

GNWT Response to Committee Report 14-17(5) Report on the 2014 Review of the Official Languages Act

On March 11, 2015, the Standing Committee on Government Operations (SCOGO) tabled its *Report on the 2014 Review of the Official Languages Act (OLA)* which made four specific recommendations to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE).

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment table an Official Languages Strategy, that includes a clear response to the 2009 Review, identifying which recommendations were accepted and rejected and the reasons why. This report must clearly articulate the vision for the Department's "new approach" and identify how this coincides with and differs from the vision contained in the 2009 Report.

GNWT Response

In response to the SCOGO CR 6-16(3) *Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act 2008-2009*, the Department of ECE provided a *GNWT Response to the SCOGO Review of the Official Languages Act* on October 5, 2009.

The Department of ECE has since updated the progress on each of the 85 recommendations as of August 2015 (Appendix I).

Aboriginal Languages:

The *Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan – A Shared Responsibility* (2010) was tabled in October 2010 which set out a framework for strengthening Aboriginal languages over ten years. It describes a broad vision, goals and objectives, as well as a series of strategies and actions to support increased use of Aboriginal languages by residents and the Government.

The Plan was developed based upon the comments and contributions of over 300 Northerners, and recognized and supported the concept that responsibility for language is shared between individuals, families, language communities, governments and the broader society.

The overall vision was: ***Aboriginal languages are used extensively, on a daily basis, to communicate in NWT homes and communities, as well as within the organizations and agencies providing services to the public.***

However, in 2014, the GNWT substantively increased the funding and decision-making authority of regional Aboriginal governments, recognizing their right to manage their own language revitalization efforts, in consideration of self-government agreements, which recognize that Aboriginal governments have jurisdiction over language and culture. ECE has recognized that it is essential that the GNWT begin to work more in continuous partnership with its Aboriginal government partners as to how this shared jurisdiction gets exercised.

As part of the renewed funding agreement, each Aboriginal Government was requested to develop a 5-year Regional Aboriginal Language Plan which identified specific actions on how best to promote and revitalize Aboriginal languages in their unique regions, and to hire a Regional Language Coordinator to help implement the Plan.

An Aboriginal Language Secretariat (ALS) at ECE was subsequently established to offer support to regional Aboriginal Governments in the development of five year Regional Language Plans. Seven of nine identified language groups now have a regional Language Coordinator to help coordinate their efforts and implement their five-year Plans; Inuinnaqtun and Inuvialuktun share one Coordinator and there are no current Coordinators for the Inuktitut Language group.

In light of these significant changes, ECE will be updating the 2010 NWT Languages Plan to properly reflect this new approach and developing both an accompanying Action Plan and an Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability (MEA) Plan for the final 5 years of the Plan (2015-2020).

French:

In 2012, the GNWT adopted the Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services (Strategic Plan for French) to improve the delivery of French language communications and services to the public. The plan was developed in partnership with the Fédération franco-ténoise (FFT) through the GNWT-FFT Consultation-Cooperation Committee (Committee).

The Strategic Plan includes guidelines designed to facilitate the application of the *Official Languages Act*. Those guidelines apply to publication formats and French translation of written notices to the public such as web sites, brochures, forms, reports, advertisements, signs, certificates, permits and licenses.

In 2013, the GNWT adopted updates to the Government Institution Regulations associated with the *Official Languages Act*, clearly identified all Government departments, boards agencies, commissions, corporations and other government institutions to which the *Official Languages Act* applies and in which geographical areas. Also in 2013, the GNWT approved the GNWT Standards for French Communications and Services, after consultation with the FFT, providing a further guide to departments and institutions designated under the Government Institutions Regulations outlining expectations on requirements and consistent standards across the Government.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment work closely with the Standing Committee to revise and bring forward its legislative proposal for amendments to the Official Languages Act in the life of this Assembly. If the Department has received any legal opinions related to the issue of federal concurrence with changes to the NWT's Official Languages Act, this information should be shared in confidence with the Standing Committee, so that the Department and Standing Committee are working with a shared understanding of the factors affecting legislative change.

GNWT Response

At this time, ECE feels that all recommendations related to the amendment of the Official Languages Act are a matter for the 18th Legislative Assembly to determine.

Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment establish an accountability framework for the funding provided to aboriginal language communities under the "new approach" and provide the Standing Committee with progress reports and a copy of the framework when completed.

GNWT Response

As mentioned in the GNWT Response to Recommendation 1, ECE will be updating the *NWT Language Plan: A Shared Responsibility* and developing an accompanying Action Plan and Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability (MEA) Plan that will include increased reporting on both activities and funding. This information, including the Plans, progress reporting and overall framework will be made available to Committee when completed and on an ongoing basis.

MEA Planning is a collaborative process involving ALS staff, an ECE MEA specialist, Regional Language Coordinators and other relevant language champions in each of the language regions. The hope is to collaborate with all language stakeholders and increase partnerships and build relationships where possible.

Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment respond to this report within 120 days.

GNWT Response

This document constitutes the Government's comprehensive response in a timely manner.

APPENDIX I

UPDATE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES RESPONSE TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (SCOGO) FINAL REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT 2008-2009*

Reality Check: Securing a Future for the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories

AS OF AUGUST 2015

Please note that ECE provided a progress update to SCOGO respecting each recommendation in April 2014. The progress update contained herein is the 2015 update to the same 2008 – 2009 recommendations.

The responses in the chart can be summarized in the following groups:

Language Agreements

Negotiations for a multi-year languages agreement between ECE and Heritage Canada are ongoing.

Official Languages (OL) Planning and Services

The GNWT works with its partners including the Fédération franco-ténoise (FFT) and regional language coordinators to make services available in all 11 official languages and promotes the use of official languages.

ECE established an Aboriginal Language Secretariat and increased funding for Aboriginal languages promotion, revitalization and training by supporting the development and implementation of strategic plans, assisting with capacity building initiatives and using school curriculum to improve Aboriginal language and cultural programming.

ECE supports Francophone language communities through the French Language Secretariat, the development of a French language strategic and operating plan and providing funding to French language organizations.

Language Boards

ECE will be discussing a range of topics associated with mandates, authorities, obligations and planning with both the Official Languages Board and the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board in April 2015.

Official Languages (OL) Reporting

As required by the Official Languages Act, the Minister of ECE tables an Annual Report on Official Languages each year and SCOGO completes a review of the Act every five years. ECE has also provided progress updates to both SCOGO and the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability Plan (MEA)

ECE is developing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability plan (MEA) to monitor, guide and inform the development and delivery of programs and services, and to improve reporting. The MEA plan will also facilitate partners input into planning processes and language services.

Amendments to the Official Languages Act (OLA)

ECE is not considering amendments to the Official Languages Act at this time. The amendments proposed by SCOGO are matter for the Legislative Assembly, and potentially the Parliament of Canada, to consider.

Recommendations

5.1 Provisions to be considered for an *Official Languages Services Act (OLA)*

SCOGO 2008-2009 Recommendations	2015 Progress Update from ECE
1. Rewrite the OLA to get away from the federal model of legislation that does not match the demographic, socio-geographic, and political realities of the NWT	The need to change the general tenant of the OLA to better match the demographic, socio-geographic, and political realities of the NWT has not been raised in any of the language symposia as a priority or identified as key to preserving and protecting the NWT's official languages. Thus, no amendments to the OLA in that respect are being considered at this time.
2. Lobby the federal government to allow the GNWT to create its own and more appropriate Official Languages legislation/regime	At this time, the priority area of interest respecting the GNWT's relations with the federal government is the re-negotiation of a multi-year Official Languages Agreement. A bilateral table has been established and negotiations have commenced.
3. Create a service oriented Official Languages regime for the GNWT and commit to a regime aimed at saving the Aboriginal languages of the NWT.	<p>For Aboriginal languages, the GNWT has increased the funding and decision-making authority of regional Aboriginal governments to assist them to implement their 5 year regional language plans. The newly formed Aboriginal Language Secretariat at ECE will also turn its attention to explore more effective ways in offering Aboriginal language services beyond those already offered by departments and identified in the annual Report on Official Languages tabled in the Legislative Assembly each year. ECE will also continue working with Education Authorities to support Aboriginal and French language education programming.</p> <p>For French, the GNWT adopted the Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services (Strategic Plan for French) to improve the delivery of French language communications and services to the public. The plan was developed in partnership with the Fédération franco-ténoise (FFT) though the GNWT-FFT Consultation-Cooperation Committee (Committee). The Strategic Plan includes guidelines designed to facilitate the application of the Official Languages Act. Those guidelines apply to publication formats and French translation of written notices to the public such as web sites, brochures, forms, reports, advertisements, signs, certificates, permits and licenses.</p>
4. Acknowledge the different situations and needs of the Aboriginal languages and French in terms of legal recognition and protection by Canada, speaker base and available resources (financial, human, linguistic and capacity)	While the OLA protects and promotes all 11 official languages, different approaches and supports have been put in place to address the unique circumstances for the languages in question. As such, there are 2 separate Language Secretariats, one for Aboriginal languages and one for French. Investments in French and Aboriginal language promotion and protection vary from year to year. In 2015-16, the overall investment in Aboriginal languages is \$15.148 million and in French it is \$5.87million.
5. Recognize Aboriginal languages and French as Official Languages of the NWT including rights granted in reference to legal proceedings and proceedings in the Legislative Assembly.	GNWT recognizes all official languages within its services.

Government retains the obligation to provide services and communication with the public in Official Languages with the following qualifiers:

<p>6.1 Determine service delivery priorities through consultations with the different language communities while recognizing the Government's capacity and resource limitations.</p>	<p>French Language: GNWT consulted the French language communities in Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik and Yellowknife to inform French-speaking residents about the GNWT Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services (Strategic Plan for French) and to listen and better understand the priorities of each community.</p> <p>The drafting phase is completed. The Committee is now carrying out its work on the implementation, administration and promotion of the Plan.</p> <p>Aboriginal Languages: GNWT increased funding to all regional Aboriginal governments to offset the costs in implementing their 5 year regional language plans. The GNWT is developing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability plan (MEA) that will assist in getting valuable feedback respecting priorities and other implementation matters.</p>
<p>6.2 Address Government capacity issues through comprehensive long-term planning (language service plans for each language) while acknowledging language community priorities</p>	<p>French Language: GNWT consulted the French language communities in Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik and Yellowknife to inform French-speaking residents about the GNWT Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services (Strategic Plan for French) and to listen and better understand the priorities of each community.</p> <p>The drafting phase is completed. The Committee is now carrying out its work on the implementation, administration and promotion of the Plan.</p> <p>Aboriginal Languages: The regional 5 year plans, developed by language communities in the NWT, are the most current articulation of service plans and community priorities;</p> <p>On the advice from participants at the 2 language symposia, the Aboriginal Language Secretariat (ALS) has developed a job description for two linguist positions, one of which has been filled and will be decentralized to Hay River in October 2015. The ALS will continue extensive work with regional language coordinators, with the support of these two linguists.</p>
<p>6.3 Create designated areas for Aboriginal languages in the communities where Aboriginal languages are indigenous (see <i>Nunavut OLA, s.3(3)</i>) and further provisions similar to the wording in the <i>Active Offer Policy of the Francophone Affairs Secretariat</i> in Manitoba,</p> <p>i.e. A region is recognized as a designated area for (name of the language) by the Government of the Northwest</p>	<p>The designation of areas for Aboriginal languages is in place.</p> <p>The GNWT and Aboriginal Language regions are profiling holidays and developing events to support language communities in promoting and revitalizing their languages. NWT Schools, Early Childhood Language Nest Programs and Aurora college have set up cultural areas for language resources and language learning.</p> <p>The 5 year Aboriginal languages plans include setting up of space for community interest in the regional offices or buildings to distribute Aboriginal language materials and to promote Aboriginal language use.</p>

<p>Territories due to the concentration of Aboriginal language speakers or the validity of the region's Aboriginal community, as demonstrated by the use of the Aboriginal language in local schools, cultural organization, community groups, etc.</p> <p>Apart from acknowledging regions where Aboriginal languages are indigenous this provides for recognizing facts and trends of our modern NWT society including mobility and urbanization.</p>	
<p>6.4 Created designated areas for French; i.e., <i>"A region is recognized...by the Government...due to the concentration of Francophones or the validity of the region's Francophone community, as demonstrated by the use of French in local schools, cultural organization, community groups, etc."</i></p>	<p>The Official Languages Regulations designate areas were approved in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.</p>
<p>7. Establish an Official Languages Secretariat (OLS) and place it with the Department of the Executive as a central agency that has the authority to implement the <i>Official Languages Services Act</i> government wide. Such an organization structure could improve accountability and oversight of the implementation of the <i>"Official Languages Services Act"</i> as well as increase focus on language community consultations and relationship building. The reporting relationship of the Official Languages Secretariat should be directly to the Deputy Minister.</p>	<p>In recognition of the different approaches and realities for French and Aboriginal languages, two language secretariats were created. Although neither the Francophone Affairs Secretariat nor the Aboriginal Languages Secretariat is housed in the Department of Executive, they both have a corporate leadership role when it comes to the promotion and revitalization of the 11 official languages. They both work closely with GNWT departments. The Director for the French language secretariat reports to the DM, ECE and the Director for the Aboriginal Languages Secretariat reports to the ADM, ECE who is also responsible for early childhood, culture and school programming, allowing for greater coordination in that respect.</p>

The Government’s Official Languages Secretariat (OLS) shall be sufficiently resourced, supported and empowered to fulfill the following mandate by:

<p>8.1 Developing government services in the Aboriginal languages and French. Determine service delivery priorities through consultations with the different language communities while recognizing the Government’s capacity and resource limitations (see “Minister Responsible” for details regarding this plan and the reporting on the progress of the plan)</p>	<p>French: GNWT departments have developed their individual 5-year Operating Plans to implement the <i>GNWT Strategic Plan on French Language Communications and Services (Strategic Plan)</i>. Aurora College and NWT Education Authorities will be developing their Operating Plans in 2015-2016. The Operating Plans cover the detailed actions required to implement the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>In 2013-2014, the GNWT and the FFT undertook together a number of consultations in Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik and Yellowknife. The consultations were intended to identify priority areas to improve French services.</p> <p>Aboriginal Languages: Similar to the work that has been completed for government services in French, the ALS will begin during the 2015-216 fiscal year working with various GNWT Departments to identify where Aboriginal languages services are currently and consistently being offered and in which areas and Departments they are required or need to be strengthened.</p>
<p>8.2 Addressing Government capacity issues through comprehensive long-term planning (language service plans for each language) while recognizing language community priorities</p>	<p>French: GNWT Departments are implementing their French language plans.</p> <p>Aboriginal Languages: Similar to the work that has been completed for government services in French, the ALS will begin during the 2015-216 fiscal year working with various GNWT Departments to identify where Aboriginal languages services are currently and consistently being offered and in which areas and Departments they are required or need to be strengthened.</p>
<p>8.3 Addressing matters of Aboriginal languages services in general</p>	<p>The ALS has made improvements to current GNWT language services within its website including the Active Offer to enable government and the public to access Aboriginal languages services.</p> <p>ALS has been working with all regional language communities on language services and addressing issues regarding language priorities.</p>
<p>8.4. Addressing matters of French language services in general</p>	<p>GNWT departments are implementing their French language plans including providing French language services.</p>
<p>8.5 Addressing complaints from the public about Aboriginal and French language services</p>	<p>This is the role of the Language Commissioner.</p>
<p>8.6 Facilitating, guiding and monitoring departments and agencies on their Aboriginal languages and French service activities</p>	<p>French: The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) developed a Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability (MEA) Plan that will be used to evaluate the implementation and success of the <i>Strategic Plan</i>. The evaluation will be completed in 2017-2018.</p> <p>Aboriginal Languages: The creation of a MEA plan will improve departmental monitoring for facilitating and guiding Aboriginal language services as well as assist the regional Aboriginal language communities by providing them with valuable and consistent feedback on the effectiveness of their 5 year language plans.</p>

<p>8.7 Liaising with Aboriginal language communities, organizations and their political bodies, and Francophone community organizations.</p>	<p>French: A GNWT-FFT Consultation-Cooperation Committee (Committee) has been established to discuss the implementation, administration and promotion of the Strategic and Operating Plans for French. Once a year the Minister Responsible for Official Languages meet with representatives of the FFT and other francophone organizations to discuss matter of importance to the community and the Government. In addition, Departments are encouraged to involve the community directly in initiatives and projects in their section.</p> <p>Aboriginal Languages: In February 2014, ECE met with regional Aboriginal Governments to discuss the concept of the new approach and funding of regional Aboriginal language plans. All regional Aboriginal Governments were supportive of this direction. Additional meetings were held with the Akaitcho Territorial Government and the Sahtu Secretariat on request. Prior to both Languages Symposia, a Minister’s Advisory Committee was struck comprising representatives of each region, to provide direction on desired outcomes, content and speakers.</p>
<p>8.8 Coordination of agreements and funding from Canada</p>	<p>Meetings between senior ECE and Department of Canadian Heritage staff have taken place to renegotiate a multi-year languages agreement. A one year Languages Agreement for 2014-15 was signed on March 30, 2015. Negotiations on a long-term agreement continue.</p>
<p>8.9 Coordination of funding and other supports to the Francophone language communities</p>	<p>The GNWT support the Francophone language communities through a number of means such as French education, partnership in the delivery of French language services, in economic development and cultural development.</p>
<p>9. Acknowledge that in order to grant equal rights to the Aboriginal languages a comprehensive language protection regime addressing protection, revitalization and modernization of the Aboriginal languages has to be implemented first.</p>	<p>ECE established the ALS to support NWT Aboriginal languages promotion and revitalization, and to assist regions in the development and implementation of 5-year Regional Language Plans.</p> <p>Since being established, the ALS has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implemented a new funding and accountability approach that recognizes regional Aboriginal governments’ right to manage their own language revitalization efforts; • increased the amount of funding given directly to regional Aboriginal Governments; • ensured Regional Language Coordinators were hired in 7 regions; • met with Regional Language Coordinators on the development of Language plans, the new approach to funding, and the development of monitoring plans; • signed off on contribution agreements with each regional Aboriginal government; and filled vacancies on both languages boards through requesting that Aboriginal governments appoint language reps. \

5.2 Provisions to be considered for an Aboriginal Languages Protection Regime

<p>10. Acknowledge continuous Aboriginal language loss, endangerment resulting in a need for protection and revitalization.</p>	<p>ECE has acknowledged this reality at all levels, most specifically in communications with the federal government, reminding them of the shared responsibility respecting Aboriginal languages.</p> <p>ECE has also initiated a comprehensive review of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Based Directive with a view to sharpening its focus on effective school programming as a tool to improving Aboriginal language and cultural programming within K-12 schools.</p> <p>ECE has also identified in the Early Childhood Framework Action Plan that Aboriginal Language Nest programming needs to be reviewed and strengthened for licensed early childhood programs.</p>
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Government commits to an Aboriginal Languages Protection Regime through:

<p>11.1 Acknowledging the different situations of the NWT in terms of speaker base, vitality, capacity, endangerment, need for protection, maintenance, revitalization and modernization.</p>	<p>Funding the development of <i>region specific</i> Aboriginal language plans is an expression of the fact that one size does not fit all. The 7 regional Aboriginal language plans provide unique measures to unique language opportunities and challenges.</p> <p>Different measures have been developed and are being implemented for French, acknowledging the different realities faced by the French speaking community.</p>
<p>11.2 A realistic long-term revitalization plan (10 to 20 year range) must be developed in consultation with each language community highlighting priorities to address needs and actions for protection, revitalization, maintenance and modernization for each Aboriginal language. This plan must include measures, monitoring and evaluation criteria. Measures must distinguish between government and language communities' responsibilities.</p>	<p>In October 2010, in response to the 2008 - 2009 Standing Committee on Government Operations (SCOGO) Review of the OLA, the GNWT tabled a 10 year Aboriginal Language Framework entitled "Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan – A shared responsibility. The plan has a vision, goals and objectives.</p> <p><i>The NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan</i> will be updated following implementation of the new approach and the conclusion of negotiations with the federal government.</p> <p>An MEA will be developed for the updated Plan and to support the work of the 5 year regional language plans.</p>
<p>11.3 Annual action plans for each language that related to the long-term strategic plan outlining responsibilities and activities by the Government, its agencies and the language communities including timelines and measures for progress towards established goals and objectives</p>	<p>The 5 year Regional Aboriginal Language Plans contain specific actions and initiatives for each region.</p>

<p>11.4 The establishment of an Aboriginal Languages Authority (ALA) in charge of the development and implementation of this plan, being the liaison to the language communities with sufficient resources and powers to fulfill this mandate and to provide ongoing support and capacity building to the Aboriginal languages communities and their organizations</p>	<p>An Aboriginal Languages Secretariat (ALS) has been established and is working to fill all current vacant positions.</p> <p>The Director of the ALS is the key contact and liaison for all Aboriginal language communities</p> <p>With funding increases and the MEA plan underway, the ALS and MEA planner have been finalizing work and input from all language regional coordinators.</p>
<p>12. Include statutory requirements to have a Committee of the Legislative Assembly review the Annual Report on Official Language Services and Aboriginal Language Protection and report back within 180 days.</p>	<p>The <i>Official Languages Act</i> currently requires the Legislative Assembly or a Committee of the Assembly to review the provisions and operations of the Act every five years. The Act also requires the Minister responsible to prepare an Annual Report on Official Languages that includes an assessment on the status of each Official Language, an evaluation of government institutions' programs and policies and a report on the language boards' activities. The legislative changes suggested by Committee are a matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.</p>

5.3 Aboriginal Languages Authority and Aboriginal Languages Advisory Committee

The Aboriginal Languages Authority is responsible for the development and implementation of a long-term strategic revitalization plan, annual action plans, and being the liaison to the language communities with sufficient resources and powers to fulfill this mandate and to provide ongoing support and capacity building to the Aboriginal languages communities and their organizations

<p>13.1 The Aboriginal Languages Authority (ALA) is obligated to consult with the language communities (set minimum requirements for consultation)</p>	<p>The GNWT has created the Aboriginal Language Secretariat (ALS) who works in partnership with the regional Aboriginal governments and their Regional Language Coordinators.</p>
<p>13.2 The Aboriginal Languages Authority is responsible for stable and sustainable funding arrangements with language communities.</p>	<p>Subject to the Legislative Assembly's prerogative to approve annual departmental budgets, ECE has allocated stable funding to regional Aboriginal governments to help offset the costs of implementing their regional language plans.</p>
<p>13.3 The Aboriginal Languages Authority must have a close working relationship and take advice from the Aboriginal Languages Advisory Committee (ALAC) (see below)</p>	<p>While a different governance regime has been chosen than what was proposed by SCOGO in 2009, the interest of close collaboration between ECE and the Aboriginal language communities has been achieved.</p>
<p>13.4 The Aboriginal Languages Authority of the GNWT needs to liaise with the Aboriginal Languages Centre (see below) to ensure a continuous work relationship is established</p>	<p>While a different governance regime has been chosen than what was proposed by SCOGO in 2009, the interest of close collaboration between ECE and the Aboriginal language communities has been achieved.</p>

The Aboriginal Languages Authority would work with an advisory committee represented by delegates of the Aboriginal Language communities. The establishment of this Aboriginal Languages Advisory Committee in combination with prescribed consultation requirements would ensure concerns of the languages communities are being heard and their advice being taken under consideration.

<p>14.1 The Aboriginal Languages Advisory Committee would replace the existing Official Languages Board and the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board.</p>	<p>General observation: This proposal would add another layer on top of an already intricate governance regime. Members of the Aboriginal Language Revitalization Board (ALRB) and the Official Languages Board (OLB) met in April 2015 and discussed future options for governance. Members requested continued conversations to determine future roles and responsibilities of the Board and its members, including mandate, meeting frequency and membership.</p>
<p>14.2 Mandate, competencies, meeting and consultation requirements of this working group shall be clearly established in policy.</p>	<p>Members of the ALRB and the OLB met in April 2015 and discussed future options for governance, requesting continued conversations to determine roles and responsibilities of the Board and its members including mandate, meeting frequency and membership.</p>
<p>14.3 The obligations of the Aboriginal Language Authority towards this advisory body shall be clearly established in policy.</p>	<p>See above comment.</p>
<p>14.4 The Aboriginal Language Advisory Committee is composed by representatives of all Aboriginal languages.</p>	<p>See above comment.</p>
<p>14.5 The mandate of this advisory body shall be to participate in the development of the long-term strategic revitalization plan and the annual action plans concerning language revitalization.</p>	<p>See above comment.</p>
<p>14.6 This body shall be linking the community needs with the planning and policy activities of the Government in regards to Aboriginal languages revitalization.</p>	<p>See above comment.</p>

5.4 Aboriginal Language Centres

While the Aboriginal Languages Authority and the Aboriginal Languages Advisory Committee would be concerned with strategic planning and policy development relating to the revitalization of Aboriginal languages, the Aboriginal Languages Centre would be tasked with language activities and program delivery aspects of a comprehensive revitalization regime.

Support and Fund an Aboriginal Language Centre (ALC) outside of Government tasked with:

15.1 Providing central resources and supports necessary for language protection, revitalization, maintenance and modernization (for example linguists, community development, capacity building, collaboration with existing programs)	The five year Regional Language Plans developed by each region identify specific actions on how best to promote and revitalize Aboriginal languages in their region. The GNWT has agreed to provide a total of 3.6 million dollars annually as its contribution towards the implementation of the 5 year plans. ALS will provide central resources and supports as well as technical expertise through linguists etc. to all language communities.
15.2 Functioning as a clearing house for resources developed by language groups and with funding from the GNWT.	ALS will provide central resources and supports as well as technical expertise.
15.3 Developing an Aboriginal languages resource website	The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre has developed a website to house Aboriginal language resources: http://www.pwnhc.ca/aboriginal-language-resources/
15.4 Accelerating the development of Unicode Dene fonts	Dene Fonts are available on GNWT website along with language apps for downloading.
15.5 Coordinating the development and offering of Interpreter/Translator training and standards (can be in collaboration with other agencies for example the existing pilot project through the Akaitcho Government)	The ALS sent out letters to each regional language community to inform all Aboriginal governments of the Interpreter/Translator training project. In March 2015, ALS received positive responses from all language representatives on this project.
15.6 Developing Adult language training and other initiatives to increase the day-to-day use of Aboriginal languages that can be adapted and used by the different language communities	The ALS is working closely with all institutes to enhance training needs in all communities in the NWT. Signage will be discussed in upcoming meetings that are scheduled for the new fiscal year.
15.7 Other activities as identified and supported by the Language Communities	5 year Regional Language Plans identify their own activities specific and appropriate to that language community.
15.8 Maintain an on-going working relationship with the language communities and the Aboriginal Languages Authority	<p>The ALS is working with an MEA expert to develop monitoring plans with Regional Language Coordinators for all 5-year Regional Language Plans. These plans are being developed in regions with the Language Coordinators and other relevant community and regional language champions.</p> <p>The NWT Literacy council sends out news updates regarding language activities and activity notices from language regions who want to have input and interest.</p>
15.9 Providing an annual report to the Aboriginal Languages Authority	<p>The Minister prepares an Annual Report on Official Languages which is tabled annually.</p> <p>The Department is developing an MEA plan to provide input for ECE languages accountability reporting requirements. The overarching MEA plan will be populated with data from monitoring plans being developed for each of the 5-year Regional Language Plans.</p>

Note: There is nothing that shall prevent the installation of an Aboriginal Language Centre within any existing language society. Language Community groups and organizations shall be consulted before the structure of the Aboriginal Languages Centre is decided on.

5.5 Mandate of the Languages Commissioner devolved

<p>16. The implementation of our recommendations to create an Official Languages Secretariat and to strengthen Government's commitment to service oriented legislation makes the position of the Languages Commissioner no longer necessary. Similar to the set-up of most other Canadian jurisdictions the Official Languages Secretariat, if provided with adequate powers, could address and receive complaints regarding Government services, while the Aboriginal Language Authority could ensure the progress of the Aboriginal Language protection regime.</p>	<p>A matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.</p>
<p>17. If the term of the Languages Commissioner appointed under the existing Official Languages Act has not expired when the new Official Languages Services Regime comes into force, then the Languages Commissioner shall be positioned in the Official Languages Secretariat to ensure continuity during the transitional period until the Commissioner's term of office has expired.</p>	<p>A matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.</p>

5.6 Minister Responsible for Official Languages Services and the Protection of Aboriginal Languages

<p>18. Designate a Minister Responsible for Official Languages Services and the Protection of Aboriginal languages and place the Official Languages Secretariat and the Aboriginal Languages Authority with the Department of the Executive to ensure accountability for the government wide implementation of the <i>Official Languages Services Act</i> and the Aboriginal Languages Protection Regime is in place</p>	<p>The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for the <i>Official Languages Act</i> and for the general direction and coordination of the policies and programs of the GNWT that relate to official languages.</p> <p>In doing so, the Minister considers the advice of the language boards, oversees the development of policies and regulations necessary to implement the Act, promotes Official Languages education, promotes the use of Official Languages by government institutions and encourages the maintenance and revitalization of Aboriginal languages.</p>
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<p>19. Make the creation of a government-wide long-term strategic-implementation plan for Official Languages services and the strategic plan for Aboriginal Languages protection a responsibility of the Minister and establish these responsibilities in legislation and policy.</p>	<p>In light of self-government agreements, which recognize that Aboriginal governments have jurisdiction over language and culture, it is essential that the GNWT work in continuous partnership with its Aboriginal government partners as to how this shared jurisdiction gets exercised. It is also critically important to ensure that the federal government stays engaged and committed to sharing its responsibility with respect to all the NWT's official languages. Given the shared aspect of jurisdiction respecting aboriginal languages, it is unlikely that there will be <u>one</u> long-term strategic implementation plan for all 9 official aboriginal languages; however, there is opportunity for the development of a Framework that captures the goals, objectives and actions of each of the 5-year Regional Language Plans.</p> <p>This makes for a complex governance regime but one that is unavoidable.</p> <p>The Minister's responsibilities respecting official languages are already set out in the OLA.</p>
<p>20. Make the creation of departmental-institutional Official Languages services implementation plan with annual reporting on measures a responsibility of each Government institution.</p>	<p>The MEA Plan will be used to direct the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. MEA plans create structures for accountability and support programs in continuous quality improvement.</p>
<p>21. Strategic and implementation plans must include financial needs assessments that would allow the Minister to bring budget requests forward during the established business planning cycle.</p>	<p>Implementation plans for Aboriginal and French Language plans include detailed work plans and financial requirements. These documents have formed the basis for our negotiations with the Federal government in order to increase our investment in these plans. In the future, at the minimum, all implementation plans will require this information.</p>
<p>22. Make strategic and implementation plans for Official Languages Services and Aboriginal Languages Protection publicly available.</p>	<p>The GNWT is currently updating and improving accessible plans and information on all language regions.</p>
<p>23. Include annual updates on the implementation of these plans including activities of the Official Languages Secretariat, the Aboriginal Languages Authority and government institutions part of the reporting requirements of the Minister's Annual Report on Official Language Services and Aboriginal Language Protection</p>	<p>The Annual Report for Official Languages is tabled in the Legislative Assembly and made available on the GNWT website.</p>

5.7 Language Communities

<p>24. Affirm relevance of the languages communities for the use, maintenance, revitalization, protection and modernization of their respective languages.</p>	<p>The ALS has contacted all regional translators for service improvements and language involvement within all departments in the NWT. ECE also sent out the MEA plan to all regional Aboriginal language coordinators for review and input on the use, maintenance, revitalization, protection and modernization of their languages.</p>
<p>25. Confirm Government's responsibility to support the language communities in using, maintaining, revitalizing, protecting and modernizing their respective languages.</p>	<p>The GNWT is supporting the Aboriginal language communities' work. ECE has provided funding and support in the development of 5 year Regional Language Plans. As well, ECE has begun the development of an MEA plan that all regional Aboriginal Language Coordinators will be asked to review and provide comment on.</p>
<p>26. Confirm Aboriginal language Communities responsibility to work with their people and political leadership at a community, regional and self-government level to increase daily usage, thus contributing to the recovery and maintenance of Aboriginal languages.</p>	<p>GNWT increased funding to all language regions. The MEA plan and Regional monitoring plans will help Aboriginal language communities to revitalize their languages by identifying the key indicators for their improvement.</p>
<p>27. The proposed Aboriginal Languages Centre would provide increased support, development and sharing opportunities avoiding duplication and increasing the capacity, programming and resource development for each language community group. Ideally this would lead to a close and on-going working relationship between community language organizations and the Centre.</p>	<p>The five year Regional Language Plans developed by each region identify specific actions on how best to promote and revitalize Aboriginal languages in their region. ALS will provide central resources and supports as well as technical expertise through linguists etc. to all language communities.</p>
<p>28. The proposed Aboriginal Languages Centre would provide increased support, development and sharing opportunities avoiding duplication and increasing the capacity, programming and resource development for each language community group. Ideally this would lead to a close and on-going working relationship between community language organizations and the Centre.</p>	<p>The five year Regional language Plans developed by each region identify specific actions for each region on how best to promote and revitalize Aboriginal languages in their region. ALS will provide central resources and supports as well as technical expertise through linguists etc. to all language communities.</p>
<p>29. The role of the Language Communities would be strengthened through mandatory consultation requirements of the Aboriginal Languages Authority and the OL Secretariat.</p>	<p>The five year Regional Language Plans developed by each region identify specific actions on how best to promote and revitalize Aboriginal languages in their region. ALS will provide central resources and supports as well as technical expertise through linguists etc. to all language communities.</p>

5.8 Implementation

30. Make negotiations with Canada on changes to the Northwest Territories Official Languages regime a policy.	The need to change the general tenant of the OLA to better match the demographic, socio-geographic, and political realities of the NWT has not been raised in any of the language symposia as a priority and identified as key to preserving and protecting the NWT's official languages. Thus, no amendments to the OLA or discussions with Canada in that respect are being considered at this time.
31. Bring a Legislative Proposal forward during the life of the 16 th Legislative Assembly.	See above comment.
32. Create an implementation plan for the introduction of the proposed Official Languages Services Act and Aboriginal languages protection regimes in the life of the 16 th Legislative Assembly (including fiscal, human resources and capacity building needs).	See above comment.
33. Conduct government wide human resources planning for the service delivery model to address Official Languages services obligations of the GNWT.	The GNWT is currently developing an inventory of Aboriginal language speakers amongst current employees.
34. Use the Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan currently under development by the Department of Human Resources to determine the GNWT's capacity to deliver services in the Official Languages.	The GNWT is currently developing an inventory of Aboriginal language speakers amongst current employees.
35. Negotiate funding agreements for Official Languages services and Aboriginal languages protection with Canada	A one year Languages Agreement for 2014-15 was signed on March 30, 2015. Negotiations on a long-term agreement continue.
36. Provide Language Communities with adequate support and resources to implement their work plan/language plans on a continuous and developing basis.	The GNWT has secured funding to support the 5 year plans. This will be renewed once negotiations are completed with new agreement.
37. Conduct an education campaign for all GNWT staff on Official Language services and Aboriginal language protection	French: The implementation of the communication plan started in 2014-2015 Aboriginal: The ALS has conducted new ads and implemented services on the GNWT website.
38. Provide an OL service delivery and communication manual for all staff setting out minimum standards including for an "active offer"	French: Standards are used by GNWT services in delivering services in French to the public. Aboriginal: Active offer is in place and present on GNWT website.

39. Extend the services offered at Single Window Service Centers (example: Manitoba)	Extension of Service TNO services started in 2014-2015. A new memorandum of understanding to deliver French Services was signed with the NWT Human Rights. Active offer is in place and present on GNWT website.
40. Future NWT Community Surveys shall include information on mother tongue and home language to allow for improved tracking of language shift in particular for the Aboriginal languages of the NWT. The tracking of language shift every two to three years could be an important indicator to evaluate if the revitalization measures put in place are successful.	The NWT Bureau of Statistics currently collects information on mother tongue and home language.
41. Ensure that the NWT Bureau of Statistics works closely with Statistics Canada to include all Aboriginal Official Languages of the Northwest Territories when collecting and reporting language information during the Census.	The GNWT is taking steps to ensure statistics are current.

5.9 Transitional Provisions

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recognizes that a meaningful implementation of these recommendations will take some time. Therefore, the Committee recommends that in the meantime the following transitional measures be acted upon without delay.

42. Improve service delivery in Official Languages	French: This is done through the implementation of GNWT departments French language plans. Aboriginal: A regional linguist, based out of Hay River, has been hired to help improve regional language delivery and awareness.
43. Provide increased financial and capacity supports to community language groups including multi-year funding agreements	Negotiations between the GNWT and the Federal Government will continue this year.
44. Improve communication and consultation with the community language groups and their organization	French: The GNWT and the Fédération franco-ténoise (FFT) established a Consultation/Cooperation Committee. Aboriginal: The GNWT has made new changes in regards to improving communication through upcoming planned regional tours and increased funding.
45. Conduct Aboriginal language community consultations to prepare for the establishment of the Aboriginal Language Centre in the fiscal year 2010-2011	Engagement with language communities has been ongoing with the ALS that is now established. The concept of an Aboriginal Language Centre has been discussed with regional language groups and ALS in 2014. No decisions have been made on this.

**In the interim make the following amendments to the existing Official Languages Act
Languages Commissioner**

46.1.1 Include NWT residency as statutory requirement	A matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.
46.1.2 Include minimum requirements for community outreach to promote Official Language rights and the Act itself	A matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.
46.1.3 Review whether the existing <i>Official Languages Act</i> sections on investigations by the Commissioner's on his-her own initiative, need to be clarified or strengthened	A matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.
46.1.4 Review whether additional powers for the Languages Commissioner to audit government agencies for their implementation of OLA, would strengthen the ombudsperson function of the Statutory Office	A matter for the Legislative Assembly to determine.

Official Languages Board and Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board

46.2.1 Amalgamate the two Languages Boards into one Aboriginal Languages Board (ALB) that will provide the link between the Aboriginal languages communities and the Minister responsible for Official Language.	<p>Members of the Aboriginal Language Revitalization Board (ALRB) and the Official Languages Board (OLB) met in April 2015 and discussed future options for governance. Members agreed that movement towards board amalgamation made sense; however, members requested continued conversations to determine future roles and responsibilities of the Board and its members, including mandate, meeting frequency and membership.</p> <p>An amalgamation of boards will require a legislative proposal and amendments to the Official Languages Act. Changes of this significance will be left for the 18th Legislative Assembly to approve; until then the two existing boards will remain as required under the Act.</p>
46.2.2 Change the appointment process by broadening the list of organizations who nominate representatives of their Language Communities. The intent is to involve a more diverse group of language stakeholders in the nomination process.	See above comment.
46.2.3 Clarify the Aboriginal Languages Board's mandate, powers and its relationship with the Minister in the <i>Act</i> .	See above comment.

<p>46.2.4 Include a description of the roles, responsibilities, competency requirements and compensation per diem schedule in the Regulations establishing the Aboriginal Languages Board.</p>	<p>See above comment.</p>
<p>46.2.5 Include requirement for board members to consult with their communities and stakeholders.</p>	<p>See above comment.</p>
<p>47. The Minister responsible for Official Languages shall include a detailed progress report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Government Operations contained in its Final Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act 2008-2009 in his Annual Report on Official Languages</p>	<p>ECE provided SCOGO with a progress report respecting each recommendation of the 2008-2009 report in April 2014.</p>
<p>48. The GNWT shall communicate with the Committee on the progress of the development of the proposed Official Languages services regime and the Aboriginal languages protection regime.</p>	<p>ECE provided SCOSP and SCOGO with updates on a variety of initiatives related to Official Languages including:</p> <p><u>SCOSP</u> August 21, 2013 – Briefing on New Approach to Aboriginal Languages November 12, 2013 – Aboriginal Language Approach October 15, 2014 – Aboriginal Language and Culture Based Education Directive (ALCBE) December 4, 2014 – ALCBE February 23, 2015 – ALCBE</p> <p><u>SCOGO</u> May 27, 2013 – Aboriginal Language Secretariat June 3, 2013 – Dene Language Conference September 4, 2013 – Aboriginal Language Secretariat April 5, 2014 – Official Language Act Review April 22, 2014 – French Language Operating Plans September 19, 2014 – Official Language Priorities</p>