

## **REVIEW HAS COMMENCED ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS FOR PROCURING SETTLEMENT AND LANGUAGE SERVICES**

On March 7, 2006, the BC Government entered into a contract with Capital City Purchasing Services Inc. to conduct a review of the RFP process used in awarding of funds for Settlement and Language services under the BC Settlement and Adaptation Program. The term of the contract is March 7, 2006 to June 14, 2006 with the final report expected May 29, 2006.

The provincial government remains committed to fair, open and competitive tendering for acquiring services. The Province is conducting the review of this RFP process to determine whether there are adjustments or changes to the way it procures services in the settlement and language training services within open tendering that could make it best suit the particular circumstances of this sector.

The Contractor will:

- i) review the procurement policies and procurement environment of the Province; as they relate to the procurement of Settlement and Language Services;
- ii) research the procurement processes used in other Canadian provinces and the Canadian federal government for the procurement of similar immigrant settlement and language services;
- iii) review the history and trends in contract solicitation/procurement and award methods for Settlement and Language Services over the past 10 years in BC and provide a brief history of key highlights;
- iv) consult with key stakeholders throughout the Province (both internal and external to the BC provincial government) to determine their views on the use of RFPs and other procurement methods for Settlement and Language Services;
- v) review and consider the legal and practical (including cost) implications of adopting procurement methods for Settlement and Language Services that could be an alternative to an RFP, or that change the existing RFP processes;
- vi) identify potential options to the current RFP process for Settlement and Language Services, including analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each;
- vii) based on the collected stakeholder information and review data, provide a determination on what the best and most practical methodology would be for acquiring Settlement and Language Services; and
- viii) based on the collected stakeholder information and review data, provide a determination on what impact, if any, the proposed changes to the Settlement and Language Services would be on the procurement policy and procurement environment of the Province.

Stakeholder interviews are anticipated to begin in April. Participating stakeholders will include, but not be limited to, individual agencies, representatives from AMSSA, ELSA Net, BCSIWA, Ministry of Attorney General (Multiculturalism Branch) staff, and other government representatives viewed as having relevant information to contribute to this contract.

The interview process will ensure stakeholder agencies that participated in the 2004 RFP process have an opportunity to participate. At a minimum, each stakeholder agency will be invited to complete a written questionnaire and to provide their comments. Additionally, 20 randomly-chosen stakeholders will be further invited to participate in a telephone or in-person interview (15 telephone interviews and 5 in-person interviews).

A representative from Capital City Purchasing Services Inc. will contact agencies randomly selected for interviews directly to establish who will represent the agency and an appropriate date and time to conduct the interview.