

Best Practices in Interdepartmental Coordination

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this document

This document was created to assist regional Canadian Heritage officers in their support role towards other departments and agencies who want to know how to support official-language communities. First, the document sets out the role of Canadian Heritage. It then provides examples of what designated federal organizations can do and what they are already doing. It also includes suggestions on what national and regional coordinators from these federal organizations can do, and ends with a few suggestions on what community associations can do to fully take advantage of opportunities to work with federal departments and agencies. Readers are invited to add their own “best practices” based on what they discover through their coordination experiences.

Historical and legal background

Official Languages Act

The *Official Languages Act*, revised in 1988, saw the addition of sections 41 and 42 to Part VII. Section 41 commits the federal government to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development, as well as fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

Role of Canadian Heritage

Section 42 states that the Secretary of State of Canada (now the Minister of Canadian Heritage), in consultation with other ministers of the Crown, shall encourage and promote a coordinated approach to the implementation by federal institutions of the commitments set out in section 41.

Network of national coordinators

Some federal organizations (27 at the outset, including Canadian Heritage - *there are now 34*) were designated to fulfill this obligation more directly. The Department of Canadian Heritage established a network of national coordinators responsible for the implementation of section 41 within their designated organizations.

<p>Designated organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plans • Status reports 	<p>These organizations must consult communities to prepare an annual or multi-year action plan and must report on the results to the Department of Canadian Heritage. The Minister of Canadian Heritage must report annually to the Parliament of Canada on these results. The role of the Interdepartmental Coordination Directorate (ICD) within the Official Languages Support Programs (OLSP) is to coordinate the implementation of section 41, with support from other directorates and regional offices.</p>
<p>Goal of interdepartmental coordination</p>	<p>The goal of interdepartmental coordination is to foster the creation of lasting working relationships between federal organizations and official-language minority communities as well as their representative associations.</p>

Best Practices in Interdepartmental Coordination

Definition

Best Practices in Interdepartmental Coordination are practices that foster better knowledge of communities, their realities and their priorities on the part of federal organizations, and better cooperation between the federal government and the communities.

Headings

The headings used, Awareness, Consultation, Communications, Coordination, Program Funding and Delivery, and Accountability, can be found in the audit tool that the Interdepartmental Coordination Directorate is currently developing for designated federal organizations.

Coordination role of Canadian Heritage

Awareness

- Share research on the official-language community situation
- Develop an Information Kit for national and regional coordinators
- Information to other departments and agencies on comprehensive community development plans
- *Maintain working and information relations with the departmental champion for official languages*

Consultation

- Organize consultations between federal organizations and communities
- Put in place two Canadian Heritage and official-language community coordination committees for Anglophones and Francophones
- Organize consultations between communities and federal organizations in the region
- Participate in community AGAs
- Set up working groups on culture
- Participate in federal interdepartmental committees
- Participate in federal councils and official-language sub-committees
- *Consultations between headquarters and the regional representatives on the analyses of the action plans and the status reports*
- *Set up a network of persons responsible for interdepartmental coordination in the regions and in headquarters*

Communications

- *Bulletin 41-42* - quarterly publication with information on initiatives in federal organization and in community
- Summaries of records of achievements in the annual report of the Minister of Canadian Heritage
- Submissions on Interdepartmental Coordination at consultations in the region

Coordination and Liaison

- Put in place the network of national coordinators responsible for the implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*
- Create tools for national coordinators, Canadian Heritage officers and communities *such as the information kit, the inventory of programs of interest to the communities, the best practices document*

Program Funding and Delivery

- Interdepartmental Partnership with Official Language Communities (IPOLC) - incentive funds to encourage the creation of lasting partnerships between communities and federal organizations

Accountability

- Annual analyses of action plans and feedback to federal organizations
- Departmental performance measurement tool developed with Consulting and Audit Canada

Best practices for designated organizations

Awareness

- Message from senior executive to the organization's staff regarding the federal government's commitment to minorities
- *Maintain working and information relations with the departmental champion for official languages*

Consultation

- Formal and informal consultations with official-language minority communities

Communications

- Post action plans and records of achievements on the organization's Web site
- Include organizations from official-language minority communities on regular client lists

Coordination and Liaison

- Create organizational units to manage the initiative
- *Letter of designation for the national and regional coordinators*
- Establish parity and joint committees
- Involvement of regional offices - either via a network of coordinators or via a close liaison partnership
- *Hold training and information sessions for the regional coordinators - a yearly meeting, may include PCH if necessary*

Program Funding and Delivery

- Implement programs or program components designed for official-language minorities and/or open to the distinct nature of language minorities

Accountability

- Action plans and records of achievements sent to Canadian Heritage
- Use of the performance measurement tool developed by Canadian Heritage

Certain departmental and agency initiatives

Agriculture &
Agro-Food Canada

Program Funding and Delivery

- Strategic planning projects in Anglophone and Francophone minority communities

Canada Economic
Development for
Quebec Regions

Awareness

- Training session given by the national coordinator to inform managers about the implementation of section 41 of the OLA

Western Economic
Diversification

Program Funding and Delivery

- Creation of economic development bodies (RDÉEs) in each of the four provinces in Western Canada

Industry Canada

Awareness

- Creation of a network of advisors in various regions to work directly with OLMC

Program Funding and Delivery

- Implement the *Francommunautés virtuelles* program, which seeks to increase French-language applications, services and content on the Internet, to connect the country's Francophone and Acadian communities, and to encourage them to use the Internet

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Coordination and Liaison

- Create an **organizational unit**: e.g., **Secretariat, Official Language Minority Communities** at Human Resources Development Canada (now Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)

Consultation

- Create **parity committees**: e.g., **National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development** and **National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority**. Goal: economic development of Canada's Francophonie

Program Funding and Delivery

- Implement *Regroupements de développement de l'économie et de l'employabilité* (RDÉEs) and Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDECs)

Program Funding and Delivery

- **Support fund** to finance these initiatives

Canada Post

Program Delivery

- Literacy prize for minority communities in each province

Health Canada

Consultations

- Create **two consultative committees** for Anglophone and Francophone minorities: Consultative Committee for French-Speaking Minority Communities and Consultative Committee for English-Speaking Minority Communities

Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Coordination and Liaison
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place the Official-Language Community Development Bureau (OLCDB)
	Consultations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a CIC - Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee to develop strategies in order to increase and facilitate the integration of Francophone immigrants into minority communities
Treasury Board Secretariat	Coordination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Strategic Framework to encourage immigration to Francophone minority communities and develop a five-year plan
	Awareness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that submissions to Treasury Board comply with the guiding principles for official languages
	Coordination and Liaison
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster minority community access to Treasury Board Secretariat official languages networks
Privy Council Office	Coordination and Liaison
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates implementation of the federal government's Action Plan for Official Languages, including development of an accountability framework
	Consultations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations between communities and ministers from key organizations as part of the government's Action Plan for Official Languages

Justice Canada

Consultations

- Creation of two official-language community consultative committees, for Anglophones and Francophones

Program Funding and Delivery

- **Program for the Integration of Both Official Languages in the Administration of Justice**, which supports access to justice through, among other things, the development of tools and through training for French-speaking lawyers

Best practices for national and regional coordinators

Awareness

- Know the difference between Parts IV, V and VI of the *Act*, and Part VII
- Be informed about minority communities in their region
- Discuss project proposals with the community and introduce project promoters to staff of the right departmental program
- Ensure that the development of new programs and initiatives and the review of existing initiatives takes into consideration the needs of minority communities
- Be informed about associations representing minority communities that have a mandate with links to their department's or agency's mandate
- Be informed about their institution's programs that are of interest to communities and "sell" the need to specifically include OLMC
- Read the community's Global Development Plan
- Visit community organization Web sites
- Encourage officials to work with community promoters to enable them to prepare acceptable projects

Consultations

- Attend AGAs of advocacy and other associations representing communities
- Meet community representatives

Coordination and Liaison

- Meet their Canadian Heritage counterpart

Program Funding and Delivery

- Fund eligible projects

Communications

- Use minority community media to reach communities

Best practices for community associations

- Learn about government priorities and policies
- Learn about federal, provincial and municipal organization mandates and programs
- Establish contacts and cultivate working relationships with these departments and agencies
- Analyze program criteria that correspond to community objectives
- Establish ties with associations from the other official-language minority
- Find out from their contacts at Canadian Heritage about federal government issues and initiatives
- Become known to federal, provincial and municipal elected representatives
- Learn who the federal, provincial and municipal program officers are
- Develop a results-oriented Global Development Plan that identifies priorities
- Submit results-based initiatives or projects that, if possible, involve more than one federal partner

Example of best practice

- Creation of a *Consortium national de formation en santé* on training and research. The goal is to provide all regions with professional staff.

- END -