



**Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
Service Nouvelle-Écosse et Relations avec les municipalités**

**2008/2009
French-language Services Plan**

March 2008

Table of Contents

Introduction to Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.....	2 -
Message from the Deputy Minister	2 -
Policy on written and verbal communications in French.....	3 -
Benefits to the Acadian and francophone community.....	3 -
Goals, Objectives and Measures for 2008-2009	4 -
Corporate Objective 1. Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act.....	4 -
Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008	4 -
Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009	4 -
Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009.....	4 -
Corporate Objective 2. Consulting with the Acadian and francophone community.....	4 -
Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008	4 -
Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009	4 -
Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009.....	5 -
Corporate Objective 3. Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French.....	5 -
Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008	5 -
Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009	5 -
Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009.....	5 -
Corporate Objective 4. Supporting French-language services development, planning and delivery in priority areas.	6 -
Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008	6 -
Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009	6 -
Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009.....	6 -
Conclusion	7 -

Introduction to Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations was formed on October 1, 2000 to be the lead service delivery arm of government for programs and services to businesses, individuals and municipalities. The Department is organized on a functional basis to facilitate the evolution in service delivery in a manner that will result in seamless delivery to customers in the most efficient manner possible.

Message from the Deputy Minister

We are pleased to present the 2008-2009 French-language Service Plan for Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. This plan outlines the progress we have achieved in our delivery and implementation of French-language services in 2007/2008 as well as the priorities and initiatives for offering French-language services within the Department in 2008/2009.

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has been committed to increasing and enhancing the level of services offered by the Department in French since the inception of the *French-language Services Act* in 2004. The Department continued to build on its base of French-language services in 2007/2008; bilingual service continued to be offered in the Provincial call centre and in the Dartmouth and Yarmouth Access Nova Scotia Centres. Bilingual employees were also hired in our Business Registration Unit to serve our clients looking to start or operate a business in Nova Scotia. We continued to translate high traffic areas of our website and introduced new online services aimed at Nova Scotia businesses such as BizPaL which streamlines the process of gathering the permits required to do business in Nova Scotia. We also published information for landlord's and tenants and introduced a new birth certificate – the first province in Canada to launch a new highly secure and durable bilingual birth certificate.

The progress Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has made this past year continued to build a solid foundation of French-language services for the Department. Our goals and objectives for this upcoming year will ensure the Department continues to increase and deliver programs and services that reflect the needs of the Acadian and Francophone community in Nova Scotia.



Greg Keefe, CMA
Deputy Minister

Policy on written and verbal communications in French

The Department will continue to respond to verbal and written requests from the public in a timely manner in French whenever possible. Written correspondence received from the public will be replied to in the language of the original correspondence; translation of written correspondence can be arranged through the Department's French-language Services Coordinator.

Bilingual employees in the Provincial Call Centre, Dartmouth and Yarmouth Access Nova Scotia Centres and Business Registration Unit are instructed to provide an active offer of French when interacting with the public. An active offer ensures our French speaking customers are aware French-language services are available and easily accessible.

Benefits to the Acadian and francophone community

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is dedicated to providing access to government information, programs and services for Acadian and Francophone Nova Scotians in French. The Acadian and francophone community is an important part of our clientele and we aim to provide options for the community to engage government in their language of choice.

The Department's 2008/2009 French-language Service Plan will expand on our existing service base and continue to reinforce the importance of Acadian and francophone culture in the Province. Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations will continue contributing to the growth and preservation of the Acadian and francophone community in Nova Scotia.

Goals, Objectives and Measures for 2008-2009

The Department will continue to improve and increase existing services in French in 2008/2009 in the following areas, subject to appropriate budget funding:

Corporate Objective 1. Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008

- Initiated internal policy on delivering websites for new programs and services in French at the same time as in English
- Promoted the government-wide “Bonjour” initiative in offices where French service was available and on the Department’s web site
- Supported the Office of Acadian Affairs on the implementation of French-language services

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009

- Support the Office of Acadian Affairs on the implementation of the *French-language Services Act* and government-wide FLS initiatives

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009

- Continue representation of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and sub-committees

Corporate Objective 2. Consulting with the Acadian and francophone community.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008

- Developed online survey to gauge customer satisfaction with our French online services
- Initiated tracking of usage statistics for French services across delivery channels (in-person, telephone, online)

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009

- Identification and prioritization of French-language services to be offered

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009

- Ensure elements of province-wide public consultations are offered in French to allow participation of Acadian and francophone community
- Continue tracking of usage statistics to determine strategies or approaches for improving service delivery

Corporate Objective 3. Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008

- Added additional content in French to the Department's web site:
 - Residential Tenancies
 - Registry of Joint Stock Companies
 - Co-operatives Branch
 - Service Nova Scotia – Permits and Licences
- Translated and published Residential Tenancies Renting Guides
 - Renting: A Guide for Tenants
 - SMARTenants Renting Guide: For Students Living Off-Campus
 - Exploring your Options
 - Mediation and Hearings
 - After the Hearing: What Now?
 - Renting in a Mobile Home Park

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009

- Continue translating program content on the Department's web site
- Update the French version of the Driver's Handbook
- Translate popular Departmental documents and publications
- Feature and promote French services more effectively on the Department's web site

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009

- Identify and prioritize high traffic program areas of the Department's web site to be translated
- Identify and translate key Departmental brochures and manuals
- Revise and print a new version of the French Driver's Handbook to incorporate recent changes affecting Nova Scotian drivers

- Incorporate French services and content more thoroughly from the outset through the redesign of the Department's web site and ensure these services and content are easily accessible

Corporate Objective 4. Supporting French-language services development, planning and delivery in priority areas.

Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2007-2008

- Added bilingual staff in the Business Registration Unit to serve business clients. These services include:
 - Business name search and reservation
 - Registration and renewal of Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, Corporation, Business Incorporation, Co-operative Incorporation, Credit Union: Incorporation, Society Incorporation (and Registration)
- Introduced French business-specific services online such as BizPaL and the Registry of Joint Stock Companies
- Continued providing bilingual service in our Dartmouth and Yarmouth Access Nova Scotia Centres and the Provincial call-centre
- Identified additional staff in other areas of the Department with the capacity to provide services in French
- Provided access to software language tools and resources for staff to aid in the delivery of French-language services
- Introduced a new highly secure, bilingual birth certificate
- Provided French training options for staff through the Office of Acadian Affairs

Specific goals and objectives for 2008-2009

- Continue to provide existing French services across designated delivery channels
- Implement a system to improve front-line staff capacity to deliver French-language services
- Identify additional transactions and service offerings suitable for delivery and translation into French
- Implement a web content management system to enable faster, more efficient handling of French web content
- Provide staff with the opportunity to participate in French-language training

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2008-2009

- Maintain provision of French-language Services:
 - in the Provincial Call Centre
 - for clients accessing services in our Yarmouth and Dartmouth Access NS Offices

- for clients accessing Registry of Joint Stock Companies services
- with online transactions and program information
- Begin to provide front-line staff with access to bilingual information on the Department's programs and services through the use of a Customer Relationship Management/Knowledge Management system
- Continue to advertise all vacant positions in the Service Delivery division as seeking French-language capacity as an asset
- Enable an enterprise level web content management system within the Department and extend its' use to other departments and agencies within government
- Work with the Office of Acadian Affairs to make French training available for staff in areas of the Department where a need for French-language skills has been identified
- Provide increased access online to information and services from Nova Scotia municipalities

Conclusion

The goals and objectives outlined in this plan lay the foundation for the delivery of programs, information and services in French based on what makes most sense from the perspective of the Acadian and francophone citizens and businesses that require them. Our French-language Services Plan is the blueprint for providing Acadian and francophone Nova Scotians with increased access to services in French and additional options to interact with government in their own language.