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UKIUP NUNNGUTAANUT NAUNAITKUTIT
ANNUAL REPORT
RAPPORT ANNUEL



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TITIRAQVIANIT KAMISSINAP ILITARIYAUHIMAYUNUT UQAUHIIT NUNAVUNMI
THE OFFICE OF THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER OF NUNAVUT
LE BUREAU DU COMMISSAIRE AUX LANGUES DU NUNAVUT



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BOX/C.P. 309, IQALUIT, NU X0A 0H0

☎ 867.975.5125 ☎ 867.979.8623 ☎ 1.877.836.2280

✉ LANGCOMM@ASSEMBLY.NU.CA

www.langcom.nu.ca

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Message from the Acting Languages Commissioner

I am pleased to present the 2007-2008 annual report. This reporting year was shared by two Languages Commissioners: first by my predecessor Johnny Kusugak who unfortunately had to resign in December 2007; then I subsequently took on the work as the acting Languages Commissioner. Mr. Kusugak did the important task of taking part in the community consultations for the proposed language acts. This was a crucial part of creating legislation that was made in Nunavut.

Significant work has been done on strengthening Nunavut's language laws through the efforts made on drafting the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and the *Official Languages Act*. I very much look forward to the introduction of the Bills to the legislature and especially the implementation of the acts.



Eva Aariak

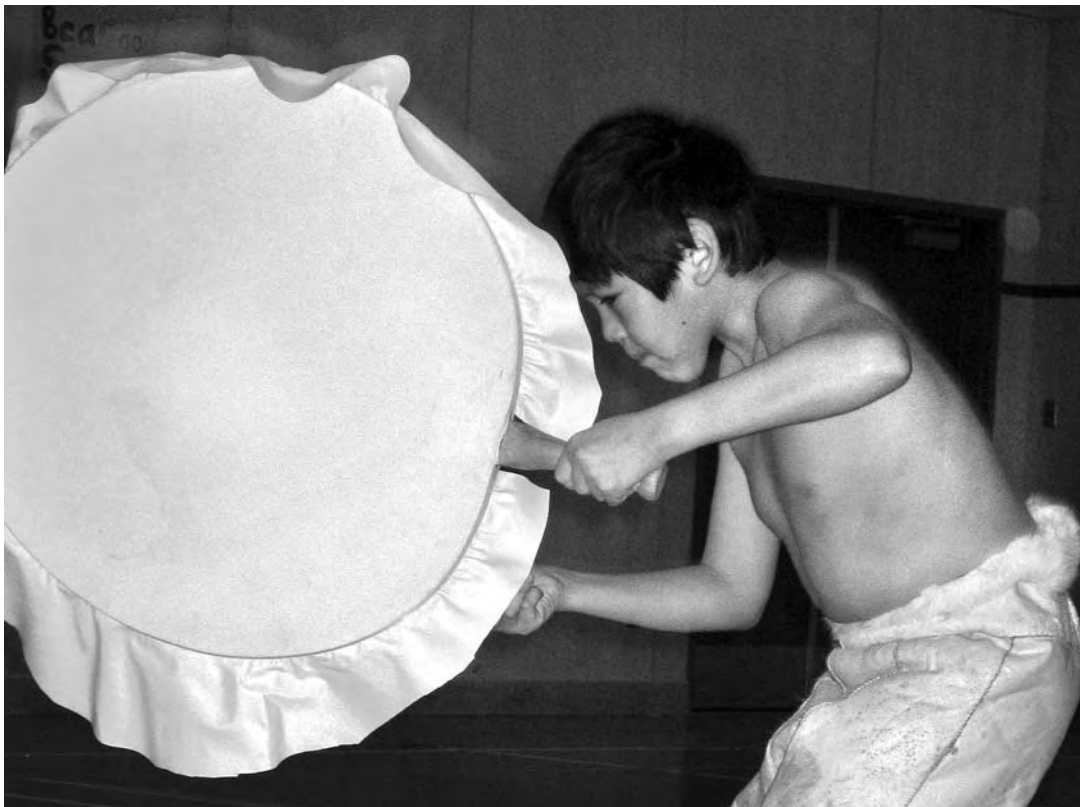
Acting Languages Commissioner of Nunavut

The Official Languages of Nunavut

The Inuit language

The Inuit language, includes Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun, is the largest language group in Nunavut. Seventy percent of Nunavummiut speak the Inuit language as their first language. The Inuit language includes a number of different dialects. Inuinnaqtun is the dialect spoken in the western-most parts of the territory.

There are two different ways people in Nunavut write the Inuit language: *Qaliujaaqpait* (or Roman orthography) and *Qaniujaaqpait* (syllabics). Most Inuktitut speakers in Nunavut use syllabics to write their language. This writing system is made up of about 60 characters, most of them representing complete syllables. Thus "NU" in Roman orthography is written with one character in syllabics: "ᑎᑦ". The Roman orthography writing





system uses the same letters that are used to write English or French. Many people who normally use syllabics will also use Roman orthography, especially for writing e-mails or when working on computers. The Government of Nunavut's computers now have the capacity to work in syllabics. Inuinnaqtun speakers almost always use Roman orthography.

French

Nunavut's capital, Iqaluit, is home to a thriving Francophone community. The French speaking population is served by a school, a daycare, a community radio station, and a cultural centre that stages various events almost every week of the year.

English

English is very prevalent in the territory. In the larger centres, use of English is as widespread as use of the Inuit language, obviously especially among non-Inuit. In Nunavut, there are still many unilingual speakers of the Inuit language and speakers whose first language is the Inuit language, although the number of people with better English than Inuit language skills is on the rise. English is the de facto language of government and industry. In its *Pinasuaqtavut* document of 1999, the Government of Nunavut promised to work toward educating children in our schools to be fully bilingual with strong skills in both languages. This is a strategy they are hoping will achieve another *Pinasuaqtavut* goal: the Inuit language as a working language of the government by the year 2020.



Roles and Responsibilities

The Languages Commissioner is an independent Officer of the Legislative Assembly, appointed by Nunavut's elected representatives to a four year term. The Languages Commissioner has a number of responsibilities, which are detailed in the current *Official Languages Act*, which was adopted from the N.W.T *Official Languages Act* and includes:

1. Monitoring

The Languages Commissioner and the staff monitor the Government of Nunavut's progress toward meeting its obligations to Nunavut's official languages under the following documents:

- The *Official languages Act*
- *Pinasuaqtavut* (the *Bathurst Mandate*), which commits the Government of Nunavut to
 - i. making Inuktitut its working language
 - ii. encouraging bilingualism in Inuktitut and English
 - iii. respecting the needs and rights of French speakers
- The *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (NLCA), which requires the Government of Nunavut to attain a level of Inuit employment that is representative of the overall population of Nunavut.
 - i. It is to achieve this partly by removing existing barriers to Inuit employment. In negotiations with the Government of Canada regarding the implementation of the land claim, the Government of Nunavut has affirmed that the use of English as its working language constitutes a barrier to employment for the majority of Nunavummiut who speak Inuktitut as their first language.

- The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which guarantees that the English and French speaking minorities in Nunavut have the right to have their children educated in their languages.

2. Advisory role of the Languages Commissioner

The Office of the Languages Commissioner is the only institution in Nunavut dedicated entirely to language issues. Through on-going contacts with communities and stakeholders throughout the territory, research activities, and policy work, the Office is able to provide the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Government of Nunavut with comprehensive recommendations on the best responses to language issues facing the territory.

3. Language Promotion

The Languages Commissioner has an important role in bringing language issues to the public's attention and participating in language promotion activities throughout Nunavut. The Languages Commissioner fulfills this duty by:

- Consulting with communities about the language issues they face and encouraging them to learn and use our official languages: the Inuit language, French and English
- Attending events focused on language issues.
- Participating in the organization of the annual *Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq* (Inuit language Week)
- Maintaining a website with information about Nunavut's languages, language rights and the role of his Office



- Participating in interviews with the media
- Addressing conferences on various language issues

The Government of Nunavut has promised to make the Inuit language its working language while respecting the rights of Nunavut's English and French speakers. The Languages Commissioner is monitoring the Government's progress and makes recommendations on how to achieve these goals.

4. The Role of Ombudsman

The Languages Commissioner receives, investigates and reports on complaints from the public regarding violations of the language rights contained in the *Official languages Act*. These include:

- The right to use any of the official languages in Nunavut's courts.
- The right to communicate with and receive services from all head Offices of Government of Nunavut (GN) departments and organizations in English and French.
- The right to communicate with and receive services from any regional or community Office of the GN in Inuktitut.
- The right to use any of the official languages in the Legislative Assembly.

If a member of the public feels that language rights contained in any piece of Nunavut legislation have been violated, they may launch a formal complaint with the Languages Commissioner. The Office of the Languages Commissioner will then investigate the complaint, and may make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly regarding any actions needed to correct the situation.



Please talk with us

In order to help us effectively perform our role of providing advice to the government regarding language issues, we rely greatly on public feedback. We encourage people to contact our office with concerns or ideas about any of Nunavut's official languages and we will do our best to make sure that these voices are heard.

We also answer any inquiries related to Nunavut's official languages. If you have a question about any of the official languages, Nunavut's language legislation, language-related initiatives taking place or any other language issues, we would be happy to answer your questions. We can also provide advice on acquiring funding for language and literacy projects in your community and offer written support for your project.

We also investigate concerns about receiving services from the territorial government in Nunavut's official languages. The Office of the Languages Commissioner is here to make sure the Government of Nunavut follows its own laws that deal with language. The *Official Languages Act* contains a number of language rights that the Government of Nunavut is required by law to respect. If you believe that the GN is breaking any part of the *Official Languages Act*, or going against any of its own language-related policies, please advise our Office. We will keep the matter confidential and attempt to resolve the problem. Feel free to drop by in person or contact us by telephone or email.

Office location: Building 1088E, Iqaluit
Toll-Free: 1-877-836-2280
Email: langcom@assembly.nu.ca





About Complaints

The translation of the word “complaining” into the Inuit language is considered negative and unproductive, this discourages Inuit to make a complaint. Though, it is believed that the idea of contribution to the betterment of society as a whole is fundamental to the society. We work hard to ensure it is understood that when violations of language rights are reported, it is to fix problems that exist. Reporting is not done merely to express dissatisfaction.

We rely to a great extent on the public to inform us if a GN organization is not living up to its obligations under the *Official Languages Act*. Infractions that are not reported to us could continue and each complaint we receive helps us to identify problems and work with departments to improve government services in all of our official languages. We conduct our inquiries and make recommendations in the spirit of respect and cooperation with the complainant and the agencies involved.

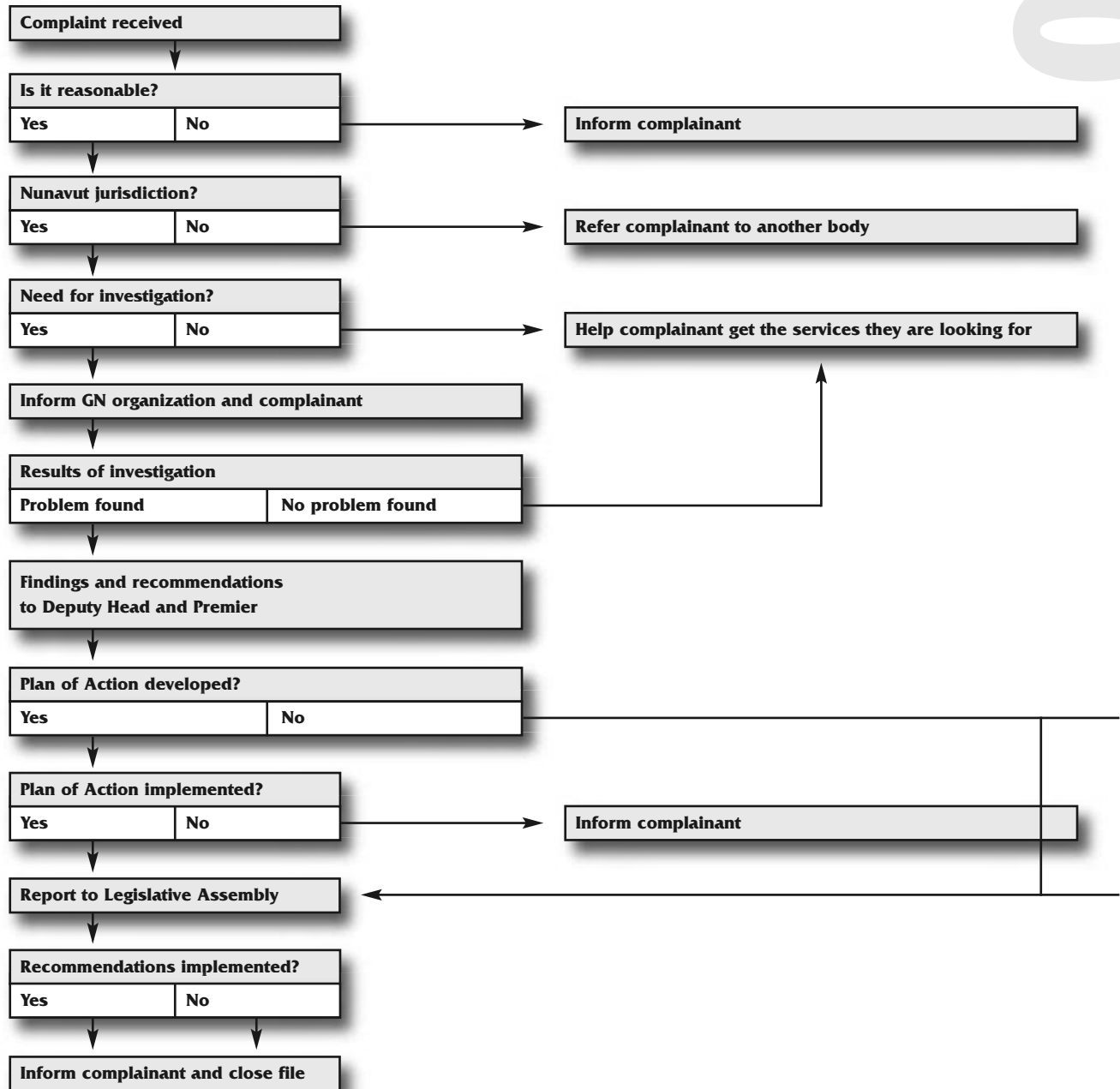
We often receive complaints regarding municipalities and private organizations and although the jurisdiction of the *Official Languages Act* is currently limited to the Government of Nunavut and territorial organizations, we do inform the

organization of the complaint and offer suggestions on how to improve their services. With the implementation of the new *Official languages Act*, we are hopeful that our jurisdiction will soon be expanded in order to protect official language rights in all sectors of the territory.

The following flow-chart outlines what we do with a complaint when it is received.



Complaints Process Flow Chart





Working Toward New Language Legislation

Developing New Language Legislation

The Office of the Languages Commissioner has long advocated for the creation of new language legislation in Nunavut. In April of 2004 a Language Legislation Steering Committee was set up with the task of developing draft legislation to preserve and promote the Inuit language in Nunavut while maintaining the rights of French and English speakers.

Since then, members of our Office along with representatives of the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. have been working towards developing a new made-in-Nunavut *Official Languages Act* and an *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

In March of the previous reporting year, the drafts of Bill 6, the *Official Languages Act* and Bill 7, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* were completed. The Language Legislation Steering Committee members were then able to take the drafts on community consultations. These consultations were very valuable as input provided by participants made a significant change to the draft legislations. The Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth is planning to table the Bills in the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Role of the Proposed Legislation

Official Languages Act

The new *Official languages Act* will establish three official languages with equal sets of rights: the Inuit language (including the dialects of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun), French, and English.

Some key rights set out by the *Official Languages Act* are that:

- All government Offices in Nunavut are required to serve the public in the Official languages.
- All Nunavummiut have the right to speak any of the Official languages when appearing in court or court-like-bodies in Nunavut.
- Anyone may ask for an audio recording of any discussion in the Legislative Assembly in any of the Official languages.
- All laws must be published in English and French and the Legislative Assembly will work towards translating Nunavut's laws into the Inuit language.

Inuit language Protection Act

Although the new *Official languages Act* will give equal status to the Inuit language, the need for a second act was identified as a way to ensure that Inuit language is strengthened and preserved.

The purposes of this Act are:

- To promote and increase the use of the Inuit language in education, government administration, municipalities, the private sector, and in the general population;
- To ensure that all Nunavummiut have the ability and access to resources to strengthen their Inuit language skills; and
- To ensure that Inuit language speakers are not discriminated against in terms of opportunities for employment, education in their mother tongue, and in receiving services from Government of Nunavut, municipalities or private businesses.

Inuit Language Authority

One of the most important aspects of the proposed *Inuit Language Protection Act* will be the provision for an Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit (the Language Authority).

The Inuit Language Authority will be an official language body with decision-making powers to develop and approve terminology and language competency, standardize writing systems, and act as a resource to the public on standards of use and terminology.





2007-08 Activities

Schools

During Language week in February, the Languages Commissioner went to the Inuksuk High school in Iqaluit to do a presentation on Official Languages and to bring awareness about language rights. Also, during the same month the Languages Commissioner did a presentation to the Masters in Education Program students in Rankin Inlet. These presentations were well received, and the questions were helpful in determining what the important issues are for students.

Community Consultations

In April this Office did community consultations as part of the work by the Language Legislation Steering Committee. These consultations were on the two language: Bill 6 the Official Languages Act and Bill 7 the Inuit Language Protection Act. Five regional roundtables were held, including a public meeting in Iqaluit. These consultations were on the content of the proposed language bills. There were representations at the roundtables from almost every Nunavut community. Unfortunately the representatives from Repulse Bay, Arviat and Arctic Bay were not able to attend due to unforeseen cancelation of flights. These consultations provided very valuable input from the participants, which were integrated into the draft Bills before they were formally introduced in the legislative assembly.

Standing Committee presentations

In September 2007 submissions by the Languages Commissioner were made to Ajauqtiit

standing committee on the recommended changes to Bills 6 and 7. Another submission was made in January 2008 to the standing committee and focused on the expanded role of the Languages Commissioner and clarification on this office's position.

Also in February 2008, the Languages Commissioner participated in a round table discussion with representatives from CLEY and the standing committee on Rules and Rights of Parliament in regards to providing Inuit language interpretation in the Senate.

Stakeholders

After the appointment of the Acting Languages Commissioner, January was spent meeting with representatives from various stakeholders; including the Francophone Association, NTI and CLEY.

In June, this office also participated in a meeting with Translation Bureau (Terminology Standardization Directorate), and the Department of Culture Language Elders and Youth in Ottawa.

Media

February is the month to celebrate language week. The Languages Commissioner did a television interview with CBC Iglaaq on public signage within the government and the private sector. This was in relation to the new languages legislation. There was also a CBC radio interview about where the Inuit language is now and a discussion on where we want to go.

In April there was an interview with APTN in which the Languages Commissioner was asked to give her thoughts on the Senate proposing to provide Inuit language interpretation.

Presentations and other Activities

One of the important duties of this Office is public awareness of language rights. In November 2007 the Languages Commissioner attended the Building a Strong Foundation Workshop panel and took part in the discussion on “Support for a Bilingual/Biliterate Nunavut”.

In February the Languages Commissioner made a presentation at the Nunavut Literacy Council, Qikiqtani regional workshop on language issues, specifically on the status of the Inuit language and the pending language legislations.

In March there was a presentation on the two Nunavut language bills at the “Inuit Lecture Series” in Ottawa. This was a joint effort between Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Carleton University, and the Inuit Relations Secretariat of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The languages commissioner also participated as a panelist at the end of the lectures.

Inquiries

The Office received over 70 inquiries in the 2007-08 year. Common inquiries include questions about Nunavut’s language legislation and

policies, how to find translation services, where to find Inuit language learning resources, and clarification on proper spelling and grammar. We receive and answer inquiries in English, Inuit language, and French, in person, by email and by phone.

Complaints

We received two formal complaints in the reporting year. Some of the less serious complaints were dealt with informally. All complaints were handled in a confidential manner and we were able to work collaboratively with everyone involved to find appropriate resolutions.

We continue to receive complaints and hear concerns from people regarding language services in organizations that are outside of our jurisdiction. When we received any such complaints, the Languages Commissioner followed up informally with the organization in question to inform them of the complaint and to discuss ways to improve their official languages services. We look forward to being able to more effectively protect language rights in all sectors of the territory once the new *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* come into force.



Recommendations

The Official Languages Act (OLA) and the *Inuit Language Protection Act (ILPA)* have now been drafted. With the anticipation of the two language legislation being passed I am recommending changes in staffing to reflect the Office of the Languages Commissioners proposed new mandate. Additional staff is necessary to enable the office to focus on compliance of the new language laws during the implementation phase as well as continued compliance after the implementation phase. The private sector will need assistance to comply with the legislation and this office needs to have the capabilities to offer assistance to ease the transition.

Increased staffing will also necessitate a larger office space.

Our hope is that we not set the private sector up for failure. In order to make the intent of the language laws come to life, ensuring services are provided in the Inuit language; revitalizing, preserving and promoting the Inuit language, we feel we must dedicate positions to ensure there are those to assist in the process. After all, we want the Inuit Language speakers of Nunavut to eat in restaurants, take flights, receive bills and do their banking in their language of choice.

Summary of Proposed new acts:

The following is a summary of some of the proposed changes to language laws, including some of the changes to our office's mandate. Lastly, we will provide recommendations on staffing changes to ensure the focus is on compliance to the new language laws.

Currently the Office of the Languages Commissioner has the following staff:

- Languages Commissioner
- Policy analyst
- Public Affairs Officer
- Executive Secretary
- Legal Counsel on an 'as-and-when needed' contract

The two acts OLA and ILPA are to work together virtually as one act. The proposed new duties for the Office of the Languages Commissioner on the two acts are as follows:

1. Official Languages Act:

The new act would recognize three official languages in Nunavut: Inuit Language, French and English. One of the changes is the use of the term "Inuit language" which includes Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut. Inuit Language rights have been strengthened to be more equal with French and English language rights. There is also a new provision which obligates services in official languages for municipal services where there is a significant demand.

The Office of the Languages Commissioner would receive complaints on claims of official language rights violations, except in the new act there will be strengthened investigative powers with stringent deadlines making it even more of a formalized complaints process. The Languages Commissioner can compel statements and also can enter premises to obtain relevant information. There is also a new mediation option that the Languages Commissioner can take to resolve a concern.

2. Inuit Language Protection Act:

This proposed act is a completely new act. Its main purpose is to promote and preserve the Inuit language. It obligates the private sector, territorial institutions, the federal government and municipalities to provide certain services in the Inuit language. These services include reception, emergency, dispatch, health, medical, pharmaceutical, hospitality, telecommunications and household services such as fuel and water. The Office of the Languages Commissioner is to create language plans guidelines for the private sector.

The proposed act also establishes Taiguusiliuqtiit, an Inuit Language Authority. Taiguusiliuqtiit is a body that would be responsible for creating, standardizing terminology, publishing them and creating competency levels. The Languages Commissioner may provide advice to the authority upon the authority's request.

The act would also create a Minister of Languages responsible for developing policies and programs for promoting and preserving the Inuit language. The Minister must prepare a plan for promoting and preserving the Inuit language and report regularly to the legislative assembly on the status of the strategy.

With the increased language service rights all the duties of the Languages Commissioner under the

Official Languages Act will apply to ILPA, these duties include:

Ombudsman – receiving, investigating and reporting on complaints, representation and advocating on language rights.

Promotion – of rights and status of official languages, attend and organize public events, provide support to language initiatives, research, monitoring media and producing press releases on language issues.

Monitoring – of investigations for patterns of breaches, research, liaise with Government of Nunavut, municipalities, private sector and other stakeholders.

Legislation review – review and recommend changes, monitor drafting and implementation of legislation, advise Government of Nunavut and work with stakeholders.

Language Planning – assist the private sector to comply with new legislation.

Inuit Language Authority – liaise, research, assist and attend meetings.

It is evident there will be a significant increase in the number of inquiries, concerns, and assistance that this Office will have to provide. It is for this reason there must be capacity to handle the workload.



3. Recommendations:

1. We recommend salaries and resources for four new positions for the Office of the Languages Commissioner.
2. We would eliminate one existing position.
3. The changes should be in place as soon as the Legislation comes into force.

Staff needed to address new roles:

Languages Commissioner – duties as per both OLA and ILPA.

Director of Policy – (new position). Oversee complaints and investigations, legislation monitoring, assist in language planning with government, municipal and private organizations.

Investigation/Research Officer (French) – (new position). Providing services to the public in French. Receiving and responding to complaints, investigations and inquiries, assist in language planning, keeping records of investigations and reports, Assisting the Languages Commissioner in his or her consultations with the francophone community, and also in communications and public outreach in French.

Investigation/Research Officer (Inuit Language) – (new position). Providing services to the public in Inuit Language. Receiving and responding to com-

plaints, investigations and inquiries, assist in language planning, keeping records of investigations and reports. Assisting the Languages Commissioner in his or her consultations with the Inuit community, and also in communications and public outreach in an Inuit Language.

Private Sector Liaison Officer – (new position). Meet with outreach to present to private sector organizations and businesses on their responsibilities according to new legislation. Assist private sector organizations develop language plans.

Public Affairs Officer – Work with media, promote language rights, attend and organize public events, produce office newsletters and other releases, assist in producing annual report, website development and maintenance.

Legal Counsel – An expected increase in the use of Legal counsel-on-contract to support investigative activities and to assist in creating new office investigative and complaints resolution policies.

Work Plan 2008-2009

Once the new language acts *Official Languages Act (OLA)* and *Inuit Languages Protection Act (ILPA)* are passed and become law much of our office's focus in the next few years will be implementation of the acts. This may include restructuring staffing in the office and adding four new positions and eliminating one position to reflect the added duties provided in the ILPA. Adding position would also require larger office space.

Our office will need to work closely with the private sector to offer assistance and guidance to them. This is to allow for easier transition of providing services in Inuit language where it did not exist prior to the new law. This will involve producing then providing information kits and information sessions.

We will also need to work closely with Department of Cultures, Language, Elders and Youth so that implementation of the acts and transition of changes made in the acts are as seamless as can

be. One area we must work closely with CLEY is a public awareness campaign so that messages to the public are clear, consistent and understandable. A rigorous public awareness campaign will need to be done to provide information on changes made by the new laws, and the changes to the role of our office and that of CLEY's.

One of the proposed changes in OLA is to include in the complaints process a mediation process. Our office will need to develop and implement a mediation procedure which will involve either training staff to do mediations or hiring an outside source on an "as and when needed" basis. The revamping of our complaints procedure will also include the new investigative powers, and the extra accountability measures provided in the new acts.

Our office will also need to produce new public information kits and update our website to reflect the changes in the new laws.





2007-2008 Budget and Expenditures

from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008

Summary	Budget	Spent	Committed	Balance
Permanent Salaries	430,000.00	292,775.44		137,224.56
Casual Wages		7,657.53	-	(7,657.53)
	430,000.00	300,432.97	-	129,567.03
Travel	40,000.00	14,772.86		25,227.14
Materials & Supplies	40,000.00	6,778.32		33,221.68
Purchased Services	25,000.00	18,853.89		6,146.11
Utilities	5,000.00	3,206.61		1,793.39
Contract Services	60,000.00	56,865.00	-	3,135.00
Fees and Payments	5,000.00	311.29		4,688.71
Other Expenses	5,000.00	7,901.77		(2,901.77)
Tangible Assets	5,000.00	-		5,000.00
Computer Hardware & Software	5,000.00	1,719.40		3,280.60
	190,000.00	110,409.14	-	79,590.86
Total	620,000.00	410,842.11	-	209,157.89



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THE OFFICE OF THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER OF NUNAVUT

LE BUREAU DU COMMISSAIRE AUX LANGUES DU NUNAVUT

BOX/C.P. 309, IQALUIT, NU X0A 0H0

☎ 867.975.5125 ☎ 867.979.8623 ☎ 1.877.836.2280

✉ LANGCOMM@ASSEMBLY.NU.CA

www.langcom.nu.ca