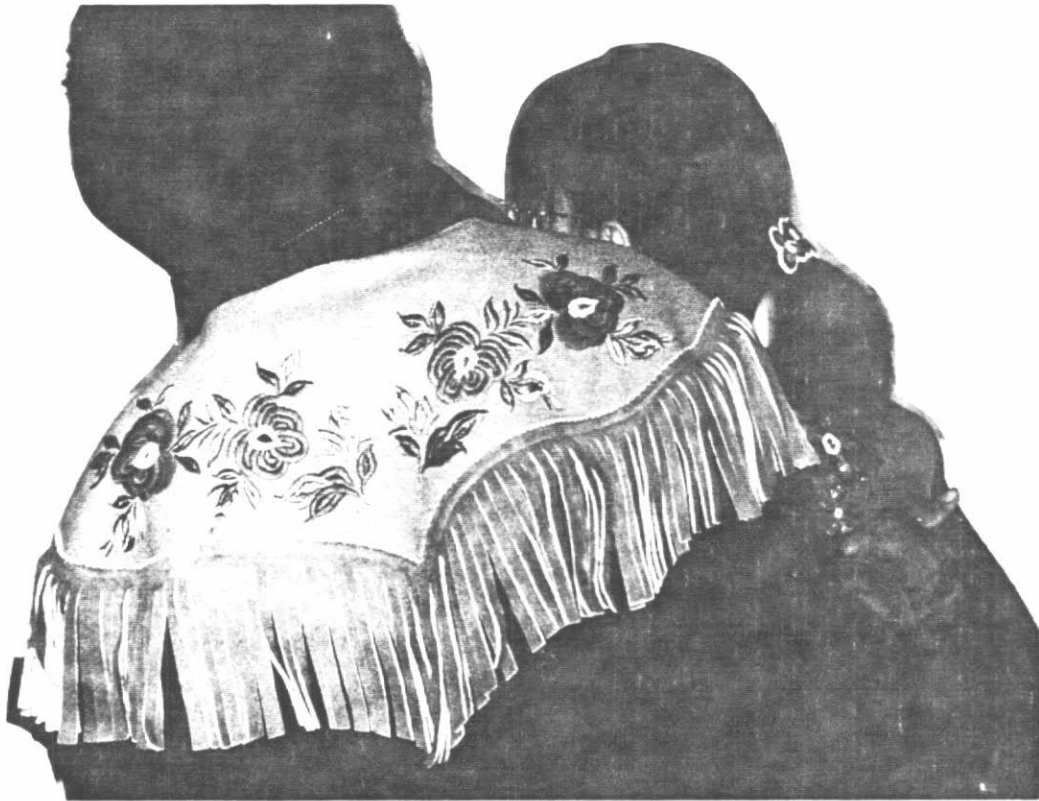


THE OFFICE OF THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

ANNUAL REPORT 2000-2001





October 22, 2001



The Honourable Speaker  
Legislative Assembly  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories



Honourable Speaker,

Pursuant to Section 23 of the Official Languages Act, I submit to the Legislative Assembly, the Annual Report of the NWT Office of the Languages Commissioner for the fiscal year 2000-2001.



Mahsi,



Fiebie Tatti  
Languages Commissioner  
Office of the Languages Commissioner  
Of the Northwest Territories



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## VISION

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As Elder Leo Norwegian so eloquently said, *"Like the people before us, we must rise like the water and take our place in the protection of languages and culture for the next generation of people."*

Each step we have taken in language revitalization has been taken with Elders and many committed and dedicated persons. Each achievement has been made by working together toward the common vision of strong, healthy NWT Official Languages. The Office of the Languages Commissioner must follow this cooperative approach, working together with all language communities and NWT citizens in meeting their language needs and aspirations and upholding the Official Languages Act.



*The Vision of Our Elders*

## MISSION

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The Office of the NWT Languages Commissioner meets this Vision by:

- Advocating support for NWT Official Language development
- Monitoring and Research activities
- Receiving and resolving inquiries and complaints regarding the Act
- Consulting with an Advisory Board
- Making reports and recommendations to the Government and Legislative Assembly
- Communicating with the Public

## MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

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A year ago I came into this office and I would like to begin by saying that it has been a year of reflection, its been a year of learning, its been a year of visiting Communities, Elders, educators, students, and many good friends. I take this opportunity to thank all the people for the show of support for the office of the Languages Commissioner.

Activities of the Office of the Languages Commissioner (Office) contained in this Annual Report 2000-2001, are based on those plans outlined in the Office of the Languages Commissioner Business Plan 2001-2004, which was a document developed in September 2000 in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders including some Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Results of the September 2000 consultation corroborated my view that in order for the Office to effectively uphold the Official Language rights of NWT citizens, the Office must shift its focus from one of primarily responding to inquiries and complaints, to that of *Advocacy*, *Research*, and *Monitoring* initiatives.

In making this shift, I acknowledge and thank previous Languages Commissioners who developed and maintained a process of managing and documenting the hundreds of invitations, inquiries, and complaints received over the past ten years. This strong foundation has allowed the Office to make its shift and focus on *Advocacy*, *Research*, and *Monitoring* initiatives yet maintain its ability to resolve an increasing number of inquiries and complaints. The earlier Commissioners' documentation also provided an institutional memory to help guide the present Office in continuing its important work.

The Official Languages have always been and continue to be a vital element for people of the Northwest Territories – languages carry our history, our beliefs, and our worldview. Office objectives over the years continue to expand on those of previous Commissioners, always with the constant goal of entrenching language rights. The challenge is daunting and obstacles many. However, with the support of the Legislative Assembly, and the many committed and dedicated individuals and organizations who work towards language revitalization, we remember the words of Elders who reassure us that “nothing is impossible.”

It is fortunate that the Review of the Official Languages Act is underway. A number of respondents to the September 2000 consultation felt that the Legislative Assembly has not been attentive enough in terms of language issues. The government recently created and funded "Official Language Communities" in response to concerns expressed by NWT citizens that citizens should have more direct ownership over language programs. It is also true, however, that the creation of the Official Language Communities must not be seen as a reason for government to be less vigilant in protecting Official Languages. Aboriginal languages are official but only for a limited range of purposes and their survival continues to be a matter for concern. It is our hope that renewed interest in languages during this review will serve to rekindle the desire of legislators to protect the gift of language, and that the recommendations contained in this report highlight some means for the Legislative Assembly to keep Official Languages in the foreground.

The Office expresses gratitude to Elders, Communities, Advisory Board Members, Directors of Divisional Boards of Education, and members of the Legislative Assembly, in working to support the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories.

In closing, I would like to offer the words of Elder Elizabeth MacKenzie to the reader, *"Each tribe needs to keep their own language. It's part of our bodies, it's from our ancestors, it's beautiful..."*

Mahsi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fbbie Tatti', written in a cursive style.

Fbbie Tatti  
Official Languages Commissioner

## ORGANIZATION

### *Advisory Board*

The function of the Board is to provide strategic direction and leadership on an ongoing, continuous basis including during the review of the Official Languages Act. An Advisory Board is also essential in maintaining communication among language groups.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	STATUS
Establish Advisory Board	Organizational Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw up Board Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Provide Board Workshop on the Official Languages Act</li> <li>• Gain regional language work updates</li> <li>• Gather recommendations regarding the Review of the Act</li> </ul>	Complete Complete Complete Complete Complete



*Fibbie Tatti, Jonas Lafferty, Alphonse Eronchi, Maggie Kursewski, Rosie Albert, Renie Arey, Shannon Gullberg*

### *Comments*

The Advisory Board to the Office of the Languages Commissioner was established and the first organizational meeting held in conjunction with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, during October 24-26, 2000.

Advisory Board Members were chosen carefully through community consultation using a number of criteria: 1) there is representation of Elders and regional language workers from each of the Official Language groups; second, the Members have lengthy experience in language work; third, the Members speak their own languages; and fourth, the Members have specialized language skills, e.g., literacy, interpreting/translating, linguistics, language program development, research.

Board members, are highly regarded in their communities and, with their collective skills, experience and resourcefulness, provide expert advice to the Office. Support from the Divisional Boards of Education contributed greatly to successful Board establishment.

Current year plans include establishment of working committees within the Board to facilitate conference calls and completion of specific advisory tasks.

Below is a list of Advisory Board membership:

REGION	BOARD MEMBER	REGION	BOARD MEMBER
<i>Dogrib</i>	Elder Elizabeth Mackenzie, Rae-Edzo Elder Alphonse Eronchi, Rae-Edzo Mary Richardson, Rae-Edzo George Mackenzie, Rae-Edzo Philip Rabesca, Rae-Edzo Jonas Lafferty, Rae-Edzo	<i>South Slave</i>	Elder Maggie Kurzewski, Fort Smith Elder Sarazine Basil, Lutsel K'e J.C. Catholique, Lutsel K'e Ann Biscaye, Fort Resolution Doris Camsell, Hay River
<i>Sahtu</i>	Elder Victor Menacho, Tulita Jane Modeste, Deline Albertine Ayah, Deline	<i>Gwich'in</i>	Elder Jane Charlie, Fort McPherson William Firth, Fort McPherson Liz Hansen, Inuvik Betty Vittrekwa, Fort McPherson
<i>French</i>	Daniel Lamoureux, Yellowknife Fernand Denault, Yellowknife	<i>DehCho</i>	Elder Adele Hardisty, Fort Simpson Elder Joe Bonnetrouge, Fort Providence Andy Norwegian, Fort Simpson Fanny Swartzentruber, Fort Simpson Joachim Bonnetrouge, Fort Providence
<i>Inuvialuit</i>	Elder Rosie Albert, Inuvik Renie Arey, Inuvik		

Board Terms of Reference, Board Meeting transcripts, and Board recommendations to the Office regarding the Review of the Official Languages Act are included in Appendix 1.



*Mary Richardson, Elizabeth MacKenzie, Alphonse Eronchi*

## ORGANIZATION

### *Office Reorganization*

The purpose of Office reorganization is to increase Office capacity to perform its new priority of Advocacy, Research, and Monitoring.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	STATUS
Office Reorganization	Rewrite current job descriptions to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Analyst</li> <li>• Public Affairs Liaison</li> <li>• Administrative Assistant</li> </ul>	Complete Complete Complete
	Hire Public Affairs Liaison (modified from Researcher) Hire Research Analyst (new position) Hire Administrative Assistant (modified from Executive Secretary)	Complete Work in progress Complete

### *Comments*

It is very important for the Office to build capacity to perform functions that are expected from stakeholders, i.e., advocacy, providing contemporary research and resources, promotional programs and communication.

At this time, the Office is fortunate to have in place, Public Affairs Liaison (Sylvie Boisclair) to implement the ambitious public affairs program. We value Ms Boisclair's experience in organizing arts and cultural events, her communication and organizational skills, and commitment.

Heather Bibby (Administrative Assistant) has extensive experience with the communities, Teaching and Learning Centres, Legislative Assembly and Department of Education Culture and Employment, and is very knowledgeable about government departments and processes.

Shannon Gullberg provides legal counsel in resolving complaints and providing legal opinion on issues affecting the Office. Ms Gullberg was instrumental in preparing workshops for review of the Act.

The Research Analyst position is critical and will be staffed as soon as possible. In the interim, the private consultants were contracted to support in a number of ways: report and plan preparation, meeting facilitation and presentations.

## ADVOCACY

The purpose of Advocacy is twofold: recognize and encourage groups and/or individuals in their language work; and encourage people to claim their language rights under the Act through the Office of the Languages Commissioner.

TARGET		ACTION	ACHIEVED
Community	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whati Negotiation Meetings, November</li> <li>• Whati School Staff, Chief, Leaders and Elders, November</li> </ul>	Meetings Meetings
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gameti Negotiation Meetings</li> <li>• Gameti Elders</li> </ul>	Meetings Meetings
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Sunrise School Staff and Students</li> </ul>	Meetings
Regional	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dogrib Treaty 11 Assembly, August, Rae-Edzo</li> <li>• Regional Dogrib Language Committee, August, Rae-Edzo</li> </ul>	Presentation Meeting
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deh Cho First Nations Assembly, August, Kakisa</li> <li>• Regional Deh Cho Language Committee, August, Kakisa</li> </ul>	Presentation Meeting
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dene Soline Chipewyan Language Working Group, December</li> <li>• Deninu Health Group, December</li> </ul>	Presentation/Meeting Meeting
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Beaufort Delta Visit with Commissioner Hansen, February</li> </ul>	Meetings
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sahtu Regional Language Conference, March</li> </ul>	Presentation/Attendance
Territorial	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Native Women's Association AGM, August, Deline</li> </ul>	Presentation/Attendance
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dene Cultural Institute AGM, September, Hay River</li> </ul>	Presentation/Attendance
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deh Cho Teachers' Conference, September, Fort Providence</li> </ul>	Presentation/Attendance
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fédération Franco TêNoise AGM, October, Inuvik</li> </ul>	Presentation/Attendance
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Dogrib Language Committee, November, Rae-Edzo</li> </ul>	Presentation/Meetings
	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dene Cultural Institute staff, December, Hay River</li> </ul>	Meeting
	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dene Cultural Institute Elders Meeting, December, Ndilo</li> </ul>	Presentation
	National	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson, August, Yellowknife</li> </ul>
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Commissioner of Canada and Staff, January, Yellowknife</li> </ul>	Meeting
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly of First Nations Language sector, Director and Staff regarding their language initiatives and NWT Official Languages Act Review</li> </ul>	Meeting

## Comments

The Languages Commissioner made presentations to raise the importance of language, commend the work being done, encourage participation in the review of the Act and outline roles and responsibilities of the Office. The Languages Commissioner also invited individuals to speak confidentially about any concerns they may have about their language rights.

It is evident from community visits that each region has dedicated language workers. People make effort to conduct at least some parts of their meetings in aboriginal languages. In regions where aboriginal languages are stronger, some meetings are conducted entirely in aboriginal languages. French organization meetings are conducted in French.

However, it is also clear in daily living, English dominates everywhere – not only in institutions such as schools and health care facilities, but also in stores, banks, movies, and other entertainment including, videogames, books, radio, and television. It is critical the efforts of language workers have support at the highest level, the Legislative Assembly. Members of the Legislative Assembly should visibly demonstrate their commitment to Official Languages to their constituents by ensuring visibility of language throughout Legislative Assembly sessions.

### Recommendation 1

*That the Legislative Assembly demonstrate their commitment to all Official Languages by ensuring visibility of languages throughout Legislative Assembly sessions with the presence of simultaneous interpreters.*



Since the demise of the Language Bureau, the Office of the Languages Commissioner has been operating without a budget for interpreting/translation (I/T) services and been unsuccessful with special requests for I/T funding. The Office of the Language Commissioner's business is language. It is essential that meetings, correspondence, public communications, and workshops be conducted with the services of interpreters and translators.



### Recommendation 2

*That the Legislative Assembly provide adequate funds to the Office of the Languages Commissioner, whose business is language, to carry out correspondence, public communication, and meetings with the services of interpreter/translators thus ensuring Office credibility in fulfilling its goals.*

# RESEARCH

The function of Research is to provide socio-linguistic research relevant to the Northwest Territories that monitors language trends and identifies critical success factors of language development projects. Collection of past studies in the development of Official Languages of the Northwest Territories provide language workers with a reference base and much needed materials for new program development.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	STATUS
Acquisition of contemporary language research on NWT languages	Works of Wendall White, Karen Rice, Ed Cook, Vic Monus, June Helm, Schott Rushforth, Robert Young, Leslie Saxon, Phil Howard, NWT Teaching and Learning Centers, GNWT Departments and Cultural Associations	Work in progress
Supportive research in the Review of the Official Languages Act	Annual Reports, Business Plans, Review Process, Socio-linguistic research	Complete and in progress
NWT Case Studies	Family Involvement in French advocacy initiatives; the Idaa Trail Project, Dene Kede and Innukatigiit Curricula, Fall Caribou Hunts	Work in progress
Other Jurisdictions	Study of other jurisdictions and identification of critical success factors in language programs and legislation	Work in progress

*Researching Yamoreya's Journey*



*... in the DehCho*

### *Comments*

Many stakeholders interviewed during the September 2000 consultation indicated that the Office should provide contemporary language research that assists language practitioners in program development and advocacy initiatives.

Discussions with the NWT Bureau of Statistics reveal that Census Canada and Bureau of Statistics language data, although of some value, have inherent flaws. For example, Census Canada samples may vary from census to census, and given small population, it is difficult to measure language growth or decline with any accuracy. In the case of NWT Labour Force Surveys, the NWT Bureau of Statistics does gather language data, but people surveyed are over fifteen years of age, and consequently do not account for "children's language", an important aspect of language research. Although Official Language Communities have undertaken language surveys these surveys were conducted independently from one another. This is understandable and important considering each language community may have different objectives when conducting their surveys, but the information gathered fails to establish accurate and consistent baseline data across language communities.

In order to establish accurate and consistent baseline data, Territory-wide surveys are essential for at least two reasons: surveys are a monitoring tool for language growth or decline, and more importantly, provides socio-linguistic information that leads to identification of critical success factors to be used as a basis upon which to make well-informed decisions for new language programs and policies.

#### **Recommendation 3**

*In order to provide a consistent picture of language growth or decline across Official Language groups and in order to identify critical success factors that provide a basis upon which to make well-informed decisions for language programs and policies, the Office recommends the Legislative Assembly approves funding to the Bureau of Statistics, in consultation with the Office of the Languages Commissioner, to undertake socio-linguistic research every three to five years.*

## MONITORING

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The function of Monitoring is to provide accountability for language funding.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	STATUS
Monitor Canada-NWT Agreement for Languages Agreement	Identify allocation of funds, purpose of funds, whether objectives were met and whether departments conducted evaluation.	Work in progress
Monitor Vote 1 (GNWT) Language Funding	Identify allocation of funds, purpose of funds, whether objectives were met and whether departments conducted evaluation.	Work in progress
Public Satisfaction Surveys	Language Services in Health Care	Work in progress

### *Comments*

Allocations for Vote 4 and Vote 1 language funding can be found in Appendix Three. Unfortunately, lack of personnel inhibited completion of monitoring tasks. The Office is committed to completing monitoring activities.

## COMPLAINTS

The function of the Office in resolving complaints regarding the Official Languages Act is to ensure peoples' language rights are upheld under the Act. In addition, investigating complaints provides an insight into whether problems are localized or system-wide. This type of information allows the Office to identify the most corrective measures to take in resolving complaints.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	STATUS
Simplify Complaint Process	Community Visits Regional Visits	Ongoing Ongoing
Receive Complaints	Resolve Complaints	Ongoing
Maintain membership with Canadian Ombudsman Association (COA)	Attend COA Annual Meeting in Canmore, Alberta	Complete

### *Comments*

*Complaints:* Ten new complaints were received during 2000-2001, six of which are resolved with four complaints outstanding. Nine complaints related to French were carried from 1998-99 and are with the Office's Legal Counsel. Complaints encompass all Official Languages - primarily French and Dene languages - with one involving Inuktitut. Time taken to resolve complaints ranged from under one month to more than one year, depending on the complexity of the investigation.

### *Interpreting/Translation Services*

Eight of the ten new complaints are related to the lack of interpreting and translation services. Current year complaints show the same pattern. Our investigations brought us to meetings and discussions with Deputy Ministers and Heads of Institutions revealing concerns surrounding Interpreting and Translation (I/T) Services.

Aurora College's recent I/T needs assessment indicates a strong need for I/Ts, especially in the fields of Health and Justice. However, Aurora College officials advised there was very low response to a call for students to take I/T courses. Aurora officials say low interest can be directly attributed to lack of I/T employment opportunities. This was corroborated by interviews with Health officials who advised they have high need for I/Ts but insufficient funds to hire additional fulltime I/Ts.

Community language workers attribute the low interest in I/T training to students' preference to take courses in their home communities where resources are readily at hand; specifically Elders are a critical language resource, and where students can train in an authentic language setting. Some community language workers have requested I/T training courses be delivered in their regions, and Aurora officials say they would deliver community-based I/T programs but require much more than the \$50,000 currently allocated for I/T program delivery.

The root problem is that I/T employment opportunities are limited. And if employment opportunities are limited, why should a community language worker seek training? Ultimately, this means that I/T services are minimal at best.

Further, unlike their French counterparts whose training is recognized through certification, Aboriginal language interpreters cannot command as high a rate of pay. Also, without certification, it is very difficult for Aboriginal interpreters to set terms of service - for example, French interpreters are able to stipulate that more than one interpreter must be hired for lengthy interpreting contracts, recognizing that simultaneous interpreting is very demanding work.

Lack of I/T certification puts Aboriginal language interpreters at a great disadvantage and compromises their ability to make a livelihood from I/T work alone. The result is a number of interpreters must rely on other employment and carry out I/T work as a source of secondary work. This limits the availability and quality of service, which in turn limits I/Ts from developing into viable businesses.

Given these problems, we must ask whether the GNWT is providing adequate Official Language service to NWT citizens. Is the spirit and intent of the Act compromised? Are we safeguarding the very people who hold the gift of the Official Languages?

We note that the Department of Education Culture and Communications in their document *Revitalizing, Enhancing and Promoting Aboriginal Languages* has in place a strategy to develop industry standards under the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Act, the expected outcome being I/T certification. We note that Part 1 of the strategy is completed. The second part, development of language standards, is "being referred to various language communities for development..... ECE will work with one Aboriginal language community each year to develop standards for interpreting and translating in their language."

We are concerned that this strategy will take years to complete. We are also concerned that this approach will result in a different "standard" for each language, yet standardization across languages has always been accepted as a cohesive force for Aboriginal languages.

With the problems surrounding I/Ts, there is pressing need for a comprehensive strategy that improves the current situation.

#### Recommendation 4

*Considering the urgency and the need for good services in the Interpreter/Translator field it is imperative that implementation and development of a comprehensive strategy for I/T training and certification becomes a priority for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in conjunction with the Office of the Languages Commissioner. This process should be completed within 3 years (2004) for all official languages.*



Canadian Ombudsman Association



*Dene Storytelling with Students of St. Joseph's School, Yellowknife*

## COMMUNICATION

The function of Communication is to stimulate public awareness of Official Languages, language development initiatives in the NWT, understanding of public rights under the Act, Office roles and responsibilities, and to respond to inquiries made to the Office.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	STATUS
Receive Inquiries	Resolve Inquiries	Ongoing
Public display	Official language and culture display panel	90% complete
Press Release	Regarding establishment of the Advisory Board and information regarding Review of the Act, January	Complete
Website	Redesign website	Work in progress
Initiate Quarterly Newsletter	First newsletter widely distributed and published on the Office website	Complete and ongoing
Aboriginal Languages Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NWT-wide TV ads in all Official Languages during March</li> <li>• Newspaper promotional advertisements promoting Official Languages</li> <li>• information display, Centre Square Mall, Yellowknife</li> <li>• Storytelling (Dene stories and legends) with students of St. Joseph Elementary School</li> </ul>	Complete Complete Complete Complete
International Women's Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storytelling (Dene stories and legends) with elementary students in Kakisa</li> <li>• Presentation at Honouring of Women (and their work in languages), Kakisa</li> </ul>	Complete Complete

### Comments

The Office received positive feedback from community members regarding the newsletter. In fact, there were several requests for additional copies.

Also, the number of inquiries received increased from 95 in 1999-2000 to 111 in 2000-2001. Most inquiries (83) were resolved within five days; 12 within two weeks, and 4 within one month, the remaining took up to several months. Subject of inquiries ranged from requests for information about the Official Languages, the Act, funding programs and I/T services.

It should be noted that in resolving inquiries, some civil servants were unaware of the Official Languages Act. In some cases, even when officials were aware of the Act, showed reluctance to provide information needed to resolve inquiries.

### Recommendation 5

*That GNWT Departments provide staff workshops on the Act and the roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Languages Commissioner, and ensure that orientation of new employees include the Official Languages Act.*

## SUMMARY OF COSTS

### LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER BUDGET 2000-2001

	2000-2001 Main Estimates	2000-2001 Revised Estimates	2000-2001 Actual Expenses
<b>Compensation &amp; Benefits:</b>			
Salaries	210,000	133,000	110,959
Wages	12,000	12,000	0
	<b>\$ 222,000</b>	<b>\$ 145,000</b>	<b>\$ 110,959</b>
<b>Other Expenses:</b>			
Travel & Transportation	40,000	40,000	25,630
Materials & Supplies	23,000	23,000	27,727
Purchased Services	13,000	13,000	14,796
Utilities	0	0	384
Contract Services	23,500	103,500	150,394
Fees & Payments	20,000	20,000	12,155
Other Expenses	3,500	3,500	0
Tangible Assets	0	0	0
Computer Hardware & Software	0	0	1,307
	<b>\$ 123,000</b>	<b>\$ 203,000</b>	<b>\$ 232,393</b>
<b>TOTAL LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER</b>	<b>\$ 345,000</b>	<b>\$ 348,000</b>	<b>\$ 343,352</b>

## APPENDIX ONE

### TRANSCRIPT OF ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AND WORKSHOP ADVISORY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS



Anne Biscaye, JC Catholique, Maggie Kurzewski

**Office of the Languages Commissioner  
Advisory Board Meeting**

**October 24, 25 & 26, 2000  
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre  
Yellowknife, NT**

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## Advisory Board Members and Invited Guests

### **Gwich'in**

Jane Charlie (Fort McPherson Elder)

### **Sahtu**

Albertine Ayah (Deline)  
Jane Modeste (Deline)  
Victor Menacho (Tulita Elder)

### **Dogrib**

Mary Richardson (Rae-Edzo)  
George Mackenzie (Rae-Edzo)  
Philip Rabesca (Rae-Edzo)  
Jonas Lafferty (Rae-Edzo)  
Alphonse Eronchi (Rae-Edzo Elder)  
Elizabeth Mackenzie (Rae-Edzo Elder)

### **Deh Cho**

Andy Norwegian (Fort Simpson)  
Fanny Swartzentruber (Fort Simpson)  
Joachim Bonnetrouge (Fort Providence)  
Joe Bonnetrouge (Fort Providence Elder)  
Adele Hardisty (Fort Simpson Elder)

### **South Slave**

J.C. Catholique (Lutsel K'e)  
Ann Biscaye (Fort Resolution)  
Doris Camsell (Hay River)  
Maggie Kurszewski (Fort Smith Elder)  
Sarazine Basil (Lutsel K'e Elder)

### **French**

Daniel Lamoureux (FFT Yellowknife)  
Fernand Denault (FFT Yellowknife)

### **Inuvialuktun**

Renie Arey (Inuvik)  
Rosie Albert (Inuvik Elder)

### **Department of Education**

Melody McLeod  
Benoit Boutin  
Pauline Gordon

### **Dene Cultural Institute**

Jean Broda

### **Canadian Heritage**

Lise Picard

## Summary of Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:**

That the Legislative Assembly work cooperatively with the Languages Commissioner and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in the process of reviewing the Official Languages Act.

**Recommendation 2:**

That in conducting the review of the Official Languages Act, the Legislative Assembly ensures that all language groups are represented in the review process.

**Recommendation 3:**

That in conducting the review of the Official Languages Act, the Legislative Assembly ensures that Elders from each of the language groups are represented in the review process.

**Recommendation 4:**

That the review process includes public hearings throughout the Northwest Territories for input on the content and scope of the Act at the community level. The Legislative Assembly must establish a clear process and timeline for conducting the review of the Official Languages Act, and provide adequate resources to conduct the review. As part of this process, the Minister responsible for languages and the Languages Commissioner must be involved in the review.

**Recommendation 5:**

That the Legislative Assembly use the Advisory Board as a useful tool in conducting the review of the Official Languages Act.

## **Day 1, Tuesday October 24, 2000**

### **Opening Prayer**

### **Opening Comments: Fibbie Tatti, Languages Commissioner**

Introductory comments recognizing the initial meeting of the Advisory Board. Stressed the importance of working with people who have been involved with languages for a long period of time, in order to build on their experiences. They have research experience and they have done extensive language and culture work with their own people.

There has to be a cohesive approach to languages and work must be done cooperatively ensuring that we do not work in isolation from one another.

### **Introduction of Participants:**

The participants introduced themselves, stated the community they were from and their language related roles.

### **Review of the Office of the Languages Commissioner's Four-Year Plan: Fibbie Tatti, Languages Commissioner**

A general overview of the direction of the Office of the Languages Commissioner for the next four years was provided. The plan was developed through surveys, community consultations and meetings with various stakeholders.

The Languages Commissioner reports to the Legislative Assembly and within the Office of the Languages Commissioner there is a researcher and an executive secretary. In the future the Office is hoping to reorganize so that there will be an administrative assistant, a public affairs officer and a research analyst. There will also be an Advisory Board that sits with the Languages Commissioner.

After talking to the communities, community leaders, Elders, etc. some strategic directions for the Office were identified. One focus

*Official Languages  
Act Community  
Workshops*

is advocacy, promoting what is happening in the communities and giving the languages a high profile. People feel that political leaders should be lobbied to make official languages development a priority. Equally important is the need to encourage young families to support language and culture development and to co-host a languages conference. The general public should also be able to make informed decisions in regards to the Official Languages Act. This information would be made available through workshops in the communities.

The second area of concentration is the reorganization of the Office of the Languages Commissioner.

*Connection between  
language and culture  
and community  
health.*

Another area of focus is research. People have said there are far too many things happening in the communities that are not being recorded. As well, case studies of initiatives in the NWT must be conducted to encourage strategic directions and implementation strategies for future initiatives. For example, in 1986 Dogrib was being used as a home language at a rate of 92%, in 1996 it was being used at 72%. Within ten years there has been a dramatic decline in the language use. What these statistics do not tell us is why it is declining that fast. We need to know why. Also, we have to make a connection between the positive language and cultural development and community health and wellbeing. We have all kinds of materials available in the Northwest Territories, for example, the Inuvialuit have all of their stories on CDs. We must take initiatives like this to ensure that these materials do not disappear. We need to find ways to preserve our words.

*What is the  
Government doing in  
terms of languages?*

The Office of the Languages Commissioner's monitoring role will also continue. It is important to know what the Government is doing in terms of language and how are they making sure that languages are in the work force and working for the people? Specifically, the public identified medical centres, educational institutions, the judicial system and the airports as areas that need to be monitored. As well, attention must be paid to public symbolism as it gives out messages to people that are representative of our land. Monitoring will also involve a check on the Canada-NWT Cooperation Agreement on language funding. To these ends there will be public satisfaction surveys conducted throughout the years.

*The importance of  
public symbolism.*

*Need to address the  
inquiries and  
complaints process.*

The Office will also carry on with inquiries and complaints. This role came as a result of the Language Task Force many years ago when people were asking what is the government going to do for

us? What is happening right now is that people are saying what are we going to do for ourselves and how is the Government going to help us do that? There has been a shift in attitude and we have shifted the Office's role to meet this change. However, the handling of inquiries and complaints will continue. As well, the complaint process has been described as convoluted and complicated, this needs to be addressed.

*Public information  
process.*

The last area of priority is communications. The public is saying that the language communities need a more consistent, cohesive approach for providing information to one another. We do not know what the Dogrib's are doing, we do not know what the Deh Cho is doing, we do not know what the Inuvialuit are doing. We need to have a more cohesive approach to communicate what is happening around the NWT. As well, people are generally unaware of their language rights and the Official Languages Act.

*Need for an Advisory  
Board.*

Those are the areas of concentration that were decided upon. One of the things that people spoke about is the need for the Office of the Languages Commissioner to have an Advisory Board. According to the survey results, people said the language community needs must be identified in consultation with the language communities. People have said that the Dene Subject Advisory Committee and the Inuvialuit and French language communities should be on the Advisory Board, as these people have been involved in languages for a long time. This Board will provide leadership and strategic direction, perhaps during the review of the Official Languages Act and on an ongoing basis. Together with the Board, the Office of the Languages Commissioner will establish what exactly the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Board will be over the next four years. It is important to make the distinction that it is the Languages Commissioner who is responsible to the Legislative Assembly, not the Advisory Board. As well, all complaints and inquiries will stay with the Office of the Languages Commissioner and the Board has no responsibility in that area.

## Regional Updates:

A representative from each of the Official Languages gave an update of what is happening in their region.

### Renie Arey: Inuvialuit

#### *Involvement of youth.*

They held a language conference in February of 1999 in Tuktoyaktuk, where they had youth involved in discussing how they should go about getting their language back. They have a number of school programs including, carving programs, fox trapping, drum dancing, muskrat camp, traditional story telling, language listening centres, traditional life skills and an Inuvialuktun as a second language program.

#### *Production of teaching materials.*

They have also produced some teaching materials; for example the Inuvialuit culture and history program. The kit contains books, workshop materials, pictures, maps, posters and videos. They have produced eleven children's books in Inuvialuktun, in three dialects. They were given out to language teachers in September and are now being used in the classrooms.

#### *Language camps.*

The Inuvialuit Communications Society was funded to do a children's program. They did six episodes in three dialects. There was also language teacher's training and they are in partnership with the University of Laval to produce a new dictionary. There were language camps held this year in both Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. They have an Elder's database with over a thousand recordings of Elders speaking on various topics. They have had community programs in six communities, including adult language classes, workplace language classes, translator's workshops, traditional sewing and recording of Elders. They held a preschool program through the Inuvialuit Child Development Centre.

#### *Preschool programs.*

For the year 2000/2001 they are planning to link the communities, to have another gathering with language teachers, to produce language learning tapes where you can read and listen at the same time. Future plans include the production of a Pictionary game and more language workshops.

### Andy Norwegian: DehCho

This summer there was a regional conference held in Kakisa and there was a one-day language conference there. It was a good

opportunity to learn the different activities that were happening in the region.

*Teacher orientation.*

The Teaching and Learning Centre staff were involved in the Teacher's Conference that was held in Fort Providence. They provided orientation for the new people that were coming in and also made time to assist new instructors set up their program for the year. This Fall they will visit a number of communities to carry on with this task.

*Aboriginal language literacy.*

One of the things they have started to concentrate on is the training of new language instructors, as they have been and will be faced with more resignations and retirements. They have been offering a number of courses that are open to the public, including basic conversational Slavey. They also offered a course on teaching language through traditional outdoor activities. They are now preparing to offer a "Literacy in an Aboriginal Language Level One Course" and will offer Level Two in the new year.

*Immersion programs.*

At the Board level there are plans to hold an immersion school for kids in Grade 9 and up with the idea that once they have completed this course they will get credit for Slavey 15 or 25. There are plans to hold this in Fort Providence and in Fort Simpson, inviting students from the surrounding areas to attend.

**Joachim Bonnetrouge: Deh Cho**

*Ownership returned to the communities.*

Joachim stated that in the last year it has become obvious that the languages are in a bad state and the challenges now lie with the people. They have a lot of ideas in their region of how to revive the language and culture, but most importantly ownership of the languages and culture must be returned to the communities.

In the next few months they anticipate that upon invitation, they will go out to the communities to help them with strategic planning for languages and offer them ideas of some of the things that are working in other places.

*Language teachers must be honoured.*

One idea that Joachim shared is the isolation and frustration that Aboriginal language teachers in the communities feel. These people, language workers, cultural workers and teachers must be honoured within our communities.

### **Mary Richardson: Dogrib Region**

*Dogrib Language Board.*

In early 2000 they formed a Dogrib Language Board at the request of the Community Service Board. There are representatives from each of the Dogrib communities, each appointed for one year. Since the establishment of the Board they have approved a conversational Dogrib language program which will take place in N'dilo, for people who will take their lunch hour to learn Dogrib. They also approved a proposal for a Caribou Skin Teepee Project, which took place last Spring. This involved the Elders and gave students the opportunity to visit the camp. There has been money allocated for the publication of children's books.

*Publication of children's books.*

There is a series of six books written by Margaret Mackenzie about the land, the animals, the fish and what we use them for, the plants that are available and the story of a young lady named Rosie. This has been done with Mary Siemens who has done work on a series of stories for students kindergarten to high school.

*Community language classes.*

The Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) has made available a number of conversational tapes that people can listen to on their own. They will also be starting Dogrib language classes in the evening for non-speakers, including teachers, RCMP, nurses and anyone else who wishes to learn the Dogrib language. Classes will also be offered for those that already speak some Dogrib. The TLC has been asked to work on the Dogrib language curriculum program from K to 6. The work is ongoing and may require more assistance with the possibility of a workshop on program development.

*Language radio programs.*

There are also plans to make use of the radio at the Rae-Edzo Friendship Center. For half-hour periods they will read and tell Dogrib stories over the radio.

### **George Mackenzie: Dogrib Region**

*Link language and culture. Increase exposure to language and culture events.*

It is very important to link language and culture together and to increase exposure to events that are language and culture focussed.

*Importance of teacher orientations.*

A problem they have faced in the past is the loss of teaching staff. In an effort to deal with this they began to take teaching staff out on the land as much as possible. This past fall they took 48 staff on the land as a way to link them to the Dogrib culture with students on

the land. There is a lot of support for these programs and they act as an orientation to teachers from the South.

*Importance of visible support by Board Members and Administrators.*

George also mentioned the importance of having school board members and administrators that visibly support language and culture, and are able to speak the language. This follows from their mission "Strong Like Two."

**Albertine Ayah: Sahtu Region**

At the beginning of every school year the TLC goes to each of the schools in the region and meets with the principals and staff. The TLCs identify how they can work together in teaching languages and culture in the schools.

The communities have half time TLC staff that spend time in the schools, helping the teachers develop teaching materials for languages and to help with cultural activities.

*Importance of materials translation.*

They are in the process of translating the Yukon Language Curriculum into the various dialects to use as a tool in helping to teach a second language. The TLCs are translating various materials and also provide support to the Aboriginal Education Program in Inuvik.

*Accessibility of materials.*

There is talk about the development of a web site that will make the TLCs materials, pictures and books more accessible. They also have plans to publish a new dictionary.

**Maggie Kurszewski: Cree, South Slave**

*Elders in the schools.*

In Fort Smith they have a Chipewyan language instructor in the school and they bring Elders into the schools, especially at Christmas to discuss the traditional ways. Maggie stressed, however, that culture must be learned on a consistent, ongoing basis.

*Role of the Elders.*

The Band held a cultural week, hosted by the Cree, in the bush in the Spring and one in the Summer. Elders were asked to come and tell stories, to do the cooking, etc. Maggie, herself is often asked to go and speak in the community about traditional and cultural ways.

*District Education Authority.*

In Fort Smith the District Education Authority is now taking two people from the Band, two from the Metis community and two from

*Guidance by Elders.*

the Town to sit on the Board. They are also looking to Elders for guidance because of their longevity and wisdom. Maggie believes that this is a big step but that there is still room for the French, Cree and Chipewyan to all be involved with the DEA.

**Acknowledgement of the Advisory Board: Fibbie Tatti**

Fibbie read a letter sent to the Office of the Languages Commissioner by Premier Stephen Kakfwi, passing on the Premier's best wishes to the delegates attending the meeting and requesting that any resolutions passed in these meetings be provided to the Premier's Office.

A letter from the Honourable Jim-Antoine was also read, expressing his personal belief and conviction in the preservation, use and promotion of all Aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories. He congratulated all board members for engaging in a task that is extremely worthwhile and honorable. He wished success in the meetings and offered his assistance and support for the future.

**Recognition of Mrs. Mackenzie: Fibbie Tatti**

Congratulations and recognition was given to Mrs. Mackenzie for receiving the Governor General's Award.

**Return to Regional Updates****J.C. Catholique: Lutsel K'e***Terminology development.*

One of the things they planned to do this year was to hire a coordinator; they have yet to fill this position. They have a voluntary committee in place and are hoping to get into terminology development in the areas of computers, legal and medical terms.

*Literacy development.*

They want to concentrate on literacy development and hope to hire an individual from the community to teach the language to both non-speakers and those who would like to learn more of their language. Another area of concentration would be the development of their own materials. They would also like to establish a language centre in the community.

*Material development.**Establishment of a language centre.**Importance of learning from the French community.*

J.C. pointed out the importance of learning from the French community particularly on the establishment of full immersion programs. He also stated that in listening to the Elders they have

*Full immersion  
language camps.*

said that language itself has to be put into the school. Other ideas that have been suggested are full immersion language camps with Elders as the teachers, designated language days set aside just to speak your own language and the incorporation of language and culture into community wellness, as part of growth and personal development.

*Designated  
language days.*

### **Jane Modeste: Sahtu Region**

*Sahtu regional  
language  
committee.*

In the Sahtu region a committee was formed last month with two people from each community to deal with the funding for language projects. This came as a result of the recommendations from the February Language Assembly held in Fort Good Hope.

### **Joachim Bonnetrouge: Deh Cho**

*Development of  
Aboriginal language  
fluency levels.*

Discussed the fluency categories they developed to set standards. The highest category is the Elder level, then the traditional level, the modern level and then the child level. The Elder level describes people that hold the language and culture strongly, through consistent use. The traditional level would be the people that spend a lot of time out in the bush, hunting and trapping and use the language in these activities. The modern or community level refers to those who communicate in their language in everyday community settings. The child level would be basic, like baby talk. Within each of these categories there are five levels.

### **Doris Camsell: South Slave, Hay River**

*Importance of  
teaching culturally  
relevant materials.*

In Hay River all of the schools are teaching the Dene language. The schools wanted to be a part of the Dene Kede curriculum and last year they did cultural work in the schools side by side with Dene Kede. They used themes based on the seasons and incorporated stories and cultural activities for each of the seasons. They produced a book to support these activities. The DEA has now passed a resolution that every school in Hay River must teach cultural activities in each season.

*Importance of  
cultural relevance.*

Doris spoke about the importance of teaching culturally relevant material that the children can relate to.

## Overview of the Official Languages Act: Shannon Gullberg

**History of the Official Languages Act:** In 1984 the Federal Government was going to amend the Northwest Territories Act, making French an official language of the NWT. The Legislative Assembly of the NWT was concerned that the Aboriginal language groups in the NWT were being set aside.

The Federal Parliament agreed that the NWT could have its own Official Languages Act, but they set restrictions on amendments that the Legislative Assembly could make to the Act. They stipulated that French had to remain an official language. The Legislative Assembly of the NWT felt that Aboriginal languages were still being largely ignored. They compromised with the Federal Government saying that the Act could be amended by the Legislative Assembly, but only if done so to increase language rights. Therefore, English and French were to have official status and Aboriginal languages could be given status so long as it didn't take away from the status of the other official languages. In 1990 there were some major changes to the Act and Aboriginal languages were given some status, although not equal to that of French and English. As well, the Office of the Languages Commissioner was created to give some protection to language rights.

Shannon raised two issues. One is the fact that the Official Languages Act is written in legalese. It is complicated and difficult to understand. Another issue is that the Official Languages Act is written only in French and English, making it all the more difficult to understand if neither English or French are your first language. An idea may be to put the Act in to languages other than English and French, but if it is to be translated it is going to take time and money. There is the concern of accuracy of translation. One option is to produce unofficial versions of the Act. The translation may not be 100% accurate but would give an overview of the Act in another language.

**Question:** Even though the Territorial Government recognizes the Aboriginal languages as Official, is it true that the Federal Government is not obligated to recognize them, including the Federal Government Departments that are in the Northwest Territories?

Yes, in terms of the Federal Government English and French are the Official languages. A question that may need to be looked into is how to promote the Aboriginal languages with the Federal Government so that there is some recognition by their Offices.

There are a number of questions that the Legislative Assembly will need to deal with in the review of the Act. First, what should be the purpose of the Act? Why does it exist? Does the Act meet this stated purpose? The purpose must be

consistent with the preamble. Secondly, should all languages be given Official status, which ones?

### **Sections of the Official Languages Act:**

As far as jurisdiction Section 3 of the OLA does not apply to municipal governments.

Section 4 discusses the languages that are the Official Languages of the NWT. These languages have to be looked at, are they relevant to our geographical location since the creation of the Nunavut Territory? What should be the Official Languages of the NWT? Should all Official Languages be given equal status and protection?

Section 8 describes whom the Act applies to, and the extent and manner allowed in this Act. It is limited to the institutions of the Legislative Assembly and the Government of the Northwest Territories and government boards and agencies. It does not apply to the private sector and it does not apply to contractors. In the review of the Act the Government must consider whether this is good or not, is it practical? How far reaching should the Legislation be, who should it apply to? These will become more important questions as the Government privatizes more and more.

Section 9 sets out that you have the right to use any Official Language in the Legislative Assembly. The problem arises with the availability of translation services?

Section 10 says that all acts and journals have to be in French and English.

Section 11 talks about certain documents that must be published in English and French. This is when a document is a formal or legal document and pursuant to some legislative authority.

Section 12 deals with written court documents, they can be in English or French, not any of the other Official Languages. However, when you are in court you can speak any of the Official Languages, and if the court sees fit, they can order simultaneous interpretation.

Section 13 talks about the language that court orders and decisions have to be in. If French was used during the court proceeding the order will be in English and French, and if the court sees fit, it can make an interpretation in another language.

Section 14 discusses the services that we can expect when we deal with the Government of the Northwest Territories. It states that communication with a

head office can be in English or French and that other Official Languages can be used if there is a significant demand or it is the nature of the Office. That raises questions as to what is a significant demand and what defines the nature of the office? In regional offices you can also communicate in any of the Official Languages where there is a significant demand or the nature of the office permits. Again the same issues arise.

One of the things that needs to be looked at is whether or not there are enough provisions in the Act to protect the Official Languages. If you go through the sections promoting language rights there is little or nothing said about the Government promoting or enhancing language rights, even though this is mentioned in the preamble. This is an important issue for the upcoming review of the Official Languages Act.

### **Group Exercise: Translation of Advertisements**

## **Day 2, Wednesday October 25, 2000**

### **Continuation of Overview of the Official Languages Act: Shannon Gullberg**

Section 20 of the Act allows the Languages Commissioner to investigate complaints that are brought to her attention. As well, the Languages Commissioner can investigate a matter that has come to her attention through the course of her duties.

Section 20 also indicates that the Languages Commissioner must meet with organizations that are prescribed in regulation at least once a year. There are currently no regulations that deal with these organizations. This is also a question that may be raised, should there be something more formal, in regulation that states the need for an Advisory Board?

Section 22 states that after an investigation the Commissioner can make recommendations to the deputy head of a department or to the administrative head of a government institution. If after doing so she does not believe appropriate action has been taken she can then report to the Legislative Assembly.

Section 23 indicates that the Languages Commissioner has to complete an Annual Report.

Section 24 discusses the fact that any information that comes to the Office of the Languages Commissioner is confidential and then Section 25 protects the Languages Commissioner from civil liability.

Another issue that may have to be covered in the review of the Official Languages Act is the power that the Languages Commissioner has or does not have. In the current Act it talks about the Languages Commissioner making recommendations and reporting to the Legislative Assembly but there are no powers beyond this. Should the Languages Commissioner be given the power to ensure the promotion and protection of languages?

In the review they may also look at how the Access to Information Act applies and relates to the Official Languages Act.

### **Languages Policy and Guidelines**

The Government implemented these Guidelines in an effort to clarify the services that members of the public can expect from the Government. There are some areas, however, where the Guidelines are not consistent with the Act. For example, the idea of designated areas is used in the Policy and Guidelines but is not mentioned in the Act. As well, in the Policy and Guidelines there is a break down of which Government Boards and Agencies the Act applies to whereas in the Act it indicates that it applies to all Boards and Agencies.

### **Discussion on the Official Languages Act of Canada**

Question: Does the Official Languages Act of Canada apply to the Government of the Northwest Territories?

### **Presentation, Dene Cultural Institute: Jean Broda**

Jean provided an overview of the Dene Cultural Institute and the recent restructuring of the organization. The mandate of DCI is to protect, promote and enhance the language and culture of the people of Denendeh. As an organization this is the area they must work on.

This past September the Institute's Elder's Council met in Hay River and discussed the need for a collective voice for everyone to be strong in their culture and language and to not be divided by politics or dollars. It is the language and culture that keep the Dene strong and that is where the DCI is headed. They are also trying to reconnect to the communities and meet the needs of the 27 communities in the NWT that DCI represents. They plan to hold future meetings in the communities.

The Dene Cultural Institute is planning to set up a web site that would make all of their materials accessible to the public through a database. Communities need to share this information and build on it. The web site address is [www.deneculture.org](http://www.deneculture.org).

### **Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board: Fibbie Tatti**

Discussion about the membership of the Advisory Board. The membership of the Advisory Board was decided upon as recommended by the communities. The Dene Subject Advisory Committee members were included because of their past experience and the depth of language work that they have done. There is a need to include representatives from each of the other Official Languages of the Northwest Territories. There is also the need to include Elders from each of the language groups. Discussion ensued on the name and mandate of the Advisory Board in terms of the review of the Official Languages Act and in the long term.

### **Remarks: Pauline Gordon, Assistant Deputy Minister, Education, Culture and Employment**

Pauline discussed the importance of language and that those fortunate enough to live close by and hear their language daily must relish it.

We have to draw on the richness of our backgrounds and gather strength from the fact that we can work together and share the accomplishments and challenges. We can all be effective if we take the initiative. You touch one life and that life touches another, that is the effect that we have to have. The challenge that was put forth was to be a healthy person, responsible for acquiring a language that is theirs or revitalizing the language that is theirs.

Pauline briefly mentioned some initiatives of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. They have worked with western consortium partners in developing a framework for Aboriginal languages; the curriculum was released this summer. They are also working on an Aboriginal component to Social Studies. They also have a residential school pilot project that they are doing with a Grade 4 class in Fort Providence that recognizes the history of our generation and the generation's previous experiences in the residential school system.

### **Honouring of Pauline Gordon**

Remarks and presentation of gifts by the Languages Commissioner and each of The Teaching and Learning Centres and the language communities to honour Pauline and thank her for her support of Aboriginal languages and culture, as well as leadership, over the years.

## Discussion and Adoption of Recommendations

Firstly, the group that was gathered passed a motion officially establishing themselves as the Office of the Languages Commissioner Advisory Board. They also agreed to adopt the draft "Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board" as presented by the Office of the Languages Commissioner, with the intention of updating these terms as necessary.

In addition the following resolutions were put forth and adopted by the Advisory Board:

**Recommendation 1:**

That the Legislative Assembly work cooperatively with the Languages Commissioner and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in the process of reviewing the Official Languages Act.

**Recommendation 2:**

That in conducting the review of the Official Languages Act, the Legislative Assembly ensure that all language groups are represented in the review process.

**Recommendation 3:**

That in conducting the review of the Official Languages Act, the Legislative Assembly ensure that Elders from each of the language groups are represented in the review process.

**Recommendation 4:**

That the review process include public hearings throughout the Northwest Territories for input on the content and scope of the Act at the community level. The Legislative Assembly must establish a clear process and timeline for conducting the review of the Official Languages Act, and provide adequate resources to conduct the review. As part of this process, the Minister responsible for languages and the Languages Commissioner must be involved in the review.

**Recommendation 5:**

That the Legislative Assembly use the Advisory Board as a useful tool in conducting the review of the Official Languages Act.

## Presentation: Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Melody McLeod

### *Community language plans.*

Melody gave an overview of her role with the Department of Education. She pointed out that each of the language communities now have language plans in place. Each of the language communities has an administrative body which is accountable for the funding they receive. As well, these organizations have designated coordinators within each of the language communities. The Cree language is the exception. They have the South Slave Métis as their administrative body and they are currently looking for a coordinator.

As part of their language plans, all of the language communities have presented what their priorities are for the next three to five years. That information has been and will continue to be shared with the language communities.

### *Importance of language promotion.*

Another project that Melody has been working on is a language promotion plan. One aspect of this plan was the Community Language Leader Award that has just taken place. The Language Communities are now in the process of making their selections of the winners.

### *Interpreter, translator certification.*

The interpreter, translator certification process is another task that is ongoing. A process was developed for this certification and a pilot project with the Dogribs is planned. It is hoped that the program will be underway by the end of March.

## Return to Regional Updates

### Ann Biscaye: Fort Resolution

#### *Formation of the Chipewyan Language Working Group.*

A planning workshop was held in February in Fort Resolution. As a result of that workshop the Chipewyan Language Working Group was formed. The majority of the representatives on that working group are Elders from the community. This group is very enthusiastic about preserving and promoting the Chipewyan language and they all work as volunteers. Sabet Biscaye was hired as the regional coordinator, Julie Biscaye as the community coordinator and Georgina Biscaye also works with the Working Group. They have set up a resource center in Father Menez's old house. Since their beginning they have had a Chipewyan Literacy Workshop and an Aboriginal Writers Workshop. There was an

#### *Chipewyan literacy workshop.*

#### *Writers workshop.*

incredible amount of interest and future workshops are being planned.

*Fundraising.*

The Working Group has held bake sales and bingos in order to cover their expenses and they have received many donations of office equipment. As well they are selling t-shirts and hats in order to raise funds. They had a project through which they placed road signs in Dene su line around the community.

They are now working on other proposals such as a cultural camp, terminology workshop, cross-cultural workshops and genealogy work. They are trying to get as much of the history and stories recorded as possible, before the Elders leave us.

**Presentation: Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Benoit Boutin**

Benoit discussed the Canada – Northwest Territories Agreement on language funding that is administered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The Federal Government and the Government of the Northwest Territories signed an agreement five years ago to provide money for our Official Languages. The first Agreement came in to effect in 1984.

*Objectives for  
Aboriginal  
language funding.*

For the Aboriginal languages the first objective was to provide money for the language plans. Each language group had to prepare a plan and establish their priorities. The second objective is to ensure that there is a link between those language plans and the communities, for example the Teaching and Learning Centre's and the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program. The third objective is to produce specialized terminology, including mining and petroleum, depending on the needs of the individual communities.

*Objectives for  
French language  
funding.*

For the French there are three objectives. First is the issue of French services within the Government. This includes the translation of Acts and Regulations, letters, printing of brochures, etc. Another objective relates to the promotion and management of the Agreement. The third objective is to provide the French with funding for their specific programs.

## **Presentation: Fernand Denault, President of La Fédération Franco - TENOise**

*Shared difficulties of minority languages.*

Fernand expressed that the opportunity to meet with representatives from each of the other language groups superseded any other concerns that La Fédération Franco – TENOise may have. He spoke of the difficulties that all minority languages face in terms of assimilation because of a lack of political will and people who are not open to and respectful of the need to keep languages and cultures alive. He also spoke of the frustration that the French community faces due to the absence of French services in the Government and a case in this regard currently before the courts.

*Defend and promote language and cultural rights of the French.*

La Fédération Franco – TENOise has been in existence since 1978 and currently represents the communities of Hay River, Inuvik, Fort Smith and Yellowknife. There are twelve organizations under their umbrella. Their mission is to defend their rights and promote their interests in all aspects of language and culture. Currently there are about 1000 French in the NWT and they have an assimilation rate of 57%. They have managed to develop a weekly paper, have their own school and school board, and two education programs in French. They have one place of business and an annual budget of approximately 1.5 million dollars. All of their funding comes from the Government of Canada.

*Relationship between the Aboriginal and French communities in the NWT.*

Fernand spoke of the history of the French in the NWT and their connection to the Aboriginal people of the NWT. He also spoke of how the French came to secure their language rights in Canada. Through the sharing of experiences, Fernand offered the assistance of La Fédération Franco - TENOise in any way that could help the Aboriginal languages.

### **Day 3, Thursday October 25, 2000**

**Department of Education, Culture and Employment  
Presentations**

### **Closing Comments**

Each participant reflected on the meetings and offered closing remarks.

## OFFICE OF THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

### ADVISORY BOARD

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### **Name**

In the process of deciding on a name that reflects the purpose, membership and importance of the Advisory Board.

#### **Summary**

The Advisory Board was established by the Office of the Languages Commissioner in October 2000. The Office of the Languages Commissioner Advisory Board (OLCAB) is a group of individuals from the Northwest Territories concerned with the promotion and preservation of the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories. Board members meet to discuss current and upcoming issues, share information from their communities, and offer guidance to the Office of the Languages Commissioner on language and culture initiatives and related issues.

#### **Mission Statement**

The main purpose of the Official Languages Commissioner Advisory Board is to work towards the preservation, promotion, and enhancement of the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories. Through an ongoing communication mechanism, the OLCAB will provide information and guidance on the needs, concerns and advancements of language to the Office of the Languages Commissioner. The Advisory Board will also strive to ensure that the Government of the Northwest Territories upholds its commitment to languages and culture and supports the efforts of community initiatives in these areas.

#### **Values**

- Preserve and promote all Official Languages and Culture for future generations.
- Encourage, teamwork, a sense of shared purpose and consensus.
- Support a cohesive and comprehensive approach to language and culture issues.

## **Operational Goals/Mandate**

- Provide leadership and support to the communities that they represent;
- Offer a point of contact and network between the Office of the Languages Commissioner and the communities that the members represent;
- Give ideas and guidance to the Office of the Languages Commissioner on issues related to language and culture;
- Supply ideas and guidance on the initiatives of the Office of the Languages Commissioner;
- Contribute in the review of the Official Languages Act as needed;
- Coordinate activities between the Members and the Office of the Languages Commissioner;
- Share information between the Members and the Office of the Languages Commissioner;
- Communicate with the Office of the Languages Commissioner throughout the year, in order to inform the Office of ongoing activities, events, concerns, or issues.

## **Membership**

The Office of the Languages Commissioner Advisory Board will be made up of community based language activists and educators, committed to the preservation and enhancement of our Official Languages, representing each of the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories. Members are appointed by the Office of the Languages Commissioner based on recommendations from the language communities represented.

## **Meetings**

The Office of the Languages Commissioner Advisory Board will meet no less than once a year. Efforts will be made to host the Advisory Board meetings in communities throughout the Northwest Territories.

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APPENDIX TWO  
SUMMARY OF VOTE 1 AND VOTE 4 ALLOCATIONS  
1999-2000 AND 2000-2001

Provided by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment

## Total GNWT Official Languages Funding for 1999-2000 (Votes 1 and 4)

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES	VOTE 4	VOTE 1
Teaching and Learning Centres		475,000
<i>Beaufort-Delta DEC</i>	89,300	
<i>Deh Cho DEC</i>	91,140	
<i>Dogrib DEC</i>	78,120	
<i>Sahlu DEC</i>	68,750	
<i>South Slave DEC</i>	65,940	
<i>YK 1 DEA</i>	38,850	
<i>YK 2 DEA</i>	37,950	
Aboriginal Language and Cultural Instructor Program		150,000
Aboriginal Language Broadcasting		235,000
Interpreter/Translator Training Program		25,000
Language Planning		50,000
Language Promotion		5,000
Language Resource Development		37,500
Geographic Place Names		10,000
Terminology Development/Language Workshop (H&SS)		20,000
Terminology Development (RWED)		7,500
Language communities	Total	885,000
<i>Chipewyan</i>	1,328,000	443,000
<i>Cree</i>	158,700	
<i>Dogrib</i>	92,700	
<i>Gwich'in</i>	252,700	
<i>Inuvialuktun</i>	96,400	
<i>North Slavey</i>	250,200	
<i>South Slavey</i>	195,700	
<i>Other</i>	211,400	
<i>70,200</i>		
Cultural Projects		0
Language Services Section - Admin		66,000
Aboriginal language school programs	Total	0
<i>Beaufort-Delta DEC</i>	1,432,000	5,515,000
<i>Deh Cho DEC</i>	775,000	
<i>Dogrib DEC</i>	837,000	
<i>Sahlu DEC</i>	650,000	
<i>South Slave DEC</i>	1,060,000	
<i>YK 1 DEA</i>	453,000	
<i>YK 2 DEA</i>	308,000	
<b>TOTAL FOR ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES</b>		<b>1,900,000</b>
		<b>6,466,000</b>

## Total GNWT Official Languages Funding for 1999-2000 (Votes 1 and 4)

### FRENCH LANGUAGE

### VOTE 4 ONLY (NO VOTE 1)

#### *Canada-NWT Cooperation Agreement for French and Aboriginal Languages*

ECE	GNWT French Translation Services	350,000	
	Services to the Public	23,000	
	Policy and Coordination	195,500	
	Language Promotion	15,000	
	Community Funding (PDCC)	145,000	
	<b>Community Funding (Special Project)</b>	<b>50,000</b>	778,500
Justice	Legal Translation Services	408,000	
	Services to the Public	32,000	440,000
H&SS	Policy and Coordination	40,000	
	Services to the Public	40,000	
	Services to the Public (Health Boards)	150,000	230,000
Executive	Services to the Public		12,000
Finance	Services to the Public		2,500
FMBS	Services to the Public		5,000
Legislative Assembly	Services to the Public		25,000
MACA	Services to the Public		15,000
Public Works & Services	Services to the Public/Office Space		79,000
RWED	Services to the Public		20,000
Transportation	Services to the Public		17,000
NWT Hsg Corp	Services to the Public		11,000
WCB	Services to the Public		14,000
NWT Power Corp	Services to the Public		1,000
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Total			1,650,000
 <b>Canada-NWT Agreement for French Language Education</b>			 1,051,000
 <b>TOTAL FUNDING FOR FRENCH</b>			 <b>2,701,000</b>

## Total GNWT Official Languages Funding for 2000-2001 (Votes 1 and 4)

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES	VOTE 4	VOTE 1	
Teaching and Learning Centres		510,000	0
<i>Beaufort-Delta DEC</i>	<i>96,641</i>		
<i>Deh Cho DEC</i>	<i>96,874</i>		
<i>Dogrib DEC</i>	<i>83,505</i>		
<i>Sahtu DEC</i>	<i>73,751</i>		
<i>South Slave DEC</i>	<i>72,155</i>		
<i>YK 1 DEA</i>	<i>44,130</i>		
<i>YK 2 DEA</i>	<i>43,010</i>		
Aboriginal Language and Cultural Instructor Program		175,000	0
Aboriginal Language Broadcasting		175,000	170,000
Interpreter/Translator Training Program		40,000	0
Language Planning		55,000	0
Language Promotion		25,000	0
Language Resource Development		40,000	0
Geographic Place Names		15,000	0
Terminology Development/Language Workshop (H&SS)		25,000	0
Terminology Development (WCB)		15,000	0
Language communities	Total	1,568,000	1,125,000
<i>Chipewyan</i>	<i>196,000</i>		
<i>Cree</i>	<i>112,250</i>		
<i>Dogrib</i>	<i>344,200</i>		
<i>Gwich'in</i>	<i>162,000</i>		
<i>Inuvialuktun</i>	<i>271,400</i>		
<i>North Slavey</i>	<i>236,000</i>		
<i>South Slavey</i>	<i>224,500</i>		
<i>Other</i>	<i>21,650</i>		
Cultural Projects		0	66,000
Language Services Section - Admin		0	290,000
Aboriginal language school programs	Total	0	5,638,000
<i>Beaufort-Delta DEC</i>	<i>1,502,432</i>		
<i>Deh Cho DEC</i>	<i>771,124</i>		
<i>Dogrib DEC</i>	<i>840,191</i>		
<i>Sahtu DEC</i>	<i>695,458</i>		
<i>South Slave DEC</i>	<i>1,095,571</i>		
<i>YK 1 DEA</i>	<i>420,618</i>		
<i>YK 2 DEA</i>	<i>312,208</i>		
<b>TOTAL FOR ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES</b>		<b>2,200,000</b>	<b>6,607,000</b>

## Total GNWT Official Languages Funding for 2000-2001 (Votes 1 and 4)

### FRENCH LANGUAGE

### VOTE 4 ONLY (NO VOTE 1)

#### *Canada-NWT Cooperation Agreement for French and Aboriginal Languages*

ECE	GNWT French Translation & French Services	447,000	
	Policy and Coordination	190,000	
	Community Funding (PDCC)	145,000	782,000
Justice	Legal Translation Services	355,000	
	Services to the Public	80,000	435,000
H&SS	Policy and Coordination	40,000	
	Services to the Public	40,000	
	Services to the Public (Health Boards)	150,000	230,000
Executive	Services to the Public		11,000
Finance	Services to the Public		3,000
FMBS	Services to the Public		5,000
Legislative Assembly	Services to the Public		30,000
MACA	Services to the Public		15,000
NWT Housing Corporation	Services to the Public		11,000
Public Works & Services	Services to the Public/Office Space		81,000
RWED	Services to the Public		35,000
Transportation	Services to the Public		15,000
Workers' Compensation Board	Services to the Public		17,000
NWT Power Corporation	Services to the Public		5,000

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Total			1,675,000
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<b>Canada-NWT Agreement for French Language Education</b>			<b>1,123,000</b>
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<b>TOTAL FUNDING FOR FRENCH</b>			<b>2,798,000</b>
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