



# Languages in Action at Air Canada: 2024-27



**AIR CANADA**  
English  
Français  
STAR ALLIANCE

**NABET**  
AIRPORT LEAD  
AGENT PRINCIPAL  
English / Français

EL KHATIB, NABET

 **AIR CANADA**

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

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Message from Air Canada's  
Official Languages Champion

## Creating meaningful connections

Creating meaningful connections every day is our promise to our customers, our employees and our community. We proudly deliver on this promise by offering services in their language of choice where required across our network, as official languages are fundamental to our core values, and we are one of the few private-sector companies in Canada to do so. Whether it is in both official languages of Canada (English and French) or in 23 other route languages, we are steadfastly ensuring this 50-year-plus commitment.

Irrespective if it is in the air or on the ground, the scale and geographic breadth on which we offer our services are tremendous, and our success is strengthened by our unique language expertise and leadership. Despite the complexities of our industry, we work diligently to develop and introduce sustained programs and initiatives that deliver services in both official languages in Canada and internationally. We also promote and advocate for the use of English and French in the workplace.

Our organization has language obligations, and supporting our efforts to be accountable to and meet these obligations are our employees who seize language training opportunities. Air Canada has developed and continues to grow a robust repository of resources and tools to champion language learning for our employees.

A diverse and respectful workplace is part of Air Canada's culture. It is our employees' diverse linguistic abilities that fuel our drive to deliver on our linguistic promise.

Our 2020–23 Linguistic Action Plan underscored our commitment to official languages. During and as we emerged from the pandemic, we never strayed from our commitments, making us all extremely proud of what we accomplished through the plan.

This continues, as outlined in our plan for the period 2024–27, and we are committed to placing emphasis on governance, communication and awareness building. Effectively, our initiatives and our commitment to official languages are reflected in these commitments, as well as in the leadership, strategic orientation and in the four pillars of our corporate strategy. That we proudly served on average more than 125,000 passengers on about 1,025 flights every day within Canada and abroad in 2023 showcases our determination to continue promoting and using both official languages because



we care about the communities in which we live and work.

As citizens of the world, we are working with all our stakeholders to meet their needs and expectations, while honouring individual rights and obligations. For instance, we voluntarily registered with the *Office québécois de la langue française* in 2023, under the *Charter of the French language*, following discussions with the Office. Our aim is to contribute to the protection, promotion and reach of the French language in and outside of Quebec, while complying with Canada's *Official Languages Act*.

We also created our Official Languages branch, supported by Air Canada's Official Languages Committee, to oversee the implementation of our action plan and initiatives. Our Official Languages supporters are on hand to help our airport and in-flight service base employees, and we established a *Comité de francisation* that focuses on Quebec-based activities.

As the Official Languages champion, I am excited about what we have accomplished to date as well as for the future of languages at Air Canada, and I look forward to reporting on our progress regarding our initiatives.

Arielle Meloul-Wechsler

Executive Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer and Public Affairs

## Our language philosophy

# Offering service to Canada in both official languages for more than 50 years

We are proud to offer services in Canada’s two official languages, English and French, and we are the sole carrier in Canada with official languages obligations under the **Official Languages Act** (OLA). Air Canada has honoured those obligations steadily for more than 50 years and will continue to do so. The OLA requires members of the travelling public to be able to communicate with and obtain services in French and in English, where there is significant demand for those services, and Air Canada employees to be able to work in either official language in bilingual regions (as provided in its regulations). Whether the regions we operate in are bilingual or not, we strive to provide support and services in various ways so that our customers are served in the official language of their choice.

We believe it is vital to protect, promote and expand the reach of the French language, and our efforts focus on ensuring this and complying with the OLA. Included in this is our decision, in 2023, to voluntarily register with the *Office québécois de la langue française* (« OQLF » or « Office »), under the *Charter of the French Language*.

Throughout the years and despite the incredible challenges we faced during the global pandemic, we have developed and introduced initiatives that support our customers and our employees, fueling our leadership and expertise in official languages across Canada and in the world. Our culture mirrors this as well, as our employees, whether they are in contact with the public or not, willingly act as bilingual brand ambassadors for our organization. Air Canada’s official languages policies, practices and course offerings are fundamental elements of Canadian identity and culture.

Our success is underscored by our objective to consistently:

- Offer our services in both official languages.
- Promote bilingualism internally and externally.
- Recognize customers’ and employees’ preferred official language.
- Ask for or provide help for colleagues who are not bilingual.
- Communicate simultaneously in English and in French.
- Support employees in maintaining their language qualifications.
- Recommend and support resources and tools to enhance service.
- Recognize and encourage colleagues’ efforts.



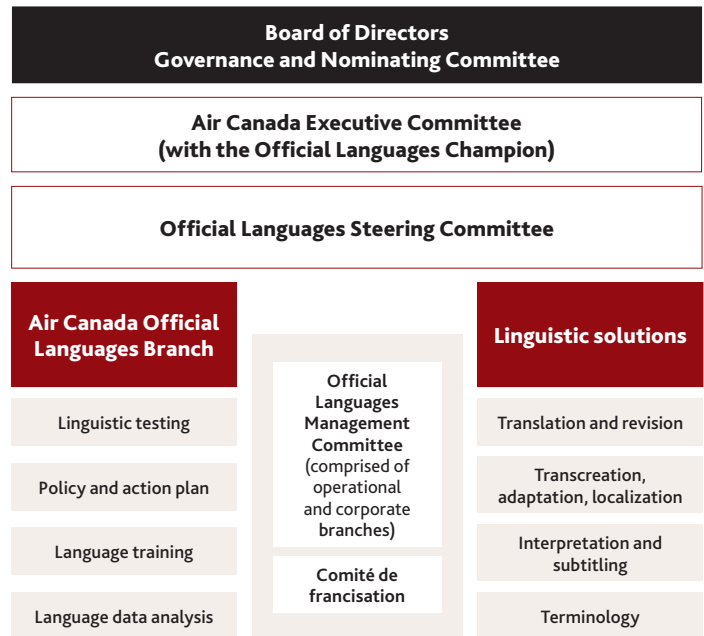
We demonstrate our commitment to advance our action plan and official languages maturity through the myriad resources and tools we impart to our customers and our employees. Members of the Official Languages branch and the Official Languages Committee, as well as supporters of the Official Languages network, all work tandemly to ensure our initiatives are sustained throughout our business and our operation.



**Governance, leadership and strategic direction**

# Our official languages policy

Under the responsibility of the Official Languages branch, Air Canada's Official Languages Policy is part of our promise of service and our commitment toward our customers and our employees. It serves as a guide for all employees to fulfill our linguistic obligations. This policy clarifies the roles and responsibilities of Air Canada managers and employees with respect to official languages. All Air Canada employees and business partners acting on our behalf must comply with the procedures outlined in the policy. For example, the policy establishes that all communications to the public and all events organized by Air Canada are in both official languages.



## Air Canada Board of Directors

Air Canada is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors. The board has four standing committees, composed of independent directors.

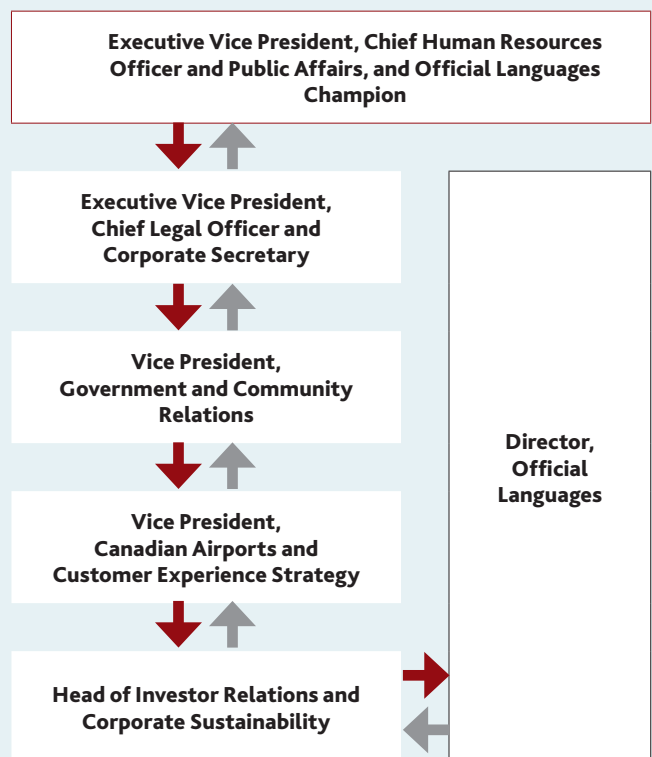
Progress on our plan "Languages in Action at Air Canada: 2024–27" and initiatives are periodically reported to the Governance and Nominating Committee of the board.

## Air Canada Executive Committee

The executive committee comprises seven members, one of whom is our Official Languages Champion. Progress of our roadmap from the Official Languages branch is reported regularly to our champion, who, in turn, reports to the executive committee.

## Air Canada Official Languages Steering Committee

Established in 2024, the steering committee is responsible for overseeing the official languages strategy and priorities.



**Bonjour**  
**Hello**

**Hello**  
**Bonjour**



## Air Canada Official Languages Branch

The branch has responsibility for implementing our “Languages in Action at Air Canada: 2024–27” plan and official languages initiatives. It reports on progress to executive management on a regular basis.

### Air Canada Official Languages Committee

- The committee comprises members of corporate and operational branches, specifically senior management from key functions. It supports the Official Languages branch by facilitating the implementation and accountability of official languages initiatives across the organization.

### Comité de francisation d’Air Canada

- Air Canada has voluntarily established a Comité de francisation that is focusing on activities in Quebec. It oversees the integration, and regular use, of French in the workplace in the province of Québec. It is also accountable for supporting the review and production of reports and plans between Air Canada and the OQLF.

### Linguistic Solutions

Linguistic Solutions fully participates in the Corporation’s aspirations and aims for excellence in translation. Services include having specialized translators in place for legal, technology and other reports; urgent requests; an internal team for shorter or highly sensitive documents; and an external partner that works together with Linguistic Solutions for larger documents.

Besides translation, the team’s myriad services include revision, editing, proofreading, localization, transcreation, terminology, subtitling and narration. Linguistics Solutions also grew to 13 members in 2023 from four in 2020, consisting of translators, revisers and project managers. Their strength encompasses their expertise in the airline sector and their capacity to improve the quality of communications in both official languages and provide internal awareness on the importance of bilingual communications.

### Language Training

The Languages Training team supports employees with resources and tools to continuously enhance their knowledge of English, French and route languages.

Language training offers in-house courses via the organization’s online course catalogue, instructor-led virtual classes and online courses and personalized coaching, all of which are all available to Air Canada employees in Canada and abroad. Employees can also take language classes outside the organization and get reimbursed.

### Language qualification testing

Language testing, in more than 20 languages, enables Air Canada to ensure that our services are offered at the appropriate quality standards for our customers. Additionally, these assessments help identify linguistic strengths and weaknesses and direct employees toward the proper learning tools and classes, when necessary.

## Our highlights and accomplishments

**The following provides insight into what we accomplished in the period 2020–23**

**Many initiatives are now integrated into our daily activities, and it is our objective to ensure their sustainability**

### Governance

- ✓ Established the Official Languages branch, with centralized training, testing and technical resources
- ✓ Further matured the Official Languages Committee and established a Comité de francisation
- ✓ Created a multi-year official languages strategic plan.
- ✓ Continued our awareness campaign on supplier obligations in collaboration with our Strategic Purchasing teams



### "J'apprends le français" pin

A new campaign to promote the use of the pin "J'apprends le français," was rolled out in 2023 for members of our frontline teams who are strengthening their French-language skills. The pin signals to customers and colleagues that these employees are on a journey to improve their French, demonstrating they recognize the importance of serving our customers in the language of their choice. Customers can also embark on our employees' journey to improve their language skill by not switching to English, choosing instead to communicate in French for their entire interaction.

## Language Training

### In 2020:

- ✓ Transitioned into virtual training, including all course materials, and trained all teachers in online teaching and technology tools
- ✓ Developed a new eight-hour course for frontline employees to maintain their language skills

*"Thank you for teaching me (and the group) French with such a passion and humor! It is fun and absolutely a pleasure to attend your classes! And make the whole "learning new language" experience a lot easier! ;-)"*

**Malgorzata H.**  
Aeronautical Info Analyst

### In 2021:

- ✓ Offered intermediary and advanced virtual courses to frontline employees
- ✓ Offered eight-hour virtual courses on skills maintenance

### In 2022:

- ✓ Introduced new virtual language courses for management
- ✓ Introduced a new online course catalogue
- ✓ Offered intensive courses to a small group of frontline employees who qualified with a 100 per cent success rate

### In 2023:

- ✓ 25,078 hours of training, an increase of over 50 per cent from 2022
- ✓ Collaborated with Brock University researchers whose work focuses on pronunciation to enhance linguistic tools for our courses
- ✓ Launched the Language Buddy pilot program, which matches an employee who wishes to improve their language skills in English or French by practising with a colleague

*"It's a great opportunity to practise and work on your language skills while getting to know more about your fellow coworkers and the company itself."*

**Andres B.**  
Customer Experience Specialist - Airports



### Online self-learning

- Honouring Canada's Official Languages
- French for In-Flight Service
- Airport French

### Virtual with instructor

- Development workshops
- Basic French
- Intermediary French
- Maintenance of French skills
- Intensive French
- Maintenance of English skills
- 1 x 1 coaching
- Accelerated French courses



### Courses for management

- English grammar and oral expression
- French oral expression
- Public speaking
- Conversation club
- Networking
- Business writing
- Coaching for executives

*"Thank you Eva for the Public Speaking sessions. I recently presented before a large audience and I felt more confident thanks to our practices. so THANK YOU!"*

**Laura B.**  
Senior Manager Financial Analysis



## Engagement in communities

- ✔ Sponsored the 25th edition of *Rendez-vous de la Francophonie (RVF)*, one of Canada's largest cultural events, in celebration of International Francophonie Day on March 20
- ✔ Supported *SuperFrancoFête*, a Quebec festival that celebrates the richness of the French language through music and culture
- ✔ Partnered with *Coup de coeur francophone (CCF)* to celebrate francophone music and culture in Canada.
- ✔ Supported the *Festival d'été francophone* in Vancouver, B.C.
- ✔ Participated in the annual assembly for the *Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique* with a theme of "La loi sur les langues officielles et le plan d'action linguistique"
- ✔ Participated in the *Congrès Annuel de l'ACFA*





## Language training management

- ✔ Established a one-stop online shop for all language courses including detailed guides to help employees navigate online course catalogues and follow their progress
- ✔ Optimized and documented all language training procedures online

## Official languages and communications

- ✔ Offered awareness sessions regarding Air Canada’s language obligations and available internal tools and resources to more than 1,200 new employees
- ✔ Promoted Air Canada’s linguistic obligations internally and explained what that means for each department at many internal department meetings
- ✔ Designed and developed tools to effectively measure our success, with a gradual roll-out to continue in the period 2024–27

## Candidate incentive program

In March 2022, we introduced the Air Canada Refer a Friend program. Employees who referred someone for employment who is bilingual in both official languages and who was hired and passed the probation period received an additional premium of 25 per cent.

- ✔ This program helped us hire more than 200 bilingual employees; over 75 per cent were customer-facing employees.

## The pursuit of language learning with science

Air Canada consistently pursues, develops and introduces innovative initiatives across the organization, and research literature indicates scientific theory fuels language learning. As such, we forged a two-phase partnership with a major Canadian university in 2021 to use science to make data-driven decisions about our language programs.

Phase 1 focused on the English program and aimed to further enhance evidence-based language training material. This voluntary study was conducted in 2022, and 14 employees from various branches completed six 30-minute online lessons on an e-learning platform developed by a researcher from a major university; these asynchronous lessons aimed to enhance the participants’ use of 24 English phrasal verbs. Most participants reported having a very positive experience regarding their autonomy to select their learning material.

Phase 2 began in 2023 and focuses on the French program, identifying areas of strength and improvement for enhancing learners’ French pronunciation. This phase seeks to reveal how individual differences may affect French pronunciation acquisition, including learners’ first language background, second language proficiency, pronunciation anxiety and pronunciation motivation.



### Onboard announcement recordings

- ✓ Air Canada has made available online all onboard announcements used by our in-flight colleagues in 15 languages to help employees with **pronunciation**.



### Dialogue Award and Employee recognition

The Excellence Awards are Air Canada’s highest form of honour that recognizes employees who stand out as role models among their colleagues.

- ✓ The Dialogue Award was added to the Excellence Awards in 2022.

Award recipients promote bilingualism in their day to day and consistently deliver on our commitment to official languages while fostering a collaborative and inclusive workplace. They help lift up the entire organization by advocating for the use of both of Canada’s official languages — be it in their interactions with colleagues or with customers.

- ✓ We also added a category on our employee recognition platform, Shine, to spotlight employees who honour our official languages, effectively enabling the recognition of this value.

*“Calvin is always prepared to go above and beyond in both official languages!”*

*“Alexander, you are a true ambassador of the Air Canada brand, promoting bilingualism and service in both English and French with our customers and colleagues.”*

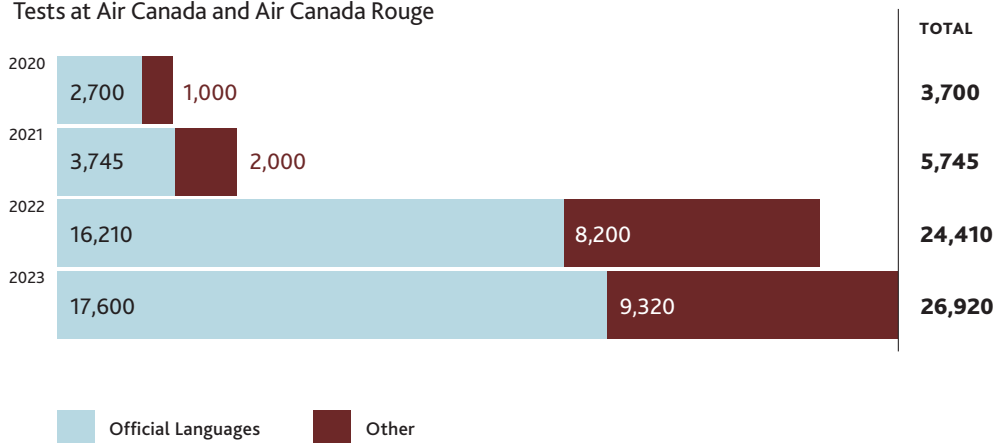
*“Carmen, thank you for saying hi in French every day. You’re helping me practice and not be so shy.”*



## Language qualification tests

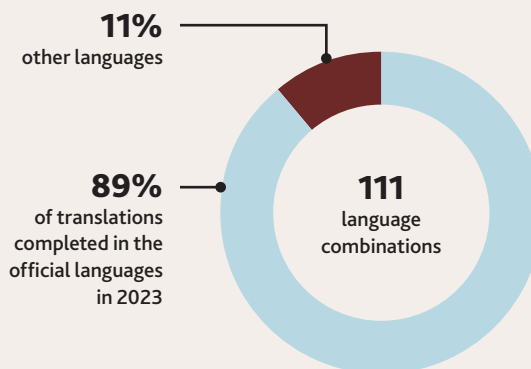
As the airline came out of the pandemic, Air Canada had to hire thousands of new candidates. We tested all our new colleagues serving our customers as our commitment to official languages never wanes.

Tests at Air Canada and Air Canada Rouge



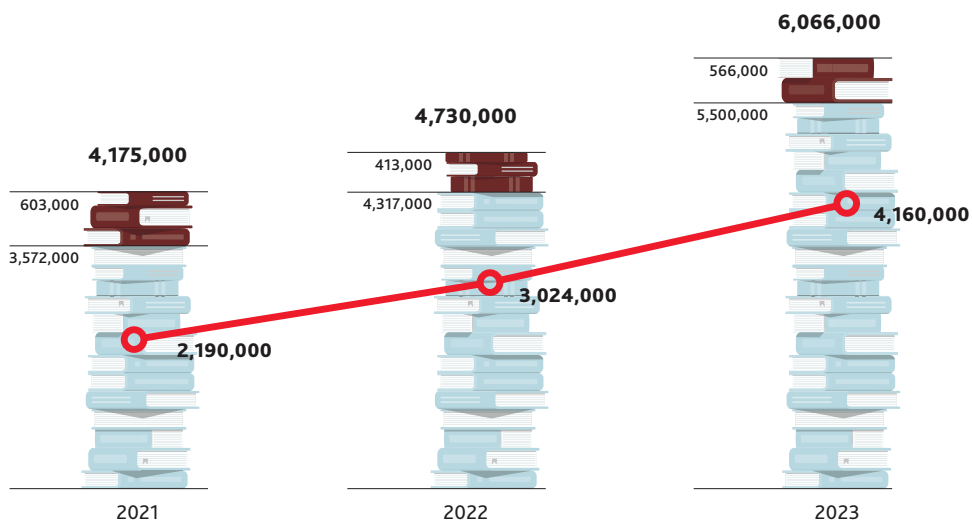
## Translation

Air Canada holds quarterly town halls with interpretation available in both official languages. We held 18 events in 2022 and another 23 in 2023, representing close to 3,000 minutes of content. The Linguistic Solutions team continues to evolve, meeting the growing needs of the organization and its audiences: it began translating event transcriptions and is currently providing interpretation services for all events.



## Translation in numbers

We are proud of our effort and our accomplishments over the last three years, which demonstrated our resiliency and commitments to official languages during the challenging period that impacted the world.



Total number of words translated in both official languages



Total number of words translated in other languages



Number of words processed by internal team

Our strategic framework

# Rise Higher

Our vision is predicated on leveraging the solid foundation we have built over the past several years to restore and rebuild toward our global champion ambition, while taking advantage of groundbreaking opportunities and continuing to execute on Air Canada’s unwavering commitment to safety, service excellence and the customer journey. We are evolving our business for the future. “Rise Higher,” Air Canada’s business imperatives framework supporting our corporate strategy, is intended to elevate everything about our business. In pursuing our Rise Higher principles, Air Canada is working to:



**Fund its future** by staying vigilant on costs, seizing on opportunities and making the right strategic investments.



**Reach new frontiers** by embracing its competitive strengths to grow its business, expanding its international reach and exploring new opportunities.



**Elevate its customers** by supporting the creation of meaningful customer experiences and human connections, such as by leveraging innovations in technology, loyalty program and products.



**Lift each other up** by fostering a collaborative workplace that respects all diverse cultures and contributions to society.

Performance	Engagement and Communication	People and Technology	Language of Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on key objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal and external</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the Official languages team</li> <li>Maturity of program offerings</li> <li>Review IT solutions for the language team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on Language of work in both official languages</li> </ul>

We are incorporating this framework into our plan, *Languages in Action at Air Canada: 2024–27*





## Fund our future

Our objective is to rise higher by staying vigilant on costs, seizing on opportunities and making the right strategic and technology investments for our people and our foundational elements, thus continually evolving and strengthening our collective role in meeting Air Canada’s language obligations.



## IMMINENT INITIATIVES AND KEY DELIVERABLES



### i) Training

Since the global pandemic, Air Canada has recruited thousands of new employees. **Our employees are our future, and we are committed to investing in growing their skills**, such as offering them more opportunities for improving their language skills and building their confidence in using another language at work.

As well as maintenance of language skills, we will offer **more intensive courses** to help employees qualify in the other official language.

### ii) Honouring official languages in management

We strive toward the goal of having all public-facing employees complete the Honouring Canada’s Official Languages training.

We will provide management in all groups a targeted awareness module on Air Canada’s linguistic obligations, the available tools and resources and the support they need to honour official languages in everything we do.

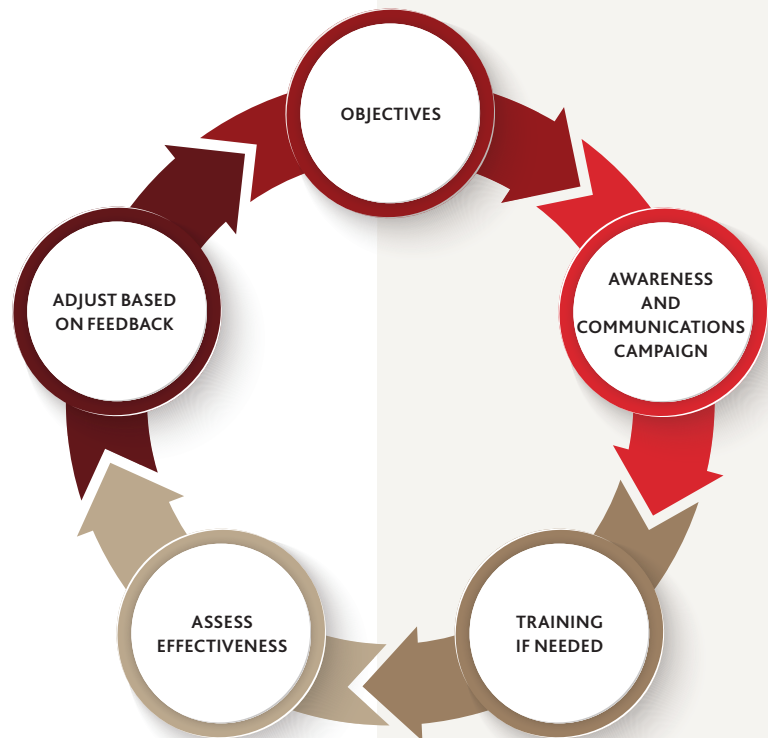
We plan to develop and introduce a **training policy for all employees in matters of official languages**.

### iii) Updating of language profile platform

Air Canada’s language profile platform is being enhanced to **elevate the experience for users** to seamlessly retrieve key information and to be connected to additional language-related resources.

## OBJECTIVES

We pursue and sustain efforts to ensure official languages, an inherent value, remain top of mind for us and our corporate culture. To this effect, we will establish official languages objectives throughout the organization to enable data-driven decisions. Results will be validated or adjusted, where necessary.





## Reach new frontiers

Our objective is to rise higher by embracing our competitive strengths to grow our business, restoring and expanding our international reach, continually exploring new opportunities and connecting Canada to the world. Every gain we make propels us forward in advancing the French language and culture and in underscoring their significant role in our commercial strategy.



Fundamental to who we are is our desire and our approach to connect francophones in Canada and abroad. Our global network connects French-speaking Canada to French-speaking destinations around the world, including Algiers, Brussels, Casablanca, Fort-de-France, Geneva, Lyon, Nice, Paris, Pointe-à-Pitre and Toulouse — to support the advancement of the French language and culture and to underscore their importance in our commercial strategy.

### IMMINENT INITIATIVES AND KEY DELIVERABLES



#### i) Community partnerships

**Forging long-standing partnerships** with linguistic communities across the country and sending a survey to our partners to help measure our impact on communities are priorities for us.

We are keenly developing partnerships with the francophone business community and cultural events, and we are cultivating relationships with our employees. We review our strategic approach on an annual basis.

#### ii) Languages and trade

Further to our voluntary registration with the OQLF, we have created a **strategic committee**, of which the Official Languages team is part, to oversee our approach in the province. All new propositions are discussed with the committee with the objective to efficiently share information to align on projects and initiatives.

#### iii) Sophisticated tools

Technology plays an important role in what we do. As such, we investigate sophisticated tools to amplify official languages across our stakeholders including **modernizing our tools** by including audio components in our customized dictionaries.





## Elevate our customers

Our objective is to rise higher by supporting the creation of meaningful customer experiences and human connections with respect to all language-related matters, effectively aligning our effort with Air Canada’s overarching commitment to elevate the customer experience.



## IMMINENT INITIATIVES AND KEY DELIVERABLES



### i) Recruitment

We align our recruiting process with the bilingual resource needs of every branch. We plan to leverage our **partnerships with francophone communities** to help the recruitment team and aim to participate in many bilingual career fairs organized by various organizations across the country. We also take part in career days in francophone schools outside Quebec to encourage youth to maintain their language skills throughout their studies.

### ii) Technology

We benchmark new testing and reporting tools for training and operations to amplify our reach and better serve our customers consistently.

A **new internal website** will be launched in 2024, providing a more interactive experience and quick access to relevant information, tools and other resources.

### iii) Testing

We will develop a new performance evaluation tool for testers and outline metrics and clear objectives. The **performance evaluation tool** will support our efforts for testing consistency on a sustainable basis.

### iv) Training

With the use of technology, we are expanding our types of learning offerings for our frontline employees.

We will develop and launch a communications plan tailored for our different groups with **training options for varied outcomes**.

### v) Maturing progress and measuring success

We have completed a full review of how Air Canada measures the impact of our initiatives. This review will **inform the development and launch of new initiatives**. The findings will be shared with the Official Languages Steering Committee.





## Lift each other up

Our objective is to rise higher by fostering a collaborative workplace that respects all diverse cultures and contributions to society. By working together with all our stakeholders, we are creating a culture of engagement and offering tailored resources, tools and support to meet the needs of our diverse groups.



## IMMINENT INITIATIVES AND KEY DELIVERABLES



### i) Employee engagement and promotion of official languages in the workplace

#### Official Languages Employee Resource Group (ERG)

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are groups of employees who voluntarily come together in the workplace based on shared characteristics and concerns for the purpose of creating a more inclusive environment that highlights the diversity of Air Canada's workforce.

**Creating an Official Languages ERG** will enable employees to take charge of their language learning skills as well as the subjects they wish to discuss. This group could meet virtually and in person and hold different activities in English and in French.

#### Dictation

We aim to **promote French in the workplace** by participating in events that will rally our French-speaking



employees together, such as the Dictée de la Fondation P.G.L., a yearly dictation with a corporate element that funds French literacy projects around the world.

#### Conversation clubs

We aim to **create opportunities for employees to network, practise public speaking** and participate in conversation clubs in both official languages, creating fun learning experiences.

#### Connecting through communications

Air Canada values diversity in all aspects including languages. Awareness and open discussions are key for creating an inclusive environment and for helping employees understand each other. The Official Languages team will communicate in different ways with employees, through bulletins or in-person or virtual meetings and presentations, to **overcome any linguistic insecurities, promote both official languages in the workplace** and integrate more bilingualism in meetings.

Through our internal social media platform, Viva Engage, we aim to reach more employees and promote events that highlight our efforts to foster bilingualism and support employees' language of choice.

We also foster engagement between employees through Shine, our employee recognition platform. Colleagues can recognize their peers' efforts in honouring

the official languages, promoting bilingualism and service in both English and French with both our customers and colleagues.

### ii) Policy update

Air Canada will launch its recently updated Official Languages Policy. The policy **clarifies the roles and responsibilities of Air Canada managers and employees with respect to official languages**. It falls under the responsibility of the Official Languages branch and will be updated every three years. The policy will be referred to in many instruments of procedures. It will be hosted on the new team internal website that will allow for tracking traffic and help us target communications.

In keeping with the continuous improvement mindset, the Official Languages team will draw from the principles of the Official Languages Policy to **develop specific tools for employees to better understand how to integrate official languages into their projects, activities and events**. A case in point is the collaboration between the Official Languages and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion teams to make internal and external communications more inclusive in English and in French as well as in route languages.



Air Canada Official Languages ambassadors in action

**We are proud of the positive impact we collectively have in our communities, and we are committed to continuing this work.**



**AIR CANADA**  
LE CENTRE CULTUREL FRANCOPHONE VANCOUVER

Air Canada célèbre la Francophonie dans le ciel et au sol  
@AirCanada #hautletrapeau



LANCEMENT OFFICIEL

*Bienvenue*

