institution's human resources planning, including succession planning and staff mobility, covers present and future needs of bilingual employees at all levels, in all categories, in all sectors and in all designated bilingual offices, at headquarters and in the regions.

(cf. AIR, BNK, CBC, FCC, NAR and NCC)

- Provide follow-up for executive language training plans to comply with the spirit of the Treasury Board Policy Concerning the Language Requirements for Members of the Executive Group (CBC for EX) – in other words, the equivalent for Crown corporations and other institutions subject to the OLA.

(cf. BNK, CBC, FCC and NCC)

- Where needed, publish guidelines to help the institution meet its obligations concerning language of work and service to the public in accordance with the Act.

(cf. AIR, BNK, CBC, FCC, NAR and NCC)

- Ensure that resources and tools are available in English and French, to deliver service to the public in both official languages in all offices obliged to do so under the OLA and its Regulations.

(cf. AIR, BNK, CBC, DIC, FCC, NAR and NCC)



- Ensure the work environment is conducive to an effective use of both official languages. Therefore, supervision, training and development, personnel and central services, meetings and work instruments, including computerized tools, are available in English and French in offices situated in bilingually designated regions (OLA Part V – Language of Work).
(cf. AIR, BNK, CBC and NCC)

- In accordance with the spirit of Treasury Board policy on the administration of the Official Languages Program, and where applicable, include in the managers' performance appraisals a section on their contribution to the implementation of policies on service to the public, language of work and equitable participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians. *(cf. BNK and NAR)*

Conclusion

The 35 activities proposed in this guide are designed to help the official languages champion and personnel in his or her institution, make official languages an integral part of all decisions relating to their functional and statutory activities in the organization. In fact, these activities are key to the institution being able to attain full integration of official languages into its operations.

The Task Force is convinced that by using all the organization's resources, the official languages champion will be able to raise his or her institution's consciousness on the importance of respect for the rights and obligations under the Act, and the realities and aspirations of official language minority communities.

Appendix I

List of Resource Persons

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