

Annual Reports for April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025

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1. LETTER TO THE SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Legislative Assembly of Nunavut Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0

Mr. Speaker,

Per subsection 24(1) of the *Official Languages Act*, I am pleased to submit to you the 2024-2025 Annual Report of the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut.

This report covers the period from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Furthermore, please table this report in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, as specified in subsection 24(2) of the *Official Languages Act*.

Respectfully,

Karliin Aariak

Languages Commissioner of Nunavut

2. MESSAGE FROM THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

Since the creation of the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut in 1999, the role of the Languages Commissioner has evolved. Notably, on July 1, 2009, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* came into force, establishing critical new roles and responsibilities for the Office in safeguarding the language rights of Nunavummiut. The additional duties are essential to note because the law outlines my office's power to investigate language rights infringements.

These laws confer on my office the right to obtain information to support our investigation of all complaints regarding language rights infringements in Nunavut. Section 25 (5) of the Official Languages Act, in particular, ensures that the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act does not limit our investigative powers. Section 38 (6) of the Inuit Language Protection Act further affirms that the protection of privacy regarding our investigation does not apply.

Our office has made numerous efforts to communicate these provisions of law to departments of the Government of Nunavut. Unfortunately, we have faced continued resistance from departments in providing the information needed for our investigations, which has delayed our efforts to address language rights infringements. I have reached out to the Information and Privacy Commissioner to confirm my authority to obtain information from GN departments and agencies to support my investigations. I am sharing below some direct quotes from the Information and Privacy Commissioner's letter:

"Section 25(5) of the OLA says

(5) If there is an inconsistency or conflict between this section and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act or the regulations made under that Act, this section prevails to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.

s 38(6) of the ILPA:

(6) If there is an inconsistency or conflict between this Part and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act or the regulations made under that Act, this Part prevails to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.

My conclusions are:

- You have the legal authority to collect and disclose the information you have asked for.
- There is no requirement whatsoever that you apply for information under the ATIPPA.
- If a public body gives you the information you ask for, there is no possible breach of privacy under the ATIPPA.

Your Powers under the OLA and the ILPA

Your office is governed by two pieces of legislation: the *Official Languages Act* (OLA) and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA). These two laws give you broad authority to investigate and to require the production of documents and other information.

The key provisions of the OLA on collection of information are the following:

- The Languages Commissioner may "request and obtain information from the persons and in the manner the Languages Commissioner considers appropriate": s 31(1).
- The Languages Commissioner may compel testimony "at a time and place" specified by the Commissioner: s 31(2)(c).
- The Languages Commissioner may compel a person to produce "documents and things" in a person's possession that the Commissioner considers relevant "at a time and place" specified by the Commissioner: s 31(2)(d).

Under the OLA and the ILPA, you have a right to whatever information you consider relevant, with few and limited exceptions. You may compel a public agency to give it to you. You do have some statutory restrictions on what you can do with the information, but that is a decision for you to make, not the public agency.

In ATIPPA terms, if a public agency gives you the information you require them to produce, there is <u>no possibility of a breach of privacy</u> under the ATIPPA. If a citizen were to complain of a privacy breach under s 49.1(1) of the ATIPPA because a public body had disclosed personal information to the Languages Commissioner, I would inevitably rule there is no privacy breach, for the reasons given in this letter."

The Information and Privacy Commissioner's analysis affirms my role and the office's right to request and obtain information about our investigation of language rights infringements.

Unfortunately, I not only had to refer to the law to compel public officials to release information supporting the investigation but also needed the Information and Privacy Commissioner to affirm this.

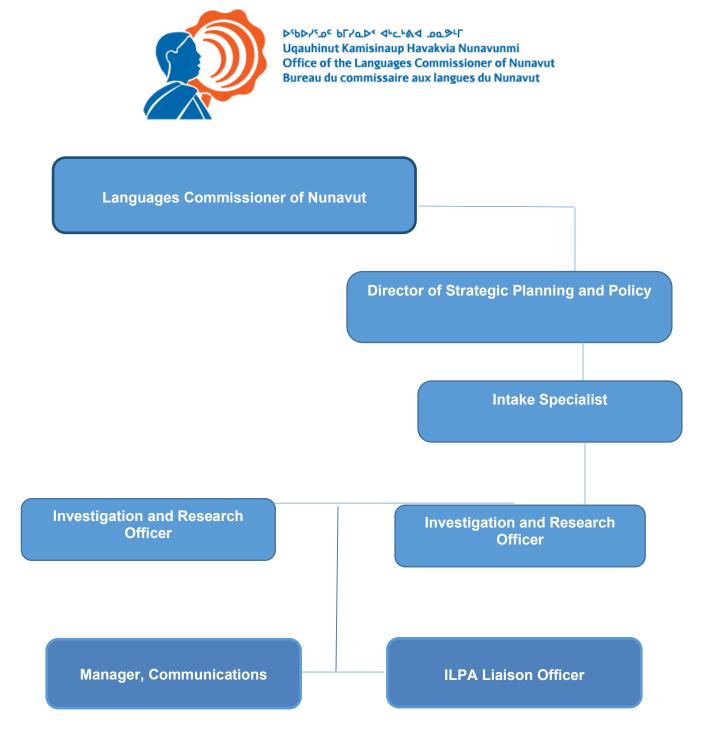
Our office's ability to effectively investigate and address language rights infringements requires the full engagement of front-line workers, middle management and senior management across all GN Departments. Please keep in mind that in addition to addressing language rights complaints related not only to services provided by the Government of Nunavut but also to services provided by public agencies of the government of Nunavut, Municipalities, private sector bodies and the federal government. Protecting the language rights of Nunavummiut is our collective responsibility and requires the full cooperation of individuals and organizations at multiple levels.

The entirety of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's letter is available by contacting our office.

Quana – ללים ה' – Nakurmiik - Thank you - Merci

Karliin Aariak

3. ORGANIZATION CHART



4. MANDATE, VISION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER

The Languages Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut appointed for a five-year term by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The duty of the Languages Commissioner is established under section 22 of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA) and section 28 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA).

MANDATE

The mandate of the Languages Commissioner is to promote and safeguard the language rights of Nunavummiut enshrined in Nunavut's language legislation. The role of the Office is to champion three distinct linguistic communities: the Inuit language-speaking community, the French-speaking community and the English-speaking community.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Languages Commissioner has four primary responsibilities:

Ombudsman

The Languages Commissioner reviews any possible breach of the language legislation by territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations, and federal departments, agencies and institutions. The Office can investigate, make findings and reports, mediate settlements and suggest ways to recommend corrective actions to address language rights violations.

Advisor

The Languages Commissioner advises, assists and works with territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations, and federal departments, agencies and institutions on their service and communication obligations. The Office also informs Nunavummiut of their language rights.

Advocate

The Languages Commissioner communicates with obligated bodies to influence decision-making, practices or policies about respecting language rights.

Monitor

The Languages Commissioner monitors and examines the progress of territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations, and federal departments, agencies and institutions in meeting their obligations under Nunavut's language acts.

The Languages Commissioner's duties are the following:

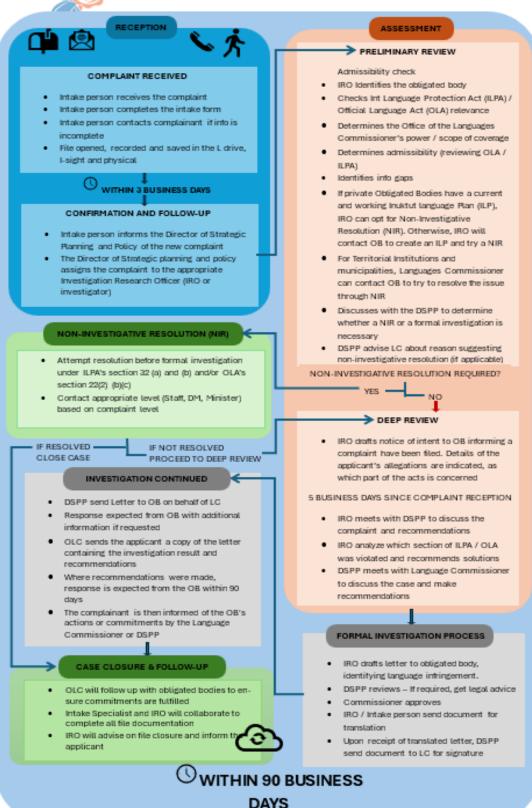
- To inform Nunavummiut of their language rights
- To inform and advise territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations, federal departments, agencies and institutions of their language obligations
- To monitor territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations, federal departments, agencies and institutions' language services and communications with the public
- To inform municipalities, the private sector and federal organizations of their language communication and service requirements under section 3 of the ILPA
- To investigate or facilitate resolution and to recommend corrective actions
- To support and monitor the implementation of Nunavut's language legislation

The Commissioner also has broader functions, including:

- Promoting language rights by providing opportunities to use the official languages
- Keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the laws relating to official language rights
- Producing and publishing reports
- Carrying out research or studies
- Making recommendations to obligated bodies and giving advice to any person

5. COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATION PROCESS

COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCESS



6.COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATION SUMMARY

To fulfill its role, the Office of the Languages Commissioner (OLC) carries out various activities, including investigations into complaints from the public. Complaints are a direct way in which Nunavummiut, as members of the public, can express their dissatisfaction or complaint over a failure to provide communications and services in Inuktut, English or French or over the poor quality of services offered.

It is essential to file a complaint to:

- Ensure that Nunavummiut's language rights are respected
- Finding solutions
- Report on a problem
- Increase awareness of language rights and obligations in territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations and federal institutions (obligated bodies¹)

The obligated body should commit to solutions such as informing the staff and managers of their language obligations, reviewing practices and guidelines for providing communications and services to the public in all the official languages and implementing control measures.

Complaints received

NOTE: A request for information is not a complaint and is not processed by the OLC. However, the applicant has the right to file a complaint if they consider that their right to receive services in the official language of their choice has not been respected.

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¹ Please refer to Chapter 6.3 – Territorial institutions as defined by the Act

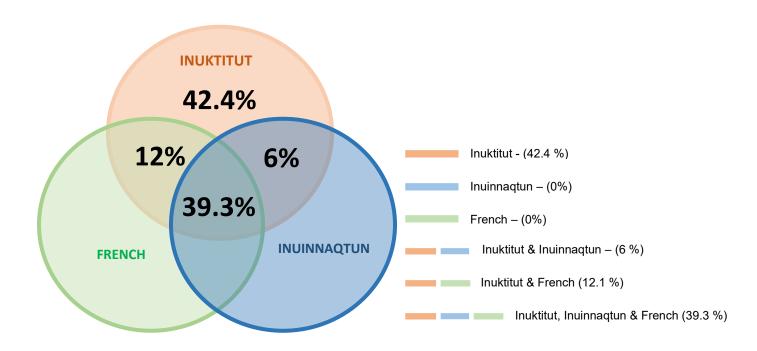
7.COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS for 2024-2025

The Office of the Language Commissioner received a total of 33 complaints within 2024-2025, accounting for an increase of 42,4% compared to last year.

Most of the complaints are registered in Iqaluit (91%). The obligated bodies with the highest number of cases are territorial organizations (48.4%) and the private sector (39.3%) More than 90% were considered admissible, while nine (30%) among them were being processed and closed, 14 (46,6%) are still in need of follow-up, and seven (23.3%) were abandoned. Half of the complaints to be followed up (seven) are systemic and repeated concerns that the office has flagged repeatedly.

The most affected language is Inuktitut, appearing in all the complaints. Inuktitut alone accounted for 42.4% of the total complaints, with Inuinnaqtun accounting for 6%, and French accounting for 12.1%. The three languages together accounted for 39.3%.

This graphic below provides an insight into the complaint's language representation:



8.COMPLAINTS

MOST SIGNIFICANT COMPLAINTS SUMMARY

In the following lines, the OLC exposes some relevant complaints. Among the 33 received, 17 have been selected to illustrate our complaint landscape challenge. They have been selected based on their relevance in terms of Obligated Body type (E.g., Territorial organizations, municipalities, private sector), languages involved, context, scope of allegations, and OLC actions taken. They are classified into two categories: Single complaints for disparate cases and systemic complaints for those highlighting a deeper and broader issue throughout the territory.

SINGLE COMPLAINTS

1. OLC VS Agsarniit Middle school

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-168	2024-04-15	OLC	Aqsarniit Middle school	Territorial	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT

An excursion letter, which included the program plan, participants' profiles, a waiver and liability form, and a parental acknowledgment form, was provided to students for their parents. However, it was only available in English.

ALLEGATIONS:

Letter to parents only in English

OLC ACTIONS:

This case has particularities that led us to consult our legal advisor. According to legal opinions, communications between parents and the school are not covered by the *Official Languages Act*, as the school is not a territorial institution and parents are not members of the public. Additionally, the communications at issue are not covered by the *Inuit Languages Protection Act*. The complaint was judged inadmissible under OLA and ILPA. Even though the complaint was not admissible, it still raised significant concerns. OLC sent a letter to the obligated body on November 25, 2024, informing them to ensure that letters sent home to parents are translated into all official languages, enabling parents who are not fluent in all languages to understand the letter's contents.

2. Employee VS Hamlet of Arctic Bay

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-169	2024-04-23	Email	Hamlet of Arctic Bay	Municipality	Inuktitut

CONTEXT

A complaint received from an applicant from Arctic Bay concerning his right to work in his language (Inuktitut)

ALLEGATIONS:

Artic Bay Hamlet's SAO said that he wants English-speaking Union members and councillors, though perfectly bilingual members are available. He said that the mayor doesn't understand English as he speaks Inuktitut and doesn't want to spend much money on translation.

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC contacted the complainant to gather further information, aiming to better understand and address the situation through a letter. Due to the unaddressed correspondence, the office was unable to proceed, and the case was subsequently abandoned after 90 days, per our internal investigative policies.

3. OLC VS Nunavut Moving and Services

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION		OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-182	2024-06-27	OLC	Nunavut Moving and Services	Private sector	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT

OLC noticed that in the Brown Building, a Nunavut Moving Services advertisement poster was in English only.

ALLEGATIONS:

Advertisement in the Brown Building in English only

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on October 24, 2024, and a follow-up letter on March 13, 2025. As no response was received, the case was abandoned because it was beyond the 90-day limit as per our internal investigative policies.

4. OLC VS Travel Nunavut

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-195	2024-11-06	In person	Travel Nunavut	Territorial	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT

OLC noticed that the website of Travel Nunavut was displayed only in English.

ALLEGATIONS:

The website is only in English

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC communicated with the Obligated Body on November 7, 2024, and sent a follow-up letter on April 16, 2025. As no response was received, the case was abandoned because it exceeded the 90-day limit, per our internal investigative policies.

5. Customer VS Frobisher Inn

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-201	2024-02-06	In person	Frobisher Inn	Private sector	Inuktitut

CONTEXT

Each time this applicant comes into town, she always notices that the staff at the Frobisher Inn does not speak Inuktitut.

ALLEGATIONS:

No Inuktitut-speaking staff

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter on March 17, 2025. The obligated body replied on March 26, 2025, stating that they are reviewing their existing processes, and they will take the necessary time to assess how they can better meet their obligations under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. OLC sent an e-mail on May 27, 2025, to follow up with them and discuss the review made and the next steps to be taken. OLC met with Obligated Body. Actions were already taken to increase the Inuktitut visibility by translating all the display materials. Some remaining actions are ongoing, while the most significant challenge comes from a systemic issue regarding the reliability of Inuktitut staff.

6. OLC VS Inukpak

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-173	2024-05-28	OLC	Inukpak	Private sector	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT

This complaint is regarding an advertisement poster for Inukpak Outfitting that was displayed in English only at the Qikiqtani Inuit Association Building.

ALLEGATIONS:

The Inukpak advertisement in the Qikiqtani Inuit Association Building is in English only.

OLC ACTIONS:

An initial phone contact was established on June 4, 2024, to request the right person to whom to address the complaint letter. While explaining the situation, the respondent said that their clientele doesn't speak Inuktitut. The person contacted was not collaborative and then asked to be served in French, which the caller did. He was uncooperative even when he had the French speaker on the phone. We had a hard time getting the necessary information from him until he finally agreed to collaborate. OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on August 8, 2024, and a follow-up letter on April 22, 2025. As no response was received, the case was abandoned because it exceeded the 90-day limit as per our internal investigative policies.

7. OLC VS Arctic Eider Society

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-174	2024-05-28	OLC	Arctic Eider Society	Private sector	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT

This complaint is regarding a poster for an ice watch advertisement that was displayed in English only at the Qikiqtani Inuit Association Building for the Arctic Eider Society.

ALLEGATIONS:

The Arctic Eider Society advertisement for an ice watch at the Qikiqtani Inuit Association building was in English only.

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on August 8, 2024. The obligated body replied on September 17, 2024, with a completed Inuit Language Plan (ILP). OLC investigated to confirm if the new poster was translated for the current period to comply with the recent Language Plan. No new posters were displayed. OLC sent a letter to follow up on that matter, but there has yet to be a response from the Arctic Eider Society.

8. OLC VS Black Heart Cafe

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-176	2024-05-29	OLC	Black Heart Café	Private sector	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT

This complaint concerns an advertisement poster displayed in English only at the Qikiqtani Inuit Association building for Blach Heart Café.

ALLEGATIONS:

Advertisement poster in English only.

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on November 18, 2024, and a follow-up letter on March 13, 2025. Since no response was received, the case was abandoned because it exceeded the 90-day limit, as per our internal investigative policies.

9. OLC VS Igaluit Aquatic Centre

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-183	2024-07-04	OLC	Iqaluit Aquatic Centre	Municipality	Inuktitut

CONTEXT:

This complaint is about the absence of an Inuktitut-speaking employee at guest services at the Aquatic Centre. The applicant went to the Iqaluit Aquatic Centre. There was a long line-up at both the canteen and upstairs with the school kids' program. On the main floor where the canteen is, not one person was serving in Inuktitut. The applicant spoke only in Inuktitut, and a young kid saw and heard that she wasn't being understood, so the kid interpreted for her.

Then, she visited the main office upstairs, where people check in to go for a swim, and again asked only in Inuktitut, where she could access a swimming school schedule. Again, no Inuktitut-speaking employees; a young person was working in the office who looked like an Inuk and probably a summer student but could not understand her request for a schedule. Again, a young kid close by interpreted for her, and she asked if they had Eskimo workers trying to use broken English. "No Eskimo worker". The girl answered that they try to have Inuktitut-speaking workers in the office, but today they didn't and said some days are hard to find one. They had a swimming pool schedule that she provided, which was correctly translated into Inuktitut.

ALLEGATIONS:

No Inuktitut-speaking employee at guest services

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on April 3, 2025, and a follow-up letter on July 2,2025. No response was received. This is a public place where everyone, including children and their unilingual parents, visits daily. It is pertinent that the municipality ensures Nunavummiut are served in their preferred language. OLC will still follow up with the obligated body.

10. OLC VS Big Racks Pita Shack

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-184	2024-07-04	OLC	Big Racks Pita Shack	Private sector	Inuktitut

CONTEXT

This complaint took into consideration that a customer was not able to be served in Inuktitut at Pita Shack on the main floor of the Aquatic Centre. She spoke in Inuktitut, and no one could respond to her.

ALLEGATIONS:

No Inuktitut-speaking employee

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on September 11, 2024, and a follow-up letter on March 13, 2025. As no response was received, the case was abandoned because it was beyond the 90-day limit as per our internal investigative policies.

9.SYSTEMIC COMPLAINTS

In this section, all the following cases are systemic. OLC collected all the complaints received throughout the year and addressed them collectively in a global investigation process. The first one highlights a federal systemic issue. All the subsequent ones emphasize a repetitive territorial complaint.

1. The following complaint flags a systemic issue within the federal government. In 2023, we received two complaints regarding federal institutions, both of which involved Canada Post. In 2024, it appeared once again among the total cases, and Inuktitut is the language affected in all the complaints. As ILPA applied to federal institutions, and as the issue is repeated, it needed to be addressed as a systemic complaint.

11. OLC VS Canada Post

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION		CONTACTED		ED BODY	LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE		
1329-25-171	2024-05-21	OLC	Canada Post	Federal	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French	

CONTEXT

OLC received an information letter from Canada Post only in English. This letter was a privacy and security notice requesting confirmation from OLC.

ALLEGATIONS:

Information letter from Canada Post in English only.

2. For the past year, the office has received seven complaints regarding the Qikiqtani Regional Hospital. They count for nearly a quarter (21,2%) of our total complaints. While the Official Languages Act (OLA) and the Inuit Languages Protection Act (ILPA) apply to territorial institutions, all the following complaints involve Inuktitut language rights infringements. Some responses were aggressive, others dismissive. In the health field, a misunderstanding between health workers and patients can be a nightmare for the patients. This is the risk that all unilingual Nunavummiut, who do not speak English live with.

12. Citizen VS Qiqiktani General Hospital

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY	LANGUAGES INVOLVED
				i l

			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-178	2024-06-18	Webmail	Qikiqtani General Hospital	Territorial / Department of Health	Inuktitut- French

CONTEXT:

The applicant notified our office that he had advised the Government of Nunavut Health Department that the parking signs outside of the Qikiqtani General Hospital were in English only, and nothing has happened. He was worried about the unilingual Inuit and French patients.

ALLEGATIONS:

Signs in the Qikiqtani General Hospital parking lot are in English only

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on July 30, 2024, and a follow-up letter on March 17, 2025. Obligated Body replied on April 10, 2025, confirming that all issues have been addressed and the complaint has been resolved. Our office visited the hospital to confirm this, and noted that the English signs are still there, but there are now visitor signs in both French and Inuktitut.

13. Citizen VS Qiqiktani General hospital

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION		OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-179	2024-06-15	E-mail	Qikiqtani General Hospital	Territorial / Department of Health	Inuktitut

CONTEXT:

The applicant called the Qiqiktani General Hospital, but the receptionist was not able to speak Inuktitut.

ALLEGATIONS:

Someone called the hospital reception and spoke in Inuktitut. Unfortunately, the person received an aggressive response from the receptionist, who stated that she does not speak Inuktitut and instructed the patient to call back on Monday, without even determining whether the call was an emergency.

OLC ACTIONS:

OLC sent a letter to the Obligated Body on August 8, 2024. No response was received. But as it is a systemic complaint, OLC will take action on all the repetitive complaints at a later date.

14. OLC VS Qiqiktani General hospital

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-188	2024-08-09	OLC	Qikiqtani General Hospital	Territorial / Department of Health	Inuktitut - Inuinnaqtun - French

CONTEXT:

A notice was placed at the new post office, in English only, "Department of Health. Health Card Address Update"

ALLEGATIONS:

Advertisement only in English

15. Applicant VS Qiqiktani General Hospital

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGOAG	LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE		
1329-25-191	2023-10-11	In person	Qikiqtani General Hospital	Territorial / Department of Health	Inuktitut	

CONTEXT

The patient arrived at the hospital through medivac from Clyde River to Iqaluit. Upon arrival, the patient and her husband were taken to the emergency room around 2:30 am. There was no medical interpreter present upon arrival, since it was very early in the morning. His daughter arrived at the hospital around 8:30 and heard about what happened throughout the night. Starting with no interpreter when they got there, and still no interpreter, she decided to request special leave for the day to help, as no interpreter was available. Special leave granted. She told the Doctor at this point that he has a legal obligation to provide a medical interpreter. She stayed until 3:30 and still had no interpreter by the time she left. She didn't return for two days, and the father said there was no interpreter available upstairs in the outpatient area. When she went up to visit, the doctor asked her to interpret again, but she stood her ground and told them to get an interpreter from downstairs.

ALLEGATIONS:

No interpreter was provided for a patient who was medevacked to Iqaluit at the Qikiqtani General Hospital.

16. Applicant VS Qigiktani General Hospital

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY	OBLIGATED BODY		LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE	
1329-25-192	2024-09-05	In person	Qikiqtani General Hospital	Territorial / Department of Health	Inuktitut

CONTEXT

This complaint is from the same applicant about his wife. The wife was medevacked to Iqaluit from Clyde River on September 05, 2024. The husband didn't have room on the plane, so he didn't arrive till September 9, 2024. On September 5, his daughters arrived to visit her at the QGH. The doctor who was tending her asked the family to interpret, as there was no staff to interpret. One of his daughters had taken some nursing training, but only in English, so she felt uncomfortable interpreting, especially about body parts, thinking she might give the wrong information. So, she did her best. Finally, on September 9, 2024, the husband arrives on a regular scheduled flight. He was already requested to interpret for the wife, having little knowledge of English. So, he asked for an interpreter, and finally, someone came. One of her daughters came again the next day, and she was unhappy to learn that her father had been asked to interpret again. She felt that her mother's privacy rights were breached when family members were asked to interpret. She had to apply for special leave from work, and it was granted.

ALLEGATIONS:

No interpreter was provided for the wife of a patient who was medevacked to Iqaluit at the Qikiqtani General Hospital.

17. Applicant VS Qiqiktani General Hospital

CASE ID	DATE OF RECEPTION	CONTACTED BY			EAROOA	LANGUAGES INVOLVED
			NAME	TYPE		
1329-25-197	2024-06-15	Phone / In person	Qikiqtani General Hospital	Territorial / Department of Health	Inuktitut	

CONTEXT:

No Inuktitut-speaking worker at the reception area at Qikiqtani General Hospital

ALLEGATIONS:

No Interpreter

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, systemic complaints need to be treated in a particular manner. OLC have collected all the cases to address them as a whole to the Government of Nunavut. Actions were initiated for some of them, but most of the complaints remain untreated due to a lack of responses and, more importantly, due to a lack of repressive means to make the obligated bodies comply. It's a matter of choice if they want to follow our recommendations. That increases the challenges and makes our duties more difficult than they should be.

As the office wants to be efficient in its tasks, the whole section must be addressed as one query relating to different specific cases under one theme: Language Rights infringements within the Government of Nunavut. OLC will work in partnership with the Government of Nunavut to address these complaints.

10. OLC TAKES ACTION AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS ON INADMISSIBLE COMPLAINTS

Actions have been taken even for inadmissible complaints. In the following lines, we will consider some relevant actions and recommendations for some crucial complaints received during the 2024-2025 year.

Even though this was mentioned above earlier as one of the complaints received, we believe it is crucial also to identify it here, as though inadmissible by OLC, it was not ignored. Still, it was addressed through a recommendation by OLC.

The **complaint 1329-25-168** was about Aqsarniit School, which organized an ice fishing trip for the students and issued a letter containing the program plan, participants' profiles, waiver, liability and parental acknowledgement form to parents, which was in English only. This complaint was deemed inadmissible under OLA because the school did not fall within the definition of a territorial institution or a public agency. Moreover, parents are not considered members of the public when communicating in their capacity as a student's representative.

Language obligations under ILPA: Section 3(1) requires organizations to display public signs and issue commercial posters in the Inuit language and provide reception and customer services offered to the general public in Inuktitut. The forms that were provided to the parents, as well as the notice of the excursion, do not fall within the scope of section 3(1). However, it was not clear if the forms were created by the school or by the outfitter. The letter from the principal suggested that at least the waiver and release of liability form was provided by the outfitter. The outfitter was subject to the language obligations under ILPA; it was unlikely that the documents provided would fall under those contemplated at section 3(1) ILPA. Therefore, the ILPA obligations did not apply to the documents and/or forms the school provided to the parents.

The Iqaluit District Education Authority (IDEA) guidelines regarding consent forms for excursions did not set out an obligation on schools to create bilingual or trilingual consent forms. The recommendation was that the forms be in English and Inuktitut and that the language be clear. With the inadmissibility of this complaint, it still raised significant concerns. The school and IDEA were made aware of the complaint. OLC recommended that forms and information about excursions and day trips be provided in Inuktitut as well as in English. Our office stated the importance for unilingual parents to understand what they are signing concerning their children's safety.

In the complaint **1329-25-170**, an 82-year-old Igloolik elder had to pay out of pocket to fly to Iqaluit just to resolve a banking issue because RBC did not provide over-the-phone customer service in Inuktitut. The unilingual elder flew to Iqaluit with the help of family members and friends because her family was going hungry without access to her bank account.

Even though this complaint was admissible, OLC was unable to investigate because we were unable to talk to the person concerned to gather more information. OLC did mention this incident to the Obligated body when we received another complaint against RBC. Our office received three complaints against RBC this year, and based on past years, we are working on starting a systemic review of the organization.

For the **complaint 1329-25-172**, an advertisement to implement the Updated Bereavement and Compassionate Travel Policy Poster in English only. This bereavement Travel policy is for beneficiaries. Since this advertisement is mainly for the Inuit, it is crucial. It will be more helpful to have an Inuktut version to ensure unilingual individuals can understand and participate in this service. OLC recommended that QIA ensure that when providing any information, including news releases, it is available in Inuktitut.

In the **complaint 1329-25-194**, OLC received a complaint from the parent of a student attending Qitiqli Middle School in Arviat. In the complaint, the parent stated that their child was told he was not allowed to speak Inuktitut in school. The child was sent to the principal's office a couple of times for speaking Inuktitut in school after being told that it was rude to speak Inuktitut in school.

Even though this complaint was inadmissible, OLC recommended that, with the decline in the number of children and youth fluent in Inuktitut in Nunavut, the Department of Education and the school take immediate action and create an environment where children are free and proud to speak Inuktitut and are encouraged to do so. Children should be taught to speak Inuktitut instead of being forbidden to speak Inuktitut in school. Inuktitut is a vital part of Inuit identity, and suppressing it defeats the purpose of all the efforts made in the past to correct injustices caused by residential schools and other policies geared toward eliminating Inuit languages and culture.

The **complaint 1329-25-185** as about Some signage in the Beer and Wine Store that were in English only. Our office recommended that a clear policy be developed regarding the issuance of signage to avoid future violations of language laws. We received a response from the DM of finance stating that they were going to investigate the issue but when we stopped by to see if it had been solved, no action had been taken.

Recommendations to Private organizations to complete an Inuit Language Plan

For private organizations, an Inuit Language Plan (ILP) is usually recommended to help them identify their language obligations and develop necessary plans and timelines to fulfill these obligations. The ILP includes (a) Organizational measures, policies and practices proposed for the communications with or delivery of services to the public required under ILPA, (b) a schedule for giving effect to the measures, policies, or practices, (c) an indication of the numbers of staff, if any, that are or will be fluent in the Inuit language and, (d) how the organization will ensure that the Inuit Language Plan and the availability of communication with or services to the public in the Inuit language are publicized.

The following complaints referred to language infringement from private organizations, and OLC recommended that the organizations complete an Inuit Language Plan.

For the **complaint 1329-25-173** about the Inukpak Outfitting advertisement that was posted on the QIA Advertisement board in English only, OLC recommended and provided an Inuit Language Plan template to help Inukpak manage their compliance with the ILPA. OLC also referred Inukpak to the Culture and Heritage Department so they can access the Private Sector Inuktut Support Program that assists private companies in complying with the Inuktut language requirements.

For the **complaint 1329-25-174**, the OLC recommended an Inuit Language Plan to help The Arctic Eider Society manage its compliance with the ILPA. The OLC also referred the Arctic Eider Society to the Department of Culture and Heritage for financial support through the Private Sector Inuktitut Support Program. We also attached an Inuit Language Plan template to facilitate its implementation.

For the **complaint 1329-25-175**, where all the advertisement signs were in English and French only at the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC). The OLC recommended that RBC implement an Inuit Language Plan in response to several complaints. We also referred RBC to the Department of Culture and Heritage to access the Private Sector Inuktut Support Program.

In the **complaint 1329-25-190**, A sign in Astro Hill properties was misspelled. The complaint was deemed inadmissible as OLC deals with language infringements and not the quality of Inuktitut translations. However, OLC gave recommendations via letter to Astro Hill that they can contact the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit for quality assurance of translations.

11. COMPLAINTS OVERVIEW

2024-2025

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Complaints	Numbers
Admissible	30
Inadmissible	3
Total	33

TABLE 2

COMPLAINTS CLASSIFIED THROUGH COMMUNICATION MEDIUM

Means of communication	Number of complaints
Verbal (in person or by phone)	8
Written (by letter, fax or e-mail)	8
OLC (Internal investigation)	17
Total	33

TABLE 3

COMPLAINTS CLASSIFIED BY LANGUAGE

Language	Numbers
Inuktitut	14
Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun	2
Inuktitut and French	4
Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun and French	13
French	0
Inuinnaqtun	0
Total	33

TABLE 4
COMPLAINTS RECEIVED CLASSIFIED BY SECTOR

Sectors	Number
Territorial	14
Municipal	2
Private	15
Federal	2
Total	33

TABLE 5

ADMISSIBLE AND INADMISSIBLE COMPLAINTS CLASSIFIED BY SECTOR

Sectors	Admissible	Inadmissible	Total
Territorial	12	2	14
Municipal	2	0	2
Private	14	1	15
Federal	2	0	2
Total	30	3	33

TABLE 6

COMPLAINTS STATUS CLASSIFIED BY SECTOR

Sectors	Ongoing	Closed	Abandoned	Total
Territorial	8	5	1	14
Municipal	1	0	1	2
Private	4	6	5	15
Federal	1	1	0	2
Total	14	12	7	33

TABLE 7

Territorial complaints

Territorial dept.	Dept of health	Dept of education	CGS	Dept of Justice	liquor and Cannabis Board	Travel Nunavut	Nunavut Media	Total
Numbers	6	2	1	2	1	1	1	14

12. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF NUNAVUT

Nunavut has three official languages: the Inuit language (Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun), also known as Inuktut, English and French. The *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* ensure that Nunavut's Inuit and Francophone communities have the means necessary to safeguard and strengthen their cultural expression, collective life and heritage for future generations.

12.1 LANGUAGE LAWS

Official Languages Act (OLA)

According to the OLA, territorial institutions must communicate with the public and provide services in all the official languages. They must also make an active offer of their services by informing members of the public of their right to communicate in their preferred official language and to receive communications and available services in that language from the head or central service offices as well as other offices where there is significant demand for an official language or due to the nature of the service (public safety, security and health).

An individual, or on behalf of another person, group or community, can file a language rights complaint with the Office of the Languages Commissioner when public members are not receiving services and communications in the official language of their choice per sections 11 and 12 of the OLA.

A complaint can be brought to the OLC in any of these circumstances:

- The status of an official language has not been recognized.
- A provision of the OLA or any other act or regulation relating to the status, use or protection of an official language has not been complied with.
- The spirit and intent of the OLA or ILPA have not been fulfilled.

The Languages Commissioner can also commence an investigation without having received complaints directly from a member of the public, either on her initiative or at the request of a territorial institution, municipality, or member or committee of the Legislative Assembly.

Under the OLA, municipalities must also provide communications and services in French or English if there is a "significant demand" for these official languages. The Government of Nunavut has yet to provide a mechanism to identify this "significant demand" and pass regulations requiring municipalities to deliver services and communications in French or English.

The Office can monitor language services and communications with the public to ensure territorial institutions' compliance with the OLA. Surveys such as call verification, written communication, website reviews, and email verification are helpful measurement tools for collecting data.

Systemic Investigation

An investigation may be systemic when non-compliance with language rights is seen as an endemic problem. The decision to conduct a systemic investigation is based on a list of criteria that follow ombudsman practices in Canada, such as:

- 1. The situation complaints major strategic issues.
- 2. It is a recurring problem.
- 3. A large number of people are potentially at risk.
- 4. The number of complaints received is essential.
- 5. The recommendations made by the Languages Commissioner's Office were ignored.

Inuit Language Protection Act (ILPA)

The ILPA guarantees the right to education in the Inuit language, protects territorial public servants who prefer to work there and defines specific obligations for government, municipalities, the private sector, and federal organizations.

A language rights complaint with a territorial institution, a municipality, a private sector organization and a federal department, agency or institution can be filed with the Office of the Languages Commissioner when public members are not receiving services and communications in the Inuit language. The Languages Commissioner takes all actions and measures to ensure that the rights, status and privileges established by this act are recognized and performed.

Also, according to section 11 of the ILPA, territorial institutions must provide an active offer, meaning there must be a "clear explanation in the Inuit Language of an individual's right to use the Inuit Language during recruitment or employment." Without the active offer, individuals may be hesitant to use the Inuit language.

12.2 STATUS OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY NUNAVUT'S POPULATION

According to Statistics Canada's 2021 Census data, the following is a brief statistical overview of Nunavut's population and language situation.²:

Population characteristics

 According to data from recent censuses, the population of Nunavut grew by 2.5% between 2016 and 2021, to a total of 36,858 in 2021.

² JEAN-FRANÇOIS LEPAGE and STÉPHANIE LANGLOIS, with the collaboration of MARTIN TURCOTTE, *Evolution of the language situation in Nunavut*, *2001 to 2016*, for Statistics Canada, March 2019.

- Nunavut's population is much younger than the provinces and other territories, with an average age of 28.3 years, compared to 41.9 years nationally.
- In 2021, there were 31,050 Inuit in Nunavut, accounting for 84.4%% of the total Nunavut population, down slightly from 84.7% in 2016
- In 2021, the non-Inuit population was mostly concentrated in Iqaluit (61.1%). A larger proportion was also found in Rankin Inlet (9.1%) and Cambridge Bay (5.7%).

Population with Inuktut as a mother tongue

- In 2021, 19,370 Nunavut residents (52.90% of the population) reported Inuktut as their mother tongue. This proportion has fallen by 14.20% since 2016, which accounted for 22,600 Nunavut residents who reported Inuktut as their mother tongue.
- The number of Inuktut mother tongue speakers has decreased by 3,230 since 2016, resulting in a percentage decrease.
- Just over three-quarters of Inuit (76.6%) reported Inuktut as their mother tongue in 2016, which means that Inuktut was not transmitted as a mother tongue to 23.4% of Inuit, or 7,075 people.

Population with French as a mother tongue

- In 2021, 1,450 Nunavut residents could converse in French. This number was down from 2016 (-130) but higher than in 1991 (+635). The demographic weight of these residents rose from 3.8% in 1991 to 4.4% in 2016, then fell to 4.0% in 2021.
- In 2021, 575 residents of Nunavut (1.6% of the population) spoke French as their only first official language.
- In 2021, 665 Nunavut residents had French as one of their mother tongues, up from 1991 (+205) and 2016 (+25)
- In 2021, 705 people (1.9%) spoke French at least regularly at home. Among those with French as one of their mother tongues, nearly three-quarters (73.9%) spoke French regularly at home.
- In 2021, 295 workers living in the territory (2.5%) spoke French at least regularly at work. Many of them worked in public administration (37.3%), educational services (10.2%) or health care and social assistance (10.2%).
- The municipalities with a population of more than 500 that had the highest proportion of people who spoke French were the capital, Iqaluit (15.2%), Cambridge Bay (2.3%) and Rankin Inlet (1.9%)
- The municipalities with a population of more than 500 that had the highest number of French speakers were Igaluit (1,110), Rankin Inlet (55) and Cambridge Bay (40).

• In 2021, one in six immigrants (16.7%) could converse in French. This proportion was higher among immigrants admitted before 2016 (18.4%) than those admitted between 2016 and 2021 (10.4%).

Population with English as a mother tongue

- In 2021, 33,105 Nunavummiut knew English as an official language.
- In 2021, 33,955 Nunavummiut recognized English as the first official language spoken.
- In 2021, English is the mother tongue of 12,100 Nunavummiut (33.3%) and is spoken most often at home by 17,060 Nunavummiut.
- Almost 88% of the population can conduct a conversation in English. The use of English is increasing at the expense of both Inuktut and French.

12.3 COMMUNICATIONS AND SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

The following chart summarizes and compares the scope and scale of the two acts regarding communications and services to the public.³

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT	INUIT LANGUAGE PROTECTION ACT	
Deals with Nunavut's three official languages: the Inuit language, English and French	Deals only with the Inuit language	
Applies to territorial institutions:	Applies to territorial institutions:	
 GN departments and public agencies Legislative Assembly Nunavut Court of Justice and other tribunals	GN departments and public agenciesLegislative AssemblyNunavut Court of Justice and other tribunals	
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 and institutions	Applies to federal departments, agencies and institutions	

³ DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE, *Uqausivut – The Comprehensive Plan Pursuant to the* Official Languages Act *and* the Inuit Language Protection Act 2012–2016, Government of Nunavut, page iii.

Territorial institutions in Nunavut as defined by the Act4

<u>Departments of the Government of Nunavut</u>

- Community and Government Services
- Culture and Heritage
- Economic Development and Transportation
- Education
- Environment
- Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Family Services
- Finance
- Health
- Human Resources
- Justice

The offices and institutions of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Judicial bodies

- Court of Appeal
- Nunavut Court of Justice

Public agencies

- Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut
- District Education Authorities
- Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit
- Legal Services Board of Nunavut
- Liquor Commission
- Nunavut Arctic College
- Nunavut Business Credit Corporation
- Nunavut Development Corporation
- Nunavut Housing Corporation
- Qulliit Nunavut Status of Women Council
- Qulliq Energy Corporation
- Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Quasi-judicial bodies (without limitation)

- Human Rights Tribunal
- Labour Standards Board
- Liquor Licensing Board

13.ACTIVITY REPORT

13.1 STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

• There are six full-time positions⁵ at the Office of the Languages Commissioner.

As of March 31, 2025, two positions were staffed:

- Director of Strategic Planning and Policy
- Investigation and Research Officer

and a competition was underway for one position:

Manager, Communications

⁴ Idem, page 4. Territorial institutions as listed in Schedules A, B and C of the Financial Administration Act.

⁵ As the Languages Commissioner is appointed by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly, we do not take this position into account.

- The Executive Assistant position was reprofiled to accommodate the need for the Intake Specialist position. A Nunavut Inuit is currently holding this position.
- The position of Languages Commissioner is vacant, as the last Language Commissioner completed her term in February 2025.

As of March 31, 2025, four positions were vacant:

- Nunavut Languages Commissioner
- Investigation and Research Officer French
- Manager of Communications
- ILPA Liaison Officer
- In November 2024, the staff received in-person training on the Nunavut Language legislations.

13.2 TRAVEL, MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- The Language Commissioner attended the Inuktuuqta Literacy Event on December 4th, 2024, at the Aqsaarnit Hotel at Iqaluit.
- The Language Commissioner attended the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc Annual General Meeting from October 22nd to 24th, 2024 at the Cadet Hall in Iqaluit.
- The Languages Commissioner attended the grand opening of Kuugalaq in Cambridge Bay in September 2024.
- The Languages Commissioner also attended and made a presentation at the Nunavut Principals' conference in September 2024.
- In October 2024, the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada, commissioner Therberg visited Nunavut. An MOU was signed between the Office of Official Languages of Canada and the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut.
- The indigenous Languages Commissioner visited the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut in June 2024.

13.3 PUBLIC OUTREACH

- CBC radio interview
- CBC requests language rights issues
- Blog Post from Microsoft Real Al interview
- CBC North interview regarding GG and language complaints

- APTN news interview regarding GG and language complaints
- complaintMS Translator goes live with video and blog
- CBC Northbeat interview regarding Inuktut language month
- Interview with CBC Igalaaq regarding Language month

13.4 PROJECTS

- We reviewed completed Inuit Language Plans received from private sectors, approved and followed up where necessary.
- We investigated complaints filed with the OLC.
- We followed up with OLC Recommendations with all the GN Departments.

14.INUIT LANGUAGE PLANS

The *Inuit Language Protection Act* (ILPA) requires that private sector organizations, municipalities, and federal departments, agencies and institutions in Nunavut offer their communications and services to the public in the Inuit language. Such communications and services include signs, posters, commercial advertising, and reception and customer/client services.

As of March 31, 2025, we received two completed Inuit language plans. The two have been approved. They were evaluated, and OLC followed up with the organizations on the obligations identified in the ILP to encourage the organizations to implement their set goals within the specified timeline.

As the Inuit language plan is not mandatory, we encourage organizations to complete one, and we assist them with planning and implementing their plans. Such a plan is a valuable tool; it allows organizations to plan future actions that are necessary for compliance with the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and will help them manage their compliance.

15.BUDGET REPORT

Statement of budgets and expenditures

THREE-YEAR COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

	2025-2026	2024-2025	2023-2024
Budget	1,333000	1,290,000	1,116,000
Expenditures			
Permanent Salaries	1,122,000	1,079,000	836,000
Casual Wages	0	0	0
Travel and Transportation	41,000	41,000	1,000
Materials and Supplies	40,000	40,000	15,000
Purchased Services	25,000	25,000	5,000
Utilities	0	0	0
Contract Services	76,000	76,000	257,000
Fees & Payments	15,000	15,000	1,000
Other Expenses	14,000	14,000	1,000
Tangible Assets	0	0	0
Computer Hardware and Software	0	0	0
Total expenditures	1,333,000	1,290,000	1,175,717

APPENDIX

In this section, the following figures will help analyze the complaints based on some specific criteria, such as the means of communication, the languages affected, sectors involved or their status.

TABLE 1 - NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

Complaints	Numbers
Admissible	30
Inadmissible	3
Total	33

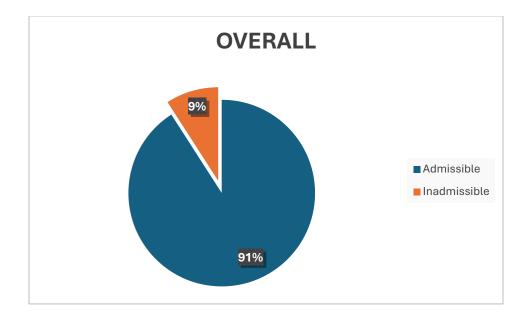


TABLE 2 - MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Means of communication	Number of complaints
Verbal (in person or by phone)	8
Written (by letter, fax or e- mail)	8

OLC (Internal investigation)	17
Total	33

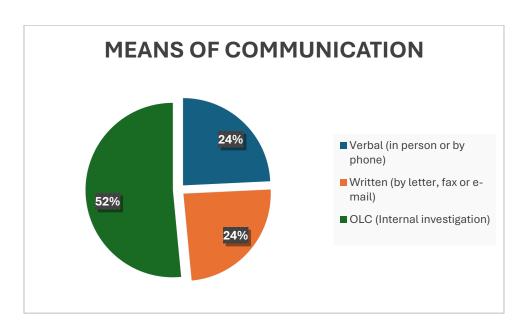


TABLE 3 - LANGUAGE

Language	Numbers
Inuktitut	14
Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun	2
Inuktitut and French	4
Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun and French	13

French	0
Inuinnaqtun Total	33

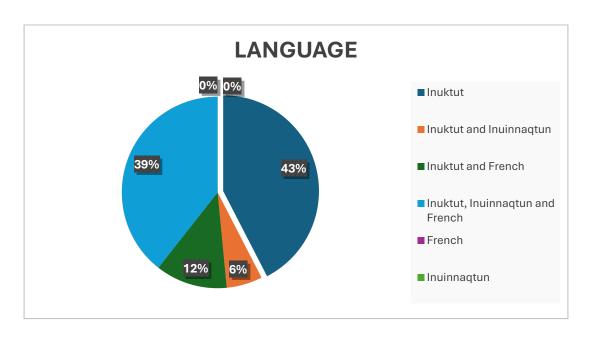


TABLE 4 - SECTOR

Sectors	Number
Territorial	14
Municipal	2
Private	15

Federal	2
Others (unclassified sectors in the legislations/frivolities, futile/bad faith/	0
Total	33

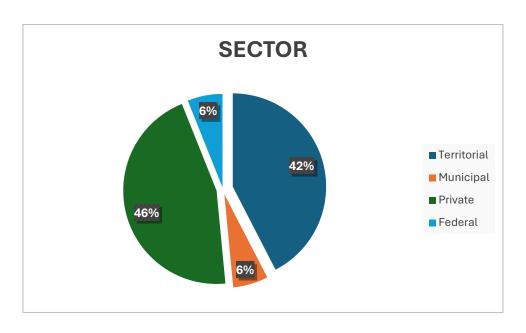


TABLE 5 - ADMISSIBILITY BY SECTOR

Sectors	Admissible	Inadmissible	Total
Territorial	12	2	14
Municipal	2	0	2
Private	14	1	15
Federal	2	0	2

Others (unclassified sectors in the legislations/frivolities, futile/bad faith/	0	0	0	
Total	30	3	33	

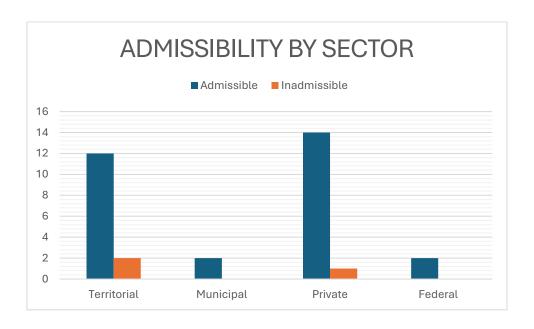


TABLE 6 - STATUS BY SECTOR

Sectors	Ongoing	Closed	Abandoned	Total
Territorial	8	5	1	14
Municipal	1	0	1	2
Private	4	6	5	15
Federal	1	1	0	2

Others (unclassified sectors in the legislations/frivolities, futile/bad faith/	0	0		0
Total	14	12	7	33

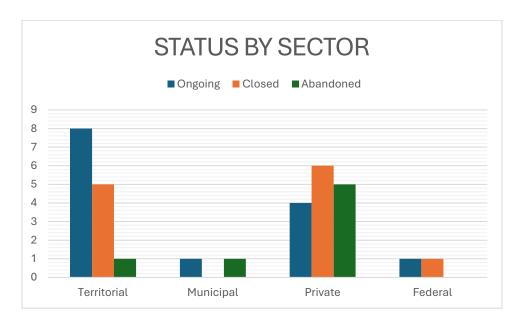
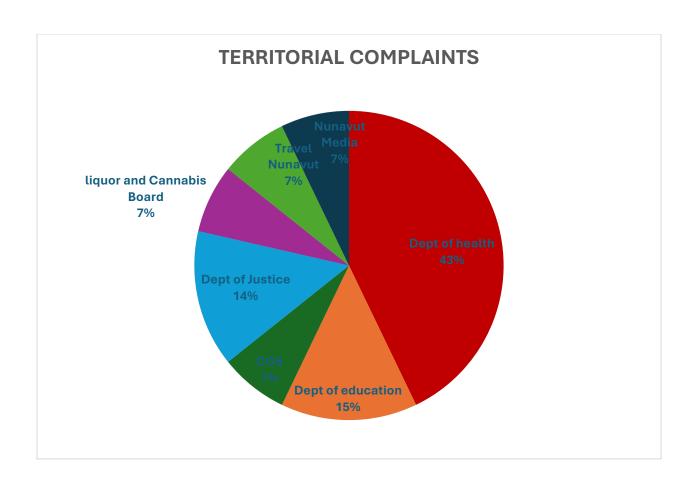


TABLE 7 – Territorial complaints

Territorial	Dept	Dept of	CGS	Dept of	liquor and	Travel	Nunavut	Total
dept.	of	education		Justice	Cannabis	Nunavut	Media	
	health				Board			
Numbers	6	2	1	2	1	1	1	14



Overall complaints

18%: Department of health complaints

82% : Other complaints

