



LINGUISTIC ACTION PLAN

2020-2023



 **AIR CANADA**

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 



LINGUISTIC ACTION PLAN 2020-2023

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Air Canada's Linguistic Plan 2020-2023

Governance, Leadership and Strategic Direction

Service Delivery and Communications with the Public

People Management

Background

Air Canada is proud to offer services in both official languages and demonstrate true leadership among major Canadian companies in promoting bilingualism.

Air Canada is subject to the *Air Canada Public Participation Act* and *Canada's Official Languages Act*. Unlike government institutions subject to the *Official Languages Act*, Air Canada receives no direct or indirect funding for language-related training, testing or communications. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Air Canada continues to increase the financial and human resources it allocates to maintain its language programs.

Air Canada is determined to meet its linguistic commitments while adapting to the constant and rapid changes that characterize the competitive airline industry, and the organizational and operational changes that have occurred in recent years and to come.

The 2015-2019 period was characterized by unprecedented growth for Air Canada.

IN 2019, WE SERVED OVER

51 million passengers – that is a 65% increase since 2009 and served **220 destinations across six continents**, having added **120 new routes** in the last five years alone.

This growth also created a significant increase in our recruitment efforts.

OUR WORKFORCE GREW TO OVER

37,000 employees worldwide. Despite this growth, the number of complaints related to official languages received has proportionally remained stable, showing an overall improvement over time.

We value our role in promoting bilingualism in Canada, both at our head office in Montréal and throughout our global network.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

We cannot ignore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our industry, and we are devoting extraordinary efforts to rebuild the organization as quick as possible. Realistically, we expect it to take at least three years for Air Canada to get back to 2019 levels of revenue and capacity. Nonetheless, official languages will remain a key focus for the future of the organization, through the objectives laid out in this Action Plan.





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Over the years, Air Canada implemented a series of sustained initiatives in its action plans to ultimately improve delivery of the services it offers its customers in both official languages.

Here are some of the initiatives:

- New official languages policies and directives for employees;
- Web-based employee awareness and training modules;
- Raising awareness of official languages obligations during new employee orientation sessions;
- Important changes to the Collective Agreement signed with Unifor regarding the assignment of bilingual agents in airports;
- Enhanced collaboration with official language minority communities on hiring new bilingual employees.

Since 2015, Air Canada introduced initiatives voluntarily to further support efforts to achieve objectives, such as raising employee awareness. The previous Linguistic Action Plan listed actions to be implemented for further improving priority items while strengthening existing best practices. It answered four objectives:

1. Executive management commitment
2. Delivery of bilingual services
3. Consultation with official language minority communities
4. Performance monitoring

Here are some highlights of concrete measures taken over the past few years:

PRESENCE IN COMMUNITIES

Among our key achievements over recent years, Air Canada has continued to support organizations to promote the Francophonie in a sustainable manner and to develop Francophone culture and the tourism industry. Our dedication to ensuring our presence in official language minority communities has contributed to the cultural and socio-economic development of Francophone communities in Canada and earned us recognition throughout the country.

We continued to build on our partnerships with various Francophone organizations outside Quebec, both national—for example, RDÉE Canada—and regional—for example, the Edmonton and Calgary chapters of the Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta [French-Canadian Association of Alberta], or ACFA.

We sponsored the business meeting of the Conseil de développement économique de l'Alberta (CDEA) [Economic Development Council of Alberta] in Calgary and the Forum des leaders de la Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne (FCFA) [Leaders Forum for the Federation of Francophone and Acadian Communities].

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In several schools, we participated in activities aimed at educating high school students about the importance of continuing to practise French after completing their studies. We also participated in the various activities of the CPF (Canadian Parents for French), including two local forums in Vancouver and Victoria in 2018 organized by French for the Future/Le français pour l'avenir with the theme of "Living My Passion in French, A World of Opportunity!". We supported and attended several events celebrating the Francophonie outside Quebec, such as Coup de cœur francophone, Festival franco-ontarien, Festival d'été francophone in Vancouver, and Gala de la francophonie de Calgary (ACFA) in November 2018.

Air Canada supported several organizations and events that highlighted the 50th anniversary of the *Official Languages Act*, such as the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie and the Winnipeg Festival du Voyageur. We also supported organizations and events of the Anglophone community in Quebec.

RECRUITING

To support our continued focus on recruiting bilingual staff and thereby contribute to the socio-economic development of Francophone communities, we participated in various job fairs aimed at the Francophonie in Western

provinces: in Calgary (Connexion Carrière and the Alberta immigration program), Edmonton (Accès-Emploi) and Vancouver (Immigration CDECB program). Our continued presence at various employment events has encouraged the economic development of communities by offering career opportunities.

Priority is always given to bilingual candidates in the recruitment of front-line employees. Since 2017, nearly 50% of new Air Canada front-line hires speak both English and French. Each year, we invest in language training, offer new employees awareness sessions and showcase our language training programs to familiarize employees with our active offering of bilingual services. In addition, over 2,400 employees enrolled in French courses in 2018 and over 2,500 did in 2019.

We continued to promote the Dialogue Award on Air Canada's internal recognition platform, Shine. The Dialogue Award recognizes a colleague's commitment and dedication to serving our customers in both official languages, regardless of whether they themselves are bilingual.

In addition, a "Hello / Bonjour" sensibilization campaign was launched among employees to promote bilingualism and to reiterate Air Canada's commitments in this regard. In order to constantly raise employee awareness, a network of supporters at various airports has

taken shape. This campaign has yielded positive results for the Organization.

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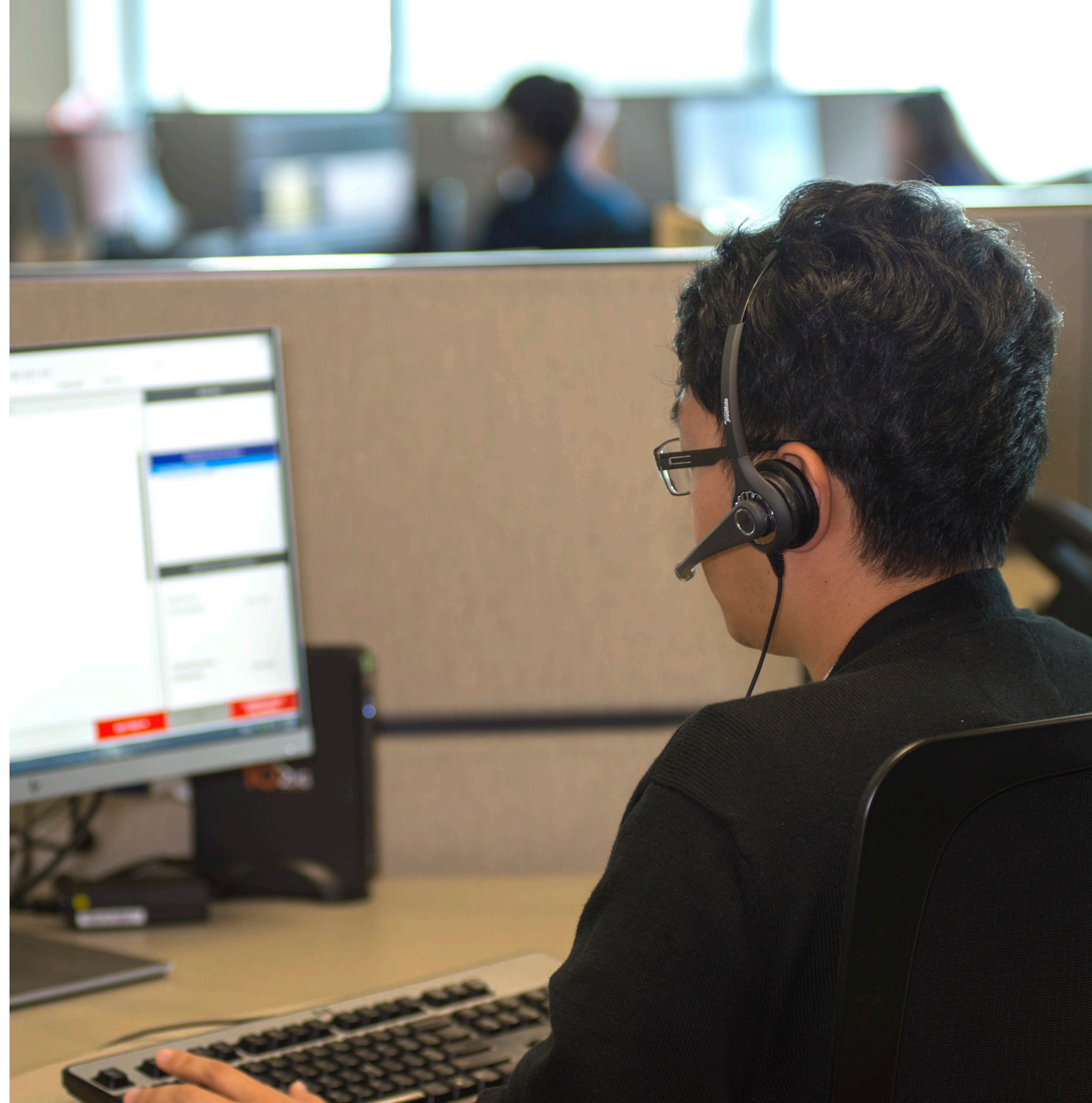
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VERIFICATIONS

Several initiatives were put in place to assess the application of official languages requirements, such as verifications, monthly telephone surveys and questionnaires completed anonymously by customers.

In surveys conducted by Ipsos, Air Canada customers indicated that they are generally very satisfied with our ability to offer services in either English or French. On average for the period of 2015-2019, customers were generally satisfied with Air Canada's ability to serve them in the official language of their choice, attesting to our collective improvement efforts. In addition, most Francophone and Anglophone clients have noted that Air Canada has improved its bilingual services in recent years.





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Air Canada's Linguistic Action Plan

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Air Canada is proud to present its 2020-2023 Linguistic Action Plan: Our continued commitment to official languages as Canada's flag carrier.

This plan builds on our previous efforts while placing an increased focus on governance, communication and awareness building. We will present our initiatives and commitment under three areas of activity:

1. Governance, leadership and strategic direction
2. Service delivery and communications with the public
3. People management

The plan includes measures to ensure a strong governance structure, improved awareness at all levels of the organization and accountability to drive performance while increasing the number of employees committed to implementing the plan.

Certain measures listed in the previous plan are included in the new Action Plan, either because they are ongoing processes, or the measures have been modified to improve their scope and effectiveness.

Air Canada also will report publicly on its progress in its annual Corporate Sustainability Report and through various public announcements.





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Governance, Leadership and Strategic Direction

The Executive Vice President, Chief Human Resources and Communications Officer is the official languages champion and is the executive responsible for the management of Air Canada's obligations in this regard.

"Hello! Bonjour! Air Canada's brand is more than our name. It's more than a logo. Our brand influences people's perception of Air Canada. Our brand is the manifestation of the promise we make to our customers. In short, our brand is all about who we are, what we do and how well we do it. Offering service to our customers in their language of choice is an integral part of how well we do our job. Air Canada's goal is to make sure that every customer gets the most consistent, enjoyable and safe travel experience and leaves with a positive lasting impression."

Arielle Meloul-Wechsler
Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources and Communications Officer, and Official Languages Champion



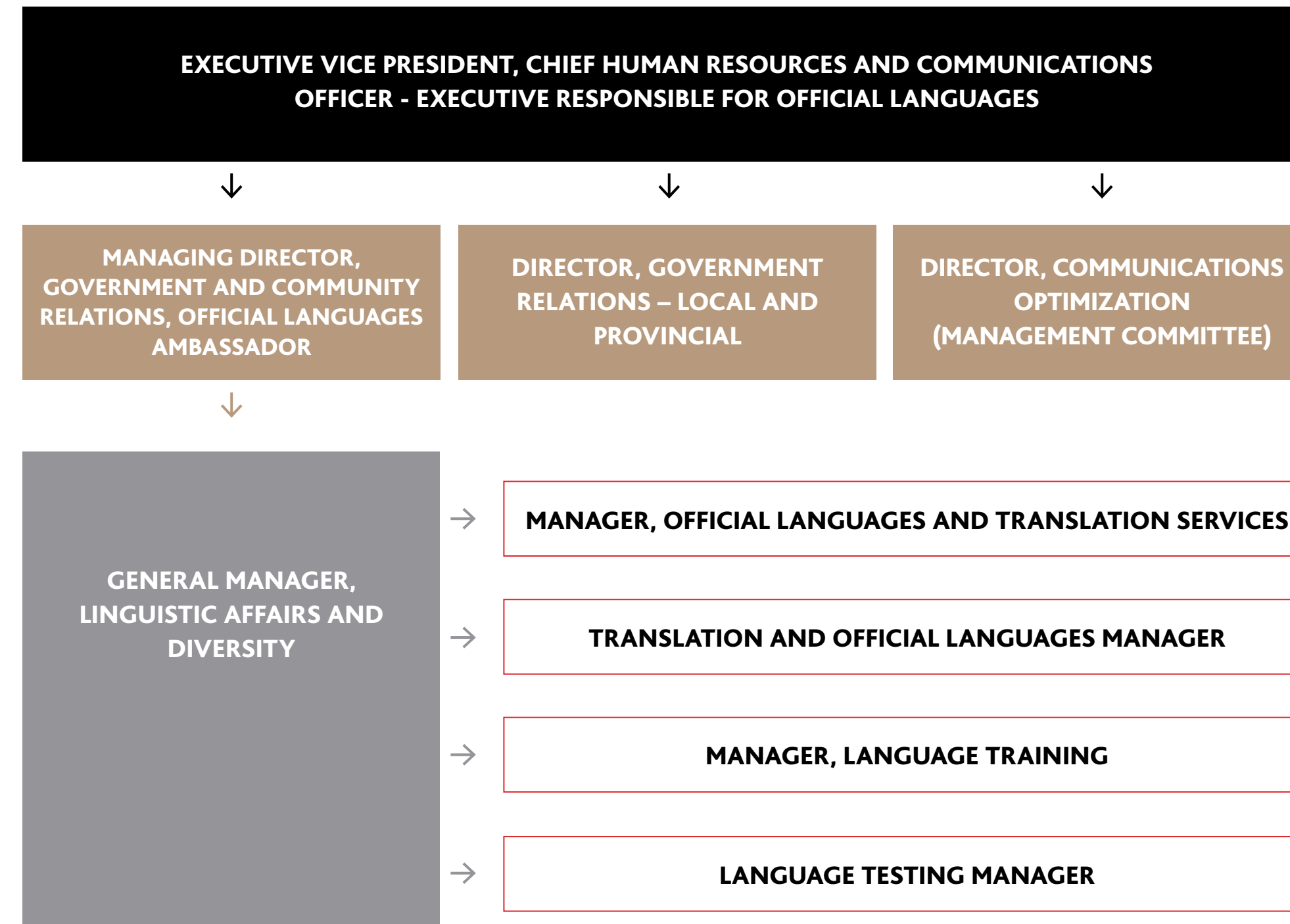
The Managing Director, Government and Community Relations also contributes to the promotion of official languages and to establishing a vision and strategy in this regard.

The Linguistic Affairs team is responsible for implementing the Action Plan and ensures that official languages are respected and used across the Organization. It reviews ongoing performance, provides support to ensure sustainability and addresses areas for improvement in the Organization.

The Linguistic Affairs team has performed a strategic planning exercise to make sure sufficient resources are allocated for the execution of this Action Plan.

This Action Plan has been presented and approved by executive management. The respective department leaders are aware of the commitments made and are involved in the execution of such commitments.

Air Canada is committed to implementing an official languages a culture in its Organization. To this end, we have identified the following continuous measures and improvements:



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Governance, Leadership and Strategic Direction

OBJECTIVE I:

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

To support Linguistic Affairs in the implementation of the Action Plan, an Official Languages Management Committee will be created.

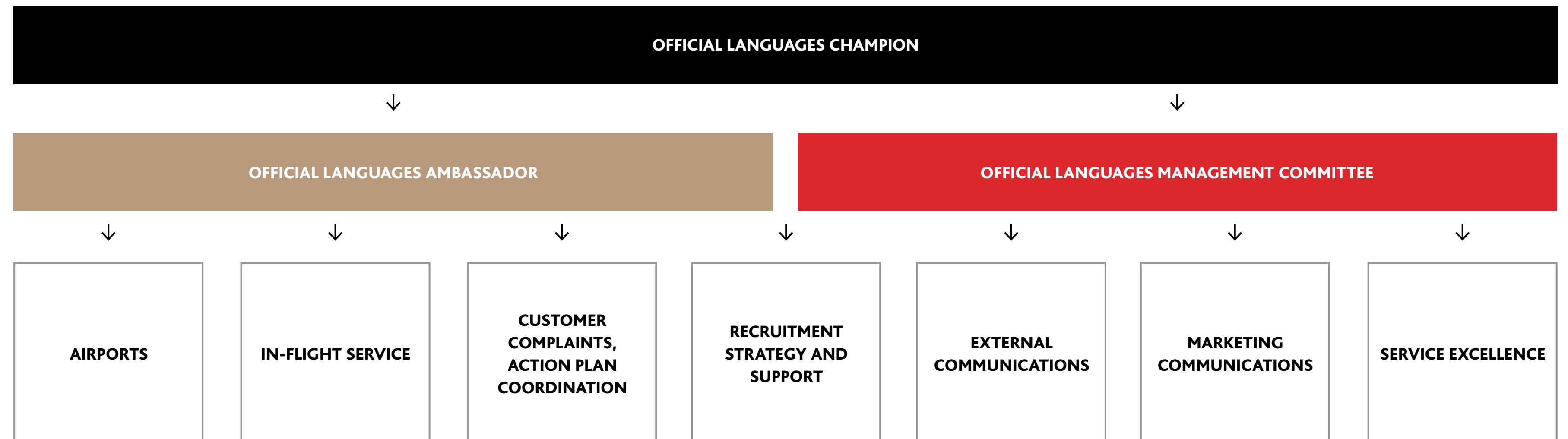
Coordinated and led by the Director, Communications Optimization, this committee will meet on a quarterly basis and be tasked with the monitoring and coordinating of Air Canada's official languages initiatives stemming from the Action Plan. The group is comprised of Air Canada senior management subject-matter experts from diverse functions, including Airports, In-Flight Service, Service Excellence, Communications (external and marketing communications), People, and Linguistic Affairs. The Committee will report on Air Canada's official languages performance and make recommendations related to official languages.

Regular updates to executive management will be conducted by the Official Languages Champion. Developments on principal initiatives will be reported annually to the executive committee of Air Canada.

OBJECTIVE II:

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES SUPPORTERS

There is continued development of the Supporters' network at each airport and In-Flight Service base. Regular meetings and exchanges will continue to report on the progress of the plan and make adjustments when necessary. This network facilitates the implementation of the Action Plan, ensures follow-up, helps identify local challenges or issues, allows for active participation in seeking support or specific solutions for various realities and challenges, and provides for regular sharing of best practices.





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OBJECTIVE III:

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Organization has a performance management program that includes annual performance objectives set for managers that are specific to their official languages obligations. Members of the Official Languages Management Committee will report on the achievements of the committee through this tool.

Linguistic performance objectives are to be included in the performance plan of all managers with responsibilities for customer service or communication with the public.

OBJECTIVE IV:

VERIFICATIONS

Air Canada aims to maintain periodic verifications and monitor progress. To this end, available verification tools will be assessed and improved for optimal reporting.

Verifications will be discussed and shared with local management to identify official language issues. Results will be assessed and monitored by Linguistic Affairs for program improvement and shared with the Official Languages Management Committee for review.





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Air Canada provides services to its customers in both official languages. All employees are informed of this obligation and made aware of the various tools available and of the importance of greeting passengers in both official languages.

As a matter of continuous improvement, the following objectives have been established:

OBJECTIVE I:

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Air Canada is committed to implementing an updated company-wide internal Communication Plan.

This Communication Plan is supported by executive management. The leadership is committed to ensuring all groups of employees understand Air Canada's linguistic obligations, the importance of respecting them and what can be done to further enhance our commitment to serving our customers in their language of choice.

The new Communication Plan will also address the importance of a bilingual active offer for all employees serving the travelling public. The goal of this plan is to improve the efficiency of communications with a continuous, consistent and clear message on language requirements.

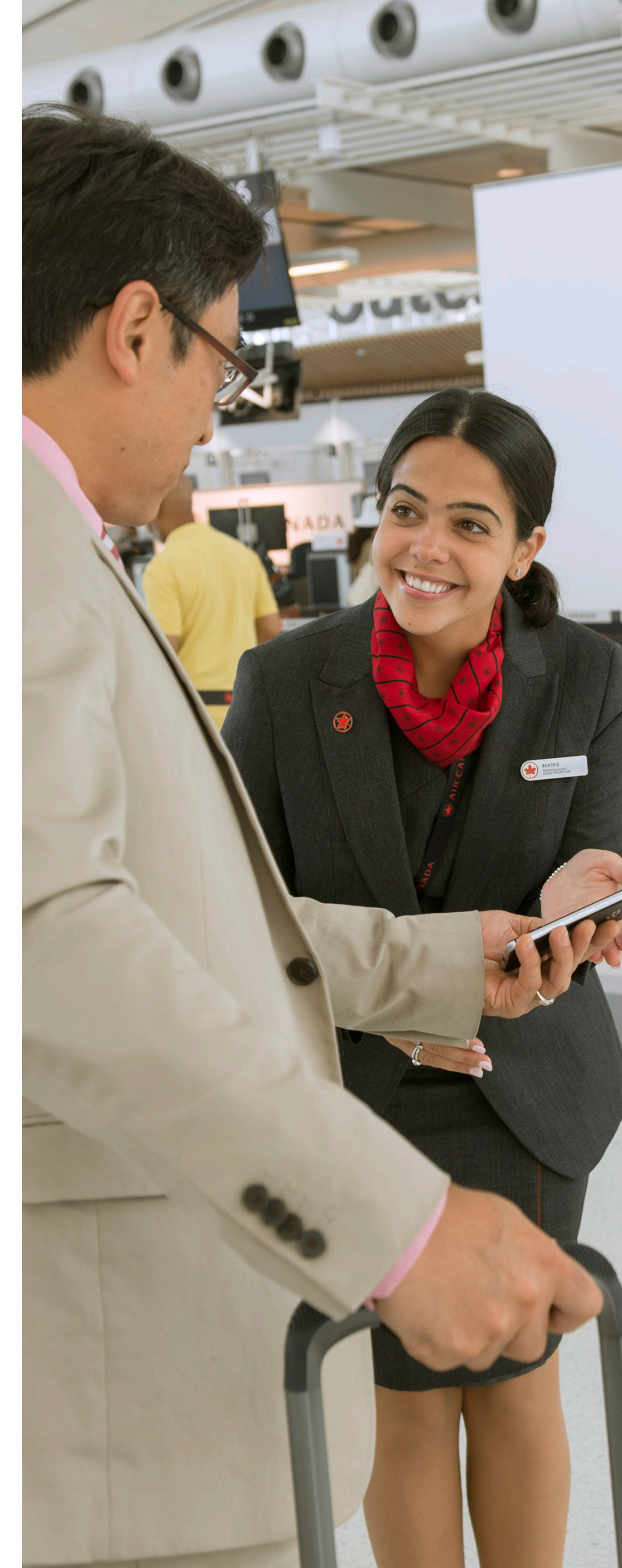
Communication will be maintained on a regular basis to ensure all employees are reminded of the new Action Plan through the different internal bulletins and newsletters and the Plan will be made available on the employees' portal and Air Canada's website.

OBJECTIVE II:

BILINGUAL WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS

A new evaluation will be conducted to assess the needs for bilingual positions (and their linguistic profiles) across the network. The analysis will be prepared in collaboration with local stations (focusing on In-Flight Service and Airports as a priority).

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Necessary succession plans will be developed taking labour requirements and attrition trends into consideration. We will also continue to work closely with partners who are active in the official language minority communities and with the Talent Acquisition team to recruit bilingual candidates.

OBJECTIVE III:

ON-GOING DISCUSSION WITH COMMUNITIES

Through regular exchanges and conversations with the communities in which it operates, Air Canada is able to measure the effectiveness of its efforts in its bilingual service delivery. Through this on-going dialogue, Air Canada expects to assess the impact of efforts deployed and identify continuous improvement measures.

OBJECTIVE IV:

ENGAGEMENT WITH OFFICIAL LANGUAGE MINORITY COMMUNITIES

The measures listed under this objective reflect the importance Air Canada places on establishing and maintaining good relations with official language minority communities and communities in general. The Government and Community Relations, Linguistic Affairs and Regional Markets teams work closely with all Canadian communities to support them in their development and to promote the Canadian identity, including bilingualism.

Air Canada is looking to continue its engagement with official language minority communities by bolstering its partnership with local organizations and building new strategic partnerships.

Air Canada issues all corporate communications in both official languages and ensures that information of equal quality is provided simultaneously to members of both language groups. To this end, we will continue to select media platforms and formats that ensure that all information provided appropriately achieves this goal.

Finally, Air Canada recognizes the importance of working with official language minority communities to recruit new bilingual employees—an increasingly common practice in its recruitment efforts. We plan to continue this approach in the coming years. Air Canada commits to continuously exploring different methods of recruitment and community outreach with different partners who are active in official language minority communities and with its Talent Acquisition team in order to further increase the number of bilingual candidates.

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OBJECTIVE V:

THIRD-PARTY AGREEMENTS

Third parties providing services to Air Canada or to its customers on its behalf are informed of Air Canada's official languages commitment. We aim to continuously have official languages obligations reflected in key agreements.

Key performance goals will also be identified for service providers interacting with the public on behalf of Air Canada. Enhanced monitoring mechanisms will be implemented in order to address areas for improvements, which will include the development of strategy plans to address findings.



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Air Canada managers have access to tools and procedures and use them to establish language needs for specific positions in the Organization.

OBJECTIVE I:

UPDATE OF LINGUISTIC PROFILES

As part of the updated bilingual workforce requirement assessment, linguistic profiles and positions will be revised and communicated to the Talent Acquisition professionals. Systemic and periodic assessments will be performed to measure progress in this regard.

Current training initiatives, such as language training offered to all employees, will be continued in an effort to further develop and maintain a bilingual workforce on a sustainable basis.

OBJECTIVE II:

EMPLOYEE TRAINING MODULE

For several years now, Air Canada employees who provide services to the public have had access to an online learning module on official languages. The current learning module will be updated and enhanced by making it more interactive, supporting the new generation of online training tools for employees, and made available to all employees. The updated module will be rolled out with appropriate communications, reminding employees of the official languages used at work with customers, along with the tools and resources available.

All customer-facing employees will need to complete this module.



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OBJECTIVE III:

UPDATE OF EMPLOYEE TOOLS

Various employee tools, such as the glossary of terms, Q&A documents, assistance procedures and checklist, will be updated.

Examples of available employee tools:

- Terminology booklet: Aerovocab
- Audio files recorded from the onboard announcement publication
- Cheat sheet with aviation terms and short phrases to help employees that have basic knowledge of one of the official languages interact with our customers



OBJECTIVE IV:

MANAGERS TRAINING MODULE

A web-based training module will be designed specifically for managers in order to inform them of the official languages obligations and the various tools and resources available. It will cover the extent of the obligations relating to the language of work, promote a bilingual workplace that upholds language requirements, and address the various tools and resources available.

The Linguistic Affairs team will continue to recognize, using internal tools, the efforts of bilingual employees who demonstrate a clear understanding of our obligations and our procedures relating to official languages and who make a conscious effort to provide service in the customer's preferred language.

Employee awareness and satisfaction will continue to be monitored with employee survey tools.



