



# **TBS Official Languages Action Plan - 2015-18**

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# TBS Official Languages Action Plan - 2015-18

## 1. Context

The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) is the administrative arm of the Treasury Board. It supports Treasury Board ministers and strengthens the way government is managed to ensure value-for-money in government spending and results for Canadians.

As a central agency, TBS provides leadership and guidance on management functions within departments and agencies and promotes sound management of government resources. Although TBS – through the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) - is responsible for the general direction and coordination of the Government of Canada's policies and programs relating to the implementation of parts IV, V and VI of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA), this plan focuses on TBS's role as a department in driving and modelling excellence in public sector management. The plan also outlines TBS's commitments in relation to its obligations under Part VII of the OLA and describes the tools it provides to support employees in promoting the development of official language minority communities (OLMCs) and linguistic duality.

As a federal institution subject to the requirements of the legislation, TBS is committed to obtaining concrete results regarding the implementation of the OLA in the following areas:

- Any member of the public in Canada has the right to communicate with and to receive available services from federal institutions in either official language (Part IV);
- Employees of federal institutions in bilingual or “either/or” <sup>1</sup> positions have the right to use either official language as their language of work (Part V);
- English- and French-speaking Canadians have equal opportunities to obtain employment and advancement in federal institutions (Part VI); and
- Enhance the vitality of linguistic minority communities and support and assist their development; and foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society (Part VII).

This OL Action Plan sets out TBS's strategic direction and key planned commitments relating to official languages for 2015–18. The commitments outlined in the plan will ensure that TBS complies with the OLA.

## 2. Vision

The *Official Languages Action Plan 2015–18* aims to create a culture that fosters the use of both official languages at all levels of the organization.

As a department, TBS aims to lead by example in the promotion of bilingualism and the use of both official languages. The purpose of the OL Action Plan is to foster excellence and to support the organization in fulfilling its OL obligations. This is, however, only possible if:

- Principles and actions are in place to create a work environment that is conducive to the use of English and French;
- Employees are aware of the tools and services available to them; and
- Employees know and understand their obligations and recognize opportunities and challenges.

The commitments outlined in TBS's *Official Languages Action Plan 2015–18* apply to employees, managers and senior leaders. The Plan will only succeed if staff at all levels take pride in and assume responsibility for their actions with respect to the use of both official languages in the work environment. Together, everyone can contribute to achieving the vision of creating a culture that fosters the use of both official languages at all levels of the organization.

(See Appendix for details on the roles and responsibilities of the various TBS stakeholders.)

TBS's commitments relating to bilingualism must become part of TBS's organizational culture. Creating a culture that promotes bilingualism will help make TBS a workplace of choice that attracts and retains highly skilled individuals, will enhance consistency across TBS, and will create opportunities to foster knowledge and to increase stakeholder engagement—all of which support the objective of making TBS a model of excellence in OL for other departments.

## 3. Approach

In developing this action plan, a comprehensive approach was taken to identify commitments that are endorsed by all of TBS. This approach included the following:

- Research and analysis of TBS's activities (e.g., those carried out under the OL Action Plan for 2012–15);
- Review of best practices in other departments, particularly other central agencies;

- Employee consultation through a satisfaction survey on language of work that was distributed to a sample of TBS employees;
- A brainstorming event involving members of the Departmental Advisory Committee on Official Languages;
- Identifying objectives in Blueprint 2020 that relate to official languages;
- Addressing the recommendations to TBS in the 2013–14 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages;
- Analysis of the results of Public Service Employee Survey 2014;
- Consultation with OLMCs; and
- A presentation to the Secretary and the Executive Committee (EXCO).

This action plan that addresses TBS’s obligations under parts IV, V, VI and VII of the OLA, provides employees, managers and senior leaders with tools and activities that will help them fulfill their obligations and responsibilities. By addressing issues that were identified, by building on accomplishments and by meeting the obligations in the OLA, the *Official Languages Action Plan 2015–18* provides direction to enable change, sustain improvement and deliver results.

To ensure that TBS delivers on its commitments, the Action Plan is structured to do the following:

- Include a manageable number of concrete activities that, whenever possible, have measurable outcomes;
- Identify departmental and sectorial activities; and
- Encourage flexibility and innovation at all levels, and ensure that parts IV, V, VI and VII of the OLA are addressed.

Because the OL Action Plan is aligned with TBS’s three-year planning cycle, commitments under the Action Plan will be monitored periodically using existing tracking methods. These tracking methods will not only make it easier to monitor progress but will also ensure that TBS can respond to reporting requests from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer and Canadian Heritage and can do so in a streamlined manner.

This plan is evergreen and will be reviewed and updated as new information becomes available.

## 4. TBS Environment

TBS is well positioned to create a culture that fully endorses the importance of maintaining an environment that is conducive to the use of both official languages. Numerous factors currently contribute to TBS’s success in the promotion of official languages, including the following:

- Good representation of English- and French-speaking employees and a strong bilingual image;
- Its location in a bilingual region;
- A results-oriented workforce that is committed to learning;
- A deputy head who is committed to the use of both official languages; and
- The Official Languages Centre of Excellence, which is part of the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Despite those factors, TBS needs to continue to make improvements in areas such as the following:

- The use of both official languages during department and sector meetings; and
- The use of both official languages in day-to-day activities, including informal discussions.

With this action plan, TBS has committed to addressing legislative requirements of parts IV, V, VI and VII of the OLA, creating and improving tools and activities that promote and facilitate the use of both official languages, and better communicating with OLMCs.

## Action Plan Activities

### Program Management—Leadership

**Objective:** To become a model of excellence in official languages (OL) by providing leadership in the administration of the OL Program at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS)

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
<b>A) Leaders create a workplace conducive to the effective use of both official languages</b>	<b>1. Presentation to the TBS Executive Committee (EXCO) on the state of official languages in the department, including Part VII of the <i>Official Languages Act (OLA)</i>, during key planning and reporting periods</b>	OL Champion	Twice a year (minimum)

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
	2. Sectors integrate OL Action Plan activities into their planning	Sector Heads	Ongoing
	3. Incorporate OL objectives into senior manager and EX performance agreements	Sector Heads	Annually in April
	4. The TBS Advisory Committee on OL continues to meet regularly to review and discuss OL concerns and initiatives	Departmental Advisory Committee	Ongoing
	5. Managers continue to discuss with employees OL needs and expected contributions to a bilingual workplace and, where needed, to identify OL development and maintenance activities to include in employees' performance management agreements (PMAs)	Managers and Supervisors	Ongoing
	6. Designate all formal governance committee meetings as bilingual. OL expectations for committee members and chairs, item sponsors, and presenters will be set out in each committee's terms of reference and are expected to be in place by April 30, 2015	Deputy Head	Ongoing

**Deputy heads ensure that designated offices communicate with and provide services to members of the public in the official language of the public's choice (Part IV of the *Official Languages Act*)**

**Objective: To continue to provide exemplary service to the public in accordance with Part IV of the *Official Languages Act***

<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timelines / Progress Indicators</b>
<b>B) Clients receive services and communications in the official language of their choice</b>	<b>1. Continue to provide the TBS website simultaneously in English and French and to ensure equal quality of its content in both languages</b>	Strategic Communications and Ministerial Affairs (SCMA)	Ongoing
	<b>2. Continue to provide exemplary service over the phone (1-800 number for enquiries from the public)</b>	Sector Heads / SCMA	Ongoing
	<b>3. Continue to ensure that TBS's communications with and services to the public are always available in both official languages</b>	Sector Heads	Ongoing
	<b>4. Update and promote an instructional tool on providing "active offers" <sup>2</sup> of service to the public in both official languages</b>	Human Resources Division (HRD) / SCMA	March 31, 2016
	<b>5. Promote the use of the following statement in the signature blocks of employees in bilingual positions: "Please do not hesitate to reply in the official language of your choice. / N'hésitez pas à répondre dans la langue officielle de votre choix."</b>	HRD / Corporate Services Sector (CSS)	Ongoing

<sup>2</sup> Active offer: Clearly indicates visually and verbally that members of the public can communicate with and obtain services from a designated office in either English or French. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that services are available in the official language chosen.

**Promote a work environment that is conducive to the use of**



## both official languages (Part V of the *Official Languages Act*)

**Objective:** To become a model of excellence in OL for other departments by creating an environment and culture that fosters the use of both official languages through increased awareness, engagement and improved tools and services that promote and facilitate use

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
<b>C) TBS maintains a corporate culture that is conducive to the use of both official languages</b>	<b>1. Post the Action Plan, the Annual Review and the OL Progress Report on the InfoSite</b>	HRD / SCMA	Annually
	<b>2. Before launching a staffing process, ensure that the linguistic profile of positions at “comparable to EX” <sup>3</sup> and “senior non-EX levels 1 and 2” <sup>4</sup> with supervisory functions are bilingual at the CBC level</b>	Sector Heads / Managers	Ongoing
	<b>3. Ensure that TBS accommodates the use of either official language by officers and employees of other government institutions when it directs or provides services to other institutions, notably by ensuring that instructions, directives and communications are communicated or sent simultaneously in both official languages</b>	Sector Heads	Ongoing
	<b>4. Ensure that central and personal services <sup>5</sup> are offered and provided in both official languages, and put into place administrative measures <sup>6</sup> when needed</b>	Managers	Ongoing
	<b>5. Organize events to promote Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie and Linguistic Duality Day</b>	HRD / Sector Heads / OL Champion / SCMA	Events take place annually in March and September
	<b>6. Recognize excellence in the use and promotion of both official languages at TBS</b>	OL Champion / HRD	March 31, 2016

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
	<p>7. Encourage employees to use the official language of their choice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During meetings</li> <li>• During one-on-one meetings with managers, including for PMAs</li> <li>• When preparing written materials, including email</li> </ul>	Managers	Ongoing
	<p>8. Promote the use of bilingual out-of-office messages by providing example templates to employees through <i>TBS In-Brief</i> and on the OL page of the InfoSite</p>	HRD / SCMA	Semi-annual
	<p>9. Develop and promote a form to assist managers in identifying the language requirements and linguistic profile of positions</p>	HRD	2016-17
	<p>10. Launch a TBS survey on language of work</p>	Sector Heads / HRD	2016–17
<p><b>D) Language training and maintenance program, and development opportunities are provided to employees and managers</b></p>	<p>1. Support employees in bilingual positions at “comparable to EX” and “senior non-EX levels 1 and 2” with supervisory functions to help them maintain the CBC level:</p>	Sector Heads / HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-annual reminder to Assistant Secretaries</li> </ul>	Sector Heads / HRD	Semi-annual
	<p>2. Promote the use of both official languages in the workplace by consulting OL tools, including the “TBS Managers’ Guide to Official Languages in Human Resources Management”</p>	HRD	Annual
	<p>3. Provide to managers the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages’ online tool, Effective Language Training Practices, and hold information sessions about the tool</p>	HRD	2017–18

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
	<p><b>4. Provide employees with opportunities to include courses that are part of the Centralized Language Training Program in their Personal Learning Plan, and/or to participate in other less formal, non-classroom learning opportunities such as:</b></p>	Managers	Annually
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Work-related training in their second official language</b></li> </ul>	Managers	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pre-evaluation assessment to confirm the maintenance of a language level</b></li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Semi-annual meeting with language training and maintenance program participants (follow-up, encouragement, tools, feedback, overviews, etc.)</b></li> </ul>	HRD	Semi-annual
	<p><b>5. Provide employees with opportunities to participate in the Language Pairing Program to practise their second official language</b></p>	Managers	Ongoing
	<p><b>6. Develop and distribute an OL orientation kit to help prepare employees who are starting a language training or maintenance program</b></p>	HRD	2016–17
	<p><b>7. Promote the use of the TBS – Language Training Program generic email account for comments, feedback and suggestions on language training to help improve the program</b></p>	HRD	2016–17
	<p><b>8. Provide tools and resources to encourage all employees to use both official languages, and post them on the InfoSite:</b></p>	See below	See below

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and promote an e-poster inviting colleagues to speak in either official language</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize lunchtime get-togethers (e.g., film screenings)</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote OL best practices through <i>TBS In-Brief</i> or <i>In Focus!</i> messages</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare, post on the InfoSite, and regularly update a bilingual lexicon of technical and other commonly used terms at TBS</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a language pairing program: Pair up English- and French-speaking employees to give them the chance to improve their second-language skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Call it the “TOP-level challenge” (for Tolerance, Openness and Patience)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	HRD	2015–16
	<p>9. Provide employees with the opportunity to personalize messages when on language training or in a maintenance program (e.g., “Please support my efforts to communicate in my second language”)</p>	HRD	2017–18
	<p>10. Offer employees informal OL assessments during and after language training to measure their progress in their second language</p>	HRD	Ongoing

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
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**Provide equal opportunities and equitable participation of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians (Part VI of the *Official Languages Act*)**

**Objective:** To continue to offer equal opportunities and to ensure equitable participation of English- and French-speaking Canadians

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
<b>E) TBS sectors are representative of the English- and French-speaking population</b>	<b>1. Produce demographic reports on TBS's workforce</b>	HRD	Semi-annual

**Enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and to foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society (Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*)**

**Objective:** To ensure that positive measures are taken

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
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Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
<b>F) TBS employees are aware of the department's obligations under Part VII of the <i>Official Languages Act</i></b>	<b>1. Provide training and support to analysts at TBS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide annual information sessions, in the form of boot camps, to policy and program analysts, including PowerPoint presentations by Canadian Heritage (PCH) and the Official Languages Centre of Excellence (OLCE), which is part of the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, within the Secretariat</li> <li>• Provide analysts with key OL information, including a case study, to assist them when reviewing Treasury Board submissions</li> </ul>	HRD	Annually
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a good practice and when required, provide analysts with information on OL considerations to take into account when analyzing proposals submitted during spending or expenditure reviews</li> </ul>	HRD	Within 30 days of announcement of spending or expenditure reviews
	<b>2. Post information pertaining to Part VII of the <i>OLA</i> on the InfoSite and on the TBS website:</b>	See below	See below
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make all presentations about Part VII available on the InfoSite</li> </ul>	HRD / SCMA	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add information to the OL Champion's InfoSite page on Part VII and official language minority communities (OLMCs)</li> </ul>	HRD / SCMA	2015–16

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post on the InfoSite the revised <i>TBS Policy on Official Languages</i> to ensure that linguistic duality and OLMCs remain part of decision-making processes at TBS</li> </ul>	HRD / SCMA	2015–16
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post on the OL InfoSite the 2015–18 OL Action Plan, the Annual Report on Results, links to Part VII and the PCH website and the Part VII section of the <i>Collection of Official Languages Resources</i></li> </ul>	HRD / SCMA	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the TBS website regularly to ensure that OLMCs are aware of TBS’s key priorities and initiatives</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind employees of their OL obligations when they are on national or international business travel, through <i>TBS In-Brief</i> and <i>In Focus!</i> messages.</li> </ul>	HRD	Annually
	<p><b>3. Celebrate Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie and Linguistic Duality Day annually:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual department-wide and sector events to celebrate and promote Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie (in March) and Linguistic Duality Day (in September)</li> <li>• Invite OLMC representatives to participate in one event over the course of the plan</li> </ul>	HRD / SCMA	Events take place annually in March and September
<b>G) TBS consults, communicates and</b>	<b>1. Dialogue with key stakeholders (OLMCs, PCH):</b>	See below	See below

Expected Outcomes	Activities	Lead	Timelines / Progress Indicators
liaises with partners on OL matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with national OLMC representatives on the Action Plan and key departmental initiatives to be aware of OLMC concerns and issues</li> </ul>	HRD	Triennial
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share information and identify issues with PCH</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule an annual meeting with OLMCs</li> </ul>	HRD	Annually
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBS's national coordinator for Part VII of the <i>Official Languages Act</i> is identified on the InfoSite and on the TBS website, and PCH and OLMCs are advised.</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate TBS perspectives and work with PCH to issue horizontal guidance, orientation and interpretation on OL issues</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing
	<p><b>2. For TBS's University Recruitment Campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to raise awareness of both official languages in the campaign (e.g., distribution of promotional tools to approximately 52 English- and French-language universities across Canada)</li> <li>Inform the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne and the Quebec Community Groups Network representatives of TBS recruitment campaigns</li> </ul>	HRD	Ongoing



<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timelines / Progress Indicators</b>
	<b>3. Participate in OL Champions' Conference, Council of Network of OL Champions and TBS Advisory Committee on OL</b>	OL Champion	Ongoing
	<b>4. Participate in the national coordinators' conferences and meetings</b>	HRD	Ongoing
	<b>5. Share information relating to Part VII of the OLA among members of TBS Advisory Committee on OL</b>	HRD	Ongoing
	<b>6. Coordinate activities with PCH to inform departmental OL representatives of the latest issues and trends in OL</b>	OLCE	Ongoing

## **Appendix: Official Languages Roles and Responsibilities for TBS**

### **Leaders (Executive Committee)**

- Act as models for official languages.
- Foster and promote an environment conducive to the use of both official languages.
- Ensure that supporting mechanisms are in place to enable managers to provide tools and training to support a bilingual environment.

### **Managers**

- Bring issues, problems and suggestions to the attention of senior management.
- Lead by example by providing a work environment conducive to the use of both official languages, for example, by chairing bilingual meetings.
- Promote an inclusive and supportive workplace to employees of both official language groups; ensure that employees receive training, development and assignments; and ensure that employees are supported and have access to work tools in their language of choice, where applicable.

- Encourage employees to participate in events celebrating the Official Languages Program.

## **Employees**

- Contribute to and participate in creating an environment conducive to the use of both official languages.
- Bring issues, problems and suggestions to the attention of managers.
- Use their first or their second official language to support the use of both official languages.
- Participate in events and activities celebrating the Official Languages Program.

## **Official Languages Champion**

- Raise the visibility of the Official Languages Program among TBS employees.
- Take action on major issues that affect the Program.
- Support the initiatives of the Departmental Advisory Committee on Official Languages.
- Report periodically to the Executive Committee.

## **Members of the Departmental Advisory Committee on Official Languages**

- Provide sector employees with a forum for official languages issues;
- Consider new ideas and strategies to improve learning and maintenance opportunities.
- Identify issues that have an impact on official language minority community members and provide advice to management on strategies or techniques to address these issues.
- Promote and participate in activities that will enhance awareness and understanding of both official language groups.
- Actively participate in carrying out the Committee's mandate by supporting the Executive Committee in implementing the Official Languages Program at TBS. This includes contributing to the development and implementation of the departmental Official Languages Action Plan.

## **Human Resources Division**

- Develops, implements, evaluates and continually improves the Secretariat's Official Languages Program, the Secretariat's Centralized Language Training Program and the Secretariat's administrative measures. It also provides strategic advice and direction on official languages to the Secretariat's managers and employees, and informs them of their roles and obligations under the *Official Languages Act (OLA)* and the Treasury Board *Policy on Official Languages*.
- Recommends strategies for improving OL performance, and reports annually on the Secretariat's activities. This includes managing and updating all of the Secretariat's official languages–related databases.
- Coordinates the handling of official languages–related complaints from employees or the Commissioner of Official Languages, and resolves those complaints in collaboration with the sectors targeted by the complaints.
- Promotes a culture change with respect to linguistic duality through the use of information kits, presentations and training in order to optimize the quality of the services offered and comply with the OLA and with the Treasury Board *Policy on Official Languages*.
- Enhances the vitality of official language minority communities, consults with their representatives and with other departments to promote cooperation and information sharing, and ensures that positive measures are taken to foster the full recognition and use of both official languages in Canadian society.
- Person responsible for OL at TBS participates in meetings with OCHRO – Official Languages Centre of Excellence to discuss policies, issues and best practices pertaining to parts IV, V and VI of the OLA.
- National Coordinator responsible for Part VII of the OLA in TBS meets with Canadian Heritage to discuss policies, issues and best practices pertaining to Part VII of the OLA.
- Defines the parameters relating to language training and administrative measures.

## **OCHRO – Official Languages Centre of Excellence**

Supports federal institutions in the implementation of Parts IV, V and VI of the OLA and creates conditions conducive to ensuring the following:

- That Canadians receive services in the official language of their choice;
- That federal institutions create a working environment conducive to the use of both official languages;
- That federal institutions offer equal opportunity for employment and promotion to French- and English-speaking Canadians; and
- That the workforce of federal institutions tends to reflect the presence of both official language communities in Canada.

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## Footnotes

- 1 The language requirements of a position are identified as “either/or” if the functions and duties of the position will only require the use of one official language and the incumbent chooses which language he or she will use.
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**Date modified:**

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