



HORIZONTAL MANAGEMENT of Official Languages

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FOREWORD

In its May 2007 report on the relocation of head offices, the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages asked the Commissioner of Official Languages to study horizontal management and make recommendations.

See: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/39/1/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/offi-e/rep-e/rep08may07-e.htm>

The Commissioner decided to charge an expert in this field, Donald J. Savoie, with the mandate of assessing the current official languages management structure in the federal administration and making recommendations with regard to coordination.

In March 2008, Professor Savoie submitted his practical advice and guidance on the horizontal management of official languages to the Commissioner of Official Languages, and we have reproduced it in its entirety in this publication.

The Commissioner has relied primarily on Professor Savoie's work to take stock of horizontal governance in his 2007-2008 Annual Report. The Commissioner has also made recommendations for improving horizontal management of official languages. See: http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/html/reports_rapports_e.php

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INTRODUCTION

B. Guy Peters wrote, as far back as 1998, that “the administrative Holy Grail of coordination and horizontality is one of the perennial quests for practitioners of government.”¹ Two years before, a federal government task force consisting of deputy ministers, former deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers was asked to come up with recommendations to strengthen the management of horizontal policy issues. The task force was unable to uncover “the philosopher’s stone that will put right what is a fundamental, permanent problem of governance.” It added that it “did not discover new and revolutionary approaches to managing horizontal issues.”² This conclusion has not prevented others from searching for the Holy Grail. If anything, the search has only intensified since 1998 and for good reasons. The word “horizontality” or variations of it have now come to dominate public administration throughout the Western world. In Canada, prime ministers and clerks of the Privy Council have stressed the importance of pursuing government-wide objectives time and again over the past fifteen years or so. It is not too much of an exaggeration to suggest that virtually everything in government is horizontal. This is true for a variety of reasons, including the fact that many of society’s problems today are horizontal in nature.

In brief, horizontal management seeks to promote policy coherence and “manage programs that are delivered by more than one organization.”³ To this date, we have yet to define a theory on horizontal management, despite sustained efforts to do so by both the academic community and practitioners. We are still at the stage of trying this and that to see what works. This is no less true in Canada than it is throughout the Western world. Horizontality remains a “fundamental, permanent problem of governance.”⁴

The Commissioner of Official Languages, in response to the work of the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages, requested that a report be prepared on horizontal management in the government of Canada from the perspective of official languages. The Senate Standing Committee expressed concern over the government’s decision in February 2006 to transfer the Official Languages Secretariat from the Privy Council Office to the Department of Canadian Heritage. The committee also asked for suggestions on ways to strengthen horizontal management in promoting official languages.

Since the 1990s, the academic community and practitioners have produced a veritable plethora of publications on how best to promote a strategic objective that cuts across departmental lines. Some observers insist that the solution lies in the modification of structures and processes, others recommend the establishment of “networks” or “networking,” others point to the need to change both an organization’s culture and the behaviour of public servants, while still others insist that horizontality is best promoted through the allocation of money.⁵ Money talks in government, as elsewhere, and new funds made available for a particular initiative will necessarily draw the attention of line departments and agencies.

The purpose of this report is to explore horizontality from the perspective of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA) and the government's policy on official languages. There are several reasons why it is important at this time to review the government's implementation of the OLA. For one thing, it is not just a simple question of policy, since the law itself requires the government to promote a horizontal perspective when it comes to official languages. All federal institutions have specific requirements under the OLA: to provide services to the public in both languages, to protect the rights of public servants to work in the official language of their choice in certain regions, to promote linguistic duality, and to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities. In addition, the OLA mandates two distinct institutions within the government to lead interdepartmental cooperation: the Department of Canadian Heritage (part VII of the Act) and the Canada Public Service Agency (parts IV, V and VI). Further, there have been recent machinery of government changes that, potentially at least, could have an impact on interdepartmental cooperation in implementing official languages policy. Further still, the federal government declared in its 2007 Speech from the Throne that it "will review its commitment to official languages in Canada by developing a strategy for the next phase of the Action Plan for Official Languages." Successive prime ministers since the 1960s have also stressed both the importance and the horizontal nature of their government's official languages policy. Moreover, since March 2003, three Speeches from the Throne have made references to the importance of Canada's official languages policy and communities. All these points lead to the conclusion that the horizontal requirements for official languages are different from other policies since all federal institutions have obligations under the *Official Languages Act*.

More to the point, the purpose of this report is to:

- determine principles of sound public management that apply to horizontal issues;
- understand current structure and horizontal management mechanisms of official languages within the government of Canada;
- outline strengths and weaknesses in the coordination of official languages;
- provide advice for strengthening the management and horizontal coordination of official languages.

We looked to several sources to secure material for this report. We consulted published and unpublished reports and government documents as well as the academic literature. We also consulted a number of federal government officials in central agencies and line departments and agencies, both in Ottawa and in the regions, to obtain a practitioner's perspective on the implementation of the *Official Languages Act*. In addition, we met with a number of "clients" or representatives of official language minority communities from outside of government who have, over the years, sought to promote the development of official language minority communities. In total, we consulted with 31 individuals.

PRINCIPLES OF SOUND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT THAT APPLY TO HORIZONTAL ISSUES

Prime ministers, clerks of the Privy Council Office (PCO) and public policy specialists have been telling line departments and agencies that there is a growing need to pursue government-wide objectives and to think beyond their own departments or silos. It takes only a moment's reflection to appreciate that, if the government wants effective policies in place to deal with, among many others, the environment, economic development and the challenges confronting Aboriginal communities, then it must require the efforts of many hands. It also goes without saying that a single department pursuing an objective with a single program can hardly be as effective as several or more departments contributing to a government-wide objective.

Not only have prime ministers and clerks promoted horizontal management through words, they have also followed up with deeds. Leaving aside recent changes in the PCO, which has shifted some of its former policy responsibilities to line departments, the size of central agencies has grown in recent years in the name of greater policy coherence, and a number of special measures have been put in place to promote horizontality. For example, there is now a weekly DM breakfast and regular DM retreats. ADM forums are also regularly held to review priority issues, and champions have been identified in line departments to promote a number of horizontal issues, including official languages.

The academic community and practitioners have also been busy in recent years defining horizontality and coming up with suggestions to strengthen it. Well they should, because there are important constraints that need to be addressed for horizontality to take root. With all the talk about the importance of horizontality, line departments, agencies and their sectoral interests still rule on a number of fronts. They deliver programs and activities, and they are the ones that deal with citizens and provide public services. They are also home to much of the sectoral expertise available in government. In addition, the doctrine of ministerial responsibility places the focus on individual ministers and their departments. Ministers must still answer to Parliament for all aspects of their departments' activities. This principle alone makes horizontality difficult because, potentially at least, horizontality muddies accountability.

Though the academic community and practitioners have tried to adjust accountability requirements to accommodate horizontality, it remains a work in progress. Line departments and agencies are still "internally focused" when defining and meeting individual accountabilities.⁶ In addition, horizontality must always compete with activities that contribute to the mission and success of individual departments and agencies. It takes only a moment's reflection to appreciate that line departments will intuitively favour activities that contribute to their immediate departmental successes rather than contribute to a government-wide objective that, at best, will speak to the success of several departments. This factor alone seriously limits the effort to make horizontality work better.

It is important to note that the government of Canada is hardly alone in searching for ways to make horizontality work. All governments in the Western world are at it, though they may employ a different vocabulary. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Blair government launched ambitious initiatives to make “joined-up” government work, and the Brown government has continued to promote these initiatives. It is called “Whole-of-Government” initiative in Australia and “Collaboration Government” in the United States. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) has also produced a number of reports and studies on horizontality based on the experiences of its member countries.⁷ Therefore, the government of Canada can now draw on lessons learned from several countries and provincial governments on how to make horizontality work. It also makes the case, however, that we are still a long way from defining an all-encompassing approach to horizontality that we can apply with success in different jurisdictions.

This is important because it is hardly possible to overemphasize the constraints to horizontal government. The establishment of boundaries to define responsibilities was central to the development of our political and administrative institutions. Hierarchical organization, departmentalization, division of labour, specialization, division of responsibility, specific responsibilities assigned to every position in the public service, and, again, the doctrine of ministerial responsibility – all these are designed to establish organizational boundaries. Boundaries serve many purposes. They establish who has legitimate access to certain decision-making arenas, as well as departmental mandates and who is responsible for what. They enable those at senior levels to exercise control and to hold subordinates to account for their decisions and activities. Boundaries, however, also make promoting horizontality very difficult.

The notion that all similar functions should “be allocated to single departments” has guided the development of the machinery of government in Canada from the very beginning.⁸ For example, a Department of Agriculture was established in 1867 at the time Canada was born. To be sure, the department was small, employing only 27 people. But it had a clear responsibility for the agricultural sector. In this sense, the government defined an organizational space, labelled it agriculture and housed in one department all responsibilities for the sector.

J.E. Hodgetts, the dean of Canadian public administration, maintains that the most important legacy of the pre-Confederation bureaucracy was the departmental framework. There was widespread belief in the early 1840s that, without a clear departmental structure, responsible government would be, at best, fraught with danger and, at worst, impossible to achieve. As a result, functions were grouped within departments, the principle of unity of command was adopted, and a hierarchy of responsibilities was put in place. This would underpin the first principle of our system of government – “the control of all branches of administration by Parliament.”⁹ Again, this makes the point that horizontality is impeded by a number of difficult issues, including history, long-

established practices and, in particular, the departmental model with its accompanying accountability requirements. It is important to stress that, while horizontality has become a highly valued goal, there is still no jurisdictional home or governance structure to look after horizontal issues.¹⁰ As noted earlier, we are still at the stage of improvising solutions and trying this and that to see what works. The point here is that horizontality runs contrary to the normal business of government, and the challenge is to ensure that horizontality is not simply an add-on to what line departments do.

Departments can only come to the table with part of the answer in hand, unable on their own to impose a comprehensive solution. To have any chance of making a horizontal process work, one must listen to all participants so that, in the words of the Treasury Board Secretariat, one can “ensure consensus and departmental buy in.”¹¹ How government goes about actually doing this is the challenge.

Some insist that horizontal government is a long-term process, albeit operating in a world that values initiative and quick decisions. Looking at experiences in European countries, Christopher Pollitt explains that: “Public servants need to acquire new skills. Different professional practices must be aligned. Mutual trust between different stakeholders must be built. Citizens must have the opportunity to exercise their (diverse) voices and learn themselves the value of participation. None of these things can be accomplished in weeks or even months.”¹² Senior officials speak about “networking skills,” “capacity for teamwork,” or “reaching out and building strategic alliances,” and a capacity to “lead or follow the lead of others, depending on the needs of the time at hand.”¹³ This requires a profound change in culture, a change that needs time and sustained efforts to take root.

While few inside government would disagree that horizontality is a long-term project, given the constraints that it must overcome, many government officials are busy searching for instruments, processes and management principles to make horizontality work better because the political executive and citizens are asking for solutions. In response, public servants have suggested organizational changes, merged structures and budgets, interdepartmental teams, shared budgets, shared objectives and policy arrangements, placing champions for government-wide objectives in line departments, promoting a new culture, and new accountability requirements and incentives, including shared performance targets.¹⁴

All of the above, however, can have only a limited impact on the pursuit of a government-wide objective unless it is supported by two key forces: a clear, strong and sustained commitment from the political executive (i.e., the Prime Minister and Cabinet), and a machinery of government able to carry out this commitment. The two are necessary to implement horizontality in government and review the horizontal management of official languages.

First things first. To make horizontality work, no modification of the machinery of government and no grand vision of horizontality can ever compensate for the lack of political will. As is well-known, the Ottawa agenda is already overcrowded with horizontal issues all vying for priority status. Think, for a moment, about the number of public policy issues that cry out for a horizontal perspective and a special priority status: the environment, regional economic development, research and development, security and public safety, climate change, competitiveness and, in the words of the Clerk of the Privy Council, “a hundred others.”¹⁵ The competition is obviously intense, and the only ones that can possibly make it to the top are the ones that the political executive has identified as high priority through words and decisions; everything else is secondary. As a keen observer of governance and public administration once observed, “much of the failure to work horizontally in government is at the policy level as opposed to the management or implementation level.”¹⁶ *Thus, the first principle of sound management of horizontal issues lies with the political executive. The prime ministers and ministers decide what is politically important and what is not, and the bureaucratic system will respond. In brief, horizontality on any given issue can work only if the Prime Minister and his key advisors establish it as a clear priority.*

The point is that, apart from the Prime Minister and, to a lesser extent, the Minister of Finance, ministers individually and collectively have lost considerable influence in recent years. In general, unless the Prime Minister sends out a clear signal that an issue enjoys a high priority status for the government, things will drift. Without clear direction from the Prime Minister, ministers and their departments will invariably focus their efforts on their departmental priorities and programs.

What about the machinery of government? A political commitment, however well articulated, cannot pursue a policy objective in a vacuum. It needs policy and administrative support. The important question here is: where should responsibility for promoting horizontality lie – in a central agency or in a line department? This question goes to the heart of the issue of promoting horizontality, and it is particularly relevant for our purpose, given that central agencies (the Privy Council Office, the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Canada Public Service Agency) and a line department have held direct responsibility for promoting official languages initiatives in recent years.

It is well-known that central agencies can exert considerable influence over the work of line departments. Though central agencies play a substantial role in promoting horizontality, they can also generate significant conflicts with line departments and agencies. PCO closely monitors policy development within government. In theory and also in line with good management principles, central agencies should “avoid the appearance of taking over the role of the lead department.” Failure to do this will give rise to conflicts.

A task force of senior government of Canada officials, asked to review horizontality, concluded that “central agencies, in particular PCO, play an important role in horizontal issues management, particularly in clarifying the relationships among ongoing initiatives, in establishing priorities, and in managing the policy workload of departments.”¹⁷ Central agencies play this role through various methods. One senior government official explains: “Let’s be honest, the main reason departments engage in horizontal work is because they are told to do so by their bosses, and the deputies and the assistant deputies themselves get the signal from the centre.”¹⁸ As is well-known inside government, central agencies are particularly effective when there is a crisis to be managed, since they are the only ones able to get everybody at the table to find a solution, to manage the crisis and to secure a coordinated response. This speaks to the advantages of having the official languages policy secretariat located in PCO.

Still, central agencies should be careful not to get drawn too deeply into managing an issue. There are limits to their involvement if only because they can never house the necessary substantive expertise on all issues, horizontal or otherwise, to manage them. Central agencies should also avoid being judge and jury to their own proposals, and that is why they should avoid taking on program responsibilities. If central agencies were to have their own programs, line departments and agencies could properly ask how they could possibly compete for new spending proposals against central agencies or against those charged with advising the political executive on the allocation of new expenditures. Many would also argue that, by definition, a central agency should not favour any particular policy area or policy position, because it would compromise their ability to provide an objective assessment of various policy options put forward by line departments to the political executive. This speaks to not having the official languages policy secretariat in PCO.

Line department officials believe that central agencies are at their best when they sit in judgment of what line departments do or propose. Their track record is not impressive when they take the lead on a major initiative. Line officials offer the examples of PS 2000, *La Relève*, various public service reforms, attempts to overhaul the employee classification system, performance pay for senior management, and attempts to introduce government-wide IT systems as cases in point.

The argument here is that central agencies, despite the rise of cross-cutting problems and issues, remain too oriented towards assessing the activities of line departments, to the detriment of specific issues that require more attention. All in all, though they are larger in size, the role of central agencies has changed very little during the past thirty years. The “goalkeeper” analogy used in the past to explain their work still applies. Pierre Gravelle, a deputy minister from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s and a former associate secretary to the Treasury Board, wrote that “it is after all the task of central agency officials to ensure that ministers are not caught by surprise with a new policy or a new initiative... it explains why central agency officials are great goalkeepers, that is, they are

excellent at stopping things, but are rarely themselves capable of successfully launching new initiatives.”¹⁹ It is also important to note that central agencies have no regional offices in the field to work with client groups and thus gain an appreciation of what works and what does not work on the ground.

If central agencies have some inherent limitations in promoting horizontal objectives, what about line departments? How effective are they in promoting horizontal policy objectives? We now have a number of lessons learned from past experiences to draw from. Here, too, the record is spotty. Think about Environment Canada and its various attempts to make government aware of environmental concerns. As is well-known, the environment has come to dominate the public policy agenda, and there is a widely held belief that it is the responsibility of “all” federal government departments and agencies. Yet Environment Canada today, and in years past, has not been very successful in promoting a horizontal perspective inside the government. Think also about DREE, MSERD, DRIE and their efforts to make regional economic development a goal to be pursued by all government departments and agencies. Not a single one of them has been able to live up to expectations.

Like central agencies, line departments have inherent limitations. For one thing, a line department operates on the same footing as other line departments, so it does not have a hierarchical basis to lead on a government-wide objective. The minister of a line department sits among his or her equals at the Cabinet table, all competing for more resources and expansion of their sphere of influence. Accordingly, one line department can hardly rise above interdepartmental competition to play a coordinating role, if only because the other departments would never permit it for fear that it would gain an edge in the competition. Further, jurisdiction matters in government, and the first question a line department will ask is why it should sacrifice some of its resources, financial or human, to the objectives being pursued by another department. Further still, individuals and relations between departments matter a great deal. A senior minister heading a line department may be too busy with his or her political and departmental responsibilities to give proper attention to the horizontal objective being pursued. A junior minister, meanwhile, may have the time but not the political clout and credibility needed to coordinate the effort. Line departments leading a horizontal objective can also be in a conflict position since their program managers will compete with those of other departments for new funding. Designated departments may well favour their own managers over others in allocating new funds. There are still other problems. There may well be a tendency in other departments and agencies to let the designated or lead department look after the problem because, after all, it is its problem. It is easy for line departments to conclude that they have enough issues to worry about flowing from their own departmental mandates and that there is no time left to be concerned about issues that properly belong to another department. It will be recalled that this was the reason the government gave in the early 1980s when it decided to abolish the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE).

Given all of the above, one is tempted to agree with the findings of a federal government task force led by deputy ministers, which concluded that horizontality “is a fundamental, permanent problem of governance.” *This leads us to a second principle of sound management of horizontal issues: there is no easy solution, and there is no one model that can apply to all issues in all circumstances and over time. No solution is complete or perfect. Accordingly, one has to craft a solution to fit the issue, the time and the circumstances. When it comes to promoting horizontal issues and management, we are only now making slow progress beyond trying this and that.*

This observation, however, could make the horizontal management of official languages feasible. Given that we are still in the early learning stages of horizontal management, the government should earmark official languages to launch new efforts and measures to make horizontal management work better and to integrate lessons learned in other sectors.

We know that sustained efforts will have to be introduced to promote horizontal management if it is to have any chance of success. We have learned that mere structural manipulations will not produce changes in behaviour, particularly if the behaviour is reinforced by other factors in government.²⁰ Some of these other factors include the budget process, interest groups operating outside government promoting a certain perspective, and a department’s history and culture. If change in behaviour is being sought, then one needs the unqualified commitment and support of the political executive at the very top of government.

As already noted, almost everything in government, it seems, requires a horizontal perspective. One may ask whether it is possible to establish a hierarchy of government-wide objectives so that, for example, the environment should rank higher than, say, regional economic development. Politicians, after all, are elected to lead and to establish the government’s priorities, and they have every right to identify which government-wide objectives are most important and then allocate resources to them. In a representative democracy, this is how things should work.

Are there exceptions? Yes; there are issues that transcend politics and political considerations. One such issue in Canada is the *Official Languages Act*. Canada’s official languages express our country’s values, national unity and a national desire and commitment to see both official language communities prosper. Canada’s constitution makes it clear that official languages policy is not like others, as does Canada’s OLA. The policy also expresses the will of Parliament, which has on several occasions in recent years strengthened Canada’s official languages legislation, thereby sending out a clear signal that it should enjoy a priority status inside government.

It is important to note that the *Official Languages Act* applies to all federal institutions and firmly commits the government to enhancing the vitality of official language

minority communities and promoting linguistic duality. In 2005, the Act was once again amended to require all federal institutions to “take positive measures” to fulfill these obligations. In addition, Parliament has an officer with a mandate to ensure that federal institutions and other organizations subject to the Act administer their affairs according to the spirit and letter of the Act.

All of the above sets official languages policy apart from other government-wide objectives. This leads to a general observation: *Canada’s official languages efforts are tied directly to the country’s fundamental values, to national unity and to statutory requirements that call on all federal institutions to provide services in both languages, to respect language of work provisions, and to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities and promote Canada’s linguistic duality.*

THE STRUCTURE AND HORIZONTAL MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

The Privy Council Office reports that it is “imperative for the Government to adopt internal mechanisms to ensure the consistency of its official language policies and programs.” It adds that a proper administrative framework is needed “to strengthen horizontal coordination for the Act as a whole, so as to decompartmentalize the different components supporting the Minister responsible for Official Languages and his (or her) colleagues at Treasury Board.”²¹

The government of Canada, it seems, has tried virtually every instrument to promote official languages as a government-wide objective. From 2002 to 2006, part of the coordination responsibility was placed in the hands of the Official Languages Secretariat in the Intragovernmental Policy Branch of the Privy Council Office. Today, that responsibility rests with the Department of Canadian Heritage. Over the years, we have seen senior ministers, as well as junior ministers, lead the charge, champions appointed in line departments and agencies, a special budget struck to support intergovernmental cooperation, a committee of ministers established to develop an action plan, a committee of deputy ministers set up to coordinate measures to promote official languages policy and efforts, as well as a process enacted to guide departments and agencies in meeting their responsibilities under the OLA. But that is not all. The Act itself (see section 41) commits “every federal institution” to put in place positive measures to promote official language minority communities and directs (see section 42) the Minister of Canadian Heritage to promote a coordinated approach among departments and agencies in their efforts to enhance the vitality of the official language minority communities. The Treasury Board Secretariat and the Canada Public Service Agency also have a coordination role to play. But, once again, that is not all. Canada has an independent officer of Parliament with a mandate to oversee the implementation of the OLA. The Commissioner monitors compliance with the Act and has the power to investigate

complaints and make recommendations. He or she also has a mandate to speak directly to Parliament on any matter under his or her purview.

On the face of it, at least, one would be tempted to conclude that all is well and that surely there is no need to question the government's ability to promote a horizontal perspective with respect to official languages. Though the mechanisms and processes may not have performed to the level expected, it would be difficult to imagine still more mechanisms or to point to any policy field within the federal government that has as many instruments to promote a coordinated or a horizontal perspective as does official languages policy. That said, all of these instruments and legal requirements have also, over the years, raised expectations in minority language communities that the federal government will be more effective in promoting a horizontal perspective for official languages than for any other policy or sector.

As already noted, the horizontal nature of the *Official Languages Act* is rooted in law. Since 1988, Part VII of the OLA commits the federal government to enhancing the vitality of French- and English-speaking communities and to fostering the full recognition of both French and English in Canadian society. In August 1994 the government put in place an accountability framework for implementing sections 41 and 42 of the Act to encourage federal government institutions to contribute actively to the development and vitality of minority language communities. The government also established, in 2002, an Official Languages Secretariat in the Privy Council Office. In March 2003, the government unveiled a five-year Action Plan (2003-04 to 2007-08). The plan provides for a number of initiatives in education and community development as well as measures to ensure that the federal public service is better able to communicate in both languages and support French- and English-speaking Canadians. At the urging of many who made presentations, the plan also placed special emphasis on accountability requirements by introducing an Official Languages Accountability and Coordination Framework. In November 2005 the OLA was further strengthened, including the introduction of a new requirement for federal government institutions to "take positive measures" to implement the government's commitment to official language communities.

The Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet also wrote to all deputy ministers in December 2005 to remind them of their responsibilities in the implementation of official languages policy. He asked them to raise employees' awareness of the needs of minority official language communities and of the promotion of linguistic duality to remind everyone of the government's commitment under Part VII of the OLA and to determine whether departmental policies have had and are having a positive impact on the development of minority official language communities. The Clerk also reminded his colleagues that the Department of Canadian Heritage has the legislative mandate to coordinate the implementation of Part VII of the Act and that a working group, under the direction of the Committee of Deputy Ministers responsible for Official

Languages chaired by the Deputy Minister of PCO-Intergovernmental Affairs, was formed to coordinate the implementation of the new departmental obligations.²²

A number of assessments have been produced in recent years on the accountability and horizontal processes employed to implement Canada's OLA. Consulting and Audit Canada prepared, in 2005-06, a mid-term evaluation of the Action Plan for Official Languages coordination program. Based on consultations with key players in central agencies and line departments, the assessment arrived at a number of conclusions. It maintained that the "vast majority of those consulted" would like the roles and responsibilities between departments, particularly between the Privy Council Office (PCO) and Canadian Heritage (CH), clarified. In addition, it reported that meetings of the Committee of Deputy Ministers on Official Languages (CDMOL) were being poorly attended. The reasons: too many meetings, and limited opportunities for making strategic interventions. The assessment applauded the introduction of the "Horizontal Results-Based Management and Accountability Framework (HRMAF)." The framework was designed to provide effective reporting on the contribution of "implementation partners." The assessment added, however, that the approach is relatively new and that departments and agencies have to learn to work with the process and to "buy into" it. Some departments, it reported, were finding the framework complex and difficult to manage.

The assessment also dealt with machinery of government issues. It highlighted some concerns with the role of PCO on the part of line departments and agencies. Though some departments considered PCO's presence unnecessary, the report concluded that PCO did play an important role in encouraging line departments and agencies to do more and also that PCO did, "in rare instances," convene meetings to resolve some implementation problems. It argued that PCO's participation has given rise to "improved horizontal communication among all partners."²³

The Commissioner of Official Languages, meanwhile, has expressed concerns over recent machinery of government changes. He writes that "history has shown that Canadian Heritage, as a sectoral and not a horizontal department, is not the best suited to issue guidelines to all federal institutions, hence the importance of a central agency to bring about the change in organizational culture needed to implement the *Official Languages Act* effectively."²⁴ It is noteworthy that the previous Commissioner, Dyane Adam, had in one of her annual reports praised the assistance PCO was giving to support the Minister for Official Languages.²⁵

The current Commissioner, Graham Fraser, went on to question the wisdom of introducing machinery of government changes in February 2006, which saw PCO's responsibilities for official languages transferred to Canadian Heritage. In addition, the Prime Minister decided to assign two different roles to the Minister for Official Languages: coordinating all federal institutions' activities related to official languages, and managing the Canadian Heritage Official Languages Support Program. The

Commissioner believes that it may well be difficult to reconcile the two responsibilities in one department. He asked how the minister could be objective when examining the work of his or her own department. With respect to the transfer of PCO responsibilities to Canadian Heritage, the Commissioner asked whether the move would weaken horizontality, given that PCO is the “nerve centre of the federal government and the reason it was assigned responsibility for official languages was to ensure uniform implementation of the Official Languages Program.”²⁶

The Commissioner also expressed reservations over the government’s decisions to do away with the ministerial committee examining official language-related issues and to disband the Committee of Deputy Ministers on Official Languages. This committee has been replaced by a committee of assistant deputy ministers charged with the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan on Official Languages. The commissioner asks whether these changes would really promote horizontality and encourage better integration. His own answer: “serious doubt remains.”²⁷

The government, meanwhile, has not provided any background information or rationale for its decision to transfer responsibilities for official languages policy from PCO to Canadian Heritage. It made its decision public with very little in the way of comments or explanations. Still, we know that, when the decision was made, the Clerk wrote to deputy ministers to outline the various machinery changes and explain that the purpose of the changes was for PCO “to return to basics.” He added the changes would reduce the number of secretariats and also “enable PCO to refocus the work of policy secretariats to the traditional and strategic stewardship function. This is in keeping with departments having the ownership of policy and program files for which their Ministers are responsible.”²⁸

The current Clerk of the Privy Council has also made public his views on what is required to promote effective organizations in the public sector. He insists that the government “needs to provide departments with clear mandates, with the responsibility and resources to achieve these mandates, and with the clear understanding of being held accountable for results.” It is worth quoting him at some length on how he views the role of central agencies. He writes: “Central agencies should provide context, coherence, coordination and challenge. They set the fiscal framework within which the government operates. They set the accountability regime which shapes how the government operates. They set out the broad policy paradigm to guide how policy is developed. In this context, PCO establishes the priorities of the government for departments and then should let departments do their jobs, based on those priorities and complemented by a rigorous challenge function. But central agencies should not micro-manage or co-manage files. Central agencies should add value, not layers, to the process of policy making and government operations.”²⁹

It will be recalled that, at the time PCO transferred its coordinating responsibilities for official languages to Canadian Heritage, it did the same for Indian Affairs and transferred its Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. There were several other changes.³⁰ The changes are all in line with the Clerk's view that central agencies should not micro-manage or co-manage files. In brief, the government decided to transfer some of the responsibilities for official languages to Canadian Heritage because it concluded that the Privy Council Office needed to streamline its operations and return to its more traditional role in its dealings with line departments and agencies.

When assessing the current approach to the horizontal management of official languages, it is important to recognize and also stress the impact individuals have on the process. To be sure, structures, the machinery of government and the requirements of policy matter. But so do the individuals. Indeed, a highly motivated, highly respected and highly competent manager will make a difference in promoting official languages policy from a horizontal perspective whether he or she works in a central agency or a line department. As we saw earlier, both central agencies and line departments have inherent limitations when it comes to promoting government-wide objectives. Having the right manager or leader with a strong capacity to navigate Ottawa's policy and decision-making processes can give life to a well-articulated commitment from the political executive and, to some extent, make up for deficiencies in the machinery of government. In my consultations with senior public servants for the purpose of this report, I met with senior officials who demonstrated an unambiguous and deeply felt commitment to official languages. I was left with no doubt that they would pursue any opportunity to promote official languages policy.

To be sure, taken as a whole, the machinery and policy instruments in support of the government's official languages policy are comprehensive and compare quite favourably with any other policy areas in the government of Canada or with those found in other governments. While it is true that PCO shifted its coordinating responsibility to Canadian Heritage and that the Committee of Deputy Ministers has been disbanded, it remains true that officials promoting official languages measures have access to an impressive array of instruments.

Consider the following:

- The OLA directs the government not only to promote the official languages, but also to put in place measures to support the development of official language minority communities and promote linguistic duality.
- A lead department, the Department of Canadian Heritage, has had close ties with official language minorities for nearly 40 years.
- An officer of Parliament has a broad mandate to report on all aspects of the Act, including any shortcomings in the government's efforts to promote a horizontal perspective.

- Legislation requires federal institutions to report to Parliament on their efforts to promote minority language communities.
- As anyone even remotely familiar with Ottawa's policy-making process knows, the Speech from the Throne matters a great deal to line departments and agencies. There is always tremendous jockeying for position among departments whenever a Speech from the Throne is being drafted. Departments know full well that any references to their policies, programs or proposed initiatives mean that they sit at the top of the Government's priority list. As already noted, since 2003, three Speeches from the Throne have made reference to official languages. In the most recent speech, delivered on 16 October 2007, the government pledged to define a strategy to promote a new phase of its Action Plan for Official Languages.
- Since 2003, official languages and official language minority communities have benefited from the Action Plan. The plan provides funding (\$751 million initially) for a number of activities in several sectors. In all, 10 federal government institutions have received funding for some of their activities through the Action Plan since 2003.
- Official languages efforts have enjoyed the support of a number of senior level committees in Ottawa, including a ministerial committee, a committee of deputy ministers and, currently, a committee of assistant deputy ministers.
- There is a Minister responsible for Official Languages with a mandate to coordinate the efforts and measures taken by the government to implement the provisions of the OLA.
- There are other tools and instruments in addition to the Action Plan. One such instrument is the Interdepartmental Partnership with Official-Language Communities (IPOLC). This instrument is designed to encourage partnerships between federal departments and agencies and official language minority communities. Under IPOLC, departments can turn to a fund at Canadian Heritage to launch new projects and partnership arrangements. Many federal departments and agencies (among others, Health Canada, Western Economic Diversification, and Industry Canada) have made use of IPOLC. There is every indication, however, that the program will not be renewed.
- Champions at the senior levels have been identified in line departments and agencies to promote official languages policy.
- As reported earlier, evaluations of interdepartmental cooperation efforts in promoting official languages measures have been, on the whole, fairly positive.
- We know that the coordinators' network on official languages (led by Canadian Heritage) has been at work for some years and that it has been successful in raising the visibility and importance of Part VII, section 41, of the OLA and making federal government managers aware of their responsibilities and the importance of focusing on results.
- Some federal councils (councils that bring together senior regional managers in the regions) have introduced a number of initiatives in recent years to promote official languages in the field, although efforts were slowed following budget cuts in fall 2006.³¹

- In 2005, Parliament made an important addition to the OLA. It reads: “every federal institution has the duty to ensure that positive measures are taken for the implementation of the commitment under subsection 1,” which, in turn, “commits the government of Canada to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development.”

The government has also published a number of guides and actively promoted numerous best practices to promote official languages policy and efforts. There are websites (see, for example http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/lo-ol/index_e.cfm) that make available guides, tools and best practices to promote the OLA. The government put in place (2005) a Management Framework for the Official Languages Program to establish specific requirements that federal institutions should meet. Some 32 federal institutions have an obligation to present an action plan and an annual achievement report on Part VII to the Department of Canadian Heritage, and its minister must then report to Parliament. In addition, all federal government institutions need to document how they implement part VII (section 41) of the Act. But, again, that is not all. The Official Languages Branch of the Canadian Public Service Agency is responsible for ensuring that federal institutions serve Canadians in the official language of their choice. Institutions must report to the Agency and, from there, to Parliament on their ability to serve Canadians in both official languages. The Treasury Board Secretariat, meanwhile, has a responsibility to ensure that Treasury Board submissions respect official languages requirements.

It is against this backdrop that we decided to consult senior government officials and members of the official language minority communities to gain a first-hand appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of current efforts and the relevance of the instruments and management tools currently in place to promote a horizontal perspective on official languages within the government. We decided to consult officials in both Ottawa and the regions, in central agencies and line departments and in various levels of the hierarchy. We also consulted members of minority language communities who have had extensive dealings with the federal government in recent years. In total, 31 people participated in the interview process.

INTERVIEWS

In 1998, I met with a number of senior federal officials to examine the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA) and the government policy on official languages. At the time, I noted in my report that there was a strong commitment among senior government officials to Canada's official languages and to the efforts to strengthen the government's capacity to promote official language minority communities. This commitment is still evident in 2007-2008. I can say without reservation that every one of the government officials I met for this report is strongly committed to promoting Canada's official languages policy.

My 2007 consultations also found that there is a much broader consensus than I had anticipated among government officials on the measures that are necessary to promote official languages policy and the development of official language minority communities. Several people commented that we must first have an unequivocal commitment from the political executive. I was told that unless key political leaders, starting with the Prime Minister, are prepared to recognize that official languages policy is a priority for the government, the rest will have only a limited impact. The fact is that no changes to the machinery of government can ever compensate for a lack of political commitment. I should emphasize that this was the message from everyone, including officials from central agencies and line departments, as well as official language minority community representatives. The message could not be clearer.

I was frequently told that the government administration's response to a political direction goes far beyond what it is generally believed to be outside the government. The Speeches from the Throne, policy statements by prime ministers, and new resources assigned to a pan-governmental objective such as official languages policy are very important. Together, they can ensure that government representatives pursue a government-wide objective with conviction and dedication. I was told that the early 2000s were a golden period for official languages within the government. That was when the government decided to launch an Action Plan for Official Languages, a minister was appointed to head the development of the plan, and senior management committees were created to coordinate official languages activities.

During my consultations, government officials made a number of suggestions to strengthen the government's political commitment to continue its efforts on official languages as an objective for the government as a whole. Their suggestions varied but, at the risk of being repetitive, they *all* stated the need for the political executive to clearly send the message that official languages policy is a priority.

There were fewer suggestions than I expected regarding reform to the machinery of government. This does not mean that the respondents thought it would not be beneficial to have an official languages secretariat at the Privy Council Office (PCO) or a deputy

ministers' committee with the mandate of promoting official languages and linguistic minority communities. Many respondents, especially representatives of linguistic minority communities, saw these as beneficial. One of the respondents said that creating a committee responsible for official languages at the deputy minister level sent a strong message to the government administration, and, conversely, disbanding the committee sent an equally strong negative message, suggesting that efforts to promote official languages are no longer so important. Representatives of linguistic minority communities also told me that the PCO Secretariat proved very useful in moving forward on initiatives that were tangled up in red tape.

Representatives of one department reported, in a written statement produced for the purposes of this report, that they have "observed a decline in leadership" since the responsibility for coordinating official languages was transferred from the Privy Council Office to Canadian Heritage. Another official said that "assigning coordination responsibilities to the Privy Council Office sent all departments and agencies the message that official languages policy was important."

However, a number of respondents reported shortcomings regarding the fact that the Secretariat was located at PCO, as well as the existence of a deputy ministers' committee. When it was part of PCO, the Secretariat was very good, sometimes, at making certain people see reason in order to move things forward, in the words of one government official. However, she added, it rarely produced new ideas or innovative projects.

I was also told that coordination is impossible without funds or decision making; often, it is merely "trying to give the appearance of coordination." Government reforms and policy instruments are less effective if they are not accompanied by the public funds and decision-making power needed to launch ongoing activities. One respondent told me that he saw a junior minister responsible for official languages mechanically attend meetings but exercise very little influence because he didn't have the budget to do anything.

Moreover, as one respondent told me, the deputy ministers' committee had a limited impact because it "never" made decisions. It has become "a sort of advisory committee," which was not enough to hold its members' interest. Deputy ministers are very busy people facing many demands on their time. They will participate in activities that bring about change, have an impact, and are likely to further their departments' interests. The respondent added that "for deputy ministers, it's just not worth it to become members of an advisory committee." As a result, the members started missing meetings. Another respondent explained that, because of the high turnover of deputy ministers, there were always one or two new members each time the committee met, which also hindered its ability to make a contribution.

Various government officials raised an issue that seems to be of increasing concern to them, but that came up much less frequently in my consultations held with public

servants for my 1998 report on official languages. It seems that the reporting requirements for official languages and other issues have become a burden that tends to impede rather than promote interdepartmental cooperation. I often heard people refer to the “reporting burden” and the fact that many officials spend far too much time filling out forms and producing reports to meet the federal administration’s reporting requirements.

Officials in line departments must fulfill the official languages reporting requirements defined by the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Public Service Agency. They are subject to the reporting requirements set out in Parts IV, V, VI and VII of the OLA. To meet this requirement, they must provide the information and documents needed to prepare reports submitted every year to Parliament. Departments that are part of the Action Plan for Official Languages must also report their expenditures and their results. In addition, central agencies invariably go to departments to get the documentation they need to prepare information documents for the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and Cabinet committees.

A number of officials candidly admitted that all several departments and agencies do is proceed mechanically, automatically filling in the blanks, simply to manage the burden of producing reports. A detailed assessment of government reporting requirements and how they are fulfilled is beyond the scope of this document. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the burden of these requirements, because it has become a problem for line departments and because it has an impact on horizontality. Horizontality should promote action and decision making, not a paper exercise or a paperwork burden.

I should emphasize that, even though official language minority community representatives found both the PCO Secretariat and the Committee of Deputy Ministers to be beneficial, few respondents within the public service shared this point of view. I should also specify that the officials I met with stated quite adamantly that the last thing they wanted from me was another increase in reporting requirements. The message was clear: please save us from new reporting requirements and don’t subject us to new structures. We must not forget that line departments must deal with accountability and reporting requirements for a variety of public policy issues, as well as many issues related to human and financial resources. Managers feel overloaded with reports on their various responsibilities.

So what are the solutions? Many respondents suggested turning to accountability, namely accountability of deputy ministers, to find an answer, instead of increasing reporting requirements or changes to the machinery of government. One official remarked that “real accountability produces real results, while new reporting requirements just result in more red tape.” He added: “It is not necessary to make a lot of changes to do this.” Detailed management agreements and procedures are already in place to make deputy ministers accountable. These accountability agreements are increasingly specific and, at least in part, deal with pursuing government-wide objectives. Furthermore, I was told that

the current Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet gives great importance to deputy ministers' accountability and spends a lot of time managing the process himself.

More than one respondent emphasized that official languages do not figure as prominently as they should in deputy ministers' accountability agreements. I was told that these agreements refer to providing service to the public in both official languages and the need for departments to have the capacity to meet both this requirement and the employees' right to work in the official language of their choice. However, they never or hardly ever refer to sections 41 and 42 of the *Official Languages Act*. Despite the recent stricter requirements of the law (e.g., in November 2005 the *Official Languages Act* was amended to include the possibility of court action regarding federal institutions' obligation to take positive measures to support the development of official language minority communities and promote linguistic duality), we were informed that deputy ministers are not held accountable as they should be for their departments' promotion of the development of official language minority communities. There is no explanation for this situation. Not only is there a legal obligation to promote a horizontal approach to government, but the Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet has often clearly asserted his firm commitment to official languages, to his colleagues and during many seminars, conferences, and public speeches.

Deputy ministers' accountability is clearly very important. It shows what is expected of them and determines whether these expectations have been fulfilled. Thus, the content of agreements between PCO and deputy ministers is subject to particular measures, and what is not included in these agreements is often laid aside. As already mentioned, deputy ministers are extremely busy, and there are limits to what they can accomplish over the course of the year. There is no shortage of problems that must be solved in any given year. Highlighting the responsibility for implementing all aspects of the OLA in deputy ministers' annual accountability exercises would also have a cascade effect, because deputy ministers and heads of agencies would establish similar expectations for their immediate subordinates, which would trickle down the hierarchy.

Other respondents urged the Canada School of Public Service to include in its courses the official languages policy and its horizontal requirements. There are courses at the school that appear particularly relevant in this regard, such as the course offered to all new public service employees. There is also a wide range of courses for new managers in the executive (EX) category. The curriculum covered by these courses is very limited in terms of official languages. Material in the course for managers and executives (EX) consists of a copy of the *Official Languages Act* and, according to one participant, official languages are mentioned briefly during the course. But that is all. This is unfortunate, because these two courses give the employer a golden opportunity to highlight the importance of the Act for the country and for the public service, and to highlight sections 41 and 42 and employers' and managers' role in promoting their implementation.

Respondents showed little enthusiasm for new structures, new committees, and new processes. Even representatives of official language minority communities said it is futile to recommend reinstating an official languages secretariat at PCO. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents thought it is necessary to provide new support in this regard, particularly in light of the government's decision to launch a new action plan. Some suggested, for example, creating a special Cabinet committee to guide the work of the committee of officials (ADMs) responsible for defining measures and initiatives contained in the next phase of the Action Plan.

It is important to recognize once again that promoting measures to support the development of official language minority communities is at the heart of Canadian unity and the fundamental values of the country. This isn't something that can be done on autopilot. It requires both clear political leadership and constant support from public servants.

It is important to note that there is a deeply felt sentiment among representatives of the English-speaking minority in Quebec that they are being left behind and that they no longer enjoy the status within the federal government that they once did. Their organizations are viewed as "regional" rather than "national" ones and are dealt with as such by the federal government. We were informed that their dealings with the federal government are carried out at a relatively junior level and that they are experiencing difficulty in getting their message heard. We note that the English-speaking community of Quebec, contrary to Ottawa tradition, does not have a representative in Cabinet.

Before I go on to practical advice, I should emphasize that, notwithstanding certain negative reactions from time to time, we have seen significant progress in the official language minority communities and in the use of both official languages within the federal government since the Act was passed 40 years ago. Both the official language minority community representatives and senior management in the public service have recognized this. Bilingualism has been institutionalized within the public service, and the availability of bilingual services has increased in recent years. Second language instruction is flourishing compared with the 1960s before the introduction of the *Official Languages Act*, and Canada has created a pool of educated, talented and bilingual people. We have made considerable progress in improving protection of linguistic minorities' rights through the Constitution and other legal mechanisms. Of course, the challenges have been and continue to be sizeable for Francophone communities outside Quebec and the English-speaking community of Quebec. Members of these communities living in large urban areas are concerned about assimilation, and those living in small rural communities are often worried about the very economic survival of their community.

During this time, the machinery of federal government has also made many adjustments and readjustments to strengthen the government's capacity to create policies and initiatives and provide services. As public administration students know perfectly well,

changes to the machinery of government are not always welcome by government departments and, when they are, it takes some time for them to take root. The public service has adopted all these changes. As one of the respondents explained, “We accept changes to the machinery of government as the government defines them. Our role is to ensure that they work, not to assess their relevance or whether they have been well thought through.”

What is important here is that progress has been made and continues to be made in the promotion of official languages within the federal government and the development of official language minority communities in Canada. Remember that, 40 years ago, many departments and agencies had a very limited capacity to provide services in both official languages, and practically no measures were in place to develop official language minority communities.

You need only a few brief discussions with various federal institutions and short visits to official language minority communities to observe the progress that has been and continues to be made. Institutions were built from the ground up, and official languages now enjoy a strong presence in Ottawa as well as in many communities across the country. A vast array of multi-faceted structures and processes is also in place, and has been for some time, to promote the interests of official language minority communities. A survey of documents and annual reports produced by federal departments and agencies shows that they are developing new initiatives, creating new committees and making new investments, especially in recent years in the health care and education sectors.

That said, the expectations of the communities have been and continue to be very high. The requests of official language minority communities to the federal government are invariably greater than the resources available to meet them. The communities naturally want to focus on the future and the work that is underway rather than on past accomplishments. They constantly express the sentiment that it is urgent for things to move forward because, once again, official language minority communities run the risk of being assimilated and, if they are located in rural areas, where the risk of assimilation is perhaps not so high, they may also be worried about their economic survival.

1. I cannot overemphasize the fact that the 2005 amendment to the OLA has increased the expectations of official language minority communities. Pursuant to the amendment, the Act now imposes on federal government institutions an enforceable obligation to take positive measures to support the implementation of the government’s commitment set out in Part VII to “enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development; and fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.”³² This amendment led to concern among federal departments and agencies about how to respond in planning activities intended for official language minority communities. There is certainly a

risk for all federal institutions, because it is quite possible that linguistic minority communities may increasingly turn to the courts, like they have already done in one case, to force federal institutions to take positive measures. An increased capacity to respond to official language minority communities from a horizontal perspective is likely to help federal institutions mitigate this risk by showing that the government as a whole is taking a number of positive measures.

POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

The government does not want to launch ambitious reforms of the machinery of government, and I am not proposing any in this report. On one hand, the government recently updated its structure. On the other hand, experience shows that such changes rarely or never meet expectations. They create uncertainty in the departments and require a lot of time and resources, sometimes at the expense of important policy development and program delivery work. In any case, it is possible to strengthen the process, efforts and horizontality without a massive upheaval of the machinery of government.

We do not belong to the school of thought that posits the more courses of action, the better. Having many courses of action risks dispersing efforts, losing focus, and sending too many different signals. As mentioned earlier in the examination of the principles of sound public management that apply to horizontal issues, horizontality requires above all a firm and ongoing political commitment, targeted action, and a clear objective in order to be successful.

Along with the three principles set out previously in this report and the opinions and suggestions arising from our consultations, we are making the following practical recommendations.

1. Although this is not a recommendation per se, we would like to remind the political executive that they need to make a clear, visible, and ongoing commitment before they can make progress in promoting official languages from a horizontal perspective.
2. The government should create a special committee of ministers to guide the implementation of the Official Languages Program as a whole and Phase II of the Action Plan for Official Languages as announced in the recent Speech from the Throne. The committee would increase the political visibility of official languages, show a commitment in this regard, and encourage departments to participate in developing and implementing the plan.
3. We have repeated several times that an essential condition to effective horizontality for official languages is that it *must* begin with the political executive. There is simply no other way. This is the message that came across loud and clear from everyone we interviewed for this report. The Government's

recent commitment as described in the recent Speech from the Throne directly addresses this requirement, and the announcement of this commitment was received favourably both by government officials and by the communities. However, political commitment must be sustained over time to produce the desired impact and provide constant political leadership and direction to the public service. In light of this, we recommend that Cabinet dedicate time once a year specifically to discuss the government's official languages actions and review the line departments' proposals for the next year. The Secretariat at Canadian Heritage should provide support and information documents to the special Cabinet committee and to Cabinet through the Department's senior management and the Privy Council Office. This action would achieve several goals: it would send a strong message that the Prime Minister and the Cabinet give high priority to official languages. It would also allow the political executive to take stock of and plan their actions and give the Canadian Heritage Secretariat government-wide visibility. It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. There have been instances in the past when a line department unit, working closely with PCO, has acted as secretariat for a Cabinet committee.

4. The Privy Council Office should review the deputy ministers' and agency heads' accountability requirements to emphasize their responsibilities in terms of promoting the equal status of both official languages within their organization and the development of official language minority communities. This requirement is even more important in light of the 2005 amendment to the OLA. Increasing priority should be given to deputy ministers' performance assessments with regard to horizontal issues, and no file deserves this kind of assessment more than official languages.
5. The Canada School of Public Service should review the content of its mandatory courses – the course for new employees and the course for new recruits in the management and executive (EX) category – to include new material and make official languages an important component of the curriculum. These two courses provide an excellent opportunity to increase the awareness of all new employees and all new managers of all aspects of the *Official Languages Act* and to highlight their responsibilities in this regard. If promoting horizontality requires a long-term commitment, there is no better time than when employees and managers have just been appointed to their positions.
6. An in-depth study of the requirements of the OLA in terms of accountability and reports is beyond the scope of this review. That said, almost all the federal government officials and representatives of official language minority communities whom we spoke to for the purposes of this report said not only that there is a problem in this area, but also that this problem hinders the development of new initiatives. They told us many times that the reporting requirements have become too burdensome and bureaucratic. They generate a large quantity of paperwork, but it appears that many managers just settle for mechanically meeting the requirements of the process. We recommend that the accountability

and reporting requirements be reviewed in depth to make the processes more accessible and easier to manage. The review should explore the possibility of conducting departmental reviews at different times or tailoring performance reviews based on the department and the actions that it has taken. The objective should not be to produce 32 reports a year. Instead it should be to conduct an in-depth analysis of selected departments to determine how effectively they are promoting the official languages policy.

7. The Department of Canadian Heritage decided not to integrate the Official Languages Secretariat (OLS) with its permanent official languages programs when it was transferred from the Privy Council Office. We applaud this decision. It is important that program activities and delivery remain separate from the Secretariat's coordination work. These two entities, the OLS and the Official Languages Support Programs Branch (OLSPB), report to the Deputy Minister through different assistant deputy ministers, and this is how they should continue. However, it should be emphasized that assistant deputy ministers who carry out the two different functions report to the same deputy minister, who reports to only one minister.

We recommend that Canadian Heritage make every effort to give the Secretariat greater visibility and a strong presence in the machinery of government in Ottawa, under the leadership of the Minister and the Department's senior management. The objective is to encourage the Secretariat to adopt a much broader perspective than a close focus on the Department, and to encourage the other departments and agencies to consider the Secretariat's mandate to be government-wide. Of course, this will require ongoing effort and support from the central agencies, the political executive, and senior management at Canadian Heritage. If we do not meet this objective soon, in coming years there will undoubtedly be pressure to reconstitute the Secretariat at a central agency.

8. In this report, we have identified the various limitations on the promotion of a horizontal perspective within the government and noted that we are still at the stage where we are trying to promote it and see what works. The government will have to be innovative if it wants to succeed at implementing horizontal initiatives and will need support and efforts from many players, including central agencies, head offices of line departments and agencies, and their regional offices. The official languages policy, especially in light of the 2005 amendment to the OLA, provides an ideal framework to test innovative approaches and foster the participation of many actors, including regional federal councils and representatives of official language minority communities. We recommend that the Official Languages Secretariat at Canadian Heritage, with the active support of departments' senior management and central agency officials, launch a pilot project to define the dual nature of modern government accountability (vertical and horizontal accountability). Phase II of the Action Plan provides an excellent opportunity to specify horizontal requirements from the initial stages of

formulating measures and initiatives, in order to deal with possible bureaucratic turf wars and emerging accountability requirements.

Notes

1. B. Guy Peters, *Managing Horizontal Governments: The Politics of Coordination* (Ottawa: CCMD, 1998), p. 1.
2. Canada, *Managing Horizontal Policy Issues* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, December 1996), p. 1.
3. Mark Sproule-Jones, "Horizontal Management: Implementing Programs Across Interdependent Organizations," *Canadian Public Administration*, vol. 43, no. 1(2000), p. 93.
4. Ibid.
5. See, among many others, E. Badach, *Getting Agencies to Work Together: The Practice and Theory of Managerial Craftmanship* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998) and F. Ostroff, *The Horizontal Organization: What the Organization of the Future Looks Like and How it Delivers Value to Customers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
6. This point was made as far back as 1996 by senior government officials. See *Managing Horizontal Policy Issues*, p. 28.
7. See, among others, OECD, *Government of the Future* (Paris: OECD, 2000).
8. John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (New York: Harper, 1869), p. 100.
9. Quoted in Henry Parris, *Constitutional Bureaucracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 80.
10. See, for example, the 2005 Annual Report of the Auditor General, Canada, http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/Internet/English/oag-bvg_e_903.html
11. Canada, "Management Accountability and Accountability for Horizontal Initiatives," (Ottawa: Canada School of the Public Service, 2005).
12. Christopher Pollitt, "Joined-up Government: A Survey," *Political Studies Review*, vol. 1 (2003), p. 34-49.
13. Canada, Federal Accountability Act and Action Plan, <http://www.faa-lfi.gc.ca/index-eng.asp>
14. See, among others, "Horizontal Tools and Relationships: An International Survey of Government Practices Related to Communities" (Ottawa: Task Force on Community Investments, 2007).

15. Canada, *Fourteenth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 2007), p. 10.
16. Peters, *Managing Horizontal Government*, p. 4.
17. Canada, *Managing Horizontal Policy Issues*, p. 11-12.
18. Quoted in Herman Bakvis and Luc Juillet, *The Horizontal Challenge: Line Departments, Central Agencies and Leadership* (Ottawa: CCMD, 6 June 2006).
19. Pierre Gravelle, "Management: A Central Agency and Line Department Perspective," Revenue Canada, 3 February 1989, mimeo 3.
20. B. Guy Peters made this point in his *Managing Horizontal Governments*, p. 47.
21. <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/205/301/pco-bcp/website/06-10-10/www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/olo/default.asp@language=e&page=home.htm>
22. Canada, Amendments to the *Official Languages Act* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, December 23, 2005).
23. Canada, Evaluation of the Action Plan for Official Languages Coordination Program (Ottawa: Consulting and Audit Canada, 2006), p. 13.
24. Canada, *Annual Report 2006-2007* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2007), p. 15.
25. Canada, *Annual Report 2005-2006* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2006), chapter 2.
26. Canada, *Annual Report 2006-2007* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2007), p. 20
27. Ibid.
28. Canada, *Reorganization of PCO* (Ottawa: PCO, 2006).
29. Canada, *Notes for an Address by Kevin Lynch, Clerk of the Privy Council, at the ADM Forum* (Ottawa: PCO, 2006), p. 2.
30. The changes included the following: National Science Advisor – to be transferred to Industry Canada; Policy Research Initiative – to be transferred to the Department of Human and Social Development (with multi-department DM governance structure); Smart Borders Task Force – to be transferred to Public Safety; Regulatory Affairs and the Smart Regulations Strategy – to be transferred to Treasury Board Secretariat; Regional

Communications – to be transferred to the Treasury Board Secretariat; Official Languages Secretariat – transferred to Canadian Heritage; Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat – moved to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

31. See, for example, Canada, *Annual Report 2002-2003* (Ottawa: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2003), p. 29.
32. Canada, “Implementation of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*: a guide for federal institutions” (Ottawa: PCO, April 2007 – notes from the Clerk to his colleagues).