

Official Languages in the Canadian Sport System Follow-Up



Getting a second wind!

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SUMMARY

In the fall of 2002, the Commissioner of Official Languages conducted a follow-up to a study published in June 2000, titled Official Languages in the Canadian Sports System, in which we had looked at allegations that French-speaking athletes could not develop to their full potential within existing sports programs. The purpose of the follow-up was to determine the extent to which Sport Canada had implemented the recommendations we had put forward in this study.

Our follow-up showed that Sport Canada has implemented three out of the fifteen recommendations and has partially implemented nine others. Three recommendations were not acted on. Furthermore, one recommendation directed to Treasury Board Secretariat was partially implemented.

As part of this follow-up, investigators met with over fifty individuals involved in the development of athletes and the training of coaches, at both Sport Canada and the organizations which it funds. Since our study was published in June 2000, we have noted that Sport Canada has taken a number of measures to make linguistic duality part of the Canadian sport system. During that time, Sport Canada published the Canadian Sport Policy and set standards with respect to official languages for high performance training centres. It also surveyed national sports organizations (NSOs) to determine the extent to which their services were available in both official languages. In spite of the progress achieved, however, English and French still do not have equal status in Canadian sport. In many cases, our recommendations were not implemented within the timeframe we had set out.

Among the improvements we noted, Sport Canada ensures that clearer provisions regarding the delivery of services in both official languages are included in the multipartite agreements for major games held in Canada that it signs with its partners. Some NSOs are making significant efforts to make their Web sites bilingual, translate documents, and improve the bilingual capacity of their staff. In 2002, Sport Canada and the Official

Languages Support Programs Branch of Canadian Heritage provided \$100,000 in additional funding for NSOs to have technical documents used for coaching translated.

Progress has been slow, however, and a consistent approach has been lacking with respect to the implementation of the recommendations. For example, Sport Canada has not fully implemented the recommendations that apply to it directly, such as those pertaining to language requirements for positions in the Branch.

The bilingual capacity of NSOs does not yet meet expectations with regard to services provided by national offices and language training for coaches. This has repercussions on the overall development of French-speaking athletes, many of whom are still being coached by unilingual coaches as part of national teams. At the two national sports centres that we visited, many services are provided to national teams in English only, notably medical services. Carded athletes whose language of preference is French and who were already underrepresented in sports overall in 2000 as compared to their numbers in the Canadian population, fare even worse today, as they make up only 17.3% of the total number of athletes. A new recommendation has also been made to Sport Canada with a view to examining this situation.

In short, this follow-up allowed us to take stock of the progress made. Clearly, however, Sport Canada and its partners must expend much greater effort in order to make linguistic duality an integral part of the sport system in Canada. We stand by the recommendations that were partially implemented and those that were not implemented, and we will continue to follow progress in this regard during the months and years ahead.



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1 • Introduction

In the fall of 2002, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages followed up on a June 2000 study pertaining to the use of French and English in the Canadian sport system, entitled *Official Languages in the Canadian Sports System*. In this study, the Office of the Commissioner weighed the validity of allegations that French-speaking athletes were unable to develop fully their skills within the framework of existing programs.

The study was designed to determine the extent to which fifteen recommendations that we had made to Sport Canada during the course of this study had been implemented. We also assessed progress in implementing a recommendation that had been addressed to Treasury Board Secretariat. In this follow-up report, we took into consideration the comments provided by Sport Canada and Treasury Board Secretariat on the preliminary report into consideration.



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2 • Background

In the course of the study, we examined the administrative and linguistic resources that the federal government invests in high performance sports, and the results of this investment. We observed that there had been progress on the language front, but that French and English did not enjoy equal status within the Canadian sport system.

We also considered the extent to which members of both official language groups participated in high performance sports, compared with their representation in society as a whole. During our study, 18% of Sport Canada carded athletes said French was their preferred language, while 82% said it was English. The participation of French-language carded athletes was less than the 24.6% of Canadians who reported French as their first official language in the 1996 Census.

Data on carded athletes obtained in March 2003 revealed that 17.3% of this group reported French as the language they preferred to use in communications with Sport Canada, slightly less than the figures of our study. See appendix 1 to the follow-up report. Based on the 2001 Census, 24.1% of Canadians report French as their first official language, while 74.5% list English (1.4% of the population said neither French nor English was its first official language). We shall consider the issue of French language representation in Section 5 of this report.

Sport Canada's mission is to "support the achievement of high performance excellence and the development of the Canadian sport system to strengthen the unique contribution that sport makes to Canadian identity, culture and society". Sport Canada makes financial contributions to nongovernmental sports organizations. As Sport Canada falls under the Official Languages Act, fifteen of the study's sixteen recommendations were directed to it. However, all the sports organizations in question should also play a role in implementing the recommendations. The recommendations that appeared in our June 2000 study were part of a strategic plan for change aimed at ensuring a sport

system that fully reflects Canada's linguistic duality. Our follow-up enables us to assess the progress that has been achieved in this area.

Organizations that receive Sport Canada contributions include national sport organizations (NSOs) and multi-sport organizations (MSOs), such as the Coaching Association of Canada and Athletes CAN, as well as national sport centres (NSCs). The federal government provides funding to NSOs under contribution agreements administered by Sport Canada. Under these agreements, sports associations have agreed to offer services in both official languages.

In May 2002, Sport Canada published the new Canadian Sport Policy, which states that linguistic duality is an essential feature of the sports system and that all persons regardless of language or culture should be able to participate in this system. The Canadian Sport Policy is aimed at eliminating language barriers imposed on Francophone athletes by providing them with essential services in their language, such as coaching. The policy is the result of concerted efforts which led to federal-provincial-territorial agreements. Sport Canada consulted with the Office of the Commissioner in the course of formulating this policy.



3. Methodology

During our follow-up, we conducted more than fifty interviews with high performance athletes and other stakeholders in the Canadian sport system. During the initial phase of this process, we asked Sport Canada to advise us in writing of the implementation status of each of our fifteen recommendations. At the same time, we met with managers and officers in charge of various Sport Canada programs and we collected relevant documents from the department. We then met with representatives of sports associations and visited two national sport centres, one of which is located in Calgary and the other in Winnipeg, and we also conducted telephone interviews with employees at the National Multi-Sport Centre - Montreal. We had previously examined these centres during our 2000 study. We then spoke with high performance athletes to find out how well the existing sport system meets their language needs.

Our follow-up enabled us to produce a linguistic profile of the Canadian sport system, three years after publication of our study. However, the written response submitted by Sport Canada lacked detail as to the actions that had been taken to implement our recommendations. Sport Canada experienced problems maintaining continuity of action due to staff turnover over the past two years and this factor has had an impact on the implementation of recommendations.



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4 Observations and implementation of recommendations

Our analysis of the implementation of recommendations relates to various topics and does not necessarily correspond to the numbering scheme appearing in our June 2000 report.

4.1 Sport Canada

4.1.1 Linguistic Capability of Sport Canada

Study

- The level of fluency required for senior executives was sufficient (CBC).
- The level of fluency required for managers was insufficient (BBB).

Recommendation 6 •

By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the language requirements of management positions, with a view to improving the French-language capability among managers, and take the necessary measures to ensure that incumbents meet the requirements of their positions.

Follow-Up

Numbering seven, these management positions still require the intermediate BBB level in the other official language. Two positions are currently vacant. One relates to sport programs and the other to sport policies. The department plans to raise the linguistic profiles of these positions to the CBC level in the course of their permanent staffing.

As a result of the recommendation, Sport Canada is currently formulating a human resources strategy that will assess measures that have been taken and is producing a schedule for modifying the linguistic profiles of all management positions based on operational requirements and language training constraints. That is why Sport Canada hired a senior human resources advisor in the summer of 2002 who reports directly to the director general. One of the advisor's tasks is to conduct an overall review of the requirements for all these positions.

Status of recommendation 6 • NOT IMPLEMENTED Progress report: December 31, 2003

4.1.1 Linguistic Capability of Sport Canada (continued)

Study

- Francophone program officers exceeded the second-language skills requirements.
- Anglophone program officers met the second-language skills requirements.
- These positions require a good intermediate knowledge (BBB) of the second language.
- There was no apparent relationship between the language skills required of program officers and the needs of the client organizations to which they were assigned.

Recommendation 7 •

By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the assignment of responsibilities among program officers, to ensure that client organizations can communicate with the branch in their preferred official language.

Follow-Up

Program officers act as consultants for funded organizations. Twenty-two officer positions now exist, two of which are vacant. Fourteen officers exceed the required intermediate BBB level while seven others meet it. Except for one officer who is enrolled in French classes, the others can serve their clients in the official language of their choice. Sport Canada has put mechanisms in place so that clients of the officer not meeting the language requirements can be served in the language of their choice. Since a number of officers exceed the intermediate standard of knowledge of their second language, Sport Canada can take this opportunity to raise the linguistic profile of some of these positions.

The incumbents of the eight Sport Policy Branch positions also serve as consultants to the sports community. Seven of these incumbents meet or exceed the intermediate level language requirement for their positions, while the other is currently taking language courses. Certain linguistic profiles were raised to the next level and positions filled on an imperative basis during recent staffing activities.

Our review of how NSO portfolios have been assigned to program officers reflects increased bilingual ability and an improvement since the time of our study.

Status of recommendation 7 • IMPLEMENTED

4.1.1 Linguistic Capability of Sport Canada (continued)

Study

- The four positions in the Athlete Assistance Program required second language skills at the intermediate level (BBB).
- This skill level was insufficient to discuss program issues with athletes.

Recommendation 4 •

By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the language requirements of positions in the Athlete Assistance Program, with a view to improving the program's French-language capability, and take the necessary measures to ensure that incumbents meet the revised requirements.

Follow-Up

The AAP manager position linguistic rating was thus increased to CBC and the incumbent now meets these requirements. Three other officer positions only require a B level in the other official language, although current employee abilities are in fact higher. Sport Canada still requires the B level, even though one position is currently in the process of being filled (PM 4).

As part of the process involved in formulating its human resources strategy, Sport Canada is reviewing the possibility of raising the linguistic profiles of various positions.



Status of recommendation 4 • : PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: September 30, 2003

4.1.2 Financial contribution to major games

Study

- Sport Canada provides partial funding for major games held in Canada.
- The 2001 Canada Summer Games and the 1999 Pan American Games respected linguistic duality.
- Nevertheless, no funding was specifically earmarked for providing services in both official languages.

Recommendation 5 •

By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada ensure that its financial contribution to major games includes adequate funds to ensure that the official languages requirements can be met.

Follow-Up

The funds allocated by Sport Canada under various multiparty agreements are substantial and are associated with a comprehensive set of official language obligations. Furthermore, Sport Canada has formulated means of ensuring a fair role for both official languages when major national and international sports events are held. During the 2001 Canada Games and the World Championships in Athletics, the organizing committees enhanced the bilingual character of these events by ensuring the active participation of London's and Edmonton's francophone communities.

The multiparty agreement for the March 2003 Bathurst games clearly recognized the bilingual nature of the event and established rules for providing services in both official languages, as had the multiparty agreement for the 2001 Canada Games in London. Moreover, these

games were successful in terms of their respect for both official languages. The multiparty agreement that was signed with respect to the North American Indigenous Games that were held in Winnipeg in 2002 also included specific language clauses. Sport Canada states that exemplary bilingual practices serve as a model for future agreements pertaining to other major games. Furthermore, additional funding has been granted to the Canada Games as well as to the North American Indigenous Games.

In short, while Sport Canada does not stipulate exactly how much funding should be devoted to ensure the respect of both official languages during major games, it has taken the necessary measures to ensure that both French and English are used in such events, and the agreements reflect this fact.

Status of recommendation 5 • IMPLEMENTED

4.1.3 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework

Study

- The NSOs funded by Sport Canada should provide a minimum level of services in both official languages, pursuant to the Sports Funding and Accountability Framework. This includes:
 - being able to respond to requests for information in the preferred language of the requesting party;
 - providing bilingual services for national championships and international events;
 - posting information in both official languages on the home page of their Web site;
 - providing bilingual services at the annual general meeting.
- Even if NSOs met the other minimum language requirements, we believe that Francophones were not fully included in NSO activities.
- The follow-up on contribution agreements was not strict enough.

Recommendation 1 •

By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the official languages goals and minimum expectations of the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework, to require sport organizations to identify and correct barriers to Francophone participation.

Follow-Up>>>

In response to Recommendation 1, Sport Canada surveyed 47 NSOs in 2001 to assess the availability of their services in both official languages. Sport Canada modified the Sports Funding and Accountability Framework (SFAF) after the first cycle (1996-2001) to harmonize it with the three primary orientations of the new Canadian Sport Policy published in May 2002:

sporting excellence, participation in sports and capacity building. By modifying the SFAF, Sport Canada seeks to help funded organizations make sustainable change and assign increased importance to achieving results. The minimal expectations defined in the previous framework have now been replaced by **national** standards applying to all NSOs. The purpose of this approach is: to ensure that the NSOs, in compliance with their national mandate, provide programs and services to their members in both official languages. Under the new national standard:

- the NSO has a policy on official languages that complies with the current Treasury Board and Sport Canada policy;
- the NSO collects statistics on its members' language preferences;
- NSO members may obtain key services in either official language;
- the NSO will provide the key specialized and technical documents in both official languages;
- static sections of the NSO's Web site must be presented and updated in full in both official languages, while dynamic (and constantly changing) sites may be displayed in either of the two official languages;
- the NSO will ensure that its national team coaches can meet the needs of each athlete in his or her official language;
- the NSO will adhere to the Sport Canada policy on Official language standards for high performance training centres

The national standard makes improvements to expectations appearing in the previous SFAF, including those pertaining to the official languages policy that should be adopted by NSOs, access to technical and specialized documents and the presence of bilingual coaches within national teams. However, the standard does not define which "key services" the NSOs must provide. Requirements to information appearing on Web sites are greater than they were previously, as NSOs must now publish static information in full in both languages. However, the sports community is often more interested in "dynamic" Web site sections that provide news and information on upcoming sports events. We therefore find the new standard limiting in this regard.

In short, although Sport Canada has revised the SFAF, we believe that certain weaknesses remain in the national standard and that in this context, recommendation 1 has not been fully implemented. And although the NSO survey identified areas where services provided to their members is lacking, it remains vague in a number of aspects.

Status of recommendation 1 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTED Progress report: April 1, 2004

4.1.3 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (continued)

Study

Monitoring of contribution agreements with national sport organizations was somewhat weak.

Recommendation 2 •

By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada systematically monitor implementation of the official languages goals and minimum expectations in the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework.

Follow-Up>>>

In the course of implementing Recommendation 2, Sport Canada referred us to its NSO survey. While this survey involved a self-appraisal by these NSOs and was in large part subjective, it did enable Sport Canada to produce a linguistic portrait of each such organization. We shall examine the results of this survey in section 4.2. Sport Canada program officers use these data to determine how thoroughly official language goals have been met and to provide counselling to organizations that are required to produce action plans to remedy whatever shortcomings have been observed.

In the summer of 2001, Sport Canada published an assessment of the 1996-2001 accountability cycle, which in part focused on repercussions of the minimal official language expectations that had been set for the NSOs.

This report, which was written by a consultant, assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the SFAF. It also serves as a tool for Sport Canada to monitor the progress that has been achieved and as a guide for its future efforts. The report indicates that the establishment of minimal expectations and the Commissioner's study have made the NSOs aware of the bilingual services situations and have served as a catalyst for change. Many of these organizations have increased their translation budgets and increased the translation of key documents that had only previously been available in English. The report also provides examples of innovative practices that certain NSOs have implemented to provide bilingual services. For example, the Board of Directors of the Canadian Freestyle Ski Association has made bilingualism a job requirement for its Chief Executive Officer.

Status of recommendation 2 • IMPLEMENTED

4.1.3 Sport Funding and Accountability Framework (continued)

Study

- The audit methodology used by Treasury Board Secretariat is focused more on the process to be followed rather than the achievement of results.
- The Commissioner therefore made a recommendation to Treasury Board Secretariat.

Recommendation 3 •

By April 1, 2001, the Treasury Board review its official languages audit methodology in order to ensure that the programs audited not only comply with established administrative controls, but also are effective in achieving program objectives.

Follow-Up>>

Treasury Board Secretariat has updated its auditing practices. This was done essentially to bring its auditing practices into line with the new program evaluation objectives contained in the April 2001 government audit policy. The objective of this policy is to focus, in particular, on results. However, we are unable to conclude that Treasury Board Secretariat has fully integrated these practices in its auditing activities.

Status of recommendation 3 • : PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: December 31, 2003

4.2 National Sport Organizations

4.2.1 Official Languages Policies

Study

- The ability of NSOs to deliver their programs in both official languages varied, depending on each sport's membership base, budget and history.
- A solid official languages program should begin with a policy declaration, clearly stating that the NSO recognizes both English and French as its languages of communication and services.

Recommendation 8 •

Sport Canada work with the national sport organizations to ensure that they adopt appropriate policy statements on official languages by December 31, 2001.

Follow-Up>>>

We saw no hard evidence of NSOs having developed policy statements reflecting all aspects of their services. Sport Canada recognizes that some policy statements are either incomplete or unsatisfactory. To correct this situation, Sport Canada is asking targeted NSOs to adopt appropriate policy statements in their annual action plans.

Sport Canada did commission a consulting firm to undertake an evaluation report on the 1996-2001 accountability cycle. The report suggested that the key factors affecting the degree to which an NSO will

introduce policies and practices that go beyond the letter of accountability and embrace the responsibilities of providing bilingual capacity, are leadership and commitment of both volunteers and staff. While resources are the most frequently cited reason for not developing further capacity, it is not only larger associations who allocate resources for official languages. The report cites some examples of smaller organizations where bilingual service is integrated in their daily practice. Other factors mentioned were the strength of Francophone membership and the cost of translation.

Status of recommendation 8 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: December 31, 2003

4.2 National Sport Organizations

4.2.2 Official Languages Programs

Study

- NSOs were not always able to provide services in French to athletes and coaches.
- Athletes often could not communicate with coaches in their preferred language.

Recommendation 9 •

Sport Canada require national sport organizations to review the linguistic capability of their staff, with a view to ensuring that athletes and coaches can receive appropriate services in their preferred official language at all times by April 1, 2002.

Follow-Up

Sport Canada says that it lacks the authority to become involved in internal NSO administration and only acts through persuasion. It says that it has started by emphasizing the linguistic abilities of High Performance Training Centre (HPTC) staff.

In the summary of its survey, Sport Canada says that it has difficulty clearly determining NSO language capabilities, since incumbent staff member titles and duties vary from one organization to the next. It concluded that in 2001 both athletes and the public were able to easily obtain written or verbal services in either official language, which were usually offered simultaneously. It is difficult for us to draw conclusions from this assessment which is based on averages. Sport Canada recognizes that the survey highlights the following issues: few meetings or the documents associated with them are bilingual, services provided to national team members during competitions held abroad are inadequate

and spoken language services provided by NSOs are often limited.

We have observed an improvement in the availability of literature in both official languages and in its simultaneous distribution, although texts are not always of equal quality. One athlete stated that his contractual agreement with the NSO would have taken a week to obtain in French. He opted for the English version. In another case, a national federation asked a Francophone athlete to sign the English version of his contract as well (he had chosen French), because the English version was the official one. The quantity and quality of information appearing in French and English on organization Web sites varies, but we have observed improvements in this area for many NSOs. For example, the national taekwando, table tennis and snowboarding sites are entirely bilingual and provide links for accessing the other language.

We have also observed progress in NSO first-line services. Knowledge of French is, however, limited in some cases, particularly among technical directors. Employees of various NSOs are taking second-language training. The Canadian Soccer Association, for example, refunds the costs of language classes taken by any staff member who has succeeded.

Many NSO general meetings are held almost exclusively in English, although both French and English participants are present at these events. Moreover, meeting documents and minutes are often available solely in English. Certain larger associations with more funds do what is necessary to ensure the distribution of bilingual materials and the participation of both official language groups. For example, Alpine Canada, with its head office in Calgary, conducts all of its major activities in both languages and ensures that its written materials are bilingual.

Furthermore, Sport Canada's program officers have examined survey results for each organization that they oversee. A letter is sent to each NSO receiving contributions at the start of the fiscal year. The officers take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate those organizations that have engaged in worthwhile initiatives over the course of the year and make note of areas in which there is room for improvement. The NSOs must include a plan of action in their response to improve services in both official languages. Follow-ups by Sport Canada officers provide additional information on NSO language capabilities.

An analysis of various NSO action plans dating from 2002 shows no uniformity in their presentation or content. They include minutes of meetings, progress reports, operational plans and multi-annual plans covering different time periods. Sport Canada should provide a reporting framework to the NSOs, specifying what the action plan should contain with respect to the official languages. Sport Canada has accordingly taken various measures to determine NSO personnel language profiles and their ability to provide bilingual services. The resulting picture is, however, unclear, and the services provided continue to be inadequate in many respects, despite some improvements.

Status of recommendation 9 • : PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

Progress report: December 31, 2003

4.2 National Sport Organizations

4.2.2 Official Languages Programs (continued)

Study

 In view of federal government expectations, national sport organizations felt that they did not receive sufficient funding to cover translation and interpretation costs.

Recommendation 10 •

By April 1, 2002, Sport Canada and national sport organizations jointly review organizations' expenditures related to official languages and establish realistic budgets for this activity.

Follow-Up>>>

Sport Canada says that information from its NSO survey allows it to assess trends with respect to official language expenditures. Sport Canada maintains that comparisons of official language-related expenditures by different NSOs could help them produce more realistic budgets. Sport Canada adds, however, that it is not responsible for producing individual NSO budgets and that it has limited means to intervene. At the same time, Sport Canada expressed no reservations about implementing this recommendation when we produced the final version of our study. We conclude that there has not been a joint review of NSO expenditures by Sport Canada, as was recommended.

Sport Canada must therefore meet with the NSOs to assess their translation needs and review these expenditures with them. This would allow them to establish what realistic budgets for translation would entail.

Status of recommendation 10 • NOT IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: June 30, 2004

4.3 Multi-sport and multi-service organizations

Study

- There were no multi-sport and multi-service organizations (such as the Canadian Olympic Association, the Coaching Association of Canada) to help national sport organizations provide their services in both official languages.
- National sport organizations stated that their primary official language requirement was access to quality and timely translation services.

Recommendation 11 •

By April 1, 2002, Sport Canada study the feasibility of providing centralized linguistic services such as translation to sport organizations, either through government programs or through a nongovernmental organization which could assume this mandate.

Follow-Up>>>

Sport Canada says that it initially produced a pilot project under which it will make a \$50,000 contribution, with that funding matched by Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Support Branch (OLSB), to help ensure translation into French of documents that are of basic interest to all NSOs. In November 2002, the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport announced that an amount of \$100,000 (from Sport Canada and OLSB) would be granted to the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) to translate technical documents. The CAC distributed these funds to 12 NSOs. We shall cover the topic of coaching document translation in item 4.4 of this report.

After its first year (winter 2002-2003), the Sport Canada pilot project will be evaluated to determine how well it met NSO translation requirements. Sport Canada is considering the possibility of maintaining the program for three years.

As this initiative responds to the needs of only certain NSOs (12 for the 2002-2003 period), these organizations will continue to experience difficulty in producing material in both languages and particularly in French without a substantial and sustained injection of funds. We call on Sport Canada to pursue this project in conjunction with Canadian Heritage's OLSB. The Sport Canada NSO survey also reveals that there is often a delay of up to six months in translating the longest technical documents into French.

Status of recommendation 11 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

Progress report: December 31, 2003

4.4 Coaching athletes and training coaches

Study

- Athletes cited the quality of the coaching program as the most critical factor in the development of their sport.
- They stated that their relationships with their coaches were often complicated by language-related issues.
- NSOs are essentially responsible for the development of coaching programs and the hiring of coaches for national teams.
- Few Francophone coaches at the national-team level.
- Lack of instructional and technical material in French.

Recommendation 12 •

Sport Canada work with national sport organizations to identify the first official language of national team coaches by April 1, 2001, and if necessary, take steps to ensure that coaches from both official language groups have access to positions at this level.

Follow-Up>>>

As a result of the survey on official languages, Sport Canada has modified its requirements for NSOs with respect to applications for annual funding (winter and spring 2003). The NSOs must submit a complete list of national team coaches, including information on coaches' official language of choice and official languages spoken. This will give Sport Canada an overview of the bilingual capacity of national team coaches in all sports and enable them to take the remedial action required in some sports.

To follow up on the second part of recommendation 12, Sport Canada plans to ask the NSOs in its next triennial survey (2004-2005) whether they advertise their competitions for coaching positions in French and English-language media. At the same time, it intends to ask the NSOs to include goals that could correct the situation observed during the survey in their plans of action. The deadline that has been set by Sport Canada for meeting the deadline seems remote (2004-2005), in view of the fact that we issued our recommendation nearly three years ago.

We received an interesting comment from the National Coaching Institute (NCI), which falls under the responsibility of the National Multi-Sport Centre - Montreal. The French-language training offered by the NCI makes it easier for Francophone coaches to obtain jobs at the national level. In Montreal, French-language NCI candidates have taken advantage of the language

training program of the Canadian Professional Coaches Association to perfect their knowledge of English. The NCI finances the travel expenses of certain Francophone candidates who serve as trainee coaches on the national teams to help them become better known and increase their chances of joining the network.

Status of recommendation 12 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: December 31, 2003

Recommendation 13 •

Sport Canada work with the Coaching Association of Canada and national sport organizations to ensure that technical manuals for coach education are made available in both official languages within the year following publication of this report.

Follow-Up

Sport Canada affirms that NSO survey results with respect to Recommendation 13 were fairly positive, as technical documents that were important in the athlete's career "were available nine times out of ten in 2001 and were simultaneously available seven times out of ten, with an average wait of three months for those documents that were not immediately available." We have reservations about the accuracy of these findings as they are based on an overall average.

Worthy efforts were made in implementing Recommendation 13, particularly in terms of the gradual revision of the National Coaching Certification Program (3M NCCP). The CAC has provided us with excellent

information in this area. Levels I to III of the Program involve work with sports and athletic teams at the municipal, school or provincial level. Levels IV and V focus on high performance athletes.

Changes were made in the 3M NCCP to give coaches access to a vast range of programs based on actual conditions and the special challenges posed by different sporting environments. The transition involves a transition from a course- and knowledge-based system (the structure in place prior to 3M NCCP) to a Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) system. The new structure will be gradually implemented by the NSOs over the next few years.

The new 3M NCCP structure provides for three types of coaches, pertaining primarily to: (1) community sport, (2) competition and (3) the instruction of sports techniques. The transition to CBET involves the production of a large number of written texts. The CAC provides financial support to the NSOs for translating materials and the guidelines on this topic clearly state that organizations are responsible for making technical literature simultaneously available in both official languages. The NSOs must oversee translation quality by working with Quebec provincial sport associations. Before moving on to a further phase in producing written texts, the NSOs must ensure that documents published during the preceding phase are available in both official languages.

For the transition to CBET, Sport Canada and the Official Languages Support Branch of Canadian Heritage are granting the CAC supplementary assistance of \$100,000 for 2002-2003. As mentioned previously, the CAC awarded these funds to 12 NSOs to translate technical documents. The CAC believes that this additional funding reserved strictly for translation is an effective means of sustaining the overall transition process and ensuring that both language communities can be appropriately served. In view of the large volume of material produced for the CBET, the CAC hopes to receive similar amounts over the next three years. The CAC estimates the translation costs involved in completing the initial transition phase for 60 sports at some \$70,000. We encourage Sport Canada to grant additional funding over the next few years to speed up the translation of these documents.



Status of recommendation 13 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTEDContinued implementation

4.4 Coaching athletes and training coaches

4.4.1 Intercultural education

Study

- Some coaches were relatively insensitive to cultural differences.
- In some cases, coaches did not always make the necessary effort to understand athletes who speak a different language from their own and failed to express patience or tolerance as coaches.
- Some athletes had to serve as interpreters for their coach.

Recommendation 14 •

Beginning immediately, Sport Canada work with national sport organizations to ensure that some members of the coaching group responsible for any national team have a knowledge of both official languages.

Follow-Up>>>

In response to Recommendation 14, Sport Canada noted that the NSO accountability framework (2001-2005) seeks to ensure that coaches can meet the needs of athletes in their official language. A review of action plans will provide for follow up in this regard. In June 2002, Sport Canada issued Official language standards for high performance training centres to NSOs operating high performance training centres (HPTC) for athletes. The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages was consulted during the formulation of these standards which provide, among other things, for the presence of at least one bilingual coach to meet the needs of each high performance team or sports program in HPTCs. The standards should be implemented by April 2005. We shall return to this subject below.

At the time of the follow-up, Sport Canada did not have precise information on the first official language of national team coaches but our observations confirm that certain national teams, including those with athletes from both language groups, have no bilingual coaches. The bilingual abilities of coaches are not an issue in certain sports, such as speed skating, but in many sports it is difficult to recruit skilled bilingual coaches at the national level. NSOs place their greatest emphasis on coach qualifications, skills and experience. Athletes also believe that these factors are of paramount importance, but many are of the opinion that the lack of bilingual coaches makes the learning process much more difficult.

Often, despite the presence of a bilingual coach in a team whose members are of both languages, training sessions are conducted in English if some of the athletes speak only that language. In the absence of bilingual coaches, some associations try to include a bilingual member during international competitions to respond to requests. While useful as a support measure, this process is no substitute for having bilingual coaches on national teams.

language training for high performance coaches. Ten coaches have made use of such funds since 2000 to improve their proficiency in the other official language, with five studying English and five French. The NSOs should make coaches more aware of such programs since they work closely with the CAC throughout the education process. Some coaches believe the NSOs should cover the cost of language training where bilingualism is an established standard.

The Canadian Professional Coaching Association (the professional division of the CAC) devotes funding to

Status of recommendation 14 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: immediately

Recommandation 15 •

Beginning immediately, Sport Canada work with national sport organizations and the Coaching Association of Canada to develop pedagogical material and coaching aids to assist coaches working with linguistically mixed teams.

Follow-Up>>>

In the case of Recommendation 15, Sport Canada has posted on its intranet and Web sites a bilingual lexicon of 34 summer sports. It will remind NSOs that this terminological resource is now available. Sport Canada says it is also seeking other sports lexicons that can be

beneficial to NSO clients and coaches. Except for this measure, we were unable to observe that any teaching materials or coaching aids had been produced that would enable coaches to work with teams consisting of members of both language groups.

Status of recommendation 15 • NOT IMPLEMENTED

New deadline: June 30, 2004

4.5 National sport centres

Study

- There are six national sport centres (now called Canadian sport centres) in Atlantic Canada, Montreal,
 Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver.
- They provide centralized professional and personal support services to high performance athletes and coaches.
- Their objective is to produce athletes capable of winning Olympic medals, while ensuring that the
 athletes develop skills and experience to adapt to life after their sport careers.
- The medical services and orientation services provided for athletes were lacking in French.

Recommendation 16 •

Sport Canada ensure that all national sport centres provide essential medical services in both official languages, by April 1, 2001 and organize appropriate orientation services for French-speaking athletes who are moving to a predominately English-speaking environment for the first time.

Follow-Up

As indicated earlier, Sport Canada published in June 2002 Official Languages Standards Regarding High Performance Training Centres (HPTC). Several are operated by NSOs, either independently or in collaboration with NSCs. These training centres provide a more intense and focussed training environment for top athletes and coaches.

Sport Canada believes that the standards go beyond the recommendation for NSCs in that they also apply to all HPTCs who must ensure bilingual services for coaching, technical materials and administrative services. HPTCs work in conjunction with NSCs to provide services in both official languages. NSOs responsible for both new and existing centres must ensure that at least one

member of the HPTC coaching staff is fluent in both official languages and that athletes can receive services in their preferred official language. These include services of a confidential nature (physicians, sport psychologists, for example), administration services and information regarding local support groups. National sport centres must maintain the same criteria although the timetable for implementation of these standards varies: April 2005 for existing centres and immediately upon finalization of standards for new centres.

We examined the same three NSCs as during our study: Calgary, Winnipeg and Montreal.

4.5 National sport centres (continued)

4.5.1 National Sport Centre in Calgary

The National Sport Centre in Calgary receives \$600,000 (about 1/3 of its total budget) from Sport Canada to run its programs. The provision of medical and professional services to athletes in both official languages is still a problem: from medical doctors, physiotherapists, massage therapists to sport psychologists, very few are bilingual. However, the physiotherapist for the women's national hockey team is bilingual and when the alpine ski team competes in Europe, there are usually one or two bilingual physiotherapists travelling with the team.

We were told that part of the reason for the slow or lack of progress in professional medical services in French is that almost all resources are contracted by the NSC in Calgary. Services from sport psychologists (or other medical and professional service providers contracted by the NSC) are paid for by the centre. If an athlete needs to go outside the centre for bilingual services, there are additional fees. And if the service provider did speak French, he would not necessarily be competent to deal with the specific issue concerning the athlete. Comments were also made regarding the need to have sport psychologists who not only speak the language but understand the athlete's culture, an element of great importance when trying to make athletes overcome mental blocks and problems that can hinder their top performance.

Transition into a larger anglophone milieu for Francophone athletes, especially young athletes from

small communities, remains an important issue. When asked what improvements could be made, athletes spoke about everything from orientation at the intake stage, living arrangements with Francophone families, schooling, to the way messages are translated on the CSC's Internet site (doping regulations, for example).

Although sessions are held in English, documentation for three compulsory workshops on harassment, drugs and supplements, and career transition, is available in both languages. We were told that athletes may ask questions in French. Since these sessions are compulsory and the information given is considered high priority, they should be made available in French as well as in English. The athlete registration form and some brochures in the information package to athletes are available in both languages, although the athlete services handbook isn't. As was the case during our study, there is a bilingual employee resource centre which is able to provide services in French.

Although there is some progress in the provision of bilingual services, it is slow. The sport centre in Calgary should be more proactive in promoting and communicating its services in both official languages. Perhaps the most telling statement came from an athlete: "the Centre is not an Alberta Sport Centre, but a Canadian sport centre and as such, should be able to provide bilingual services to athletes and coaches." The centre needs to have mechanisms in place for delivery of services in French by alternate means if need be.

During our debriefing session at the Centre, the following suggestions were made:

- involve athletes more in the development of an administrative structure to improve services in French.
- ensure the availability of front line people who are fluently bilingual at 'intake' and orientation so that athletes are able to communicate in their preferred language.
- adopt a mind set of helping Francophone athletes deal with the language barrier.



4.5 National sport centres (continued)

4.5.2 National Sport Centre in Winnipeg

At the time of our initial study, neither Volleyball Canada nor the Winnipeg sport centre (where both men's and women's national teams are based) had taken steps to make medical services and psychological counselling available in French. Our follow-up revealed that physiotherapy, medical services, massage therapy and sport psychology, notably for the men's team, are still provided in English. However, the physiotherapist and athletic therapist for the women's national team are bilingual. The physiotherapist assigned to the beach volleyball team is also bilingual.

From the intake stage, the performance service manager is involved in the coordination of medical and sport science services such as athletic therapy, physical therapy, biomechanics. At that stage, the manager should be more conscious of the necessity to provide Francophone athletes with services in their language. Service providers are first and foremost identified by qualifications and geographic location, language being a secondary criterion. Interviews revealed that orientation services and sport psychology were two of the areas that needed improvement. Some athletes stated that the only time they received medical services in French was at International or World Cup events. Staff in Winnipeg indicated that requests for medical services in French would be referred to the St-Boniface General Hospital.

Some administrative services in both languages are still lacking. No individual intakes are done in French with new athletes, but for team intakes, it can be done in both languages. The three compulsory workshops offered by the centre, "Drugs and Supplements", "Transition" and "Out of Bounds" (on harassment) are available only in English, because there are few Francophone athletes. Given the importance of the subject matter in some workshops, it would be appropriate to have them available in both languages. A part of the "static" information on the website is available in English and French, but the "interactive" side is essentially in English. The cost of translating the material is an issue and the Centre most often relies on volunteers. The athlete intake form is posted in both languages on the site.

Athletes sit on the Board of Directors and usually meet with staff to determine what their needs may be, and the Centre does try to incorporate their input within the services it provides. These meetings could be the right forum to discuss athletes' needs and concerns on official languages matters.

The General Manager of the Winnipeg sport centre, who has occupied the position for a short period of time, recognizes that the Centre could be more proactive to ensure provision of services in French to Francophone athletes.

In our debriefing we made the following suggestions:

- take a proactive approach to the provision of services and look at viable alternatives.
- explore options that would help in the transition of Francophone athletes and,
- re-examine what areas of orientation and professional services need to be improved upon.

Having examined the situation at the time of our study and during the follow-up, we conclude that Sport Canada and national sport centres must make more concerted efforts to ensure adequate provision of bilingual services. Leadership and commitment are key in this respect.



Status of recommendation 16 • PARTLY IMPLEMENTED

Progress report: April 1st 2004

4.5 National sport centres (continued)

4.5.3 National Multi-Sport Centre - Montreal

Study

The National Multi-Sport Centre - Montreal was unaffected by Recommendation 16, since the centre's service providers offer professional and medical services in both official languages. The centre continues to provide such services, which include medicine, sports psychology, physiotherapy and massage therapy. About twenty percent of carded athletes training in Montreal are Anglophones.

Administrative and orientation services, materials for athletes and most information posted on its Web site are available in both languages. The language used in mandatory workshops on harassment, the use of drugs and supplements and on athlete careers and transition depends on the audience. During meetings held twice a year, coordinators from the national sports centres that are responsible for athlete services can pool the information they have on hand (policies and documents) in both official languages, although this is not done on a systematic basis.



Population of carded athletes according to preferred language

A starting point for our 1999 study was the under-representation of French-language carded athletes. At that time, 18% of carded athletes stated that their preferred language was French, a figure lower than the 24.6% of the population that reported French as their first official language in the 1996 Census. Today, 17.3% state a preference for French, a difference of nearly 7% with respect to the figure of the 2001 Census in which 24.1% of all Canadians said French was their first official language.

The efforts to follow up on our recommendations have not rectified this imbalance up until now and Sport Canada must once again focus on this issue to determine its causes. While certain sports have traditionally held a greater attraction for one language group or the other, we do not believe that such an attraction alone explains the imbalance or total absence of Francophones in certain sports. We realize that the participation rate of Francophones may vary from year to year and that it is not the sole indicator for assessing the "health" of the official languages in the high performance sport system. However, the persisting difference continues to give cause for concern.

In certain sports, there are few carded athletes in absolute numbers and any minor fluctuation up or down can substantially modify percentages. However, this is not the case with sports that draw large numbers of athletes. For example, currently there are only four (5.3%) Francophones in track and field out of a total

72 athletes, while there were 7 (11.3%) in 1999 out of a total 62. Furthermore, despite soccer's popularity in Quebec, participation of francophone men and women is less than 13%. There are only 40 carded athletes in sailing, 5 of them Francophones (12.5%). In rowing, one athlete out of 68 is Francophone.

There is no question that carded athletes should be selected on the basis of merit and objective criteria. But we believe that Sport Canada should commission an independent study on Francophone participation in all sports and determine what conditions are propitious for ensuring equal access by both official language groups. In the course of this study, the group should emphasize the manner in which the location of high performance training centres might affect such representation. The study could be conducted by members of the academic or sport communities that have already conducted research on sports in Canada.

Consequently, the Commissioner is formulating a new recommendation that:

- a) by October 31, 2003, in co-operation with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, undertake an independent study on Francophone participation in sports overall and determine what conditions are conducive for ensuring equal access by both official languages groups to high performance sports.
- **b)** conduct the study and produce a report by June 30, 2004.

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6. Conclusion

Since the publication of our study in June 2000, efforts made by Sport Canada and other sport organizations demonstrate their commitment to incorporate linguistic duality within the Canadian sport system. The Canadian Sport Policy offers a broader vision of sport in Canada, which seeks to include all Canadians and adapt itself to their needs. The establishment of official language standards for high performance training centres is a positive addition to efforts by Sport Canada aimed at helping its athletes progress, in the language of their choice.

Financing granted to sport organizations by the federal government is certainly a key element in meeting the goals that Sport Canada has set for itself, and recent contributions from the Secretary of State may prove useful in this regard. Outside of financial considerations, the federal government and its partners should accelerate the pace of implementation of our recommendations that are primarily aimed at optimal development of athletes in a bilingual nation. It is incumbent upon Sport Canada to provide most of the leadership in this regard to ensure that all partners rapidly structure their approach and coordinate their efforts to meet established goals.



7.1 Population of carded athletes

		HONES	110 (1100)	HONES	TOTAL
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number F	Percentage of Total	Numbe
Alpine Ski	14	60.9 %	9	39.1 %	23
Alpine Ski - Paralympic	9	100 %	0	0 %	9
Archery - Paralympic	2	100 %	0	0 %	2
Athletics	72	94.7 %	4	5.3 %	76
Athletics - Paralympic	24	66.7 %	12	33.3 %	9
Badminton	6	85.7 %	1	14.3 %	7
Baseball - Men	6	66.7 %	3	33.3 %	36
Basketball - Men	37	100 %	0	0 %	37
Basketball - Paralympic -Men	12	100 %	0	0 %	12
Basketball - Paralympic - Women	10	83.3 %	2	16.7 %	12
Basketball - Women	26	89.7 %	3	10.3 %	29
Biathlon	9	90 %	1	10 %	10
Bobsleigh - Men	12	92.3 %	1	7.7 %	13
Bobsleigh - Women	6	100 %	0	0 %	6
Boxing - Men	9	64.3 %	5	35.7 %	14
Boxing - Women	1	50 %	1	50 %	2
Canoeing	27	73 %	10	27 %	37
Cross Country Ski	14	77.8 %	4	22.2 %	18
Cross Country Ski - Paralympic	4	100 %	0	0 %	4
Curling - Men	12	100 %	0	0 %	12
Curling - Women	12	100 %	0	0 %	12
Cycling	24	70.6 %	10	29.4 %	34
Cycling - Paralympic	1	25 %	3	75 %	4
Diving	5	33.3 %	10	66.7 %	15
Equestrian	19	100 %	0	0 %	19
Fencing	15	50 %	15	50 %	30
Fencing - Paralympic	1	100 %	0	0 %	1
Field Hockey - Men	33	100 %	0	0 %	33
Field Hockey - Women	25	100 %	0	0 %	25
Figure Skating	12	50 %	12	50 %	24
Freestyle Ski	23	74.2 %	8	25.8 %	31
Goalball - Men - Paralympic	4	66.7 %	2	33.3 %	6
Goalball - Women - Paralympic	4	66.7 %	2	33.3 %	6
Gymnastics - Men	13	100 %	0	0 %	13
Gymnastics - Trampoline	6	85.7 %	1	14.3 %	7
•	12	85.7 %	2	14.3 %	14

DISCIPLINE	ANGLOPHONES		FRANCOPHONES		TOTAL	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Number Pe	ercentage of Total	Number	
Hockey - Women	35	77.8 %	10	22.2 %	45	
Judo	6	35.3 %	11	64.7 %	17	
Judo - Paralympic	1	100 %	0	0 %	1	
Luge	8	100 %	0	0 %	8	
Racquetball	10	83.3 %	2	16.7 %	12	
Rowing	68	98.6 %	1	1.4 %	69	
Rugby - Men	22	100 %	0	0 %	22	
Rugby - Paralympic - Men	8	66.7 %	4	33.3 %	12	
Shooting - Paralympic	6	100 %	0	0 %	6	
Skeleton	7	100 %	0	0 %	7	
Snowboard	4	66.7 %	2	33.3 %	6	
Soccer - Men	28	87.5 %	4	12.5 %	32	
Soccer - Women	31	88.6 %	4	11.4 %	35	
Softball - Women	28	96.6 %	1	3.4 %	29	
Speed Skating	33	62.3 %	20	37.7 %	53	
Squash	11	91.7 %	1	8.3 %	12	
Swimming	52	88.1 %	7	11.9 %	59	
Swimming - Paralympic	16	94.1 %	1	5.9 %	17	
Synchro Swim	21	70 %	9	30 %	30	
Table Tennis	7	63.6 %	4	36.4 %	11	
Taekwondo	4	40 %	6	60 %	10	
Tennis	6	60 %	4	40 %	10	
Tennis - Paralympic	7	70 %	3	30 %	10	
Triathlon	4	100 %	0	0 %	4	
Volleyball - Beach	12	75 %	4	25 %	16	
Volleyball - Men	31	91.2 %	3	8.8 %	34	
Volleyball - Paralympic - Men	11	100 %	0	0 %	11	
Volleyball - Women	31	86.1 %	5	13.9 %	36	
Water Polo - Men	18	100 %	0	0 %	18	
Water Polo - Women	21	75 %	7	25 %	28	
Water Ski	6	100 %	0	0 %	6	
Weightlifting - Women	0	0 %	1	100 %	1	
White Water Canoe	13	92.9 %	1	7.1 %	14	
Wrestling - Men	24	96 %	1	4 %	25	
Yachting	35	87.5 %	5	12.5 %	40	
Yachting - Paralympic	7	100 %	0	0 %	7	
	,	100 /0	J	3 70	,	
TOTAL	1 153	82.7 %	242	17.3 %	1395	

7• Appendices

7.2 • List of recommendations

Recommendation 1: By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the official languages goals and minimum expectations of the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework, to require sport organizations to identify and correct barriers to Francophone participation.

Recommendation 2: By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada systematically monitor implementation of the official languages goals and minimum expectations in the Sport Funding and Accountability Framework.

Recommendation 3: By April 1, 2001, the Treasury Board review its official languages audit methodology in order to ensure that the programs audited not only comply with established administrative controls, but also are effective in achieving program objectives.

Recommendation 4: By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the language requirements of positions in the Athlete Assistance Program, with a view to improving the program's French-language capability, and take the necessary measures to ensure that incumbents meet the revised requirements.

Recommendation 5: By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada ensure that its financial contribution to major games includes adequate funds to ensure that the official languages requirements can be met.

Recommendation 6: By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the language requirements of management positions, with a view to improving the French-language capability among managers, and take the necessary measures to ensure that incumbents meet the requirements of their positions.

Recommendation 7: By April 1, 2001, Sport Canada review the assignment of responsibilities among program officers, to ensure that client organizations can communicate with the branch in their preferred official language.

Recommendation 8 : Sport Canada work with the national sport organizations to ensure that they adopt appropriate policy statements on official languages by December 31, 2001.

Recommendation 9 : Sport Canada require national sport organizations to review the linguistic capability of their staff, with a view to ensuring that athletes and coaches can receive appropriate services in their preferred official language at all times by April 1, 2002.

Recommendation 10: By April 1, 2002, Sport Canada and national sport organizations jointly review organizations' expenditures related to official languages and establish realistic budgets for this activity.

Recommendation 11: By April 1, 2002, Sport Canada study the feasibility of providing centralized linguistic services such as translation to sport organizations, either through government programs or through a nongovernmental organization which could assume this mandate.

Recommandation 12: Sport Canada work with national sport organizations to identify the first official language of national team coaches by April 1, 2001, and if necessary, take steps to ensure that coaches from both official language groups have access to positions at this level.

Recommendation 13: Sport Canada work with the Coaching Association of Canada and national sport organizations to ensure that technical manuals for coach education are made available in both official languages within the year following publication of this report.

Recommendation 14: Beginning immediately, Sport Canada work with national sport organizations to ensure that some members of the coaching group responsible for any national team have a knowledge of both official languages.

Recommendation 15: Beginning immediately, Sport Canada work with national sport organizations and the Coaching Association of Canada to develop pedagogical material and coaching aids to assist coaches working with linguistically mixed teams.

Recommendation 16: Sport Canada ensure that all national sport centres provide essential medical services in both official languages, by April 1, 2001 and organize appropriate orientation services for French-speaking athletes who are moving to a predominately English-speaking environment for the first time.

New recommendation:

a) by October 31, 2003, in co-operation with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, undertake an independent study on Francophone participation in sports overall and determine what conditions are conducive for ensuring equal access by both official languages groups to high performance sports.

b) conduct the study and produce a report by June 30, 2004.