



PRESS RELEASE
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Sherbrooke 2013 Unveils a Unifying Language Services Policy

Sherbrooke, January 18, 2012- The Host Society of the Canada Summer Games – Sherbrooke 2013 announced their Language Services Policy. This policy is the result of an effort to demonstrate open-mindedness and consideration for the linguistic differences of the participants and visitors, and also to showcase the French language to the Games' diversified clientele. In so doing, the policy will highlight the harmonious relations between Francophone and Anglophone communities which have given the Eastern Townships its uniqueness and its strong linguistic expertise. In addition to offering quality services in both official languages, the organization is proud to collaborate with the First Nations and Inuit and with the hearing impaired for the presentation of the event.

"As a Host Society, our main goal is to ensure that all participants and visitors feel welcome, and that we can meet all of their needs. We wish them a most exceptional experience" said Tom Allen, Chair of the Board and of the Executive Committee. "The openness of this policy allows a special place for all who wish to participate in this mobilizing event and join the Games family," added Bernard Sévigny, Mayor of Sherbrooke and First Vice President of the Board and Executive Committee.

The presentation of this multisport event includes a number of language obligations that are an integral part of the agreements signed with the Canada Games Council and Heritage Canada. However, this policy goes beyond these basic obligations. "Personal achievement is a key value of the Games, and we want to emphasize this. The integration of the First Nations, Inuit and the hearing impaired in our policy rallies everybody around this goal. We are privileged to be able to count on partners who are solidly rooted in the region and who will contribute to the success of the Games," explained William Hogg, Language Services Manager. A Language Services Advisory Committee composed of representatives from the communities present in the region will also be set up.

Here are some of the commitments in place for the period before, during and after the Games:

- Ensure that visitors, athletes, mission staff and officials can be served in the official language of their choice
- Recruit a majority of volunteers who are at ease in both official languages
- Evaluate the language proficiency of staff and volunteers and provide the necessary training
- Develop a signage policy which could include a translation in Abenakis language whenever appropriate
- Provide high quality services for the hearing impaired during ceremonies and at medal ceremonies where hearing impaired athletes participate, and work to develop services for hearing impaired visitors

The policies, structures and regulations of the Canada Summer Games-Sherbrooke 2013 conform to the *Official Languages Act of Canada*, the *Charte de la langue française* and the *Règlement sur la langue du commerce et des affaires du Québec*.

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