

REPORT

**THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
NETWORK OF COORDINATORS RESPONSIBLE FOR PART VII -
SECTION 41 OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT***

JUSTICE CANADA

HELD IN OTTAWA

DECEMBER 15 AND 16, 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

Véronique Lavoie, National Coordinator responsible for the Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* at the Department of Justice, welcomed participants. She suggested going around the table and letting everyone introduce themselves. (See Appendix 1 for list of participants)

She reminded everyone that the purpose of the meeting was to fuel the work of regional coordinators, of program coordinators and of the Section 41 coordination team at the Department, as well as to provide a further networking opportunity for all these stakeholders. She also stressed that the adoption of Bill S-3 amending the *Official Languages Act*, including Part VII, would require even more cooperation and ongoing communication within the Network of Coordinators.

Facilitator Ronald Bisson mentioned that the development of the Section 41 implementation initiative began almost 5 years ago. He reminded participants that the roles of Section 41 coordinators at the Department of Justice had been defined two years prior and that this was the third meeting of the Network of Coordinators.

2. THE ROLE OF COORDINATORS AND TEAM 41

The National Coordinator restated the roles of each stakeholder within the Network of Coordinators. A document summarizing these roles was included in the participants' kit.

TEAM 41: COORDINATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 41

Team 41 is the nucleus through which the information of the Network of 41 Coordinators flows. All relevant information is made available to all members of the Network via the Outlook public file on the implementation of section 41.

In addition, Team 41:

- develops relationships between community organizations and the components identified at the Department;
- supports regional and program coordinators in the implementation of section 41;
- acts as coach internally and with communities;
- assumes a regional coordination role for Ontario;
- is the first point of contact for receiving and sharing information ;
- ensures ongoing communication within the network (conferences, exchanges, file notes) and helps maximize the time devoted to section 41 by each coordinator.

Team 41 is also responsible for producing the documents required on behalf of the Department, including updating the Five-Year Action Plan and preparing the Status Report for Canadian Heritage, which in turn submits a consolidated report on the implementation of section 41 to Parliament.

MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK OF COORDINATORS

Roles of regional and program coordinators:

- collect data as required and draft and update necessary reports (Status Report, Action Plan, file notes);
- be knowledgeable about the Department (programs and services) and get to know communities and their needs;
- take part in conference calls, the annual meeting and ongoing communication with Team 41;
- liaise between official language minority communities and the Department's Team 41;
- facilitate understanding of departmental programs within communities;
- help community organizations submit projects that fit program requirements.

Special roles of regional coordinators:

- attend Canadian Heritage regional interdepartmental committees in order to better define the needs of the communities;
- be knowledgeable about the Department (programs and services);
- know the needs and priorities of communities in their region, including the overall development plan of provincial and territorial representative organizations;
- direct communities to appropriate departmental programs.

3. ANNUAL RECAP

The facilitator asked participants to provide feedback on those aspects of their work that worked well and those that didn't work as well over the course of the year. The main comments expressed were as follows:

- Some coordinators were able to develop an effective collection system for ad hoc data. It proved more productive to collate the data as we went and to keep files up to date; it makes year-end reports that much easier to generate and reduces the risk of oversight to a minimum.
- The method of operation for contacts between regional and program coordinators remains hazy for many. A wish is expressed to define a way of working that will allow coordinators to keep in touch without having to acquire an in-depth understanding of topics that are of less concern to them.
- It is observed that the role of supporting community groups in the preparation of a funding application can be quite challenging. Organizations are not all at the same level when it comes to their ability to develop projects. The efforts of regional coordinators, which often represent a considerable time investment, must be well targeted and yield results.
- It is mentioned that interdepartmental projects (such as a project funded by Justice Canada, Canadian Heritage and Status of Women) sometimes reach a level of complexity for which

communities groups are not prepared. Justice representatives have limited power in such instances, since the other departments involved have their own program requirements and administrative processes.

- It is observed that community groups are not very familiar with the Department when it comes to initiating projects under programs other than the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund. The process for the latter is clearly understood by the target groups.
 - We must remember that the Support Fund is the only program specifically aimed at official language minority communities.
 - In other programs, linguistic minority groups are clients like any other; no level of financial support is expressly earmarked for these groups or for the implementation of section 41. Official language minority communities are a relatively new clientele; there is a learning curve for these communities with regards to Justice Canada programs.
- The importance is stressed for regional coordinators to know which groups in their jurisdiction are in contact with the Department, which received funds from various Department programs and who their representatives are. They must also know when and how contacts are initiated with these groups.
 - The Programs Branch used to do a detailed mailing regarding funded projects to each of the Department's regional managers. This process was considered too cumbersome; the Branch now recommends the use of its website, which shows all projects funded by the Department.
- It is mentioned that for some very small official language minority community groups (e.g., Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin in Prince Edward Island), there are too many federal interlocutors whom one must know and establish ties with. This makes it difficult for the Department to develop a specific relationship with these groups.
- It is stressed that in order to ensure optimum use of the regional coordinators' time, the time required to search for and obtain information must be reduced, especially when the Department already produces or has that information.

The facilitator presented a summary of ideas to be developed further to these interventions and the group's comments:

- 1) Data collection must be optimized; some have developed tools adapted to their needs, which could be shared. The important thing is that each coordinator is able to provide information based on the needs of Team 41 in a timely fashion.
- 2) A procedure should be developed to ensure effective communications between coordinators. Consultation and coordination need to be improved.

- 3) We must work to develop ties with the communities: get to know them, support them, not consider the task a burden, and accept that there is a learning curve in such relationships.

The facilitator mentioned the possibility of organizing a table of regional coordinators for the discussion period included on the agenda (see point 7 of this report), in order to discuss this further and provide answers to the questions raised.

4. PRESENTATION BY CANADIAN HERITAGE

Pierrette Jutras, of the Interdepartmental Coordination Directorate at the Department of Canadian Heritage, presented the federal support strategy for official language minority communities. A printed copy of this presentation was distributed to participants. The topics covered were as follows:

- a historical review of the evolution of the *Act* since 1969;
- the key players under the current federal strategy: Justice Canada, the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada, the Treasury Board, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Privy Council Office and Canadian Heritage;
- the current accountability and coordination framework, which applies to all federal institutions and targets 34 institutions for the implementation of section 41;
- the obligations of the targeted institutions: consult with communities on their priorities, prepare an annual action plan, make a list of annual achievements and applying a Section 41 lens to their policies and programs;
- areas of action: internal education, community consultations, communications on programs and services, coordination and liaison, funding, reporting;
- what regional coordinators can do for official language minority communities;
- how Canadian Heritage can help coordinators: interdepartmental consultations, building relationships between federal institutions and communities, developing tools;
- the importance of relationships in the federal machine (at the regional, intradepartmental and national levels) for the success of the support strategy;
- a description of the Interdepartmental Partnership with Official Language Communities (IPOLC) and its operation; IPOLC is a five-million-dollar-a-year federal incentive fund, managed by Canadian Heritage, that grants supplementary funds and contributions from federal institutions; IPOLC projects meet the requirements of these institutions' regular programs, who sign a fund transfer protocol with Canadian Heritage.

Mrs. Jutras explained that Canadian Heritage receives each federal institution's status report by May 31 of each year. Canadian Heritage includes the summary provided by each institution in its consolidated annual report on the implementation of section 41, which must be submitted to Parliament. Canadian Heritage also examines the status report of each institution by asking the question: "Is this the most effective way to support community development?"

Concerning Justice Canada's Status Report for 2004-2005, Canadian Heritage feels that the measures put forth are numerous and effective. He notes that Justice representatives serve on regional federal councils and on advisory councils, and that the work of Justice Canada at the

regional, intradepartmental and national levels often leads to concrete improvements. Canadian Heritage also noted the Department's sustained communication efforts (regular mailings to community organizations, e-mail list being developed, support and promotion) and the Department's decision to invest targeted efforts in its programs with a strong community component.

The role of Canadian Heritage with regards to section 41 is to help federal institutions support community development. The Department's Bulletin 41-42 (quarterly) provides a vehicle for various federal institutions to promote major initiatives or share success stories with all those involved in the implementation of section 41 and with communities.

The complete list of national and regional coordinators for section 41 in federal institutions was distributed to participants to help them in their coordination role. This list is updated regularly by Canadian Heritage.

5. PREPARATION OF 2005-2006 STATUS REPORT

The facilitator briefly presented the data collection charts for the preparation of the status report for the current year. Personalized charts have been prepared for each component and each regional coordinator, based on the measures outlined in the 2005-2010 action plan. These charts will be updated annually based on the changes made to the departmental Action Plan for each component and each region.

Two separate charts must be completed. The first is a generic chart concerning the coordination role itself (process). The second is a chart specific to the region or the component and concerns the particular action taken in the region or the program concerned (content).

At the individual region level, the current action plan calls for specific measures for three regions only (Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). The other regions received blank charts and the content is to be developed as needed.

If future activities are planned, they should be included in the departmental Action Plan for 2006-2007.

Participants were asked if they have any questions or needed clarification on how to complete the charts; no clarification was requested.

6. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON BILL S-3 AND ITS IMPACT

Me Marc Tremblay, General Counsel and Director, Official Languages Law Group (OLLG), presented an analysis of the impact of the adoption of Bill S-3 amending the *Official Languages Act*, which received Royal Assent on November 24, 2005. A printed copy of this presentation was handed out to participants. The topics covered were as follows:

- The government’s commitment to “enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and support and assist their development; and foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society” remains unchanged: it is the old section 41, now subsection 41(1).
- Section 42 concerning the coordination role of Canadian Heritage remains unchanged.
- S-3 makes three amendments to Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* :
 - 1) obligation by federal institutions to carry out the federal commitment: new subsection 41(2): “Within the scope of their functions, duties and powers, federal institutions shall ensure that positive measures are taken for the ongoing and effective advancement and implementation of the Government of Canada’s commitments under subsection (1). (...)”
 - 2) specific power of the Governor in Council to make regulations in respect of Part VII: new subsection 41(3);
 - 3) justiciability of Part VII: the new subsection 77(1) of the *Act* provides for a remedy to be sought before the Federal Court against federal institutions for breaches to the obligations provided in Part VII.
- Most of the provisions needed for the implementation of S-3 are found in:
 - the Accountability Framework (1994);
 - the Accountability and Coordination Framework of the Action Plan for Official Languages (2003), especially section 17;
 - the Management Framework for the Official Languages Program (2005).
- The following central agencies are responsible for coordinating the implementation:
 - Privy Council Office (intergovernmental affairs);
 - Canadian Heritage;
 - Justice;
 - Treasury Board Secretariat;
 - Human Resources Management Agency.
- In all federal institutions, coordination is ensured through the following measures:
 - Official languages champions and co-champions;
 - National coordinators responsible for the implementation of section 41 (in the 34 institutions designated);
 - Official Languages Branch;
 - Legal Services.

Me Tremblay also made the following comments:

- The obligation under 41(2) is to take positive measures, not to ensure that all possible measures are taken.

- The potential adoption of implementing regulations raises questions: the more regulations are brought in for clarification purposes, the greater the risk of limiting the scope of Part VII by excluding what is not specified in the regulations.
- Remedies were not possible prior to November 24, but some complaints filed before that date involve issues that have an ongoing impact.
- The adoption of S-3 does not provide all the answers; it is to be expected that the courts will be required to deal with certain questions and to interpret the new provisions of the *Act*.
- The official languages issue is a priority in terms of legal risk management.
- Maintaining good relations with the representatives of official language minority communities is part of the risk management action, but such relations do not preclude potential lawsuits.
- The implementation of S-3 will require additional funds over time to fill new needs, including some that remain to be identified in coming months and years.

Participant asked a few clarification questions, including concerning the support that will be provided to regional offices. These questions prompted the following comments:

- To undertake this work properly, it is important that implementation instructions and answers to questions all emanate from a single centre. The government wants to make sure that the information is consistent and must ensure that any new questions raised will be routed to the right resources. Canadian Heritage will provide the initial information concerning the implementation of S-3; some information will involve legal issues and will be developed by the Department of Justice.
- An implementation kit is currently being developed. It will include a communication plan. It should be presented to national coordinators for Part VII in federal institutions in February 2006.
- Beginning in winter 2006, Team 41 at the Justice Department will undertake an information tour of all components of the Department, including regional offices.

7. OPEN DISCUSSION: NETWORKING SESSION

To launch the thought process, regional coordinators and program coordinators held discussions in separate groups. Viewpoints were then shared in a whole group session.

Regional coordinators directed their interventions on the need to clearly define individual roles and tasks, and to better define the working relationships and communication channels between the various stakeholders.

The following questions were used to illustrate the content of the questions raised by regional coordinators:

- Concretely, what do we have to offer? The “moral” support which the Department offers communities is not enough; we must be able to provide funding.

- What funds are available within the programs for the various regions? Which groups are applying? Which groups are receiving funds?
- When are budgets approved? When are calls for proposals made?
- Once community groups have been connected with the programs, how can we follow the progress of their files and play a constructive role?
- When a project can be funded using various sources of funding, from the Department and other federal institutions, to whom should the regional coordinator refer the organization? What type of feedback will he/she receive? Will he/she remain the project's carrier within the federal machine or within the Department? Should he/she take follow-up action?
- Should we use an interdepartmental approach in those regions where it is difficult to link Justice Canada's programs with the specific needs of groups?
- Who collects the data from a given project? Is it the program or the region? How can we avoid duplication of the data itself and of the collection efforts?

Program coordinators observed that the majority of organizations in official language minority communities do not have the expertise or the capacity required to submit program applications. To address this need, they feel that a system is needed to impart basic information to the communities, e.g. training (with the involvement of representative organizations and the network of AJEFs), a sponsorship mechanism, a planning grid template, etc.

The general observation is that there is a communication gap between regional coordinators and the programs; the loop is not entirely functional.

The fundamental question is the following: What are the nature and the mechanics of working relationships and communications between the regions, the programs, national coordination and the communities?

Clarifications made during the discussion included the following:

- Reminder: The Advisory Committee, Justice in Official Languages has two sub-committees, i.e. the Sub-Committee, Access to Justice in Both Official Languages and the sub-Committee, Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, Community component. These committees are headed by Department employees and this role is included in their job descriptions.
- Right from the first meeting of the Network of Coordinators in 2003, the collective decision was that regional coordinators are transmission belts. They are responsible for educating, informing, creating links. They must put interested organizations in contact with program coordinators. They must also help the Department and the programs to gain a better understanding of communities' concerns. In their role as liaison, they feed the Network in terms of community priorities.

- It is not up to regional coordinators to determine a project's eligibility for a given program; the programs themselves make this determination. When a project is deemed valid by the regional coordination function, it conveys its favourable analysis of the project to the programs via internal communications. The normal project analysis procedure includes a request for opinion from regional coordination.
- Regional coordinators must be sufficiently knowledgeable about the Department's programs to be able to refer organizations to the program most likely to be interested in their project. This being said, the programs may discuss the various projects submitted among themselves in order to determine the best way to respond.
- When an organization is referred to a program, the program takes over. To avoid communication gaps, program coordinators must keep the regional coordinators abreast of the status of each file in a timely fashion.
- An essential aspect of the work of regional coordinators is to represent to official language minority communities that funding is only one aspect of the implementation of section 41. The Department is not there for the sole purpose of distributing funds through its funding programs. The ultimate goal of the implementation of section 41 is to allow communities to fully take part in the public policy development process in the area of justice.
- The role of the initiative is to increase access to departmental programs for official language minority communities, and not to give them funds in proportion with their demographic weight. There are no defined amounts or percentages, no targets to be reached, either for minority community groups or for the implementation of section 41. Programs provide support based on merit and section 41 projects may come from non-minority groups. Projects may be submitted at any time, which helps nurture relationships with groups rather than pressure them into submitting incomplete project too quickly.
- The distinction between the community component and that of access to justice is an important one for the Department, but it is not necessarily interpreted the same way by jurists and community groups. Jurists have known the Department longer because they have been interested in matters of access to justice and the magistrature; until recently, jurists wondered why the issue of justice should be approached from a programs point of view. Community groups have now identified the need to work on the justice issue, especially for certain target groups (youth, women, immigrants); in their minds, we need information, prevention and support intervention rather than focus solely on access to the courts.
- In response to a question from regional coordinators regarding the depth of consultations with official language minority communities, the favoured approach is to fully integrate this specific consultation within the Department's regular consultation processes.
- The interdepartmental approach is important at both the regional and national levels. When dealing with the funding of specific projects, the approach should also call directly on the programs.

- The Department must be able to direct requests to the right stakeholders at the provincial or territorial level where necessary. Groups of official language minority communities often have the reflex to go to the federal level but 95% of the money is paid to the province. Under some circumstances, it is clear that groups will be better served by contacts with their provincial or territorial government. Regional coordinators will need access to lists of contacts at the provincial government level in order to include this dimension in their work. However they must seek information from national coordination, since in many cases program coordinators already have ties with provincial and territorial governments. It is important that the Department, as a unit, be steady and consistent in its relations with its interlocutors in the provinces and territories.
- Concerning data collection, duplication should not automatically be assumed simply because the regions and programs gather similar information. It is more of a necessary complementarity, which illustrates the difference between the roles of regional and program coordinators. Harmonization should not be forced for the wrong reasons. The programs have developed templates to collect this data (contacts, mailings, file progress). The programs have their own way to keep tabs on communications and they keep a log book. In each region, it is important to collect data concerning the activities of the coordinators themselves, including liaison activities such as attendance at conferences and annual general meetings.
- Reports on results and analyses regarding access to programs by minority communities are done using two performance indicators inserted in the results-based management frameworks (RBMF) of each program: the degree of communication and the number and amount of support for the projects emanating from the communities.
- The role of General Attorney is not included in the implementation of section 41 at the Department of Justice.

The general conclusion following the discussions is as follows:

Emerging consensus: Team 41 will need to develop a tool to define more clearly the working relationships and communication mechanisms within the Network of Coordinators, as well as between the Department and the communities.

More specifically, the tool will have to embody the following aspects of the work to implement section 41 within the Department:

1) A coordinated approach to communications

The tool shall clarify the working relationships as well as the nature, level of detail, format, frequency and flow of the information to be transmitted, for each stakeholder. Communication mechanisms shall be regular, consistent and predictable and they shall take into consideration the limited availability of regional coordinators.

The tool shall be centred on the role of Team 41 as a turntable for the implementation of section 41 and as a control tower for communications. Any information emanating from the programs or

the regions will be sent to national coordination and placed in the shared Outlook file for the implementation of section 41.

Finally, the tool shall be sufficiently formal to remain valid and functional despite occasional changes in the makeup of the Network of Coordinators.

2) An integrated approach to programs

In their relations with the communities, regional coordinators shall consider all of the objectives pursued by each of the programs. These objectives shall leave ample room for policy development and shall not be limited to project funding. The ultimate goal is to enlist the full participation of official language minority communities in the dialogue on public policy.

3) A prudent approach to community relations

Regional coordinators represent the Department in the communities, but they are not spokespersons for content; this role belongs to each program.

The regional coordinators send the Network information pertaining to community priorities and direct communities to the appropriate stakeholders; they are not there to represent community interests to the programs.

8. PRESENTATION BY MR. MICHEL BOUCHARD: IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 41 – PROGRESS EVALUATION AND OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

Mr. Michel Bouchard, Assistant Deputy Minister and Champion of Official Languages at the Department, presented his evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of section 41 at the Department of Justice. His comments are summarized below:

- The involvement of coordinators is key to the success of the initiative to implement section 41 at the Department. As a token of his appreciation for the active participation of coordinators, official letters of thanks have been sent to each of them, with copies to their supervisors.
- The initiative, although still young, has yielded impressive results.
- The Department has received praise from official language minority community stakeholders at the presentation of the mid-term report on the government's Action Plan for Official Languages.
- These successes are largely due to good teamwork within the Department and cooperation with other federal players on the official languages issue.
- Much remains to be done, but this should motivate rather than intimidate us.

- At the Department, we have ambitious objectives regarding official languages; we have also created and cultivated legitimate expectations outside the Department.
- The adoption of S-3 is an important milestone: it is positioning the government machine in “positive action” mode. As a federal institution, we must be consistent. The burden of proof is ours and we will be judged on our actions and our efforts.
- Despite the successes, there is always room for improvement: we have to be able to make adjustments where needed and our action plan is never final.
- We have recently launched a new strategy to integrate official languages in all aspects of the Department, which specifically calls on certain key sectors, i.e. Human Resources, Justice in Official Languages, Communications, Evaluations, Official Languages Law Group.
- We are taking good note of the willingness displayed by 41 coordinators since the creation of the initiative; this willingness should not run out of steam. We must keep official languages a top-of-mind priority.

The question period allowed Mr. Bouchard to provide some clarification, including the following:

- Regional coordinators do not have to disseminate a specific message or to issue comments concerning claims by federal employees who feel themselves injured by the fact that bilingual requirements in the federal civil service are not backed by adequate support measures. This has nothing to do with the implementation of section 41.
- The quality of French communications, just like English communications, should be the best possible under the circumstances; we cannot demand perfection. In official communications, errors should be noted and a follow-up done to adjust as needed.
- Efforts to promote the use of both official languages are not an end in themselves simply aimed at upholding a right; they must have a purpose, that of getting to know each other and of understanding each other better so that we may live in harmony.
- The territorial model of official languages, such as that of Belgium, would be difficult to apply in Canada. From a legal standpoint, there is openness toward aboriginal law, and also toward aboriginal cultures. However, differences in languages and cultures among First Nations would make the application of a territorial model difficult.

9. PRESENTATION OF PROGRAMS: A TOOL TO COMMUNICATE WITH COMMUNITIES

Lise Sarault, Policy Analyst, Section 41, presented a new communication tool that allows us to describe in simple language the Department’s approach to the implementation of section 41 as well as the six initiatives identified in the Five-Year Action Plan to support the development and vitality of official language minority communities:

- Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund
http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/pb/prog/official_languages.html
- Family Violence Initiative
<http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm/index.html>
- Victims of Crime Initiative
<http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/pb/prog/victimsfunds.html>
- Child-centred Family Justice Strategy
<http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/pad/about/>
- Youth Justice Renewal Initiative
<http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/yj/index.html>
- Justice Partnership and Innovation Fund
<http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/pb/prog/jpif.html>

This presentation was developed at the request of regional coordinators.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was handed out to all participants. Team 41 is asking regional coordinators and program coordinators for their comments and questions. The goal is to produce a final version of the presentation that will be translated and distributed at the end of February 2006.

The presentation specifies that most of the initiatives identified in the departmental Action Plan fall into five areas:

- policy development;
- legislative reform;
- research and evaluation;
- project funding;
- public legal education and information (PLEI).

The description of each initiative includes:

- the initiative's objectives;
- the initiative's web address;
- the person responsible for section 41 coordination within the initiative;
- examples of projects funded by the initiative.

The presentation also includes, for each region, the contact info for:

- the organization representing the official language minority community;
- the designated public education and information (PLEI) organization;
- the association des juristes d'expression française (AJEF), if applicable;
- the person responsible for regional coordination of section 41 at the Department.

Some of the comments made during the discussions were included in this presentation :

- Most of the funds paid under initiatives defined in the departmental Action Plan are allocated to the entire Canadian population; the funds do not exist to serve a particular community.
- There is not specific deadline, nor formal call for proposals.
- The role of Team 41 is to make sure that the groups follow the proper process; they must copy Team 41 in all communications concerning a section 41 project.

The participants' comments following the presentation led to more clarification:

- We are saying that services are made available to communities through funds paid to the provinces and territories; the perception in the communities is that they do not receive services in connection with these funds.

Federal-provincial-territorial agreements now include official language clauses. The Department observed in the initial years of the process that in order to attain success, it should not attempt to play a surrogate role, but rather encourage the communities and provincial or territorial governments to work together. Several people expressed reservations with this way of doing things, but the results (in Ontario and Saskatchewan, among others), speak to the effectiveness of this influence or leveraged approach.

- The first role of regional coordinators is to convey this information to the communities, but more specific information is needed to answer the questions asked by communities: What are the amounts available? Is the organization eligible for a given program? We have to be credible in front of the groups; we must avoid creating excessive expectations.

The funds available through the funding programs are going to non-government organizations. In some programs, a larger portion goes through the provinces and territories. We cannot say exactly how much money is available at a given time and program priorities can change from year to year. In addition, the funds available are not what should draw our attention in our work as a Department, since this is really only one aspect of our initiatives. We should work just as hard if not harder at supporting communities in their efforts to get involved in the development of public policy at the provincial and territorial levels.

Summary:

- 1) There is no money specifically earmarked for official language minority communities, except for the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund.
- 2) There are no specific amounts of money reserved by province or territory.
- 3) We are working in an area of shared jurisdiction: we must work with the people in the provincial and territorial governments, rather than send groups to knock on their doors. This

is the strategy successfully used by the Department with AJEFs in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia; the same approach works in Quebec.

10. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION OUTSIDE QUEBEC

Denise Legault, Coordinator of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada - Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee, presented the Strategic Plan for Francophone Immigration outside Quebec, slated for formal adoption within the next few months. She stated that the justice file has special meaning for some immigrant groups, especially refugees, women and youth. Mrs. Legault discussed the following topics (a printed copy of the presentation was given to participants):

- Origin of the initiative: the works of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne and its project Dialogue;
- The importance of the regional dimension;
- A description of the Joint Committee and its purpose;
- Key steps and documents produced;
- The five objectives of the strategic framework adopted in November 2003 (which precedes the strategic plan currently being finalized);
- The three pillars of successful Francophone immigration: attraction, integration and retention;
- Current challenges: the number and makeup of immigration; immigrant mobility; economic and social integration; and the lack of capacity within communities;
- Strategic choices: better immigrant integration; recruiting of new immigrants; and integration, retention and rooting in the communities;
- Priorities for the period 2006-2011;
- Two levels of coordination: local/provincial and national;
- Federal settlement programs;
- Internationally trained workers initiative;
- Next steps: launch strategic plan; create community networks, implement strategic plan;
- Internet links for more information;
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada contacts in the regions.

Clarification:

The role of the Department of Justice regarding immigration in Francophone minority communities remains to be attentive to their needs, to promote the active offer of services and to educate.

Associations of French-speaking jurists (AJEFs) are already positioned to provide information and identify certain needs, but services are more needed in the short term, especially legal aid.

11. EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION TOOL – BEST PRACTICES

The National Coordinator for Section 41 briefly presented a project to develop an education and communication tool for communities. She reminded participants that following the mid-term

report on the federal government's Action Plan for Official Languages, this was a good time to talk about best practices.

The coordination team will undertake steps to analyze and identify projects based on various best practice themes, in consultation with program coordinators and regional coordinators. The purpose is to identify 13 projects to highlight best practices, in a form that remains to be determined (the idea of a calendar was retained by the team for now).

Regional and program coordinators will be asked, based on their availability, to help identify best practice projects and themes.

Team 41 is asking regional and program coordinators to email their feedback on this project.

12. DATA COLLECTION CHART FOR ACTION PLAN

The meeting agenda called for a detailed explanation of the data collection chart for the Action Plan (personalized chart for each component/program and each regional coordinator). Coordinators will begin completing their charts (activities planned for the coming year). Follow up will be done by national coordination for section 41.

13. CONCLUSION AND END OF MEETING

The National Coordinator reminded participants of the importance of reporting on the achievements for the current year and of planning for next year using the charts provided. A teleconference will be organized in January 2006.

Participants must submit their comments concerning the presentation tool by January 10, 2006. The objective is to raise the comfort level of regional coordinators in their role of presenting information to communities.

The Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF) will hold its annual convention February 9-11, 2006. The Department of Justice will have a booth there and would like to have the coordinators' suggestions regarding the elements to present at this event, which holds special importance since the CNPF wants to include the theme of justice in its overall Development Plan, the basic document that will guide the efforts of the network for the next five years.

14. EVALUATION OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

- The group agreed that December was not the best month to hold the annual meeting of the Network of Coordinators and that we should avoid having participants travel during weekends or holidays.
- At the next meeting, the coordination team will prepare binders for participants to make it easier to organize and find information.

- The group deemed the volume of information reasonable.
- Regional coordinators agreed that they had a better understanding of the scope of their role, while reminding organizers that information flow mechanisms still had to be fine-tuned. National coordination will follow-up on this point.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NETWORK OF COORDINATORS RESPONSIBLE FOR PART VII

SECTION 41 OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT* HELD IN OTTAWA, DECEMBER 15 AND 16, 2005

Justice Canada representatives

Penney Baxter	Program Analyst, Innovations, Analysis and Integration Directorate
Julien Bédard	Counsel, Tax Litigation, Manitoba
Nancy Boillat	Senior Counsel, Quebec Regional Office
Michel Bouchard	Associate Deputy Minister of Justice
Sylvie Bourgault	Council, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Danielle Bruyère	Program Analyst, Program Development
Michèle-Renée Charbonneau	Departmental and Internal Communications, Team Leader, Strategic Communications, Communications Group
Lucille Collard	Counsel, Judicial Affairs, Courts and Tribunal Policy
Pauline Cormier	Program Analyst, Youth Justice Renewal Fund
Andrée Duschesne	Legal Advisor, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Adel Ghié	Policy Analyst, Section 41, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Richard Keswick	Counsel, Aboriginal Law Service, Alberta
Lise Lafrenière-Henrie	Senior Counsel, Coordinator, Family Law Policy
Véronique Lavoie	National Coordinator, Section 41, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Joseph McHattie	Counsel, General Aboriginal Litigation, Advisory, Saskatchewan
Richard Meredith	Regional Director, Client Services, Yukon
Pierre Millette	Office Coordinator/Editorial Assistant, Communications Branch
Susan Murtagh	Regional Communications Advisor, Nova Scotia
Suzanne Poirier	General Counsel and Director, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Mireille Provost	Program Manager, Innovations, Analysis and Integration Directorate

Nahid Roboubi	Program Manager, Family Violence, Innovations, Analysis and Integration Directorate
Pierre Rousseau	General Counsel, Policy, Programs and Integration, Vancouver Regional Office
Marc Rozon	Senior Program Analyst, Innovations, Analysis and Integration Directorate
Lise Sarault	Policy Analyst, Section 41, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Myshell Smith	Administrative Assistant, Francophonie, Justice in Official Languages and Legal Dualism
Diane Sylvain	Regional Director, Criminal Prosecutions, Northwest Territories
Marc Tremblay	General Counsel and Director, Official Languages Law Group

Representatives from other departments

Pierrette Jutras	Senior Analyst, Interdepartmental Coordination, Canadian Heritage
Denise Legault	Senior Advisor, Special Initiatives and Outreach, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Resource persons

Ronald Bisson, Facilitator	Management Consultant, Ronald Bisson & Associates Inc.
Charles Draper, Recorder	Ronald Bisson & Associates Inc.