

2009-2010 French-language Services Plan

Public Service Commission

April 2009

Message from the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the 2009-2010 French Language Services Plan for the Public Service Commission.

The Public Service Commission is committed to making a difference in the lives of Nova Scotians by contributing to a continuing and improved availability of a skilled, dedicated and diverse public service. The Commission focuses on labour relations and human resource management of direct government employees and designated areas of the broader public sector. It acts as the central human resource agency of Government, providing leadership in the development and implementation of human resource policies and practices applicable to public servants.

The Public Service Commission is responsible for:

- Corporate human resource policies, programs and services
- High quality human resource management principles, values and practices
- Ensuring fair and consistent treatment of staff
- Acting as government's agent in collective bargaining.

The PSC recognizes the importance of preserving and supporting the growth of the Acadian and Francophone community in Nova Scotia. The Commission's primary contribution in support of the French Language Services Act is through its corporate responsibility to provide policies and programs in support of all of government's employees who are responsible, where appropriate, to deliver French-language services. In 2008-09, the PSC initiated the process to draft Human Resource guidelines to assist departments in areas that include assessment of French-language capacity, required French-language competencies and existing gaps. This work will continue in 2009-10.

While the PSC does not generally provide services to the general public, it will continue to identify materials, such as *Values, Ethics and Conduct: A Code for Nova Scotia's Public Servants*, for translation and distribution to French-speaking employees and government offices in regions of the province with large French-speaking populations.

We will look for opportunities to increase our capacity to provide service in French, as well as increase our use of translation services as appropriate to make our publications more accessible to government's French-language speaking employees and to the French-speaking members of the public.

Responses to French Requests (Written and Oral)

Front line staff have been provided with instructions and support materials, such as the Bonjour! Program's *Practical tips for providing service in French* guide, to assist them in responding to telephone calls from French-speaking members of the public.

Staff members with French-language capacity have been identified to respond to verbal and written requests and inquiries from the public. Administrative staff and others within the PSC have been advised of the availability of these individuals and the assistance they can provide. Efforts will continue to identify other staff members with French-language capacity, to provide additional support in responding to French-language requests and inquiries.

French-language Services Inventory

The PSC does not generally provide services to the general public. However, the Commission does provide policies and programs in support of all of government's employees who are responsible, where appropriate, to deliver French-language services.

The PSC has facilitated an arrangement which enables departments to place bilingual job postings with Career Beacon in both French and English, and has also used other mechanisms, such as Le Courier, Nova Scotia's French-language newspaper, to advertise French-language related positions.

The Commission also continues to have many of its program promotional materials and other publications translated into French. Internal publications, directed toward public servants, such as the Corporate Human Resource Plan, public service values plaques, as well as promotional materials (e.g., posters and brochures) for programs including the Respectful Workplace and Employee Assistance Programs have been translated. These French-language promotional materials are sent to government offices in those regions of the Province that have large French-speaking populations, and are also forwarded to anyone who requests them.

The PSC also ensures that we have Employee Assistance Program service providers who are able to deliver their services in French when required.

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009

Table 1 – Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009: Public Service Commission

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals, Objectives and Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
<p><u>Objective 1</u> Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act.</p>	<p>1.1 The Office of Acadian Affairs and the Minister fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act.</p>	<p>The PSC will continue to support the French-Language Services Coordinating Committee by supporting representation of a staff member on the Committee</p>	<p>A dedicated staff representative for the Coordinating Committee was in place for part of 2008-09. Efforts are underway to identify a new dedicated resource for this role. In the absence of a dedicated PSC representative on the Committee, another staff member has been included in communications with the Committee, shared information within the PSC as required, responded to requests from the Office of Acadian Affairs, and attended Committee meetings on a periodic basis.</p>
	<p>1.2 Increased capacity for government to support departments/offices in the delivery of French-language services.</p>		
<p><u>Objective 2</u> Consultation with the community.</p>	<p>2.1 Establishment and prioritization of the French-language services to be offered, and of strategies or approaches for service delivery.</p>	<p>The PSC will utilize consultation guidelines developed by the French-language Coordinators Committee to consult with the Acadian and francophone community.</p>	<p>While the PSC did not conduct any public consultations in 2008-09, the department continues to be aware of the existence of the guidelines developed for consultation with the Acadian and francophone community should the need for public consultation arise.</p>
<p><u>Objective 3</u> Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French.</p>	<p>3.1 Public information is available in both official languages of Canada.</p>	<p>Although most of its publications are directed towards employees of government, the Public Service Commission will continue to have materials translated.</p>	<p>Promotional materials, such as posters and brochures, for the new Respectful Workplace program were translated into French and sent to government offices in those regions of the province that have large French-speaking populations. These materials are also made available to anyone who may request them.</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals, Objectives and Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
	3.2 Employees and the public are more aware of the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services.		
<p><u>Objective 4</u> Supporting French-language services development, planning, and delivery in priority areas.</p>	<p>4.1 Some departments/offices develop and adapt plans and strategies for French-language service delivery as part of their annual planning process.</p> <p>4.2 The government has a coordinated approach to deal with human resources issues related to the delivery of French-language services.</p>	<p>In collaboration with the Office of Acadian Affairs, establish a position at the PSC for a Policy Analyst responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of appropriate human resource guidelines and policies that will help advance delivery of French language services for all provincial departments and agencies in support of the French-language Services Act and regulations</p>	<p>In late 2007-08, a term Policy Analyst position was established and recruitment efforts began. The position was staffed during the 2nd quarter of 2008-09 during which time an initial draft of guidelines regarding the following was prepared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of current positions within government requiring French-language capacity • Identification of current French language capacity within government • Development of French-language verbal and written competency standards required to assess that capacity • Identification of French-language training requirements in order to close existing competency gaps • Posting and hiring of individuals with French language competencies required to fill any gaps <p>The incumbent in the Policy Analyst position moved to another position within government and efforts to re-staff the position on a permanent basis were initiated. The position is expected to be filled in early 2009-10 at which time work on the development of these guidelines, including extensive consultations with the Office of Acadian Affairs, the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and HR Community, will continue.</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals, Objectives and Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
		<p>Departmentally, identify internal candidates to provide backup for the current French-language point of contact and provide them with necessary training.</p>	<p>In support of the effort to identify current French-language capacity within government, the PSC, in consultation with the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and its subcommittee on Human Resources and Training, has included a question in the 2009 How's Work Going employee survey that asks employees to identify their level of proficiency in speaking and listening to, reading, and writing French.</p> <p>Within the PSC, front line staff have been provided with instructions and support materials, such as the Bonjour! Program's <i>Practical tips for providing service in French</i> guide, to assist them in responding to telephone calls from French-speaking members of the public.</p> <p>Staff members with French-language capacity have been identified to respond to verbal and written requests and inquiries from the public. Staff have been advised of the availability of these individuals to provide assistance as needed.</p>
	<p>4.3 Service delivery corresponds to the objectives outlined in the Global Development Plan for the Acadian and Francophone community.</p>		
	<p>4.4 School community centres contribute to the growth of the Acadian and Francophone community.</p>		

Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2009-2010

Table 2 – Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2009-2010 – Public Service Commission

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
<p><u>Objective 1 – Framework and Policy</u> Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act</p>	<p>1.1 The Office of Acadian Affairs, the Minister, and designated public institutions fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act and Regulations. This includes the required review of the Regulations before July 31, 2010 to evaluate their effectiveness in ensuring substantive and measurable improvements to the French-language services offered by the Government of Nova Scotia.</p>	<p>The PSC will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the French-language Services Coordinating Committee by supporting representation of a staff member on the committee • Support and contribute to corporate planning and progress reporting requirements • Identify publications and program promotional materials for translation into French and distribution among French-speaking employees, and availability within government offices in regions within the province with large French-speaking populations 	<p>A dedicated staff member is in place to participate on the Coordinating Committee on a regular basis.</p> <p>The PSC contributes to the corporate 2008-09 Progress Report on French-language Services; prepares and publishes the PSC's 2010-11 French-language Services Plan.</p> <p>The PSC will translate the new Public Service Code of Conduct and make it accessible to French-speaking employees and members of the public</p>
	<p>1.2 Designated public institutions have implemented all sections of the Regulations.</p>	<p>Explore other opportunities to include French-language service delivery considerations in the development and implementation of programs and services.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities for greater use of translation services and increase French-language content on the PSC website.</p>
<p><u>Objective 2 – Enabling French-language Services</u> Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas</p>	<p>2.1 Designated public institutions deliver services that respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and Francophone community as identified through consultation.</p>	<p>Respond to any identified needs of the Acadian and Francophone community as they relate to services and programs provided by the PSC.</p>	

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
	<p>2.2 Public service employees are more knowledgeable about the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services; are more sensitive to cultural issues pertaining to the Acadian and Francophone community; and promote public awareness of French-language services and their availability.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities to raise awareness among employees of the objectives of the French-language Services Act and Regulations and the PSC's role in contributing to these objectives.</p>	<p>Encourage consideration of French-language service delivery needs in development of programs and services.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the guidelines in place for consultation with the Acadian and francophone communities when public consultations are considered.</p> <p>In support of the Bonjour! Program, continue efforts to identify additional staff members with French-language capacity, to provide support in responding to French-language requests and inquiries.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the availability of translation services.</p> <p>Promote French-language training opportunities and Lunch & Learn sessions organized by the Office of Acadian Affairs.</p>
	<p>2.3 The public is more aware of the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and of the programs and services available to them.</p>	<p>Continue to provide ongoing support for the Bonjour! Program</p>	<p>Front-line staff are instructed on how to respond to inquiries received in French; staff with French-speaking capacity have been identified to assist in responding to any French-language verbal or written requests received.</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
			The availability of French-language publications, promotional materials and other services is promoted by our staff and on our website.
	2.4 Prioritization and establishment of French-language services to be offered, and of strategies or approaches for service delivery.		
	2.5 The capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased due to the recruitment of French-speaking employees and training of employees, and standards and guidelines for recruitment, evaluation, and training are in place.	<p>Corporate Human Resource guidelines relating to the following are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of current positions within government requiring French-language capacity • Identification of current French language capacity within government • Development of French-language verbal and written competency standards required to assess that capacity • Identification of French-language training requirements in order to close existing competency gaps • Posting and hiring of individuals with French language competencies required to fill any gaps 	Policy Analyst position responsible for leading PSC's contributions in support of French-language Services Act and Regulations and the development of these guidelines is staffed on a permanent basis.

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
<u>Objective 3 – Community Development and Capacity-Building</u> Ensure that the Acadian and Francophone community has resources available for its long-term development and sustainability	3.1 Government has helped Acadian and Francophone community-based organizations, where appropriate, realize their objectives expressed in the community's Global Development Plan.		
	3.2 Acadian and Francophone school community centres offer services and programs to the Acadian and Francophone community.		

Addressing the Priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Community

In providing policies and programs in support of all of government's employees who are responsible, where appropriate, to deliver French-language services, the Public Service Commission will work with the Office of Acadian Affairs and the French-language Services Coordinating Committee to understand the priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Communities.

The corporate Human Resource guidelines being developed under the leadership of the Public Service Commission will support government employees who are responsible for delivery of French-language services and will provide assistance across government in the following areas:

- identifying current positions within government requiring French-language capacity
- identifying current French language capacity within government
- developing French-language verbal and written competency standards required to assess that capacity
- identifying French-language training requirements in order to close existing competency gaps
- posting and hiring individuals with French language competencies required to fill any gaps

Conclusion: Contribution to the Preservation and Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community

The PSC recognizes the importance of preserving and supporting the growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community in Nova Scotia. To this end, the PSC will strive to fulfill its corporate role of providing policies and programs in support of all of government's employees who are responsible, where appropriate, to deliver French-language services, in support of the needs and priorities identified by the Acadian and Francophone Communities.

Within our own department, we will look for opportunities to increase our capacity to provide service in French, as well as increase our use of translation services as appropriate to make our program and promotional materials more accessible to government's French-language speaking employees and to the French-speaking members of the public.