



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

**2009/2010
French-language Services Plan**

March 2009

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Introduction to Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) is the lead government Department for improving access to government information and services for businesses, individuals, and municipalities. Information registries on motor vehicles, vital statistics, businesses and corporations, and land data are some of the information and services managed by the Department. The Department also provides advice, assistance, and program support to Nova Scotia municipalities.

Message from the Deputy Minister

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is pleased to present our 2009/2010 French-language Service Plan. This plan outlines the progress we have achieved in our delivery and implementation of French-language services in 2008/2009 and identifies the priorities and initiatives for the Department in 2009/2010.

The Department has been steadily increasing the level of services offered in French since our first French-language Services plan in 2005. This past year saw us continue to offer bilingual service across our three major service channels: in-person at our Dartmouth and Yarmouth Access Nova Scotia Centres, over the phone in the Provincial call centre and online via our website. We received over 40,000 visits to our French web pages and continued translating new programs and services as they were introduced online. We continued to work closely with the Office of Acadian Affairs and French-language Coordinating committee on French-language issues such as communications, public consultations, human resources and recognition.

Our goals and objectives for this upcoming year will focus on improving our capacity to manage French-language services as we build on our strong base of existing services. We will continue to expand French-language Services to the Acadian and Francophone community to enable improved interaction with government for the delivery of information, programs and services, in their own language.

Kevin Malloy
Deputy Minister

Policy on written and verbal communications in French

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

French-language Services – Progress to date

Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations began offering French-language services in the fall of 2005. To date, the following progress has been made to increase and improve our services, publications and program information in French:

Bilingual Staffing

- In-person RMV services are provided in French in the Dartmouth and Yarmouth Access Nova Scotia Centres
- Bilingual staff is available in the Business Registration Unit to serve business clients
- Telephone service is provided in French in the Provincial Call Centre for Registry of Motor Vehicles, Vital Statistics, Residential Tenancies and general public inquiries
- A bilingual web developer provides support for creating and updating French web pages
- A French-language Services Coordinator plans French-language initiatives for the Department and represents the Department on the French-language Services Coordinating committee

Publications, Translated Material

- The Driver's Handbook is available for purchase in French from our Registry of Motor Vehicle and Access Nova Scotia offices
 - An electronic (PDF) version of the French Driver's Handbook is available online
- Written driver examinations for Learner and Motorcycle Licences are available in French in Registry of Motor Vehicle and Access Nova Scotia offices
- The Nova Scotia birth certificate
- The Alcohol Ignition Interlock User Handbook
- Residential Tenancies guides for landlords and tenants in Nova Scotia:
 - *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*

Online Services

- Online Services in French are available for the following transactions:
 - Birth, death, and marriage certificate requests
 - Motor Vehicles - Vehicle Permit Renewal
 - Change of address
 - Fine payments, Payment on Account
 - Personal Property Registry – Lien Check
 - Driver test payments
 - Knowledge (written) test payments
 - Municipal parking ticket payments

- Business services in French
 - BizPaL – Business permits and licenses application
 - Registry of Joint Stocks - Company Name Search and Name Reservation Request

- The following sections of the Department’s website are available in French:
 - Registry of Motor Vehicles
 - Vital Statistics
 - Registry of Joint Stocks
 - Residential Tenancies
 - Access to Business
 - Petroleum Pricing
 - Your Energy Rebate program
 - Graduate Tax Credit
 - Life Events
 - Service NS permits and licences
 - Registry of Firewood Vendors
 - Alcohol Ignition Interlock program
 - Co-operatives

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2008-2009	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>Support the Office of Acadian Affairs on the implementation of the French-language Services Act and government-wide FLS initiatives</p>	<p>Continue representation of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee and sub-committees</p>	<p>Ensured representation on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee</p> <p>Ensured representation on FLS Communications, Consultation, HR/Training and Recognition sub committees</p>
	<p>1.2 Increased capacity for government to support departments/offices in the delivery of French-language services.</p>			<p>Played a lead role in creating Guidelines for displaying French on Provincial Government Websites to assist departments in creating a consistent display of French web pages across government departments</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2008-2009	Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
<u>Objective 2</u> Consultation with the community.	2.1 Establishment and prioritization of the French-language services to be offered, and of strategies or approaches for service delivery.	Identification and prioritization of French-language services to be offered	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	Translated materials related to public consultations where appropriate Tracked website usage statistics to determine program areas to translate

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2008-2009	Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
<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>Continue translating program content on the Department’s web site</p> <p>Update the French version of the Driver’s Handbook</p> <p>Translate popular Departmental documents and publications</p>	<p>Identify and prioritize high traffic program areas of the Department’s web site to be translated</p> <p>Identify and translate key Departmental brochures and manuals</p> <p>Revise and print a new version of the French Driver’s Handbook to incorporate recent changes affecting Nova Scotian drivers</p>	<p>Translated and published the Alcohol Ignition Interlock User Handbook and web site</p> <p>Translated the “National Safety Code Carrier Registration” application form and the “Commercial Carrier Registration” renewal form and made them available online</p> <p>Revised the French Driver’s Handbook (online PDF version) to reflect fee changes</p> <p>Added information on the French Online Vehicle Permit Renewal service on Vehicle Renewal Notices mailed to registered vehicle owners in the province</p> <p>Continued to maintain and update translated program area web pages simultaneously in French and English</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2008-2009	Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
<p><u>Objective 3</u> Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French.</p>	<p>3.2 Employees and the public are more aware of the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services.</p>	<p>Feature and promote French services more effectively on the Department's web site</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Promoted the French-language Services within the Department through new employee "Onboarding Sessions"</p> <p>Added the <i>Bonjour!</i> logo to the Department's homepage to highlight available services in French</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2005-2009 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2008-2009	Planned Measures – 2008-2009	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2008-2009
<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>Continue to provide existing French services across designated delivery channels</p> <p>Implement a system to improve front-line staff capacity to deliver French-language services</p> <p>Identify additional transactions and service offerings suitable for delivery and translation into French</p> <p>Implement a web content management system to enable faster, more efficient handling of French web content</p>	<p>Maintain provision of French-language Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>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</p> <p>Enable an enterprise level web content management system within the Department and extend its’ use to other departments and agencies within government</p>	<p>Continued to provide bilingual service in our Dartmouth and Yarmouth Access Nova Scotia Centres, the Provincial call-centre and Business Registration Unit</p> <p>Maintained our existing online services and began upgrading our services to incorporate our new website design and to allow Interac payments from our online services</p> <p>Added a new on-line service to allow the payment of municipal parking tickets</p> <p>A CRM/KM system was selected and is currently being used as a pilot project for the Your Energy Rebate program</p> <p>Began the initial stages of implementing a web</p>

				content management system to enable timely and more efficient updating of French web pages
	4.2 The government has a coordinated approach to deal with human resources issues related to the delivery of French-language services.	Provide staff with the opportunity to participate in French-language training	<p>Work with the Office of Acadian Affairs to make French training available for staff in areas of the Department where the need for French-language skills has been identified</p> <p>Continue to advertise all vacant positions in the Service Delivery division as seeking French-language capacity as an asset</p>	<p>Provided French training options for staff through the Office of Acadian Affairs</p> <p>Advertised all vacant positions in the Service Delivery division as seeking French-language capacity as an asset</p>
	4.3 Service delivery corresponds to the objectives outlined in the Global Development Plan for the Acadian and Francophone community.		Provide increased access online to information and services from Nova Scotia municipalities	<p>Provided assistance to the Municipality of Argyle with the translation of their website</p> <p>Added an on-line service to allow the payment of municipal parking tickets in French for select municipalities.</p>
	4.4 School community centres contribute to the growth of the Acadian and Francophone community.			

Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2009-2010

The Department will continue to improve and increase existing services in French in 2009/2010 in the following areas, subject to appropriate budget funding:

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
<u>Objective 1 – Framework and Policy</u> Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act	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.	Continue to support the Office of Acadian Affairs with regards to the French-language Services Act and Regulations	Ensure representation on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee Ensure representation on the French-language Services Communications, Consultation, HR/Training and Recognition sub committees Contribute to the Government's annual progress report on French-language Services
	1.2 Designated public institutions have implemented all sections of the Regulations.	Review the availability of French-speaking staff during all available business hours	Develop an internal policy on the availability of French service during all available business hours

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
<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>Continue provision of existing French services across designated delivery channels</p> <p>Continue to increase the amount of program content available in French on the Department’s website</p> <p>Translate documents and publications such as manuals, forms and brochures</p>	<p>Maintain French-language Services currently offered in the Provincial Call Centre, for clients accessing services in our Yarmouth and Dartmouth Access NS Offices, in the Business Registration Unit and with online transactions</p> <p>Identify and prioritize program areas (both new and existing) of the Department’s website to be translated</p> <p>Review key Departmental forms to assess the viability of offering French or bilingual versions</p>
	<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>Provide employees with increased access to information on French-language Services</p>	<p>Promote French-language Services to new employees through orientation sessions</p> <p>Provide information on French-language services for employees on the Department’s Intranet site</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
<p><u>Objective 2 – Enabling French-language Services</u> Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas</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>A phased redesign of the Department’s website enabling greater awareness of French-language services and improved user experience</p>	<p>Implementation of the “Website Content and Design” standards for French-language web pages and the migration of French content into a web content management system</p>
	<p>2.4 Prioritization and establishment of French-language services to be offered, and of strategies or approaches for service delivery.</p>		
	<p>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>	<p>Increase the number of French-speaking front-line staff</p>	<p>Continue to advertise all vacant positions in the Service Delivery division as seeking French-language capacity as an asset</p> <p>Provide staff with opportunities for French-language training</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Goals and Objectives – 2009-2010	Planned Measures – 2009-2010
<p><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</p>	<p>3.1 Government has helped Acadian and Francophone community-based organizations, where appropriate, realize their objectives expressed in the community's Global Development Plan.</p>	<p>Encourage municipalities to begin offering French services and/or programs</p>	<p>Provide increased access online to information and services from Nova Scotia municipalities</p>
<p><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</p>	<p>3.2 Acadian and Francophone school community centres offer services and programs to the Acadian and Francophone community.</p>		

Priorities of 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. Greater collaboration with municipalities to increase services in French has been identified as a need in the community. Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations has taken steps to encourage municipalities to begin offering services in French and is providing services online for municipalities in Nova Scotia.

We encourage the Acadian and Francophone community to provide us with feedback on our services and to indicate areas or programs where we could initiate offering French-language service offerings to suit the community's needs.

Conclusion

The goals and objectives outlined in this plan build upon the foundation of French-language services the Department has in place to provide Acadian and Francophone Nova Scotians with options to interact with government in their own language. The Acadian community is an important part of our clientele; providing increased access to programs, services and information in French is a very exciting initiative which benefits our customers, our employees, our Department, and all of government.