



Nova Scotia



**Office of the Ombudsman
French Language Service Plan
2012-2013**

February 27, 2012

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Office of the Ombudsman

Introduction to the Office of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman is established as an Officer of the House of Assembly, a commissioner for investigations. The Office of the Ombudsman investigates complaints arising from the administration of provincial or municipal laws within Nova Scotia. The Office of the Ombudsman may also initiate investigations of administrative activities and practices, referred to as “Own Motion Investigations” or matters referred to it by a “committee of the House.” The Ombudsman has focused responsibility with respect to youth, seniors, adult offenders, and disclosure of wrongdoing. On December 20, 2011, the Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act and regulations came into effect, increasing this Office’s responsibilities in this area.

Mission

Fostering confidence in the public service by promoting the principles of fairness, integrity and good governance.

Message from the Ombudsman

On behalf of the Office of the Ombudsman, I am pleased to present our French language Services Plan for 2012-2013. This plan outlines our priorities and initiatives for continuing to improve our capacity to provide French language services. The plan will be updated on an annual basis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dwight Bishop". To the right of the signature is a vertical line, likely indicating where it was signed on a document.

Dwight Bishop
Ombudsman

Response to verbal and written requests to communicate in French

This Office responds to verbal and written requests to communicate in French from the public in a timely manner. We accomplish this by utilizing staff of the Office of the Ombudsman who are proficient in French and/or through a translation service. We will continue to enhance our capacity to provide French language services over the long term.

French-language Services Inventory

This Office provides the following documents in English and French:

- ? Office of the Ombudsman Annual Reports from 2004-2005 to date.
- ? Brochure - *Do you Have Concerns about the Provincial and Municipal Government?*
- ? Youth Brochure and Poster - *We have Time to Talk* - (Also available in Mi'kmaq).
- ? Poster - *Nova Scotia Office of the Ombudsman*
- ? Ombudsman Website

We are currently having our complaint form translated into French and will be available for distribution in 2012-2013. The youth material is distributed province wide to all residential child caring facilities, secure care, correctional/detention facilities, probation offices, all youth designated police holding cells (municipal & RCMP), various Child and Youth Advocates across the country, and to staff of youth facilities. In addition, all of our communication is distributed to the public during presentations, conferences, community outreach visits including senior residential facilities, adult correctional facilities, and Justice Centres.

We currently have three staff (two permanent, one contract) with capacity to provide verbal and written French-language services, with some limitations. The *Bonjour* sign is displayed in the offices of these individuals. During 2011- 2012, four staff took French language lessons through University Saint Anne.

How the Plan Will Contribute to the Preservation or Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Communities

The ability of the Office of the Ombudsman to provide French language services will allow Acadian and Francophone individuals to bring forward concerns about provincial and municipal services in their language of choice. In addition, the increased number of staff from outside the Acadian and Francophone community who can communicate in French will enhance their understanding of Acadian and Francophone language and culture.

Table 1 – Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012:
(Office of the Ombudsman)

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012
<u>Objective 1 – Framework and Policy</u> Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the <i>French-language Services Act</i>	1.1 Administrative and Policy Framework The Office of Acadian Affairs and the Minister of Acadian Affairs fulfill their obligations pursuant to the <i>French language Services act and regulations</i> .			1.1 Applies to the Office of Acadian Affairs.
	1.1 Institutional Responsibilities Designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act and Regulations	Fulfill obligations determined in the French-language Services Act and Regulations	? Participate on the French Language Services Coordinating Committee ? Promote staff attending Awareness Training	Ensured representation on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. One staff member attended Awareness training on French language services in this fiscal year. Five staff have taken this training to date.

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012
		1.2 Increase capacity for government to support departments/offices in the delivery of French language services	? Create internal policy on expanding information and initiatives available in French.	Progress has been made in expanding initiatives available in French i.e. website, media releases, bilingual Investigation reports, Annual Reports and complaint form.
<u>Objective 2 –</u> <u>Enabling French-language Services</u> Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas.	2.1 – Consultations Designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation.	Establish and prioritize the French language services to be offered, and the strategies or approaches for service delivery	? Develop a five year plan to enhance our capacity to provide French language services. ? Ensure outreach information is available in French, i.e. kiosk.	? Plan has been developed ? Bilingual information distributed: 212 French general information brochures, 146 Youth brochures, and 2 posters were distributed. ? Displayed Bilingual Banners for the Kiosk (Ombudsman and Youth) at 2 functions - Halifax 50+ Expo and Digby 50+ Expo. Community visited - Cheticamp ? Bilingual NSG broadcast message re: annual report ? Facebook and Twitter messages in French.

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012
	<p>2.3 - Communications with the Public</p> <p>Key stakeholders and the community better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them.</p>	<p>Establish and prioritize the French language services to be offered, and the strategies or approaches for service delivery</p> <p>Key public information is available in both languages.</p> <p>Increase employee and public awareness of the approach by government to provide French language.</p>	<p>? Continue to publish annual reports, brochures, and posters in French.</p> <p>? Bilingual publication of documents - includes media releases and website.</p> <p>? Publish bilingual French Language Services Plan for 2012-2013 .</p>	<p>Translated and published documents in French, including Annual Reports, and the French Languages Services Plan, complaint form.</p> <p>Bonjour sign is displayed in the Office.</p> <p>Website has been translated.</p> <p>Bilingual media releases.</p>
	<p>2.5 Human Resources</p> <p>The capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French</p>		<p>Staff are supported in attending French language training</p>	<p>Four staff persons attended French lessons this fiscal year. Seven of the present staff have taken French lessons.</p> <p>Ability to work in French is included as a consideration in hiring staff.</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012
<u>Objective 3 –</u> <u>Community</u> <u>Development and</u> <u>Capacity -Building</u> Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability	3.1 – Preservation and Growth of the Community Government has helped Acadian and francophone community organizations Realize objectives expressed in the community's Global Development Plan 2009-2014.	Develop and adapt plans and strategies for French language service delivery as part of annual planning process Apply a coordinated approach to deal with human resource issues related to the delivery of French language services. Support community, cultural, and economic initiatives to meet the needs of the Acadian and Francophone communities.	? Actively support the government's French language services initiative. ? Develop linkages and partnerships within government that address the French language services needs.	? Provided staff with opportunities and resources for French language skill development, maintenance and growth. ? Encouraged display of Bonjour sign ? Worked with human resources to have French language requirements included in appropriate job postings. ? Include Acadian communities in our community outreach initiatives.

Table 2 – Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2012-2013

Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2012-2013:
(Office of the Ombudsman)

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2012-2013	Planned Measures – 2012-2013
<u>Objective 1 – Framework and Policy</u> Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the <i>French-language Services Act</i>	1.2 - Institutional Responsibilities Designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the <i>French-language Services Act and Regulations</i> .	Fulfill obligations determined in the French-language Services Act and Regulations	? Participate on the French Language Services Coordinating Committee. Encourage staff to attend Awareness Training on French language services.
<u>Objective 2 – Enabling French-language Services</u> Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas	2.1 - Consultations Designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation.	Establish and prioritize the French language services to be offered, and the strategies or approaches for service delivery	? Implement the five year plan to enhance our capacity to provide French language services. ? Ensure outreach information is available in French, i.e. kiosk., information brochures
	2.3 -Communications with the Public Key stakeholders and the community better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them.	Establish and prioritize the French language services to be offered, and the strategies or approaches for service delivery Key public information is available in both languages. Increase employee and public awareness of the approach by government to provide French language.	? Continue to publish annual reports, brochures, and posters in French. ? Expanded French translation of documents, media releases, and website. ? Publish Bilingual French Language Services Plan for 2012-2013 on the Office of the Ombudsman website.

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2012-2013	Planned Measures – 2012-2013
	<p>2.5 - Human Resources</p> <p>The capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased.</p>	<p>Increase the skill level of the staff presently able to provide Services in French</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Identify French-language /bilingual capacity of staff. ? Provide staff with opportunities, learning tools, and resources for French-language skills development, maintenance, and growth. ? Promote and encourage employees to attend the Acadian awareness session Acadie at a Glance offered by the Office of Acadian Affairs. Include French language competency as an asset in recruitment.
<u>Objective 3 – Community Development and Capacity-Building</u> Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability	<p>3.1 - Preservation and Growth of the Community</p> <p>Government has helped Acadian and francophone community organizations Realize objectives expressed in the community's Global Development Plan 2009-2014.</p>	<p>Develop and adapt plans and strategies for French language service delivery as part of annual planning process</p> <p>Apply a coordinated approach to deal with human resource issues related to the delivery of French language services.</p> <p>Support community, cultural, and economic initiatives to meet the needs of the Acadian and Francophone communities.</p> <p>Acadian Communities visited - 1 Cheticamp (Foyer Pere Fisset)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? Actively support the government's French language services initiative. ? Develop linkages and partnerships within government that address the French language service needs. ? Continue representation on French language committee. ? Continue to Include Acadian communities in our community outreach initiatives.

Appendix A

Enhancing the Capacity of the Office of the Ombudsman to Provide French Language Service

2009-2014

Year	Initiatives
2009-2011	Completed translation of Website and other communication materials
Ongoing throughout plan period	Create opportunities for staff to enhance their capacity to provide French Language
Ongoing throughout plan period	Continue to host community outreach visits in Acadian and Francophone communities
2012-2013	Meet with members of Acadian and Francophone community to obtain input as to how we can improve our service delivery
2014	Re-evaluate plan to ensure we are achieving a more in depth - stand-alone capacity to provide French language services

