

National Capital Commission
Annual Review on Official Languages
April 2003 – March 2004

Preamble

It proved to be yet another successful year for the National Capital Commission (NCC) with regards to its official languages program. What follows are some of the particular initiatives that were carried out in 2003-2004.

Service to the public

- The NCC is a leader in providing service to the public in both official languages. The Capital InfoCentre, the Gatineau Park visitor centre and sites, along with the Canada and the World Pavilion continue to be models of exceptional visitor service in both official languages.
- The NCC received its report card subsequent to the Government of Canada Telephone Services Audit conducted in February and March 2003 and our results with respect to both availability of service and of active offer are very positive.
- During the year, the NCC received fewer than a handful of complaints from the Commissioner of Official Languages. Any enquiries or complaints were handled in an expeditious manner to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Special study conducted by the Commissioner of Official Languages

- We have reviewed the results of the study conducted by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages entitled *For Rent: In Search of Bilingual Services from Businesses in NCR Federal Buildings*. We welcome these recommendations and believe they will reinforce the Federal government's obligation to promote both official languages and foster respect for the two official language communities in this region. The NCC has often taken a leadership role in this regard.

Language of Work

The NCC makes a constant effort, and takes concrete measures, to create and maintain a work environment conducive to the use of both official languages.

The Language of Work survey which was conducted in January and February 2003 resulted in several recommendations:

- As a means of addressing the predominance of English in meetings and in the workplace, new signs were prominently displayed in all our meeting rooms providing helpful tips on conducting meetings in both official languages. A message to this effect appeared on our Intranet to raise the awareness of our employees, and in particular, that the person chairing the meeting has a key role to play in ensuring that everyone feels right at ease in using either official language.
- In an effort to increase the bilingual capacity of the supervisory group, an analysis of a number of supervisory positions was conducted, the results were verified and meetings with the respective Branch vice-presidents will take place in an effort to address any shortcomings that may exist with regards to supervisors fulfilling their linguistic obligations.

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- In reviewing the bilingual capability of some central services, consultations will occur with those Branches whose central services were identified by the survey respondents as needing improvement.
- With an aim to improving the quality of bilingual messages to employees, a message appeared on Intranet, encouraging employees to report any mistakes in an effort to increase linguistic quality. In addition, linguistic tools are available on Intranet.
- A follow-up was conducted with our Information Technologies personnel to determine if specific work instruments could be made available in both official languages. Indeed, such applications as Microsoft Office 2000, PeopleSoft and Intranet are available in both official languages.
- With respect to the availability and accessibility of language training, on-site language training sessions (oral interaction) are available for employees during lunch-time. This year, over 60 employees are currently registered in this form of training (which is proving to be very popular and well received by the participants). In addition, we are awaiting further information from the Official Languages Branch of the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada to obtain sustainable funding for language training.

Work continues to unfold on an ongoing basis in the implementation of these recommendations.

Equitable participation of English-speaking and of French-speaking Canadians

Given the proportion of 81% of our positions designated bilingual, and in light of the new direction the Government of Canada is taking with respect to bilingual imperative staffing being the norm for bilingual positions, we feel that our current representation of 55% Francophones and 45% Anglophones will continue to remain relatively unchanged.

New Official Languages Policies

On March 31, 2004 a presentation was given to our Executive Management Committee outlining the new official languages policies which took effect April 1, and which are now applicable to all institutions subject to the *Official Languages Act*.

Performance Evaluation Card

The NCC will be one of about 30 federal institutions that will be assessed against certain criteria and will receive a Performance Evaluation Card as part of the annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 2004-2005.