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Uqauhinut Kamisinaup Havakvia Nunavunmi
Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut
Bureau du Commissaire aux langues du Nunavut



Business Plan 2016-2019

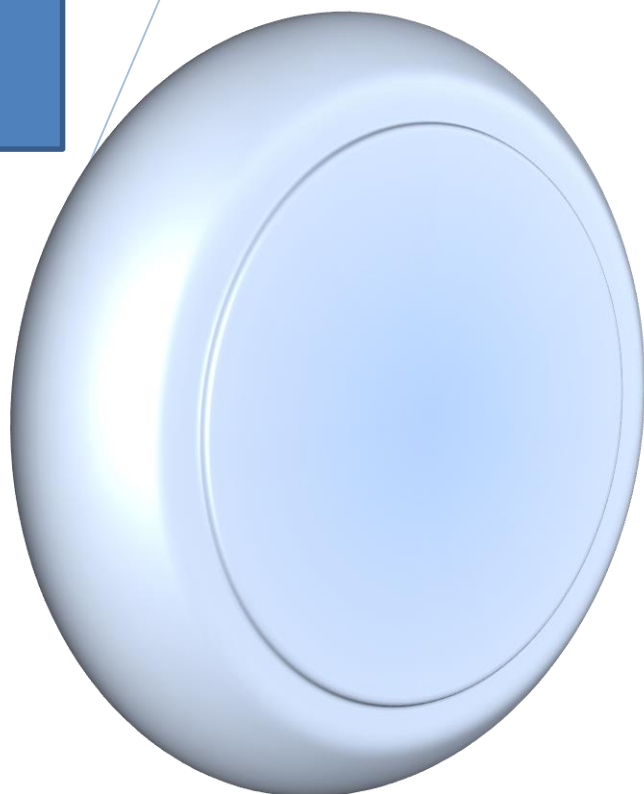


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Introduction

The Languages Commissioner is an independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly appointed for a four year term by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The responsibilities of the Languages Commissioner are those detailed in the *Official Languages Act (OLA)* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act (ILPA)*.

The Office of the Languages Commissioner (OLC) of Nunavut safeguards and promotes the language rights of the Inuit (Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun), English and French speakers in Nunavut.

The objectives of the office are to:

- Inform Nunavummiut of their language rights.
- Inform and advise territorial institutions of their language obligations.
- Monitor territorial institutions' language services and communications.
- Inform and prepare the private sector of their future language service requirements.
- Receive concerns on language rights infringements, investigate or facilitate resolution, recommend corrective action if necessary, and generally support and monitor the implementation of the Nunavut language legislation.

Mission

To promote and safeguard the language rights of Nunavummiut enshrined in Nunavut's language legislation.

Vision

Individuals and language groups are able to receive services from all sectors in their official languages of choice.

Principles and Values

The following principles and values shall apply to the Languages Commissioner when exercising the powers and in performing her/his duties:

- Inuuqatigiitsiarniq – respecting others, relationships and caring for people
- Tunnganarniq – fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive
- Pijitsirniq – serving and providing for family or community, or both
- Aajiiqatigiinni – decision through discussion and consensus
- Piliriqatigiini/Ikajutiginni – working together for a common cause
- Qanuqtuurniq – being innovative and resourceful

Mandate

The Languages Commissioner has four primary roles and responsibilities: Ombudsman, Advocate, Advisor and Monitor.

Ombudsman

The Languages Commissioner reviews any possible breach of the language legislation by territorial institutions and municipalities. The office can investigate, make findings and report, mediate settlements, and informally suggest ways to redress language rights violations.

Advocate

The Languages Commissioner communicates with those obligated to provide language services to influence decision-making, practices or policies on respecting language rights.

Advisor

The Languages Commissioner advises assists and works with territorial institutions, municipalities and the private sector on their language service and communication obligations. The office must also inform Nunavummiut of their language rights.

Monitor

The Languages Commissioner monitors and examines the progress of territorial institutions in meeting their obligations under Nunavut's language acts and municipalities.

Environmental Scan

Demographics

The *Official Languages Act* (OLA) recognizes the Inuit (Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun), English and French languages as the official languages within the territory.

According to the 2011 Census of Canada- Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, the median age in Nunavut was 24.1 years of age compared to the national 39.6 years of age. On the total of 31,770 Nunavut residents, the Inuit language is the mother tongue of 21,225 people. Within that population 16,490 say they speak the Inuit language at home and 8% are unilingual Inuit language speakers.

For the French language, 1,205 people say they speak both French and English, French being the mother tongue of 435 people. French is spoken at home by 250 people. There are 35 unilingual French language speakers.

Most young people are currently able to use both the Inuit and English or the French and English languages. Few people can speak both French and the Inuit languages.

The use of English is increasing at the expense of the Inuit language and French. The Elders of Nunavut mainly speak only the Inuit language. Many bilingual Inuit and Francophones say they would prefer services and communications in their own language.

Geography and Communication

Nunavut's vast territory and the distance between the communities profoundly influence communication activities. It makes face-to-face meetings difficult and expensive. So while there is a need to achieve the "personal touch" our outreach activities must include the use of social media, radio, television, newspapers, the OLC publications, and the Internet. Each has its limitations; not everyone listens to the radio or reads newspapers, and while our Web site is an important tool, poor internet bandwidth and/or computer skills, can be a limit to its effectiveness for certain sects of society.

We strive to produce communication simultaneously in all three official languages, including Inuit (Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun), English and French. Publishing in three languages, one (Inuit) of which has two distinct dialects including orthographies, requires innovative design and approaches to avoid confusing literature and encourage readership.

Legislation

The Official Languages Act

Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* (OLA) was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2008 and came into force on April 1, 2013. OLA sets out service and communication requirements for the three official languages of Inuit (Inuktitut), English and French within the Legislative Assembly, the Government of Nunavut, its boards and agencies, Nunavut courts and municipalities. This

means a person can receive a service or communicate with these offices in their official language of choice.

The act creates a Minister of Languages, to promote and advocate the equal status of the Official Languages, to promote the efficient and effective implementation of and compliance with the Act by territorial institutions and municipalities, and to coordinate the implementation, monitoring, management and evaluation of language obligations, policies, programs and services by departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies.

The Inuit Language Protection Act

As the title suggests, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) aims to protect and revitalize the Inuit language (Inuktitut). It was assented to in 2008. The act mandates the government to take specific measures to safeguard the Inuit language. The act has implications for educational rights, right to work, municipality services and private sector services. ILPA creates a Minister of Languages responsible for coordinating, administering and advocating the full, efficient and effective revitalization and exercise of the rights and privileges established under the Act.

Municipalities

According to the ILPA, municipalities now have to provide services and communication in the Inuit language. A municipality also needs to provide services and communication in an official language if it is deemed through a regulation there is a “significant demand”.

Capacity

The OLC has a total of 7 positions: Languages Commissioner, Executive Secretary, Director of Strategic Planning and Policy, Investigation/Research Officer- Inuit Language, Investigation/Research Officer- French Language, Project Manager and the Public Affairs Officer. In addition to the full-time contingent of employees, the OLC has a contract with legal counsel to provide legal advice and assistance with mediation on an as when needed basis.

Resources

To date, the resources allocated to the Office of the Languages Commissioner has been sufficient.

Core Activities

The core activities of the Office of the Languages Commissioner (OLC) are described below.

Budget (\$000)	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Directorate & Operations	633	633	633	633
Communications	159	159	159	159
Policy, Planning and Investigations	618	618	618	618
Total	1,410	1,410	1,410	1,410

1. Policy, Planning and Investigations

As an ombudsman office, the OLC exists to safeguard language rights and therefore will take actions on all concerns received from the public on language rights as well, the Languages Commissioner can initiate an investigation. Investigations and informing people of their language rights are ongoing activities of this office. These investigations procedures inform the public of how concerns are dealt with once received by the OLC.

Policy and Planning

The OLC examine, analyse and make recommendations with regards to the proposed and existing language policies in territorial institutions and municipalities.

Monitor

The OLC monitors the availability of language services and communications within Nunavut's territorial institutions. For example, the OLC conducts a call verification survey, a news release and website review as well as right to work survey.

Ombudsman and Investigative Training

Awareness of language rights happens through public education campaigns, public appearances and responses to events, and reports of finding and recommendations. It is imperative for OLC staff to be informed and have up-to-date knowledge about best practices to be in a position to investigate and report on findings. Ongoing training and development of its employees is essential for an ombudsman office given their duty to act fairly according to the laws of natural justice.

Investigation

A language rights concern with a territorial institution or municipality can be reported to the Languages Commissioner by an individual or a language group when they are not receiving services, communication or information in the official language of their choice. A concern can be brought to the OLC in any of these circumstances:

- a) The rights, status, privileges of an official language has not been recognized.
- b) A provision of the OLA or regulation relating to the status, use or protection of an official language has not been complied with.
- c) The spirit and intent of the OLA or the ILPA has not been fulfilled.

The Languages Commissioner can also, on their own initiative, or at the request of a territorial institution, a municipality or a Member or Committee of the Legislative Assembly, commence an investigation without having received concerns directly from an affected person.

Systemic Investigation

Systemic investigations are conducted when the perceived violation of language rights is a potentially endemic problem within a territorial institution. The Languages Commissioner has authority to combine more than one concern.

Private Sector

The OLC informs all private sector bodies of their obligations listed under section 3 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) and provides assistance to these organizations with language planning.

2. Communications

The Languages Commissioner recognizes the importance of language rights education and bringing awareness to the public about Nunavut's language legislation.

The Languages Commissioner has the duty to inform the public of their language rights and language obligations under Nunavut's language legislation. The OLC website and social media are important communication tools to Nunavummiut. The website is advertised on all our promotional items to make it visible and accessible to the public. It is also used to promote our activities, annual reports and news releases.

The OLC is very conscious of the importance of using appropriate media to target the official language communities. The OLC makes every effort to use language appropriate media to advertise sections of language legislation which are coming into force, as well as other activities and announcements.

The OLC also attends trade shows to communicate with the public and private sector organizations. Trade shows have been a great opportunity to inform the private sector and the public sector of their language rights obligations under Nunavut's language legislation.

Promotional items are used to communicate language rights as well as the OLC's contact information to encourage Nunavummiut to communicate with the OLC any concerns regarding languages.

During the Inuit and French language weeks the OLC also uses the media to do an aggressive public awareness campaign by doing interviews and activities.

Inuit language speakers

According to Statistics Canada's 2011 census, the Inuit language is the mother tongue of 21,225 people in Nunavut out of a total population of 31,770. Among those people, 16,490 claim to speak the Inuit language at home. Considering that the majority of Nunavut's population is aged between 0 to 24 years old (19,485 people), the OLC considers Inuit youth to be a key segment of society towards the goal of preserving and protecting Inuit language rights. The youth of Nunavut need to embrace their culture and language if the language is to thrive. For that reason the OLC has determined Inuit youth to be a top priority for revitalization and protection efforts.

In our messaging to the Inuit language community the OLC will stress importance of language inclusivity in Nunavut, as it is integral to the vitality of a language. A slogan promoted by the OLC is: My Language, My Right. The purpose of this slogan is to encourage Nunavut's official language speakers to speak their languages proudly.

When services and communications are available in Nunavut's official languages, it stimulates the demand and therefore contributes to the vitality of a language. It sends a message to the Inuit language speakers that their language is respected and welcomed in the services that are provided. The OLC's continual messaging includes informing the public on the importance of communicating language rights violations, because it is only when the OLC knows about them that corrective measures can be taken.

Inuit unilingual Elders are the most vulnerable when it comes to the effects of the lack of language services. As most Nunavut private businesses do not yet provide services in the Inuit language, often Inuit Elders need assistance with interpretation when doing their banking and other personal business. It is for this reason that we look forward to the coming in force of s. 3 of ILPA so that services and communications of the private sector are set and clear.

French language speakers

According to Statistics Canada's 2011 census, 1,205 people claim to speak both French and the English. Among the French speakers, 435 people have the French language as their mother tongue, 35 people are French unilingual speakers and 250 people mostly speak French at home. This modest number who speaks the French language at home is extremely worrisome for the vitality of the French language in Nunavut. In order to help preserve the identity and vitality of the French language in Nunavut, it is important for the OLC to continue to advocate for services in French. Too often, services are unavailable in French even though it is clear that French is included as one of the official languages in Nunavut.

In our messaging the OLC will place emphasis on the importance of speaking the French language at home, as it is the first step towards preserving the vitality of a language. A slogan promoted by the OLC is: My Language, My Right. The purpose of the slogan would be to encourage Nunavut's official language speakers to speak their language proudly.

When services and communications are available in Nunavut's official language, it stimulates the demand and therefore contributes to the vitality of a language. As most French speaking people have English as a second language, they will accept services in the English language when there often is not an active offer of services in the French language, even if it is available.

Status of 2015-2016 Priorities

Communications

- ✓ Lobby the GN to put not in force sections, namely 3 to 5, 9, and 10 of ILPA into force.
Status: A recommendation was included in the OLC 2013-2014 annual report regarding sections 3-5 of ILPA.
- ✓ Develop appropriate compliance tools for territorial public servants.
Status: The OLC worked on and distributed compliance tools.

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Five year review on the status of addressing recommendations made by the OLC.
Status: The OLC has reviewed the status of addressing recommendations made by the OLC.
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions language services through phone call verification and the GN's news releases review.
Status: The OLC has completed a phone call verification and a GN's news release review.

Priorities for 2016-2017

Communications

- ✓ Participate in public dialogue on standardization of the Inuktitut writing system.

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' right to work in the Inuit language.
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through news release review.

- ✓ Investigate the compliance of language services and communications by third party contracts, if in force, held by territorial institutions.

Priorities for 2017-2018

Communications

- ✓ Monitor compliance of private sector and federal government entities (if in force).

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through phone call verification and news release review.

Priorities for 2018-2019

Communications

- ✓ Review the Office of the Languages Commissioner's communication campaign and tools.

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through news release review.
- ✓ Review Inuktitut revitalization efforts of the Government of Nunavut.



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 Uqauhinut Kamisinaup Havakvia Nunavunmi
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 Bureau du Commissaire aux langues du Nunavut

BUSINESS SUMMARY	2015 – 2016		2016 – 2017		2017 – 2018		2018 – 2019	
	Main Estimates		Main Estimates		Planned		Planned	
	\$ 000	PYs	\$ 000	PYs	\$ 000	PYs	\$ 000	PYs
DIRECTORATE & OPERATIONS								
Salary	291	2	291	2	291	2	291	2
Grants & Contributions	—		—		—		—	
Other O&M	342		342		342		342	
Subtotal	633		633		633		633	
COMMUNICATIONS								
Salary	129	1	129	1	129	1	129	1
Grants & Contributions	—		—		—		—	
Other O&M	30		30		30		30	
Subtotal	159		159		159		159	
POLICY, PLANNING & INVESTIGATIONS								
Salary	570	4	570	4	570	4	570	4
Grants & Contributions	—		—		—		—	
Other O&M	48		48		48		48	
Subtotal	618		618		618		618	
TOTAL	1,410	7	1,410	7	1,410	7	1,410	7