



**Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee  
Report 29-19(2): Report on the Review of the  
Languages Commissioner for the Northwest Territories Annual Report 2020-2021**

## Background

The Standing Committee on Government Operations (SCOGO or Committee) presented Committee Report 29-19(2): “Report on the Review of the Languages Commissioner for the Northwest Territories Annual Report 2020-2021” (Report) on May 26, 2022.

SCOGO reviews the reports of all statutory officers. On February 17, 2022 SCOGO held a virtual public review<sup>1</sup> of the annual report with the Languages Commissioner. SCOGO’s report contains three recommendations for ECE in response to the recommendations of the Languages Commissioner.

As part of their statutory review of the *Official Languages Act*, SCOGO also added these recommendations to its list of legislative priorities, which were communicated to the Minister Responsible for the *Official Languages Act* in March 2022.

Responses to the recommendations of SCOGO are outlined as follows.

## Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment clarify the role of the Languages Commissioner, specifically regarding how the Languages Commissioner may bring forward concerns and recommendations to the Minister Responsible for Official Languages.

### *GNWT Response*

The Minister has noted that this authority is already enabled under s. 20(1) of the *Official Languages Act*. This section specifically states that the duty of the Languages Commissioner is to take all actions and measures under their authority to ensure the recognition of rights, status and privileges of each of the official languages. This would include bringing forward concerns and recommendations to the Minister responsible.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF-b8CDQvU8>

## Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment strengthen the Languages Commissioner's ability to get requested information from public bodies, including time-bound requirements to respond to requests.

### *GNWT Response*

ECE agrees and will propose amendments to the Act, accordingly.

## Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment impose time-bound requirements on public bodies to respond to recommendations from the Languages Commissioner.

### *GNWT Response*

ECE agrees and will propose amendments to the Act, accordingly.