



Information session: 2024-25 Official Languages Review

The Monitoring Team
Official Languages Centre of Excellence (OLCE)
Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO)
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS)

February 19, 2025

Welcome to the information session on the 2024-25 Official Languages Review (OL Review) Exercise!

This information session was prepared to equip you for this upcoming exercise to showcase your institution's achievements in the area of official languages.

To provide some historic context, the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer here at Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) and the Official Languages Branch at Canadian Heritage provide coordinated leadership for all federal institutions subject to the Official Languages Act (OLA).

All these institutions must therefore meet their linguistic obligations and are required to report regularly on their results. To facilitate reporting, data collection processes for TBS and Canadian Heritage have been harmonized since 2011.

However, the modernization of the OLA has resulted in the transfer of responsibilities from Canadian Heritage to TBS for the coordination of the OL Review exercise, and while 2023-2024 was a transition year and a joint exercise, TBS will lead the 2024-2025 exercise, and TBS and Canadian Heritage will continue with data collection for respective reporting purposes.



Today's session will not be recorded, and we ask that you refrain from using artificial intelligence to record our sessions without the consent of the OLCÉ and participants.

The French and English presentations are joined to the invitation, so don't hesitate to share them with your colleagues. They will also be available in both official languages on our GCWiki page shortly ([Community of Official Languages/Tools/Monitoring – wiki](#)).

If you have been invited today, it's because your institution will need to submit a Review for the 2024-25 exercise. So, we can imagine you have lots of questions for us!

A question period is reserved after the presentation, so we ask that you wait until after the presentation to ask your question to make sure you don't miss anything.

If you have any questions after the presentation, please don't hesitate to contact us at our generic address OLReview-BilanLO@tbs-sct.gc.ca.

Modernized OLA

Treasury Board's responsibilities

Leadership and horizontal coordination

- The President of the Treasury Board (TB) is now responsible for exercising leadership within the federal government for the **implementation, coordination and good governance** of the Official Languages Act (OLA).

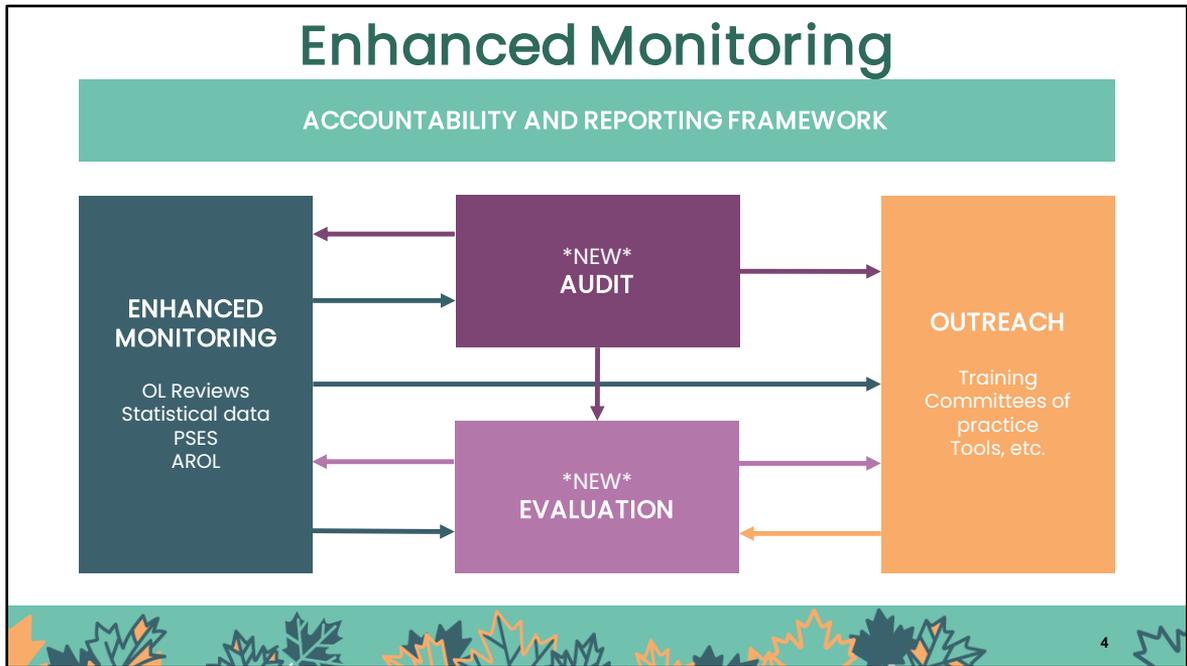
Monitoring compliance

- TB's previous **discretionary** authorities for communications with the public (Part IV), language of work (Part V) and equitable participation of English and French-speaking Canadians in the federal public service (Part VI) have now become **mandatory**, meaning that TBS **must** monitor the compliance of federal institutions, and evaluate and audit OL policies and programs in federal institutions.
- This monitoring now extends to federal institutions' obligation to take positive measures, as well as to the new obligation to promote the inclusion of language clauses in federal-provincial/territorial agreements (Part VII).

Part VII Regulations

- TB has the authority to develop new Part VII regulations (in consultation with Canadian Heritage – PCH) to specify the terms and conditions regarding the obligation to take positive measures to advance the equality of status and use of English and French, and the obligation to foster the inclusion of language clauses in agreements with the provinces and territories.

Let's start with the main legislative changes regarding the responsibilities of the President of the Treasury Board, resulting from the modernized OLA.



Here's a visual representation of the main compliance and accountability tools that are of interest today because we're now talking about enhanced monitoring as explained previously.

It's important to note that the Accountability and Reporting Framework is the umbrella for all of this, and it's responding to the need to update the official languages governance structure across the federal government.

As part of the OL Review exercise, since this is session on the OL Reviews, federal institutions provide - in addition to their OL Reviews - documentation and details which is analyzed to ensure that they are in line with expectations, but no formal audit or analysis has been carried out until now. So this is where the new compliance and reporting tools for audit and evaluation come in.

This overview is presented today because what you present in your OL Review could be subject to audit or evaluation.

An ad-hoc meeting on the subject was already presented on January 16. The presentation on Audit & Evaluation is available on our GCWiki page and more details will follow this winter, so stay tuned!

[Community of Official Languages/Tools/Monitoring - wiki](#)

Official Languages Review Exercise *New methodology *

- A two-year cycle, starting with: 2023-24 and 2024-25.
- Questions on Part VII have been revised by TBS and PCH, and merged together.
- Additional evidence or clarification is requested for monitoring purposes.
- An instruction sheet has been created for new and modified questions to support institutions when answering the questionnaire.
- Allows the 200 or so institutions subject to the OLA to report at least once per cycle.
- Around 30 institutions produce a Review each year.

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Keeping enhanced monitoring in mind, following the modernized OLA, TBS also revised the methodology for the OL Review exercise, and have updated the questions in the questionnaire to reflect these new responsibilities.

The new methodology now includes a two-year cycle (instead of 3 years), and 2024-2025 will be the final year of this new cycle

The questions on Part VII have been revised by TBS and Canadian Heritage and have been merged. As a result, more evidence or clarification is requested for monitoring purposes.

An instruction sheet has been created for new or revised questions to help you answer them properly

This new cycle allows the 200 or so institutions subject to the Act to produce a Review at least once per cycle, and around 30 institutions submit a Review every year (depending on their size and mandate)

See the List in Annex

Why an OL Review ?

Legislative requirement: Official Languages Act (OLA)

- TB and PCH are required to table an annual report to Parliament.

Annual Report on Official Languages (AROL)

- OL Review results are used to write AROs (TB and PCH).
- TB maintain its right to name an institution that has not submitted a Review.
- AROs are used to inform the state of compliance of federal institutions.

Institutional Diagnostic

- Identify areas of strength and opportunity for improvement on official languages.
- Identify trends, best practices.
- Offer support to institutions.

Your Reviews are also used to...

- Communicate your achievements with key stakeholders.
- Create implementation tools.
- Document and track on institutions' progress.

Why do you need to provide a Review?

First of all, it's a legislative requirement. The President of the Treasury Board and the Minister of Canadian Heritage are required to table an annual report to Parliament every year.

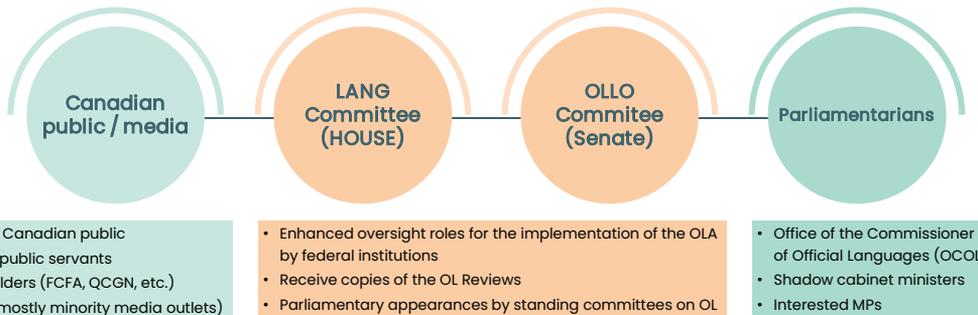
Your Reviews are used to write AROs.

If an institution fails to provide a Review when required, TBS reserves the right to name that institution in its report.

Gives a global view of OL and helps identify strengths and challenges across the Government of Canada.

Helps identify trends, best practices and horizontal gaps.

AROL Readership



Who reads these annual reports?

There's a wide range of readers, including the Canadian public, the media, parliamentary committees (LANG and OLLO), and Members of Parliament who wish to stay informed of the state of official languages in government.

The 2 parliamentary standing committees on official languages have an enhanced oversight role in the implementation of the Act by federal institutions.

This is why your Review must be entirely in both official languages. You must provide a copy of your Review to these 2 parliamentary committees, as well as to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

What is the OL Review?

Two key components

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (PARTS IV, V, VI AND JOINT TBS-PCH QUESTIONS ON PART VII)

- Collects official languages related information with questions on Governance, Monitoring, Communications and Services to the Public, Languages of Work, Leadership, Equitable Participation, and Human Resources Management.
- Collects information on positive measures taken in relation to:
 - enhancing vitality of official languages minority communities and fostering English and French
 - protecting and promoting the French language
 - consulting with key stakeholders representing OLMC

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES WORKFORCE DATA

- Collects statistical data on your workforce (resources providing services to the public, first official language of employees, language requirements of management, etc.)

If your institution is part of the Core Public Administration	If your institution is not part of the Core Public Administration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update your official languages workforce data in your HR system by March 31. • We extract this data for you via the Position and Classification Information System (PCIS). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Languages Statistical Data (OLSD) must be filled out in SOLO. • Information sessions will be provided to concerned federal institutions in March.

The OL Review has two key components

Review

The questionnaire itself (with Parts IV, V, VI and Part VII which is the joint TBS-PCH part)

In preparation for today's meeting, you have received an e-mail with a draft of the Review questionnaire in Word format that is specific to your institution. We provided you with this draft so that you can already take a look at the questions and start your consultations before the official launch.

The Review collects information grouped into 8 sections:

- Governance, Monitoring, Communications with and Service to the Public, Language of work, Leadership, Equitable participation, Human Resources Management, Advancement of Equality of Status and Use of English and French.

The Review also collects information on positive measures – and we'll go over this concept in detail a little later.

Also note that the questions in the Review are not related to the 2023-2028 Action Plan for OL that falls under Canadian Heritage.

OL Workforce Data

The other component is OL Workforce Data. This is mandatory for all institutions and every year.

If you are part of the CORE Public administration, make sure that your OL data is up to date in your HR systems. If you're not part of the CORE Public administration, you will need complete this portion in

SOLO..

For both groups: Data should be as of March 31 and deadline is May 30, 2025

A specific information session for institutions required to submit their data in SOLO will be held in March.
Invitations will be sent shortly

Overview of what's new

- New section on Part VII (6 questions)
- More evidence requested
- Removal of the section on emergency and crisis situations
- Majority of answers with drop-down menus and some narrative questions with modified answer options

The new questions are focusing on:

- Part IV (social media, active offer of bilingual service and new technology)
- Monitoring
- Leadership
- Equitable participation
- Language training and language insecurity
- Part VII (positive measures)

New step on revision and validation

- Once your OL Review is submitted, the Monitoring Team of the OLCE at TBS will revise and validate responses provided.
- An email will be sent to each federal institution for additional questions or clarifications, or to confirm that the OL Review is the final version.
- **Once this step is completed, federal institutions will be invited to share their OL Review with stakeholders.**

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What's changed since your last Review?

There's a new section on Part VII with 6 new questions on Part VII, covering:

1. positive measures
2. language clauses in FPT agreements
3. enhancing the vitality of official language minority communities and fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society
4. surplus federal real property or federal immovables
5. and we are requesting examples of best practices

More evidence is requested for sections on monitoring, communications with the public, language of work and Advancement of Equality of Status and Use of English and French

The section on emergency and crisis situations has been removed, but those questions have been integrated to Parts IV and V.

There's also changes in answer options to reduce the amount of detail requested and to better compile and analyze the overall results for the federal government as a whole.

The new questions mainly concern: Part IV (social media, active offer of bilingual service and new technology), Monitoring, Leadership, Equitable participation, Language training and language insecurity, Part VII (including positive measures).

There's also a new final step where TBS revises and validates your Reviews.

So if our team needs clarification, we'll be in touch. Once TBS has validated the final version of your Reviews, you will then be invited to share a copy with stakeholders.

The aim of this new step is to ensure consistency and quality across the board. That's why it's so

important to complete your Reviews properly, so that you're better prepared to participate in our enhanced monitoring and reporting initiatives.

What is a positive measure?

The Act does not define what positive measures are but lists certain characteristics to clarify the legislator's intention (41(5)). Positive measures must:

Positive measures support the implementation of the government's commitments under Sections 41(1), 41(2) and 41(3) of the OLA.

Be concrete.

Taken with the intention of having a beneficial effect (positive impact) on OLMCs or in the advancement of English and French.

Respect the necessity of protecting and promoting the French Language in each province and territory and taking into account that French is in a minority situation in Canada and North America due to the predominant use of English.

Respect the necessity of considering the specific needs of each of the two official language communities of Canada, taking into account the equal importance of the two communities.

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What do we mean by Positive Measures? One of the key concepts in Part VII is positive measures that must be taken to implement the first three commitments set out in section 41. Given the different realities and needs of the two linguistic communities, and the diversity of the 200 or so federal institutions subject to the Act, some leeway is needed to enable institutions to identify positive measures themselves.

The Act doesn't define what "positive measures" mean per se, however certain characteristics are listed in subsection 41(5):

- They must be concrete – specific tasks or steps taken to achieve a goal
- They are taken intentionally to implement section 41 specifically
- They respect the need to protect and promote French in every province and territory.
- They respect the need to take into account the particular needs of each of the two official language communities.

The Act stipulates that each federal institution must establish evaluation and monitoring mechanisms relating to positive measures and the obligation to promote the inclusion of official language provisions in relevant FPT agreements.

Although the commitments in subsections 41(1) to (3) do not create an obligation of result, there is an obligation to put in place the means to evaluate the impact of the measures taken to implement these commitments, and to monitor this implementation.

Remember that a positive measure is by definition taken with intention, so it makes sense in some way to revisit the intention and determine whether you're on the right track, and ultimately whether what was intended has been achieved.

Since the Act explicitly mentions the need to set up evaluation and monitoring mechanisms, institutions are well advised to take account of their obligations in their planning activities, in their decision-making processes, and then in their operational and reporting processes.

Essentially, each federal institution must determine which positive measures are adapted to their mandate and reality by applying an “official languages lens” to their activities.

For further examples, I'd like to refer you to the instruction sheet, which is currently being revised and will be updated in time for the launch.

Tips and tricks

OL Review

- Refer to the **Instruction sheet** for new and modified questions, as well as examples for requested evidence;
- Answer **all of the questions** by selecting the appropriate answer from the drop-down menus;
- For narrative questions, write answers in **both English and French**.
- Pay particular attention to questions requiring **"mandatory clarification"**;
- The space reserved for narrative responses has been increased to **30,000 characters**;
- Ensure to include evidence with your submission in a **PDF format**.

OL Workforce Data

For institutions that are part of the core public administration (CPA)

- Ensure that your official languages data in your human resources systems are up to date as of **March 31, 2025**.
- The extraction of official languages data from the Position and Classification Information System (**PCIS**) will take place after **May 30, 2025**.

For institutions that are not part of the CPA

- Fill in the Official Languages Statistical Data (OLSD) in **SOLO**:
 - A special information session will be offered in March to concerned federal institutions.

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Here's a little reminder of what to keep in mind

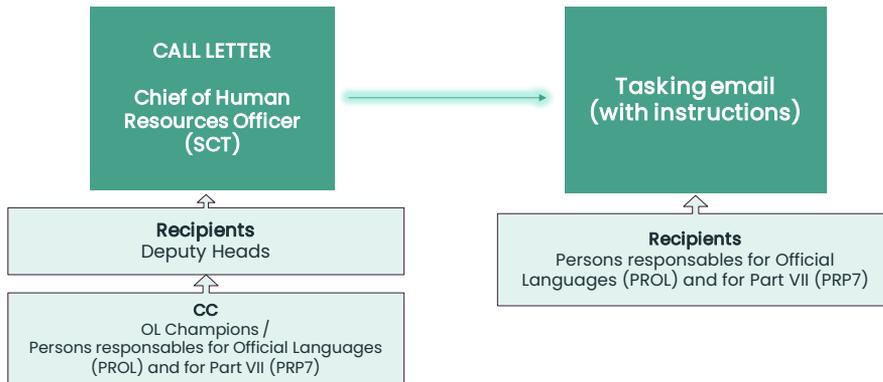
For your Reviews

- Refer to the instruction sheet (a draft is attached to the e-mail you received with the draft Word questionnaire specific to your institution – it will be updated in time for the launch).
- Answer all the questions in both English and French
- Pay particular attention to mandatory details when they're requested
- And add your evidence in PDF format when applicable.

For Workforce Data (in orange), you must either :

- Update your data in your HR systems OR in SOLO
- Data should be as of March 31 and deadline for everyone is May 30, 2025

Launching the OL Review Exercise



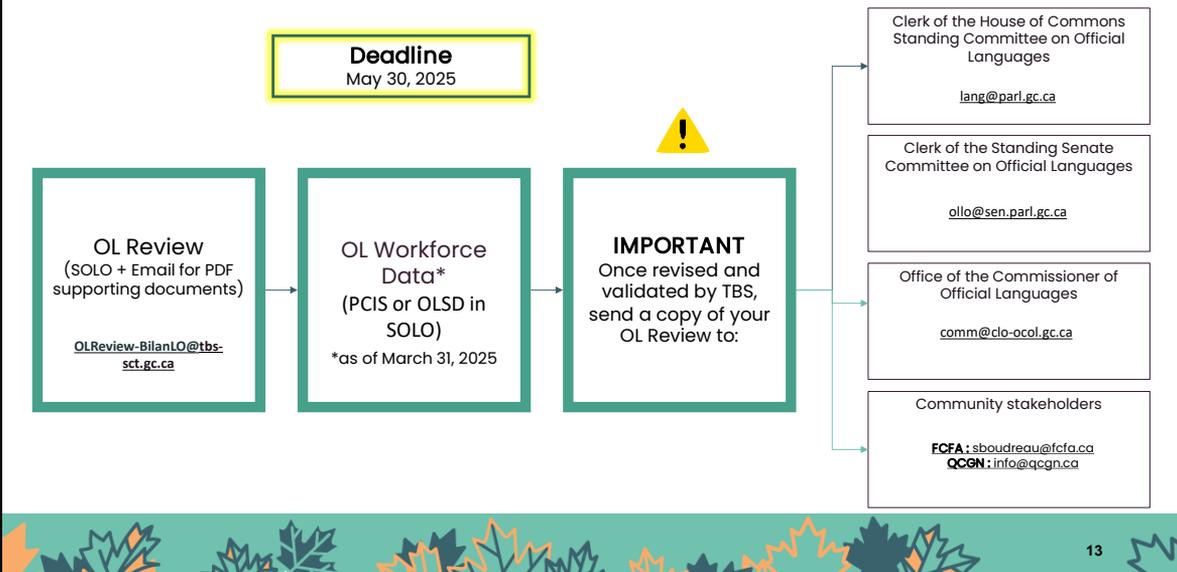
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We plan to launch the exercise by the end of March 2025.

The launch will take place in 2 stages, and you will receive two emails:

1. Email from our CHRO to Deputy Heads (cc to PROLs, PRP7 and to Champions).
 - This is the “formal call letter” that officially launches the Exercise.
 - It’s a high-level message to your Deputy Heads informing them of expectations and deadlines.
 - No templates or instructions are included in the call letter.
2. Tasking Emails addressed to you, PROLs and PRP7s. This one is not sent to your DHs. It contains instructions on how to access your Reviews and statistical data in SOLO (if applicable), as well as an instruction sheet.

PROCEDURE : Submitting your OL Review and OL Workforce Data



This slide illustrates the procedure for submitting your Reviews and workforce data.

The deadline is May 30, 2025 for both.

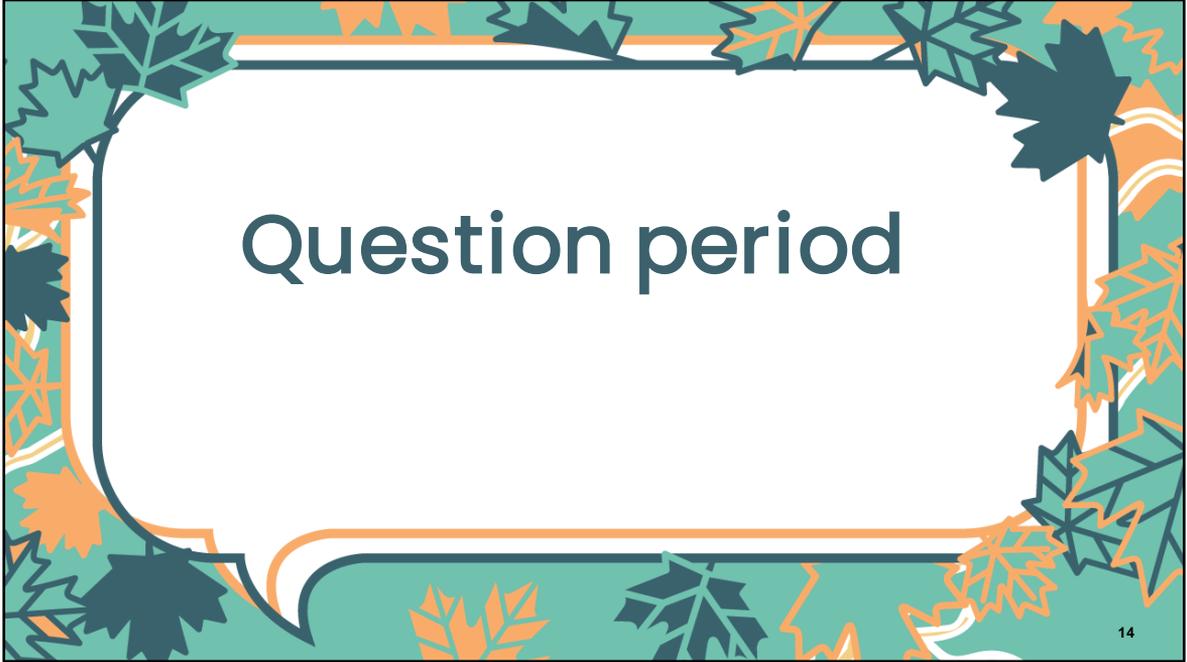
This year, the Review will be completed in SOLO – so no excel spreadsheet this year. You will have a function in SOLO that allows you to attach your supporting documents in PDF format. If you have any technical issues, don't hesitate to write to us.

As for your Workforce Data, it must be up to date either in your HR systems or in SOLO as of March 31, 2025.

And finally, once TBS has revised and validated the answers provided in your Reviews, you can then send a copy to stakeholders.

All of this information will be detailed in the tasking emails you will be receiving when we launch the Exercise, so this is just a snapshot of the info you will be receiving.

Annex: We have added links to our wiki page on SOLO including a useful FAQ on how to get an account and there's also a new user guide with step by step instructions with screen shots.



This concludes the presentation. We will now open the floor to questions, and invite all OLCE experts to respond if the question is addressed to their area of expertise.



CONTACT US



Official Languages Centre of Excellence

If you have any questions, comments or ideas you would like to share with us, please feel free to send us an email at: OLCEInformationCELO@tbs-sct.gc.ca



Official Languages Regulations and the System for Official Languages Obligations (SOLO)

If you have any questions about the Regulations or SOLO, please communicate with us at: info-ollo@tbs-sct.gc.ca



Annual Reviews and Annual Report

For all questions related to the Annual Review on Official Languages or the Annual Report on Official Languages published by TBS, please contact: OLReview-BilanLO@tbs-sct.gc.ca



Second Language Training Framework

For all questions or comments regarding the Second Language Training Framework, please contact: OLCE-2OL-Learning_CELO-Apprentissage-2LO@tbs-sct.gc.ca

ANNEX

System for Official Languages Obligations (SOLO)
Visit or Wiki page or click on the following links:

- [Link to SOLO Production](#)
- [Link to SOLO Simulator](#)
- [Presentation: SOLO Training](#)
- [SOLO Training FAQ](#)
- [SOLO User Guide](#)
- [Transcription: SOLO Training](#)
- [Video: SOLO Training](#)



ANNEX

Two-year cycle 2023-2025

Visit or Wiki page or click on the following links:

The following list is provided to you to help your institution better position itself in the two-year cycle for the **2023-24 and 2024-25** period.

•List: 2023 to 2025 Cycle