



Library and Archives Canada

ATIP action plan progress report

June 2025



Library and Archives
Canada

Bibliothèque et Archives
Canada

Canada

Catalogue No.: SB3-6E-PDF

ISSN: 3111-217X

ATIP action plan progress report (Library and Archives Canada) – June 2025

Également disponible en français sous le titre : Rapport d'étape sur le Plan d'action sur l'AIPRP
(Bibliothèque et Archives Canada) – juin 2025

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Introduction

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) continues to benefit from the continuous improvement made by its teams to its ATIP function. As the temporary funding associated with its [action plan](#) reaches its midway point, LAC is looking at future policy and procedural changes that will have lasting impacts on its ability to respond to client requests and ultimately to put records into clients' hands sooner, whether through ATIP or, in the case of archival records, other program-based channels.

Furthermore, the ATIP Branch and the other business areas in LAC that support ATIP continue to realign resources to ensure efforts are put into areas of significant volume and in accordance with the overall funding envelope.

Part 1: Getting back on track

Reducing the backlog of requests

As demonstrated in the following table, LAC has made excellent progress towards eliminating its backlog of requests, with a 40% reduction during fiscal year 2024–2025.

Table 1-Requests related to other government department records

Type of records	Late as of April 1, 2024	Received between April 1 and March 31, 2025	Completed as of March 31, 2025	Late as of March 31, 2025
Records of former Canadian Armed Forces members and former public servants	7,007	6,869	10,984	3,452
Government of Canada archival records	2,397	4,531	4,438	2,229
LAC operational records	0	55	39	0
TOTAL	9,404	11,455	15,461	5,681

LAC also continued answering incoming requests. While it had set a target of 65% for fiscal year 2024–2025, LAC responded to 85% of them within legislated time frames.

New incoming request responses from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025	Number of requests
Responded within legislated timeframes	4,842
Not responded to within legislated timeframes	827

Progress highlights in 2024–2025

- LAC completed 85% of requests received within legislative timeframes (progress target for 2024–2025 was 65%, moving towards a target of 95% for 2026–2027).
- LAC ATIP reviewed 2,102,607 pages—a 31% increase in the number of pages reviewed from the previous year.
- While experiencing a 35% increase in the number of requests received, LAC completed and processed more pages, and therefore the number of requests carried forward to the next reporting period decreased by 33% from the previous fiscal year.

LAC teams were particularly busy this year completing an access to information request related to the disclosure of the Deschênes Part II Report. The detailed research and analysis to support the processing of this request required the contribution of approximately 50 employees from across LAC, to respond to a single ATIP request. As a result, these employees were not able to contribute as much to reducing other backlogs or responding to new incoming requests within legislated time frames.

Reducing the backlog of complaints

LAC continues to work actively to resolve the complaints it receives, while ensuring a constructive working relationship with the Office of the Information Commissioner (OIC) and clients. In 2024–2025, the ATIP Complaints Team closed 193 complaints, including 93 complaints that were active as of March 31, 2024, totalling over 45,000 pages of records. As part of these efforts to respond to complaints and orders, LAC also continues to evolve its ongoing relationships with other Government of Canada (GC) departments to ensure effective prioritization of consultations and to explore opportunities to reshape the consultation process or apply different methodologies to respond to requests as efficiently as possible, while exercising LAC’s discretion to the fullest extent possible.

Active complaints as of April 1, 2024	135
Active complaints as of March 31, 2025	122

Part 2: Internal review and improvements

Renew our policies and processes

Reducing consultations with other departments

“I intend to recommend that the Minister include, in LAC’s next ATIP action plan report on progress, specific updates on LAC’s progress regarding timelines for consultations with other government departments.” (Excerpt from the initial report 5823-02288 of the Information Commissioner)

Further to the request of the OIC in the above-mentioned report, LAC is pleased to provide more details on its approaches to transform its consultation processes.

LAC has undertaken significant efforts to reduce consultations with other departments. In 2023, LAC created a dedicated team called the Archival Research Team (ART). The ART has become a critical part of LAC’s ATIP analysis process to inform its analysts, reduce or eliminate the need for consultations, and ultimately allow LAC to exercise discretion in a different way.

Since its implementation, the ART has produced over 300 research reports, which in turn resulted in a decrease of 86% in the need for consultation on military and intelligence subjects, excluding consultation with Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). During fiscal year 2024–2025, out of a total of 140 requests closed on military and intelligence subjects where in the past LAC would have undertaken consultation, LAC was able to independently complete 121 files without seeking external consultation to obtain subject matter expertise to inform the ATIP analysis process. LAC was therefore able to proceed independently with its review and release (or redaction where necessary) of information. This demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach, alleviating consultation burdens from the shoulders of other government departments and allowing LAC to exercise its delegated authority under ATIP in a responsible and informed manner.

The quality of the ART’s work has been recognized by CSIS, Global Affairs Canada and the Department of National Defence. With LAC’s new research approach, some departments have confirmed that they will no longer require consultations, reconfirming a collaborative understanding of LAC’s sound methodologies to inform its discretionary decision-making.

Throughout 2024–2025, LAC was testing and preparing for the implementation of a new case management software: ATIPXpress. LAC began its phased implementation on April 1, 2025. As part of this implementation, LAC is developing a new tracking tool to assist in monitoring the return of consultations and to put in place a system-based approach to follow-ups. Any previous efforts to monitor and follow-up on the return of consultations was done manually, overwhelmed by volume and therefore not undertaken consistently over the years. In recent years, this has been accelerated and focused on cases that were under investigation by the OIC. Now, thanks to the integration of Microsoft Power BI, detailed reports can be generated and progress tracked in real time. LAC will continue to implement this new approach over the course of the coming year as the software is implemented by all ATIP teams across various networks. Furthermore, as previously noted, LAC anticipates the total volume and scope of consultations will continue to decrease as it continues to clear its backlog of outstanding requests and implement the new ART methodology.

In recent years, LAC has also implemented new procedures and gained functionality in new networked technologies to ease the burden of the transmission of consultation packages. Before the installation of new secure infrastructures at LAC, secure consultations were sent by paper mail

or on CD via approved physical mail courier services. Now they are transferred directly, digitally, via secure networks, thus significantly reducing the time to transmit between departments. This will improve further as more and more ATIP teams in other GC departments onboard to these secure networks.

LAC will continue its efforts to reduce the need for consultations through the analysis performed by the ART. LAC will develop new and improved procedures to inform the consultation processes where it deems consultations are still required, as well as processes to follow up on outstanding consultations and take action when consultations are not returned. LAC will continue to report on the progress made in its December 2025 report.

Proactive review and declassification

Another program that has continued is the proactive review and declassification of archival records. Records that are open do not require an ATIP request and therefore reduce the overall burden on the ATIP system, including potential consultation processes. Records that are declassified to a lower security designation can be handled and processed more efficiently and with less effort than highly classified material. After reviewing over six million pages of archival documents in 2024–2025, the Block Review Team opened more than 4.5 million pages. At the same time, the Declassification Team analyzed 540,000 pages of classified documents and proactively declassified 46,000 pages, thereby facilitating their handling for future ATIP requests. Both efforts remain ongoing and ultimately reduce the volume and/or level of effort of ATIP requests.

Reviewing procedure on incoming ATIP requests

As of April 1, 2025, a new process has been implemented with LAC's Research Support and Regional Services Team to improve the processing of incoming ATIP requests. Access to information requests for archival records without archival references or with incomplete archival references (excluding Privacy Section 8 requests) are now automatically placed in "stop the clock" status until the Research Support and Regional Services Team can work directly with clients (part of our duty to assist and seek clarifications, in accordance with the Acts) to assess and identify the relevant archival records and determine, based on the conditions of access, whether a review under the Access to Information Act is actually required. By streamlining and validating client request intake, this new approach ensures that requests being registered by ATIP are ready to be processed. Since April 1, 2025, approximately 50% of those incoming requests that were returned for further up-front discussion with clients have been determined to not require ATIP, and clients have been provided with records directly and more quickly as a result—a better outcome for clients and for LAC.

Implementation of new procedures

LAC ATIP has introduced several new procedures to further enhance the efficiency and accuracy of its ATIP process. Each of these procedures is accompanied by clear communication on implementation expectations and training for staff to ensure proper adherence going forward, as well as plans for the assessment of effectiveness throughout implementation.

LAC has implemented a procedure to address requests received from non-eligible requesters. This procedure helps to quickly identify and close requests that do not meet the eligibility criteria, streamlining the process and reducing unnecessary workload. Training sessions have been conducted to familiarize staff with the criteria for eligibility and the steps to take when communicating with clients and closing non-eligible requests. Ultimately this means clients are communicated with more quickly and LAC does not accumulate a number of requests that are ultimately not processable.

Following its [June 2024 report](#), LAC ATIP has now fully implemented the new procedures regarding the disclosure of historical records that have reached a certain age, informed by [TBS Policy Guidance on the Disclosure of Historical Records](#). These new procedures, along with the training provided to staff, demonstrate LAC's commitment to continuous improvement and its dedication to making processes more efficient to provide timely and more consistent responses to ATIP requests.

Invest in IT

As announced in its last report, LAC continues to add recently completed requests to its database of [previously released ATI requests on archival records](#) while improving the simplicity of this database for its users thanks to the integration of an online viewing tool. Since September 2024, this database has generated more than 13,000 downloads and 15,000 views. This means that the ATIP team is no longer the intermediary between the client and these records as they can be downloaded in a self-serve capacity, which aligns with LAC's strategic priority to empower clients to be more autonomous and improve digital service delivery as outlined in the [Policy on Service and Digital](#). This also frees up time for the ATIP team to focus further on improving other processes, better client service and backlog reduction.

Since April 1, 2025, LAC has been handling all incoming requests in its new case management software ATIPXpress, which is already demonstrating its efficiency compared to the previous case management software. The most noteworthy features include the ability to open multiple tabs and consult or work on multiple requests at the same time, the ability to send correspondence to clients directly from the case management system, faster upload time for large files, and more autonomy for analysts to perform tasks on their own and easily transpose and reuse content from other existing requests. LAC is implementing ATIPXpress on classified networks over the coming years while working on iterative improvements on the Protected B network to adjust its workflows to the new software.

LAC has made significant improvements to its capacity to process requests on secure networks. Since the publication of its ATIP Action Plan, LAC has expanded its secure network infrastructure, enhancing its ability to handle sensitive and classified digital and digitized records more efficiently. These upgrades ensure that requests involving classified Secret and Top Secret information are processed in accordance with GC security requirements. These advancements not only render LAC's operational capabilities more efficient and effective but also reinforce its commitment to maintaining robust information security standards. Additionally, this enhanced capacity facilitates more effective communication and consultations with other government departments on secure records, where required, ensuring seamless and secure information sharing.

Ensure business stability and continuity

Library and Archives Canada continues in its efforts to optimize the processing of ATIP requests by placing employees directly in the locations where documents are stored, across multiple cities and facilities, for more direct review of paper-based material and digitization in situ rather than shipping to different facilities. This allows for faster and more efficient responses to requests, reducing or eliminating document transportation times and modernizing to digital processing models.

LAC ATIP has also undertaken a thorough evaluation of critical functions and positions within the organization. This evaluation documents the nature and needs of the ATIP function on an ongoing basis. By identifying critical roles, it will help plan for future needs and allow more proactive human resources planning to minimize the potential for risk or downtime—ultimately ensuring that LAC maintains optimal capacity to continuously and effectively process ATIP requests in accordance with legislated requirements. Furthermore, LAC has prioritized essential service for veterans requiring urgent access to their files for medical, program or services needs.

Training and development initiatives

LAC ATIP is committed to the continuous professional development of its staff. The Training and Development Team has developed more than 10 internal training modules specifically designed for LAC ATIP staff. These modules cover a wide range of topics, such as International Requesters, Important Dates, Searching in Military and Government Personnel Information Index, Cross-Referencing and Duplicate Requests, ensuring that employees have access to comprehensive and up-to-date training resources. In addition to these modules, LAC is engaged in ongoing group and individual training efforts. Regular presentations are offered to a wider LAC audience on the work of the different teams within the ATIP Branch, providing staff with a deeper understanding of the various roles and responsibilities. These presentations foster a collaborative environment and ensure that all team members are well informed about the broader ATIP operations. These training initiatives underscore LAC's dedication to maintaining a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce, working in close collaboration and contributing to the organization's overall capability of effectively managing ATIP requests. It has also generated innovative approaches to problem-solving and to bringing new workflow opportunities between teams, both within ATIP and across the organization.

Recruitment and retention of experienced ATIP analysts are constant challenges for all government departments, particularly for LAC, where ATIP work can be specific to archival records or the personnel files of former Canadian Armed Forces members. To address these challenges, LAC has developed a set of tools designed to attract, develop and retain ATIP analysts with various levels of experience. These tools offer a structured, competency-based learning and evaluation framework that enables officers and analysts at all levels to develop and broaden their knowledge of ATIP and the competencies and skills required at different levels. Furthermore, they will help analysts enhance their competencies, empowering them to become better prepared for more senior roles by undertaking training proactively. Finally, these tools also support management at all levels to manage performance by having clearly defined expectations of performance and competencies at all levels and by identifying, developing and promoting talent from within the ATIP Analyst stream. Using these tools, managers can foster the development of internal institutional knowledge while ensuring that employees have the opportunities they need to develop long-term careers at LAC.

Information sessions were held for managers and employees to ensure effective implementation and utilization of these tools.

Part 3: Engage with external partners on broader issues affecting ATIP

Engage with Government of Canada partners

LAC ATIP successfully completed its portion of the ATIP-informed work related to the LGBT Purge Fourth Supplementary Settlement Agreement, marking a significant milestone in this important initiative. In collaboration with other government departments, LAC ATIP reviewed approximately 11,000 pages of material. This comprehensive effort reflects a strong commitment to transparency, accountability and the preservation and dissemination of historical records related to the experiences of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals in the federal public service and Canadian Armed Forces.

LAC also contributes actively to efforts to review the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act, working in close collaboration with the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) and other government departments. This contribution is particularly important to ensure that LAC's unique mandate and expertise in managing archival material are properly considered in the review of both Acts—namely, supporting both access to historical records and the responsible protection of personal information while capturing the unique and specific mandate of LAC to make the history of the government of Canada available to all Canadians.

LAC continues to engage with TBS and other GC institutions to bring improvements to the ATIP system, both as the co-lead of an interdepartmental working group for managing the complaints process and in discussions about new approaches to the declassification of records of interest to Indigenous communities through Indigenous data sovereignty-related initiatives. LAC has also received specific funding over three years, starting in 2024–2025, to strengthen its proactive approaches to making records available, including declassification.

Engage with international organizations

Since our last report, LAC ATIP representatives held a meeting with representatives from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Declassification Center. This meeting provided an opportunity to discuss and learn about their operations and challenges and to benefit from their experiences. During the meeting, LAC representatives gained valuable insights into NARA's declassification and disclosure processes, particularly for information of a national security nature, and strategies for managing large volumes of historical records. The exchange of knowledge and best practices will help LAC enhance its own declassification efforts and improve the efficiency of its ATIP operations.

Engage with clients and the public

In May, representatives from LAC delivered a presentation at the National Claims Research Directors meeting (Indigenous land claim researchers), providing a summary of results achieved, changes and insights into access to information processes and discussing ways to support

Indigenous organizations in navigating archival research. Additionally, LAC contributed to the national dialogue on mental health in archival work by presenting on trauma-informed approaches at the annual conference of the Association of Canadian Archivists. This presentation addressed the emotional toll that can arise from working with sensitive or traumatic records and emphasized the importance of institutional awareness and support mechanisms for employees and for clients.

To further strengthen client relationships, LAC ATIP maintains regular conversations with high-volume requesters to help prioritize files and reconfirm their evolving needs. These ongoing discussions ensure that services remain client-focused, efficient and aligned with expectations, while also supporting more effective resource planning and delivery and efforts to respond to ATIP requests within legislative time frames. Recently, LAC met with 11 clients that represent over 200,000 pages of records under active review, asking each of these clients for feedback on the ATIP system at LAC as well as inviting them to learn more about the process. The goals of these collaborations are to share a common understanding of the ATIP process, to look for opportunities to streamline or prioritize the requests underway, and to ensure an open and constructive dialogue on the work being undertaken to process these requests.

As outlined in Section 2 of this report, LAC implemented a new “stop the clock” procedure, ensuring that only fully scoped and review-ready requests are processed under ATIP by seeking clarifications from clients and implementing “duty to assist.” Importantly, this change has resulted in increased direct contact with clients at the front end of their requests, as LAC works more closely with them to clarify their submissions before proceeding. Ultimately this provides records directly to clients where possible without ATIP intervention. It ensures that requests being processed under ATIP are as clear and specific as possible, ultimately eliminating down times and wait times for clients and rendering behind-the-scenes processes more efficient for LAC as well.