Frequently Asked Questions and Answers
Official Languages Review Exercise 2024-25

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General Information

The Annual Official Languages Review exercise consists of two main components:

1. The Official Languages Review;
2. The Official Languages Workforce Data:
    a. If your institution is part of the core public administration, we extract this data from the Position and Classification Information System (PCIS).
    b. If your institution is not part of the core public administration, you must complete the Official Languages Statistical Data via the System for Official Languages Obligations (SOLO).

Information Sessions

The persons responsible for official languages (PROLs) of each federal institution who are required to provide an Official Languages Review or Official Languages Statistical Data (OLSD) for the current year are invited to participate in an information session before the official launch of the exercise, which takes place at the beginning of the spring of the current year.

Presentations are provided and attached to the invitation that is sent to PROLs. These presentations are also shared on our GCwiki page (Community of Official Languages/Tools/Monitoring - wiki).

General Questions

When the exercise is expected to be launched and what is the date for the submission of documents?

The launch of the annual Official Languages Review exercise usually occurs around the end of March. A call letter is sent by the Chief Human Resources Officer of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) to all deputy heads of federal institutions subject to the *Official Languages Act* (OLA).

A second email is sent to the persons responsible for official languages (PROLs), the persons responsible for Part VII (PRP7s), and the official languages champions. This email includes instructions on documents to be completed for the fiscal year that is ending or has ended, if applicable. The submission of these documents is required by the end of May of the current year.

As a small federal institution, could you provide us with examples of good practices we could implement that don't require additional resources?

You can consult collections of best practices, participate in the Official Languages Symposium, and join interdepartmental official languages practice committees. These committees and events not only allow you to expand your network but also provide an opportunity to exchange ideas with other small federal institutions on effective practices.

The annual official languages reports from the Treasury Board and Canadian Heritage (PCH) are also valuable sources of information that include best practices in official languages. You can also reach out to other federal institutions to ask if they would like to share their Official Languages Review with you.

Where can I get information about the System for Official Languages Obligations (SOLO)?

All information related to the System for Official Languages Obligations (SOLO) is available on the GCwiki page Official Languages Community/Tools/RegsLO. There, you will find many tools for the SOLO, including a SOLO_User_Guide.pdf, which provides a section on how to navigate the module for Official Languages Reviews and the module for Official Languages Statistical Data.

Here are also other helpful tools:

- SOLO Training FAQ
- Link to SOLO Production
- Link to the SOLO Simulator
- Presentation: SOLO Training
- Transcript: SOLO Training
- Video: SOLO Training

Access to modules in SOLO varies depending on your role. The SOLO account of an Official Languages Champion and a PRP7 account provide access to the Official Languages Review for the federal institution, while the SOLO account of a PRLO provides access to all modules in SOLO, including the Official Languages Review and Official Languages Statistical Data, if the federal institution is required to submit them.

If your role in your federal institution has changed, please contact the generic mailbox info-ollo@tbs-sct.gc.ca to modify the role assigned to your SOLO account.

Questions on the Official Languages Review Questionnaire

Why is it important to complete an Official Languages Review?

The Official Languages Reviews from federal institutions collect information on the implementation of Parts IV, V, VI, and VII of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA). An institution's Review helps identify strengths and challenges regarding official languages.

The information collected is used to identify trends and best practices, and to provide horizontal support to federal institutions.

Moreover, it contributes to the creation of the annual reports on official languages from the Treasury Board and Canadian Heritage that are tabled in Parliament. These reports provide an overview of the implementation of official languages programs within the federal government. They also allow parliamentarians and the public to stay informed on the status of official languages within the public service and Canadian society.

Do I need to complete a Review this year?

All federal institutions subject to the OLA must submit a Review at least once during a cycle.

However, around thirty federal institutions are required to complete an Official Languages Review every year, due to their mandate and interactions with the public, with all federal employees, or with official language minority communities.

To find out when your federal institution needs to complete a Review, you may refer to the **List: Cycle 2023 to 2025**. This will help you better understand your institution's position in the biennial cycle for the period **2023-2024** and **2024-25**.

Can the Official Languages Review Questionnaire be shared on your GCwiki page?

No. There are multiple versions of the Official Languages Review Questionnaire and each federal institution receives a version tailored specifically to them.

Additionally, not all federal institutions are required to submit a Review for the closing fiscal year. An email containing a draft version of the questionnaire, specific to each institution, will continue to be sent to the relevant federal institutions before the information sessions on the Reviews. The final version of the questionnaire will be accessible through the Official Languages Obligations System (SOLO) when the reporting process begins.

Should a comment box be completed only if we select "yes," or in all cases?

Questions that require a mandatory response in the text boxes are clearly identified. However, depending on the response provided, additional details or supporting evidence may be required.

That said, federal institutions may also choose to provide additional details or supporting evidence for other questions if they wish.

What is the maximum character limit for comment boxes?

The character limit is 30,000. If you wish to add documents or additional information, you may submit them via email to olreview-bilanlo@tbs-sct.gc.ca and to pch.portail41-gateway41.pch@canada.ca, clearly specifying which section or question your additional information refers to.

Some questions require additional details or supporting evidence. Can you clarify the difference between the two?

You may choose to provide additional details, supporting evidence, or both, depending on the needs.

When submitting supporting evidence, it is important to link each attachment to the corresponding question response. Questions that require additional details or supporting evidence are clearly identified, and the instruction sheet accompanying the Review provides several examples to guide federal institutions.

For certain questions, if "No" or "N/A" is selected, additional details are required.

Why must our responses be provided in both official languages?

Federal institutions must provide a copy of their Official Languages Review to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and to stakeholders, such as the parliamentary committees on official languages at the Senate and the House of Commons, and organizations representing the main official language minority communities in Canada (e.g. the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada and the Quebec Community Group Network). The last stakeholders identified include parliamentarians, senators and members of the public. As a result, Part I (Proceedings of Parliament) and Part IV (Communications with and Services to the Public) of the OLA apply.

Can we submit supporting evidence in only one official language?

If the supporting evidence is part of the details provided to answer the question, it must be submitted in both official languages. It is considered part of the institution's Official Languages Review and must be shared with official language stakeholders. Therefore, the federal institution must comply with official language requirements and ensure full accessibility of their Official Languages Review to all stakeholders. For example, if your response to a question refers to Annex A, that document must be provided in both languages.

Supporting evidence may also be provided as an example to demonstrate the implementation of details previously provided by the federal institution. For example, a federal institution may indicate in its response that it has monitoring mechanisms in place for implementing Part IV (Communications with the Public and Service Delivery) and submit a checklist as supporting evidence. In this case, it is preferable to provide these documents in both official languages if available, but it is not mandatory.

How can we submit our supporting evidence?

SOLO allows you to generate an email to add your supporting evidence, in which the TBS and PCH email addresses will automatically be included. Additionally, the subject line will indicate your institutional code, as well as the reference to the relevant question.

When and where are the Official Languages Reviews published?

The Official Languages Reviews of federal institutions are not made public, but some institutions choose to publish them on their website in accordance with accessibility

standards, as a good practice and in the interest of transparency. Federal institutions are invited to provide a copy of their Official Languages Review to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, parliamentary committees on official languages in the Senate and the House of Commons, and key organizations representing official language minority communities in Canada (e.g., the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA) and the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN)).

The annual reports on official languages, which are tabled in Parliament, provide an overview of the results from the Reviews, but do not cite the results of a specific federal institution.

Are we required to share our Official Languages Review with multiple official language minority communities, or is this only encouraged?

The FCFA and the QCGN are the main organizations representing official language minority communities (OLMCs), and federal institutions are asked to provide them with a copy of their Official Languages Review. In addition, the Official Languages Reviews of federal institutions are subject to Access to Information requests.

Federal institutions may also choose to provide a copy of their Review to other OLMC organizations with which they interact or which are located in their geographical region, but this is not mandatory. We understand that many organizations representing OLMCs may be interested in receiving the Official Languages Review of certain institutions based on their mandate and their interactions with those federal institutions.

When should federal institutions provide a copy of their Official Languages Review to stakeholders?

Following the modernization of the OLA, Official Languages Reviews of federal institutions are reviewed and validated by TBS. It is best to wait until TBS confirms that the version submitted by the institution is considered final, in case TBS has any additional questions, which may result in the submission of a revised version of the institution's Review.

What are the contact details to use to provide a copy of our Official Languages Review to stakeholders?

The contact details of the stakeholders will be provided in the last email you will receive from the TBS, confirming that the latest version of your institution's Review submitted is the final version.

When are the overall results of the Official Languages Reviews shared with Parliament?

The Official Languages Reviews of federal institutions are not made public.

TBS compiles, monitors and analyzes the information and data collected in the Official Languages Reviews of federal institutions.

TBS and PCH prepare their respective Annual Reports on Official Languages (AROLs) based, among other things, on the information collected in the Official Languages Reviews of federal institutions. The AROL is normally tabled in Parliament and posted on TBS and PCH websites during the following fiscal year.

Questions on the Official Languages Statistical Data

Where can instructions and definitions for each section be found?

At the beginning of each section (Part IV, Part V, and Part VI), click on the "Instructions" hyperlink.

When should a resource be considered bilingual?

For the purposes of Official Languages Statistical Data, bilingual resources are those who hold a bilingual position and meet the linguistic requirements of their position. The federal institution is responsible for determining whether its personnel members are

bilingual and whether they can perform the duties of their position that require bilingualism in both official languages.

Many resources in the federal institution are working remotely full-time. How should their place of work be determined?

In principle, remote workers are assigned to a position linked to an office, whether it be headquarters, a regional office, or a local office. The place of work is considered the office to which the employee's position is linked, as certain linguistic obligations may apply regarding the language of service or the language of work.

In the section on Part IV, I do not see all the offices of my federal institution. Why?

The offices, service points, and routes included in Part IV are only those designated as bilingual for communication with the public and service delivery.

If an office has been added or removed from SOLO after the publication of the Statistical Data on Official Languages, you must click the "Refresh Office List" button to synchronize the information with your current office list. This button is located at the top right of this section.

Offices, service points, or routes that provide services in only one official language or that do not provide service to the public are not listed in this table. Federal institutions must complete the information as it appears in SOLO after synchronizing updates, if applicable.

In the section on Part VI, what information must be recorded?

In the tables for Part VI, the entire workforce of the institution must be recorded, regardless of whether the place of work is in an office or facility that interacts with the public or not.