Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

2004-2005 Estimates

Part III - Report on Plans and Priorities
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

2004-2005 Estimates

Part III - Report on Plans and Priorities

The Right Honourable Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada
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SECTION I: Messages

Commissioner’s Message


As an officer of Parliament, it is my duty to make all decisions and take all measures to ensure recognition of the equal status of the two official languages and compliance with the spirit and the letter of the Official Languages Act. It is also my duty to ensure compliance with legislative intent regarding administration of the affairs of federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act, including activities concerned with the advancement of English and French in Canadian society. Canadians rightly expect to be able to communicate with their government and obtain quality services in the official language of their choice. Furthermore, Canadians within a minority linguistic community expect their community to be able to develop and flourish within our changing Canadian society.

With the support of my organization, I will therefore continue to oversee advancement of the Government of Canada’s Action Plan for Official Languages to ensure that the following tangible results are achieved for Canadians: quality services available in both official languages; both official languages as an integral part of public service culture; greater support for official language minority communities; and an increase in the number of young bilingual Canadians. In 2004-2005, we will focus even more on the economic and social issues relevant to the Anglophone and Francophone communities of Canada.

I cordially invite you to read this report, which will inform you about the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages’ continuing efforts to meet the expectations of Canadians.

Dyane Adam
Management Representation Statement


This document has been prepared in compliance with the reporting principles and disclosure requirements contained in the Guide to the Preparation of the 2004-2005 Report on Plans and Priorities.

- It accurately portrays the organization’s plans and priorities.
- The planned spending information in this document is consistent with the directions provided in the Minister of Finance’s Budget and by the Treasury Board Secretariat.
- It is comprehensive and accurate.
- It is based on sound underlying information and management systems.

The reporting structure on which this document is based has been approved by Treasury Board Ministers and is the basis for accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities provided.

Name: Louise Guertin, __________________________

Title: Director General, Corporate Services

Date: April 26, 2004
Section II: Raison d’être of the Commissioner and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

As an officer of Parliament and agent of change, the Commissioner plays several roles in promoting the Official Languages Act (the Act) and implementing its provisions, protects the language rights of Canadians and promotes linguistic duality and bilingualism in Canada.

The Commissioner ensures that the three key objectives of the Act are achieved and takes all necessary measures in that regard. Those objectives are:

- the equality of English and French in Parliament, within the Government of Canada, the federal administration and institutions subject to the Act;
- the development and vitality of official language minority communities in Canada; and
- the equal status of English and French in Canadian society.

More specifically, the Commissioner plays the following six roles:

1. **Ombudsman role:** The Commissioner receives and reviews complaints and, if required, investigates and makes necessary recommendations. In this role, she also conducts investigations on her own initiative as she deems advisable.

2. **Auditing role:** The Commissioner plays a proactive role by conducting audits to measure compliance with the requirements of the Act and proposes recommendations relating to the existing management framework within organizations.

3. **Liaison role:** With support from the regional offices and liaison officers, the Commissioner works with federal institutions and other organizations, various levels of government and official language minority communities throughout the country. Through that interchange, she gains a better understanding of the needs and concerns of linguistic communities, makes relevant recommendations and intervenes judiciously in major official language issues.

4. **Monitoring role:** The Commissioner acts preventively by intervening at the stage where laws, regulations and policies are developed so as to ensure that language rights remain a primary concern of leaders.

5. **Promotion and education role:** The Commissioner heightens Canadians’ awareness of the benefits of linguistic duality, works together with community organizations, takes appropriate action to have organizations subject to the Act give official languages and linguistic communities the attention they deserve, and contributes toward the development and enhancement of the vitality of official language minority communities. This role consists of conducting research, studies and public awareness
activities. She makes speeches and participates in symposia and workshops to inform all Canadians of the status and importance of the official languages.

6. **Court intervention role:** The Commissioner aids in advancing Canadians’ language rights by seeking leave to intervene, when appropriate, in adjudicative proceedings relating to the status or use of English or French to ensure that linguistic rights are respected.

The chart below illustrates the interaction between the Commissioner’s six roles as an agent of change with her four main groups of interlocutors (Parliamentarians, federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act, official language minority communities and the Canadian public).

*Commissioner’s roles as an agent of change*
OCOL supports the Commissioner in her duties as an officer of Parliament. More specifically, OCOL:

- ensures that federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act administer their affairs according to the spirit and the letter of the Official Languages Act by reviewing their strategic directions in matters of official languages, measuring their results and working with them to achieve those results;
- receives complaints and investigates;
- conducts audits, studies, research and analysis to gain a better understanding of changes in the status and use of English and French in Canada;
- monitors the advancement of English and French within the federal administration and Canadian society; and
- contributes to the development and vitality of official language minority communities.
Section III: Planning Overview

The overall planning framework for OCOL reflects the Commissioner’s independence from the government. As an officer of Parliament, the Commissioner can exercise her ombudsman and auditing roles to urge compliance by the organizations subject to the Act.

The aim of OCOL – equal status for the two official languages and equality of rights and privileges regarding their use within federal institutions, as well as the recognition and vitality of linguistic duality in Canada – can be achieved only through actions undertaken and carried through by federal institutions and other organizations. This is why OCOL is constantly seeking effective, innovative methods to encourage decision makers to achieve these results on behalf of Canadians.

To be certain of respecting the spirit and the letter to the Act, federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act must adopt new approaches adapted to modern technology, to the new framework for managing human resources and to diversification of service delivery mechanisms. They must be able to adapt quickly so as to address the new issues, emerging trends and ever greater risks and challenges of the society in which we live.

OCOL works with those organizations to see that they gain a better understanding of the importance of linguistic duality, especially as it relates to service delivery. By encouraging federal institutions to serve Canadians in the official language of their choice, OCOL assists in changing government organizational culture and improving the quality of service.

From an organization tasked with answering complaints, OCOL is becoming an agent of change by working closely with federal institutions and other organizations, Parliamentarians, other levels of government and official language minority communities.
Like other federal institutions, OCOL espouses modern management principles and practices and is taking measures to become a learning organization. More specifically, OCOL’s plans and priorities for 2004-2005 incorporate the main elements of the Treasury Board Secretariat Management Accountability Framework:

- thinking about citizens first;
- applying a rigorous policy analysis;
- considering key risks;
- having the right work force;
- ensuring that public resources are managed with probity; and
- assigning clear accountabilities, with due regard to capability.
Section IV: Strategic Outcome and Strategic Orientations

Compliance with and respect for the *Official Languages Act* by the federal institutions subject to the Act.

The objectives extend beyond this reporting period. To achieve them fully depends upon the following four strategic orientations:

1. equality of English and French within the institutions subject to the Act;
2. equality of English and French as a fundamental value of our increasingly diverse Canadian society;
3. vitality of official language minority communities in Canada; and
4. development of an exemplary workplace and efficient, effective management.

In 2004-2005, the Commissioner and OCOL will undertake and carry out the activities described here as they pertain to each of these four strategic orientations.

1. Equality of English and French within the institutions subject to the Act.

The following objectives will be pursued in line with this strategic orientation:

- that designated bilingual offices of federal institutions provide quality services in both official languages and that all regions and sectors make significant improvement;
- that federal institutions located in bilingual regions offer employees a workplace conducive to effective use of both official languages and that they actively promote respect for the working language of each employee; and
- that federal institutions increase the number of Anglophones in the federal Public Service in Quebec.

The Commissioner will recommend that the Treasury Board Secretariat strengthen its management accountability framework developed for general administrators by adding responsibilities for the increased use of the official languages in service delivery and workplaces to accountability agreements throughout federal institutions.
She will urge federal government officials to attach more importance to bilingualism in the Public Service and within their respective institutions, to recognize the right of Canadians to the same quality of service in both official languages, and to recognize the right of their employees in bilingual regions to work in the official language of their choice.

She will continue receiving and reviewing complaints regarding application of the Act, and, if need be, will investigate and make the necessary recommendations. She will seek leave to intervene in court cases as she deems advisable to ensure that official language rights are respected.

She will conduct at least two audits concerning how federal institutions discharge their responsibilities with regard to services to the public and language of work.

OCOL will engage in promotion and education activities, act as liaison agent and undertake studies to better identify the main issues relating to official languages now and in future.

It will analyze official language studies and reports that Treasury Board Secretariat receives from federal departments and agencies, as well as statistical surveys of Canadians regarding services.

It will assess the performance indicators developed by federal institutions with regard to the government’s official languages objectives.

In the regions, OCOL will continue its proactive collaboration with the councils of senior federal officials to draw their attention to the importance of the official languages and encourage them to implement appropriate activities.

OCOL will ensure that the initiatives taken by the Government of Canada as part of Government On-Line adhere to the spirit and the letter of the Act. It will continue to urge Public Works and Government Services Canada and participating organizations to increase the volume of services offered on-line. This will give Canadians access to more quality services in the official language of their choice, and civil servants will be able to work more in the language of their choice.
The following objectives will be pursued in line with this strategic orientation:

• that the levels of government introduce measures that promote an increase in the number of bilingual Anglophone Canadians outside Quebec and the overall number of bilingual young Canadians;

• that the population’s commitment and support for linguistic duality as a Canadian value be strengthened;

• that the policies and activities of the federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act be integrated to better reflect linguistic duality as a fundamental value of Canadian society.

The Commissioner will continue monitoring implementation of the government’s Action Plan for Official Languages in the areas of health, immigration, education, justice, economic development and youth.

She will urge the government to strengthen its commitment to change federal Public Service culture and adapt its values to the realities of Canadian society by requiring deputy ministers and the heads of agencies subject to the Act to report on their official language results within the management accountability framework process.

The Commissioner will further recommend that Parliament clarify the scope of Part VII of the Act and declare it enforceable through statutory regulations or measures. The ambiguity of that part underscores the need to consider the federal language system, which was last reviewed sixteen years ago. OCOL will consult key stakeholders to determine whether, given the social, political, economic and technological changes in Canadian society, we can meet the challenges now confronting us.

She will encourage decision makers in the National Capital Region to recognize the bilingual character of our national capital and the importance of portraying linguistic duality in their activities.

She will conduct at least one audit concerning how federal institutions discharge their responsibilities with regard to the promotion of the equality of English and French as a fundamental value in Canadian society.

Furthermore, OCOL will review the importance that the government attaches to linguistic duality in its enabling documents and in its policies and international activities. It will examine, for example, relevant draft bills and federal-provincial-territorial agreements as they come up for renewal in order to ensure that they reflect linguistic duality, and the Commissioner will intervene with parliamentary committees if the need arises.

2. Equality of English and French as a fundamental value in our increasingly diverse Canadian society.
To promote the recognition of linguistic duality as a fundamental Canadian value, OCOL will also urge the federal institutions contemplated by the government’s *Action Plan for Official Languages* and the various levels of government to integrate the two official languages into their day-to-day activities.

### 3. Vitality of official language minority communities in Canada.

The following objectives will be pursued in line with this strategic orientation:

- that federal institutions make meaningful provisions to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities, especially in the areas of health, education, immigration and justice; and

- that the provincial, municipal and territorial governments make meaningful provisions to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities.

OCOL will continue to oversee implementation of the government’s *Action Plan for Official Languages* and evaluate its outcomes as they affect official language minority communities.

It will work with the main stakeholders to better understand the economic and social needs specific to official language minority communities. It will also encourage government administrations to consult those communities more when developing policies, programs and legislation that could affect community vitality.

Through its regional offices, OCOL will encourage communities, as well as federal, provincial and territorial government departments and agencies, to network so as to identify and share their best practices and work together towards the vitality of official language minority communities.
4. Development of an exemplary workplace and efficient, effective management.

To better equip OCOL to achieve its strategic outcome and objectives and thus serve Canadians better, the following objectives will be pursued in line with this strategic orientation:

- continue to introduce a modern management culture within OCOL;
- make OCOL a learning organization; and
- make OCOL a more client-oriented organization.

OCOL will continue developing its management accountability framework, which will set out the key results that the organization is targeting over the short, medium and long term; define appropriate performance indicators; and identify methods for evaluating and auditing activities. Since OCOL activities affect those in which other organizations are engaged for the benefit of Canada, it will develop performance indicators to measure its own efficiency and effectiveness concerning its use of resources to achieve its agenda for change.

OCOL will continue moving toward a modern management culture based on team work and achievement of the targeted results. It will use the survey data gathered from civil servants to improve its workplaces. Pursuant to the Treasury Board Secretariat Policy for Continuous Learning, it will continue developing and implementing individualized learning plans with members of its personnel, those plans representing an essential milestone in establishing a continuous learning culture.
OCOL intends to continue pursuing these strategic orientations for the benefit of Canadians. The chart below illustrates the links between OCOL and the four key stakeholders involved in this particular outcome (Parliamentarians, federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act, official language minority communities and Canadian public).

Our strategic orientations and the key stakeholders
Section V: Organization

In carrying out her mission of ensuring full recognition and widespread use of English and French within Canadian society and federal institutions, the Commissioner of Official Languages is supported by OCOL’s staff, which is divided between the National Capital Region and regional offices across Canada.
### Strategic outcome and business lines

($ thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Lines</th>
<th>Strategic Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compliance and respect of the Official Languages Act by federal institutions subject to the Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigations</td>
<td>6,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications, research and analysis</td>
<td>7,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Services</td>
<td>5,090</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,528</strong></td>
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## Planned spending

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<td>Investigations</td>
<td>5,989</td>
<td>6,434</td>
<td>6,435</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications, research and analysis</td>
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<td>7,004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate Services</td>
<td>5,389</td>
<td>5,090</td>
<td>5,074</td>
<td>5,074</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Main Estimates</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,270</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,528</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,513</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,513</strong></td>
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<td>Adjustments (Planned Spending not in Main Estimates)</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Planned Spending</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,055</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,528</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,513</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,513</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plus: Cost of services received without charge</td>
<td>2,429</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>2,456</td>
<td>2,438</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Cost of Program</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,484</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,978</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,969</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,951</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Full Time Equivalents</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>164</td>
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## Appendix A: Net Cost of Program for the Estimates Year

<table>
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<tr>
<th>($ thousands)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Planned Spending</strong></td>
<td>18,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plus: Services Received without Charge</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada</td>
<td>1,615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions covering employer’s share of the employees’ insurance premiums and expenditures paid by TBS</td>
<td>835</td>
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<td><strong>2004-2005 Net Cost of Program</strong></td>
<td>20,978</td>
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</table>
Appendix B: Contact Information for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

HEADQUARTERS:

Contact information for the Commissioner, Policy and Communications, Investigations, Corporate Services and Legal Affairs Branches are as follows:

344 Slater Street
3rd floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0T8

General information: (613) 996-6368
Toll free number: 1 877 996-6368
Fax: (613) 993-5082
Complaints: (613) 992-LANG
(613) 992-5264

Internet Site: [http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca](http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca)
E-mail: [message@ocol-clo.gc.ca](mailto:message@ocol-clo.gc.ca)

REGIONAL OFFICES:

Atlantic Region
Tel.: (506) 851-7047 or 1 800 561-7109
Fax: (506) 851-7046

Quebec Region
Tel.: (514) 283-4996 or 1 800 363-0628
Fax: (514) 283-6677

Ontario Region
Tel.: (416) 973-1903 or 1 800 387-0635
Fax: (416) 973-1906

Manitoba and Saskatchewan Region
Tel.: (204) 983-2111 or 1 800 665-8731
Fax: (204) 983-7801

Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut Region
Tel.: (780) 495-3111 or 1 800 661-3642
Fax: (780) 495-4094