

# Progress Report 2011

## French-language Services Provided by the Government of Nova Scotia



# Bonjour!

Français / English

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# Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the *2011 Progress Report on French-language Services Provided by the Government of Nova Scotia*. This is our fifth annual report on the progress of departments, offices, and agencies in developing and delivering services in French to Nova Scotians. The 2011 report focuses on key performance indicators and spotlights French-language services which help government meet its priorities as well as the needs of the Acadian and francophone community.

Why do we provide services in French? Government has made a commitment to contribute to the preservation and growth of the Acadian and francophone community through the French-language Services Act. The provision of services in French and the support given to the Acadian and francophone community for various initiatives help preserve the French language and help the community develop and grow. This contributes to the enhancement of life in Nova Scotia by providing government services that are better adapted to the needs of Acadians and francophones.

A review of French-language services completed in 2010–2011 has shown that the French-language Services Regulations are effective. The regulations have guided our consultations with the Acadian and francophone community. They have informed our work to increase government's French-language capacity and French-language services delivery, as outlined in this report. Overall we have made a lot of progress, but there is still work to be done.

Developing and delivering services and programs in French is the responsibility of the departments, offices, and agencies identified in the French-language Services Regulations. I would like to thank employees, deputy heads, and French-language services coordinators for their hard work and commitment. More information about the achievements of these institutions can be found in their 2011–2012 French-language services plans, which include progress from the previous year.

As a division of the Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage, Acadian Affairs remains government's central support agency for French-language services. Acadian Affairs looks forward to assisting departments, offices, and agencies in better integrating French-language planning into their services, programs, and communications activities.



I would also like to acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services.

And lastly, but not least, I would like to thank French-speaking Nova Scotians and Acadian and francophone community organizations across the province for requesting and using services available in French, and for participating in government consultations. This validates what we do and provides feedback on how we can improve.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

Graham Steele

Minister of Acadian Affairs

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# Executive Summary

The progress and best practices of departments, offices, and agencies in developing and delivering services in French serve as examples to help government institutions ingrain French-language services in their planning and operational activities.

Key progress achieved in French-language services in 2010–2011 include:

## Creating a Better Working Environment

- Human resources guidelines were developed to provide a consistent protocol to integrate French-language capacity into human resources planning and management.

## Building and Enabling French-language Services

- 27 consultations and citizen engagement initiatives were undertaken with the Acadian and francophone community to ensure that government better understands the community's needs, is more sensitive to its cultural issues, and is able to consider the community's priorities in the development of policies, programs, and services.
- 1.7 million words were translated to increase the amount of publications, speeches, correspondence, website content, and press releases available in French.
- 791 seats of French language training were filled by public servants to strengthen their capacity and confidence in providing services in French.



The website [www.nouvelle-ecosse.com](http://www.nouvelle-ecosse.com) welcomes French-speaking visitors to Nova Scotia.

## Partnering with the Community

- 35 community development or cultural activities were supported through the Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services, helping the Acadian and francophone community meet its goals for development.

## French-language Services Support Government Priorities

The Department of Health, the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, the district health authorities, and the IWK Health Centre adopted initiatives to help provide quality health-care services in French at critical moments and increase patient and family comfort, for example by:

- Adopting a process to help identify patients who speak French and who may require the services of an interpreter
- Implementing a phone-based interpretation service to provide health-care professionals with access to qualified French-language interpreters
- Revising hiring policies to include language ability in French and advertising positions where French-language capacity is an asset
- Hiring employees who are able to speak French and encouraging existing and new employees to proactively offer services in French
- Communicating with the public in French through public service announcements, publications, and website content

The Government of Nova Scotia supported economic, community, and cultural development initiatives in the Acadian and francophone community which contributed to the community's long-term development and sustainability by:

- Collaborating with adult education service delivery partners to advance literacy and essential skills in the Acadian and francophone community
- Implementing the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS) to enable community organizations to submit and manage their funding applications to government's labour market programs online and in French
- Providing grants to Acadian and francophone arts and culture organizations
- Preserving and celebrating Acadian heritage in Nova Scotia
- Supporting community initiatives to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants recruited and retained in Nova Scotia



**National Acadian Day is celebrated in style in Baie Sainte-Marie (Clare region), with a tintamarre, or parade.**

The provincial government continued to expand its capacity to provide services in French for families, students, and seniors, by:

- Introducing new online services
- Increasing access to legal services and information in French
- Providing French-language information and training sessions on new standards and regulations
- Enhancing the services provided to Acadian and francophone students in the schools of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial

For more detailed information regarding the progress made by specific designated public institutions, please consult the 2011–2012 French-language services plan of each institution.



**Part of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial, the new École secondaire du Sommet in Bedford, Nova Scotia, opened its doors to 312 students in September 2010. The official opening, pictured above, took place December 3, 2010.**

# How We Approach Our Work

The development and delivery of French-language services by the Government of Nova Scotia is a collaborative effort between various stakeholders, including the departments, offices, and agencies designated in the French-language Services Regulations, members of the French-language Services Coordinating Committee, and Acadian and francophone community stakeholders.

## Acadian Affairs – Government’s Central Support Agency for French-language Services

Acadian Affairs, a division of the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage, provides services to government departments, offices, and agencies to help them develop and deliver services in French and meet their obligations under the French-language Services Act. These services include translation, French language training, funding, policy advice, and tools such as the *Bonjour!* Visual Identification Program. Acadian Affairs also encourages the Acadian and francophone community to participate in government consultations to ensure that the community’s needs are understood and addressed in the development of government programs, policies, and services.



## Designated Public Institutions

The French-language Services Regulations specify the government departments, offices, and agencies to which the French-language Services Act applies. These designated public institutions include all departments, most offices, and many agencies, including the nine district health authorities and the IWK Health Centre. The Acadian and francophone community can expect to receive some services in French from these public institutions.



**An exchange between an employee and a customer at an Access Nova Scotia site.**

## French-language Services Coordinating Committee

The French-language Services Coordinating Committee is an interdepartmental committee which assists and advises the Minister of Acadian Affairs on the implementation of the French-language Services Act. The committee works on initiatives and policies which provide direction to government in increasing its capacity to offer services in French. For example, the committee has developed guidelines on recruiting and training bilingual employees, translating documents and publications into French, providing services in French during public consultations, and preparing communications and web content in French. Twenty-five departments and offices were represented on the committee during 2010–2011.

## French-language Services Coordinators

Designated departments and offices are required to appoint a French-language services coordinator to the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. The coordinators advise on the implementation of the French-language Services Act within their department or office in various ways, including participating in the development of policies, programs, and initiatives to improve services in French, coordinating translation requests, and liaising with community stakeholders. Coordinators also help their institution prepare an annual French-language services plan, as well as evaluate and report on the institution's progress in French-language services delivery.

## Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services 2009–2013

The Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services for 2009–2013 seeks to support the development, delivery and expansion of quality government services in French for Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone community, and to support initiatives which will enhance the vitality and assist with the development of the community. The implementation of the Strategic Plan for French-language Services 2009–2013 is supported by funding from the Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services 2009–2013.

In 2010–2011, 17 government institutions were supported through the Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services to help them plan, develop, and deliver services in French or support the development of the Acadian and francophone community.

# Key Performance Indicators for French-language Services

The Government of Nova Scotia's progress in French-language services for 2010–2011

is presented in relation to the

three specific objectives and the key performance indicators of the Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services 2009–2013. This progress report is not an exhaustive list of all the achievements in French-language services for the 2010–2011 fiscal year. For more detailed information regarding the progress made by specific designated public institutions, please consult the 2011–2012 French-language services plan of each institution.

## Creating a Better Working Environment

### Objective 1: Framework and Policy

Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act

# 1

In 2010–2011, the Government of Nova Scotia continued to cultivate an environment and a culture that foster the development and delivery of French-language services. With the French-language Services Act and Regulations in place, the guidance of the French-language Services Coordinating Committee, and services available from Acadian Affairs, government institutions were able to plan for service improvements and to make progress in French-language services delivery.

Thirty-five departments, offices, and agencies published a French-language services plan for 2010–2011, outlining their objectives and planned activities for the fiscal year as well as reporting on the progress they achieved in French-language services delivery in 2009–2010.



**Nurses at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital in Sydney.**

Acadian Affairs provided services and policy advice to designated public institutions to increase French-language services delivery, including translation services, French language training for provincial civil servants, and funding to help develop and implement French-language services as well as to support initiatives led by the Acadian and francophone community. Staff delivered presentations to government organizations to raise awareness of the French-language Services Act and Regulations. Acadian Affairs also participated on interdepartmental committees and initiatives led by other departments and offices to provide input and increase understanding of the Acadian and francophone community's needs and priorities.

### **French-language Services Coordinating Committee 2010–2011 Deliverables**

- Human resources guidelines to support the implementation of the French-language Services Act were developed and approved to provide a consistent protocol on integrating French-language capacity into human resources planning and management.
- A review of French-language services provided by the Government of Nova Scotia was completed in the spring of 2010, as required by the French-language Services Regulations (2006). The results and recommendations were published in the *Progress Report 2010: French-language Services provided by the Government of Nova Scotia*, tabled in the Legislative Assembly in fall 2010.
- The Subcommittee on Third-Party Services continued work to better define the French-language services obligations of third-parties providing services on behalf of government and to identify tools and resources available to assist them in meeting these obligations.



**Wind turbines at the Pubnico Point Wind Farm,  
in Lower West Pubnico.**

## Building and Enabling French-language Services

### Objective 2: Enabling French-language Services

Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas

# 2

Collaboration between departments, offices, and agencies and with community stakeholders enabled the Government of Nova Scotia to offer services in French in the priority areas identified by the Acadian and francophone community, to inform the community about government policies, programs, and services, and to expand government's capacity to offer services in French.

In 2010–2011, 27 consultations and citizen engagement initiatives were undertaken with the Acadian and francophone community to help ensure that government better understands the community's needs, is more sensitive to its cultural issues, and is able to consider the community's priorities in the development of policies, programs, and services. The Acadian and francophone community was consulted on a variety of subjects including those listed below and others mentioned throughout this report.

Subjects of 2010–2011 Community Consultations	
Artistic and cultural activity in Nova Scotia	Provincial government budget
Cleaning up contaminated lands	Renewable energy
Community Lands Trust	State of the Nova Scotia coast
Data needs of the Acadian and francophone community on Community Counts	Usage of C@P sites
French-language media satisfaction with government communications	Volunteerism sector

Departments, offices, and agencies encouraged and facilitated the participation of French-speaking Nova Scotians by providing services in French during this consultation and citizen engagement sessions in various ways, such as:

- Advertising the consultation in French-language media
- Hiring a French-speaking facilitator
- Distributing French-language discussion papers, backgrounders, consumer surveys, and other documentation
- Using French-language Internet-based surveys or submission processes
- Using Université Sainte-Anne's or the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial's videoconferencing systems to ensure participation by Acadians and francophones across the province

## Communicating in French

Government increased the amount of publications, speeches, correspondence, website content, and press releases in French to communicate to the Acadian and francophone community about its programs, policies, and services. In 2010–2011, government issued 43 per cent more media releases in French than the previous fiscal year and 1.7 million words were translated.

Public servants' capacity and confidence in providing services in French was strengthened through the French language training. Over 3,200 seats of French language training have been filled since 2005–2006.

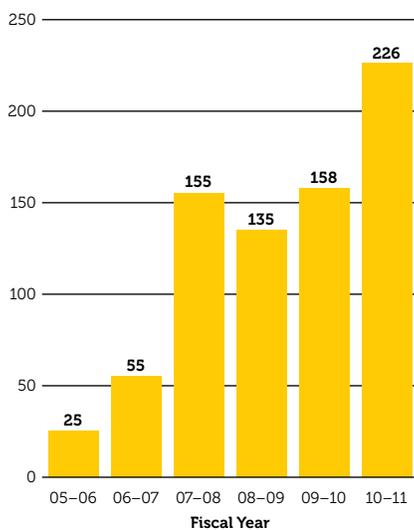
Employees who can speak French were encouraged to proactively offer services in French by using *Bonjour!* Visual Identification Program material, for example by wearing a *Bonjour!* pin and posting a *Bonjour!* sign at their workspace. Eight government institutions received *Bonjour!* material in 2010–2011, for a cumulative total of 37 designated public institutions having received *Bonjour!* material since the program's introduction in 2006–2007.

## Active Offer

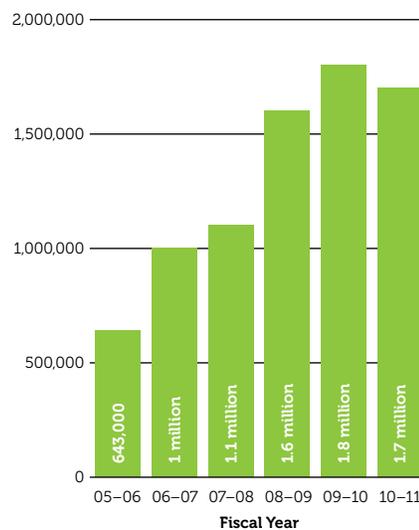
Only one francophone in 10 is likely to request government services in French without prompting, while nearly nine out of 10 francophones state that there is a strong probability that they would use a government service in French in the presence of a proactive offer from a government employee.

Study: The Utilization of French-language Government Services (in Nova Scotia), Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, March 2010.

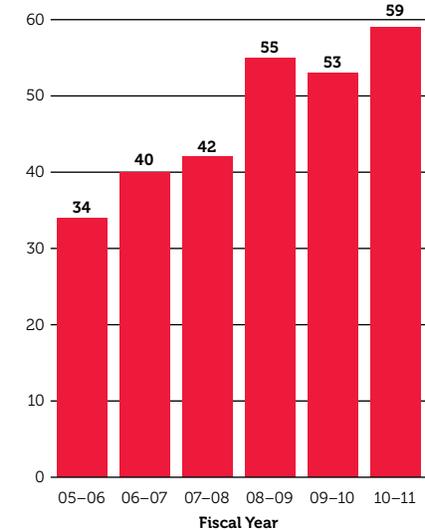
Number of Media Releases Issued in French



Number of Words Translated



Number of Government Institutions Accessing Translation Services



The annual *Bonjour!* Awards for Excellence in French-language Services recognize outstanding contributions to the development and delivery of French-language programs and services by employees of the Government of Nova Scotia. The awards encourage and inspire public servants to respond proactively to the needs of the Acadian and francophone community. The awards were presented for a second time in March 2011.



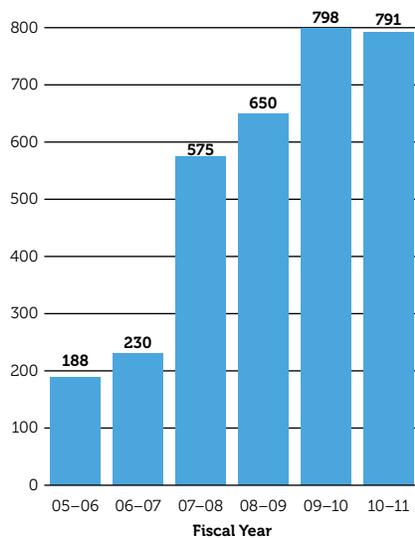
**Graham Steele, Minister of Acadian Affairs poses with award recipients at the 2011 *Bonjour!* Awards for Excellence in French-language Services. From left to right: Sandy Graves, Lucille Cormier, and Cora Lunn.**

### Acadie at a Glance/ Coup d'œil sur l'Acadie Workshop

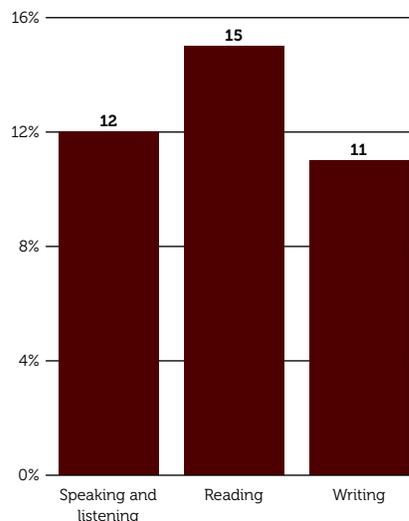
2009–2010	48 participants	4 sessions
2010–2011	137 participants	19 sessions

Public servants increased their understanding of the cultural identity and heritage of the Acadians and francophones of Nova Scotia by completing the Acadie at a Glance or the Coup d'œil sur l'Acadie workshop. This workshop explains the provincial government's commitment to the preservation and growth of the Acadian and francophone community through the French-language Services Act.

**French Language Training Offered to Public Servants (number of seats)**



**French-language Skills: Public Servants with Intermediate or Advanced Levels Skills (2011)**



*How's Work Going 2011* employee survey, which asked Nova Scotia public servants to self-assess their French language skills.

## Partnering with the Community

# 3

### Objective 3: Community Development and Capacity-Building

Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability

Government contributed to the preservation and growth of the Acadian and francophone community by supporting community initiatives and projects. Thirty-five community development or cultural activities were supported through the Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services, helping the Acadian and francophone community to grow and ensure its sustainable development. Government's support helps the community achieve the development goals identified in its Comprehensive Development Plan and assists community organizations that deliver services in French.

Two school community centres which provide programs and services to the Acadian and francophone community in Nova Scotia's urban areas were also supported through the Canada–Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services: the Conseil communautaire du Grand-Havre in Halifax Regional Municipality, and the Conseil communautaire Étoile de l'Acadie in Sydney.



# Spotlight on French-language Services

## Quality Health Care... in French!

The Government of Nova Scotia is helping French-speaking patients and their families navigate the health-care system and obtain quality care in French.

### Providing Patient Care in French

When patients are admitted to the IWK Health Centre in Halifax, registration clerks use a newly adopted script to help identify patients who speak French and who may require the services of an interpreter. Following admission, the health centre's clinical areas first look to their own staff to provide services and care in French. The coordinator of bilingual services or interpreter services are available when French-language capacity does not exist within a specific clinical area.

A similar approach is used by Capital District Health Authority to care for French-speaking patients. Since April 2010, the phone-based interpretation service Language Line provides an alternative to using in-person interpreters. Language Line provides instant access to medically certified interpreters in more than 170 languages and dialects, including French and Acadian French. The phone-based interpretation service ensures patients have access to qualified interpreters who can relay critical information and questions between patients and health care providers.



### A Direct Line to Trusted Health Information

Nova Scotians can access non-emergency health information and services 24/7 in many languages, including French, through the 811 telecare service. French-speaking nurses as well as an on-demand third-party interpretation service provide advice, information, and reassurance on general health issues and questions in French.



### **Integrating French-language Services into Planning and Operational Activities**

Beyond providing bedside care to French-speaking patients, Capital Health and the IWK Health Centre are working to ingrain services in French in their planning and operational activities. In 2010–2011, Capital Health created the position of French Language Coordinator to ensure resources are dedicated to fulfilling the district health authority's legislative requirements with respect to French-language services. At the IWK Health Centre, a Diversity and Inclusion Community Forum was held during which various Acadian and francophone organizations, as well as other organizations representing diverse communities, were invited to participate and share information. The community forum provided feedback to help the IWK provide culturally competent services and care to all the populations it serves.

Integrating French-language services into human resources and training initiatives is another way district health authorities can increase their capacity to offer services in French. In 2010–2011, Annapolis Valley Health revised its hiring policy to include language ability in French as an asset.

The district health authority's French Working Group also produced a survey to identify how many French speakers work within the organization. Annapolis Valley Health then conducted four 10-week French language courses through Université Sainte-Anne during the winter of 2011 in which 27 students participated, including staff, physicians, and volunteers. Similarly, the IWK's human resources department strengthened its commitment to advertise the health centre's interest in recruiting candidates who speak French, and new staff at the health centre are asked what languages they speak. Those who indicate proficiency in French are introduced to the *Bonjour!* Visual Identification Program and are encouraged to proactively offer services in French.

### **Government–Community Partnerships to Improve Health-care Services in French**

Sixty-nine health-care professionals increased their awareness of the Acadians and francophones of Nova Scotia and the provincial government's commitment to French-language services by participating in one of the nine sessions of the Acadie at a Glance/Coup d'œil sur l'Acadie workshop offered throughout the district health authorities. This initiative illustrates how government institutions (Acadian Affairs and the Department of Health) and community organizations (Consortium national de formation en santé – Université Sainte-Anne and Réseau Santé Nouvelle-Écosse) can collaborate to improve the delivery of health-care services to Acadians and francophones.

### **Better Health Services for Acadian and Francophone Schools**

Students of the Acadian and francophone schools in the Capital District Health Authority benefit from the services of two new French-speaking public health nurses.

## Promoting French-language Services and Programs to the Community

French-speaking patients and their families are better informed of health-related information, programs and services thanks to an increase in French-language documents and publications. Annapolis Valley Health produces public service announcements in French, as well as in English, so that Acadians and francophones can be more aware of the district health authority's programs, services, and activities. Responding to a need for French-language information on pre-natal counselling and vaccination identified during a consultation with the Military Family Resource Centre in Greenwood, Annapolis Valley Health produced and distributed documentation in French to the resource centre. At the IWK, responses to queries received in French via the website and the switchboard are answered in French, and the health centre's annual report to the community is published in French. The IWK also increased the amount of information available in French on its website.

In 2010–2011, The Department of Health Promotion and Protection produced French-language consumer health education documents and publications in a wide array of subject areas, such as healthy eating, pregnancy and early childhood, healthy schools, communicable disease prevention, and physical activities, sport and recreation.

**These initiatives have enabled the Department of Health, the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, the district health authorities, and the IWK Health Centre to provide quality health-care services in French at critical moments and increase patient and family comfort during highly stressful circumstances.**



## French-language Books and Resources at Patients' Fingertips

A section of the Family Resource Library at the IWK Health Centre is dedicated to French-language books and resource, which are accessible through an updated database. In 2010–2011, the resource library coordinated the translation of 17 new patient brochures and made previously translated brochures available for families through the IWK website. The library continues to expand its collection of French-language resources.

## Supports for French-Speaking Health-care Professionals

The Department of Health is committed to increasing the number of French-speaking health professionals in Nova Scotia. The department provides bursaries to help French-speaking nursing graduates find employment in Nova Scotia after graduation and supports training physicians in French through the Quebec–New Brunswick Agreement.

## Supporting Economic, Community, and Cultural Development



**Repairs take place at the A. F. Theriault & Son Ltd. shipyard in Meteghan River, Nova Scotia.**

Departments, offices, and agencies are contributing to the Acadian and francophone community's growth by supporting economic and community development initiatives. Investments by government in tourism, culture, and heritage initiatives are contributing to building strong and sustainable economic and cultural sectors. Community initiatives to help attract and retain French-speaking immigrant entrepreneurs and skilled workers to Nova Scotia are also benefiting from government support, as the community and government collaborate to make businesses and industries more innovative, productive, and competitive.

### Contributing to Economic Development

Government departments maintain strategic partnerships with community organizations to support economic development in the Acadian and francophone community. The Department of Economic and Rural Development supported the activities of the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse. The Department of Labour and Workforce Development collaborated with the Acadian employability table, the Réseau acadien des intervenants en employabilité (RAIE), to develop a plan to fulfill the community's labour market requirements. Acadians and francophones are identified in JobsHere, the provincial government's plan to grow the economy ([www.gov.ns.ca/jobshere/plan](http://www.gov.ns.ca/jobshere/plan)), as under-represented in the workforce. The department and the RAIE are working to increase the number of Acadians and francophones in the workforce.

Government programs are making it easier for Acadians and francophones to gain the skills required to access good jobs. Labour and Workforce Development worked closely with the Acadian and francophone community to ensure province-wide delivery of adult education and family literacy programs in French. In 2010–2011, the department consulted with adult education service delivery partners to identify the needs and priorities of the community and collaborated with these partners to advance literacy and essential skills in the Acadian and francophone community. The Department of Economic and Rural Development supported the programs and activities of the Réseau acadien des sites PAC de la Nouvelle-Écosse, the French-language Community Access Program (CAP) network, helping Acadians and francophones strengthen their computer, technology, and communications skills.

Since November 2010, Acadian and francophone community organizations can submit and manage their funding applications to government's labour market programs online through the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS). LaMPSS is a common system and set of business processes that were developed to focus on the administration of labour market programs and services for three provincial partners (the Department of Community Services, the Office of Immigration, and the Department of Labour and Workforce Development).

Under the leadership of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development, components of LaMPSS are available in French, including the system's internet interface, user guides, and reports as well as the guidelines and the application forms for labour market programs. During the system's implementation, Acadian and francophone stakeholders had access to client support in French. This contributed greatly to increasing the comfort level and success of community partners submitting funding applications in French. The efforts of the LaMPSS team to make French an integral part of the new system were recognized in March 2011 when the team was awarded the *Bonjour!* Award for Excellence in Program Development.

### Preserving and Celebrating Acadian Heritage in Nova Scotia

The Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage worked with members of the Acadian and francophone community and representatives from the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, the Association francophone de la vallée d'Annapolis, and Université Sainte-Anne to designate a section of the Belle-Isle Marsh as a protected site. The protected site status was announced by the Minister of Acadian Affairs on October 22, 2010. The 37-hectare site, located about 15 kilometres northeast of Annapolis Royal, contains significant archaeological artefacts of early French and Acadian settlement before 1755. Tourism, Culture and Heritage also participated on the Advisory Board for Nomination Grand Pré to develop a submission to UNESCO to have the landscape of Grand Pré designated as a World Heritage Site. The UNESCO designation would be an opportunity to promote the cradle of Acadie and to share this facet of Nova Scotia's history with an international audience.

### A Step Forward for Adult Education

The Department of Labour and Workforce Development supported the development of the French-language curriculum for Université Sainte-Anne's *Formation générale des adultes* program. The program enables French-speaking adults to obtain their high school diploma in French as well as pursue employment and other training in French.

### Vibrant Tourism, Heritage, and Arts and Culture Sectors

In 2010–2011, the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage supported a marketing campaign for the Festival acadien de Clare, enhancements to the visitor experience at Grand-Pré National Historic Site, and the operations of Le Village historique acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse. The department awarded 19 grants to Acadian and francophone arts and culture organizations.



**Members of La Baie en Joie dance troupe celebrate National Acadian Day.**

## Increasing Francophone Immigration

The provincial government supports community initiatives to increase francophone immigration to Nova Scotia.

The Office of Immigration initiated, in 2010–2011, a pilot project with Immigration francophone Nouvelle-Écosse to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants recruited to the province. The Office of Immigration also supported the opening of a new welcome center for francophone immigrants operated by the non-profit sector. The welcome center provides much needed visibility for services available in French to newcomers and fosters collaboration between immigrant settlement organizations.

## Francophone Immigration in Acadian and Francophone Communities

In 2010–2011, the Office of Immigration supported initiatives of three Acadian and francophone organizations linked to francophone immigration: the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse for hiring a business advisor in Halifax Regional Municipality to help French-speaking entrepreneurs, Université Sainte-Anne for a project to prepare French-speaking immigrants for the Canadian labour market and workplace, and the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse to support the settlement and integration of French-speaking immigrants in Nova Scotia.

**By supporting literacy and essential skills development, economic and cultural development, and increased francophone immigration, the Government of Nova Scotia is helping the Acadian and francophone community to grow and is helping it ensure its sustainable development.**

## Services in French for Families, Students, and Seniors

The provincial government continues to expand its capacity to provide services in French to Acadians and francophones of all ages, from children and youth, to students, seniors, and their families.

### Providing Government Services in French

The Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations makes it easier for Acadians and francophones to interact with the provincial government in French and obtain information on provincial programs and services. The department operates a province-wide, toll-free telephone and e-mail enquiry service, the Ask Public Enquiries page, and maintains a comprehensive database of information on various government services and programs. These services are available in French.

Access to legal services and information in French has increased in 2010–2011. The Department of Justice increased its French-language capacity by appointing a bilingual justice to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court and by hiring two bilingual probation officers and two bilingual lawyers. The department provided French language training and French legal terminology training to staff, to ensure they are able to provide support during French-language trials. Based on discussions with the community, Justice enhanced French-language content on its website by adding information on Victim Services, Correctional Services, the Firearms Office, and the Maintenance Enforcement Program.

Increasing the Government of Nova Scotia's capacity to offer services in French remained a priority in 2010–2011. The *Human Resources Guidelines to Support the Implementation of the French-language Services Act* were approved by the Public Service Commission in February 2011. The guidelines provide departments, offices, and agencies with a consistent protocol for integrating French-language capacity into human resources planning and management initiatives. This includes French language training and the recruitment and retention of employees



### Bilingual Services from the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation

The Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation (NSLC) is committed to providing bilingual customer service in retail stores in four primarily French-speaking communities: Arichat, Chéticamp, Meteghan and West Pubnico. Bilingual signage is in place in these four stores. Also, a list of bilingual employees working at the corporation's head office and distribution centre is available to assist in providing customer service and dealing with inquiries in French.

### A First in Online Services

French-speaking clients are now able to make online payments to Collection Services and renew up to ten commercial vehicle permits online in French. The Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations introduced these two online services in French and English. Nova Scotia also became the first province in Canada to provide bilingual reports to online users accessing the Personal Property Registry and Lien Check Search service.

with French-language capacity. As the capacity to offer services in French increases, so does government's capability to respond to the needs and priorities of the Acadian and francophone community.

### Supporting Children and Youth

Acadian and francophone early child-care centres, family home day care providers and agencies, and early childhood education programs now have access to training opportunities and tools in French. The translation of the new Day Care Regulations and the accompanying five sets of standards has enabled the Department of Community Services to expand services offered to the Acadian and francophone community. French-language information sessions on the new Food and Nutrition Support Standards and the new Day Care Regulations are available to regulated child care providers to ensure that they offer nutritious food and meet regulatory requirements.

The Department of Education is helping increase the availability of French-language education programs and resources through its support of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP). In 2010–2011, the department collaborated with the CSAP to continue the implementation of the Student Information System and the SchoolsPlus/Integrated Service Delivery Model in French. Full implementation of the Student Information System will result in a modern, province-wide information management system for school boards, and make it easier to track student achievement and school performance. Following the expansion of the SchoolsPlus/Integrated Service Delivery Model to the CSAP, schools will be utilized as service hubs for programs and services that provide timely identification of, and response to, children and youth in need of additional support and services.

Government facilitates participation in sporting events and training for Acadian and francophone coaches and athletes. The Department of Health Promotion and Protection supported French-language training in the High Five program to enable coaches to ensure quality standards in children's sports and recreation programs. Through support from the department, 24 Acadian and francophone coaches participated in the second Nova Scotia French Coaches Conference, during which the coaches strengthened their competencies in athletics and volleyball and completed Part B of the National Coaching Certification Program in French. As a result of an initiative of Health Promotion and Protection, the



### Easily Accessible Road Conditions Information

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal tested the expansion of the 511 road conditions phone services with both English and French-speaking Nova Scotians to include voice recognition capability. Implementation of the voice recognition component is scheduled for 2011–2012.

Nova Scotia School Athletic Federation handbook and resource training material is also now available in French. Better trained French-speaking coaches means Acadian and francophone athletes have access to the support and coaching they need to compete in various sporting events such as the Jeux de la francophonie canadienne and the Jeux de l'Acadie, which the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and the Department of Education supported in 2010–2011.

The Department of Education supports Acadian and francophone post-secondary students and their families. The Student Assistance branch of the department incorporated a French-language session in its consultation on improving the student financial support system in Nova Scotia. The session used Université Sainte-Anne's videoconferencing system to reach students, faculty, and administrators at the university's five campuses across the province. Input received from the Acadian and francophone community was included in the consultation's final report.

### Supporting Seniors

Government recognizes seniors and supports activities that enable them to remain active and contributing members of their communities. The Department of Seniors re-launched the Intergenerational Award program for individuals and community groups during the fall of 2010. Promotional material and the nomination form are available in French, providing citizens the opportunity to submit nominations in the language of their choice.

The Department of Seniors supported three projects to help improve the lives of Acadian and francophone seniors: the Adopt a Grandparent project from Le Transport de Clare Society where youth visit seniors' homes and start a walking program together; Seniors and the Law information forums from the Regroupement des aînées et aînés de la Nouvelle-Écosse; and a Senior Safety Grant for Security for Seniors Association/ Association des seniors en sécurité.

**Through partnerships with community organizations and collaboration between government departments, offices, and agencies, the Government of Nova Scotia is increasing its capacity to provide programs and services in French.**

### A Focus on Early Childhood and Youth Services

Over 90 per cent of the Department of Community Services' translations come from divisions responsible for Early Childhood Development, Youth Secretariat, and the Child and Youth Strategy. This is in response to the Acadian and francophone community which consistently identifies early childhood and youth as priority areas for French-language services development and delivery.



# Recommendations

**A**cadian Affairs supports government in its efforts to deliver services and programs in French by providing advice, guidance, and services to government institutions. The departments, offices, and agencies with responsibilities under the French-language Services Act – collectively called the designated public institutions – are accountable for developing, implementing, maintaining, and evaluating their own French-language services and programs. Many designated public institutions excel in this, as we can see in this progress report. Providing services and programs in French is an ongoing process and designated public institutions will continue to plan for French-language services according to their mandate and the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community.

Designated public institutions are encouraged to follow the recommendations below to help implement their French-language services.

## 1

### **Integrate French-language Services into Service and Program Delivery**

Integrating French-language planning at the development stage of new programs, services, and policies is essential.

Guidelines developed by Acadian Affairs and the French-language Services Coordinating Committee provide direction to designated public institutions in the areas of consultations, communications, websites, and human resources. Funding for planning, development, and delivery of French-language services can be accessed through Acadian Affairs.

In addition, when negotiating or renewing third party contracts, designated public institutions should include the delivery of French-language services as an element of the contract, where practicable.

## Consult and Engage the Acadian and Francophone Community

# 2

Designated public institutions must give priority to services where there is a demand from the Acadian and francophone community. Consultations and citizen engagement initiatives are ways that government can stay abreast of the needs, priorities, and trends in the Acadian and francophone community.

The French-language Services Regulations require that services be provided in French during at least one session of province-wide meetings for the purpose of consulting the community, but it is recommended that designated public institutions go beyond this minimum requirement. Designated public institutions are encouraged to review the French-language Services Consultation Guidelines and the Toolkit for Consulting in French to help ensure French-language services and content during consultations and citizen engagement initiatives with the Acadian and francophone community.

Designated public institutions should also encourage members of the Acadian and francophone community to become members of the agencies, boards, and commissions which report to the institutions.

## Promote the Availability of Programs, Services, and Information Available in French

# 3

Designated public institutions must promote the availability of French-language services to the Acadian and francophone community. Institutions may consult the French Communications Guidelines and use the French-language Cooperative Advertising Program to help increase awareness about new or existing services and programs in French.

Using *Bonjour!* Visual Identification Program materials will ensure that stakeholders, clients, and customers are aware that services are available in French and English. *Bonjour!* materials for government use include lapel pins, desktop signs, posters, and a website button.

Designated public institutions must also make efforts to increase the presence of French-language information on their websites and make it readably accessible for French-speaking visitors. The French-language Services Guidelines for displaying French on Provincial Government Websites provide guidance in this regard.

## 4

### Contribute to Increasing Government's French-language Capacity

Designated public institutions can contribute to increasing government's French-language capacity by implementing the Human Resources Guidelines to Support the Implementation of the French-language Services Act. The guidelines provide direction to institutions on identifying which positions require French-language capacity, publicizing these positions, and considering French-language capacity in recruitment processes. The guidelines also help designated public institutions evaluate their current French-language capacity and support employees with the development of their French-language capacity through French language training.

## 5

### Reward Excellence in French-language Services Delivery

Step back, evaluate, celebrate, and recognize excellence in French-language services development and delivery. The annual *Bonjour!* Awards for Excellence in French-language Services recognize public servants for their contributions toward the development and delivery of services and programs in French.

Encourage managers and employees to nominate co-workers for the *Bonjour!* Awards for Excellence in French-language Services.