

# UQAUSIVUT

---

The Comprehensive Plan pursuant to the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*

2012-2016  
Government of Nunavut





## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF LANGUAGES

In 2008, the Government of Nunavut passed two pieces of legislation that made Canadian history. The *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provide an unprecedented level of protection for an Aboriginal language in a Canadian jurisdiction. The Acts confirm that in the Territory, the Inuit Language, French and English have equal status and affirm the right of our citizens to service in their official language of choice. At the same time they provide special support to the Inuit Language, the mother tongue of most Nunavummiut, and one of Canada's unique cultural treasures.

The passage of these two historic Acts was the first step on a longer journey. We knew that achieving our vision would call for the cooperation and engagement of all Nunavummiut, young and old, from every sector and community. And we knew that, like any ambitious journey, this one would require a roadmap.

The document before you is that roadmap.

A year ago, I had the honour of introducing the first draft of the Uqausivut Plan for the Implementation of the Language Acts. The version you hold today reflects the opinions and recommendations of hundreds of Nunavummiut who expressed their hopes and perspectives to us at regional round tables, in public meetings, at the Language Summit, and through emails, letters, faxes and personal statements. Nunavummiut spoke to us through their organizations, through their hamlets, and as individuals. Their hopes and their wisdom have given form to our vision.

A special debt of thanks is owed to the Official Languages Commissioner and her staff, to our partners at Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., and to the many officials within the Government of Nunavut who shared a commitment to the future of our languages and culture.

The passage of our language legislation marked the first step in a journey just as bold and ambitious as the creation of Nunavut—the challenge of shaping our territory in a way that enshrines and protects the languages that define our culture and society.

The roadmap is before you. The journey begins today.

The Honourable James Arreak  
Minister of Languages

# Table of Contents

## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### ***SECTION 1: THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT***

Introduction	1
Nunavut’s Official Languages	2
Official Language Rights	3
Implementing Official Language Obligations	4
Legislative Assembly	5
Acts, Regulations and Nunavut Gazette	5
Administration of Justice	5
Government Communications with and Services to the Public	6
Municipal Communications and Services	8
Official Languages Promotion	9

### ***SECTION 2: THE INUIT LANGUAGE PROTECTION ACT***

Introduction	10
Defining the Inuit Language	11
Language Services to the General Public	13
Private Sector Bodies	14
Municipalities	15
Federal departments, agencies and institutions	16
Territorial departments and public agencies	17
Language Learning at all Stages of Life	18
Early Childhood Education	18
Kindergarten to Grade 12	19
Adult Language Learning	20
Language of Work	21
Language Development and Standardization	22
Language Revitalization and Promotion	23

### ***SECTION 3: MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY***

Executive Council Oversight	24
Minister of Languages	24
Co-ordinating and Promoting Implementation	25
Monitoring and Evaluating Performance	26
Resourcing the Plan	27

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Nunavut is committed to implementing Nunavut's new language legislation by ensuring its spirit and intent are reflected in government policies, programs and services.

The *Official Languages Act* defines specific obligations of territorial government institutions to ensure they communicate with and serve members of the public in the official language of their choice: the Inuit Language ("Inuktitut"), English or French. While respecting the equality of all Official languages, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* gives Inuktitut new prominence in education, work and daily life throughout the Territory, and sets out measures by which governments and private sector organizations can take positive action to protect, revitalize and promote its use.

Under the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, the Minister of Languages is tasked with developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan to coordinate the implementation of the language legislation by departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies.

On June 9, 2011, the Minister of Languages tabled a proposed comprehensive implementation plan (the "proposed Uqausivut Plan") to allow Nunavummiut to review and comment on its content. The Government received and reviewed 35 submissions from individuals and stakeholders, including the Languages Commissioner, Regional Inuit Associations, Francophone organizations, businesses, municipalities and others.

To develop the final version of the Uqausivut Plan, the Government of Nunavut consulted Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. ("NTI"), the Designated Inuit Organization, in accordance with Article 32 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*. The Department of Culture and Heritage established a meaningful collaboration with NTI by creating a joint steering committee, under the guidance of the Languages Commissioner, to develop this plan for the effective implementation of language obligations pursuant to both Acts.

The Government of Nunavut will continue to consult with territorial institutions, municipalities, Francophones, Anglophones and other interested bodies regarding their specific concerns during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the results of the Plan.

The Uqausivut Plan identifies implementation measures through which departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies will meet their obligations under the language legislation. The first section of the Plan outlines obligations, responsibilities and priorities for implementing the various components of the *Official Languages Act*; the second section provides the same outline for the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. The third and last section presents a management and accountability framework, and describes how the Plan will be resourced.

Detailed strategic work plans will be prepared, setting out specific objectives, activities, outcomes and timelines to guide the work of departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies for implementing their language obligations, and for monitoring and reporting on the results achieved.

The following chart provides a brief tabular overview summarizing and comparing the scope and scale of the two Acts with respect to communications and services to the public.

<b>Official Languages Act</b>	<b>Inuit Language Protection Act</b>
Deals with Nunavut's three Official Languages: the Inuit Language, English and French	Deals only with the Inuit Language
Applies to "Territorial Institutions": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GN departments and public agencies</li> <li>• Legislative Assembly</li> <li>• Nunavut Court of Justice and other tribunals</li> </ul>	Applies to "Territorial Institutions": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GN departments and public agencies</li> <li>• Legislative Assembly</li> <li>• Nunavut Court of Justice and other tribunals</li> </ul>
Applies to municipalities "if there is a significant demand" for "prescribed" communications and services in an official language	Applies to municipalities regardless of demand
Does not directly apply to private sector bodies	Applies to private sector bodies (includes business and any other organized entity delivering services or information to the public in Nunavut)
Does not apply to federal departments, agencies or institutions	Applies to federal departments, agencies or institutions

Provisions under the *Inuit Language Protection Act* addressing Inuktut as a language of education, early childhood education, and adult language learning, and Inuktut as a language of work, apply only to territorial institutions or the Government of Nunavut alone where specified.

The Acts further assign responsibility for different aspects of implementation, development, and enforcement to different bodies. Of importance are the responsibilities assigned to these bodies:

- The Minister of Languages is responsible for coordinating the implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of the legislation by departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies. The Minister is also mandated to promote the equality of Official Languages in Nunavut, and to create policies or programs to support the revitalization of Inuktut in areas of need.
- The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit is an independent body of language experts mandated to develop and standardize terminology and orthography for the modern use of Inuktut in government and business.
- The Office of the Languages Commissioner has an expanded role in the investigation of concerns about language services both in the public and private sectors, and in finding innovative solutions and, if necessary, seeking remedies for serious violations of the Acts through the Nunavut Court of Justice.

## SECTION 1: THE NEW OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

### INTRODUCTION

When Nunavut was created in 1999, it inherited the Northwest Territories *Official Languages Act*. The Act provides for full equality between English and French, and recognizes a lesser set of rights to seven Aboriginal languages, including Inuktitut<sup>1</sup>. This does not reflect the realities of Nunavut, where a majority of people speak neither English nor French as their first language, but a single Aboriginal language.

On June 4, 2008, Nunavut's new *Official Languages Act* was approved by Nunavut's Legislative Assembly and received concurrence from the Federal Parliament on June 11, 2009. The new Act establishes the Inuit Language ("Inuktitut"), English and French as Nunavut's Official Languages. The new Act will maintain and enhance all the rights and privileges of English and French speakers, while raising Inuktitut to equal status.

The new Act recognizes that Inuktitut is the spoken and preferred language of a majority of Nunavummiut, and provides Inuit in Nunavut with a clear statement of their inherent right to use Inuktitut in full equality with the other two Official Languages. It also affirms that positive action is necessary to protect and promote Inuktitut and Inuit cultural expression. The *Official Languages Act* represents a significant change from previous language legislation in the territories, and is unprecedented in Canada.

Nunavut is also home to two other official language communities, which have contributed and continue to contribute to the social, economic and cultural development of the Territory. English is widely used in the media, business, education and daily life. Francophones form a vibrant and dynamic community; but as a linguistic and cultural minority living far from the programs and resources available elsewhere, they have unique concerns regarding the protection and maintenance of their community's vitality in Canada's Arctic.

This section of the Plan identifies the implementation methods that departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies will employ in order to:

- Establish a clear standard of communication and access to government services in all three Official Languages—the Inuit Language, English and French;
- Protect and promote the French language and the vitality of the Francophone community, consistent with the obligations of Nunavut and Canada and with their policies as mutually agreed; and
- Provide a framework for action by territorial institutions to ensure that the Inuit and Francophone communities in Nunavut each have the means necessary to safeguard and strengthen their cultural expression, collective life and heritage for future generations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Under the NWT *Official Languages Act (1988)*, Inuktitut includes Inuinnaqtun.

## NUNAVUT'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The new Act recognizes the Inuit Language, English and French as Nunavut's three Official Languages. They have equal status, rights and privileges as to their use in territorial institutions, to the extent set out in the Act and regulations.

In its application to Inuinnaqtun, the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* must address the need for language revitalization and improve access to government programs and services specifically in Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Bathurst Inlet and Umingmaktuq.

### Official Languages in Nunavut

In 2006, Nunavut had a population of 29,325<sup>2</sup> people spread over 25 communities. The Territory covers 1.994 million square kilometres of land mass, and stretches over three time zones. There are no roads connecting the Territory with the rest of the country or linking its communities. Most goods and people must be flown in by plane, or by ship during the short summer season. This adds considerably to the cost of living in the Territory.

According to 2006 census data, Inuit formed 84% of Nunavut's population with 24,635 people, and represented the majority of residents in all communities. About 280 people reported another Aboriginal identity, and 4,410 reported non-Aboriginal identity.

The Government of Nunavut, under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, has an obligation to achieve a workforce representative of the population across all employment categories. In June 2011, the overall level of Inuit representation within the public service was 51% (c.f., *2012-2015 Government of Nunavut Business Plan*).

In terms of official language use, about 71% of the territorial population reported Inuktitut as their mother tongue in 2006, while 55% identified it as the main language used in the home and 79% were able to use it in normal conversation.

About 28% reported English as their mother tongue, while about 45% said it was the language they "mostly or only" spoke at home. About 88% of the territorial population reported they were able to speak it.

The census data indicated that about 1.4% of the territorial population reported French as their mother tongue, while 0.7% used it most often at home, and 4% were able to speak both English and French. Most Francophones in the Territory live in Iqaluit.

These geographic, economic and demographic factors impact significantly on the development and delivery of government programs and services in the Territory.

---

<sup>2</sup> As of July 2011, the total population of Nunavut was 33,320. Since language data for 2011 has not yet been released, data from the 2006 census will be used for comparison purposes.

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGE RIGHTS

The new *Official Languages Act* establishes the right to use Official Languages in the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and the Courts.

The Act also guarantees members of the public the right to communicate with and receive available services from the head or central service office of a territorial institution in the official language of their choice. With a few exceptions, Nunavut citizens can receive services from territorial institutions in any of the Official Languages.

Where significant demand for an official language has been identified in a municipality, members of the public can expect to receive prescribed municipal communications and services in that official language.

The new Act is not yet in force. Currently the *Official Languages Act* inherited from the Northwest Territories continues to apply in Nunavut. **Once the Minister's comprehensive plan is tabled with the Legislative Assembly, the Government of Nunavut will take action to bring the new *Official Languages Act* into force.**

Meanwhile, all departments and public agencies are required to make the necessary changes in order to meet their new obligations. These changes will strengthen compliance with the current version of Act.

## IMPLEMENTING OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OBLIGATIONS

The new Act creates specific obligations for territorial institutions and municipalities in Nunavut. Territorial institutions include all departments of the Government of Nunavut, the Legislative Assembly, judicial and quasi-judicial bodies, and the public agencies listed under Schedules A, B and C of the *Financial Administration Act*.

Municipalities will also be responsible for providing prescribed municipal communications and services where significant demand for service in an official language has been established in a community by way of a regulation.

The new Act does not create direct obligations for private sector bodies operating in the Territory, unless they are contracted to provide certain communications and services to the public on behalf of a territorial institution.

**Table 1: Territorial institutions in Nunavut as defined by the Act**

<p><b><u>Departments of the Government of Nunavut</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs</li> <li>• Community and Government Services</li> <li>• Culture and Heritage</li> <li>• Economic Development and Transportation</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Health and Social Services</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Justice</li> </ul> <p><b><u>The offices and institutions of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut*</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Judicial bodies*</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nunavut Court of Justice</li> <li>• Court of Appeal</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Public agencies**</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nunavut Arctic College</li> <li>• Nunavut Housing Corporation</li> <li>• Qulliq Energy Corporation</li> <li>• Nunavut Development Corporation</li> <li>• Nunavut Business Credit Corporation</li> <li>• Workers’ Safety &amp; Compensation Commission</li> <li>• Liquor Commission</li> <li>• Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council</li> <li>• Legal Services Board of Nunavut</li> <li>• District Education Authorities</li> <li>• Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut</li> <li>• Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Quasi-judicial bodies (without limitation)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights Tribunal</li> <li>• Labour Standards Board</li> <li>• Liquor Licensing Board</li> </ul>
--	---

\* *The Act affirms the Speaker’s jurisdiction over the privileges and traditions of the Legislative Assembly and the independence of the courts of Nunavut to regulate their own processes.*

\*\* *Regulation may allow a public agency to be excluded from obligation to the Act when that agency’s primary mandate relates to the strengthening or promotion of a single language or language community.*

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The new Act guarantees that anyone can use any official language in debates and other proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, to the extent set out in the Act. In conformity with the rights, immunities, privileges and powers of the Legislative Assembly and its members, the Minister will continue to consult with the Legislative Assembly and promote the efficient and effective implementation of the Act.

## ACTS, REGULATIONS AND NUNAVUT GAZETTE

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The Act supports the use of Official Languages in the laws of Nunavut. This includes printing and publishing Acts of the Legislative Assembly in English and French, and making bills available in Inuktitut when they are introduced to the Legislative Assembly. An Inuktitut version of an act may also be published and declared authoritative in the manner prescribed in the Act. The Department is also responsible for printing and publishing in both English and French instruments required by law in the *Nunavut Gazette*, and in Inuktitut in the manner prescribed in the Act.

**Current situation:** *The Legislation Division of the Department of Justice translates all acts and regulations into French. With respect to Inuktitut, significant progress has been made. Since 1999, every bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly has been translated into Inuktitut. Some older legislation has also been translated into Inuktitut, including pre-division bills, post-division acts, consolidations and website text.*

**Implementation priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to ensuring that its laws and other legal instruments are available in the three Official Languages, while supporting the fuller use of Inuktitut over time in the laws of Nunavut. The following implementation priorities have been identified:

- i. Prepare French language translations of all acts and regulations.
- ii. Boost legal translation and terminology development capacity in Inuktitut.

## ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Judicial and quasi-judicial bodies established by the laws of Nunavut with an adjudicative function are responsible for ensuring that Nunavummiut can use any official language in their proceedings, to the extent set out in the Act. In conformity with the independence, privileges and powers of the Nunavut Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal, the Minister will continue to consult with the Courts and quasi-judicial bodies and promote the efficient and effective implementation of the Act.

The Government of Nunavut is committed to support judicial and quasi-judicial bodies in meeting their obligations under the Act, including providing legal interpretation of their proceedings in the Official Languages, and translating decisions, orders, and judgments as required under the Act.

## COMMUNICATIONS WITH AND SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies are responsible for ensuring that signage and written materials intended for the public include the three Official Languages. Each official language version must have equal prominence, impact and effect.

The departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies are also responsible for providing their communications and services to the public in the three Official Languages, to the extent set out in the Act and regulations. In particular, a head or central service office of a department or public agency has an obligation to ensure that a member of the public can communicate with and receive available services in an official language of their choice. This also applies to other offices where significant demand for service in an official language has been identified, or where such service is warranted due to the nature of an office (e.g. scope, impact or importance of the service, or with respect to the health, security or safety of the public).

The administrative heads of every department of the Government of Nunavut, and of most public agencies, are responsible for taking measures to ensure that the offices they manage provide an active offer of services, by making members of the public aware of their right to communicate and receive service in their official language of choice. These services would be available on request, delivered with consideration given to cultural appropriateness and effectiveness, and of comparable quality in any official language. The administrative heads are further responsible for developing and maintaining operational policies or protocols for the implementation these measures.

**Current situation:** *The Government of Nunavut has taken important steps to improve compliance with the Official Languages Act. Actions include a restructured website for the Government of Nunavut available in the Official Languages, and the initial appointment of bilingual Government Liaison Officers to improve communication between Nunavummiut and their government in Inuktitut and English. The Department of Culture and Heritage has also begun to expand its capacity to provide translation services to departments and public agencies, and to build capacity over the years to manage French language services within the Government.*

*The Office of the Languages Commissioner has reviewed and commented on the Government's recent efforts to provide information to the public in the Official Languages. The Office noted that improvements are needed to ensure government forms, job postings, press releases and other public documents are issued equally in all Official Languages. The Office also assessed the availability of official language services over the telephone from head or central service offices, and noted that improvements are needed to ensure that employees serving the public make an active offer of services in the Official Languages, and that they follow a standard protocol for responding or redirecting callers in their official language of choice.*

*Feedback received from Nunavummiut emphasized the need for a greater focus on language revitalization, particularly in the Kitikmeot region where current language loss is a pressing issue. The lack of resources affects the capacity of the Government and various organizations to provide quality translation services in Inuinnaqtun. In light of this capacity challenge, emphasis should be placed on identifying realistic translation priorities for materials that will actually be*

*used, published in standardized orthography, and have the greatest impact on the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun.*

*Francophones would also like to see the Official Languages Act implemented without any further delay, and seek improved French delivery of government services. The need for quality French translations was also noted. The community wants to be involved in the design of programs and services impacting Francophones, including determining the feasibility of establishing a one-stop shop for the delivery of government services in French. Actions to facilitate the delivery of direct French language services to the public should be prioritized.*

**Implementation priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to improving its communications and services offered in the Official Languages. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Develop and implement policies and guidelines to support the delivery of both oral and written communications and services in the Official Languages.
- ii. Expand translation services and quality control in the Official Languages.
- iii. Identify priorities for the translation of materials in Inuinnaqtun that will have the greatest impact on language revitalization efforts.
- iv. Identify and implement measures to improve public access to communications and services in the Official Languages from departments and public agencies.
- v. Increase capacity within the public service to communicate and offer services in the Official Languages by reviewing the application of the bilingual bonus policy, designating a sufficient number of staff positions serving the public in an official language, ensuring an acceptable level of fluency and literacy, and providing language training, orientation and tools to staff.
- vi. Develop and implement measures to inform members of the public that they can communicate and receive available services in their preferred language, by making an active offer of services in the Official Languages by telephone, in person, and in writing.
- vii. Review government contracts to ensure communications or services delivered to the public through a third party will become available in the Official Languages.
- viii. Departments and public agencies will develop and maintain operational policies to ensure office protocols or procedures are in place to provide quality services in the Official Languages to members of the public.

## MUNICIPAL COMMUNICATIONS AND SERVICES

**Responsibilities and obligations:** If significant demand for municipal communications and services in an official language has been determined, the administrative head of the municipality is responsible for ensuring that members of the public can receive the municipal communications and services prescribed by regulation in that official language<sup>3</sup>.

**Current situation:** *Iqaluit is the only Nunavut community with a sizeable French speaking community. People who reported being able to speak French in 2006 represented about 12.5% of the total population in the territorial capital. Some measures may already be in place, but more research and discussion are needed to implement this provision of the Official Languages Act.*

**Implementation priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to promoting effective implementation of and compliance with the *Official Languages Act* by municipalities. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Establish a method for determining significant demand for municipal communications and services in an official language in a community.
- ii. If significant demand for municipal services in an official language has been determined in a community, draft regulations to set out the municipal communications and services to be provided to the public in that official language.
- iii. Request implementation plans from municipalities identified by a regulation to describe the activities and resources needed to manage and administer their language obligations, programs and services effectively.

---

<sup>3</sup> Essential municipal communications and services must be provided in Inuktitut under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, regardless of the volume or level of demand, in all Nunavut communities. These requirements will be dealt separately under Section 2 of this document.

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGES PROMOTION

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The Minister is responsible for advocating the equality of Nunavut's three Official Languages and promoting compliance with the language legislation, inside and outside of the Government of Nunavut.

The Act establishes an Official Languages Promotion Fund ("Fund"). The Fund will promote several goals, including recognizing and advancing the equal status, rights and privileges of the Official Languages of Nunavut, strengthening the vitality of the Francophone and Inuit language communities, and creating a positive environment for their cultural expression and collective life in Nunavut. The capital of the Fund may be drawn from fines or penalties from violations of the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, including from donations, bequests and other payments directed to the fund, and from a working capital advance to the fund from moneys appropriated by the legislature.

The Minister also has the authority to enter into agreements with the Government of Canada to promote and protect the Official Languages and the vitality of the official language communities in a manner consistent with the obligations of Nunavut and of Canada and with their policies as mutually agreed.

**Current situation:** *The Official Languages Promotion Fund has been established as a special account in the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Government of Nunavut. To date, no fine or penalty has been credited to the Fund. Before any potential funds can be disbursed, regulations must be made following consultations with stakeholders.*

*Since 1999, the Department of Culture and Heritage has administered the Canada-Nunavut General Agreement on the Promotion of the French and Inuit Languages. The Agreement has supported the delivery of territorial government services in French and the development of the Francophone community. Several community-based initiatives for the preservation, use and promotion of Inuktitut in Nunavut communities were also supported.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to promoting the equality of Official Languages in Nunavut. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Advocate for the equality of Nunavut's three Official Languages and promote compliance with the language legislation, inside and outside of the Government of Nunavut.
- ii. Develop regulations for the disbursement of funds, following research into best practices and consultations with stakeholders, and develop a long-term fundraising strategy to ensure the sustainability of the Official Languages Promotion Fund.
- iii. Administer agreements to promote and protect the Official Languages and the vitality of the official language communities in a manner consistent with the obligations of Nunavut and of Canada, and with their policies as mutually agreed.

## SECTION 2: THE *INUIT LANGUAGE PROTECTION ACT*

### INTRODUCTION

The protection and promotion of Inuit culture was identified as one of the most important goals for the creation of Nunavut, and language is one of the most important elements of Inuit culture.

While respecting the equality of Official Languages, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* was designed specifically to ensure respect for unilingual Inuit, particularly Elders, to reverse language shift among youth, and to strengthen the use of Inuktitut among all Nunavummiut. The Act was unanimously approved by the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut in September 2008, and is now law in Nunavut.

As one of Canada's founding languages, Inuktitut is also an irreplaceable part of the national heritage, and contributes to the richness and diversity of life in this country. Canada recognized this fact, and the need to protect and support Inuktitut, when it signed the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* in 2005, and, more recently, when it endorsed the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in November 2010.

In order to respond to the pressures confronting Inuktitut, and to ensure that its quality and prevalence are protected and promoted in Nunavut, this section of the Plan identifies the implementation methods that departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies will employ in order to advance Inuktitut:

- **As a language of education**, by providing children with lifelong oral and writing skills through a bilingual learning environment, enabling them to enter adult life as world citizens and participate in the day-to-day life, development and cultural vibrancy of their communities and homeland;
- **As a language of work in territorial institutions**, by supporting Inuit employment within the territorial public service to a representative level, and the advancement and participation of Inuit in the economic opportunities and development of Nunavut;
- **As a language in the day-to-day services** provided by governments, municipalities, and private sector bodies to the general public in Nunavut.

Implementation will also support the use of Inuktitut in pre-school and adult education, and include special measures to revitalize and promote its use among youth and in communities where there are concerns of language loss or assimilation.

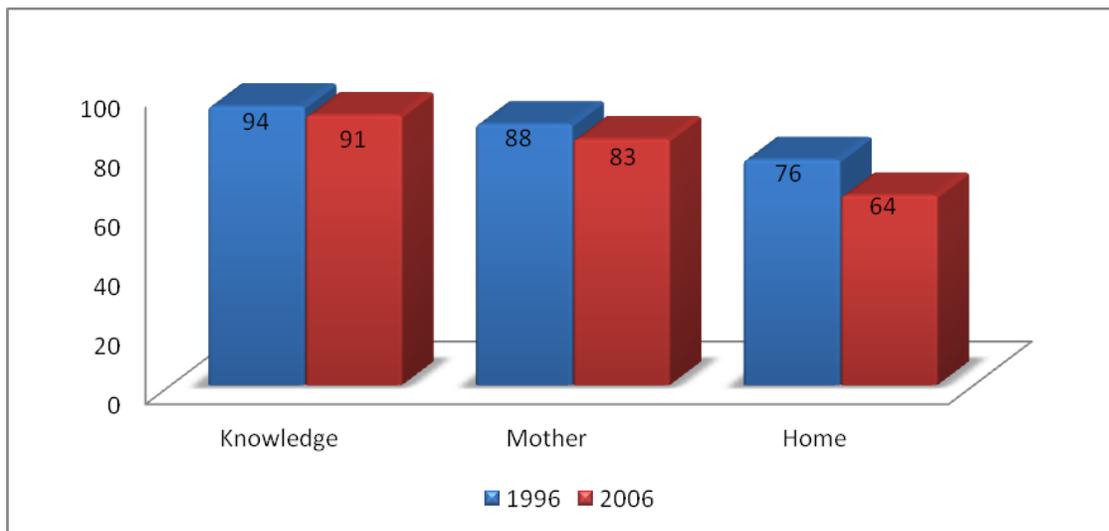
## DEFINING THE INUIT LANGUAGE

Except as directed by the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the Inuit Language is defined in the Act as Inuinnaqtun in or near Kugluktuk, Cambridge Bay, Bathurst Inlet and Umingmaktuug; Inuktitut in or near all other communities; or both, as prescribed by regulations. The term “Inuktitut”<sup>4</sup> is used interchangeably with the term “Inuit Language” throughout this document, unless a regional variant is specified.

In its application to Inuinnaqtun, implementation of Act will address the need for language revitalization and improving access to communications, services, instruction and language programs in Inuinnaqtun-speaking communities.

### *The vitality of Inuktitut in Nunavut*

The 2006 Canadian census data shows that Inuktitut is one of the three Aboriginal languages in Canada with enough speakers to have a good chance for survival. However, the data presents some very disturbing trends.



**Figure 1 Inuit identity with mother tongue and home language, Nunavut, 1996-2006**

The chart above reflects what Nunavummiut have known for a long time: over a period of ten years, the percentage of Inuit who report knowledge of their language, who name Inuktitut as their mother tongue, and who speak the language in their homes has dropped.

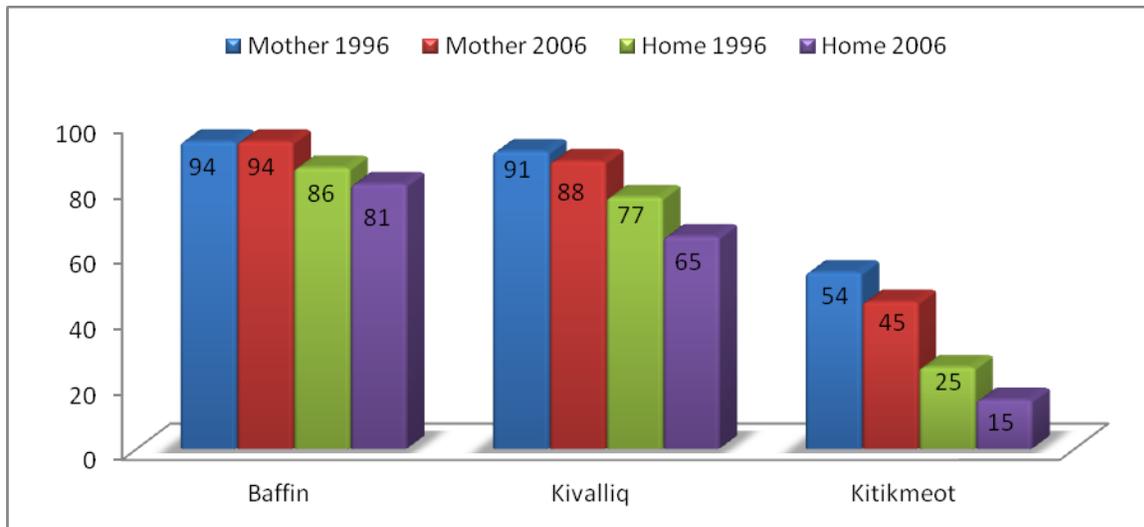
The decline in the number of people who speak mainly Inuktitut in their homes is particularly worrisome. Home is the most important environment for the transfer of a language from one generation to another. If enough households stop using Inuktitut in the home, there will not be enough mother tongue speakers to sustain the language into the future.

---

<sup>4</sup> At the time that Bill 7 (*Inuit Language Protection Act*) was before the Legislative Assembly for review in 2007, the MLA for Kugluktuk proposed to the Minister of Languages to use the term “Inuktitut” to refer to Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut together.

Inuit youth are beginning to feel that cultural gap. English dominates many aspects of contemporary society in Nunavut. Inuit youth are increasingly concerned about hearing and speaking more English and losing their ability to speak Inuktut. They have expressed the need for support for their language through family, community and education.

The vitality of Inuktut varies considerably by region, as illustrated in the chart below. A language strategy prepared by the Kitikmeot Inuit Association estimates that language revitalization in the region may take between 20 to 40 years if concerted action is taken immediately in homes, communities and schools. There are also concerns about language loss in other communities across Nunavut, particularly in Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Iqaluit, and Resolute Bay.



**Figure 2 Inuit Identity with mother tongue and home language, by Nunavut region, 1996-2006**

Social exclusion and access to services are also long-standing concerns. These include access to federal, territorial, municipal and business services delivered in Nunavut. To date, unilingual Inuit, particularly Elders, report feeling disadvantaged in their homeland. Because of language barriers, they often do not have equal access to important and basic services that other Canadians enjoy in either English or French.

Past government actions and policies, such as compulsory relocation of Inuit to residential schools, have had a persistent negative and destructive impact on Inuit identity, culture and language. The Canadian Prime Minister’s apology in June 2008 was a welcome step to begin the healing process, but much must still be done to truly address the disadvantages and discrimination faced by those for whom Inuktut is the first, only or preferred language.

## LANGUAGE SERVICES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The Act applies to organizations operating in Nunavut. This includes public sector bodies, municipalities and private sector bodies. Under the Act, public sector bodies include territorial departments or public agencies and federal departments, agencies or institutions. Private sector bodies include, unless exempted, businesses, Inuit organizations, cooperatives, unions, community or any other non-government entity.

These organizations are responsible for communicating with and providing services to the general public in Inuktitut. More specifically, every organization is required to:

- Include Inuktitut on its public signs, posters and any commercial advertising, and ensure that the text in Inuktitut is at least equally prominent with any other language used; and
- Provide reception services and any customer services available to the general public in Inuktitut.

In addition, an organization providing particular services designated under the Act must also include Inuktitut in its oral and written communications with the public, such as notices, warnings or instructions for users of the service, including monthly bills or invoices, and any other prescribed communications.

Under the Act, the designated particular services include:

- Emergency, search and rescue and dispatch services;
- Health, medical and pharmaceutical services;
- Supply of fuel, water, power and telecommunications;
- Restaurant, hotel, residential and housing services; and
- Other essential or important services that may be prescribed.

Contracts issued by the Government of Nunavut will similarly require that third parties provide their communications and services directed to the public in Inuktitut. This will be an important incentive, encouraging organizations bidding for government contracts or support to demonstrate their compliance with the requirements of the Act and regulations.

It is recognized that the legislation may create short-term challenges for some private sector organizations. The provisions of the Act will therefore be implemented and come into force over the next three years. This phased implementation, along with the discretionary powers of the Language Commissioner<sup>5</sup>, will give organizations time to prepare whatever procedures and materials they need to ensure compliance and to establish the required level of language capacity.

---

<sup>5</sup> If the requirements cause excessive hardship to a particular private sector organization, the Languages Commissioner can substitute less strict requirements. Exceptions to the requirements can also be made for private sector organizations whose purpose and activities relate to a single linguistic or cultural minority.

## Private Sector Bodies

**Responsibilities and obligations:** Private sector organizations operating in Nunavut are responsible for ensuring that the communications and services they provide to the general public are available in Inuktitut to the extent set out in the Act and regulations.

**Current situation:** *Under the Act, the Office of the Languages Commissioner has an expanded role in supporting private sector organizations with language planning as needed or required. Plain language guidelines and templates are now available. The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit can also assist organizations with the review of spelling and proper use of Inuktitut on signs and other documents. It is also responsible for administering a Language Award Program to acknowledge outstanding achievements by organizations in meeting the requirements of the Act.*

*The Department of Economic Development and Transportation is mandated to assist businesses, entrepreneurs and communities in support of economic development throughout the Territory. The Department administers the Small Business Support Program, and collaborates with various economic development organizations to foster business development through promotion, education, training, and advocacy. The Department of Community and Government Services provides centralized purchasing services for all government departments' goods, services and logistical requirements. It provides expertise in the preparation of tenders and contracts for a variety of activities for all government departments.*

*Private sector organizations are generally supportive in promoting Inuktitut to their customers. During the public consultation process, comments received from businesses and their representatives acknowledged the need for enhanced collaboration between government and the business community, clear directives and support programs for meeting the requirements of the Act, and leadership in determining a preferred or primary language or dialect to be used in "universal" applications such as signs, posters, commercial advertising and other customer-related services.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to maintain ongoing dialogue with private sector organizations to assist them in administering and preparing to meet their language obligations under the Act. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Review the Small Business Support Program Policy and enhance support for signage and other requirements of the Act, as identified in an Inuit Language Plan.
- ii. Work with economic development organizations to coordinate and promote leadership in the delivery of quality services to the general public in Inuktitut.
- iii. Provide plain language information on the requirements of the Act and undertake a campaign to foster pride in doing business in Inuktitut.
- iv. Review the call for proposals and tenders process to ensure that organizations bidding for government contracts or support are compliant with the Act.

## Municipalities

**Responsibilities and obligations:** Municipalities are responsible for delivering municipal communications and services in Inuktitut in all Nunavut communities, regardless of demand, to the extent set out in the Act and regulations. These provisions came into force on September 19, 2012.

**Current situation:** *The Department of Community and Government Services has the mandate to work in partnership with municipal governments, and to assist them in building their capacity to meet the needs of their residents. The Department provides programs and funding that support core municipal operations, infrastructure development, and land development. Support is also provided to ensure that training for councils and municipal employees is available.*

*While municipalities are generally effective in providing services in Inuktitut, the Act will ensure consistency across the Territory. For instance, some municipalities in the Kitikmeot region report that it is sometimes challenging to get documents translated or to find employees who can answer the telephone and provide services in Inuktitut. There is a consensus that municipalities will require financial support to ensure compliance with their obligations, including assistance in developing and promoting common municipal terminology in Inuktitut across Nunavut.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to maintaining ongoing dialogue with municipalities to assist them in meeting their language obligations under the Act. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Provide one-time support to municipalities for updating road and municipal building signage in their respective communities.
- ii. Work with the Municipal Training Organization to identify and deliver language training programs for municipal employees.
- iii. Prepare and provide plain language information on the requirements of the Act for municipal communications and services in Inuktitut.
- iv. Translate territorial government documents and manuals intended for the use of municipalities.

## Federal departments, agencies and institutions

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The *Constitution Act*, 1982, international and national human rights and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* require that federal departments, agencies or institutions operating in Nunavut take positive action to ensure equal access to their communications and services to the majority of Nunavummiut for whom Inuktitut is the first, only or preferred language.

**Current situation:** *Inuktitut speakers, particularly unilingual Elders, have long felt excluded from accessing essential services and benefits that other Canadians enjoy in either English or French.*

*Prior to the enactment of the Inuit Language Protection Act, Canada expressed the view that any compliance by the federal government with the provisions of the Act would be on a voluntary basis. Although some progress has been noted, the Government of Nunavut and its partners will continue to monitor and advocate for improved access to federal services in Inuktitut.*

*Federal programs and services that play an important role in the lives and wellbeing of Nunavummiut include those delivered by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, CanNor, Canada Post, the Canada Revenue Agency, Service Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Parks Canada, the Canadian Coast Guard, Health Canada, Elections Canada, Statistics Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and other federally regulated bodies.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to advocate for improved access to communications and services in Inuktitut provided by federal public bodies to Nunavummiut. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Maintain dialogue with federal public bodies operating in Nunavut to emphasize the importance of providing and promoting federal communications and services to the majority of Nunavummiut for whom Inuktitut is the first, only or preferred language.
- ii. Monitor the availability of federal services delivered to Nunavummiut in Inuktitut, identify service delivery gaps, and encourage remedial action.

## Territorial departments and public agencies

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The new *Official Languages Act* defines the Government's obligation to communicate and provide its services to the public in all Official Languages. The *Inuit Language Protection Act* also designates certain particular services that require improvements in Inuktitut delivery.

**Current situation:** *The Government of Nunavut has made important commitments to improve the delivery of communications and services in Inuktitut to the public. These include commitments to engage bilingual Government Liaison Officers in Nunavut communities, and to increase the number of Inuktitut-speaking employees at all levels, with a focus on those areas where the public's need for communications is both acute and immediate. The Government has thus encouraged Inuktitut-speaking Nunavummiut to become nurses, social workers and police officers through training. Language training is also being provided to government employees; and as more people become bilingual through the education system, the need for translation for unilingual individuals is expected to become less of an issue over time.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to improve public access to communications and available services provided by its departments and public agencies to the public in Inuktitut. The following implementation priorities have been identified:

- i. Improve access to reception services, and to any client or customer services available to the general public in Inuktitut.
- ii. Improve access to emergency, search and rescue, and dispatch services in Inuktitut, such as policing and child intervention services.
- iii. Improve access to quality health, medical and pharmaceutical services in Inuktitut, including training for nurses and medical interpreters, and support for medical terminology development and standardization initiatives.
- iv. Improve access to residential and housing services by ensuring reception and customer services are available in Inuktitut, including any notices, warnings or instructions provided to tenants.
- v. Improve access to services, such as the supply of power, by encouraging Qulliq Energy Corporation to ensure that reception and customer services are available in Inuktitut; and that monthly power bills, notices, warnings or instructions are provided to consumers in the official language of choice.

## LANGUAGE LEARNING AT ALL STAGES OF LIFE

### Early Childhood Education

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The Act supports early childhood language development and learning involving children and their parents at the community level. This section of the Act is not yet in force. It will be implemented in conjunction with the applicable provisions of the *Education Act* and potential future revisions of the *Child Day Care Act* and associated regulations.

**Current situation:** *The Department of Education provides support and guidance for the delivery of early childhood programs in Nunavut, including licensing and inspecting early childhood facilities, in accordance with the Child Day Care Act and associated regulations. Recent activities include initiating the development of language and culture learning materials and pre-kindergarten language assessment programs, and holding the first early childhood education conference. Funding resources are now available to District Education Authorities to promote Inuit language and culture in their early childhood education programs, as mandated by the Education Act. Nunavut Arctic College further delivered training programs for early childhood educators in Nunavut.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to promote early childhood development and learning in Inuktitut, involving children and their parents at the community level. Based on the *Education Act* and the *Child Day Care Act* and associated regulations, the following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Provide support to District Education Authority language and culture funding initiatives; expand outreach of early childhood education language and culture programming to parents with pre-school children at home; and support existing and new pre-school programs.
- ii. Develop and provide materials and resources to District Education Authorities to promote Inuit culture and language in early childhood programs in their communities.
- iii. Identify options to deliver a post-secondary Early Childhood Education Training Program in alternating locations across Nunavut.
- iv. Review the *Child Day Care Act* and associated regulations for possible revisions, and ensure that any revisions complement the *Education Act* and support compliance with the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

## Kindergarten to Grade 12

**Responsibilities and Obligations:** In conjunction with the *Education Act* and associated regulations, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* recognizes every parent's right to have his or her child receive instruction in Inuktitut. This right came into force on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 for kindergarten to grade 3 in most communities, and will be gradually phased in to all other grades by July 2019. The Government's goal is to produce bilingual graduates, fully proficient in Inuktitut and English or French.

**Current situation:** *The Department of Education has an important role to play in establishing an education program that develops Inuit Language learning and proficiency through bilingual education. Recent actions and achievements include updating Inuktitut language competency targets and language assessment strategies for grades 1-6, developing bilingual teaching and learning units for grades 1-3, and working with District Education Authorities and schools to establish language of instruction models and complete their staffing plans.*

*In the 2011-12 school year, 234 (33%) educators in Nunavut schools were Inuit, including 75 language specialists, 19 principals/vice/co-principals, and 140 teachers, most of whom are working with early elementary grades. Nunavut Arctic College is now offering the Nunavut Teacher Training Program (NTEP) in 11 communities, with more than 90 students currently registered.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to implement a K-12 education program that produces bilingual graduates. This commitment will be implemented using the *Education Act* and associated regulations. The following implementation priorities have been identified:

- i. Assist District Education Authorities and schools in implementing a language of instruction model appropriate for their community, updating annually staffing plans, providing training on language of instruction models and reviewing their implementation in schools.
- ii. Implement bilingual education by introducing a bilingual literacy approach for grades K-12, and review and offer a new Inuit Language and Culture Program.
- iii. Implement Inuit Language competencies and assessments for grades K-6, and develop Inuit Language competencies for grades 7-9.
- iv. Continue to develop and implement new bilingual curriculum materials, teaching and learning units for grades K-6 and 7-9.
- v. Continue to implement the *Qalattuq: Ten Year Educator Training Strategy*, in collaboration with Nunavut Arctic College and other partners.

## Adult Language Learning

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The Act requires that the Government develop and provide materials and programs designed for adults who wish to learn or improve their proficiency in Inuktitut, both in community learning environments and through post-secondary education.

***Current situation:** Research conducted by the Nunavut Literacy Council and other organizations emphasizes that advanced literacy skills are essential for modern work. Low reading and writing skills amongst beneficiaries is an issue that often impacts their ability to access and attain education, training and employment. It is important to consider skills gaps, language and literacy development together. Initiatives to increase the use of Inuktitut among adults should be supported by language enhancement training for different levels of speakers, while mainstreaming language and literacy development through post-secondary programs. Support should also be provided through community-based language learning and literacy programs.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to develop and provide materials and programs designed for adults who wish to learn or improve their proficiency in Inuktitut, both in community learning environments and through post-secondary education. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Consolidate all language and culture programs offered by Nunavut Arctic College, and increase the production of bilingual learning and teaching materials and publications.
- ii. Increase capacity to expand the delivery of the Interpreter/Translator Program in Nunavut.
- iii. Develop and implement a Nunavut Literacy Strategy Framework, and monitor and report on literacy initiatives across Nunavut in conjunction with the Nunavut Literacy Council.

## LANGUAGE OF WORK

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The Act provides every employee in the territorial public service the right to use Inuktitut at work in the manner prescribed in the Act and the regulations. This right protects employees who only speak Inuktitut, as well as bilingual employees for whom Inuktitut is the preferred language of work. This right came into force on September 19, 2011. Territorial institutions are thus responsible for creating work environments conducive to the use of Inuktitut by their staff. These provisions are a proactive response to the obligations set out in the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, including the requirement in Article 23 to establish a public service representative of the population of Nunavut.

**Current situation:** *The Government of Nunavut committed to making Inuktitut its working language with the Bathurst Mandate in 1999. To date, the Government has provided language training for territorial public servants, and supported the development of computer software and other tools that can be used in Inuktitut. The Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with other partners, has a prominent role to play in providing overall leadership and guidance to departments and public agencies to ensure these obligations are met.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to promote Inuktitut as a language of work within the territorial public service. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Develop and implement an Inuit Language Incentive Program to promote Inuktitut as a working language of the Government, and support the development of language and literacy skills among staff.
- ii. Expand the number and quality of language training and upgrading programs for staff for whom Inuktitut is a first or a second language.
- iii. Conduct a survey to establish baseline data on the status and use of Inuktitut as a language of work within the territorial public service.
- iv. Develop a language-of-work manual, review related legislation, regulations and policies, and provide orientation to assist management in supporting the use of Inuktitut in recruitment and employment.
- v. Encourage language networks, mentoring and other innovative means within the workplace to increase the use of Inuktitut among employees who prefer to work in Inuktitut.
- vi. Provide, when available, information technology systems that support the use of Inuktitut (e.g., systems compatible with Unicode-compliant syllabic fonts, the Inuktitut language interface currently available for popular computer office programs).
- vii. Develop and maintain a departmental list of terms necessary for staff working in Inuktitut, in collaboration with the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND STANDARDIZATION

**Responsibilities and obligations:** The Act establishes the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, an independent body of experts mandated to expand knowledge and expertise with respect to Inuktut, and to make decisions about the use, development and standardization of Inuktut in all areas under the legislation.

***Current situation:** The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit was established in 2008 and became an independent public agency on September 19, 2011. The agency has held two standardization symposiums, formed sub-committees to oversee the development of health, education, media, justice, and private sector terminology. The agency also met with similar language authorities in Canada and Greenland. An orthography committee was established with representatives from various departments and organizations to review options for a standardized written form of Inuktut, following consultations with Nunavummiut.*

*The diversity of Nunavut's dialects is part of the richness of Inuktut, and every effort should be made to protect and promote this diversity. Consideration must also be given to the growing demand and support required for the establishment of a common standard for today's education, businesses and workplaces to ensure effective communication regardless of dialect differences.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to support the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit in the development and standardization of Inuktut in all areas under the Act. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment.

- i. Develop and standardize Inuktut for modern government and business use, including terminology, competency levels and assessment for the purpose of certification.
- ii. Establish consensus on a common, standard written language writing system to support the delivery of quality services in Inuktut, and increase effective communications between users of different dialects and orthographies.
- iii. Assist businesses, municipalities, government and other organizations in reviewing spelling and proper use of terminology on signs and other public documents.
- iv. Undertake and/or supervise research on Inuktut, including language surveys, joint research initiatives with other organizations, and documentation of traditional terminology.
- v. Share information about language development and standardization by holding symposiums, workshops or other means, and establishing and maintaining a database to promote new terminology in Inuktut.
- vi. Administer a Language Award Program to recognize and acknowledge outstanding achievements by organizations or individuals in protecting and promoting Inuktut, and in complying with the requirements of the Act.

## LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION AND PROMOTION

**Responsibilities and Obligations:** The Act assigns to the Minister of Languages the responsibility to create government policies and programs to revitalize and promote the development and use of Inuktitut in the full range of activities and sectors of Nunavut society. The Minister may also enter into agreements with other government and non-government agencies sharing similar objectives.

***Current situation:** Several Inuit and other community organizations strongly advocate for increased and strengthened measures to revitalize Inuktitut. In the Kitikmeot region, there are serious concerns about language loss and assimilation. All partners were encouraged to work together to begin the long journey to language recovery in the home, community and school. Publishing, television, radio, performing arts, and new media were also identified as important tools in language preservation, revitalization and promotion. While many are lobbying for government action, communities also want and need a greater role in shaping local language promotion activities.*

*Grants and contributions provided to communities by the Department of Culture and Heritage, and by other territorial departments, provide a foundation for building partnerships. The Official Languages Promotion Fund has also the potential to become an important tool for the advancement of Inuktitut in Nunavut.*

**Implementation Priorities 2012-13 to 2015-16:** The Government of Nunavut is committed to support the revitalization and promotion of Inuktitut. The following implementation priorities have been identified to realize this commitment:

- i. Develop a tool for the assessment of local needs, and assist communities to develop language plans and manage language promotion activities that reflect local priorities.
- ii. Review policies and programs to support initiatives aimed at revitalizing and promoting Inuktitut among youth and communities for which there are concerns of language loss.
- iii. Review policies and programs to increase support for music and print production in Inuktitut, and work with partners to acknowledge and celebrate the work of authors.
- iv. Review policies and programs to increase contributions to the production and versioning of film, television and digital media in Inuktitut.
- v. Work with partners to identify media access technologies that have the greatest potential to promote the use or revitalization of Inuktitut.
- vi. Improve communication and public awareness about the legislation and associated regulations, language tools, and the importance of Inuktitut to Nunavummiut.
- vii. Undertake activities to advocate for enhanced legal, financial, program and research support for Inuktitut by national, international and private sector authorities.
- viii. Partner with other government or non-government agencies to help protect, develop and strengthen the use of Inuktitut, within and outside of Nunavut.

## SECTION 3: MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To support the effective and efficient implementation of language rights and obligations, the *Official Languages Act* and *Inuit Language Protection Act* establish a clear management and accountability framework, including an enforcement mechanism in case of non-compliance.

### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OVERSIGHT

In order to mainstream the implementation of language obligations throughout the Government of Nunavut, the Executive Council has been assigned a general oversight mandate. The Executive Council's authority includes:

- Approving, rejecting and revising or referring the comprehensive plan back to the Minister of Languages with direction, including proposed amendments to the Plan;
- Receiving or requiring periodic reports from the Minister, or from the administrative head of a department or a public agency, regarding the performance and implementation of the Plan.

### MINISTER OF LANGUAGES

The legislation appoints a single Minister of Languages who plays a leadership role in ensuring the effective management, accountability, promotion and implementation of the language legislation.

The Minister's specific duties include:

- Promoting and advocating the equal status of Nunavut's three Official Languages, and the full realization and exercise of Official Languages rights and privileges in Nunavut;
- Promoting the efficient and effective implementation of and compliance with the legislation by territorial institutions and municipalities;
- Co-ordinating the implementation, monitoring, management and evaluation of language obligations, policies, programs and services by departments and public agencies;
- Undertaking of other duties as required.

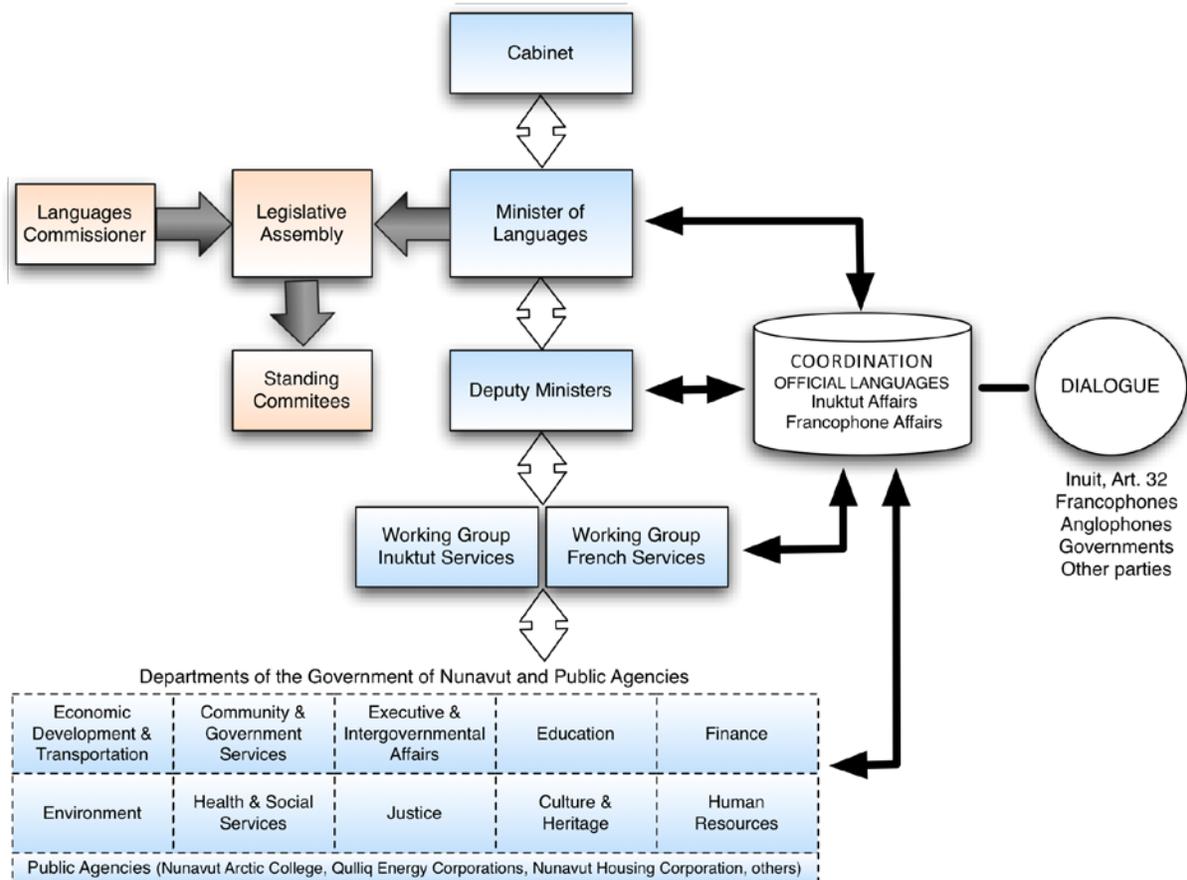
The overall responsibility for supporting the implementation of the language legislation is shared between the Minister of Languages, the departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies. Under the legislation, each department and public agency is accountable for the efficient and effective implementation of its statutory language obligations, both to Executive Council through its administrative head, and to the Legislative Assembly through its Minister.

The Minister of Languages is further tasked with developing and maintaining a comprehensive plan for the implementation of language-related obligations by the departments of the Government of Nunavut and public agencies, and with consulting Nunavummiut in the manner prescribed in the Act.

## CO-ORDINATING AND PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION

The following implementation governance structure will support the efficient and effective implementation of the Uqausivut Plan across the Government of Nunavut.

**Figure 3 Implementation Governance Structure**



A dedicated group of Deputy Ministers will support the Minister in the implementation of the legislation throughout the Government. This group will manage activities and government resources for implementation, and monitor results achieved under the Minister's Uqausivut Plan. The Deputy Minister of Culture and Heritage will play a lead role.

Interdepartmental working groups will provide support and advice to Deputy Ministers. The working groups will be comprised of designated departmental co-ordinators for the Inuit and French languages, and chaired by the Department of Culture and Heritage.

The Department of Culture and Heritage will act as a central agency to support the Minister, and provide overall guidance to departments and public agencies in planning and managing their language obligations. With added coordinating capacity for Inuktitut and French, the Department will play key roles in developing and maintaining a regulatory and policy framework; promoting awareness and better understanding among territorial institutions, municipalities and the public about the legislation and its implementation; monitoring the performance of government departments and public agencies; and preparing reports for the Minister.

The Government of Nunavut will establish and maintain dialogue with communities, organizations and sectors impacted by the implementation of the Uqausivut Plan, as it relates to their specific interests. This will include NTI (in accordance with Article 32 of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*), Francophones, Anglophones, territorial institutions, municipalities, businesses, and community organizations and groups. The Government will also cooperate with other government and non-government agencies for the protection and promotion of Official Languages in Nunavut.

A number of independent bodies also play important roles in ensuring effective implementation and compliance with the language legislation.

- The Office of the Languages Commissioner is responsible for investigating concerns regarding language practices of territorial institutions, municipalities and private sector organizations, and for helping to find innovative solutions. For difficult cases, an application can be filed to the Nunavut Court of Justice for binding enforcement.
- In conformity with the rights, immunities, privileges and powers of the Legislative Assembly and its members, standing committees of the Legislative Assembly may examine annual reports from the Office of the Languages Commissioner, the Minister of Languages, and the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, and call on these and other ministers concerning the implementation of the language legislation.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATING PERFORMANCE**

The Minister will regularly monitor the performance of government departments and public agencies in implementing their language obligations, and will initiate periodic reviews or audits of their compliance. As directed, departments and public agencies will prepare and submit annual or longer-term implementation plans to the Minister. Regular reports from departments and public agencies will inform the Minister and Cabinet of progress made in implementing language obligations, policies, programs and services, including the results achieved.

Based on this information, the Minister will prepare an annual progress report and table it in the Legislative Assembly. The annual progress report will describe:

- Activities, results achieved and use of government resources in implementing language obligations by departments and public agencies;
- The establishment, operation and performance of policies, programs and services delivered by departments and public agencies; and
- Any other information that the Minister considers appropriate.

An evaluation framework will be developed to provide a consistent measure of progress by government departments and agencies in implementing their language obligations, and to identify any adjustments necessary to improve results. The framework will ensure that results are captured in a consistent and timely manner, drawing on lessons learned during implementation.

The framework will:

- Describe how the outcomes of this plan will be captured at various levels;

- Define measurable indicators, including number of staff serving the public in an official language, their level of fluency and literacy, the impact and effectiveness of policies, activities, programs and services, and use of government resources for implementation; and
- Establish baseline data to inform the development and maintenance of the Plan, including the five-year review of the *Official Languages Act* and *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

## RESOURCING THE PLAN

The Government of Nunavut has made important investments and will continue to invest in the development and implementation of programs and services to meet its language obligations. The guiding principle of *Qanuqturniq* will also be promoted to encourage departments and public agencies to be innovative and resourceful, and to make the most of the available government resources in undertaking the implementation of their language obligations.

To assist departments and public agencies in meeting their language obligations, the Government of Nunavut will establish an Implementation Fund to pay for government-wide programs and services in Inuktitut. The Fund will be primarily used to build capacity among departments and public agencies, with the expectations that programs and services in Inuktitut will become a normal and regular part of their operations and planned for.

In addition, the Department of Culture and Heritage will continue to administer the *Canada-Nunavut General Agreement for the Promotion of the French and Inuit Languages*. Over the last decade, Canada has provided approximately \$1.45 million annually to pay for programs and services delivered in French by departments and public agencies, and support the development of the Francophone community. The federal government has provided a further \$1.1 million dollars annually, primarily to support community-based Inuit Language initiatives.

The Government of Canada is and will remain an important partner for the implementation of Nunavut's language legislation. The Government of Nunavut, along with its partners, will advocate for a new Nunavut-specific language funding agreement between Nunavut and Canada. We will seek "adequate and sustained" federal funding for the continued protection and promotion of Official Languages in the Territory, consistent with Nunavut's legal obligations<sup>6</sup>, particularly with respect to French and Inuktitut.

---

<sup>6</sup> The Senate of Canada endorsed this view when it gave concurrence to Nunavut's new *Official Languages Act* on June 11, 2009: "That, in light of Parliament's decision to concur in the passage of the *Official Languages Act* by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, the Government of Canada make adequate and sustained funding available to the Government of Nunavut for the continued protection and promotion of official languages in the territory, as is consistent with the Government's legal obligations." Recommendation issued by the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs in its final report entitled: *Language Rights in Canada's North: Nunavut's New Official Languages Act*.