



Environment and Labour

French Language Services Plan 2007-2008

1. Name of Designated Public Institution:
Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour
2. Message from Deputy Minister or CEO

As a regulatory agency, it is very important that Nova Scotia Environment and Labour is able to provide public service and access to departmental programs to the Acadian and francophone community in their language of choice and preference. Significant progress has been made by the NS Government, the Office of Acadian Affairs and by individual provincial departments, to improve or expand services in French since the official proclamation of the French Language Services Act in 2004. I am pleased to provide a copy of our French Language Services Workplan for 2007-08 in which NSEL will pilot the delivery of its French language services program. The NSEL has selected two initial subject areas - violence in the workplace, and proposed development of fire safety regulations for Bed and Breakfasts that accommodate less than 10 people, to focus departmental service over the next two years. These topics were selected on the basis of their linkage to health, safety, and security issues identified under the French Language Services Act, as priority areas of interest to the Acadian and francophone community.

It is our intention to continue building our capacity to provide services in the French language to meet the needs of the Acadian and francophone community. In subsequent years, NSEL will extend our offer of services beyond the initial focus areas, to address those priority interests expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. Every effort will be made to make services available in French in as efficient a manner as possible while respecting financial, operational, and French language capacity realities of the department. We ask for your patience and indulgence as we continue to define the best approach for delivering services, improve our French language skills, and prepare or revise internal policies to allow for French service delivery. NSEL encourages input on environment and labour issues of priority interest to the French community and feedback on services provided. NSEL looks forward to working collaboratively and in partnership with Acadian and francophone communities, the Office of Acadian Affairs and government departments and agencies, to create a sustainable framework that supports the French-language services Act and meets the needs of the Acadian and francophone community.

3. How our institution's staff have been instructed to respond to verbal and written requests from the public to communicate in French.

Various French speaking staff members have offered to provide services in the French language in response to verbal and written requests from the Acadian and francophone community. NSEL staff members who receive requests beyond their capacity to provide a response in the French language, are asked to contact these French speaking staff members for assistance. If the material is more technical in nature, the employee is asked to forward the English version to the NSEL FLS Coordinator to request written translation by the Office of Acadian Affairs.

4. French –language services offered now

French language services currently offered pertain to the provision of NSEL documents and consultation materials translated into the French language on topics that relate generally to health, safety, and security (e.g. occupational health and safety, labour relations and standards, minimum wage). Access to these documents is provided on the NSEL website.

NSEL continues to build its capacity to provide French language services, by offering opportunity for staff to take French language training.

5. How the plan will contribute to the preservation or growth of the Acadian and francophone community.

The NS Department of Environment and Labour (NSEL) recognizes the contribution of the Acadian and Francophone community, and the importance of continued work with this community to provide services in French to support the preservation, development and enhancement of its language, culture, and heritage. The NSEL plan will serve to coordinate and provide French language services in a manner consistent with approaches taken by the Office of Acadian Affairs, to meet government responsibilities under the French Language Services Act. The plan will provide and continually build upon French Language Services delivered to the Acadian and francophone community in Nova Scotia.

6. Goals, Objectives and Measures for 2007-08

Corporate Objective 1: Strengthening the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French–language Services Act.

Specific goals and objectives for 2007-2008

- Develop internal policies related to the provision of services in French.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2007-08.

- Continue to implement the departmental French Language Services Plan and annual workplan, to identify priority service needs of the French community, to build internal capacity to communicate, offer services in French, and monitor progress.

- Formalize the development of an internal process to coordinate public consultations in the French language.
- Maintain a departmental list of upcoming public consultations for which a French language component is needed and required.
- Continue to participate on the OAA French Language Services Coordinating Committee to provide advice and assistance on the implementation and application of the French Language Services Act and to coordinate NSEL response to the French Language Services initiative.
- Incorporate the French language services plan into the departmental business plan
- Report to the Office of Acadian Affairs on departmental progress on the provision of French language services on an annual basis.
- Continue to participate on the Consultation Sub-committee to identify and prioritise community needs for French language services, and to build stronger relationships between the provincial government and Acadian and francophone community-based organizations.

Corporate Objective 2: Consulting with the Acadian and francophone community.

Specific goals and objectives for 2007-2008:

- Develop an internal policy to outline NSEL responsibilities in French language service, services to be offered, and approaches to French language Service delivery.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2007-08.

- NSEL will develop and implement options for delivery of services on two priority topics in 2007-09 (violence in the workplace, and proposed fire safety regulations for Bed and Breakfasts accommodating less than 10 people).
- Provide French language services in at least one session of province-wide consultations/public meetings to consult the public on the proposed development of fire safety regulations for Bed and Breakfasts accommodating 10 people or less.
- Include bilingual materials on the NSEL website, on the topic of violence in the workplace.
- Encourage Acadian and francophone participation in agencies, boards and commissions under the responsibility of the NS Department of Environment and Labour, within advertisements.
- Prepare an internal guide for the translation of press release materials and advertisements into French.
- Formal designation of staff to provide services in French or to act as liaison between the department and Acadian and francophone communities in response to calls and written correspondence.

Corporate Objective 3: Communicating, sharing information, and promoting services available in French.

Specific goals and objectives for 2007-2008

- Ensure that key documents are available in both French and English.
- NSEL will work with the OAA to ensure that the public is aware of approaches being taken by NSEL to provide French-language services.
- Employees are more aware of the French Language service initiative, and

departmental roles and responsibilities under the French-language Services Act and Regulations.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2007-08.

- Implement an internal communications plan on the French Language Service initiative to inform employees on the provincial government commitment to provide French-language services, to build support, and encourage interest in French language training and service.
- Design and Implement an internal NSEL campaign to promote awareness of the provincial government French Language Service Act, the activities of OAA; and NSEL progress in support of the initiative to increase awareness, understanding, and promote interest and involvement.
- Make presentations to senior management and NSEL staff on French Language service initiative and progress achieved to implement the NSEL FLS plan.
- Prioritize, translate and make available information in French through printed publications, website placement, news releases, and advertisements of particular relevance to the Acadian and francophone community.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures to respond to requests for information/service in French on NSEL issues.

Corporate Objective 4: Supporting French-language services development, planning and delivery in priority areas.

Specific goals and objectives for 2007-2008

- Service delivery corresponds to health, safety and security objectives and expressed interests of the Acadian and francophone community for information on NSEL issues.

Specific measures which will be taken to achieve these goals and objectives in 2007-08.

- Work with the OAA to develop and distribute a community survey to more clearly identify priority community French language service and information needs pertaining to NSEL issues/topics.
- Assess the capacity of the department to provide French language service in priority areas of the province on selected priority topics for 2007-09.
- Provide staff with training opportunities, learning tools, and resources for French-language skills development, maintenance, and growth (e.g. French language training, NSEL technical terms dictionary).
- Sponsor a non-governmental organization providing environmental youth education programs that incorporate a French language component.
- New services or programs will be introduced in areas of violence in the workplace and the proposed development of fire safety regulations for Bed and Breakfasts accommodating 10 people or less.
- Ensure if practicable, that third parties contracted by the department to provide services on its behalf, provide services in accordance with French-language Services Regulations.
- With the assistance of OAA, evaluate language capacity level of staff members both before and after they have taken a French language course to determine their progress in French language development and ability to provide French language service.