

## THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

### Official Languages Accountability and Coordination Framework (extract relative to Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*)

All federal departments and institutions are subject to the accountability and coordination framework adopted in the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages, unveiled by the Prime Minister on March 12, 2003. This framework reminds federal institutions of their existing obligations and adds new ones. It provides for, among others, horizontal coordination centered on the minister responsible for official languages and the Committee of Deputy Ministers on Official Languages.

### Obligations of ALL federal institutions under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*

The accountability framework describes the steps each federal institution must undertake in their strategic planning and in the implementation of their mandate towards official languages:

- Make employees aware of the needs of minority communities and of government commitments, as outlined in Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA);
- Determine whether its policies and programs have impacts on the promotion of linguistic duality and minority community development, from the initial stages of their inception through to the implementation process, including the devolution of services;
- Consult affected publics, if necessary, in particular the representatives of the official-language minority communities (OLMC), in developing and implementing programs and policies;
- Be able to describe its approach and show that it has considered the needs of the OLMC; once impacts have been identified, plan the activities according to the coming year and in the long term, present the expected results, taking into account budget considerations, provide for results assessment mechanisms.

Each federal institution must analyze the impact of proposals contained in memoranda to Cabinet on the linguistic rights of the general public and of federal employees, as well as on the promotion of French and English. They must also, for all presentations to Treasury Board, analyze all impacts relating to the development of the OLMC. They are required to consider the impact of the various modes of service delivery on official languages and consult the OLMC when changes in service delivery might affect the development of these communities. Finally, the purchase of media space or time must include organs that serve the Anglophone or Francophone minority in a community.

### Obligations of the institutions designated by the 1994 Accountability Framework – Implementation of article 41 of the *Official Languages Act*

Thirty-four federal institutions designated by the 1994 Accountability Framework are obligated to develop an action plan for the implementation of section 41 (part VII) of the OLA. These plans are prepared in consultation with the OLMC in order to enable the federal institutions to take into account the priorities of the communities in the planning of activities while respecting the limitations of their mandate. Each year, the designated institutions are required to submit to the Minister of Canadian Heritage their action plans as well as a report on the results of their activities. The Minister of Canadian Heritage then reports to Parliament each year on the implementation of this governmental commitment (section 41).