

# Nova Scotia Department of Justice French-language Services Plan

**2012-2013**

March 31, 2012

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## Message from the Deputy Minister

On behalf of Nova Scotia's Department of Justice, I am pleased to present our annual French-language Services Plan for 2012-2013, which presents priorities for the upcoming year and details our progress over the past year.

Last year, we increased the amount of translated material made available on our website; employed more bilingual staff; and continued to offer staff the opportunity to expand their skills by taking part in French-language and French legal terminology training. A year-end site audit confirmed that 40 percent of content on the Justice website is now available in French, including Public Trustee's Office, Victim Services and Maintenance Enforcement.

We have also translated legal documents, most notably the Civil Procedure Rules, with the guidance and approval of the Judiciary. The Civil Procedure Rules in French are now available on all Courts website along with the official English version.

During this upcoming year, we will continue to work with staff to ensure our justice system responds to the needs of Acadians, Francophones and Francophiles in the province of Nova Scotia.

We encourage you to take a few minutes to review this plan, and we welcome your feedback. We thank our staff and our partners for their efforts in implementing this plan for all Nova Scotians.

Judith F. Ferguson

Deputy Minister

## 1. Planning for Excellence in the Delivery of French-language Services

In keeping with the objectives of Nova Scotia's *French-language Services Act and accompanying regulations*, all government departments must develop and publish annual French-language Service plans in French and English.

In accordance with the regulations, this plan outlines:

- French-language services offered by the department;
- Goals and objectives for improving French-language services and specific measures the department will take to achieve these in 2012-2013. It is important to note, that while the department offers French-language services to all Nova Scotians, when establishing specific goals and objectives, the department gives priority to geographic areas with the highest concentration of Acadian and francophone citizens, specifically Yarmouth, Digby, Halifax, Dartmouth and Port Hawkesbury;
- Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2011-2012.

While they operate independently from the Department of Justice, both the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) and Nova Scotia Legal Aid (Legal Aid) participate in the department's French language Services annual business plan. As a result, this plan also includes:

- French-language services offered by PPS and Legal Aid;
- Goals and objectives for improving French-language services and specific measures PPS and Legal Aid will take to achieve these in 2012-2013;
- Progress in reaching specific goals and objectives set for 2011-2012.

## 2. Responses to French Requests (Written and Oral)

Section 12 of the *French-language Services Regulations* states that each designated public institution must ensure that all written correspondence in French that is received by their offices is 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.

Divisions with the most public contact are Court Services and Correctional Services. Employees in these divisions have been directed to forward written or oral requests in French to staff within their workplace that are able to respond in French. If there is no one within the office who can respond in French, the correspondence is to be directed to head office for translation or to other staff who are able to answer questions in French.

Where written or verbal information is related to public safety, health or security concerns, EMO ensures information is made available in French and English on their website. This includes, but is not be limited to: declarations of states of emergency, public announcements indicating impending or actual emergencies, public announcements regarding emergency preparedness and public announcements regarding emergency recovery programs.

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.

## PPS

PPS has one staff member who is part of the "Bonjour!" campaign and that staff member has agreed to respond to French requests from the public in accordance with the approach recommended by that campaign. The remaining PPS staff members who provide French-language services are Crown Attorneys, therefore, their French-language communication obligations are governed by section 530 of the *Criminal Code*. When required, the services of out-of-region staff with French-language communication skills are engaged.

## Legal Aid

Legal Aid operates a 24-hour telephone duty counsel service providing free and immediate legal advice to persons who have been arrested or detained. Legal Aid maintains a list of French-speaking lawyers who are willing to provide such 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.

### 3. 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 and PPS.

Court Services provides:

- hearings in court in accordance with the *Criminal Code*;
- interpreters in Provincial Court for criminal matters;
- interpreters in Family Court for certain family 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 some subject areas.

Correctional Services provides:

- French pre-sentence reports;
- offender supervision at certain locations.

Emergency Management Office (EMO) provides:

- in partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), French-language service, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to 911 callers.

Information Technology provides:

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

PPS provides:

- all French-language services required by the *Criminal Code*;
- court proceedings in French not covered by s. 530 Criminal Code of Canada;

- French presentations to students of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP).

#### 4. French-language Services Accountability Report 2011-12

This section outlines the goals and objectives established by the Department of Justice, Legal Aid and Public Prosecution Service for 2011-2012 and the specific measures and/or activities that took place to achieve them.

<p><b>Objective 1: Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the <i>French-language Services Act</i></b></p>
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To strengthen the policy and regulatory administrative framework of the *French-language Services Act*, 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.

#### Specific measures for 2011-2012

The Department of Justice will:

- focus on the continued implementation of the *Federal Contraventions Act* agreement;
- continue to meet legal obligations and enhance services pursuant to section 530 of the *Criminal Code* and the *Federal Contraventions Act*;
- provide a French Judge, Court Reporter, Crown Prosecutor and Interpreter for proceedings in accordance with section 530 of the *Criminal Code* and the *Federal Contraventions Act*;
- ensure the French-language Services Coordinator continues to sit on numerous committees and keeps l'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse (AJEFNÉ) and the Coordinators Committee at Acadian Affairs informed of current projects;
- support Acadian Affairs by implementing the "Bonjour!" campaign at the Department of Justice and by providing "Bonjour!" posters, cards and brochures to display in offices throughout Nova Scotia;
- promote the "Bonjour!" Awards for Excellence in French-language Services;
- explore, with the Federal government and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, the implementation of a bilingual parking infraction ticket program; and
- finalize terms of reference for a Court Services French-language Services Advisory Committee.

Legal Aid will:

- support the delivery of French-language Services;
- support Acadian Affairs by implementing the "Bonjour!!" campaign and by providing "Bonjour!!" posters, cards and brochures to display in offices throughout Nova Scotia;
- have a senior executive member sit on the Department of Justice's French-language Services Advisory Committee and report to the Executive Director for action required;
- provide annual progress updates to the French-language Services Coordinator;
- inform staff and lawyers about the obligations to provide French-language services;
- regularly review, and continue to develop, French-language services policies; and
- publish information about French-language services on the website.

Public Prosecution Service will:

- implement a French communications directive; and
- support Acadian Affairs by implementing the "Bonjour!" campaign and by providing "Bonjour!" posters, cards and brochures to display in offices throughout Nova Scotia.

## Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012

### *Department of Justice*

In accordance with section 530 of the *Criminal Code* and the requirements of the *Federal Contraventions Act Agreement*, the Department of Justice participated in the evaluation of the implementation of the official languages requirements under the Contraventions Act fund and made French services available in Court by providing francophone Judges, Court Reporters, Crown Prosecutors and interpreters for trials.

To share information, the French-language Services Coordinator met:

- monthly with Acadian Affairs;
- quarterly with AJEFNÉ and the Departmental French-language Services Advisory Committee;
- tri-annually with the Divisional French-language Services Advisory Committee; and
- annually with the Federal-Provincial-Territorial working group on access to Justice in both official languages.

The French-language Services Coordinator:

- supported Acadian Affairs by providing Court Services, Correction Services and Maintenance Enforcement offices with "Bonjour!" posters, cards and brochures to display in their offices throughout Nova Scotia;
- explored with the Federal Government the implementation of a bilingual parking infraction ticket program. The Federal Government has decided to put this project on hold, pending the outcome of other initiatives underway;
- managed the budget and expenditures, prepared and submitted the Nova Scotia financial report for 2011-2012 in accordance with the requirements under the *Federal Contraventions Act Agreement*;
- finalized terms of reference for the Court Services French-language Services Advisory Committee.

### *Legal Aid:*

- implemented the "Bonjour!" Campaign and provided "Bonjour!" posters, cards and brochures to display in offices throughout Nova Scotia;
- a senior member of the Executive or Designate has continued to sit on the Department of Justice's French Language Services Advisory Committee and continues to report to the Executive Director for action required;
- a list of lawyers and support staff who have taken French programming has been compiled;
- a program whereby notice is sent to each office of French Court availability has been re-instated;
- promoted the advantage of having French Language experience as an asset in hiring lawyers and support staff;
- regularly reviewed and continued to develop French Language Service Policies;
- translated the website;

- provided French Language Services to individuals in the Criminal Courts and the Family Courts who requested trials or hearings in French.

*PPS:*

- designated a senior executive member to sit on the Department of Justice French-language Services Advisory Committee;
- supported Acadian Affairs by providing "Bonjour!" posters, cards and brochures to display in PPS offices throughout Nova Scotia;
- translated content on their website.

**Objective 2: Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language Services in priority areas**

*Specific measures for 2011-2012*

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to consult with French-language stakeholders such as Acadian Affairs, AJEFNÉ and la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE) to explore areas where increased services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community;
- continue to identify, prioritize and recommend print material for translation and consult with FANE to ensure prioritized documents would be useful to the Acadian and francophone community. The focus this year will be on content related to the Maintenance Enforcement Program, Correctional Services and Victim Services. Victim Services will print French referral cards for distribution by police to French-language speaking clients;
- continue to enhance bilingual content on the website and consult with stakeholders and the department, to ensure prioritized areas of the website would be useful to the Acadian and francophone community;
- collaborate with AJEFNÉ to offer a French parent information program to the Acadian and francophone community;
- explore with AJEFNÉ and Acadian Affairs the possibility of accepting French wills without requiring an English translation;
- hire bilingual staff when appropriate vacancies occur and hire designated bilingual staff based on operational needs;
- prepare the French-language services accountability report for 2011-2012; and
- prepare and implement the 2012-13 French-language services plan.

Various divisions within the department will undertake specific initiatives, including:

- 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;
- Public Safety and Security will include the phrase "bilingualism in French and English will be considered an asset" in job postings for positions with the Provincial Firearms Office;
- Maintenance Enforcement Program will add "the ability to speak French would be considered an asset" in their job posting;
- Victim Services will advertise for a designated bilingual position in the HRM area.
- Court Services, will:
  - complete translation of the Provincial Court Rules and Civil Procedure Rules;

- complete the implementation of internal bilingual signage at designated areas in accordance with the terms of the Federal *Contraventions Act* Agreement;
- provide training in specialized French legal terminology to Justice staff;
- explore training at Université Sainte-Anne for court reporters, fund training and have return for service agreements signed; and
- support French training at Université Sainte-Anne (sponsored by Acadian Affairs).

The Department of Justice will also continue to support the French-language Coordinator who will:

- ensure the department meets French-language services requirements, including providing services in French where appropriate, as well as assist, as required, in community engagement sessions regarding the dissemination of the Domestic Violence Action Plan and the First Voice Research Project;
- provide in-kind contributions and deliver presentations at three AJEFNÉ symposiums about French-language Services at the Department of Justice;
- support the delivery of French-language services in workplaces offering direct services to the public by providing “Bonjour!” posters and explanatory cards and supplying “Bonjour!” toolkits to new French speaking employees;
- increase French-language services capacity<sup>1</sup> by identifying employees capable of providing French-language service and by providing learning tools, resources and training in support of French-language skills development;
- 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;
- continue to update the list of staff who have taken part in training as well as those who are capable of providing French-language services;
- translate documents if they relate to a specific province-wide initiative or if they pertain to Acadian-related matters;
- develop and implement an approved website translation plan.

Legal Aid will:

- improve Legal Aid’s ability to deliver legal services in French by continuing to provide information to Legal Aid support staff and lawyers regarding the *French-language Services Act* and maintaining the policy of enhancing opportunities for staff to develop French speaking skills;
- provide French-language services information to employees through formal staff meetings and continue to provide all staff with the formal policy directive on French-language services contained in its policy manual;
- provide information regarding training and encourage staff to take advantage of opportunities to develop French skills;
- meet regularly with the Department of Justice French-language Services Advisory Committee and provide timely information on projects and developments;
- continue its relationship with AJEFNÉ, seeking advice, referrals and meetings with the executive;

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<sup>1</sup> Based on operational needs and the French-language training policy.

- contact the Justice French-language Services Coordinator for translation of documents and correspondence received in French and publish up-to-date bilingual information on the Legal Aid website;
- advertise employment opportunities with “the ability to speak French would be considered an asset” as well as translate and publish the Nova Scotia Legal Aid Annual Report on the Legal Aid website;
- compile a list of Legal Aid staff capable of providing French-language services, supervise the provision of French services by staff and monitor staff training/development;
- continue to update the roster of staff and private lawyers available to provide duty counsel service in French and accommodate lawyers and support employees who wish to continue French training to enhance service delivery;
- support the movement of French speaking staff, as required, to provide representation in French;
- supervise the provision of tools to facilitate French speaking services e.g. lexicons, legal references, the posting of the “Bonjour!” poster in appropriate locations, etc.

Public Prosecution Service will:

- provide a staff person to meet with AJEFNÉ to discuss the needs of Acadian and francophone communities;
- identify and prioritize print material requiring translation;
- continue to ensure that PPS Crown Attorneys and support staff are provided French-language training opportunities, as availability, funding and operational requirements permit.

### **Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012**

The Department of Justice:

- consulted and met with Acadian Affairs, AJEFNÉ and representatives from FANE to explore areas where increased services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community;
- translated a variety of materials including French Victim Services referral cards which were printed for distribution by police to French-language speaking clients and a Correctional Services brochure entitled “Your Career in Correctional Services”;
- consulted with stakeholders to identify priority areas for bilingual information on the website. The translation and publication plan for 2011 was completed resulting in enhanced Public Trustee’s Office, Victim Services and Maintenance Enforcement content. Furthermore, with the approval of the Judiciary, the Civil Procedure Rules of the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court, including its Family Division, were published in French along with the official English version on the Judiciary’s Courts website. This work includes the ongoing translation of the family rules and practice memoranda;
- a year-end site audit confirmed that 40 percent of the Justice website has been translated and is now available in French;
- reviewed and updated the Parent Information Program (PIP) manual which was then translated in French by AJEFNÉ. AJEFNÉ is also recruiting volunteers to facilitate the PIP in French;
- explored with Acadian Affairs and AJEFNÉ the possibility of accepting wills in French without requiring an English translation. A working group, with representation from Acadian Affairs, Department of Justice and AJEFNÉ, canvassed concerns of Registrars of Probate, determined the

volume of French wills submitted to Probate over a five-year period, and conducted a cross-country jurisdictional review of the law. A report was drafted and provided to Minister of Justice;

- hired a bilingual support staff for the Port Hawkesbury Community Corrections office as well as two articling clerks;
- offered six types of training to Department of Justice employees:
  - 15 staff attended French correspondence training;
  - 40 staff attended 15 one-day sessions of Specialized French Legal Terminology training;
  - 3 probation officers and 7 court reporters took part in French legal terminology training specific to their employment;
  - 29 staff participated in courses at l'Université Sainte-Anne;
  - 6 staff studied Practical French Legal Terminology (a week long course held in Montréal); and
  - 1 probation officer participated in French courses at Alliance Française in Moncton, NB.
- completed the 2012-13 French-language services plan and annual accountability report by March 31, 2012.

Over the past year, divisions within the department have successfully promoted the delivery of French-language services in priority areas across the province. A number of initiatives are listed below:

#### Court Services:

- completed translation of the Provincial Court Rules and Civil Procedure rules;
- offered intensive French training at Université Sainte-Anne to court reporters in exchange for a two-year return of service agreement to provide French-language services in court. A court reporter will begin participation in April 2012;
- installed bilingual signs in the Port Hawkesbury Justice Centre and the Port Hood satellite office;
- the Maintenance Enforcement Program added "the ability to speak French would be considered an asset" in their job posting; and
- the Victim Services program advertised for a designated bilingual position in the HRM area, however, they were not successful in securing a bilingual employee.

Public Safety included the phrase "bilingualism in French and English will be considered an asset" in job postings for positions with the Provincial Firearms Office and translated promotional pamphlets about the "*Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act*" which were distributed in Yarmouth.

#### Within the Crime Prevention Unit:

- applications, nomination forms and documents for the Minister's Awards for Leadership in Crime Prevention were published in French;
- the one time Crime Prevention grants which support community initiatives are open to French community organizations; and
- staff reached out to francophone community organizations to engage in a number of government/community initiatives focused on family violence and senior abuse.

Information Technology Services developed and disseminated new Web Content Development Guidelines which outlines specific protocols for translation of new content prior to website publication.

The Department of Justice French-language Coordinator:

- provided advice, direction and French-language support to an inter-departmental team that held various engagement sessions with Acadian and francophone community organizations regarding the provincial Domestic Violence Action Plan and the Dialogue on Domestic Violence project;
- communicated regularly with AJEFNÉ, including quarterly meetings between Court Services and AJEFNÉ; and one meeting with the Minister of Justice;
- delivered presentations at three AJEFNÉ symposiums about French-language Services at the Department of Justice;
- coordinated a meeting between AJEFNÉ and Correctional Services to discuss French pre-sentence reports;
- delivered a presentation at FANE's annual general meeting about French-language Services at the Department of Justice;
- promoted the "Bonjour!" program within the Department of Justice, at Legal Aid and the PPS, provided "Bonjour!" material as required and promoted the "Bonjour!" Awards for Excellence in French-language Services within the Department of Justice, Legal Aid and the PPS;
- coordinated the translation of job postings and interview questions;
- coordinated testing of four employees by Université Sainte-Anne to evaluate their French-language skills;
- developed and oversaw the implementation of the 2011-12 website translation plan;
- provided bilingual employees with French tools as required, including providing bilingual Criminal Codes to Justice Centres *and providing* Antidote HD, a French grammar and editing program, to two court reporters;
- continued to update the list of staff who have taken part in training as well as those who are capable of providing French-language services;
- translated documents relating to various province-wide initiatives such as the Dialogue on Domestic Violence on-line tool and the Personal Directives Act.

### *Legal Aid*

Legal Aid consulted and met with the Acadian Affairs, AJEFNÉ and representatives from FANE to explore areas where increased services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community, and translated and posted their website content in French. One lawyer attended French correspondence training and one lawyer participated in Specialized French Legal Terminology training, a French course at l'Université Sainte-Anne, and studied Practical French Legal Terminology for a week in Montréal.

### *PPS*

Three staff participated in Specialized French Legal Terminology training and five staff participated in Practical French Legal Terminology (a week long course held in Montréal). PPS consulted and met with the Acadian Affairs, AJEFNÉ and representatives from FANE to explore areas where increased services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community. PPS continues to make staff available for French training.

<p><b>Objective 3: Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability</b></p>
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In collaboration with AJEFNÉ, the Department of Justice is committed to supporting youth by promoting knowledge of the justice system in French schools.

### Specific measures in 2011-2012

To facilitate Law Day, the Department of Justice will:

- provide funding and in-kind contributions to support AJEFNÉ;
- offer lectures by professionals working with the Department of Justice about careers; and
- deliver presentations about the Nova Scotia Correctional Services Youth Facility.

### Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012

As part of Law Day, the Department of Justice and AJEFNÉ collaborated to invite French students from throughout Nova Scotia to participate in the event. The Department of Justice provided funding and in-kind contributions to support AJEFNÉ with Law Day. Lectures by professionals working with the Department of Justice about potential careers and presentations about the Nova Scotia Correctional Services Youth Facility were offered to law students at two French high schools. A Crown Attorney spoke about her career during Law Day.

## 5. French-language Services Plan 2012-2013

This section outlines goals and objectives established by the Department of Justice, Legal Aid and Public Prosecution Service for 2012-2013 and activities that will be undertaken to achieve them.

### **Objective 1 - Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the French-language Services Act by:**

- 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.

### Specific measures for 2012-2013

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to implement the *Federal Contraventions Act* agreement, including providing training in specialized French legal terminology for Justice employees;
- negotiate the 2013-2018 *Federal Contraventions Act* agreement;
- create a *Federal Contraventions Act* brochure/pamphlet;
- 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 judge, court reporter, Crown prosecutor and interpreter for proceedings;
- ensure the French-Language Services Coordinator continues to sit on numerous committees and keeps AJEFNÉ 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;

- provide quality legal advice and ensure solicitors continue to take advantage of relevant training opportunities available to the Legal Services Division.

Legal Aid will continue to support the delivery of French-language services and continue to develop policies.

PPS will continue to support the delivery of French-language services and continue to develop policies. The PPS web site will be updated to allow easy access to French-language information. Bilingual Crown Attorneys will be provided with bilingual business cards.

## Objective 2 - Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language Services in priority areas

### Specific measures for 2012-2013

The Department of Justice will:

- continue to consult with French-language stakeholders such as Acadian Affairs, AJEFNÉ and FANE to explore areas where increased services could be offered to the Acadian and francophone community;
- continue to identify, prioritize and recommend print and electronic material for translation;
- 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:
  - 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 and coordinating translation of materials as required;
  - support the delivery of French-language services in workplaces offering direct services to the public by providing “Bonjour!” posters and explanatory cards and supply “Bonjour!” toolkits to new French speaking employees;
  - increase French-language services capacity<sup>2</sup> by identifying employees capable of providing French-language service and by providing learning tools, resources and training in support of French-language skills development;
  - 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;
  - continue to update the list of staff who have taken part in training as well as those who are capable of providing French-language services;
  - translate documents if they relate to a specific province-wide initiative or if they pertain to Acadian-related matters;
  - develop and implement an approved print and electronic translation plan.

Various divisions will take on specific initiatives, including:

- Legal Services will continue to increase capacity to respond to the demands of French-language services by identifying legal and support staff capable of providing French-language service to clients and by taking advantage of all relevant training opportunities;

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<sup>2</sup> Based on operational needs and the French-language training policy.

- Court Services will continue translation of the Court Services website, explore training at Université Sainte-Anne for court reporters, fund training (with federal support) and have return for service agreements signed;
- Correctional Services will continue to support staff participation in French-language training; monitor vacancies in metro Community Corrections offices with the intention of establishing a bilingual probation officer position when a position becomes vacant; provide bilingual business cards to Community Corrections staff to promote the availability to bilingual services; and actively monitor the website to ensure new content is translated;
- Public Safety and Security will:
  - 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;
  - identify a bilingual translator to assist when required;
  - translate documents into French if they relate to a specific province-wide initiative or if they pertain to Acadian community matters;
  - explore the possibility of translating any new divisional pamphlets, forms and notices. Possible areas include Private Security (in relation to the new Security and Investigative Services Act), Crime Prevention Strategy, Public Safety Investigative Section, and Civil Forfeiture as well as Crime Prevention grants and awards;
  - advertise vacant or new positions within the Public safety and Security division as seeking French language capacity as an asset where appropriate. Possible upcoming positions include Area Firearms Officer – Firearms Office, Compliance Officer/licensing Clerk – Security Programs Office;
  - continue to seek opportunities through the Crime Prevention Unit, to engage with AJEFNÉ and FANE in relation to initiatives such as senior abuse and the Provincial Domestic Violence Action Plan.

### *Legal Aid*

Legal Aid will improve its ability to deliver French legal services by continuing to provide information to Legal Aid support staff and lawyers regarding the *French-language Services Act* and maintaining the policy of enhancing opportunities for staff to develop French speaking capabilities.

### *PPS*

PPS will continue to identify and prioritize print and electronic material requiring translation and continue to ensure that Public Prosecution Service Crown Attorneys and support staff are provided French-language training opportunities, as availability, funding and operational requirements permit.

**Objective 3: Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability, including promoting knowledge of the justice system in French schools**

### *Specific measures in 2012-2013*

To facilitate Law Day, the Department of Justice will provide funding and in-kind contributions to support AJEFNÉ;

- offer career lectures by professionals working with the Department of Justice ; and

- deliver presentations about the Nova Scotia Correctional Services Youth Facility.

## **6. Addressing the 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 committed to advancing and resolving outstanding issues which go to the heart of “access to justice” for our French speaking citizens. 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. The trial may then proceed in either the Provincial or Supreme Court. We have judges and staff available who can provide the service requested. The Department of Justice also provides interpretation and translation services, in most cases. This is applicable when a witness or lawyer does not speak French. The Public Prosecution Service also has French Crown Attorneys available.

## **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 service 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, in court and also to 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.