



Nova Scotia Department of Justice

*Committed to the fair and effective administration of justice
and to promoting public safety in Nova Scotia*

French-language Services Business Plan 2014-2015

March 31, 2014

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Message from the Deputy Head

It is our pleasure to share with you the details of the Department of Justice 2014-2015 annual French-language Services Plan. As our blueprint for our ongoing action, the plan sets out our commitment to contribute to the preservation and growth of the Acadian and francophone community, and provide for the delivery of French-language services.

As we begin the new fiscal year, I'd like to thank all of you for your hard work in 2013-2014. Thanks to you, we made great progress on our departmental commitments throughout the year. We will continue to support employees as they continue to work collaboratively with our government and community partners to ensure justice policies, programs and services effectively serve the needs of our francophone citizens.

Specific highlights from the past year include the appointment of a bilingual Justice to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, and brochures such as the CyberSCAN, Safer Communities, Bullying, and Your Careers in Correctional Services were printed in both official languages. We also continued our efforts to increase the amount of translated information contained on the department's website such as the Summary Offense Tickets information and the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office preparedness for an emergencies. We have also increased the number of bilingual staff employed with the department, and we continue to support staff wishing to improve their skills by attending French-language and French legal terminology training.

While they operate independently from the Department of Justice, Nova Scotia Legal Aid (Legal Aid) participates in the department's French-language services annual business plan. As a result, this plan also includes French-language services offered by Legal Aid as well as their goals and objectives for improving French-language services and their specific measures to achieve these in 2014-2015. Legal Aid has also included in this plan their progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2013-2014.

We are privileged to have very talented and committed staff, supportive partners and the confidence of Nova Scotians to carry out the work we do to make Nova Scotia a better and safer place. I encourage your feedback on our plan for 2014-2015 and extend a sincere thanks to all who have contributed to the making of this plan and a note of appreciation for your anticipated contributions in the year ahead.

Judith F. Ferguson
Deputy Minister

1. *Responses to French Requests*

Section 12 of the *French-language Services Regulations* states that each designated public institution must ensure that all written correspondence received in French must be replied to in French, and that reasonable and appropriate steps are taken to make members of the public aware that services are available in French and English.

At the Department of Justice, Court Services, and Correctional Services are the divisions with the most public contact. Employees in Courts and Correctional Services forward French written or oral requests to staff within their workplace that is able to respond in French. If there is no one within the office who can respond in French, the correspondence is forwarded to head office for translation or to other staff who are able to answer questions in French.

Legal services responds to French requests, in writing and orally, as capacity permits and they have several staff fairly fluent in French who are able to field calls and inquiries.

Other divisions use staff members participating in the "Bonjour!" campaign to respond to specific inquiries in French. If there is no one at the local level who can manage the request, it may be referred to the department's French-language Services Coordinator.

Legal Aid

Legal Aid operates a 24-hour telephone duty counsel service providing free and immediate legal advice to people who have been arrested or detained. Legal Aid maintains a list of French-speaking lawyers who are willing to provide telephone duty counsel services in French. Legal Aid has a few staff members who are able to converse in the French language. When an accused person in a French-language trial qualifies for legal aid, Legal Aid ensures that French-speaking counsel is retained to act for the accused even if counsel is from out of province. If Legal Aid receives written correspondence in French, the response will be in French. The document will be translated in-house or by Acadian Affairs.

2. *French-language Services Inventory*

This section of the business plan provides a general inventory of the programs and/or services that are offered in French by the Department of Justice.

Court Services provides:

- hearings in court in accordance with the *Criminal Code*;
- interpreters in Provincial Court for criminal matters;
- staff participation in the "Bonjour!" campaign;
- simultaneous translators as required at Supreme Court and Appeal Court for criminal matters;
- translated print and website materials in priority subject areas;
- interpreters in Family Court for certain family matters;
- the Parent Information Program in both official languages in Family Division and Court; and

- bilingual staff in court administration offices located in designated areas.

Correctional Services provides:

- French presentence reports;
- offender supervision in French at certain locations; and
- staff participation in the “Bonjour!” campaign.

Legal Services provides:

- services in French by responding to inquiries from members of the public and other government departments.

Information Technology provides:

- support to department clients to accommodate online French requirements where departmental business functions deem they are necessary.

3. *French-language Services Coordinator*

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4. *Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2013-2014*

This section outlines the goals and objectives established by the Department of Justice and Legal Aid for 2013-2014 as well as the specific measures and/or activities that took place to achieve them. This is in accordance with the specific objectives identified in the 2009-2013 Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services.

Objective 1: Leadership and Policy Direction

Department's Goals and Objectives 2013-2014

To champion and support the policy development, planning, and administrative framework for the implementation of the *French-language Services Act* and *Regulations*, the Department of Justice is committed to:

- supporting Acadian Affairs;
- implementing the *French-language Services Act* and *Regulations*;
- contributing to government's annual progress report on French-language services; and
- ongoing development of policies to support the delivery of French-language services.

Planned Measures for 2013-2014

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to consult with French-language stakeholders such as Acadian Affairs, l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-

Écosse to explore areas where enhanced services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community;

- ensure the French-language Services Coordinator continues to sit on numerous committees and keep l'Association des juristes expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and the French-language Services Coordinators Committee at Acadian Affairs informed of current projects;
- support Acadian Affairs by implementing the "Bonjour!" campaign at the Department of Justice and by promoting the "Bonjour!" Awards for Excellence in French-language Services.

Progress:

1. Consulted and met with representatives from FANE to explore areas where enhanced services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community;
2. To share information, the French-language Services Coordinator met monthly with Acadian Affairs, and participated in the HR & training, active offer and communication subcommittees;
3. Met with l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse four times in the last fiscal. Two of these meetings were with the Minister;
4. Met quarterly the Departmental French-language Services Advisory Committee;
5. Provided Kentville and Sydney Legal Aid Offices posters, cards and brochures to display in their offices to support the "Bonjour!" campaign. The "Bonjour!" Awards for Excellence in French-language Services information was distributed to all divisions at the Department of Justice;
6. A Justice employee was a recipient in the category of Excellence in Leadership; and
7. Completed and translated the 2014-15 French-language services plan and annual accountability report by **March 31, 2014**;

Legal Aid will maintain its position on the French-language Committee.

Progress:

1. Participated in three (3) Departmental French-language Services Advisor Committee meetings;
2. Contributed to the department's French-language services annual business plan through the Department of Justice's French-language Services Advisory Committee;
3. Continued to report to the Executive Director for action required; and
4. Reviewed and explored development of Nova Scotia Legal Aid's French-language policy.

Objective 2: Availability and accessibility of French-language Services

Department's Goals and Objectives 2013-2014

To increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language services through active offer, communications, printed and electronic material, and enhanced French-language capacity of public servants, the Department of Justice is committed to:

- delivering services that respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation;
- increasing capacity to provide French services in priority areas; and

- advising stakeholders and the community about French programs and services available to them.

Planned Measures for 2013-2014

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to identify, prioritize and recommend print and electronic material for translation, including Family Law consultation/discussion papers;
- hire bilingual staff when appropriate vacancies occur and hire designated bilingual staff based on operational needs;
- continue to support the French-language Coordinator who will:
 - coordinate French assessments of current and new employees in designated positions to evaluate their French-language capacity and assist human resources with the hiring process;
 - increase French-language services capacity¹ by identifying employees capable of providing French-language service and by providing learning tools, resources and training in support of French-language skills development;
 - translate documents if they relate to specific province-wide initiatives or if they pertain to Acadian-related matters;
 - develop and implement an approved print and electronic translation plan; and
 - provide departmental services in French where appropriate as well as support the Dialogue on Domestic Violence Project, including facilitating engagement with the Acadian and francophone community, making presentations to the Acadian and francophone community and coordinating translation of materials as required.

Progress:

1. *Translated the following reports for Phase II of the Family Law Reform Project. The materials are for public and stakeholder consultations planned for the early Spring of 2014:*
 - *Discussion Paper addressing the FLRP Phase II proposed amendments to the Maintenance and Custody Act;*
 - *Feedback Form on proposed amendments to the Maintenance and Custody Act;*
 - *The wording for Justice's consultation microsite; and*
 - *Notice for court sites entitled "Government seeks public input on family law changes".*
2. *Advertised a designated bilingual contravention staff posting. The position will be filled in the next fiscal;*
3. *Assisted human resources with the hiring process by translating the job posting and the interview questions. No assessments were done in 2013-14;*
4. *Offered five types of training to Department of Justice employees:*
 - *Four staff attended French Legal Communication training;*
 - *Thirty-five staff attended 15 one-day sessions of Specialized French Legal Terminology training;*
 - *Fifty-nine staff participated in courses at l'Université Sainte-Anne;*

¹ Based on operational needs and the French-language training policy.

- *Six staff attended la Semaine de perfectionnement en français juridique 2013-2014 (February 10-14, 2014) sponsored by the Centre canadien de français juridique; and*
 - *One court reporter participated in intensive French-language training at Université Sainte-Anne.*
5. *Provided juricourriels and French legal terminology lexicons to 56 employees, and PPS and Legal Aid staff;*
 6. *Consulted with stakeholders to identify priority areas for bilingual information on the website. The translation and publication plan for 2013 was completed, presented to the Senior Management Committee and approved;*
 7. *Presented the initial results from the first phase of the Dialogue on Domestic Violence project to la Fédération des femmes acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse; and*
 8. *Translated the new Dialogue tool with funding support for that work through Acadian Affairs; and sent out recently, a promotional piece to Acadian and francophone community organizations to encourage participation in the Dialogue project; and ensured that the promotional materials related to the Dialogue project are bilingual.*

Various divisions will take on specific initiatives, such as:

Legal Services will:

- continue to increase capacity to respond to the demands of French-language services throughout Justice by identifying legal and support staff capable of providing French-language service to clients;
- ensure solicitors continue to take advantage of relevant training opportunities; and
- provide quality advice to its clients, including Acadian Affairs.

Progress:

1. *Our capacity to respond to the demand for French-language services has been enhanced by continuing to identify employees at intermediate level for further French-language training. In the 2013-14 fiscal year Legal Services division has sent a total of 8 attendees (7 lawyers and 1 legal assistant) on French-language Training; and*
2. *Legal Services division has continued to provide ongoing legal advice to Acadian Affairs, as required to support their operations and conduct of business.*

Court Services will:

- continue to implement the *Federal Contraventions Act* agreement, including providing training in specialized French legal terminology for Justice employees;
- complete renewal of the *Federal Contravention Act* for the period 2013 – 2018;
- provide *Federal Contraventions Act* brochure/pamphlet to enforcement agencies;
- continue to meet legal obligations and enhance services pursuant to section 530 of the *Criminal Code* and the *Federal Contraventions Act* including providing a French-speaking judge, court reporter, Crown prosecutor and interpreter for proceedings;

- hire bilingual staff where required, and advertise French-language capacity as an asset for employment consideration;
- explore the translation of Court Services' website in consultation with stakeholders to determine priority areas;
- support French-language training at Université Sainte-Anne, fund training (with federal support);
- maintain translation of Civil Procedure Rules, Criminal Court forms and Provincial Court Rules;
- translate the Court Service's client complaint form for use by French-language clients;
- continue to support the newly established French-language Parent Information Program;
- work with Federal and Provincial stakeholders to explore the feasibility of designing, developing and implementing a bilingual parking ticket infraction program;
- design, develop and use as required, a French-language jury administration package; and
- provide Probate translation services for clients with French-language wills.

Progress:

1. *Approved the renewal of the Federal Contravention Act for the period 2013–2018;*
2. *Implemented the Federal Contraventions Act agreement for 2013-14 and provided the federal government with a report for 2012-13 in accordance with the requirements under the Contravention Act Agreement between Canada and Nova Scotia;*
3. *Provided the Federal Contraventions Act brochure/pamphlet to five Justice Centres in designated areas for distribution;*
4. *Supported French services in Court by providing French-speaking Judges, court reporters for 20 French trials and 31 French interpreters in accordance with section 530 of the Criminal Code and the requirements of the Federal Contraventions Act Agreement;*
5. *Hired three (3) Deputy Sheriffs as we continue to advertise that French-language capacity as an asset;*
6. *Translated and posted on the Department of Justice website most of Court Services web pages;*
7. *Provided one (1) court reporter with 5-months intensive French training course;*
8. *Translated four (4) Civil Procedure Rules amendments and incorporated them into the Rules;*
9. *Translated the Court Service's client complaint form for use by French-language clients. Will be published on the Court Services website (ongoing);*
10. *Held one (1) French Parent Information Program session on February 2014;*
11. *Explored with the Federal Government the implementation of a bilingual parking infraction ticket program. This project is still on hold, pending the outcome of other initiatives underway;*
12. *Provided French-speaking judge and court reporter for proceedings in accordance with section 530 of the Criminal Code of Canada and the Federal Contraventions Act; and*
13. *Explored the development of a French-language jury administration package. Carried over to 2014;*

Correctional Services will:

- enhance services to francophone clients, partners, and the public by providing translated signage within correctional facilities and designated community corrections offices; and

- continue to support staff participating in French–language training to increase capacity to provide French oral and written communication with clients, the courts and the general public.

Progress:

1. *Carried over to fiscal 2014-15 enhancing services to francophone clients, partners, and the public by providing translated signage within correctional facilities and designated community corrections offices as well as continuing to support staff participating in French–language training to increase capacity to provide French oral and written communication with clients, the courts and the general public;*
2. *Translated, printed, and published on the website the recruitment brochure “Your Career in Correctional Services”; the Offender handbook that will be printed as required; the Offender Phone System Frequently Asked Questions;*
3. *Supported the delivery of French-language services in workplaces offering direct services to the public by advertising “Bonjour!” posters and explanatory cards at various Community Corrections offices throughout the province; and provided bilingual business cards to bilingual staff; and*
4. *Supported 5 employees participating in French legal terminology training.*

Public Safety and Security will:

- continue to identify opportunities for employees to consider French-language training; inform new employees of French-language training opportunities and encourage all employees to consider French-language training;
- translate documents into French if they relate to specific province–wide initiatives or if they pertain to Acadian community matters;
- explore the possibility of translating new divisional pamphlets, forms and notices;
- translate critical information on security licenses (ID cards) issued to industry upon proclamation of the *Security and Investigative Services Act*;
- advertise vacant or new positions within the Public Safety and Security Division as seeking French-language capacity as an asset where appropriate;
- continue to seek opportunities through the Crime Prevention Unit, to engage with stakeholders such as l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and la Fédération des femmes acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse in relation to initiatives such as senior abuse and the Provincial Domestic Violence Action Plan; and
- continue to collaborate with the Conseil Scolaire Acadian Provincial regarding the Restorative Approach in schools project.

Progress:

1. *Had a staff member complete the Beginner 3 Course and will continue to provide training opportunities for all staff;*
2. *Identified availability of professional translation services. Public Safety is aware of this resource and intends to utilize when necessary;*

3. *Printed and provided agencies with the CyberSCAN, Safer Communities, and Bullying brochures in both official languages. The CyberScan Unit will continue to support this initiative;*
4. *CyberSCAN Unit had four staff attend a one day workshop created to help government employees better understand and appreciate the cultural identity and heritage of the Acadians and francophones of Nova Scotia;*
5. *Attempted to partially translate the Private Security ID cards, however, based on French translation protocol the decision was made to leave the ID card in English as the whole ID card was not able to be translated into French;*
6. *Explored the possibility of translating any new divisional pamphlets, forms and notices, recognizing that not all forms and notices can be translated at this point but will continue to monitor these options. These results will be carried over to 2014-2015;*
7. *Private Security hired a bilingual staff person;*
8. *Advertised position as seeking French-language capacity as an asset and hired a bilingual francophone person for the position of Area Firearms Officer in Yarmouth to better service the diverse population in that area of the province;*
9. *Provincial Firearms Office responded to requests for delivery of the Canadian Firearms Safety Course in French by identifying instructors able to do so within the program and obtaining manuals in French;*
10. *Offered as part of a Federal program, pamphlets and other information material available in both official languages;*
11. *Continued to seek opportunities through the Crime Prevention Unit, to engage with stakeholders such as l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and la Fédération des femmes acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse in relation to initiatives such as senior abuse and the Provincial Domestic Violence Action Plan;*
12. *Ensured the translation of all applications for grants and nominations forms, the December 2013 Domestic Violence Action Plan Update report, the related facts sheets and the new informational brochures for new Canadians; and*
13. *Supported and implemented collaboration with the Conseil Scolaire Acadian Provincial regarding the Restorative Approach in schools project. Advertised components of Restorative Justice website in both official language and will continue to support this initiative.*

EMO will:

- review existing pamphlets and work with external partners to add French content to printed material and website information.

Progress: *Re-designed and incorporated its website within the Department of Justice website and translated "prepare for an emergency" documents currently available on the EMO webpage under the title "Services en français".*

Legal Aid will:

- continue to make proficiency in French a desirable asset in hiring new personnel;
- continue to expand the list of employees to whom French training is offered;
- explore the possibility of translating the Brydges After Hours Telephone Duty Counsel Manual and the Poverty Law cards; and
- provide bilingual business cards to bilingual members of Nova Scotia Legal Aid.

Progress:

1. *Continued to post hiring ads which included proficiency in French as an asset and hired a bilingual articling clerk in 2013, with articles to commence in June 2014;*
2. *Sent French-language training notifications to staff;*
3. *Registered one staff to attend la Semaine de perfectionnement en français juridique 2013-2014 (February 10-14, 2014) sponsored by the Centre canadien de français juridique, and 3 employee participated in French training offered in Sydney;*
4. *Continued to provide opportunities for French-language training to enhance the proficiency of those who have taken training;*
5. *Secured funding in cooperation with Acadian Affairs, to complete translation of the Brydges After Hours Telephone Duty Counsel Manual;*
6. *Carried over to 2014, the translation of the Poverty Law cards and providing bilingual business cards to bilingual members of Nova Scotia Legal Aid; and*
7. *Maintained two designated Bonjour! Offices (Amherst and Yarmouth) and is working towards having a third office (Kentville) designated a Bonjour! Office.*

Objective 3: Community engagement and outreach

Department's Goals and Objectives 2013-2014

To engage the Acadian and francophone community and provide services which support its development and growth, the Department of Justice is committed to:

- collaborating with l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse to support youth by promoting knowledge of the justice system in French schools.

Planned Measures for 2013-2014

To facilitate Law Day, the Department of Justice will:

- provide funding and in-kind contributions to support l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse; and
- offer career lectures by professionals working with the Department of Justice.

Progress: Provided funding and in-kind contributions to support AJEFNÉ with Law Day; and offered lectures by professionals working with the Department of Justice about careers in Justice.

5. *French-language Services Plan 2014-2015*

This section outlines goals and objectives established by the Department of Justice, and Nova Scotia Legal Aid for 2014-2015 and activities that will be undertaken to achieve them. This is in accordance with the specific objectives identified in the 2013-2018 Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services (available from Acadian Affairs).

Strategic Objective 1 – Leadership and policy direction

Department's Goals and Objectives 2014-2015

To champion and support the policy development, planning, and administrative frameworks for the implementation of the *French-language Services Act* and *Regulations*, the Department of Justice is committed to:

- supporting Acadian Affairs by implementing the *French-language Services Act* and *Regulations*;
- contributing to government's annual plan and progress report on French-language services; and
- ongoing development of policies to support the delivery of French-language services.

Department's Planned Measures for 2014-2015

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to consult with French-language stakeholders such as Acadian Affairs, l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse to explore areas where enhanced services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community;
- ensure the French-language Services Coordinator continues to sit on numerous committees and keep l'Association des juristes expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and the French-language Services Coordinators Committee at Acadian Affairs informed of current projects;
- support Acadian Affairs by implementing the "Bonjour!" campaign at the Department of Justice and by promoting the "Bonjour!" Awards for Excellence in French-language Services;
- ensure the French-language Services Coordinator conducts a review of all the divisional French-language services operational needs tables.

Legal Aid will be represented on the Department of Justice French-language Advisory Committee.

Objective 2 – Availability and accessibility of French-language services

Department's Goals and Objectives 2014-2015

To increase the visibility of French-language services through active offer, communications, printed and electronic material, and increased French-language capacity of public servants, the Department of Justice is committed to:

- delivering services and informational materials that respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community;
- supporting French-language training; and
- increasing capacity to provide French-language services in priority areas.

Department's Planned Measures for 2014-2015

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to identify, prioritize and recommend print, electronic material, and website content for translation, including Family Law consultation/discussion papers;
- hire bilingual staff when appropriate vacancies occur and hire designated bilingual staff based on operational needs;
- continue to support the French-language Coordinator who will:
 - coordinate French assessments of current and new employees in designated positions to evaluate their French-language capacity and assist human resources with the hiring process;
 - increase French-language services capacity² by identifying employees capable of providing French-language service and by providing learning tools, resources and training in support of French-language skills development;
 - translate documents if they relate to specific province-wide initiatives or if they pertain to Acadian-related matters;
 - develop and implement an approved print and electronic translation plan;
 - provide departmental services in French where appropriate; and
 - support the Dialogue on Domestic Violence Project, including facilitating engagement with the Acadian and francophone community, making presentations to the Acadian and francophone community and coordinating translation of materials as required.

Various divisions will take on specific initiatives, such as:

Legal Services will:

- continue its commitment to excellence in providing quality advice to government clients, including Acadian Affairs;

² Based on operational needs and the French-language training policy.

- continue to increase capacity to respond to requests for French-language services in the Department of Justice by identifying lawyers and support staff capable of (or suitable for training to) provide French-language service to government clients; and
- continue to ensure lawyers and support staff are taking advantage of relevant French-language training opportunities on an on-going basis.

Court Services will:

- consult and meet regularly with l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse to explore areas where enhanced services could be offered to Acadian and francophone community;
- hire bilingual employees where required, and advertise French-language capacity as an asset for employment consideration;
- support French-language training offered at Université Sainte-Anne, and fund training (with federal support);
- maintain translation of Civil Procedure Rules;
- continue to support the French-language Parent Information Program;
- design, develop and use as required, a French-language jury administration package;
- Translate and publish on the web Maintenance Enforcement Program fact sheets;
- explore the feasibility of providing Probate translation services for clients with French-language wills; and
- arrange for a French-speaking judge, court reporter and interpreters for proceedings in accordance with section 530 of the Criminal Code of Canada and the Federal Contraventions Act.

Correctional Services will:

- enhance services to francophone clients, partners, and the public by providing translated signage within correctional facilities and designated community corrections offices; and
- continue to support staff participating in French-language training to increase capacity to provide French oral and written communication with clients, the courts and the general public.

Public Safety and Security will:

- explore the possibility of translating the private security webpage once the new *Security and Investigative Services Act* is in force;
- continue to identify candidates for French-language training, inform new employees of French-language training opportunities and encourage all employees to consider French-language training;
- continue to identify opportunities for employees to consider French-language training;
- translate documents into French if they relate to a specific province-wide initiatives or if they pertain to Acadian community matters;
- explore the possibility of translating new divisional pamphlets, forms and notices recognizing that not all forms and notices can be translated at this point but will continue to monitor these options;

- continue to respond to requests for delivery of the Canadian Firearms Safety Course in French by identifying instructors able to do so within the program and obtaining manuals in French;
- ensure the federal firearms program, pamphlets and other information material will continue to be available in both official languages;
- advertise vacant or new positions within the Public Safety and Security Division as seeking French-language capacity as an asset where appropriate;
- continue to seek opportunities through the Crime Prevention Unit, to engage with stakeholders such as l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and la Fédération des femmes acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Écosse in relation to initiatives such as senior abuse and the Provincial Domestic Violence Action Plan; and
- continue to collaborate with the Conseil Scolaire Acadian Provincial regarding the Restorative Approach in schools project.

EMO:

The Emergency Management Office has been assigned to another department and their plan for 2014/15 presumably will be offered with the new department.

Legal Aid will:

- continue to make proficiency in French a desirable asset in hiring new personnel;
- continue to update and expand the list of employees to whom French-language training is offered;
- translate Social Justice/Poverty Law Cards;
- provide bilingual business cards to bilingual members of Nova Scotia Legal Aid; and
- continue to make upgrades to our French-language website.

Objective 3: Community engagement and outreach

Department's Goals and Objectives 2014-2015

To engage the Acadian and francophone community and provide services which support its development and growth, the Department of Justice is committed to:

- building relationships between government and the French-speaking community through formal and informal engagements and providing French-language services during consultations;
- encouraging francophones to apply for position on Agencies, Boards and Commissions; and
- advising stakeholders and the community about the process to submit complaints about government services including French-language services.

Department's Planned Measures for 2014-2015

The Department of Justice will:

- provide funding and in-kind contributions to support l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse and offer career lectures by professionals working with the Department of Justice to facilitate Law Week; and
- publish on the Court Services website the Court Service's client complaint form for use by French-language clients.

6. *Priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Community*

In the past few years, great progress has been made to ensure that French-speaking Nova Scotians have access to justice in French. Pursuant to Section 6 of the *French-language Services Regulations*, the Department of Justice has outlined in this plan how it has addressed, and will continue to address, the priorities of the Acadian and francophone community. The department is sensitive to the needs of the francophone community and is committed, to advancing and resolving outstanding issues which go to the heart of "access to justice" for our French-speaking Nova Scotians. We recognize this is a work in progress and some of the challenges will require significant time and resources to overcome.

Section 530 of the *Criminal Code* guarantees the accused the choice of language in which the court proceeding will be heard. This choice is made by the accused appearing before the provincial court when they enter a plea. Dependent upon the offence, the trial may then proceed in either the Provincial or Supreme Court. We have judges and staff available who can provide the service in both official languages. The Department of Justice also provides interpretation and translation services, when required.

7. *Conclusion: Contribution to the Preservation and Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community*

In accordance with section 5(1)(e) of the *French-language Services Regulations*, the Department of Justice will continue to work with partners and focus efforts on those areas of the province deemed most important by the Acadian and francophone community. Priority areas include Halifax, Dartmouth, Port Hawkesbury, Yarmouth and Digby.

The department will further improve its capacity to deal with front-line inquiries at the counter, at reception areas, by phone, and in court, and to also translate public material, especially material available on the department's website. It will also facilitate access to justice in French by continuing to offer a variety of services, tools, and French-language training to staff. The department's work will continue to be guided by direct consultation with Acadian and francophone groups and through reference to consultation reports generated by Acadian Affairs.