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## Final Report

### 2012-603 Evaluation of Translation Bureau Programs Volume 3: Conference Interpretation Program

Office of Audit and Evaluation  
January 21, 2014





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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The following presents the results of the Evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program of the Translation Bureau. This Program is situated in the Public Works and Government Services Canada's (PWGSC) 2012-2013 Program Alignment Architecture under sub-program 1.6.5 (Conference Interpretation). The Deputy Minister for PWGSC approved the conduct of this Evaluation, on recommendation of the Audit and Evaluation Committee, as part of the *2012-2017 Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan*.
2. The Evaluation provides an assessment of the relevance and the performance of the Program. Planning and research took place between May 2012 and March 2013, in accordance with the evaluation standards of the Government of Canada and the Office of Audit and Evaluation at PWGSC. More information on the approach, methodologies and limitations of this evaluation can be found in Appendix A.
3. The research for this evaluation was conducted in conjunction with the research for the Evaluation of the Translation Bureau's related Programs (including the Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program and the Terminology Standardization Program). An analysis was conducted to determine the appropriate level of research effort to be dedicated to the Evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program. Compared to the other Translation Bureau programs which underwent simultaneous evaluation, the Conference Interpretation Program's materiality is relatively low and the overall risks of the Program are low. Program spending accounts for less than 1% of the total PWGSC budget and 7.98% of the Translation Bureau budget for 2012-2013, and the Program has a clear and unambiguous mandate. As a result of these factors, the evaluation team chose a compressed format to report on the core areas of evaluation.

### **Why it is important**

4. The Conference Interpretation Program ensures the provision of conference interpretation services in both official languages and other languages to the judiciary and federal departments and agencies in support of government's operations, official events and missions abroad. Interpretation services are essential to the ability of the federal government to communicate with Canadians, and for the public to access the services of the federal government, in their official language of choice. For these reasons, as well as to meet the PWGSC's obligations under the Treasury Board *Policy on Evaluation*, it is important to periodically evaluate the Program's continued relevance and its performance to support decision-making.

### **About the Program**

5. The Translation Bureau, within PWGSC, is the federal organization that provides translation, interpretation and terminology services to the judiciary, federal departments and agencies and to Parliament. It supports the Government of Canada

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in its efforts to communicate with and provide services for Canadians in the official language of their choice. It was established in 1934.

6. The Conference Interpretation Program provides interpretation services in both official languages, Canada's Aboriginal languages, foreign languages and in visual languages to all federal government departments and agencies. Conference interpreters provide interpretation services at events such as international summits, bilateral or multilateral discussions between heads of state/government, intra- or inter-departmental conferences and meetings between federal ministers and their provincial or territorial counterparts. In addition, the Program also provides 'elbow' interpretation services where the interpreter follows the proceedings in the same room and in a low voice translates what is being said into the client's ear.
7. The provision of official languages interpretation for the debates in the House of Commons, the Senate, Cabinet and their committees, press conferences and the proceedings of parliamentary associations are captured under sub-program 1.6.4 (Translation and Interpretation to Parliament) and were therefore excluded from the scope of this evaluation.
8. The Translation Bureau became a Special Operating Agency, reporting to PWGSC, in 1995 by decision of the Treasury Board. At that time, both the Conference Interpretation Program and the Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program became optional services to federal departments and agencies (except for Parliamentary Interpretation). Federal organizations have since been unrestricted in their choice to procure both translation and other linguistic services or conference interpretation services from the Translation Bureau or from the private sector directly.
9. Currently, conference interpretation services are paid for via transfers to the Translation Bureau Revolving Fund from PWGSC's Vote 1. This covers the costs in cases of interpretation services provided to federal departments and agencies listed under Schedules I, II, IV and V of the *Financial Administration Act*. These organizations also pay for travel, travel allowances (such as meals and incidentals<sup>1</sup>) and accommodation fees associated with interpretation services.
10. In fiscal year 2012-2013, the total reported expenditures for the Program were \$14.25M in direct and indirect costs. This included 44.75 full-time equivalent staff<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Allowable incidentals expenses and rates are defined by the *Travel Directive* held by the National Joint Council.

<sup>2</sup> Of the Program's 44.75 FTEs, 5 are involved in the development of human and technological capacity to meet interpretation needs of federal departments and agencies and the judiciary and 39.75 are involved in the provision of interpretation services to federal departments and agencies and the judiciary, in both official languages and in other languages on demand.

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15.69 of which were interpreters, 20.46 were administrative support staff<sup>3</sup> and 1.97 were management<sup>4</sup>. The Program represents 7.98% of the total costs of the Translation Bureau.

11. A logic model for the Translation Bureau was developed for the Evaluation and is provided in Appendix B. The activities, outputs and outcomes for the Conference Interpretation Program are bolded and italicized. The Conference Interpretation Program shares its intermediate outcomes with other Translation Bureau programming: The Terminology Standardization Program and the Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program.

### **Authority**

12. The *Translation Bureau Act*, updated in 1985, established the Translation Bureau and outlined its duties and functions, including those related to the provision of interpretation services. The act also authorized the Minister of Public Works and Government Services (PWGS) to develop supporting regulations.
13. The Minister of PWGS is authorized to offer linguistic services to other government departments by the *Department of Public Works and Government Services Act*:

“The powers, duties and functions of the Minister extend to and include all matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction, not by law assigned to any other department, board or agency of the Government of Canada, relating to [...] (i) the provision to departments, boards and agencies of the Government of Canada of translation and related services.” [Section 6 (i)]

14. The *Translation Bureau Regulations* outlines the responsibilities of the Bureau including the provision of “interpretation services requested by departments” (Section 3 (e)).
15. The Translation Bureau is managed in accordance with the powers and authorities conferred upon the Minister of PWGS. By order-in-council (1993-1459), the Minister of PWGS is responsible for implementing the *Translation Bureau Act* and the *Translation Bureau Regulations*.

### **Evaluation Reporting**

16. The results of the Evaluation research and analysis are presented in table format (see Sections 1 & 2). The tables present the findings, evidence, conclusions and

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<sup>3</sup> Administrative support staff includes staff in the Clerical and Regulatory (CR classification) and Administrative Services (AS) occupational groups who are employed directly within the Program. Administrative support staff costs are included in the direct costs of the Program.

<sup>4</sup> Management staff includes employees at the TR-05 level whose responsibilities are primarily of a management nature, and who are employed directly within the Program. Management staff costs are included in the direct costs of the Program.

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recommendations by evaluation issue. The indicators and data sources used to assess the evaluation issues are included in the table as well. This reporting format meets the requirements for evaluation reporting set out in Section 6.4.1a (i-ix) of the Treasury Board *Standard on Evaluation for the Government of Canada*. Two additional reports - Volume 1: Terminology Standardization Program - are submitted to the Audit and Evaluation Committee separately and Volume 2: Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program.

### **Summary of Findings**

17. The Evaluation found that the Conference Interpretation Program is relevant in that it addresses a continued need, is aligned with federal priorities and departmental strategic outcomes, and is an appropriate role and responsibility for the federal government.
18. The Program is achieving progress on its specific expected result (i.e. immediate outcome) as evidenced by the use of the Program's services among federal departments and agencies, who report them as being both high quality and timely.
19. Limitations in the data collected by the evaluation prevented the isolation and quantification of the Conference Interpretation Program's contribution to the achievement of shared intermediate outcomes. To the extent that it is meeting its immediate outcome and as evidenced by stable demand for the services, the Program is likely contributing to the intermediate outcomes which are shared with other Translation Bureau programs.
20. As the ultimate outcome for this Program is also shared with other Translation Bureau programs, and given that achievement of the ultimate outcome includes the contributions of multiple government departments and agencies involved in the promotion of Canada's official languages, it was not feasible for the Evaluation to assess the extent to which it has been achieved.
21. With regard to efficiency and economy, there may be potential for further improvements to efficiency and economy by increasing the utilization rate of internal interpreters. The Evaluation also found that the Program's use of external suppliers in recent years is economical. Current performance measures do not link financial information (i.e. program costs) with the Program's activities, outputs and outcomes.

### **MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN**

#### **Management Response**

The Translation Bureau Management concurs with the evaluation's findings as well as its recommendations, and is pleased to note that the evaluation team concluded that the Conference Interpretation Program is relevant, addresses a continued need and is aligned with the Departmental and Federal priorities.



## **Recommendations and Management Action Plan**

**Recommendation 1:** The Chief Executive Officer for the Translation Bureau should seek ways to maximize the utilization rate of internal interpreters.

### **Management Action Plan**

The Translation Bureau will seek ways to maximize internal interpreters. More specifically:

**Management Action Plan 1.1:** Establish a consistent methodology of accounting for activities.

**Management Action Plan 1.2:** Better document interpretation days, including essential related activities (e.g. travel and documentation).

**Management Action Plan 1.3:** Consolidate interpretation services in order to optimize the use of resources.

**Recommendation 2:** The Chief Executive Officer of the Translation Bureau should develop and implement a performance measurement strategy for the measurement of expected outcomes which includes financial measures that link costing information to activities, outputs and outcomes.

### **Management Action Plan**

The Translation Bureau will develop and implement an ongoing performance measurement strategy to track the measurement of expected outcomes and related financial information:

**Management Action Plan 2.1:** Conduct an analysis of available performance information related to the Program activities, which includes financial measures.

**Management Action Plan 2.2:** Modify key performance indicators to ensure outcomes are matched to financial information (i.e. program costs/expenditures).

**Management Action Plan 2.3:** Report annually on the Program's key performance indicators.

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**SECTION 1: RELEVANCE**

**Continued Need:** The extent to which the program continues to address a demonstrable need and is responsive to its clients is assessed in this section.

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
The extent to which the original Program rationale remains valid.	The evaluation was unable to find documentary evidence identifying the original rationale for the Program.		The evaluation was unable to identify the original impetus for the establishment of a conference interpretation services program in the federal government.	None Required
Evidence of a legislative requirement to provide the services.	The Translation Bureau is mandated by the <i>Translation Bureau Act</i> and the <i>Translation Bureau Regulations</i> to provide conference interpretation services upon request.	<i>Translation Bureau Act</i> and <i>Translation Bureau Regulations</i> .	While there is no statutory requirement for the use of the Program's services, there is a legislative and regulatory basis for the Translation Bureau to provide conference interpretation upon request. Further, conference interpretation services are a key means of enabling the federal government to comply with legislative requirements and/or decisions regarding official languages and the visually impaired.	
	The <i>Official Languages Act</i> stipulates that federal institutions ensure their work environments are conducive to the effective use of both official languages. To this end, the provision of simultaneous interpretation for parliamentary proceedings was likely extended to other venues such as summits, bilateral or multilateral discussions, or intra- or inter-departmental conferences.	<i>Official Languages Act</i> .		
	With respect to visual interpretation, a Federal Court of Canada decision found that the Government of Canada is required to provide sign language interpretation services (for the benefit of the public or federal employees) under certain circumstances.	<i>Canadian Association of the Deaf vs. Canada</i> 2006 FC 971 Date: August 11, 2006		
Level of demand for the Program's services.	Use of the Program's services is optional.	<i>Translation Bureau Act</i> and <i>Translation Bureau Regulations</i>	Federal organizations are accessing the Program's services although they are not required to do so. Demand for the Program's services remains stable.	None Required
	The Program's market share has been estimated at 90% (in 2006)	Document Review		
	The number of conferences where the Program has provided interpretation services has remained relatively stable from 2009/10 through 2012/13: 2009/10 - 3,431	Program Data		

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Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
	2010/11 - 3,590 2011/12 - 3,237 2012/13 - 3,229			

**Federal Priorities and Departmental Strategic Outcomes:** The extent to which the program has linkages with federal government priorities and with departmental strategic outcomes is assessed in this section.

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
Extent to which the Federal Government is committed to Canada's official languages.	Federal priority-setting reports highlight the Government of Canada's commitment to official languages.	2007 <i>Speech from the Throne</i> 2010 <i>Speech from the Throne</i> <i>Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities.</i>	The Program is aligned with federal government priorities in support of official languages, and the whole-of-government approach for service delivery.	None required
Extent to which the Program aligns with the federal priority of adopting whole-of-government approaches to service delivery.	By eliminating the need for federal organizations to coordinate their own conference interpretation services, the Program's delivery model of a single window access point to the interpretation industry corresponds closely to the whole-of-government approach to service delivery.	<i>Budget 2012</i> Interviews with senior managers in the Translation Bureau and client departments		
Degree to which the Program aligns with Departmental strategic outcomes.	The Program is identified by PWGSC as one of its key service elements in support of the linguistic requirements of the federal government.	<i>PWGSC 2013-2014 Report on Plans and Priorities.</i>		

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**Appropriate Role and Responsibility for the Federal Government:** Determined by examining decentralization to other federal departments and agencies; devolution of program responsibility to another level of government; and, devolution of responsibility for the program to the private sector.

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
The potential for Program decentralization to other departments and agencies	The Translation Bureau's sole employer status for interpreters (the TR occupational group) within the federal government precludes the decentralization of responsibility for provision of interpretation services to other departments and agencies.	Document Review	It is not feasible to devolve responsibility for the Program to other departments and agencies or to another level of government.	None required
	Decentralizing responsibility for contracting with a freelance interpreter is complex and would create an administrative burden for each individual department. The Translation Bureau provides a level of quality assurance (by preparing, administering and grading interpreter accreditation exams) and logistical support (in the form of contract management) likely unavailable to departments if they were to secure the services of an interpreter themselves.			
Potential for Program devolvement to another level of government	With few exceptions, other levels of government are not required to comply with bilingualism requirements to the same degree as the federal government.	Document Review		
	Provincial-federal conferences currently make use of interpretation services arranged through the Program. For example, the services of the Conference Interpretation Program are used by the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat.	Document Review		
Potential for Program devolvement to the private sector	77% of the Program's business volume was provided by individual freelance interpreters available on the standing offer arranged by the Program in 2012/2013	Program Data	While the private sector plays a role in the delivery of the Program's services, it would not be feasible to devolve	

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Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
	The interpretation industry is highly fragmented and composed of a limited number of freelance service providers. There are approximately 150 pre-qualified interpretation service suppliers across Canada.	Interviews with senior managers in the Translation Bureau and client departments	responsibility for the Program to the private sector.	
	The private sector is not accountable for adhering to the federal government's official languages requirements.	Document Review		

**CONCLUSION: RELEVANCE**

The Conference Interpretation Program is relevant in that it addresses a continued need, is aligned with federal priorities and departmental strategic outcomes, and is an appropriate role and responsibility for the federal government.

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**SECTION 2: PERFORMANCE**

**Outcome Achievement:** *Immediate Outcome* – The extent to which federal departments and agencies and the judiciary have access to high-quality and timely linguistic services is assessed in this section.

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
Extent to which the Program's services are accessed by the judiciary and federal departments and agencies	The number of interpreter days provided for federal organizations remained relatively stable from 2009/10-2011/12, but saw a decrease in 2012/13. <u>2009/10</u> : 11,009 interpreter days <u>2010/11</u> : 11,618 interpreter days <u>2011/12</u> : 10,601 interpreter days <u>2012/13</u> : 8,962 interpreter days	Program data	The Program has met the outcome as federal departments and agencies are accessing the services and most report satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of services.	None Required.
Extent to which clients are satisfied with the quality and timing of interpretation services	66-78% of survey respondents rated the quality of interpretation services as 4 or 5 out of 5.	Translation Bureau-conducted client satisfaction survey (2011/12)		
	A major client reported that they are highly satisfied with the quality of services.	Client Interviews		
	79-91% of survey respondents rated the ease of access of interpretation services as 4 or 5 out of 5.	Translation Bureau-conducted client satisfaction survey (2011/12)		

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**Outcome Achievement:** *Intermediate Outcome* - The Translation Bureau contributes to the capacity of federal departments and agencies and the judiciary to operate in both official languages and in other languages, as needed. (This is a shared outcome and its achievement is dependent on all Translation Bureau programming.)

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
The extent to which the immediate outcome has been achieved (access to high-quality and timely linguistic services)	Federal government organizations have access to high-quality and timely linguistic services.	Translation Bureau-conducted client satisfaction survey (2011/12)	To the extent that it is meeting its immediate outcome and as evidenced by stable demand for the services, the Program is likely making a contribution to the capacity for federal departments and agencies and the judiciary to operate in both official languages.	None Required.
		Program data		
		Client Interviews		
Extent of uptake of the Program's services.	The number of conferences where the Program has provided interpretation services has remained relatively stable from 2009/10 through 2012/13: 2009/10 - 3,431 2010/11 - 3,590 2011/12 - 3,237 2012/13 - 3,229	Program data		

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**Outcome Achievement:** *Intermediate Outcome* - The Translation Bureau supports federal departments and agencies and the judiciary in the fulfillment of their obligations under the *Official Languages Act*. (This is a shared outcome and its achievement is dependent on all Translation Bureau programming.)

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
The extent to which the immediate outcome has been achieved (access to high-quality and timely linguistic services)	Federal government organizations have access to high-quality and timely linguistic services.	Translation Bureau-conducted client satisfaction survey (2011/12)	To the extent that it is meeting its immediate outcome and as evidenced by stable demand for the services, the Program contributes to the effective use of both official languages in federal work environments.	None Required
		Program data		
		Client Interviews		
Extent of uptake of the Program's services.	The number of conferences where the Program has provided interpretation services has remained relatively stable from 2009/10 through 2012/13: 2009/10 - 3,431 2010/11 - 3,590 2011/12 - 3,237 2012/13 - 3,229	Program data		None Required.

Given the Program's indirect contribution to the ultimate outcome (*Canadians can communicate and have access to federal institutions services in the official language of their choice and in other languages, as needed*) and that its achievement is dependent on multiple Translation Bureau programs as well other government departments and agencies involved in the promotion of Canada's official languages, it was not feasible for the Evaluation to assess achievement of the ultimate outcome.

**CONCLUSION: PERFORMANCE (OUTCOME ACHIEVEMENT)**

The Program is achieving its specific expected result (i.e. immediate outcome). To the extent that the Program is achieving its immediate outcome, the Program is likely contributing to the achievement of the intermediate outcomes for the Translation Bureau. Stable demand for the services further supports the likely contribution of the program to the achievement of the intermediate outcomes. It was not feasible for the Evaluation to assess achievement of the Translation Bureau's ultimate outcome.



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**Efficiency and Economy:** The extent to which resources are utilized in relation to the production of outputs and outcomes are assessed in this section. Efficiency refers to the extent to which resources are used such that a greater level of output is produced with the same level of input or, a lower level of input is used to produce the same level of output. Economy refers to minimizing the use of resources. A program has high demonstrable economy and efficiency when resources maximize outputs at least cost and when there is a high correlation between minimum resources and outcomes achieved.

Indicator	Finding	Source	Conclusion	Recommendation
Utilization rate of internal interpreters	The Program's internal interpreters have achieved a utilization rate of 57% against a maximum utilization rate of 65%	Program Data	There is potential for improving the average utilization rate of internal interpreters.	The Chief Executive Officer for the Translation Bureau should seek ways to maximize the utilization rate of internal interpreters.
Program's cost to provide interpretation services compared to other similar international governmental organizations	Program cost for one day of interpretation by internal salaried staff is lower than the comparators <u>Program cost</u> \$1,429 <u>Comparator costs</u> \$2,752 (European Parliament) \$2,267 (European Parliament's Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences)	Review of Other Jurisdictions	The Program's cost of providing interpretation services is lower than the other jurisdictions examined in the evaluation, and the degree of management and administrative oversight provided to the Program aligns with the whole of the Federal Government.	None Required
		Program Data		
Proportion of management staff to interpreters	Management staff account for 2.2% of the total staff complement. This is lower than the average for the whole of the Federal Government, which is 6.9%. Management staff prepare, administer and grade accreditation examinations and manage suppliers.	Program Data		
Proportion of administrative support staff to professionals	Administrative support staff accounts for 22% of the Program's staff complement when external suppliers (who provide 77% of the Program's business volume) are counted as employees. This is on par with the average level of administrative support across the Federal Government, which is	Program data		
		Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (PIMART data tool)		

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	also at 22%. Administrative support staff provide event planning, arrange travel, arrange contract security and hiring of temporary foreign workers when necessary, and support managers in supplier accreditation, selection and contract management and payment.	Interviews with senior managers in the Translation Bureau		
Extent of the use of external suppliers and the associated costs.	77% of volume of interpretation work is conducted by external suppliers. The 2012/2013 direct cost of external interpreters (\$775 per diem) is slightly higher than the direct cost of internal interpreters (\$656 per diem, salary) The 2012/2013 full cost (includes direct and indirect <sup>5</sup> costs) of external interpreters (\$1,388 per diem) is slightly lower than the full cost of internal interpreters (\$1,429 per diem, salary)	Program Data	The use of external suppliers in recent years has been economical.	None Required
Adequacy of performance measures in support of efficiency and economy.	Key activities and outputs are being tracked (the number of interpreter days provided to clients by internal staff and external suppliers). However, the Program is unable to determine the costs it incurs to conduct its business activities or to produce outputs. Outcome measurement is limited to assessments of client satisfaction.	Program Data	Performance measures currently focus on measuring key elements of the Program's activities and outputs, with limited information on outcomes. Current performance measures do not link financial information to Program activities, outputs and outcomes.	The Chief Executive Officer of the Translation Bureau should develop and implement a performance measurement strategy for the measurement of expected outcomes which includes financial measures that link costing information to activities, outputs and outcomes.

**CONCLUSION: PERFORMANCE (EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMY)**

The Program's use of external suppliers in recent years is economical and the current complement of administrative and management support to the Program appears to be appropriate. However, there is potential for improvements in efficiency and economy by increasing the utilization rate of internal interpreters. Additionally, current performance measures do not link financial information to Program activities, outputs and outcomes.

<sup>5</sup> Definitions for direct and indirect costs are located on pages 10 and 11.

## **APPENDIX A: ABOUT THE EVALUATION**

### **Authority**

The Deputy Minister for Public Works and Government Services Canada approved the conduct of this evaluation, on recommendation by the Audit and Evaluation Committee, as part of the *2012-2017 Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan*.

### **Evaluation Objectives**

The Evaluation examined the Translation Bureau Programs, including the Conference Interpretation Program, delivered by the Translation Bureau within PWGSC. This evaluation had two objectives:

- To determine the relevance of the Program: the continued need for the Program, its alignment with governmental priorities and departmental outcomes and its alignment with federal roles and responsibilities.
- To determine the performance of the Program: the achievement of its expected outcomes and a demonstration of the efficiency and economy by the Program.

### **Approach to the Evaluation of Translation Bureau Programs**

The Evaluation was conducted in accordance with the *Standard on Evaluation for the Government of Canada*. The Evaluation of this program was done in conjunction with the evaluation of related Translation Bureau Programs: the Terminology Standardization Program and the Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program which will be reported on separately in the future. Planning and research took place between May 2012 and March 2013. To assess the evaluation issues and questions, the following lines of evidence were used.

*Document Review:* An initial document review provided an understanding of the Program and its context to assist in both the planning phase and in providing background data for the Program. Documents reviewed included documents provided by the Program, as well as documents written about the Program. They included: legislative documents; Treasury Board submissions; business cases; annual and multi-year plans; and departmental documents such as annual *Reports on Plans and Priorities* and *Departmental Performance Reports*. Additionally, secondary documents were reviewed which provided data on the Program context.

*Financial Analysis:* The Evaluation reviewed Program financial information and related comparative data as well as additional information provided by the Program on the cost of salaries and benefits for professional, administrative support and management staff. This information informed the analysis of Program efficiency and economy.

For the purposes of the cluster engagement to evaluating Translation Bureau programs, direct costs include salaries, operation and maintenance (O&M) and other costs that are incurred directly by the Program in the conduct of its activities and that are charged to the

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Program cost center. Indirect costs include the Program's share of the Translation Bureau overhead costs (e.g., the Chief Executive's Office, resource management, strategic planning) as well as other costs such as accommodation, human resources, information management/information technology (IM/IT) services, and finance provided to the Translation Bureau by PWGSC.

*Interviews:* Interviews with Program Stakeholders: Interviews were conducted with Managers and Senior Managers within the Translation Bureau (14), officials of federal organization translation coordination units (6), private sector translation and linguistic services providers (4). The interviewees provided information about the Program's activities, outputs, expected outcomes, stakeholders, environment/context, relevance, and performance. The qualitative analysis of the interviews provided information about the Program's activities, outputs, expected outcomes, stakeholders, relevance and performance from the perspective of Program managers, client departments, and other related stakeholders. Guides were developed and used to conduct these interviews.

*Survey of Translation Bureau Clients:* Clients of the Translation Bureau were asked to provide their feedback on their experience with the Program and its products to compare this experience with that of alternatives (such as internal linguistic services units and the private sector). A total of 1000 people were invited to complete the survey (from an estimated total population of 6,390), 291 people responded representing a response rate of 29.1%. 5 respondents had specific experience with the Conference Interpretation Services Program at PWGSC.

*Review of Program Performance Data:* The Translation Bureau generates performance data which was reviewed for this evaluation. This included data on Program activities, outputs and outcomes; examples include client satisfaction surveys and reports and studies conducted by external parties.

### **Limitations of the Evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program**

The conduct of this evaluation was part of a larger engagement which piloted a 'cluster' approach to evaluating Translation Bureau programs that had not yet been subject to an evaluation: the Terminology Standardization Program, the Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program, and the Conference Interpretation Program. A Logic Model that depicted the outcomes that were common to all three programs was prepared by the Translation Bureau. The data collection methodologies employed for the cluster engagement did not support the isolation and quantification of a program's specific contribution to the achievement of the Translation Bureau's intermediate and ultimate results. Reference to this limitation is made within the Report.

The 'cluster' engagement employed a risk-based approach to determining scope and level of effort, placing a greater emphasis on the assessment of the Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program, given its greater materiality (in terms of FTEs and \$), sensitivity and delivery complexity. The Conference Interpretation Program's materiality is, by comparison, relatively low and the program has a less complex delivery model.

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Program spending accounts for less than 1% of the total PWGSC budget and approximately 8% of the Translation Bureau budget for 2012-2013. As such, the evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program focused on the program's achievement of its specific results at the immediate level. Furthermore, as a result of the risk-based approach to scope and level of effort, the evaluation team chose a compressed format to reporting the evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program.

A number of challenges were experienced in the design, data collection and analysis of the Evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program. These challenges, as well as related limitations and strategies used to mitigate their impact, are outlined here. It was difficult to compare the Program internationally, as the nature of Canada's language profile is unique. National comparisons are equally challenging as the Evaluation was unable to uncover equivalent organizations with similar mandates and activities in other provinces or territories. As a result of this challenge, benchmarks were established based on other Programs within the Translation Bureau, or with other service providers across the government.

The number of respondents to the client survey who had experience with the Program's conference interpretation services specifically was very low (5 respondents) and therefore the statistical significance was not robust. This was due to the fact that the survey was targeted to clients of the Translation and Linguistic Services Program, and not the Conference Interpretation Services Program specifically. Therefore, survey results from these clients were not included in this analysis or in the report. Instead, the evaluation team used data from the Translation Bureau's client survey (2011-2012), which captured a greater number of clients that had experience with conference interpretation services.

At the time of the writing of this report, financial data was available up to and including period 11 for the 2012/2013 fiscal year. Data from period 12 only became available during the final phases of the writing of this report.

The Evaluation of the Conference Interpretation Program focused on the use of existing data to inform reporting. Efforts were made to draw information on the specific contribution by the Program to the achievement of shared Translation Bureau outcomes from existing data however it was not possible to do so. Recommendation 2 of this Evaluation should help mitigate this risk in future evaluations.

Finally, efforts were made to draw linkages between the Program's outputs and outcomes but limitations in the existing data had an impact on the ability to assess the overall efficiency of the program. Recommendation 2 of this Evaluation should help mitigate this risk in future evaluations.

## **Reporting**

Findings were documented in a Director's Draft Report, which was reviewed by the Office of Audit and Evaluation's Quality Assessment function. The Translation Bureau's Chief Executive Officer was provided with the Director's Draft Report and a request to

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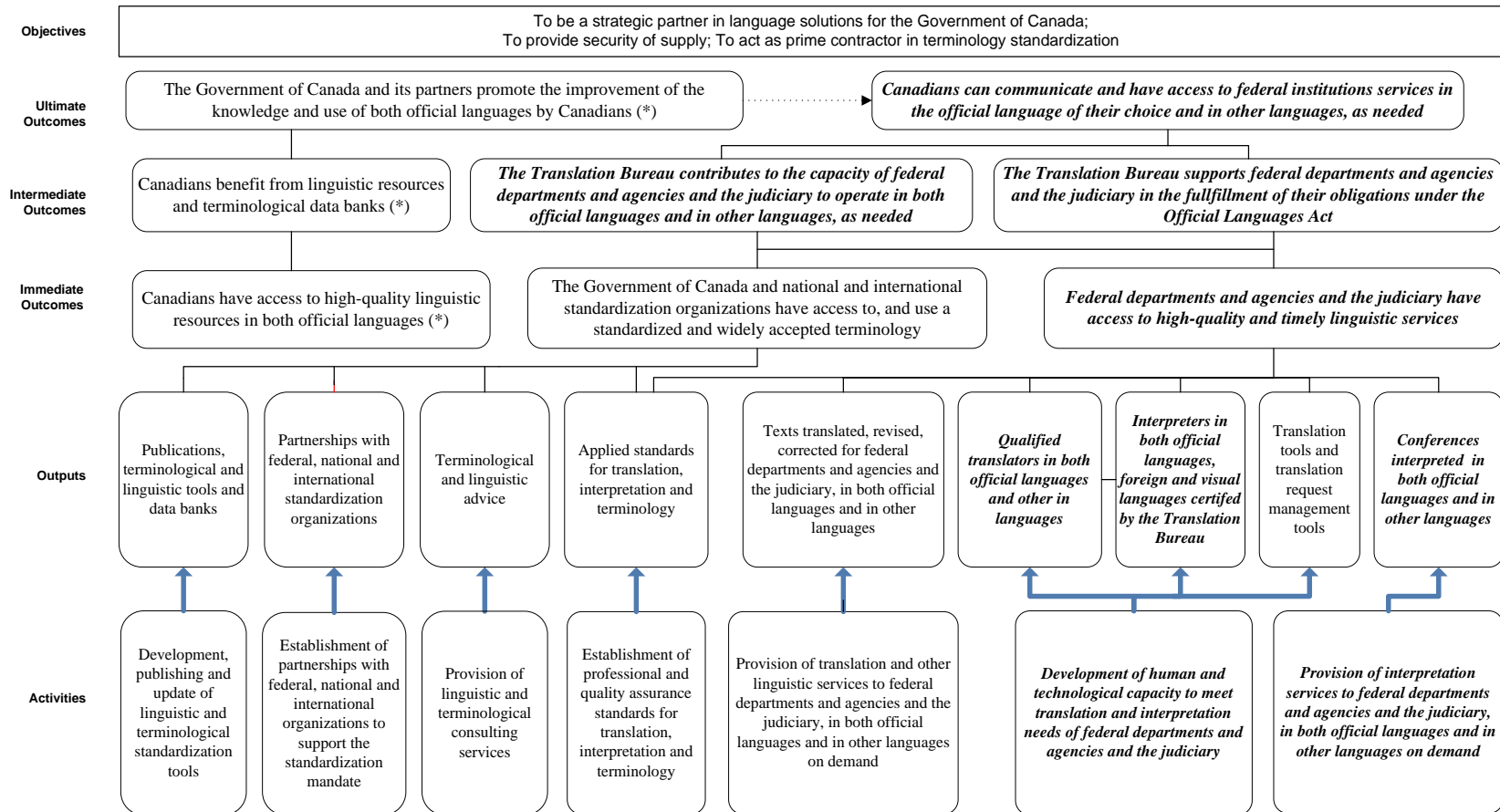
validate facts and comment on the report. A Chief Audit and Evaluation Executive's Draft Report was prepared and provided to the Chief Executive Officer, Translation Bureau for acceptance as the Office of Primary Interest. The Office of Primary Interest was requested to respond with a Management Action Plan. The Draft Final Report, including the Management Action Plan, was presented to PWGSC's Audit and Evaluation Committee for the Deputy Minister's approval in November 2013. The Final Report will be submitted to the Treasury Board Secretariat and posted on the PWGSC website.

**Project Team**

The Evaluation was conducted by employees of the Office of Audit and Evaluation, overseen by the Director of Evaluation and under the overall direction of the Chief Audit and Evaluation Executive. The evaluation was reviewed by the Quality Assessment function of the Office of Audit and Evaluation.

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**APPENDIX B: LOGIC MODEL<sup>6</sup>**



(\*) These results have been covered in the OAE evaluation *Evaluation of PWGSC's Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013 Initiatives*, which was approved by the Deputy Minister in November, 2012

<sup>6</sup> Activities, outputs and outcomes attributable to the Terminology Standardization Program are bolded and italicized. All other boxes are associated with other Translation Bureau Programs (Translation and Other Linguistic Services Program and Conference Interpretation Program).