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Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut
Bureau du commissaire aux langues du Nunavut

Business Plan

2017-2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Languages Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly appointed, until February 2017¹, for a four-year term by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly.

2. MISSION

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

3. VISION

(Official Languages Act) Individuals are able to communicate with and receive services from the Government of Nunavut, and its public agencies, the Legislative Assembly, and its institutions, the Nunavut courts and the municipalities² in their official language of choice.

(Inuit Language Protection Act) Individuals are able to communicate with and receive services from the Government of Nunavut, and its public agencies, the Legislative Assembly, and its institutions, the Nunavut courts, the municipalities³, the private sector organizations and from the federal departments, agencies or institutions in the Inuit language.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Languages Commissioner has four primary roles and responsibilities: ombudsman, advocate, advisor and monitor. The responsibilities of the Languages Commissioner are those detailed in the *Official Languages Act (OLA)* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act (ILPA)*.

Ombudsman

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

¹ The next Languages Commissioner will be appointed for a five-year term.

² See page 7.

³ See page 7.

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 services and communications obligations. The Office also informs Nunavummiut of their language rights.

Monitor

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

5. MANDATE

The mandate of the Office is:

- To inform the Nunavummiut of their language rights
- To inform and advise territorial institutions and municipalities of their language obligations
- To monitor territorial institutions and municipalities' language services and communications with the public
- To inform and prepare the private sector and the federal institutions of their future language service requirements
- To investigate, or facilitate resolution, and to recommend corrective action
- To support and monitor the implementation of the Nunavut language legislation

6. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

The following principles and values shall apply to the Office of the Languages Commissioner (OLC) when exercising the powers and in performing their 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
- Piliriqatigiiniit/lkajutiginniq: working together for a common cause
- Qanuqtuurniq: being innovative and resourceful

7. CAPACITY

The OLC has a total of 7 positions:

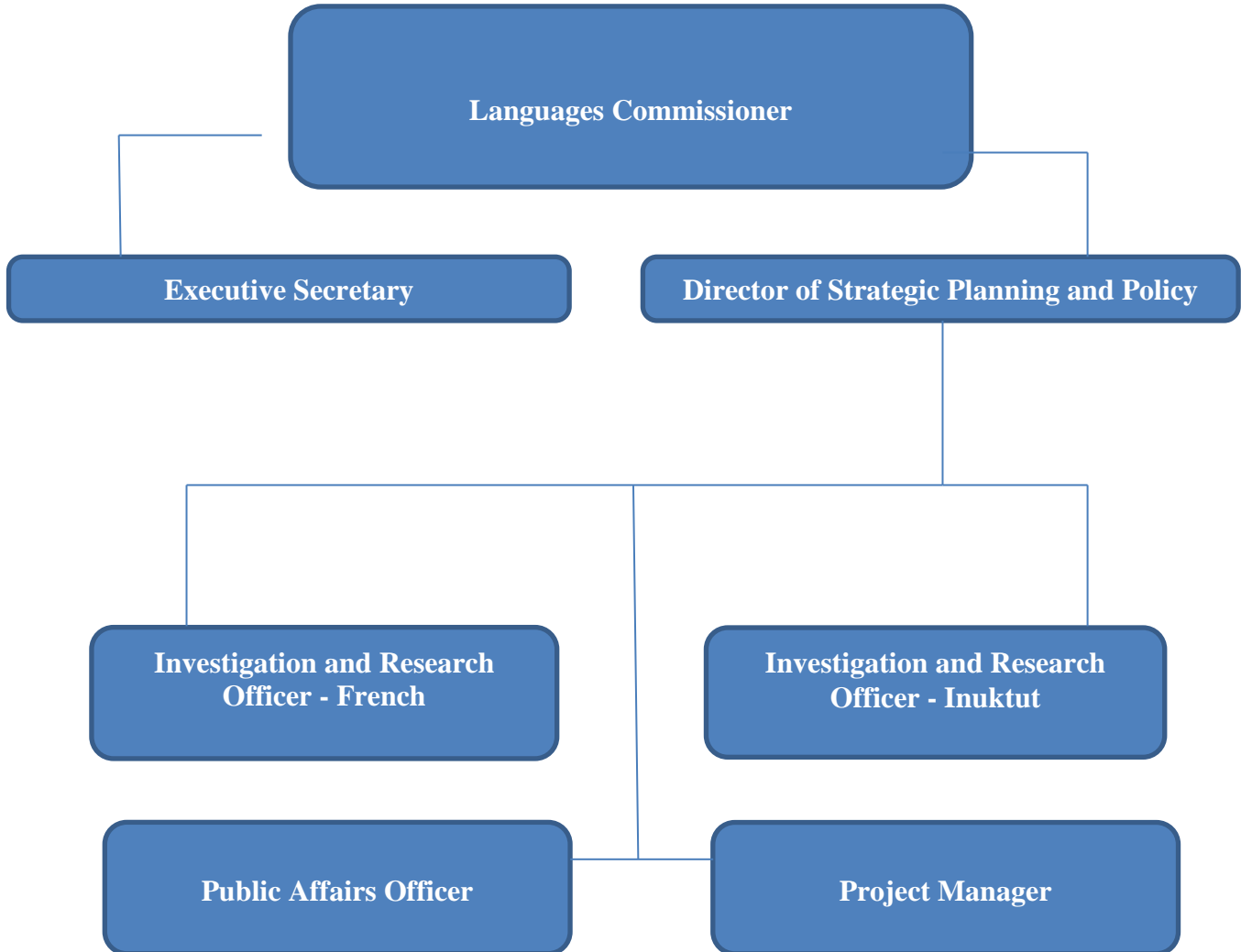
- Languages Commissioner
- Director of Strategic Planning and Policy
- Executive Secretary
- Investigation and Research Officer - French
- Investigation and Research Officer - Inuktitut
- Project Manager
- Public Affairs Officer

In addition to the full-time contingent of employees, the OLC has a contract with a legal firm to provide legal advices and assistance with mediation on an as when needed basis.

8. ORGANIZATION CHART



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9. 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. The OLA sets out service and communication requirements for the three official languages (Inuit language, English and French) within the Legislative Assembly, the Government of Nunavut, its public agencies, and the Nunavut courts. These organizations are to provide an active offer and ensure a person can receive services from or communicate with them in their official language of choice.

The Act created a minister responsible for languages to coordinate and guide the language service requirements that must be met by territorial institutions and municipalities.

Municipalities need to provide communications and services in French or English if it is deemed that there is "significant demand." The Government of Nunavut has yet to provide a mechanism to identify what "significant demand" is, and to pass regulations accordingly to which municipalities are to provide services and communications in French and English.

The Inuit Language Protection Act

Assented to in 2008, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) sets out to protect, promote and revitalize the Inuit language. The Act mandates the government to take specific measures to safeguard the Inuit language.

It includes:

- Educational rights, including early childhood education, Inuit language instruction and adult language acquisition and upgrading
- The right to work in the Inuit language in territorial institutions
- Obligations for municipalities as well as the private and public sectors, including federal and territorial institutions, to offer services in the Inuit language

The ILPA created a minister responsible for coordinating the implementation of policies and programs to protect, promote and revitalize the Inuit language. It also created the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit (IUT), the Inuit Language Authority. The ILPA applies to municipalities regardless of demand.

The Cabinet has yet to set effective dates for:

- Services and communications in the Inuit language to be provided by the private sector bodies and federal departments, agencies or institutions (ILPA, section 3)
- Services being provided for territorial institutions through third party contracts to be provided in all the official languages [ILPA, section 4 and OLA, paragraph 12(7)(c)]
- Provisions for Inuit language services in civil claims to be included in the Nunavut Court of Justice's rules or directions (ILPA, section 5)
- Early childhood education and adult language acquisition and upgrading to be provided in the Inuit language (ILPA, sections 9 and 10)

10. CORE ACTIVITIES AND BUDGET

10.1. COMMUNICATIONS

The Languages Commissioner recognizes the importance of language rights education and bringing awareness to the public about Nunavut's language legislation and has the duty to inform the public of their language rights, and the obligated body of their 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 give information on language rights, promote our activities, annual reports and news releases. People can use our online forms to send us a concern.

During the Inuit and French language months, we use the media and communication tools to do a public awareness campaign on language rights. The slogan "My Language, My Right" encourages Nunavut's official language speakers to speak their languages proudly and to raise awareness about OLC's role. We also want to raise awareness about the importance of language rights and obligations, and the impact of both the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* on people's life.

When services and communications are available in all the official languages, it stimulates the demand and therefore contributes to the vitality of a language. It sends a message to the members of the public that their language is respected and welcomed in the services that are provided.

10.2. 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; the Languages Commissioner can also initiate an investigation. Ongoing activities of the Office are investigations and informing people of their language rights and the obligated bodies of their obligations.

Policy and Planning

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

Monitor

We monitor the availability of language services and communications within Nunavut's territorial institutions and municipalities. We are conducting different surveys, such as: call verification, communication and website reviews, as well as municipality and right to work in the Inuit language surveys.

Ombudsman and Investigative Training

Awareness of language rights happens through public education campaigns, public appearances, responses to events, reports of finding and recommendations. It is imperative for the 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 is essential for an ombudsman office given their duty to act fairly according to the laws.

Investigation

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

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

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

Systemic Investigation

A systemic investigation is 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 and federal institutions

We inform all private sector bodies of their obligations listed under section 3 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) and provide assistance to these organizations with language planning. We intended to do the same with federal institutions located in Nunavut.

10.3. BUDGET

The budget related to the core activities is the following:

Budget (\$000)	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Directorate and operations	633	633	633	628
Communications	159	159	159	160
Policy, planning and investigations	618	618	618	624
Total	1,410	1,410	1,410	1,412

11. PRIORITIES

Throughout the fiscal years, as indicated in our annual reports, we carried out several activities. As many of these activities are recurrent, in the business plan, we put the focus on key priorities.

12. STATUS OF 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

Legislation

- ✓ Participate in the *Education Act* Review
Status: The Office sent a response to the Department of Education on proposed amendments to the 2008 *Education Act*.

Communications

- ✓ Participate in public dialogue on standardization of the Inuktitut writing system
Status: IUT will be holding further community consultations throughout 2016–2017; communities currently targeted for consultation are Kugaaruk, Taloyoak, Sanikiluaq, Chesterfield Inlet and Whale Cove.
- ✓ Participate in a working group on writing in French and translation into French
Status: Ongoing. The objectives are to facilitate the translators' work regarding translations into French, to standardize French text writing and to develop a writing guide and a lexicon.

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' right to work in the Inuit language
Status: Ongoing. We are planning the survey; it will be conducted by March 31, 2017.
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through communication review
Status: Ongoing. The report will be ready by March 31, 2017.

13. PRIORITIES FOR 2017-2018

Legislation

- ✓ Participate in the *Education Act* Review

Communications

- ✓ Develop a communication plan for the OLC
- ✓ Develop an advertising campaign on the OLC's role
- ✓ Review the Office's website: the content

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through e-mail verification
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through communication review
- ✓ Implement a case management software to handle concerns more efficiently
- ✓ Review the investigation procedures

14. PRIORITIES FOR 2018-2019

Communications

- ✓ Develop an advertising campaign on language rights
- ✓ Review the communication tools
- ✓ Review the Office's website: design and implementation

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through communication review
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' right to work in the Inuit language
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through website review

15. PRIORITIES FOR 2019-2020

Communications

- ✓ Develop an advertising campaign on language rights
- ✓ Develop an advertising campaign on the OLC's role
- ✓ Inform the private sector organizations and the federal departments, agencies or institutions of their language obligations under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*

Policy, Planning and Investigations

- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through communication review
- ✓ Monitor territorial institutions' language services through call verification
- ✓ Audit the Department of Health and the Qikiqtani General Hospital to determine their progress in complying with the OLC's recommendations (Systemic Investigation Report)

16. MAIN ESTIMATES FOR 2017- 2020

BUSINESS SUMMARY	2016 – 2017		2017 – 2018		2018 – 2019		2019 – 2020	
	Main Estimates		Main Estimates		Planned		Planned	
	\$0	PYs	\$0	PYs	\$0	PYs	\$0	PYs
DIRECTORATE & OPERATIONS								
Salary	291	2	291	2	291	2	286	2
Grants and Contributions	—		—		—		—	
Other O&M	342		342		342		342	
Subtotal	633		633		633		628	
COMMUNICATIONS								
Salary	129	1	129	1	129	1	130	1
Grants and Contributions	—		—		—		—	
Other O&M	30		30		30		30	
Subtotal	159		159		159		160	
POLICY, PLANNING & INVESTIGATIONS								
Salary	570	4	570	4	570	4	576	4
Grants and Contributions	—		—		—		—	
Other O&M	48		48		48		48	
Subtotal	618		618		618		624	
TOTAL	1 410	7	1 410	7	1 410	7	1 412	7

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