

PN-48R2: Official languages and contracting

Policy walk-through for the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies (ACEC)



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Public Services and
Procurement Canada

Services publics et
Approvisionnement Canada

Canada 

Policy objectives

- Meet PSPC's obligation under the Official Languages Act (OLA) to serve and communicate with the public in both official languages as part of our procurement process.
- Provide buyers with clearer, simplified guidance that enhances client service and official languages compliance.
- *Emphasis on publications:*

“All procurement notices and related tender documents published online must be in both official languages. French and English content must be of equal quality and be published at the same time.”

Who is the target audience for our policy?

- PSPC buyers, and clients (federal government departments, agencies)
- The policy is *not* directed at suppliers.

How are engineers, geoscientists and architects implicated?

- PSPC buyers source sealed documents from these professionals, for use in tender requirements (e.g. real property construction, infrastructure, defence and marine projects).

Background

2021-December

PN-48R1 issued in December, coming into force in May to align with government-wide policy changes

2022-December

Internal communique – interim guidance on sealed documents

2023-December

ACEC presented industry impact survey results on PN-48R1 to PSPC

2024-July

Launch of public consultations on PN-48R2

ACEC Industry Impact Survey – Key take-aways

- Industry lack of bilingual capacity – especially for smaller firms and those based in predominantly unilingual regions
- Navigating how to translate professionally sealed documents against varied provincial and territorial (PT) professional regulations
- Contractor - as well as professional liability
- Increased costs to the Crown, project delays and backlogs

Updated policy highlights

Regional guidance on professionally sealed documents

- Detailed instructions for sourcing and tendering activities according to professional regulations for every province and territory
- Summary table of PT regulations governing translation of sealed documents
- Advice on sourcing strategies to support industry competitiveness (e.g. architects, engineers, geoscientists)

Additional content:

Defining contractual requirements in relation to:

- Enhanced roles and responsibilities of buyers and clients
- International specifications and standards

How we are consulting

Online – open to the general public

- Promoted through LinkedIn, X and CanadaBuys
- Announced to:
 - Buyers
 - Clients (government departments and agencies)
 - Federal-Industry Real Property Advisory Council (FIRPAC)

Targeted engagements

- Engineers Canada, Geoscientists Canada, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
- Provincial and territorial engineering, geoscience and architectural regulatory bodies
- ACEC as key partners in advancing the federal government's capital programs and critical engineering-related projects

Share your thoughts

- We invite you to download the policy and send us an e-mail with your feedback by visiting our request for information (RFI) on [CanadaBuys](#)
 - PSPC will carefully consider all feedback; follow-up will be on a case-by-case basis
 - We also encourage you to share your feedback directly with ACEC

Walk-through of PN-48R2

Questions

Annex – Government policy related to official languages in procurement

Current

- [Policy on Official Languages](#) (Government of Canada)
- [Directive on the Management of Procurement](#) (Government of Canada)
- [Guide to Official Languages in Federal Procurement](#) (Government of Canada)
- [PN-48R1](#) (PSPC)
- [Supply Manual \(Section 4.20\)](#) (PSPC)

Discontinued

- [Contracting Policy](#) (Government of Canada)
- [PN-48](#) (PSPC)