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Chair

The Honourable Michael Chong

Standing Committee on Official Languages

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• (0845)

[Translation]

The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)): Welcome to the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages on this Thursday, March 1, 2012.

[English]

Before beginning today, I just want to draw to the attention of members of the committee that we have received the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013. Our estimates are not particularly large, but they are for an amount of \$22 million. They're going to be deemed automatically reported to the House by May 31. So if members of the committee wish to review these estimates—they pertain to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Chief Electoral Officer, the Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board, and the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat, as well as the Privy Council—I'd be more than happy to organize a meeting, to call witnesses so they can explain these estimates, and we can vote on them.

[Translation]

We are here today pursuant to Standing Order 108 to pursue our study on the evaluation of the Roadmap: improving programs and service delivery. Three groups of witnesses will be appearing before us today.

[English]

First we have Mr. Johnson and Mr. McGovern from the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development. Welcome.

[Translation]

Then we have Ms. Cantin, from the Canada School of Public Service.

Welcome.

[English]

Also here are Mr. MacLeod and Mr. Tremblay of the Treasury Board Secretariat.

[Translation]

We'll begin with the representative of the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development.

[English]

Mr. David McGovern (Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy and Research Branch, Department of Human Resources and Skills Development): Mr. Chairman, *membres du comité*, thank you for the opportunity to share Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's contribution to the road map for Canada's linguistic duality. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's mission is to build a stronger and more competitive Canada, to support Canadians in making choices that help them live productive and rewarding lives, and to improve Canadians' quality of life.

Within its mandate, HRSDC is committed to supporting initiatives that foster the development of official language minority communities and that promote the use of English and French in Canadian society.

[Translation]

Under the Roadmap, the department allocated \$94 million over a five-year period to implement four initiatives in the areas of social, human resource and economic development of official language minority communities in Canada.

[English]

Let me begin with the enabling fund for official language minority communities. The enabling fund is HRSDC's main contribution under the road map and is a cornerstone initiative in community, economic, and human resource development for official language minority communities. The Commissioner of Official Languages has recognized the enabling fund as an example of a positive measure.

The initiative represents an investment of \$69 million over five years, which has funded the operations and activities of 14 national, provincial, and territorial not-for-profit organizations, including

[Translation]

the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité, the RDÉE,

[English]

the national coordinating body for francophone communities; 12 provincial-territorial networks representing francophone and Acadian minority communities; and CEDEC, the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation, representing Quebec's anglophone communities.

The success of these organizations has been based on their ability to forge partnerships and to build on the strengths and expertise of others. For example, in 2010-11, enabling fund recipient organizations leveraged over \$40 million from the public, private, and non-profit sectors, representing three times the value of the original investments made through the enabling fund.

The RDÉE and CEDEC networks create hubs for community-based partnerships. They support an integrated approach to local economic and human resources development, and they have undertaken innovative projects that respond to local needs. For example, RDÉE Ontario developed *La bonne affaire*, an innovative model that supports the economic integration of francophone immigrants into small and medium-sized businesses. CEDEC has worked with the remote anglophone community on Quebec's north shore to develop the tourism sector to support economic diversification in the region. CEDEC helped members of the community acquire the skills they needed to be successful and facilitated the development of strategic partnerships with tourism associations.

• (0850)

[Translation]

A second Human Resources and Skills Development Canada initiative under the Roadmap is strengthening the capacity of non-governmental organizations for early childhood development. Four million dollars has been allocated to this initiative over five years.

The funding is used to promote the linguistic and cultural aspects of early childhood development while strengthening and improving access to programs and services in official language minority communities. It recognizes the important role that the not-for-profit sector plays in building relationships, networks and partnerships with parent and learning organizations for an environment that supports early childhood development at the community level.

The funding is used to support the Commission nationale des parents francophones, which includes obtaining a consensus on a vision for early childhood development in official language minority communities and preparing a harmonized national action plan, including the development and transfer of educational tools and products for children and families such as video clips, a guidebook and resources for professionals.

The work of the Commission nationale des parents francophones and its partners has helped to strengthen and improve access to programs and services in official language minority communities. It has worked to create a strong network where partners can work shoulder to shoulder to sustain and evolve the vision for early childhood development among communities and their stakeholders.

[English]

The third Human Resources and Skills Development Canada component under the road map is the child care pilot project. Funding for this initiative is \$13.5 million over the life of the road map. The initiative is a research project studying the impacts of a French language preschool program on linguistic and cultural development and on the readiness to learn of young children living in francophone minority communities.

The project is being conducted in six communities: Saint John and Edmundston in New Brunswick; Cornwall, Durham, and Orléans in Ontario; and Edmonton, Alberta. Approximately 400 children and their families are participating in this project.

The pilot project is a unique initiative that provides research evidence on what works for children growing up in minority francophone communities. The results are particularly informative for parents, service providers, and communities with respect to the design and delivery of early childhood development and the identification of ways to preserve francophone culture and language. So far, the results of the study indicate a positive impact of the preschool program on the school readiness of children growing up in minority francophone communities.

[Translation]

The fourth and last Human Resources and Skills Development Canada initiative under the Roadmap is the family literacy initiative. The purpose of the family literacy initiative is to improve access to francophone family literacy services by supporting networks and partnerships with various community stakeholders with a view to reaching families and adults that play an important role in the lives of children. Family literacy services are being integrated into existing community programs and services, and tailored to the specific literacy needs of minority communities. Total funding for this initiative is \$7.5 million for 2008-2013.

This initiative is managed by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills which in turn is working closely with the Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences and its partners to implement the initiative. The initiative objectives are to strengthen networks and create new partnerships; to adapt literacy services and programs to meet the particular needs of certain groups within a minority community setting; and to increase access to family literacy training and to have qualified trainers. The Family Literacy Initiative has supported eight new research reports identifying needs and tools for targeted groups, developed nine family literacy models, implemented two awareness strategies and published various promotional tools.

•(0855)

[English]

This completes the overview of the four initiatives supported by Human Resources and Skills Development under the road map. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada remains committed, through its policies, programs, and services, to listening to communities and responding to their needs. The department has developed an integrated official language minority community consultation framework to facilitate meaningful consultations at both the national and regional levels. The department has established and continues to maintain ongoing dialogue with communities to gain a better understanding of their views, needs, and priorities. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada is contributing to the horizontal evaluation of the road map that has been conducted by Canadian Heritage. Two initiatives are being formally evaluated at this time: the enabling fund and the family literacy initiative. These evaluations are well under way and are expected to be completed by the summer of 2012.

The department also reports on its initiatives under the road map through the departmental performance report of Canadian Heritage that's tabled in Parliament annually.

[Translation]

I want to reassure the members of the committee that our department is committed to fostering the development of official languages minority communities and linguistic duality, and will continue to support and explore avenues to pursue this engagement.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to present the departmental accomplishments with regards to the Roadmap. My colleague and I will be pleased to respond to your questions. Thank you.

[English]

Thank you very much.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we will go to Ms. Cantin.

Ms. Nancie Cantin (Director, Research and Development, Canada School of Public Services): Mr. Chairman, committee members, thank you for this opportunity to come and talk to you about our initiative and about our contribution to the Roadmap.

My name is Nancie Cantin, and I am the director of Research and Development, Language Training in the Learning Programs Branch of the Canada School of Public Service. On behalf of the school, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to talk about the school's contribution to the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013: Acting for the Future.

The Canada School of Public Service is the common learning services provider for the public service of Canada. Throughout the country, the school offers a range of training and development activities aimed at strengthening both individual and organizational capacities and fostering management excellence in the federal public service.

In the context of the Roadmap, the school proposed an initiative to enhance access to its on-line second-language training and retention products, with the support of Canadian universities. This initiative, which is being conducted in the form of a pilot project, began in 2009 and will draw to a close on March 31. The school received funding of \$2.5 million over three years to implement this initiative. One of the objectives was to help expand the pool of recent university graduates who consider the federal public service as an employer of choice and who meet the Government of Canada's bilingualism requirements.

The school's main activities in the context of this initiative involved negotiating agreements with partner universities, adapting language training products, facilitating access to its products, and finally, evaluating the initiative. This evaluation is currently underway. The partner universities, meanwhile, were asked to provide an environment conducive to learning, to contribute to the advancement of official languages, and to participate in a cohort study.

•(0900)

[English]

Concretely, 10 universities participated in this pilot project: Carleton University; L'École nationale d'administration publique; York University, Glendon Campus; Université Ste-Anne; Simon Fraser University; the University of Alberta; the University of Ottawa; the University of Regina; the University of Waterloo; and the University of Victoria.

The school developed two course curricula, one in French and one in English, and organized sessions with the Public Service Commission to assess the participants' second-language competencies, both at the beginning and at the end of the initiative.

[Translation]

The school then provided access to 16 of its on-line learning products to students at these 10 universities. The curricula we developed consist of a progression of educational activities in nine phases. These learning activities are aimed in particular at improving comprehension, pronunciation, grammar and writing skills in the second language. The products are interactive; they include simulation components and language skills self-assessment tools.

In addition, the school created short video sequences with the Commissioner of Official Languages in which the commissioner talks about the importance of Canada's linguistic duality. These video sequences were inserted into the curricula as educational material to create awareness of the importance of Canadian linguistic duality. Preliminary findings indicate that participants were pleased with the quality of the learning tools and with the services provided by the school in the context of the initiative.

Together with Canadian Heritage, the Canada School of Public Service is participating in the horizontal summative evaluation of the Roadmap in order to assess its relevance and the effectiveness of the pilot project.

[English]

Thank you for your attention, and I'll be happy to answer your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Madame Cantin.

Now we'll have the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Mr. Ross MacLeod (Assistant Deputy Minister, Governance Planning and Policy Sector, Treasury Board Secretariat): Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. Above all, I would like to say thanks for the opportunity you've given us to contribute to your study on the evaluation of the road map. We have been following the progress of your work with great interest and are pleased to be able to play a part in it.

[Translation]

I am joined today by Marc Tremblay, executive director of Official Languages in the Governance, Planning and Policy Sector at the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Under the Roadmap, the office has had gross annual funding of \$3.4 million renewed for five years, which it had been granted on a recurring and permanent basis in the 2003-2008 Action Plan for Official Languages.

• (0905)

[English]

This funding was included in the road map because it's part of the money granted by the Government of Canada to further strengthen the foundation of Canada's linguistic duality and therefore to allow Canadians to benefit from linguistic duality in their daily lives.

The purpose of including this recurring funding in the road map was to promote efforts to strengthen the accountability with regard to official languages.

[Translation]

It is against this backdrop that the office was tasked with continuing to serve as a centre of excellence in the area of official languages. The main focus of this work was to closely monitor issues related to service to the public, language of work, and the representation of both language groups within the federal administration and to continue to promote the creation of work environments that encourage federal public servants to exercise their right to work in the language of their choice in the National Capital Region and other regions designated as bilingual in terms of language of work.

[English]

The office's official languages centre of excellence initiative is part of the road map component, "Ensuring efficient governance to better serve Canadians".

According to the horizontal results-based management and accountability framework and the performance measurement strategy for the road map, the centre of excellence initiative should help to strengthen the linguistic duality in the public service and the capacity of the government in terms of official languages.

Since we are talking about the performance measurement strategy, I would like to mention that as a road map partner organization, the

office regularly reports to Canadian Heritage on the progress made in implementing its initiative within the scope of the work of the various committees established by the Official Languages Secretariat to help it fully assume its coordination role in implementing the road map.

[Translation]

As you know, human resources management has been undergoing a major overhaul in recent years. First of all, deputy heads are now fully responsible for managing human resources—including implementation of the Official Languages Program—in their respective organizations, under the new human resources management system established after Parliament passed the Public Service Modernization Act.

Next, the office was reorganized in June 2009 to address the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Public Service of Canada, co-chaired by the Right Honourable Don Mazankowski and the Honourable Paul M. Tellier.

In this context, the Official Languages Centre of Excellence initiative needed to be rethought in order to harmonize it with the procedures for implementing the new human resources system that is now in place.

[English]

The activities of the centre of excellence initiative are now conducted in line with the vision that deputy heads are fully accountable and responsible for managing their human resources, including issues related to official languages.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure you that the office's restructuring has not changed any of the responsibilities of this team in charge of supporting the Treasury Board in carrying out its mission under part VIII of the Official Languages Act. This team's duties are the same as before, but they must be accomplished in accordance with the new human resources management system that the government has put in place.

As part of the official languages centre of excellence initiative, the office provides horizontal support to federal institutions to assist them in implementing parts IV, V, and VI of the Official Languages Act, and, more effectively, in order to strengthen linguistic duality in the public service. More specifically, the office develops and updates, at the request of the minister, the official languages regulatory instruments as well as the Treasury Board's applicable policy instruments. It gives advice on the language obligations to be included in the instruments of other policy centres of the Treasury Board Secretariat.

[Translation]

The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer provides horizontal support and advice to federal institutions on applying the act and the Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations, which we call "the Regulations". In order to accomplish this, it oversees the regulations and coordinates a review of their application based on data from the most recent decennial census.

The office develops and issues policy interpretations, for CALDECH, for example. It manages various committees and networks, such as the Departmental Advisory Committee on Official Languages, the Crown Corporations Advisory Committee on Official Languages and the Council of the Network of Departmental Official Languages Champions.

It undertakes information and awareness activities, such as the annual conference of official languages champions and the Best Practices Forum for all federal organizations. It makes available to federal institutions tools to help manage official languages, such as the Official Languages Management Dashboard, the Linguistic Needs Designator and The ABCs of linguistic profiles at your fingertips.

● (0910)

[English]

The office also assesses the performance of federal institutions with regard to official languages, through official languages reviews and the management accountability framework, and has prepared the annual report on official languages, which was tabled by the President of the Treasury Board in November.

[Translation]

In the short term, the Official Languages Centre of Excellence initiative should help to enhance understanding, knowledge, information sharing and dialogue in federal institutions.

In the medium term, it should increase the ability and commitment of federal institutions in terms of official languages.

In the long term, the initiative should result in better enforcement of Parts IV, V and VI of the act and the regulations within federal institutions, in improved official languages leadership and in stronger linguistic duality in the federal public service.

[English]

A summary evaluation of the official languages centre of excellence initiative is currently under way. The Internal Audit and Evaluation Bureau of the Treasury Board Secretariat has set up a governance committee and has prepared the evaluation framework for this evaluation. It has nearly completed the document review and is preparing to survey some 200 federal institutions as input into the evaluation.

Without prejudging the results of this evaluation, we can say that since 2008 we have witnessed constant changes in the overall implementation of the official languages program in federal institutions. Here are a few examples of the results obtained under the official languages centre of excellence initiative.

On March 31, 2011, 94.4% of incumbents in bilingual positions met the linguistic requirements of their positions. This is up from 91.7% in 2007-08.

The percentage of incumbents of bilingual positions serving the public who met the language requirements of their position continued to grow and reached 93.3% in 2011, compared with 93.0% in 2010, 92.4% in 2009, and 91.5% in 2008.

The percentage of bilingual positions requiring superior proficiency, that is, level C in oral interaction, to serve the public has gradually increased since 2008, from 34.8% to 36.1%.

[Translation]

The number of employees in the core public administration providing personal and central services and who meet the language requirements of their positions is continually on the rise. On March 31, 2011, 94.4% of incumbents occupying bilingual positions and providing personal and central services met the language requirements of their positions, compared with 93.2% in 2010, 92.6% in 2009 and 91.8% in 2008.

As for supervisors across Canada (including managers), 94.0% met the requirements of their positions in 2010-2011, in comparison with 92.7% in 2010, 91.9% in 2009 and 91.8% in 2008. So this rate has gradually increased over the past 10 years.

The process for preparing annual reviews and writing the Annual Report on Official Languages has been simplified. The office has developed in collaboration with Canadian Heritage a new common approach to collecting data on Parts IV, V, VI and VII of the act from federal institutions for the preparation of their respective annual reports.

[English]

A new collaborative approach with the advisory committees and the network of champions has been gradually implemented to help the members become more self-reliant and strategic and to exercise stronger leadership in their institutions.

In April 2009, the office launched the regulations management system. The purpose of this new web application is to help institutions determine whether their offices serving the public should provide communications and services in both official languages.

A working group reporting to the two advisory committees was established to support institutions that had to work closely with the public during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver, and to ensure that services were available in both official languages at the games.

The office also developed an analytical grid and accompanying material to assist institutions in analyzing the impact of the Supreme Court ruling in the CALDECH case and in adhering to the principle of substantive linguistic equality in the provision of services.

The office monitored the application of the analytical grid to ensure that institutions were respecting the principle of substantive linguistic equality.

We have almost completed our review of official languages policy instruments, and the new instruments should come into effect in summer 2012.

● (0915)

[Translation]

Official languages form an integral part of the human resources management expectations, which are included in the annual performance agreements between the Clerk of the Privy Council and deputy ministers. In many institutions, they can also be found in agreements between managers and their respective supervisors.

To conclude, I would like to point out that the paradigm shift that occurred in 2009 has made it possible for institutions to take more charge of their affairs and to assume their official languages responsibilities in a more effective manner. The office continues to fully assume its official languages role, while complying with the new human resources system now in place.

After some fine-tuning, the current model is almost at the desired stage of maturity, which involves a fair balance between the accountability of deputy heads and the involvement of central agencies.

[English]

As for the official languages centre of excellence initiative, the results obtained so far are very encouraging and show that implementation of the official languages program is continuing to improve.

We are now available to answer your questions.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thanks to everyone. A period of an hour and a half will be devoted to questions and comments. There will be a brief five-minute health break at 9:45. We will begin with Mr. Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to welcome our guests.

Mr. Chairman, when we began our proceedings this year, you talked about studying the annual report of the Treasury Board Secretariat. We could put that on the agenda. I am not introducing a motion to that effect; I am simply saying that you said you were prepared to conduct that study, and we would like to do it as well.

The Chair: All right. If you have a motion on the matter, submit it to the clerk.

Mr. Yvon Godin: That's perfect.

My questions will be put directly to the Treasury Board people. My colleagues will put theirs to the representatives of the other departments.

Does the \$17 million funding received under the Roadmap represent 100% of funding for the Centre of Excellence?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: To date, yes. However, that funding may be increased if necessary, for example if we want to add specific projects to the work of the Centre for Excellence during the year.

Mr. Yvon Godin: The purpose of the reports on plans and priorities is to describe the mandate, mission and strategic objectives of each department and to provide information the structure of their areas of activity, their expected results and their strategy regarding performance measurement. These reports include the coming fiscal year and two subsequent years. They are tabled in the House of Commons by the Treasury Board president after the main estimates.

How is it that the Treasury Board Secretariat, which has major official languages responsibilities, has no official language plans or priorities?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: The official languages plans and priorities are among the responsibilities of the Official Languages Centre of

Excellence. There is a work plan for each year. We are now working in collaboration with all the other stakeholders in government.

Mr. Yvon Godin: And yet that's what is stated in your Report on Plan and Priorities tabled in Parliament. This is unacceptable, and it has been going on for years.

How can you say that the institutions have to be more rigorous about official languages performance, oversight and governance plans when you yourselves are not? One would think that the approach you prefer, which is to draw on best practices, doesn't work.

Mr. Ross MacLeod: We are pursuing a lot of activities in collaboration with other federal departments and agencies. This is a work plan that we pursue every year. We have a series of meetings with them and have made commitments with the deputy ministers to assist them in understanding and stimulating their capacity to discharge their official languages responsibilities within their institutions.

• (0920)

Mr. Yvon Godin: You are responsible for the reports on plans and priorities. It is mandatory for official languages to be part of the plans and priorities of all the institutions. Why have you not yet issued a directive requiring official languages to be included in those reports? Can you promise us that you will do so as soon as possible?

Mr. Marc Tremblay (Executive Director, Official Languages, Treasury Board Secretariat): According to the philosophy of the Official Languages Act and its implementation, all government activities are affected when it comes to our services to the public and the language of work. Language requirements are therefore integrated into all government processes. That is why the official languages are a foundation piece of every program, activity and service offered. They are part of that. The deputy heads are responsible for compliance with language requirements. Requesting that that appear in the reports on plan and priorities would mean reviewing all government activities. In a way, the official languages are a part of all government plans and priorities.

Mr. Yvon Godin: No, the Treasury Board is the watchdog. This may be everyone's responsibility, but someone has to oversee it all. Don't you have any responsibilities in that regard?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Yes, the Treasury Board has responsibilities under Part VIII and genuinely exercises them.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I am going to cite a passage from the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Annual Report on Official Languages for 2008-2009: "...the Official Languages Centre of Excellence modified its usual practice in 2008-2009. Rather than requesting all federal institutions to submit a review of their official languages activities, only some were asked to submit a report."

In your view, does that run counter to section 48 of the Official Languages Act, which reads as follows:

48. The President of the Treasury Board shall, within such time as is reasonably practicable after the termination of each financial year, submit an annual report to Parliament on the status of programs relating to the official languages of Canada in the various federal institutions in respect of which it has responsibility under section 46.

That is set out in the act. In 2010, the NDP filed a complaint with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages because you asked only certain institutions to submit a report on official languages to you, which is contrary to the Official Languages Act. Has the situation been corrected? Can you confirm for us that you now require a report from all institutions every year?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: I won't state an opinion on the premise of your question because it arises from an interpretation of the act. Furthermore, a complaint was filed with the Commissioner of Official Languages. That means that the process must be complied with and be allowed to follow its course.

I add that it is correct to say that the cycle of annual reports, of requests to the federal institutions for reports, has been changed in the past three years essentially to aim—

Mr. Yvon Godin: You're violating the act.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: In my opinion, we are complying with the act.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Tremblay.

Mr. Gourde, go ahead, please.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here with us this morning. My question is for Ms. Cantin.

I was pleasantly surprised to see that your school was taking initiatives to support students and that \$2.5 million had been allocated for that purpose. Can you tell me how many persons that has been able to serve? Can you give us more details? Have more people been able to take part in these initiatives in certain provinces, or are initiatives being implemented across Canada? Could you tell us more about the initiatives implemented?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Thank you.

As soon as we received the funding, we called on the universities in the country that might be interested in taking part in the project so that we could have representation across Canada. Eleven of the universities that expressed interest were selected, although one of them subsequently withdrew. The pilot project therefore involved 10 universities. They were to find participants who were prepared to commit to the project for three years and who obviously were interested in Canada's linguistic duality.

At the start, 282 participating students expressed interest, although that figure varied over the following months. As of March 31, 2012, we are talking about 153 participants from across Canada.

• (0925)

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Have those students been involved in a more defined program for three full years? If not, was this a single initiative within their study program? You mentioned students who had completed four years of university or more.

Ms. Nancie Cantin: These are students attending university, whether it be in public administration, political science or other fields. Regardless of the program, various groups took part in the initiative, including one guided group. In that case, we sought a commitment by both the university and students. The idea was for

them, in addition to their university work, to devote between 5 and 10 hours a week to the project and to using the tools to develop their language skills.

In another group, spread over the 10 universities, we allowed the students to access the tools but gave them a little less guidance. Those students devoted the number of hours they wanted to allocate to learning their second language.

Lastly, there is what is called a control group. It is also spread across the country. So there is a guided group in which we provide students with self-learning tools. We guide them by providing them with a little more information and regularly sending them bulletins so they feel supervised. There is also a less supervised group to which we nevertheless offer self-learning tools, and, lastly, there is a control group which we offer no supervision. This approach is part of the study. We want to be able to observe what students' language skills are at the start and check to see whether there has been progress in that regard at the end of the project.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: I think the project is a good way to develop the skills of those students. With this extra university training, have they become potential candidates for Canada's public service? Have we been able to recover those students or have we simply lost them? Have they moved into other areas of activity? In Canada, finding competent bilingual people for the public service is a major challenge. I thought the project was initially supposed to help meet that need. Are we recovering the people who took part in the program?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Yes, they are still at university; they haven't all graduated. The objective was very well explained to both participants and the universities. One of the interesting aspects is that they can progress and acquire what we call a linguistic profile, an evaluation of their language skills based the federal government's standardized tests.

However, we have no control over them; we can't force them to join the public service. As I said earlier, the evaluation is underway. That is part of the incentives. For the candidates and universities that expressed interest, the prospect of working for the public service was definitely attractive. That objective was clearly explained to them. It was one of the criteria used to select the universities and students.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Thank you very much.

Do I have any time left?

An hon. member: Yes.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: In the end, that's fine.

The Chair: Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Welcome, madam, gentlemen.

If I correctly understood, there was to be a mid-term evaluation of the Roadmap. Am I right in thinking that? Yes?

Some voices: Yes.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Was that supposed to be completed last month?

• (0930)

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Yes. It was to be completed in February.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Have you completed it?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: The Department of Canadian Heritage is responsible for the mid-term evaluation of the Roadmap.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Didn't every agency concerned by the Roadmap conduct a summative evaluation?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Every agency concerned by the Roadmap made a commitment to complete a summative evaluation.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Is it finished?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Not for the Treasury Board.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: For you, madam?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Not for the School of Public Service.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: For you?

Mr. Stephen Johnson (Director General, Evaluation Directorate, Strategic Policy and Research Branch, Department of Human Resources and Skills Development): It isn't finished for us. However, we are in the process of doing it.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: If I understood correctly, then it will be completed in July, approximately at mid-year. Is that correct?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: In the case of the Treasury Board Secretariat, we hope to have preliminary results in May. It will probably be formally completed in September.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I'm going to put the same question to everyone. If I ask you for documents and you are unable to provide them to me, or you are unable to answer the questions I ask you, I would like to know. You'll be able to provide the committee with the requested information once you have it.

May we know who in your organization is conducting this summative evaluation? May we know who you have consulted for this summative evaluation, when you did so, where you did it and how you did it—that is to say by telephone, email or in person? Can we know the questions that are asked and the answers you receive?

Is there any of that information that you are unable to give us?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: As regards us at the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development, I can say that I can answer those questions right now, with the exception of the last one. We have framework regulations on privacy that prevent us from making a connection between specific answers and individuals.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: If they agree to share that information, you can share it, can't you?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: Pardon me?

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: If the people who give you the answers agree to allow those answers to be shared, you can share them.

Mr. Stephen Johnson: Yes. However, our practice is normally to state at the outset that we don't do that.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: However, I'm asking you to ask them, when you ask them your questions, if you can share their answers with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages. Can you do that?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: That's definitely inconsistent with the practices we have adopted, even though we occasionally use private businesses to gather the information, and we even state in the contracts that the link between specific answers and individuals will not be disclosed to the department in order to keep their opinions confidential.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Give me whatever you want, and we'll see.

By the way, thank you for the presentations you gave us. Did those presentations have to be approved by someone in your department or agency?

Mr. David McGovern: We shared all the content with the office of the deputy minister and the minister's office, but the speech was prepared by the people who work for me.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: All right.

Were any changes made by the office of the deputy minister or minister?

Mr. David McGovern: No, not at all in my case.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: You shared—

Mr. Ross MacLeod: The answer is the same for us. The secretariat and our parliamentary relations group saw it.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: The thing is that the Department of Canadian Heritage has given us a new task. We were told, about eight months too late, that we had to their job. That's why I want to know the conditions in which we are called upon to do their work. That's why I ask these questions; I hope you'll understand.

How many day care spaces have been created in the official language minority communities under the Roadmap?

Mr. David McGovern: I have no idea. I don't have any information on that subject, but I can put the question to people who work with us.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Mr. McGovern, you talked about one of your initiatives, the child care pilot project, in which six communities are taking part. Can you tell me how those communities were selected?

[English]

Mr. Stephen Johnson: An open process was posted for communities to put in submissions if they were interested. They had to have a certain number of francophones to a certain capacity, because this isn't adding a new service; this is just building on top of what exists. So there was an open process and the communities were selected through that.

• (0935)

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Was there an evaluation grid?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: I imagine there was, but I don't have—

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Could you share that with us too?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: Certainly.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Thank you.

I'm still speaking to Mr. Johnson. You have four initiatives. Bravo! We have some figures that show roughly where you stand with regard to expenditures. We have figures that take us up to the end of the third year. Those figures were made public by the Treasury Board, I believe.

According to those figures, you should normally be at approximately 60% of the amount. That should be roughly 20% per year. In the case of human resources, you have two initiatives. Bravo! And in two other cases, the child care pilot projects and the family literacy initiative, you are at 40% after three years. Why is that the case?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: In the case of the research pilot projects, the expenditures are not the same every year; they are highly variable. There are higher costs in the years in which we gather information. The purpose of the project is to offer the service, and we wait a year or two before following up.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: The projects should have been operating in 2010 and 2011. Based on my information, you planned for expenditures in the order of \$2.7 million, but actual spending was \$1.1 million. So something is wrong somewhere.

Mr. Stephen Johnson: In fact, we allocated all the moneys necessary to that pilot project, but there was money left near the end. So we identified other research projects in that same area of interest. In fact, we didn't need all the amounts that had been allocated at the start of the Roadmap.

As regards the other initiative, we had a little more time to put it in place. That is why we spent less at the start than toward the end of the five-year period.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Trottier, go ahead, please.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Thanks to our witnesses for being here this morning.

I found your speeches very interesting. My first question is for the witnesses from the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development.

How long have you been at that department? Were you there in 2008 or before that?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: Yes.

Mr. David McGovern: Yes.

A voice: Personally, I wasn't there.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Could you describe the deficiencies that were there before the Roadmap was implemented?

We are here today to evaluate the Roadmap. What changed as a result of its adoption? You no doubt previously worked to support the linguistic communities.

In fact, it's not just a matter of money, but, with regard to the process, what changed as a result of the Roadmap, in 2008, and since that time?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: I have worked at the department for about 10 years. So I was there when the Roadmap was established.

On the one hand, there was less of an impact on the department because, for a long time, it had had activities designed to support the communities. A number of those activities continued. We did not receive supplementary funding, but we continued to use our own funds, which had been allocated to the department. In that perspective, we more or less continued our activities.

[*English*]

On the other hand, in terms of the horizontal collaboration across federal departments and the various ADM committees and working groups, it has provided a really interesting opportunity for us too. It's provided a larger framework within which we have been able to talk about our own initiatives, to situate those, to share and discuss information. For example, in the last couple of years we launched an interdepartmental research committee to look at the various research that all the departments do. I think some of those types of cross-federal government institution activities

[*Translation*]

are in place partly thanks to the Roadmap, which encouraged us to adopt a more comprehensive approach throughout government, in addition to our individual responsibilities.

● (0940)

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Thank you.

My next questions are for the Treasury Board representatives. I very much appreciated the fact that you quantified things in your speech. We always wonder whether it is possible to have performance indicators to determine whether there has really been progress in the linguistic communities across the country. I believe you are doing a good job.

Are there these kinds of reports for all the departments? Is this included in the performance reports throughout government? Is it somewhat like security, which is an important issue in all departments? Are there these kinds of measures, these kinds of indicators everywhere?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: That reflects the government's overall performance. We use the data to provide important figures. For the performance of each department, we use a sample of one-third of the departments every year. All departments will be covered after a three-year cycle.

I would add that the performance of the 46 federal organizations is monitored as part of the Management Accountability Framework under Parts X and IV, which concern communications with the public and the provision of services. That's reflected here. The performance of each department is analyzed by the Treasury Board Secretariat, and that will be included in the results forwarded to the deputy head of each department.

Lastly, I would emphasize that the results and performance evaluation under the MAF are part of the evaluation of every deputy minister for [*Editor's note: Inaudible*] at the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: I am asking you roughly the same question as I put to the HRSDC representative. Since 2008, has the Roadmap changed matters within your department? Has the Roadmap helped correct any deficiencies that were there before 2008?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: Yes, there are two aspects. First, there was an increase in funding allocated to the Treasury Board. That was necessary to assist us in understanding the changes that occurred in human resource management in government and the changes in responsibilities between the deputy ministers and the centre.

There is another aspect, which follows from the same idea. Our meetings with human resources employees were an opportunity to work in a more concerted way with other departments to assist them with horizontal advice, for example, and in group work to develop best practices that we can share with the human resources champions and the human resources and official languages structure in each department. For me, that was an integration.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Could you briefly describe certain weaknesses in the Roadmap? What is missing? We are considering a next version of the Roadmap, a five-year program. What could we change to improve the program?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: I would ask my colleague, Mr. Tremblay, to answer your question.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Some improvements should be made not so much to the Roadmap as such, but rather to our own world. Under Parts IV, V and VI, the annual reports that the institutions are required to submit are an opportunity for us to identify problem areas, not only from time to time—because there are individual weaknesses—but in a collective fashion.

In the circumstances, some problems have persisted. We are thinking of active offer. Although service is generally offered actively, we see that there are certain weaknesses in personal service, for example. We can also think of meetings, with regard to language of work. This may seem a somewhat trivial subject of interest, but we must consider creating a workplace conducive to the use of both official languages. Employees often report that it is in meetings that they do not feel fully supported in exercising their rights. These are factors that we can identify. There is still work to do in this area.

We are able to take steps to improve matters through the interdepartmental coordination networks, by working with the deputy ministers and deputy heads. So work has not yet been completed on this, but improvements are constantly being made over time.

The Chair: Thank you.

We will take a brief five-minute break.

● (0940)

(Pause)

● (0950)

The Chair: We are continuing the 28th meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

Mr. Weston, go ahead, please.

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to our guests for being here today.

I am a member from British Columbia and am very much interested in the vitality of the French language in our great country. I am also convinced that, even though we have the best possible program, it isn't just the government that will contribute, through its programs, to the vitality of the official languages in the minority communities.

If we don't ask the right question, we will get an incorrect answer. What are we doing in the communities to elicit a response from the private sectors, from people, parents in the schools, students, businessmen and women about what motivates them to learn a second language? What are we doing to trigger a response?

My question is first for Mr. McGovern. Can you imagine any indirect responses linked to your program? I think that, ultimately, success will be

[English]

in the hearts and minds of Canadians, not necessarily from the programs. Are we winning the battle that way? Can you give me some comment? Then I'd invite the other panellists to respond.

Mr. David McGovern: Thank you very much. That's a very thoughtful question; "hearts and minds" is not something I'm usually asked to respond to.

HRSDC really is the department that provides a human face on the federal government for many Canadians.

With respect to our road map engagement, it's actually framed by our responsibilities under part VII of the Official Languages Act. I can actually tell you with some certainty that I am not the best person to respond to the hearts and minds question, but I would like to give you just a sense of what we are doing to engage communities across the country with respect to our initiatives.

I mentioned the enabling fund in my opening remarks. The enabling fund actually lets us strengthen the capacity of networks that we find right across the country to mobilize support for community economic development projects. We create various partnerships among the private, public, and non-profit sectors, and we try to leverage resources from other levels of government and from the private and non-profit sectors.

In our child care pilot project, which is a research project, we're really looking at assessing the impact of French language preschool programs, and we're doing it from the perspective of looking at the linguistic and cultural development of those children.

Mr. John Weston: If I can interrupt, I noticed there was no British Columbian participation in that, so certainly I invite you to go further west if you can.

Mr. David McGovern: I love British Columbia.

The six francophone communities we're looking at now are sort of ranging in a relatively restricted area—we've got New Brunswick, Ontario, and Alberta—but the research work that's done is replicable across jurisdictions. It's not confined to research that's only relevant to francophone minority communities; it's also replicable with anglophone minority communities.

On the family literacy initiative, again, it's an extremely important initiative under our road map work, because it gives families access to literacy services for francophone households in minority settings. Again, it helps to strengthen the networks and to create these new partnerships that really allow people to leverage the literacy services, the programs, to specific needs such as immigrants, where we've noted there's a real demand, and it provides an increased access to the family literacy training for qualifying trainers.

Then, finally, the fourth initiative we have is related to strengthening the capacity of non-governmental organizations for early childhood development. Again, this initiative is intended to identify existing resources for training in francophone early childhood development. We're looking at identifying the existing research on the subject, but then we're looking at developing an information-sharing mechanism. So it's not just confined to specific areas; it can actually be used across the country.

● (0955)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Monsieur Aubin.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, everyone, and thank you for the reports you have submitted. I am going to spend all my five minutes discussing the School of Public Service with Ms. Cantin. I hope you won't hold it against me, gentlemen.

When I study the issue, it seems to me there are two approaches, one of them being the dream that all future public servants will come to us already bilingual and that your services will not be required. However, I get the feeling that dream is far from a reality, although it appears the government views matters differently. Indeed, it seems there will be less and less need for your services starting on April 1, which concerns me.

Can you confirm that all of the \$2.5 million allocated to the pilot project with the universities, which ends on December 31, has been spent and that the project was fully realized?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Thank you.

The project will end on March 31, not December 31. As I said earlier, since the project ends on March 31, the evaluation is currently underway.

Mr. Robert Aubin: I was just talking about budgets. Have the funds been allocated?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Yes, I am coming to that.

As part of the evaluation, we will obviously be determining whether the component is still relevant. As for the other component, we will be evaluating its effectiveness and efficiency. In the current circumstances, we must determine whether this kind of project helps optimize resources.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Will we be able to get a copy of that evaluation once it is completed?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: It's part of the horizontal summative evaluation.

Mr. Robert Aubin: So that's where we should find it.

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Precisely.

Mr. Robert Aubin: Thank you.

With regard to the universities' participation, could you tell me in a few words what criteria were used to select one university rather than another? Some of them were ruled out. I'm thinking of the Université de Moncton in particular. Since one university withdrew, I wondered why you didn't offer that space to one of the ones that had been ruled out, for example.

Ms. Nancie Cantin: As I told you at the outset, we called upon the universities and community colleges across Canada. It was really open to those institutions that wanted to take part in this pilot project. The criteria were very flexible because we wanted to encourage as many universities and community colleges as possible to cooperate in it. We requested a commitment on their part, that is to say that we asked them if they were ready, interested and prepared to commit for the duration of the pilot project, to find participants among their student bodies and to ensure that conditions were conducive to student participation and to the introduction of initiatives fostering the use of both official languages. There were four essential criteria. There were also some assets.

● (1000)

Mr. Robert Aubin: Was it a numerical rating that was used to rank the universities?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Yes, but I want to point out that there were no rejections as such based on selection criteria. The universities that submitted their applications wanted to make the commitment. In the case of the Université de Moncton, we went to the university to see whether those people were interested in taking part in the project, but they were not.

Mr. Robert Aubin: All right. Thank you. Let's move away from the future aspect and focus on the School of Public Service today.

An evaluation of services was planned. Could you confirm for me whether that evaluation has been conducted and that the report has been written?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Mr. Chairman, would it be possible to clarify the question? We're talking about the evaluation of services, but exactly what services are we talking about?

Mr. Robert Aubin: I'm talking about the evaluation of the services of the School of Public Service's language school in Ottawa.

More specifically, Paul Gaboury published an article in *Le Droit* entitled, "Federal government 'concealing' unfavourable report, union says". I imagine that an evaluation of the services of the language school of the School of Public Service had been conducted and that, if it was unfavourable to the government, it conveyed a favourable view of the quality of the teaching of French and English as second languages in the public service. We would like to get a copy of that report, if it exists. Do you know whether it exists?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Aubin.

Ms. Cantin, can you answer Mr. Aubin?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Mr. Aubin, I am here to discuss the Roadmap. It is not at all my duty to comment on that article.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Williamson, go ahead, please.

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

My question is further to what Mr. Weston just talked about, that is to say the thoughts and feelings of the communities. Perhaps I will approach it from another angle. The question is for Mr. McGovern or Mr. Johnson because, in my comment, I saw not only that there were activities in your department, but also that you are working with the linguistic communities across the country. This is really an open question.

What are the biggest threats to the linguistic communities in Canada?

[*English*]

Mr. David McGovern: Thank you very much for the question.

Probably the issue with respect to threats...one of the things that underlines all of the work that we do in our four initiatives under the road map is an extensive program of consultation with the official language minority communities. Frankly, they are probably better placed to understand what the challenges are that they are facing.

When we initiated the work on the road map we developed an integrated official languages minority community consultation framework. That is a big sort of statement to say we tried to make sure we had our act together, and we wanted to facilitate meaningful consultations with the official language minority communities. We shared the plan with the national-provincial-regional OLMC organizations. We also provided for and committed to an annual dialogue session with the national OLMCs.

As I noted before, I'm relatively new to the department, but in the time I've been there I have participated in two of the annual dialogue sessions. The first took place last November with the francophone minority communities and then in February with the anglophone communities. These were daylong sessions where we brought people in, and we also brought in my colleagues from Service Canada, who are of particular interest to the OLMCs. We brought in people who were responsible for key programs, not just those associated with the road map initiative, to be able to have a really open and clear dialogue.

We had representative participation from both the francophone and anglophone minority communities. They represented a whole range of sectors covering literacy, economic development, employability, seniors, child care, youth, and learning. We brought in advocacy organizations.

Stephen noted earlier that one of the benefits of the road map is the horizontality that's encouraged between other federal departments. We brought in representatives from other federal departments to participate and to hear from the minority communities directly.

These sessions really are fundamental to allowing us to get a better understanding of what the community priorities and challenges are. It also allows the communities to be more aware of what our role is with respect to supporting part VII of the Official Languages Act, but also the programs and services we provide to Canadians more broadly.

● (1005)

Mr. John Williamson: Can you drill down a little bit? I appreciate the framework you have put in place. Can you draw out some of the conclusions, or even if you do not participate in all of them, you must have a sense of what some of the challenges are, for example, going forward.

Mr. David McGovern: The good news is that many of the initiatives, in fact most of the initiatives, under our road map are intended to deal with some of the key priorities that those communities have identified. They relate to literacy and then access by immigrants to the labour market. Those issues aren't just confined to the official language minority communities. Those are also issues with respect to broader access to labour market participation for, frankly, most Canadians.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Madam Michaud.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Thank you all for your presentations.

[*English*]

My first question would be for Mr. McGovern and Mr. Johnson.

What programs and support are available to Canada's English linguistic minority community in Quebec, specifically in the area of early childhood development, and what research or consultation has HRSDC undertaken to determine the early childhood development needs of those communities in Quebec?

Mr. David McGovern: I noted in my last response that we actually have an annual consultation session, which is part of the framework we put in place to help guide the work we do under the road map. When we met with the representatives of the anglophone community earlier this year—I think it was last month, in February—we also had representatives from a whole range of groups, including people who have an interest in early childhood development.

Ms. Éline Michaud: Could you tell me more about specific programs or support that's now available for this community through the road map?

Mr. David McGovern: With the road map, as we noted before, there are four specific initiatives. One that we find particularly useful is the early child care pilot project. This is a research study that looks at the impact of French language preschool programs for linguistic and cultural development on the readiness to learn of young francophone children living in minority francophone communities.

I also indicated that the results of this work will be replicable. The research studies will be relevant, not just for the six francophone communities we looked at but for the anglophone communities.

[Translation]

Ms. Éline Michaud: Now let's talk about another topic. Let's come right back to the Roadmap and to actual spending for 2010-2011. If we take a closer look at the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities, we see that it states that 14 contribution agreements were reached with national, provincial and territorial organizations. However, the 2010-2011 Departmental Performance Report for the Department of Canadian Heritage states that the sum of \$200,000 in program funding was not spent by one of the receiving organizations.

Can you give us a few more details on that subject? What is that organization and why was that expenditure not incurred?

Mr. David McGovern: I unfortunately do not have the information you are requesting.

Ms. Éline Michaud: Would it be possible to do a quick search and to provide that explanation to the committee?

Mr. David McGovern: Certainly.

Ms. Éline Michaud: During our consultations, certain witnesses mentioned that the transfer agreements between the federal and provincial governments are administrative contracts that contain no specific language clause.

I would like to know how the funding granted to the provinces is monitored to ensure compliance with linguistic obligations?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: I can mainly talk about two types of important agreements, the labour market development agreements, the LMDAs, and the labour market agreements, LMAs. Those two types of agreements include the obligation to consult the communities and to provide services in both official languages.

•(1010)

Ms. Éline Michaud: Are those kinds of consultations planned for all administrative contracts, or is that just the case for those two types of contracts, because it is important to follow up in order to be [Editor's note: Inaudible].

Mr. Stephen Johnson: I mentioned those two agreements in particular because they are quite important and because I know them well. Furthermore, to my knowledge, this is generally something important that is provided for in agreements with the provinces and territories. There is a need to consult the communities and to provide services in both official languages.

Ms. Éline Michaud: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Boughen, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Let me add my voice of welcome to the panel this morning.

I have three questions. First of all, to the folks from Human Resources, you mentioned \$65 million, I think it was, over five years. I guess my first question is whether the funding is adequate. Do you have enough dollars to do the job you were entrusted to do? How's that working out?

Mr. David McGovern: Thank you very much for your question.

The program you're mentioning is the enabling fund. It's the single largest initiative under our road map contribution. This is a program that allows us to contribute to the development and vitality of the official language minority communities by strengthening their capacity in areas of human resources and community economic development.

Fourteen participant organizations from the official language minority communities have provided funding proposals. We do the best we can with what we have.

Mr. Stephen Johnson: Could I add to that and say that, by design, the enabling fund was intended to leverage funds? It was not intended to be 100% funding for these activities.

Mr. Ray Boughen: So how goes the leveraging?

Mr. Stephen Johnson: Well, three to one—

Mr. Ray Boughen: So it's working well.

Mr. Stephen Johnson: We have completed a formative evaluation, and it's up on our website. It's not a summative. It looked at the early implementation and some of the early results. It did confirm both that there were partnerships that were built and that there was this leveraging effect of roughly \$3 for every one federal dollar that goes directly into the pot.

Mr. Ray Boughen: In the project, do you supply some consultative opportunities for you to share the vision with other people? Do you also supply personnel in the projects you operate?

Mr. David McGovern: No, we don't. We provide the funding to these organizations, but they actually engage in some pretty useful activities. Our funding allows them to do job placements. It allows for human resource skills development, youth labour market integration initiatives, entrepreneurship awareness, economic integration of immigrants, and development of the tourism sector. It has some very significant spin-off benefits.

Mr. Ray Boughen: Yes, that's a big spectrum.

Thanks, guys.

Moving to Nancie and the project you're involved in, I'm interested in how the measurement is occurring in terms of... If you're talking about a university in the eastern part of Canada, you're going to have your project people being able to communicate and practise their language skills with other groups of people who are French-speaking or English-speaking.

But if you go to the University of Regina, it's going to be tough for those students to practise much skills building, because there are not many people in Regina who speak French. In fact, if you spoke Ukrainian and/or Chinese, you'd probably have more opportunity for dialogue. How do you factor in that truism that there are just not many people who speak French? In fact, if you were to hear five sentences in French in 12 months, that would be pretty outstanding.

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Thank you for your question.

Indeed, this is probably one of the main reasons that we put this pilot project in place: to provide tools and opportunities for people. In the instance you mentioned in Regina, where they don't have many opportunities to speak French, let's say, that's exactly the reason why we want to provide tools. We want to provide them as well with the tools I was talking about—to learn but also to maintain their language.

• (1015)

[Translation]

The fact is that, regardless of the number of persons, linguistic duality is in place across the country. Consequently, by at least providing tools in places where there are fewer opportunities to practise the second language, we are making an effort to help people to become bilingual and to retain their bilingualism, particularly if they want to enter the public service, because there they will have to serve the public in both official languages.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Boughen and Madame Cantin.

Mr. Harris.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Thank you.

In going last for my group, I'm a bit of a catch-all, so I'm going to try to ask some questions quickly.

As Mr. Bélanger mentioned earlier, the heritage department has decided to use our study rather than do their own consultations, which of course raises some concerns for us. Do any of your departments plan on following their lead down the road in using our study rather than doing your own future consultations? Just a quick yes or no, please.

Mr. David McGovern: We're actually going to use the work of this committee as an important input into our work, but we also have the consultative framework that I talked about, and ongoing consultations, and we're doing our own evaluations.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McGovern.

Madame Cantin.

[Translation]

Ms. Nancie Cantin: The results of the evaluation will provide us with information for future action.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. MacLeod, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Ross MacLeod: The committee report will be an important input into our work, but we will be consulting with 200 federal institutions, as well as the minority linguistic communities.

Mr. Dan Harris: Thanks.

[Translation]

Ms. Cantin, I would like to ask you two questions.

In the pilot project, is there a plan to monitor participants once they have completed their studies and are in the labour market in order to determine whether that influences their success rate?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: At the end of the pilot project, based on the results of the evaluation, the Canada School of Public Service will not have the funding to take further action on this initiative. Obviously, that will depend on the government's priorities and whether there is any additional funding. However, the school would be interested in exploring further action, or an extension, with similar activities.

Mr. Dan Harris: The school recently decided to stop offering language training. The federal institutions will have to turn to the private sector from now on. In the event a similar project or another pilot project is provided for in the next Roadmap, would the school still have the capacity to carry out that project?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: In response to your first question, that depends on the government's funding and priorities. Currently, we would not have the capacity or money to do that. That will really depend on those factors.

Mr. Dan Harris: Thank you.

[English]

The Treasury Board is engaged in a large project to find reductions in government spending. In light of the fact that we're not going to every department now to get a report every year on official languages, does the department have a plan in place to ensure that, while this project is ongoing, there isn't a cumulative negative effect on official languages communities? I ask that because for the Commissioner of Official Languages and for many of the groups we've seen in this committee, their biggest concern is the cumulative effect—that everything could be nicked and dined, with little changes here and there, which could add up to a drastic effect. Is there a plan in place to ensure that this doesn't happen and to protect our official languages?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: Yes. What you're describing is what the commissioner has called the unintended consequences of these decisions. I can't comment, of course, on the decisions themselves. We have been very active to ensure that official languages considerations are reflected. I'll also add that in every Treasury Board submission that gets done, we play a role in ensuring that our colleagues at Treasury Board give due consideration to OL in all propositions made to the board.

• (1020)

Mr. Dan Harris: If and when there are plans in place, would it be possible to provide them to the committee?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: Not in terms of the advice we would provide to ministers.

Mr. Dan Harris: No, not the advice, but if there's an actual plan in place to ensure those unintended consequences don't happen...

Mr. Ross MacLeod: I think we would be able to provide a description of how we actually did that—a framework, yes.

The Chair: Thank you. If you can provide that to the clerk to be distributed to members of the committee, that would be great.

Mr. Menegakis, go ahead.

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): I too would like to welcome you to our committee and to thank you for your presentations and your responses to our questions. So far, I've found them to be both professional and informative. I certainly appreciate getting that feedback from you, particularly because all three of your groups are partners in the road map, and it's important for us to hear from the partners. The road map represents an investment of roughly a billion dollars for our government. One of the major reasons why we are studying it midway through is to see what its impact has been to date and to hear from you. It's very important information for us.

In that regard, I was particularly encouraged to hear about some of the accomplishments—it's a good news story here as well. I want to focus a little bit on that. Without belittling everything else you've said, certainly the efforts by HRSDC with the day care initiative I think are very important.

The partnering with the universities, 10 universities, is an excellent effort. Of course, we'd like to see every university, but Rome wasn't built in a day, as they say. That was a great initiative. I was very encouraged to hear that there's an increase in the incumbents in bilingual positions, from 91.7% pre road map to, I think you said, 94.4% as of March 31, 2011. Those are all good things to hear.

Of course, we want to see where we're going with our road map. As you know, it comes to an end in 2013. Very soon, we're going to be looking at the next road map. I'd be very interested to hear from each of the groups here, and all of you if you like, about some of the things you would like to see. First of all, would you like to see the next phase of the road map...would you like to see the road map continued? If so, where would you focus your efforts? What would you like to see in the next road map?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: From the point of view of the Treasury Board Secretariat, if the government decided to go ahead with a new road map, we would obviously participate.

The President of the Treasury Board has several responsibilities under the Official Languages Act, and we would like to continue that important work in collaboration with our partners through the road map. I think it focuses really on sections 4, 5, and 6 of the Official Languages Act and the responsibilities there. We would like to continue to do that work in support of the president with his responsibilities.

Mr. Costas Menegakis: Thank you.

Madame Cantin.

[Translation]

Ms. Nancie Cantin: If there is a continuation of this initiative, the School of Public Service would definitely be interested in exploring possibilities, given that its roles and mandate are, among other things, to facilitate access to language training and language learning across the country and to continue developing learning and skill maintenance products. In that context, it might be good to explore future possibilities.

[English]

Mr. David McGovern: Thanks very much for the question.

I share the sentiments expressed by my two colleagues. One of the important things to remember is that our department is still obligated under the Official Languages Act. The part I'm most familiar with is part VII, which is the advancement of English and French. I'll just read you a brief line:

Every federal institution has the duty to ensure that positive measures are taken for the implementation of the commitments under subsection (1).

Subsection (1) says:

The Government of Canada is committed to (a) enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development;

That doesn't change, whether there's a road map or not.

Mr. Costas Menegakis: Thank you.

There are 17 partners in the road map. We obviously have the entire ministry and this group here. I'd like to hear how you would describe the interdepartmental cooperation on the road map.

Do you care to comment on that?

• (1025)

[Translation]

Mr. Ross MacLeod: I believe this is a good partnership for those working on the Roadmap.

[English]

It's a very integrated package and covers a wide range of government activities. I think what's good about it is that it doesn't isolate official languages from the normal activity of government. It helps enable those to happen throughout the various activities of the partners, in particular with the *Conseil du Trésor*.

[Translation]

Ms. Nancie Cantin: For my part, as regards our little initiative, unlike those of much larger partners than we are, the fact that this is a horizontal contribution means that the scope is much greater and can produce better results.

The Chair: Thank you.

Be brief, Mr. McGovern.

[English]

Mr. David McGovern: I can only reinforce what my colleagues have said. The issues and challenges we face at HRSDC are horizontal in nature. There's literally nothing we do that doesn't have the involvement of other departments and other levels of government communities. So the strength of the road map—the horizontality with other federal departments—has been a very significant benefit to us.

The Chair: Thank you.

Monsieur Godin.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I can't help but make a comment to the representatives of the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development. You say your purpose is to ensure a human presence for Canadians, but there will be only 22 offices left in Canada. The human presence is the numbers one, two, three and four that people press. Soon they'll be pressing numbers five, six, seven and so on. Is that it, your human presence? I can't help but say that.

Furthermore, with regard to the pilot projects, I would perhaps recommend that the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development go west—as Mr. Boughen said, you don't find many francophones there—and take along some translators to help the workers in Fort McMurray. They should be able to pass their tests in English because, if they can't pass them, they will lose their jobs and have to return to Acadie or Quebec. If only we could get francophones there rather than strangers who speak neither French nor English. I had to get that off my chest.

Ms. Cantin, you have responsibilities. If there is a report, I don't believe it is solely on the Roadmap. You tell us you can't give us the report. However, does that report exist?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: Is it possible to say what report you are talking about?

Mr. Yvon Godin: I am talking about the report that might be unfavourable. We have learned that the school was planning to conduct an evaluation of its language training service in 2011-2012. Did it conduct that evaluation?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: I am not in a position to answer that question. I am not the person who can answer it.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Do you have the answer without being able to give it?

Ms. Nancie Cantin: I am not in a position to answer that question.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Do you have the answer without being able to provide it?

[English]

The Chair: Just to come to the defence of the witness here, we did ask that—

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: We will have to resort to the Access to Information Act.

The Chair: According to the agenda, the witnesses are here to talk about the Roadmap.

Mr. Yvon Godin: If we are talking about the Roadmap, we must be able to talk about government programs, Mr. Chairman. As to whether the reports may be favourable to the language training school, it seems to me that we are entitled to answers. This is supposedly a transparent government. So we'll have to resort to the Access to Information Act in order to have a right to the government's transparency.

The Chair: That isn't a problem.

[English]

We've asked him to come to talk about the road map. I've given members of the committee great latitude in the kinds of questions

they ask. Obviously the witness does not have the answer to your question, and she's indicated that.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: That's very good.

Do you think we'll have another Roadmap? I am putting the question to the Treasury Board representatives.

If 100% of the \$17 million was used, don't you think those amounts should be granted permanently, rather than having to rely on the Roadmap? Isn't this a need, at the Treasury Board, for the Centre of Excellence?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: I cannot comment on the government's future decisions.

[English]

If there is another version of the *feuille de route*, we would anticipate having funding for that to support the program and legislative responsibilities of the president. If there is no *feuille de route*, we would have to reconsider how we resource those programs and support the president in his role.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: How many people are now working at the Centre of Excellence?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: There are 21 persons.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: We change every day because we are currently hiring people. There are 22 positions, two of which have to be filled.

Mr. Yvon Godin: There were 50. Now there are only 20. You are expanding. You've reached 21, perhaps 22.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: The figure was 11, and we've risen to 22.

Mr. Yvon Godin: There were 11, there are 21, and soon it will be 22. There were previously 50. What program or activity was lost?

• (1030)

Mr. Marc Tremblay: There was no lost activity, as such. There was a refocusing of the activities of the Centre of Excellence to align them with the new human resource management model. There are fewer interventions—

Mr. Yvon Godin: Are there fewer human interventions?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: No, we are completely available.

The difference is this: I am regularly invited to join in departmental networks. Some departments have established their own internal human resources committees because we have made them accountable. I was at the Department of the Environment this week and there were some very dynamic meetings. I am in a position to transmit the message horizontally to more people.

Mr. Yvon Godin: However, they had 50 people, and now there are 11. So something happened. The Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development said that everything had changed with technology, for employment insurance, for example. However, we get calls at our offices and people tell us they are no longer entitled to employment insurance.

You've made some changes. Is something missing in the service delivery area?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: We're in a change cycle. In our assessment of the situation, we have to adjust to this new service delivery model, to a redefined role for the centre and to enhanced responsibilities for all the institutions and deputy ministers who are ultimately responsible for implementing requirements.

In the context of our mandate, we are working to improve the way we do things. To give you a concrete example, we had a series of policies that were promising and highly detailed but that were not aimed directly at the deputy minister. The deputy minister who read those policies could not clearly see what his main responsibilities were and what actions he was expected to take.

We are revising our policies so that they communicate those requirements more clearly.

Mr. Yvon Godin: In the meantime, is something missing?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: We're obviously working every day.

Mr. Yvon Godin: There is a new policy. It wasn't you who issued it; it was the government. You're here, you do your job, and you're paid.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: That's indeed what we do.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Is something missing? It went from 50 persons to 11. There must have been something missing somewhere.

It's all well and good to have a Roadmap and to allocate millions of dollars to it—

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Mr. Chairman, I have been in my position for seven months. I am in the process of assessing the team's circumstances and planning for the future.

Mr. Yvon Godin: We will ask Mr. MacLeod. For how many months have you been there?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: I have been here for nearly two years now. When I arrived, 11 persons were assigned to the Centre of Excellence. There has since been an increase of 10 persons.

Mr. Yvon Godin: You haven't conducted a study that you would be hiding?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Godin.

Mr. Gourde.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm going to take 30 seconds to ask you my question so as to leave each person a minute and a half to answer it. We like to work in a positive and constructive manner. This is an important study for the future of the Roadmap.

Would you have any recommendations to make or examples to cite to improve service delivery?

Thank you.

Mr. Ross MacLeod: As regards services, we would put the emphasis on horizontal advice to departments to assist them in discharging their responsibilities under the act.

[English]

We would like to be able to ensure that the departments have the opportunity to exercise their true responsibilities under the Official Languages Act to provide the best possible services for Canadians.

[Translation]

Ms. Nancie Cantin: This is somewhat in the same vein as the comment made earlier. The idea for us would be to continue contributing to service improvement. We will see how matters go, but some tools are being offered under the pilot project. There is a horizontal contribution across the country in places where it might be more difficult to learn or practise the second language. This is a positive initiative that could continue to produce results, depending on funding conditions, to the extent that it would be among the government's priorities.

[English]

Mr. David McGovern: Thanks for the question.

We actually need to learn from the four initiatives we're involved in now. We have to learn from our partners through the horizontal aspects of the road map, and then we have to continue to engage with the OLMC. We have to listen to the official language minority communities to ensure that what we're doing is consistent with what they need.

• (1035)

[Translation]

The Chair: Do you have any further questions, Mr. Gourde?

Mr. Jacques Gourde: I would simply like to make a brief comment. I want to thank you personally. Your comments were very interesting, and they will help us continue developing our study. I think we have worked constructively here, in a manner respectful of the witnesses, and we sincerely thank you. You have made a significant effort in contributing to this study.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Gourde.

Now we'll go to Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Tremblay, Mr. MacLeod, I believe that 56 persons dealt with official languages at the Treasury Board in 2006. Is that correct?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: Yes.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Could you give us some specific year-over-year figures reflecting developments since 2006?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: We could send you those figures, but there has essentially been a gradual decline due to the refocusing of programs, cancellations or the fact that projects terminated. When funding disappeared, the figures changed.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: It isn't necessary for that to go into September, is it? Can you get those figures quite quickly?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Yes.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Can you tell us which of the duties you performed in 2006 you no longer have today?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: They mainly involve individual advice to institutions. We had portfolio specialists. The model was somewhat similar to what we have already heard, that is to say that the official languages officer in a department phoned the centres of excellence to get an answer to all his questions. He was not required to think a lot about what his questions implied. His automatic reaction was to telephone.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: In short, there are no more portfolio specialists.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Indeed. Now we provide horizontal information, and the official language officers are able to advise the deputy minister in their department.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: The departments and agencies are supposed to submit a report to you every year.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Under section 48 of the Official Languages Act, the Treasury Board President files an annual report on the status of official languages.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: There was a time when the departments and agencies submitted a report to you every year, but that is no longer the case, is it?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Indeed.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: There was a time when the reports you received were evaluated, but you have stopped doing that, and now there are no more reports. Is that correct?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: No, we still prepare our reports.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: But the departments and agencies that submitted reports to you no longer do so.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: The departments still prepare reports.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: How many?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: I would have to look at the figures, but I can tell you that we essentially ask one-third of the federal institutions to submit reports every year.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: If I understand correctly, only one-third of all agencies that used to report now report, and two-thirds no longer do so.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Pardon me, but in one year, one-third of institutions report, and the second third do so in the second year, and the third third do so in the third year.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I have perhaps a minute or two left.

Mr. MacLeod, I have a question for you.

[*English*]

You said, sir, that the official languages considerations were in every Treasury Board submission. Since you brought it up, I used to be on the board, for a little while, and I have to say that those considerations were a little bit tenuous. How have you strengthened them, sir, with the diminished resources?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: We have worked with our colleagues in the Treasury Board in terms of how they provide analysis to the board in the précis they provide to ministers for their consideration. In every submission to the board, there is a section on official languages implications. We have trained and worked with the analysts and program sectors to ensure that they can provide the appropriate analysis, and they do consult with us on issues.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Without asking for any particular information, in terms of a particular submission, there must be a grid of some sort that they're asked to fill.

[*Translation*]

There must be some sort of model.

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Yes. There is a guide for Treasury Board submissions that—

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: May we get a copy of that guide?

Mr. Marc Tremblay: Yes, you may have a copy of that guide.

[*English*]

Mr. Ross MacLeod: We also provide training for the analysts as well, so they can understand the grid and how it's implemented, to make sure they can provide the appropriate analysis.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Is there a training guide as well?

Mr. Ross MacLeod: We use the guide that Marc mentioned, but we also provide sessions to members of the program sector.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I'm sure you're not going to offer me a session, but could we have a...? I wouldn't mind it. Could we have a copy of the guide, of the training they receive?

I'm getting the impression, with all due respect, that the Treasury Board has dramatically changed what it was doing—you've confirmed that. I'm not convinced that the changes are all positive ones in respect of the Official Languages Act. Obviously you believe differently, so I'd love to be convinced.

● (1040)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Tremblay: The training sessions that we offer are mainly based on an examination of that Treasury Board submissions guide. I am not convinced that we will be able to provide you with any other information because it is done orally. We give the analysts a more specific context.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Then we will look at the guide.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: I want to thank all committee members for their questions and comments.

I also thank all the witnesses for their testimony.

[*English*]

Without further ado, this meeting is adjourned.

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