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Mr. Steven Blaney

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● (0905)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC)):
Bonjour à tous.

Welcome to meeting number 41. Pursuant to Standing Order 108 (2), this morning we are continuing our study of the broadcasting and services in French of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games.

It's a pleasure this morning to have with us Mr. Yves Duguay. Mr. Duguay is the senior vice-president of operations and official languages champion for the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority.

[Translation]

Mr. Duguay, thank you for being here. As you know, committee members have for some time been examining the question of linguistic duality and the Olympic Games. In the course of our meetings, we realized that the experience of passengers was part of the experience of tourists who will be going to the Olympic Games.

We thank you for agreeing to appear before our committee this morning. I see you have prepared an address in both official languages. I therefore invite you to make it to us.

Mr. Yves Duguay (Senior Vice-President and Official Languages Champion, Operations, Canadian Air Transport Security Authority): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Yves Duguay. I am the Senior Vice-President of Operations at the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority and responsible for screening operations and performance management in our organization. I am also the Official Languages Champion for the organization, and I am a passionate advocate for ensuring that the spirit of the Official Languages Act is constantly reflected in our planning and decision-making processes. I am also responsible for our preparations for the Olympic Games.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and the members of your committee for this opportunity to showcase how CATSA approaches the Official Languages Act and, in particular, how it will perform in the context of the forthcoming Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

[English]

Before I get into this specifically, I believe it is important that I provide you with some context about CATSA. CATSA is a crown corporation based in Ottawa with a national presence and mandate. We have approximately 500 employees in locations across the country. There are well over 6,000 screening officers working at 89

designated airports nationwide. CATSA's main objective is to protect the public by securing critical elements of the air transportation system. This is in our mandate. Essentially, we have four responsibilities: the pre-board screening of passengers and their carry-on baggage; hold baggage or checked baggage screening; non-passenger screening, which relates to the screening of airport employees; and the development of the restricted area identity card.

Pre-board screening is what most people, and certainly you, are familiar with. In a typical year, screening officers will screen nearly 50 million passengers. Hold baggage or checked baggage screening involves the screening of all checked baggage using specialized explosive detection equipment. Over 60 million pieces of checked baggage are screened at designated airports in Canada annually.

[Translation]

We also conduct non-passenger screening, which involves, in particular, flight crew, catering crews and maintenance and construction workers who have access to the restricted areas in our country's 28 major airports. CATSA administers the access program to these areas using a system of dual biometric restricted area identity cards. All these activities are critical to maintaining air transport security. It is a responsibility we take very seriously because lives and livelihoods are at stake, especially as the Olympic Games approach.

The spirit of the Official Languages Act is an undercurrent that permeates every aspect of the organization and is reflected in our policies and procedures and the way in which we conduct our business when it comes to large operational projects like the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver.

Last month, as you are no doubt aware, the Commissioner of Official Languages addressed some 300 CATSA employees at a corporate retreat. He conveyed the notion that the employees of CATSA are Canada's goodwill ambassadors and that we are the first and last institution that many travellers will see when visiting Canada for the Winter Olympic Games.

The Olympic Games are a golden opportunity for us to showcase the quality of our people and services. We will use that opportunity to give Olympic visitors a proper reception in the Vancouver region and also at all other airports where we offer services, by serving them, in particular, in the official languages of their choice.

I want to emphasize to the committee that CATSA takes its role very seriously and to say that we fully embrace the Commissioner's sentiment wholeheartedly. CATSA's commitment to service excellence is unwavering.

[English]

Mr. Chairman, I would like to share with the members of the standing committee some of the solutions that CATSA has implemented already and how we are addressing the commissioner's recommendations, especially for the Olympics.

CATSA is committed to serving passengers in the official language of their choice and is regularly reviewing the procedures and tools in place, implementing oversight mechanisms, and taking the corrective action required to continue to make enhancements in this area. In fact, CATSA has already put in place several programs that help us to meet our official language requirements.

The following initiatives contribute to improving customer service monitoring, including official language requirements.

We have an operational performance oversight program. In the last two years, we've hired 100 oversight officers. These officers are positioned at screening points throughout Canada. They look at the work being performed by the screening officers to ensure that they are complying not only with security regulations but also with customer service. This is definitely one of the most important programs we have at CATSA. Official language is one of the elements being monitored by these oversight officers, which include the active offer, adequate signage, and the presence of bilingual officers at the screening point.

In the last two years, we've also implemented a shift briefing program, a direct communication tool with the screening officers that's published by CATSA and shared with the service contractor. This program provides a reliable tool to remind screening officers of our official language obligations. We did this in the last shift briefing on November 4, and we're going to issue a special edition of that shift briefing at the beginning of December. We want to engage the employees in the Olympic experience.

Ongoing compliance audits in major airports constitute another tool at our disposal. Our compliance team conducts compliance verification tours in major airports. In category one airports, which are our main eight airports, we conduct four verifications every day to ensure that the signage is appropriate and that staffing requirements are met. The compliance team reviews CATSA's compliance, including the official language requirements as per standard operating procedures and the Official Languages Act.

The performance payment program is a program with incentives for meeting official language requirements and for complying with both security and customer service standards.

● (0910)

[Translation]

In preparation for the 2010 Winter Games, we have decided to add to our regular programs and have been working very closely with our screening contractors to ensure that we have sufficient bilingual screening officers at major airports for this international event, more particularly in the Vancouver region.

For this purpose, 350 screening agents will be relocated from various places in Canada to the theatre of operations in Vancouver. Of those 350 officers, 50% are bilingual. This leads me to tell you that language proficiency was an important consideration in the

selection process of screening officers for special assignments, particularly for the Olympic Games.

CATSA has established the Olympic incentive program for screening contractors participating in the special assignments for the Olympic Games. This program also includes criteria for meeting official languages requirements.

Today I want to thank everyone on CATSA's Winter Games working group, which has been working constantly for the past 18 months to make official languages a priority. I also want to hail the major recruitment efforts of our screening contractors, and I'm happy to announce that we will indeed be in a position to offer bilingual service during all operational hours at every site designated throughout the period of the games, not only in the locations where we have to offer those services, that is at 38 airports, but also at all temporary sites. Not only will we meet requirements in the Vancouver region, we will go further.

In addition to our participation in the awareness campaign of the Commissioner of Official Languages for Vancouver 2010, CATSA has also cooperated with various partners, including Air Canada, WestJet, local airport administrators, more particularly those in Toronto and Vancouver, and the Canada Border Services Agency, to pool our best practices in order to improve our official language policies and procedures during the 2010 Winter Games.

In closing, Mr. Chair and distinguished committee members, I would like to convey on behalf of CATSA that we are well on our way to meeting our official languages obligations and would very much like to ensure that the legacy of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is a memorable experience for all Canadian and international travellers, while continuing to ensure security at Canada's airports and providing excellent service in both official languages, while continuing to fulfill our security mandate to protect the public at large.

I am now prepared to answer your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Duguay.

Mr. Rodriguez, go ahead please.

● (0915)

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Duguay. You've read the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages that was tabled in 2008-2009. It states that, in 2007-2008, only 55% of employees occupying bilingual positions serving the public met the language requirements of the positions in question.

Has the situation changed since that time?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Are you talking about screening officers, contractors or CATSA employees?

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: The report refers to employees occupying bilingual positions and serving the public.

Mr. Yves Duguay: I can tell you today—and I can always check to see whether there are any more recent statistics—that we have about 500 employees at CATSA. Nearly 50% of those positions are designated bilingual. Most are occupied by people whose language qualifications are already adequate. In certain cases, where the skills have not been acquired, a special training program has been set up. I can't tell you exactly what the percentage is or the number of those positions.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Has that training program been implemented at the various service points in the country, at the various airports?

Mr. Yves Duguay: I was talking about CATSA employees, that is to say our own employees. As for service contractors, screening and control officers who work at the 89 airports, we have contractual obligations. They require the supplier to recruit bilingual officers and to ensure that there is always at least one bilingual screening officer at every control post in bilingual airports.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: The fact remains that the way for you to encourage suppliers to meet those bilingualism obligations is to offer them a bonus of approximately 20%. It was 5% in the past. Is that correct?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Our current incentive program has probably changed a lot from the one you are referring to. The purpose of this incentive program is to achieve compliance not only with the security aspect, that is to say the regulations and our normal operating procedures, but also with everything concerning the customer service aspect, including active offer.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: But these people receive a bonus if they meet their obligations.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Exactly, they receive a bonus if they meet the target.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Yes, but they can very well not meet their language obligations and not receive the bonus. They do have the contract they've negotiated, and that suits them. Do you understand what I mean? There's no real constraint related to their original contract. They can therefore very well not meet the bilingualism obligations. Nothing changes for them. They simply don't get the bonus. They need only plan their budget in accordance with the original conditions.

Mr. Yves Duguay: I mentioned our Operations Performance Oversight Program, which concerns 100 oversight officers. Unfortunately, I can't go back to 2007 because the program wasn't in effect at that time. It has been in effect for almost 16 months. Between May and October 2009, the rate of compliance with active offer and bilingual services increased, as a national average, from 88% to 94%. That means that we are not perfect. It may happen that there is no active offer at some point at an airport. However, we're really trying, through our observations, to constantly improve our performance. Vancouver is the best example. In recent months, the compliance rate has risen from 79% to 94%. Although that's not perfect, there are contractual obligations—

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: You're improving.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Exactly.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: In his report, the Commissioner says this: These observation results are unacceptable, and they are a clear indication that much work still needs to be done by CATSA to improve its performance in Toronto and Vancouver in time for the Games.

You say you're trying to take the necessary corrective action to correct this deficiency.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Perhaps I can draw a distinction. I don't know the sampling method used by the Commissioner of Official Languages, although we discussed the subject on two occasions. I can tell you that our sampling comprises more than 20,000 samples and that the compliance rate in the context of that sampling was 94%, 95% in Toronto. With a total sampling of 100 samples over a period of six months, you don't get the same results. I'm very confident and very comfortable with the method we used to measure our compliance level.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Rodriguez.

Now we'll go to Mr. Nadeau.

• (0920)

Mr. Richard Nadeau (Gatineau, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Duguay. I may be a little tough: I don't believe what you've said this morning. You should read the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages. I rely on him before I rely on CATSA, which is trying to justify the unjustifiable.

When you say that only 55% of people occupying bilingual positions are actually bilingual, I think that constitutes a major problem. We agree on that, beyond a shadow of a doubt.

You've received my complaint letter. I'm going to read you a paragraph from it:

On Friday, October 9, 2009, around 4:00 p.m., at Ottawa's Macdonald-Cartier Airport, I proceeded to the departure gate and went through security. The two employees present informed me that they did not speak French—*We don't speak French*—when I asked to be served in French. Both treated me in a condescending manner, immediately considering me as someone who no doubt wanted to assert himself and annoy them. Needless to say, I was not very pleased. I was furious, particularly since I had in front of me a little sign informing me that I could ask to be served in French. Neither employee even offered to go and find a French speaker to serve me. I felt like a second-class citizen.

Mr. Duguay, all that took place here at Ottawa Airport, in a supposedly much more bilingual area than other areas in Canada. We must agree on the fact that “bilingual” means French and English. One of the employees told me: “I do speak a lot of languages.” This was in Canada. In Ottawa, which is part of Canada, the official languages are French and English.

That said, how do you train your employees to show them what active offer is? Active offer isn't complicated; it amounts to saying “*Bonjour*, Hello.” In that way, people who arrive at the airport know they can be served in French or English and that, if the CATSA person who receives them can't answer them in the desired language, they will go find a bilingual colleague. That may take a minute or two, and that bilingual colleague will come and provide service in French or in English, as the case may be.

How do you provide training on active offer, if you do provide it?

Second, incidentally, I am very pleased that the Olympic Games are being held in Vancouver, but we'll go on living afterwards. I hope you won't stop providing your services or making your efforts at the end of February 2010.

How do you train your people with regard to active offer? How do you do that? I was personally faced with two individuals who quite stupidly told me: "We don't speak French."

I'm listening.

Mr. Yves Duguay: First of all, I'd like to apologize if you didn't receive the appropriate services to which you were entitled and that you should receive. I apologize to you and to any other member of the committee who may have had a similar experience.

Unfortunately, of the 52 million passengers we deal with every year, there are occasions when normal operating procedures are not followed. That's unfortunate, but every case, whether it's a customer service case involving official languages or security, we conduct an investigation in an attempt to determine the cause and to solve the problem.

In this particular case, perhaps I can give you a little information, with your permission, about—

Mr. Richard Nadeau: I would like to say two things.

First, the fact that you're giving me that information is a good thing.

Second, how do you train employees with regard to active offer?

Go ahead.

Mr. Yves Duguay: You provided a very good description of our normal operating procedure, our NOP. Active offer does indeed begin with "Hello, *Bonjour*."

If ever the person can't speak French... For the Olympics, we're currently developing a checklist with common phrases in French and English. As you mentioned, the employee should have gone and found a co-worker. Unfortunately, on that day, there were 10 bilingual individuals at the screening points and they did not take the time... An investigation was conducted, and I assure you that appropriate corrective measures will be taken.

Let's go back to the training aspect. There are two aspects that concern us in this matter: training and oversight. That's to ensure them that what we teach them in training is also applied in everyday activities.

● (0925)

The Chair: I would ask you to defer the rest of your answer until later.

Thank you, Mr. Nadeau.

We'll now continue with Mr. Gravelle.

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Good morning, Mr. Duguay.

When you hire people, do you ask that they be bilingual? If you hire someone who is already bilingual, that can help avoid a lot of problems in future. Could you tell me whether you make that special request?

Mr. Yves Duguay: You're referring to our screening officers, aren't you?

Mr. Claude Gravelle: I'm referring to all your employees.

Mr. Yves Duguay: As I mentioned earlier, CATSA has a linguistic profile for each of its positions, and an analysis is conducted to determine whether the position must be bilingual. With the growth in our operations in the regions, 50% of the last positions filled in the past six months were filled by bilingual staff, from Vancouver to Halifax.

Now I'm going to talk to you about screening officers who are not our employees, but who are the employees of companies hired by CATSA to provide the services. Where they are concerned, there are incentives and contractual obligations for service contractors to hire people who are already bilingual.

Recently, our partner, Aeroguard Group, in Vancouver, managed to hire 20 bilingual individuals in the Vancouver region by requesting the aid and support of the francophone communities. In addition, we recently met with all the heads of our four main service contractors. We asked them to go and recruit people from the francophone communities outside Quebec. We had excellent results in Vancouver and Toronto.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: So you hired 20 bilingual individuals out of a total of how many?

Mr. Yves Duguay: In all, 70 persons were hired.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: That's not even 50% of the total.

Mr. Yves Duguay: No, it's not 50%, but, with regard to Vancouver, if you compare the situation to what it was before that, it's very good. It should not be forgotten that we need one bilingual person per screening post. So ideally, as Mr. Nadeau explained, when service is actively offered and a person asks to be served in French, there will always be at least one bilingual officer available.

We're currently examining the fact that, if there is one bilingual officer per screening post during peak periods and there are seven waiting lines at that post, that's probably not enough. So we're in a period where we are doing preparatory work for calls to tender for next year, and we intend to increase the criteria regarding the presence of bilingual officers at screening posts.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: You say you received 20 admissible complaints in 2007-2008. That's not a lot, but we know that not everyone complains.

I'm sure you won't be able to answer my question. How many persons complained? If 20 complained, that's far too many because I'm sure the number is much larger.

Mr. Yves Duguay: That's a very good argument, and I thank you for raising it. We're lack data. We've vastly improved our management system by going after data through our oversight officers. In fact, we lack public feedback. We're trying to develop a system in which travellers, when leaving the screening post, would have a 1-800 number or an instant messaging contact to give us their feedback.

The 24, 21 and 14 complaints received in recent years have been subject to the same investigation method, whether they concerned official languages or a security violation. I myself receive each of the complaints and each of the letters before responding to the people concerned. We take this matter very seriously because, for us, a complaint is used to improve our service.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Are you trying to have bilingual staff at every airport at all times?

Mr. Yves Duguay: We are required by the act to provide bilingual services at 38 of the 89 airports where we currently operate. In my address, I mentioned that, with the number of bilingual candidates we've been able to recruit and that will be transferred temporarily to Vancouver, we'll be able to offer bilingual services, even at the temporary sites, in the two restricted regions, in the security areas in Vancouver. So that will enable us to increase our bilingual presence beyond what is required by the act.

• (0930)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Gravelle.

I have a brief question. You say that there is one bilingual employee per screening point. How many employees are there at a screening point?

Mr. Yves Duguay: That will vary during the day, depending whether you're talking about peak hours or not. For example, at Ottawa airport, if six lines are open at the same time, we can have 24 to 30 employees at a time. It varies. That's the minimum.

The Chair: At one screening point, there can be six lines. That means there is one bilingual employee. I think that's quite clear.

Mr. Yves Duguay: That's the minimum.

However, as I was explaining to Mr. Nadeau—

The Chair: There isn't one bilingual employee per line.

On a line, how many people are there?

Mr. Yves Duguay: There are four or five persons, depending on the type of airport.

The Chair: There are four or five persons per screening line and one screening point can have as many as six lines. There's one bilingual employee per screening point. That can go up to six lines.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Yes, and 17% of screening officers are bilingual. There is always more than one bilingual person at a screening point.

The Chair: Did you say that 17% of your employees are bilingual?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Seventeen percent of screening officers are bilingual.

The Chair: So that's 17% of 6,000 persons. That's perfect.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: Just to be clear, there isn't one bilingual employee per line, is there?

The Chair: No, a screening point can have as many as six lines, which have four employees each.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez: They'd better not go to the washroom!

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Mrs. Boucher.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Good morning. This is very interesting, particularly since things are going very quickly for the Olympic Games. In light of what you've just told me, I hope no one will be rushed because that won't be any fun.

I'm a bit surprised that there is only one bilingual person per screening line. This is 2009 and everybody on the Standing Committee on Official Languages thinks it's very important that more than adequate service be offered in both official languages. It always surprises me to see that it is so difficult to find perfectly bilingual people in 2009. That being said, I know that everyone here is working very hard for service in French, when we talk about official languages. We often find it hard to get a response in French at certain airports.

We often talk about small airports that have less than one million passengers. I know that your agency recently conducted a survey to assess demand in both official languages at 71 small airports.

Can you give me any information on that survey? What changes do you intend to make in response to the results of that survey, especially at remote small airports? Often a "oui" and "non" are fine. However, when you ask for a coffee, they don't know that coffee and "café" are the same thing.

Mr. Yves Duguay: No, I'm not aware of that study. I can only tell you that 38 airports are identified. At least nine airports have traffic greater than one million passengers and bilingual services are required there. In the other cases, these are airports where there's less passenger traffic but where the offer of bilingual service is equal to or greater than 5%. I couldn't tell you where that study comes from or what the findings were, but I know that we have 38 airports designated under the Official Languages Act.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: In that case, I'll ask you another question. For you, how important is it for there to be bilingual officers at all security posts? Do you pay less attention and do you assign fewer resources to regions that aren't considered bilingual?

Mr. Yves Duguay: For us, active offer is part of the total approach to customer service. When we meet the screening officers, the contractors, we always tell them that, for people who are travelling through airports today, it's quite a stressful experience. One of the best ways to welcome a customer—because you're all being paid to be screened—is to say "Hello, *Bonjour*" with a smile. That relieves a little of the tension that may exist, particularly in the biggest airports. To my mind, active offer is important because it's not only an obligation, it's also a very good approach to customer service.

Do we focus more particularly on regions where we have to provide the service? Definitely. Do we have bilingual officers at other airports? Yes, but as I was telling you, our contracts are up for review right now. We're working on a call for tenders for 2010. The minimum requirements we referred to earlier, that is to say one bilingual employee per screening post, will be changed because that no longer bears any relation to the actual air traffic situation we're facing today.

I would like to change the contracts sooner, but processes have to be followed. I can guarantee you that, in the next call for tenders, the language requirements will be increased in the contracts.

• (0935)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: So, if it's not one bilingual employee per screening point, how many will it be?

Mr. Yves Duguay: We still have to establish the ratio per line, and I wouldn't want to speak too soon on that until I've had the chance to discuss it with my colleagues.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: All right. You'd make a good politician: you're skating!

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: I have another question.

The Chair: You have 30 seconds left.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: It's over, only 30 seconds?

In the so-called orphan regions, is it possible to get service in both official languages at the small airports, on the Magdalen Islands, for example?

Mr. Yves Duguay: In the Magdalen Islands, I believe you have no problem getting service in French.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: I can tell you that I've had trouble, just asking for a coffee. In fact, it wasn't me; it was someone who was with me who politely ordered a coffee and who was told: "I don't speak French."

Mr. Yves Duguay: We don't offer coffee service at the screening points; that might be someone else.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: No, but that was nevertheless on the Magdalen Islands. At the screening point, sometimes they don't even ask us any questions.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Boucher.

The members are in a good mood this morning. The fact nevertheless remains that we're advancing and we're moving forward. We'll go to our second round.

Mr. D'Amours, go ahead please.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for appearing before us, Mr. Duguay.

You talked about the requirement. I hope that when you're invited back to appear before the Standing Committee on Official Languages, you won't tell us you've increased the requirement from one bilingual employee to two. Once we've finished today, if there is one message that you should retain, it is that it's important to improve that.

You said we were paying for it. However, if I'm paying for it, as a New Brunswicker, why can't I get the service? You said so yourself. According to the requirement, the figure of 3.33% corresponds to one bilingual employee for 30 people. A little earlier, the jokes about the washrooms were all well and good, about whether a person goes to the washroom... That's nevertheless the reality. How do two francophones who arrive at the same time get served? You can wonder. Your corporation is a Crown corporation. At some point,

you have to take this subject seriously. I also have to mention certain things today.

First, you say you're going to reassign employees from various places elsewhere. What will happen in those places? There's going to be a shortage of staff and no service will be offered in French there. The current situation with regard to this system is such that, if you do that, if you are compelled to make those statements, it's because you've been unable to meet the minimum requirements and to offer service.

I'm going to go a little further. I know this is going to make Mrs. Boucher smile. We wanted to refer to this earlier. This concerns an experience I had with Air Canada Jazz. It's a simple story. It was written on the door: "Do not smoke in the lavatory." In French, it was written: "Ne pas fumer les toilettes." After repeating that, I finally received a letter from Jazz telling me that they were doing a complete check of all their aircraft.

Today, I'm going to repeat what happened to me in Winnipeg. By repeating it, perhaps we'll ultimately get some service. I was lining up at the counter in Winnipeg, where there was a nice little sign stating: "Bilingual." I've always spoken French and yet I've always been answered in English. As if by chance, I was the lucky one who had to undergo a manual search. It was quite limited because I kept my clothes on. When I was on a small carpet, I was told to raise my arms, and so on. The gentleman started speaking to me in English. I answered that I was sorry but that I wanted service in French. At that stage, anyone wants to ensure he understands what's being done to him or said to him; you don't want to get into trouble. This caused a whole drama: they had to go find a little gentleman who could come and speak to me. You've no doubt already heard about my story. I hope so. If not, someone hasn't reported the facts, because I've told it here at least 10 times. That gentleman then asked me if I wanted a "massage"!

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: Based on your 3.33% figure, Mr. Duguay, of all the employees you represent, whether they are contractors or not, it was that person in particular who was supposed to be bilingual. Do you find that acceptable? Based on your 3.33%—one in 25 or 30 employees—that was the service I was given. Do you think that's bilingual service? I paid for that service.

• (0940)

Mr. Yves Duguay: May I comment on the first part of your question?

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: I'd like you to start with the last part, if that doesn't trouble you.

Mr. Yves Duguay: If you wish.

You're talking about consistency in service. First, I must tell you that what the employee said wasn't appropriate. However, I'm not prepared to refuse to encourage people to perform in a language that is not theirs and who are making the necessary efforts. Those efforts may not yet be adequate. These people are at least making the necessary effort.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: Mr. Duguay, in your contract, you guarantee that there will be a bilingual person. There's a difference between learning French and being bilingual. There's a difference between my language profile when I started to learn English and that of a bilingual person. If this is the contract prerequisite, then we're not dealing with a learning model; you're providing the services of a bilingual person.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Mr. D'Amours and Mr. Blaney, with your permission, I must tell you that I misled you. We're talking about a minimum number of "bilingual screening personnel" and an adapted number of "bilingual screening personnel" depending on the screening point. I gave an example: there were 10 bilingual persons in Ottawa. Pardon me if I misled you. Fortunately, my colleagues corrected me at the last minute.

You asked me an excellent question about the Olympic Games. May I go back to it? The program under which we are transferring 350 persons for the Olympics is a reward program for outstanding screening officers who have done a good job, who have served you in particular, who have served passengers in both official languages.

That said, since we've recruited them—a number of them are from the Maritimes because we have a lot of bilingual staff there—those officers are being replaced by bilingual people. We're going to offer the same adapted service at the screening points, which is greater than the limit of one per screening point. This is a program I'm very attached to. Too often people tend to belittle the work of the screening officers. It's very difficult, and we like to recognize those who—

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Jean-Claude D'Amours: I'd simply like to get some information, Mr. Chairman.

Is it possible to get the number of bilingual persons working for each designated airport and for each contractor?

The Chair: If possible, Mr. Duguay, you can submit any relevant information you want to the clerk.

However, I would like to give you the chance to clarify one thing. If I correctly understood, there were, for example, six screening lines per screening point.

Mr. Yves Duguay: And even more.

The Chair: And there are four persons on each screening line.

How many bilingual employees are there per screening point?

Mr. Yves Duguay: There are minimum requirements, but a number of employees are also assigned to bilingual screening, depending on the type of airport and the screening point. I know that the minimum is one, but I'm told that, in Ottawa, there are usually 10 bilingual employees out of 35 or 40 employees at the screening points. However, if you go to a smaller airport, the number of bilingual employees will be less, as madame mentioned earlier.

The Chair: I thought there was at least one bilingual employee per screening line. I think you'll be providing us with details on that.

• (0945)

Mr. Yves Duguay: Perhaps I could give you a document on that with specific details.

The Chair: All right. That will clarify the matter.

Ms. Guay.

Ms. Monique Guay (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): As you can see, we're very concerned about the situation here on the official languages committee.

You say there are 10 in Ottawa. How is it that there isn't an employee who is able to go get another one who is supposed to be bilingual? Are the 10 in the washroom at the same time? That makes no sense; it's impossible. Something isn't right in what you're saying.

As for your screening points, it just takes one Air France flight to arrive when there's only one bilingual employee for that employee to have a nervous breakdown. Those people don't speak English. How are you going to operate? This makes no sense. I find this utterly abnormal.

Furthermore, you're not giving us real technical information. You tell us there will be a person. You can't tell us how many screening posts there will be. What you're telling us isn't clear. We would like clear and precise information. Is it possible to give us that, rather than tell us about standards and this and that? We have nothing. Really give us specific information. I can tell you things will take a turn for the worse in a while.

With respect to complaints, I believe Mr. Gravelle is entirely right: foreign travellers who come to the Olympic Games won't complain. They won't even know where to file a complaint. So what will they do if they aren't offered adequate service? I'm very concerned about two or three planes full of francophones landing when there won't be any bilingual service. People will wonder where they are, whereas they thought they were in Canada, in a bilingual country. But they won't have any service in their language.

There's another problem. When a woman enters the screening service, Mr. Duguay, she is entitled to ask to be searched by a woman. Do you offer appropriate services for that as well? I don't want to be searched by a man who also doesn't speak to me in my language. I would ask that it be done by a woman. Is that service available, Mr. Duguay? Has that been considered in your calculations of the staff required?

Mr. Yves Duguay: I'll start by answering the first part of your question. You're referring to an individual and corporate performance of a service contractor, to compliance and to the oversight aspect. Incidents result in people not following normal operating procedures, as in the case that Mr. Nadeau mentioned. In that case, Mr. Nadeau clearly explained what our procedures are. These people have to refer the passenger to a bilingual colleague.

Will there be incidents in which our service does not meet expectations? As I told you, we've improved our performance from 88% to 94%. It's not over. We have to continue improving. Will we be perfect? We aim for perfection. I can't guarantee that we'll be perfect every day.

As for the possibility for a woman to be searched by a woman, we have planned for that. That's part of our policy. Not only can you be searched by a woman, but you must be searched by a woman. This is an obligation and it can be done in a private place, out of sight of other passengers. So this is a service that we offer and it is one of our normal operating procedures.

Ms. Monique Guay: Will it be bilingual?

Mr. Yves Duguay: As to whether the woman in question will be bilingual, I'll tell you that, in most major airports, that will be possible. In the smaller airports, there will be a bilingual person, but it might not be a woman. One thing is certain: the search must be conducted by a person of the same sex; that's an obligation.

Ms. Monique Guay: Personally, if I arrive at an airport and they can't search me in French, it's really too bad, but I'm going to explode, and you'll have quite a complaint on your hands. That's unacceptable, especially when foreigners come to Canada to attend the Olympic Games, to celebrate and to encourage the Olympians, both from their country and from ours. That's what the first welcome is. If they aren't well received there, I'm sorry, but that will project a very bad image and will leave a bad taste in the mouth of the person who has come here on a trip.

So you have a lot of work to do. I don't think you've at all reached the point we thought you had reached. I don't know how you're going to manage to achieve those objectives for the Olympic Games. And those services have to be maintained after the Olympic Games.

● (0950)

Mr. Yves Duguay: I can tell you that I'm very confident, that I believe we can meet all the language requirements during the Olympic Games.

You referred to a gateway. Most travellers will be arriving in Toronto, Montreal or directly in Vancouver. There's no problem with our certainty that we can offer bilingual services not only by virtue of the fact that we will be staffing the positions adequately, but also by virtue of the fact that we'll be conducting enhanced oversight of operations, not only with regard to bilingual offer of service, but naturally as regards the fact that we are going to be in a situation in which the security level will be high, since the threat will be higher. Our oversight will therefore be enhanced. Our monitoring will not only be in the security area, but also with regard to customer service. So I have no doubt that we will meet the requirements, that we'll meet this challenge and that we'll do a good job during the Olympic Games.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Guay.

[English]

We'll now turn to Mrs. O'Neill-Gordon.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Duguay, for being with us.

I know, as you said, a lot of work has gone into this and we appreciate all the work that has been done. I know you're not exactly right where you'd want to be right now, but would you say that much progress has been made over the last ten years in this process of having more bilingual service?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Yes. Thank you very much for your question.

I have to be very honest; there's still some work to be done. But if I look at data and I look at comments and I look at the feedback that we're getting, generally speaking it's becoming more and more positive, and what we're trying to do is something that we cannot change overnight. It's a change in culture. Very often the screening officers who are hired by the service contractors were hired with a mindset of security, and yes, we are a security business, but after all, we're in a people business. We're hiring people to screen people, and that's a big shift in the culture that we're trying to do.

Official languages is one component of that approach for customer service, and I'm very happy to report that I feel we're making some great progress. There's still a lot of work to be done, but we've been focusing on the Olympics and we're trying to train like an Olympian to make sure we deliver the best performance in February and March next year.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon: Thank you.

You also mentioned that when you hire employees they're not always bilingual, that a certain percentage are not bilingual, but are they given an opportunity to take training in the official language of their choice, the language that they're not yet comfortable in, after they've been hired, and in what ways is that done?

Mr. Yves Duguay: The way we operate at CATSA is that we develop the training programs and we train the screening officers. We train them in the official language of their choice throughout Canada. We have training departments in all the major provinces and we offer that training.

One thing we need to take a look at, to be very honest with you, in the next RFP, is to ensure that there's a governance model and there's a structure in place with the service contractors that would have an adequate human resource department to promote not only the engagement of the screening officers, which I think is essential, but also the development and the training, including language training, and it's something that we will include in the next RFP.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon: Is this training available right in the area where they live or do they have to travel far or anything?

Mr. Yves Duguay: At some point they need to travel. We have regional training centres, so as far as the contract is concerned, we cover the cost of travel and accommodation for the screening officers.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon: We notice that with CATSA, so that people are more able to understand, there are going to be pins to identify the language and there are different publications for staff that reinforce the language requirements and training. Do you see this being continued after the games are over?

Mr. Yves Duguay: It will. You will see this bilingual pin. You will also see an Olympic pin. As I mentioned earlier, it was very important for us to find a way to reward and recognize excellence in the 350 screeners we found. So all the screening officers will be wearing an Olympic pin, and we've developed a new name tag that will identify the screening officers and the languages they speak. As I mentioned earlier on, many will speak many languages on top of the official languages.

We want to maintain that program. We want to ensure that the next service contractors—those who will bid on the contracts next year—will have an HR program that works on engaging the employees through reward and recognition.

• (0955)

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill-Gordon: Yes, it's very important to show the countries that are coming in that we are a friendly country and ready to accept them.

Le président: Thank you, Mrs. O'Neill-Gordon.

[Translation]

Mr. Duguay, in your presentation, you clearly explained that CATSA was created following the attacks on September 11, 2001. Is it possible, first, that greater emphasis has been placed on security? Now you're talking about a change of culture, about catching up. Has there always been an official languages champion at CATSA, from day one, or was that position created after that?

Mr. Yves Duguay: I couldn't tell you what the situation has been since 2002, but I know that my CEO, Mr. McGarr, was previously the official languages champion. I don't know for how many years he occupied that position. He passed on the torch to me when he was appointed president of CATSA.

I must say you conducted a good analysis. At the time of the incidents on September 11, I was at Air Canada. The first reaction was a security reaction. We set a lot of things aside to focus on security. In my opinion, what we try to show screening officers when we meet them is that, if we provide excellent customer service, we'll be even better off in the area of security because we'll be focusing on people.

I don't think a pencil or a knife necessarily constitute a threat if they're in my hands, but they may become a threat if they're in someone else's hands. To have this kind of risk- management-based approach, you have to interact with the public. Sometimes screening officers criticize us and tell us we spend too much time talking about customer service rather than security. We often repeat to them that, if they do an excellent job with customer service, they'll be excellent in the security area as well. It's this change in culture that we're trying to introduce, but it will take a little time. In spite of everything, we're beginning to see a very positive glimmer on the horizon.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Gravelle.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: I just want to clarify one point. I don't know whether I misunderstood. I don't have a doctorate; there are no letters after my name.

Did you in fact say that only 10 out of 40 employees in Ottawa are bilingual?

Mr. Yves Duguay: That's the information I obtained from my colleagues.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: That corresponds to 25% in a bilingual city, a sector, where there is quite a bit of French.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Mr. Gravelle, there are at least 10, but there can be more, depending on the shifts.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Nevertheless, a minimum of 10 is not very much, particularly in a city like Ottawa and especially if you consider Gatineau and Hull.

If there are 10 out of 40 here in Ottawa, I wonder how many there are in Toronto, Vancouver and other places that aren't bilingual. I don't think 10 out of 40 is very much. There must be a lot fewer in Toronto and Vancouver.

Mr. Yves Duguay: I don't have those details with me, but I would be happy to share that kind of information with you.

The Chair: You need only send it to our clerk.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. D'Amours said a little earlier that 350 employees had been transferred from other airports. What is the situation in airports that have lost those bilingual employees? There must not be a lot of bilingual employees left.

Mr. Yves Duguay: This is naturally a whole. As I told you, this is first an excellence program designed to reward people whose performance has been excellent. We're giving them the opportunity to live the Olympic experience. In the context of this program, we're hiring more bilingual people at the points where we're withdrawing those individuals in particular, to replace them with bilingual people. The people aren't all bilingual, but 50% of those 350 employees are.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: You've obviously made a big effort to have bilingual employees in Vancouver, but what will the situation be six months or a year after the Games? Will we go back to the same point as last year or in 2006-2007? Will the bilingual employees be leaving?

Mr. Yves Duguay: To provide adequate coverage of the Vancouver Olympic Games, we're calling on employees who come from two different sources. Those who were hired locally will stay on site. The 350 employees I referred to will be assigned to 18 temporary locations where we've been asked, in particular, to take charge of screening passengers and baggage for helicopters, hydroplanes and so on.

Following the discussion we had earlier this morning, I can tell you that, in the next call for tenders and the next contracts, we really intend to insist on bilingual services and customer service. We want to find partners who are the right fit for us so that we can offer those services. By measuring them and opting for a contract based on a performance model, there's no doubt that our ability to provide bilingual services will only increase in the years to come.

• (1000)

Mr. Claude Gravelle: You said earlier that CATSA had 500 employees.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Yes.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Some 6,000 people also work on contract. How many of your 500 employees are bilingual?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Half of our employees are bilingual.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Do those who make up the other half want to improve? Do they have the opportunity? Do you offer anything in that area?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Yes, there is individual training, based on the person's language profile. This is offered to all employees in all regions.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: I ask that question because Canadian Forces representatives appeared before the committee a few weeks ago. In their case, leadership comes from the top and works downward.

Do you think that, if there were more bilingual staff at your company, that would be preferable for the contractors?

Mr. Yves Duguay: I can tell you that our management committee is entirely bilingual.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Gravelle.

We'll now go to Ms. Zarac.

Mrs. Lise Zarac (LaSalle—Émard, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Duguay. Security, of course, is your first duty at CATSA. However, if you aren't able to communicate, security may not be very effective. So language is very important. I congratulate you on your employee excellence program. You say that only half of the 350 employees are bilingual. However, the committee's objective is to ensure that people who come to attend the Olympic Games can get answers in their language. The fact that only half of the 350 employees are bilingual is a bit troubling. First, I wonder whether that's enough, but what do you say about other access points such as Ottawa and Toronto, for example? Has the number of bilingual persons there increased as well?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Thank you for the question. Last year, we spent a lot of time with our main contractors. The issue of the discussion was always the same: the Olympic Games are a golden opportunity for us to showcase our services, to show what we can do. That's also the case for the service contractors. These are independent companies that are trying to get other contracts, of course. However, one of the main objectives is to ensure that people are well received, and that starts with official languages.

You ask me whether 175 of the 350 employees is an adequate percentage. You have to take into account what we're going to do, the way we want to provide the service. This is naturally subject to people following normal operating procedures, which was not the case for Mr. Nadeau, for example.

There will be oversight. We'll be on site ourselves. Our employees will conduct enhanced oversight of operations to ensure that normal operating procedures are well applied by service contractors. I'll be on site as well for most of the Olympic Games. I'm going to talk to employees to make them understand how great an opportunity it is for them to work at these Olympic Games. We don't often get the chance to showcase ourselves and take full advantage of that. We have to encourage employee commitment. Our service contractors are very committed right now. They are actively recruiting staff with a view to increasingly hiring bilingual people.

Mrs. Lise Zarac: You didn't answer the second part of my question, whether the number of bilingual employees at other screening posts has been increased?

Mr. Yves Duguay: In the transit areas, for example, people will be travelling to Vancouver... In Montreal, I don't have the percentage, but it's more than 90%. So there's no problem.

In Ottawa, a lot of bilingual people have been hired, as well as in Toronto. Yesterday we were talking with the Garda people who have approached the francophone communities in Toronto to increase the recruitment rate. Aeroguard in Vancouver has done an excellent job recruiting people. So we haven't yet reached the target number of people, but a considerable effort has been made to improve this ability to offer bilingual service.

• (1005)

Mrs. Lise Zarac: We on the committee also hope that those efforts will continue even after the Olympic Games.

You said that you had a team that was auditing the main airports. Could you name those airports and tell me how often those audits are being done?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Transport Canada has divided the airports into three groups: the first includes the main airports, that is to say Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. We have a permanent presence at those airports. We have people who conduct these audits, this oversight of operations, on a daily basis. These people also have to cover the airports of the region where they work, such as the category 2 airports, whether it be the Victoria Airport or the one in Quebec City.

Our future plan is to review our regional structure in order to start deploying people to the smaller airports—it's relative—category 2 airports, such as those in Victoria, Kelowna, Quebec City, Moncton and Saint John probably. We'll eventually have an activity oversight model with a frequency that will vary with the staff at our disposal.

Mrs. Lise Zarac: I know a survey has been conducted. Could we have the results of the survey that CATSA conducted last year?

The Chair: Will the survey be available soon, Mr. Duguay?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Yes, I'm told it will be available soon.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Zarac.

We're going to continue with Mr. Petit.

Mr. Daniel Petit (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Duguay.

I would like to address the security aspect, which you have focused on since 2001; that is to say that a certain form of so-called internal control has been established. That means that, when someone travels within Canada, he or she must necessarily go through a screening post, which was not previously the case. There was only customs when entering the country or U.S. customs when leaving Canada to enter the United States. So this is a very significant change.

I spoke with a Liberal MP from Vancouver, Mr. Dosanjh, who took part in a feature on Radio-Canada—I don't know whether you saw it—showing a person arriving in Vancouver from India. That person spoke only Hindi and did not speak English. That person will be spoken to in Hindi at the airport and then function in Hindi in Vancouver.

A question arises about what currently exists. We wouldn't want the work you're trying to do—and I think it's entirely to your credit that you're making an effort to have bilingual people—to be limited solely to Vancouver and that there are no other results afterwards. As you can see, we are demanding of you.

We have had occasion to meet with Canadian Forces representatives three times. They told us what kind of textbooks they use, how they provide the courses and so on. I know that your company isn't a school, but how do you go about getting the necessary bilingual staff to respond to all needs—because the airports have to be able to meet your own standards? What do you offer your staff? Do you have a school, a place where they can learn? What kind of textbooks do you use? Is “Hello, *Bonjour*” all you ask them to know? I hope not.

What do you currently have to offer those people? What tools do your contractors have? Are you aware of that?

● (1010)

Mr. Yves Duguay: First, I'd like to draw a distinction between the military model and ours. We operate on a contract basis. These people are not our employees. This is a labour relations matter. We're trying not to interfere in the supervision and management of those resources.

We do have schools, training centres. We offer training in French and English. However, we don't offer second-language training, unless it's for our own employees. They have access to second-language training, on an individual basis or in classes. For our employers, there are contractual requirements concerning the staffing of bilingual positions.

As for the active offer you're referring to, we've prepared a training module that is being used right now. Every employee will have to take that training module before the Olympic Games. This is not a language course, but it is a timely reminder to underscore our obligation regarding active offer and follow-up.

Of course—you've no doubt noticed the same thing—I see, when we get the “Hello, *Bonjour*” and start speaking French, that people tend to freeze on the spot. Their reflex is to go find the co-worker who speaks French because there is one who speaks French at the screening points. It's this process, which we talked about earlier, that we're trying to remind people of. We remind them what must be done.

I don't know whether that answers your question.

Mr. Daniel Petit: You say you offer your employees courses. Where is that? What is it? Do you offer them a lot of hours or is it just to provide them with an hour of courses, then to tell them that they're bilingual, that they can say “yes”, “no”, “toaster”, and that's it. That's not what I want. What kind of courses are you giving them? Can you describe them to us?

Mr. Yves Duguay: We could give you more details on language training at CATSA. It's made on a commitment basis; it's nearly a contract. If employees are not bilingual, they make a commitment, by occupying the position, to become bilingual within a two-year period. We sit down with them and tell them that, to get to that point, they will have to take a certain type of training. We're doing that at CATSA, but we're not doing it with contract employees.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Daniel Petit: Do you have a course plan? Could you provide it to us? Is it confidential? I suppose not.

Mr. Yves Duguay: No, it's not confidential, but it is very individualized training. It's based on the type of position occupied and the person's ability. The type of training varies.

Mr. Daniel Petit: Thank you.

The Chair: One thing is certain: if you want to forward your information to us on training programs for your employees, we will send it to committee members. Thank you.

Now we'll finish the third round with Mr. Nadeau.

Mr. Richard Nadeau: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Duguay, I'm very happy that you've come this morning. It would have been good for your CEO to be here as well. I understand that this morning you're in charge of defending people who make decisions. It's not you who make the decisions at the outset; it's your bosses. You are responsible for the files. However, if we can't meet the leadership, the one who's at the top, to tell him what we think, at some point the orders you receive... I'm not always sure of the will to improve things, and I'm going to tell you why.

You said certain things earlier. For example, on September 11, 2001—that's eight years ago—measures were put in place. I understand, but that was eight years ago. If it takes your organization, CATSA, eight years to understand that you have an obligation... Third parties also have an obligation, as you said earlier. Don't come and tell us that, because they are third parties, it may be comprehensible that they are not too good in French and that some freeze when French is spoken to them. That's not normal.

When you want a doctor at a hospital or a medical board, you make sure he has his documents, his papers attesting to his medical training. If you want people in bilingual positions, they have to be bilingual. If they freeze or are surprised to learn that there are people speaking French in Canada—some are learning that right now—that's not very reassuring. I want you to know that. You're not responsible for the situation, but some people will have to wake up at some point to something else than just meeting obligations for the sake of meeting obligations. You provide a service to a given clientele; that's a major factor.

Another aspect is very important for me. The Olympic Games are coming up, as we said earlier, and you mentioned that as well. After the games, will efforts continue to ensure that we exceed the ratio of one bilingual employee to 24 employees in Ottawa? Fifteen percent of the population of Ottawa is francophone; 97% of the population of Gatineau is as well. Put the two together, and you're nearing a francophone population of 26% or 27% in the greater region served by the Macdonald-Cartier Airport.

Couldn't you try to get closer to 25%? For 24 people, that means how many bilingual persons? That means five or six persons at least who should necessarily be on the floor. You've just told me that it takes at least one because sometimes there are 10. You understand what I mean. This is the kind of recommendation we're submitting to you.

When we read the document I have here, the report of the Commissioner of Official Languages, although I don't exactly know the number of departments, Crown corporations and agencies there are in Canada—we could get the figures—one thing is clear: the three offenders in order are Air Canada, Canada Post and CATSA. There are also definitely 40, 50 or 60 of these organizations.

You tell me you have training schools. I hope the courses there are mandatory. Because if it's only on a voluntary basis, we're seeing the result. Tell us in concrete terms: what is your plan to ensure that, when a Gravelle, a Guay, a Zarac, a Rodriguez, our friend D'Amours, a Boucher, a Petit or a Chong, who speaks very good French, appears at one of your service posts, they'll immediately receive service in French? If you can't tell me that immediately, could you send us your action plan so that compliance with the Official Languages Act is a reality after the Vancouver Games? I'm listening.

•(1015)

Mr. Yves Duguay: Above all, I want to pass on the regrets of Mr. McGarr, our president, who had to meet with the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities this morning. That's why he is not here with you this morning. Mr. McGarr is completely bilingual. With regard to governance, I must tell you that I couldn't be working for a better president who is setting the tone at the top. There's absolutely no problem in that regard.

You referred to the performance level. You raised a very good point, a very good idea, which is the ability to identify people in order to know whether they are really bilingual. In the next call for tenders, as I mentioned, we will have requirements so that our contractors, service contractors, can test the language ability of the people they're going to hire. We have some work to do in that area, I admit.

With respect to the statistics, I don't have a thorough knowledge of the sampling method of the Commissioner of Official Languages. I would be more than happy to share mine with you. As I said, my sampling comprises 20,000 samples. I don't know what the sampling of the Commissioner of Official Languages is. On this basis of 20,000 samples, I can say that it is a fairly accurate representation. I have a compliance rate of 94%, and I'm very proud of that. I spoke to the Commissioner of Official Languages on two occasions so that we could further discuss our sampling method, the tests and the oversight of our operations, and so that we could share this kind of information, which would be beneficial to both parties.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Nadeau.

The fourth round begins with Ms. Boucher, whose name has been set down. There are others, and I invite them to do so.

We're going to kick off with you, Mrs. Boucher.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Good morning, sir. We seem to be whining, but we simply want to ensure that the official languages are

respected. We know that you're doing a fairly extensive job these days.

Earlier you said that your employees were learning an official language on a voluntary basis. When there are resisters who absolutely don't want to learn English or French, are there any consequences for those employees or are they free to make their own decision without any problem? Do you ever have people who resist learning the second language, and are there any consequences?

Mr. Yves Duguay: That doesn't happen to my knowledge, madam. In our organization, we have a very good culture. That's moreover what attracted me to CATSA. I mentioned that the tone is set by the CEO and that goes down to the lowest level. I remember no incident of that kind.

However, as I told Mr. Petit, there is a kind of social contract when you occupy a position. Within a certain period of time, you have to be able to meet the language requirements of the position. I know there are people who are still working without having met them. Are there any consequences? We've done follow-up to enable the person to succeed. It's always done in a very positive way.

•(1020)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: All right. You're going to rely more on the person's good will, without any written contract, and you're going to ensure that person has the will to do it.

Mr. Yves Duguay: Precisely. That's part of our performance evaluation system. There are nevertheless quite strong encouragements.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Thank you. That's what I wanted to know.

The Chair: Thank you. I've come to the end of the list of committee members who want to question our witness.

Mr. Gravelle.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Chairman, I simply have one or two other questions.

Earlier you said that 38 out of 89 airports are designated bilingual. Would it be possible to have a list of those airports with the number of bilingual employees at each and to know how many of them work there at the same time?

Mr. Yves Duguay: Yes, we could provide you with that information.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Gravelle.

I'd like to thank you for appearing before our committee. I hope that this is the start of a constructive dialogue between your agency and the committee. This morning, you've laid the foundation for a better understanding. We have a clearer understanding of who you are and how you operate. We also encourage you to consider the committee's comments and suggestions, particularly with regard to your contractors. The experience of passengers isn't necessarily shaped through contact with the agency's 500 members, but rather by contact with your employees, those who work at the screening posts. You can rely on the committee's support to ensure an active offer of bilingual service. Thank you for being here.

Ms. Guay, do you have a brief question?

Ms. Monique Guay: My question is for you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Very well.

Then we will thank our witness.

Yes?

Ms. Monique Guay: Mr. Chairman, I received the committee's agenda on November 17. We were to hear from someone from Broadcasting and Services in French of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. I received a new notice—

The Chair: You're talking about the notice of meeting?

Ms. Monique Guay: Yes. It was changed yesterday. We only heard from Mr. Duguay.

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Monique Guay: I simply want to know why no one came. We were supposed to have two witnesses.

The Chair: That's possible. Can you show it to Ms. Dumas? We're going to adjourn the meeting and study that.

Mr. Richard Nadeau: She's right; I read it too.

The Chair: All right, I understand. That's the name of the study, Ms. Guay. This morning, we heard from CATSA as part of the study of the broadcasting of the Games. We'll be hearing from representatives of the airports at future meetings.

Mr. Richard Nadeau: Next Tuesday, we'll be discussing the report on delivery of the cheques.

The Chair: That's correct. Thank you.

(The committee adjourned.)

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