



Human Rights Commission

**2011 - 2012 French-Language Services Plan
Submitted March 2011**

Message from the Director & CEO

I am pleased to submit the 2011-2012 French-language Services Plan for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. The Commission is committed to contributing to fulfilling the Government's obligations pursuant to the *French-Language Services Act* and Regulations.

The Commission aims for excellence in the delivery of its dual mandate - human rights dispute resolution and eliminating barriers to full participation in society through education, training and consultation, including policy advice. This requires enhancing our understanding of the diverse groups in the province, including Acadians and Francophones, and building strong relationships with government, academic institutions, civil society and the public to better meet the needs of all the people we serve.

The accessibility of information on human rights in French for Acadians and Francophones is very important in promoting language rights and providing access to justice.

The Commission is working actively to enhance its services in French at all stages of the dispute resolution process. As part of this year's plan, we will continue to support staff in their efforts to increase their French language skills and promote opportunities to practice French.

I am leaving the Commission on May 1, 2011. The plans for 2011-2012 may require adjustment when a new Director and CEO is appointed.

Krista Daley,
Director & CEO

Responses to French Requests (Written and Oral)

Inquiry / Intake Services

The Human Rights Commission responds to phone inquiries and provides information to the public on human rights issues mainly through its phone service in the Halifax office, through distribution of print material and the website. Staff are directed to provide service in French, or make available service in French, to all callers and walk-in clients who request or need service in French. Our intake team can communicate in French both orally and in writing.

Written Correspondence / Print Materials / Website

All written correspondence in French received by the Commission is replied to in French. The intake forms are now available in French and a goal for 2010-2011 is to have all documents updated, translated and available in French.

The *Human Rights Act* and all of the Commission's print brochures are available in French. They provide information on human rights and explain the services of the Commission.

The Commission is still redeveloping its website and will incorporate French as part of the redesign.

Investigation / Mediation

Complaint investigation is a highly technical process that requires knowledge of and the ability to describe investigation techniques, legal theory and Commission policies. Attracting individuals who can perform these functions in both official languages has proven to be elusive. However, several existing Human Rights Officers are seeking to improve their capacity to function in French. As training seats become available, these officers will work toward their goal of increased fluency. In the interim, internal and external resources are accessed by officers to ensure the needs of French-speaking clients are met.

The Commission maintains a roster of eight external mediators. Although none of the roster mediators currently have French capacity, building this capacity has been identified as a priority. In the event that a French-speaking mediator is required, there is the ability to sole source and the Commission knows persons who can fulfill the requirements. In 2010-2011, the Commission had to use this approach and it was an excellent way to ensure that mediation services were provided in French.

Training / Public Events / Media

Training and public events are generally conducted in English. Promotional material for public events, such as posters and brochures, are distributed in French.

The Director and CEO is bilingual and can conduct public speaking engagements in French. One of the Commissioners has French as a first language and is available to conduct public speaking engagements in French.

Media releases involving Board of Inquiry decisions or other matters of relevance are distributed in French. The Director and CEO has conducted media interviews in French.

The Commission will continue to examine how it can present training programs in French. This may also require use of outside trainers who contract with the Commission for services.

French-Language Service Inventory

The Commission currently employs 24 people and operates provincially with three offices: a central office in Halifax and regional offices in Sydney and Digby. The Commission is striving to increase the capacity of its staff to provide services in French.

The Commission also administers a roster of eight mediators who conduct mediations in different parts of the province. Currently six Commissioners, serving on a part-time basis, come from diverse backgrounds and from different regions of the province. In addition, Board of Inquiry Panel Chairs make decisions on human rights cases.

Currently there are a number of staff who can communicate in French and competency levels vary. Only one staff, an intake officer is considered functionally bilingual and her post requires her to be so. With the departure of the current CEO in May 2011, there is no fully bilingual manager although two managers have some competencies in this area.

The Commission has been providing support to staff to enhance their language competency in both written and oral French. During 2010-2011, an increased number of staff participated in French language courses. The information on French language training is always circulated.

The Commission has a number of brochures available in French. The Commission is in the process of updating all of the public information brochures and will have them available in French.

- *Human Rights Act* - Loi sur les droits de la personne
- Basic Guide to the work of the Commission - Guide de base sur le travail de la Commission des droits de la personne de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Guide to the Complaint Process - Guide de la procédure de traitement des plaintes
- Introduction to Settlement Initiatives - Introduction aux initiatives de règlement des plaintes
- Guide to Mediation, One Option for Settling Complaints - Guide de la médiation, une option pour régler les plaintes
- For Employers, a guide for drafting job application forms and interview questions - Pour les employeurs, guide de rédaction des formulaires de demande d'emploi et des questions d'entrevue
- Workshops and Training through the Race Relations, Equity and Inclusion Division - Ateliers et formation offerts par la Division des relations interraciales et de l'action positive de la Commission des droits de la personne de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Plan for Dispute Resolution of Aboriginal Complaints - Plan pour l'investigation et la résolution des plaintes déposées par des Autochtones and the Executive Summary - Résumé
- Tent cards promoting the Commission

Table 1 – Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2010-2011

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2010-2011

Human Rights Commission

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2010-2011	Planned Measures – 2010-2011	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2010-2011
<p><u>Objective 1 – Framework and Policy</u> Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act</p>	<p>1.1 – Administrative and Policy Framework The Office of Acadian Affairs and the Minister of Acadian Affairs fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.</p>			
	<p>1.2 – Institutional Responsibilities Designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.</p>	Contribute to the annual progress report	Progress report filed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission is represented on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee via CEO - submit progress report
<p><u>Objective 2 –Enabling French-language Services</u> Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas</p>	<p>2.1 – Consultations Designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as</p>	N/A	N/A	A person who self-identifies as of Acadian heritage is a Commissioner

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2010-2011	Planned Measures – 2010-2011	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2010- 2011
	identified through consultation.			
	<p>2.2 – Internal Communications</p> <p>Public service employees are more knowledgeable about the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services. They are more sensitive to cultural issues pertaining to the Acadian and francophone community and more aware of the requirements to communicate in French; they promote services in French to the public.</p>	Request and use materials from the Bonjour! Program within the Commission.	Materials from the Bonjour! Program received and actively used.	<p>Materials are actively promoted</p> <p>CEO regularly communicates with staff in both languages to promote use of French (written and oral communication)</p>
	<p>2.3 – Communications with the Public</p> <p>Key stakeholders and the community better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them.</p>	<p>Plan and begin implementation of a bilingual website with translation of priority materials.</p> <p>Provide reception signage in French.</p> <p>Once amended, translate intake forms into French and make available</p>	<p>Plan established and translation of priority materials.</p> <p>All signs now in English will also be visible in French in the reception area.</p> <p>Intake forms available in French and distributed as necessary.</p>	<p>Entire website is being redeveloped. When relaunched, French site will be developed.</p> <p>Did not proceed. Commission is moving to new premises and unclear as to signage requirements.</p> <p>Intake forms translated.</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2010-2011	Planned Measures – 2010-2011	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2010-2011
	<p data-bbox="467 426 605 485">2.4 – Service Delivery</p> <p data-bbox="467 520 691 768">Services in French considered as priorities are identified, strategies or approaches for service delivery are implemented, and services are offered.</p>	<p data-bbox="716 331 919 359">to French clients.</p> <p data-bbox="716 426 919 575">Use sole source procurement if a French speaking BOI or mediator is required.</p> <p data-bbox="716 674 919 852">Increase opportunities for staff to learn and use French so service improved.</p> <p data-bbox="716 1304 919 1604">Ensure all clients who request or need service in French at all stages of the dispute resolution process received services in French.</p> <p data-bbox="716 1640 919 1818">Plan a human rights forum in conjunction with Acadian and Francophone stakeholders to</p>	<p data-bbox="943 426 1114 604">Any mediation or BOI that should be held in French is held in French.</p> <p data-bbox="943 674 1114 940">Number of staff who participate in French-language courses and other activities to learn and use French</p> <p data-bbox="943 1251 1114 1493">Number of clients who request or need services in French and receive service in French.</p> <p data-bbox="943 1619 1114 1734">Plan is in place and funding is received.</p>	<p data-bbox="1138 426 1373 548">As required, a French speaking mediator was engaged through procurement</p> <p data-bbox="1138 646 1373 705">A record number of staff took French classes – 9</p> <p data-bbox="1138 1283 1373 1377">When hiring new intake officer, French was an essential qualification.</p> <p data-bbox="1138 1629 1373 1692">Did not proceed due to staffing situations.</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2010-2011	Planned Measures – 2010-2011	Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2010- 2011
	<p>2.5 – Human Resources</p> <p>The capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased.</p>	<p>promote understanding of issues they face.</p> <p>Enhance ability to provide services at all stages of dispute resolution process in French including mediation</p>	<p>Ability exists to provide services at all stages of dispute resolution process in French including mediation.</p>	<p>Self-identification surveys of staff completed to determine level of language competency. 9 staff took language classes</p> <p>Staffing of intake officer required French language.</p>
<p><u>Objective 3 – Community Development and Capacity-Building</u></p> <p>Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability</p>	<p>3.1 – Preservation and Growth of the Community</p> <p>Government has helped Acadian and francophone community organizations realize objectives expressed in the community's Comprehensive Development Plan 2009-2014.</p>	<p>Participate as a member of the Advisory Panel for the EEP survey which was sent to Acadian and Francophone stakeholders.</p>	<p>Develop further partnerships with Acadian and Francophone stakeholders to promote understanding of issues faced by the community.</p>	<p>No specific funding made but continue to expend resources on ongoing litigation on French language school funding (Comeau v. HRM and the Province)</p>
	<p>3.2 – School Community Centres</p> <p>Acadian and francophone school community centres offer services and programs to the Acadian and francophone community.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Table 2 – Goals, Objectives and Measures for 2011-2012

Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2011-2012

Human Rights Commission

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012
<p><u>Objective 1 – Framework and Policy</u> Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act</p>	<p>1.1 – Administrative and Policy Framework The Office of Acadian Affairs and the Minister of Acadian Affairs fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.</p>		
	<p>1.2 – Institutional Responsibilities Designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.</p>	<p>Continue to meet responsibilities by participation on French language services coordinating committee Submit progress report</p>	<p>An effective transferring of responsibilities from outgoing CEO to manager. Participate on committee. Progress report is filed on time.</p>
<p><u>Objective 2 – Enabling French-language Services</u> Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas</p>	<p>2.1 – Consultations Designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation.</p>	<p>When changing processes/systems, consult with community as required.</p>	<p>Community is aware of changes within the Commission and are able to provide feedback.</p>
	<p>2.2 – Internal Communications</p>	<p>Management team continues to use French and to promote its usage</p>	<p>Managers and staff receive training on the French language service</p>

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012
	Public service employees are more knowledgeable about the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services. They are more sensitive to cultural issues pertaining to the Acadian and francophone community and more aware of the requirements to communicate in French; they promote services in French to the public.	throughout the organization.	requirements of Government. Will liaise with Office of Acadian Affairs for an appropriate program.
	<p>2.3 – Communications with the Public</p> <p>Key stakeholders and the community better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them.</p>	Bilingual website launched.	As changes occur in the Commission, materials are produced in French and posted on the website.
	<p>2.4 – Service Delivery</p> <p>Services in French considered as priorities are identified, strategies or approaches for service delivery are implemented, and services are offered.</p>	Ensure availability of Board of Inquiry Chairs, mediators and human rights trainers who can work in French.	<p>Review roster mediators.</p> <p>Develop a list of persons who can do human rights training in French.</p>
	<p>2.5 – Human Resources</p> <p>The capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased.</p>	Continue to improve capacity.	<p>Staff continue to take courses and attend lunch and learns.</p> <p>Staffing of new positions takes into consideration the language of the position.</p>
<p><u>Objective 3 – Community Development and Capacity-Building</u> Support the Acadian and francophone community in</p>	<p>3.1 – Preservation and Growth of the Community</p> <p>Government has helped Acadian and francophone</p>	N/A	N/A

Objectives	Expected Results: 2009-2013 French-language Services Strategic Plan	Department Goals and Objectives – 2011-2012	Planned Measures – 2011-2012
its long-term development and sustainability	community organizations-realize objectives expressed in the community's Comprehensive Development Plan 2009-2014.		
	<p>3.2 – School Community Centres</p> <p>Acadian and francophone school community centres offer services and programs to the Acadian and francophone community.</p>	N/A	N/A