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**DIRECTORATE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES ESTABLISHED**

WHITEHORSE – Premier Dennis Fentie and Highways and Public Works Minister Glenn Hart today have announced the establishment of the Directorate of French Language Services (*Direction des services en français*).

“The creation of a directorate is what the francophone community in the Yukon has asked for; it is a commitment we made last spring, and it is what we are delivering today,” Fentie said. “Yukoners and our government support the delivery of French language services. The Government of Yukon is committed to extending recognition of French, in accordance with the *Languages Act*, and to ensuring our French-speaking citizens may communicate and access programs with the Yukon government in French.”

“The Yukon is very fortunate to have a dynamic francophone community that makes such a positive contribution to our social, cultural and economic fabric,” Hart said. “Creating a directorate raises the profile of French language services in our government, demonstrates our commitment to Yukon’s francophone community and the respect and pride we share in their success.”

The Yukon’s francophone community expressed the importance of naming a minister directly responsible for French language issues, and today Premier Fentie also announced Minister Glenn Hart will officially be recognised as the minister responsible for French Language Services.

“The inception of the Directorate of French Language Services responds to a request made by the francophone community for more profile within the Yukon government,” Jean-Marc Perreault, president of the Association franco-yukonnaise, said. “We are confident that the directorate’s new orientation will ensure better French language services from government to francophones. We can now contemplate a genuine opportunity to develop a shared vision of the needs and aspirations of French-speaking Yukoners. Through this action, the Government of Yukon continues to support the French-speaking community as an integral part of Yukon’s social fabric.”

Hart also said Carol Genest, the director of the Directorate of French Language Services who was hired in Jan. 2006, will now report directly to the minister responsible for French Language Services.

The directorate and the provision of French language services in the Yukon government will continue to be funded through an agreement with the Government of Canada.

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Attachment: Carol Genest’s biography and photo

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## **ATTACHMENT: Carol Genest's biography and photo**

**Carol Genest** – Director, Directorate of French Language Services

Born a Franco-Manitoban, Carol Genest has carved out a career in Canada's civil service since 1985. At the former Secretary of State for Canada, she was actively involved in the implementation of official-languages programs as well as policies towards the advancement of women, first in Calgary and later, in a managerial capacity, in Yellowknife. She was director of finance and administration at Parks Canada's regional office in Cornwall, Ontario. While working at Canadian Heritage, she served as chief of staff to a great advocate of the official languages, assistant deputy minister of citizenship and Canadian identity, Roger Collet. She was manager of the Canadian Heritage office up until recently. Ms. Genest, who has made Yukon her home for the last ten years, was appointed director of Yukon's Bureau of French Language Services in January 2006.

