



## Fostering linguistic duality in small departments and agencies

### Employee Engagement Initiatives

#### FINTRAC Official Languages

##### Newsletter

The FINTRAC Official Languages working group publishes a bi-annual newsletter to all employees. Thus far, five editions have been published. Each issue covers the following standard items:

##### 1. Upcoming Events

Features timelines to register for key internal programs and language training, and details of upcoming or recent events/initiatives.

##### 2. What is happening at FINTRAC and in the Federal Public Service

Features statistical data such as PSES, information about the development of FINTRAC's internal language school, and guidance related to official languages published on the intranet.

##### 3. In the News

Brief summaries of 2-3 news articles relevant to Canada's official languages.

##### 4. Spotlight on a Useful Resource

Each edition features a new tool or resources that can help employees develop their second language skills.

##### 5. The Working Group's Cultural Corner

Recommendations of a cultural aspect - such as movies, books and music - are shared so that employees can immerse themselves in both official languages.

##### Event Series - OL Connects

A new event series was piloted for employees who could benefit from ad-hoc drop-in sessions to practice speaking in their second official language. The virtual events are hosted by FINTRAC's Official



Languages Champion and breakout rooms are led by members of the working group to have informal discussions and develop

employees of all levels' skills.

##### Language Buddy Program

The Language Buddy program offers interested learners an opportunity to practice and improve their second language skills with the help of a volunteer coach. Employees can register to be paired up with a colleague as a learner, coach or both. This informal, self-directed activity allows employees the flexibility to set up meetings to suit their personal goals and schedules.





## Internal Event Samples

<p><b>February 2022 – Building a linguistically inclusive workplace</b></p> <p>Join FINTRAC’s Official Languages Champion for a chat with guest speaker Robert Talbot, Manager of Research for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL). Robert will share tips for building a linguistically inclusive workplace based on the results of a survey conducted by OCOL with public service employees. To learn more, consult this <a href="#">infographic</a>.</p>	<p><b>March 2023 – Diversity of French</b></p> <p>For the Journée de la francophonie, you will explore French culture and be transported around the globe! FINTRAC’s Official Languages Champion will moderate a discussion with four employee panelists who have roots across the globe that influence the way they experience francophonie.</p>	<p><b>September 2023 – Official Languages Programs Showcase</b></p> <p>For Official Languages Day, we will do a deep dive into how we bring English and French to life at FINTRAC. You will hear from previous participants of the Language Buddy and learners from the internal Language School. We will conclude by highlighting learning tools that are published on the Centre’s intranet and how to optimize their use.</p>	<p><b>September 2021 – Linguistic Duality</b></p> <p>Join guest speaker Nicole Redford from Canadian Parents for French for an event that covers the implications of the modernization of the Official Languages Act on bilingualism, suggested tools and resources to develop your second language and tips to increase your confidence when using your second language.</p>
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## FINTRAC Language School

FINTRAC has invested in the development of our very own internal Language School in order to optimise employee learning and respond to concerns around language training quality and consistency. Our vision is for the school to become the one-stop-shop for all employee language training needs. The success of the Language School is driven by the professionalism and expertise of our language teachers. Hiring the right talent to build the foundational elements of the curriculum as well as gaining insight from partners regarding their approach was critical.

Our language school is now composed of four language teachers who have delivered 14 courses to a total of 68 employees. Language teachers who are familiar with the organization help students progress more rapidly toward their goals because the environment is tailored to their day-to-day requirements and the realities of their roles. Delivering training in a secure environment allows employees to discuss their work and apply real life situations and tasks in the classroom, considering FINTRAC’s high security posture.



## Internal Diagnostic Assessment

In order to guide employees in their learning progression, the FINTRAC Language School conducts a diagnostic assessment of each employee who requests language training. The diagnostic assessment is composed of three parts: an oral interaction interview, a reading comprehension test, and a written expression test. Based on the results, employees are placed into the category that best describes their needs from the following:

- Acquire level A, B, or C
- Refresher level A, B, or C
- Maintenance Level B or C

## French Level B Refresher Course

This training provides employees the opportunity to refresh their knowledge and language skills in order to prepare for level B second language evaluations. The course spans over 150 to 180 hours. Each group virtual or in-person consists of up to six employees who are assigned to one of three language teachers for two 3-hour sessions per week.



In order to be eligible to participate, employees must have a valid or expired BBB or higher profile; have obtained a result during the diagnostic that indicates Refresher Level B would be suitable, and have obtained permission and endorsement from their supervisor. The first intake of learners are those that have an expired language profile or whose SLE results will expire during the fiscal year. If availability remains, then participation is expanded beyond the parameters outlined above.

A Progress Report, including recommendations, is given to each participant upon the conclusion of the course period.

## French Level C Retention Course

This training provides employees the opportunity to maintain their Level C language skills. The course spans over 30 to 90 hours. Each group virtual or in-person consists of up to six employees who are assigned to one of the language teachers for two 2-hour sessions per week.

All employees are welcome to express interest in this course. In order to be eligible, they must have a valid or expired linguistic profile of CBC or higher, have obtained a result during the diagnostic that indicates Retention Level C would be suitable, and have obtained permission and endorsement from their supervisor.



## Impactful Policy Elements

### Proactive CBC Enhancement

FINTRAC is taking a proactive approach to enhancing the language profile of positions that are affected by the modernization of the OL Act, following the Royal Assent of Bill C-13. The modernized OL Act provides that in designated bilingual regions for language of work purposes, employees have the right to be supervised in the official language of their choice, regardless of the linguistic profile of their position. In order to comply with these legislative changes and to foster a culture of inclusion, FINTRAC's OL Policy has been changed and now requires that all positions within the Centre whose functions include supervising employees in designated bilingual regions have a second language proficiency of CBC/CBC.

Employees whose positions language profile will be enhanced will benefit from a legacy clause granting them the right to remain in their position regardless of the status and level of their current SLE results. However, the rights granted under this legacy clause apply only to the position held at the time the new changes take effect. Should employees wish to transfer/deploy to another position, they will be required to meet the linguistic profile of that position.

Recognizing that the leadership community plays a pivotal role in shaping the workplace and culture, every employee with supervisory functions is expected to demonstrate inclusive leadership skills by taking the actions required to foster a culture that values linguistic duality, diversity, collaboration, inclusion, accessibility and ethical behaviour (civility). For this reason, it is expected that leaders make demonstrable efforts towards meeting and/or maintaining the second language requirements of their position. Their effort and commitment to achieve the new level will be assessed annually during the performance management exercise, starting April 1, 2024.

FINTRAC remains committed to supporting efforts to learn the second official language and providing access to training and other learning tools and activities. FINTRAC's Language School will assist the employees affected in developing a realistic and effective learning plan that will not only lead to achieving the required level, but will enable a clear assessment of progression/effort with precise, measurable objectives.

While supervisors who do not meet the enhanced CBC profile obtain their language proficiency, administrative measures will be put in place to ensure that official languages obligations are met. This includes, in particular, the right of employees to be supervised in the official language of their choice. Managers are responsible for determining the appropriate measures on a case-by-case basis and communicating with the affected employees. The measures are documented and monitored by the People, Culture and Workplace sector.

### Non-Imperative Staffing

FINTRAC is not subject to the Public Service Employment Act and regulations (PSEA and PSER), and therefore has established its own direction regarding the use of non-imperative staffing in



its own internal Official Languages Policy. Similar to the CPA, the policy sets out three situations in which a person may be appointment non-imperatively:

- a. The applicant pool is very limited due to the highly specialized nature of the duties;
- b. There are insufficient applications from members of either official language community and non-imperative is likely to promote the underrepresented linguistic community; or
- c. Exceptional situations identified by a sub-delegated manager and approved by the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Incumbents appointed on a non-imperative basis are temporarily exempted from satisfying the language requirement of the position for a period of up to **four (4) years** beginning on the effective date of the appointment, as opposed to the Core Public Administration where the exemption is for two (2) years. The prescribed period is determined on a case-by-case basis following an evaluation conducted by a professional second language-training provider. Extensions to this period may be granted in increments of 6 months for up to two (2) additional years in the following circumstances:

- a. Exceptional operational requirements or personal circumstance have occurred which were not foreseeable at the time of the appointment;
- b. A physical, mental or learning impairment that hinders the learning of the other official language at the required level of proficiency; or
- c. The Centre's inability to obtain language training services.

## Second Language Evaluation Service Providers

Historically, when staffing bilingual position, FINTRAC would use the Public Service Commission's (PSC) second language evaluation services as the official mechanism for the assessment of second language proficiency, even though the Centre is not subject to the PSC's Appointment Policy. As part of the renewal of FINTRAC's People Management Framework, a new Staffing and Talent Acquisition (STA) Policy Suite was implemented.



In order to maximize the flexibility imbedded in the STA policy suite and ensure agile and efficient staffing, Knowledge Circle was approved as an official testing provider for all Reading Comprehension, Written Expression and Oral Interaction evaluations. Knowledge Circle is a results-oriented, cost effective and timely solution. Second Language Evaluation results obtained through Knowledge Circle are not be transferable to the Core Public

Service, but are valid and transferable across FINTRAC positions for a duration of five (5) years. In order to continue to support employee mobility, PSC tests are leveraged in parallel, at the employee's request.