



CEO's REPORT

Since my last report to Convocation in November, the organization has focused much of its efforts on the following activities:

- Strategic planning in anticipation of the 2015-2019 bencher term;
- Budget planning for 2015, and the introduction of longer term budget projections, for the 2015 to 2017 budget cycle;
- Implementation of various projects approved by Convocation that support the strategic priorities for this bencher term, including the Pathways Pilot Project for lawyer licensing, Alternative Business Structures, Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees and the TAG initiative;
- The question of accreditation of Trinity Western University;
- Implementation of improvements in the complaints and discipline process to support recommendations in the Gover Report;
- Ongoing implementation of tribunal reforms to support the office of the new Tribunal Chair;
- Implementation of Enterprise Content Management system and upgrades to Microsoft Office to support the three year technology plan;

This report will provide an overview of priorities and initiatives that are currently underway, operational trends and activities and policy initiatives that are in development to support strategic priorities.



STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

In support of ensuring a smooth development and transition for the strategic priorities of Convocation, and in anticipation of the election of a new Bench in April 2015, senior management has recommended to the Priority Planning Committee a process for the Law Society's strategic priority planning initiative.

The plan of action for setting strategic priorities includes the appointment of a Bencher Planning Group that would work together with Senior Management to develop the process and supporting materials for the Bencher Planning Session that will follow the next Bench election. With the assistance of skilled facilitators, chosen and retained by the Planning Group, the process to obtain feedback from all current Benchers on ongoing and new strategic priorities will begin in September 2014 and culminate with the session in September 2015.

The goal is to ensure that Benchers are provided with the resources they require to make informed decisions about the organization's strategic priorities, well in advance of the planning session, and then to develop a creative and engaging process for discussion and deliberation for the session itself. This planning will help to achieve well-developed outcomes at the planning session, with specificity in planning for support, scheduling and funding. It will also mean that the resulting Strategic Plan for the organization will be well-defined, including measurable objectives for ongoing evaluation of results.

2015 BUDGET UPDATE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2015-2017 BUDGET PLAN

In April and May 2014, the Society's Senior Management Team met to begin planning for the 2015-2017 budget cycle. In addition, the Team reviewed input obtained from the departments on any operating plans or issues that may have a financial impact in 2015 and beyond. The Priority Planning Committee has also started to assess some of the factors that may influence the next revision to the Society's financial plan.

Staff presented draft preparatory material to the Audit and Finance Committee in May and June with the intention of presenting the 2015-2017 financial plan to Convocation in October.



OPERATIONAL TRENDS AND ACTIVITIES

COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Complaint trends fluctuate year by year. During the three year period starting in 2011 and ending in 2013, there was approximately a 5% increase in the intake of new cases into Professional Regulation. The trends were unusual during this period in that the total number of new cases in 2011 was higher than in 2012, which saw a 1.7% reduction. In 2013 however, there was a noticeable increase in new cases with a 5.4% increase compared to 2012.

The trend appears to have reversed again during the first five months of 2014. The number of new cases received in this period (2072) is 10% lower than the 2303 cases received in the same period in 2013 and 2.5% higher than the 2021 cases received in 2012.

From January 1 to May 31, 2014, the 2072 cases are distributed as follows:

- Lawyers: 1502 complaints (72%)
- Paralegals: 242 complaints (12%)
- Lawyer Applicants: 84 cases (4%)
- Paralegal Applicants: 140 cases (7%)
- Unauthorized practitioners: 104 complaints (5%)

Through process efficiencies and more focused triage, significantly more cases have been closed. In the first five months of 2014, the Division closed 14% more cases than were closed in 2013.

Last year, there was an increase in complaints inventory as a result of the increased intake of new complaints. There has been a significant reduction in inventory. As at May 31, the complaints inventory is 15.5% lower than at May 31, 2013.

MORTGAGE FRAUD

Over the past several years the Law Society has received new reports of mortgage fraud allegations at the rate of between two and five lawyers every month. This trend continues – from January through May 31, 2014, the Law Society received reports of lawyers engaged in mortgage fraud at an average of between four and five lawyers every month. There are currently 85 mortgage fraud investigations (105 cases) in the inventory.



The Division's plan is to complete investigations in 18 months. Currently, 49% of mortgage fraud investigations are less than 10 months old, 31% are between 10 and 18 months old, and 20% are older than 18 months. Of the 19 investigations that are older than 18 months, seven are expected to be completed by the end of the second quarter (i.e. June 30, 2014). These investigations are being tracked and monitored regularly for timely completion.

EFFICIENCIES IN THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

A number of efficiencies have been implemented or are under consideration since the 2011 review of discipline department processes conducted by outside counsel Brian Gover.

DISCLOSURE UNIT

One of Mr. Gover's recommendations was that the Law Society adopt more standardized, better recorded disclosure, which could be used as a precursor to implementation of electronic disclosure. He also suggested that improvements in disclosure practice would likely reduce the time cases take in discipline overall, which is a key objective for Professional Regulation.

The Executive Director of Professional Regulation established a new Disclosure Unit as a pilot project in July 2013. Since then the Unit has provided a reliable and efficient disclosure process. It was made a permanent feature of the regulatory process on May 1, 2014. The Disclosure Unit is now preparing disclosure for all Investigations files (except for summary hearings, unauthorized practise and mortgage fraud). Larger, more complex files from the Complaints Resolution department are also prepared by the Disclosure Unit.

The Disclosure Unit has three main objectives:

- i. To increase the consistency in the files transferred to the Discipline Department, which in turn leads to increased consistency in the Law Society's disclosure practices. This has been implemented.
- ii. Creation and implementation of uniform disclosure logs. This has been implemented.
- iii. Incorporating electronic disclosure into the disclosure process. This will be revisited after completion of other work regarding document management.

Between July 2, 2013 and May 2, 2014, 25 matters were processed through the Disclosure Unit. A "matter" refers to all cases contained in one Investigation Report, and therefore, may include more than one case against a licensee.



LICENSING UPDATE

During the first six months of 2014, Professional Development and Competence (PD&C)'s Licensing and Accreditation team has been engaged in implementing the Pathways Pilot Project, namely through the development of processes and supports for the new Law Practice Program and enhancements to the Articling Program.

LAW PRACTICE PROGRAM (LPP)

Our team has been working collaboratively with Ryerson University and the University of Ottawa to facilitate candidate registration for the Law Practice Program. Information about program format, key dates and fees has been provided to candidates through regular messaging, updates to the Law Society's licensing process webpage, and speaking engagements at law schools. The Executive Director continues to receive monthly reports from the LPP providers on the development of program curricula, assessment and evaluation protocols, faculty and mentor recruitment, and progress on work placements.

At this time there are approximately 400 candidates who have selected the LPP as their experiential learning option.

ARTICLING ENHANCEMENTS

PD&C has also been working on the development of the new evaluative processes for the Articling Program. Rating scales, which will be used to measure candidate performance of and exposure to the Law Society's experiential training competencies, have been validated and finalized after a series of working group meetings with practitioners from various practice contexts and subsequent pilot testing. The team has created a new, online reporting platform to streamline the process for Articling Principals and candidates. That platform will be available for use on July 2014.

We have communicated changes to the Articling Program widely to the profession via mass emails, an Ontario Reports advertising campaign and changes to the Law Society's website. In addition, a web-based, "Guide to the 2014-15 Articling Program" has been developed to assist Articling Principals with the new reporting activities.

Initial feedback received from Articling Principals indicates that the new reporting requirements may be perceived as onerous. Some Principals have expressed concern that certain skills and tasks may not be achievable in their particular



context. These matters will continue to be monitored as part of the overall evaluation activities that have been integrated into the Pathways to the Profession three year pilot project.

THREE-YEAR TECHNOLOGY PLAN

As reported in last November's Report to Convocation, an internal audit of our Information Systems department in early 2013 identified a number of issues with the Law Society's technical infrastructure.

As a result, a three-year technology plan was approved earlier this year that will address these issues. The plan is also designed to enhance efficiencies and/or reduce costs over the longer term by automating a number of processes that are currently performed manually.

The plan is progressing well, with a number of milestone targets in progress or nearing completion.

ENTERPRISE CONTENT MANAGEMENT (ECM)

Implementation of an Enterprise Content Management system (a single, secure location to develop, collaborate, distribute and archive information) was central to our plan to upgrade the Law Society's technology infrastructure. After careful consideration, Microsoft's SharePoint 2013 was selected as our preferred ECM provider.

SharePoint was chosen for its close integration with other Microsoft products, its ability to operate on a wide range of devices, its collaborative design features and its ability to support digitization of licensee files and workflow automation. These features are expected to create a more collaborative and efficient workplace, mitigate risks associated with paper documents (specifically licensee files) and position us well to meet future infrastructure requirements.

Phase 1, which is focused on establishing foundational capabilities such as the environment installation and set-up, is proceeding as planned. The first step, updating our current Microsoft Office 2007 to *Office 2013*, began in May of this year and should be completed by the end of June. Next will be the migration of our current e-mail platform, Lotus Notes, to *Outlook 2013* which will occur during the summer months.

Phase 2 will include the automation of workflow in each functional area. This rollout will occur in stages over the next twelve months, although a pilot project with our



Membership Services area is already underway. This phased approach to implementation will enable us to fine-tune the solution to each area's unique needs, allowing for the necessary integration with our regulatory (IRIS) and licensing (iLAWS) databases. It is anticipated that the entire organization will be on the ECM/SharePoint platform by May 2015.

OTHER TECHNOLOGY-RELATED IMPERATIVES

The methods by which we communicate with our stakeholders – and the speed at which the exchange of information must occur – are constantly changing. To cite just one example, our Membership Services department has noted a marked decrease in the number of paper documents sent to them by licensees. This recognition has shaped the Law Society's approach to technology in a very significant way.

This year, a *Finance portlet* is being developed to allow licensees to view and pay their annual fees online. Licensees will also be able to adjust their fees based on changes to their employment status, through a new *Change of Information (COI) portlet*.

Transparency as a regulator also demands that our stakeholders have access to information in an easy-to-find format. That is why, over the coming months, our *Lawyer & Paralegal Directory* will be expanded to include information about licensees' areas of law/legal services provided, as well as a flag that alerts users of a licensee's discipline history.

A page on our web site will also be created with links to legal resources that will assist members of the public in making informed decisions related to legal matters.

Other recent technology-related developments affecting the Law Society include the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* requirements that focus on web site accessibility, and the *Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)*. While our current position is that e-mails to licensees are not considered Commercial Electronic Messages (CEMs) under CASL, the legislation's effect on other types of Law Society e-mails needs to be considered – for example, CPD-related e-mail being sent to non-licensees. An opt-in/opt-out solution is being developed to gather the necessary consent.

Internal technology initiatives include the automation of the Law Society's Time and Attendance procedures. This project is scheduled for launch in April 2015. Benefits are expected to include cost savings (through increased efficiencies), more accurate data, and the ability to generate real-time reports.



ROLE PROFILE INITIATIVE

A project to review the Law Society's more than two hundred job descriptions is currently underway, with the objective of establishing role profiles and levels of accountability within those profiles. As part of this initiative, the Senior Management Team participated in a facilitated working session to discuss accountabilities and role levels.

The end result should be a consistent approach to job documentation, and a base salary system that can be used to ensure internal job equity. In addition, the ability to develop employee career paths will be enhanced.

SUCCESSION PLANNING INITIATIVE

The Law Society has the reputation of being a good employer and has experienced a low turnover rate in its work force. The average age of an employee at the Law Society is 46. This creates a business continuity risk that Senior Management, on behalf of the organization, must address through succession planning.

Succession planning enables organizations to select, train, and develop employees who can be available for selection, when key leadership positions become available. This provides an organization with continuity to support its strategic objectives and priorities. As it takes three to five years to build this level of capacity, a formal succession planning process is currently being developed and will be in place by the end of 2014.

STRATEGIC POLICY, EQUITY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF "PEPA"

Grant Wedge was appointed as Executive Director, Strategic Policy, Equity and Public Affairs ("PEPA") in late 2013 and commenced his duties on February 3, 2014. Grant provides strategic leadership and guidance to the Treasurer, Convocation, and Directors in Policy, Communication, Equity and Public Affairs. He is also responsible for providing leadership in an operational implementation of the Law Society's Access to Justice priorities.

This appointment was coincident with restructuring our management reporting for some positions. Josée Bouchard, Director of Equity, Roy Thomas, Director of Communications, Jim Varro, Director of Policy and Sheena Weir, Director of Public Affairs now report to Grant. Their titles, positions, and responsibilities remain the



same and they continue to be part of the senior management team.

I look forward to working with our new Executive Director in particular as the plan established by Convocation in February for our access to justice priority is implemented within the operations.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE ACTION GROUP (TAG)

In February 2014, Convocation approved the access to justice framework with its two key, complementary, components:

- developing focused internal resources to fully integrate access to justice objectives, including equity principles, into the Law Society's core business functions: professional regulation and professional development and competence; and
- reconstituting The Treasurer's Advisory Group on Access to Justice as a standing forum called The Action Group on Access to Justice, to foster change and collaboration, assisted by dedicated Law Society support.

On June 3 the Law Society hosted a very successful launch of The Action Group (TAG) to begin its work in collaborating for access to justice. Approximately 90 participants attended the working session followed by a reception.

With the public launch and input received, the Reference Group will be meeting with PEPA staff to plan a range of activities. We expect that they will include clusters of interested parties focused on particular themes where greater collaboration and success of initiatives can be achieved.

The Access to Justice Committee will be addressing in the coming months how the Law Society will undertake its work to examine barriers to and opportunities for promoting access to justice.

ALTERNATIVE BUSINESS STRUCTURES (ABS) WORKING GROUP

With the support of staff in Professional Regulation and Policy, significant progress has been made on the alternative business structures, or ABS, initiative through the work of the Working Group on ABS. Following Convocation's approval of a consultation based on various ABS models as set out in Working Group's report to February to Convocation, staff are working closely with the Working Group to organize various meetings and map out the consultation plan. The Working Group has already engaged with various stakeholder organizations, such as The County & District Law Presidents' Association (CDLPA), the Ontario Bar Association and the



Advocates' Society. The Working Group also created a dedicated ABS webpage on the Law Society's website where information on the initiative and educational materials are available. Planning for more formal consultations will continue into the summer in anticipation of additional in-person meetings in the fall, with a consultation document to focus the discussion. The question of what if any changes to permitted structures are appropriate makes the consultation phase an important part of this study. The Working Group is aiming to report on this initiative by the spring of 2015.

A separate study of regulatory changes focusing on firm or entity regulation and compliance based regulation, authorized by the February report, is also being undertaken through the Working Group, led by the Executive Director of Professional Regulation. The results of this study will eventually be reported through the Professional Regulation Committee.

CHALLENGES FACED BY RACIALIZED LAWYERS

To recap my 2013 report on this initiative, the Working Group on Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees, following meetings with a number of stakeholders, retained a firm to conduct a consultation with lawyers and paralegals. Beginning in June 2013 and into the fall, the consultants met with key informants, convened focus groups comprised of racialized and non-racialized licensees and conducted a survey with the profession. The Working Group also engaged in a parallel consultation process to garner information from racialized licensees who may not have come forward during the formal consultation process, resulting in discussion groups and/or one-on-one interviews with approximately fifty racialized licensees.

The Working Group made preliminary presentations to most Law Society standing committees in May 2014. As a result of the committee discussions, the Working Group has decided that it will present a consultation report to Convocation in the fall.

THE REAL ESTATE LIAISON GROUP (RELG)

The Law Society, through the Treasurer, has established the Real Estate Liaison Group with the Ontario Bar Association, CDLPA and LawPRO to provide an arena for dialogue and future planning responding to expressed concern about the future and current state of real estate practice in Ontario. The group will meet six times in 2014 to address the various concerns that were identified in the CDLPA real estate resolution at its 2013 November Plenary. There is an expectation that the OBA and CDLPA real estate sections will meet independently of RELG to address some of the issues and to coordinate the expected specific movement on each of the issues.



LEGAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES (LISS)

The Legal Information and Support Services working group includes external representatives and benchers. The group was struck by the Treasurer to consider future directions for the county law library systems in an environment of anxiety and mistrust.

The group has met five times and has compiled a series of observations for the Treasurer to consider. The Working Group met once again in June to consider options for next steps and presentation of its findings.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FEDERATION'S MODEL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Work is progressing on implementation of the Federation of Law Societies' Model Code of Professional Conduct through of a series of amendments to the lawyers' *Rules of Professional Conduct* and *Paralegal Rules of Conduct*, effective October 1, 2014. Significant activity continues in the Professional Development and Competence, and Communications departments in particular, to integrate the changes into the licensing examinations and revise all resources, guides, and guidelines supported by the organization and housed on our web site or elsewhere. This is a very extensive undertaking. As mentioned in my November 2013 report, we are offering a Continuing Professional Development session on the amended Rules in September 2014.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Our Communications staff continue to digitize our publications, to make them more accessible and to encourage both the public and our members to visit via mobile devices or the internet. Last year, the Gazette was created in digital format. This year the Law Society's first digital Annual Report was published. We have discontinued the printing and mailing of both of these publications.

Our use of social media also continues to grow. The Treasurer has just published the 100th post on his blog. Hashtags are routinely attached to public events, such as the recent Justicia Symposium, and current calls to the Bar, utilizing Twitter live through those activities. The number of our followers on Facebook, Linked In, and Google+ keeps growing.

The Communications staff are actively supporting compliance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) legislation, with a particular focus on our websites and the content posted to them. They have contributed to the development



of an organizational policy on AODA, and created guidelines for staff to assist them in building web content that complies with AODA rules. This is an on-going challenge.

ELECTION OF PARALEGAL BENCHERS

The election process to elect five paralegal benchers, managed by Elections Officer Jim Varro, was completed on March 31, 2014. For the first time, five licensed paralegals were elected as benchers in Convocation. This was the second paralegal election since the Law Society began licensing and regulating Ontario paralegals.

Bill 111, effective December 12, 2013, amended the *Law Society Act* to make all five elected paralegals benchers as well as members of the Paralegal Standing Committee. On April 10, the Law Society welcomed Brian Lawrie and Marian Lippa, and incumbent members of the Committee Robert Burd, Cathy Corsetti and Michelle Haigh to their first Convocation as the new paralegal benchers. On behalf of Law Society staff, I congratulate and welcome each of them. Cathy Corsetti was reelected as Chair of the Committee on April 9.

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY (TWU) ACCREDITATION

Convocation's decision on April 24 to deny accreditation of the TWU law program reflected very significant and focused work by several Law Society departments.

Beginning in December 2013, staff in Policy, Public Affairs, Communications and General Counsel's office were engaged in providing legal, advisory and administrative support. This included assisting the Treasurer in preparing statements at both January and February Convocations, establishing the process for Convocation's deliberations in consultation with the Treasurer, managing the call for submissions, preparing the material for the April 10 and 24 Convocations and organizing communications and the dedicated TWU web page. This was time-intensive and required a high level of consultation, teamwork and planning. Our General Counsel, the Executive Director of PEPA and the Directors of Policy, Public Affairs and Communications were key to the successful management of this initiative.

Our engagement on this issue is continuing, as TWU's application for judicial review of Convocation's decision is proceeding.



ACTIVITIES OF THE NEW TRIBUNAL

David A. Wright, our new Tribunal Chair, continues the work he began on September 3, following his appointment in June 2013. Significant progress has been made to modernize the Law Society Tribunal under David's leadership, and is continuing with the goal of achieving excellence in our Tribunal process

With March 12, 2014 as the effective date of the tribunal-related amendments to the *Law Society Act*, the Law Society Tribunal Hearing and Appeal Divisions were established. Convocation made appointments of adjudicators to each at February Convocation, following institution of an application process. The Tribunal Committee and staff also managed the required amendments to the Rules of Practice and Procedure, and necessary amendments to O.Reg 167/07, the Adjudicator Code of Conduct and various by-laws that reference the Tribunal. Through a process involving all adjudicators and staff, the Tribunal finalized its Mission Statement and Core Values that solidified its independent identity within the Law Society.

There is now a new Law Society Tribunal website, containing transparent and accessible information about the Tribunal and helpful resources for those involved in a Tribunal proceeding, including a series of guides designed to assist a self-represented licensee or a licensee applicant. As noted in my last report, in an effort to openly dialogue with stakeholders, David Wright convened the Chair's Practice Roundtable, including members who regularly represent licensees and the Law Society before the Tribunal or appear as duty counsel.

The above initiatives benefitted from the involvement of benchers of the Tribunal Committee and Implementation Working Group and members of the Tribunal.

As of January 2014, David assumed overall leadership responsibility for the Tribunal and its staff, with the management of Grace Knakowski, Registrar and Senior Counsel. The Tribunal team continues to provide excellent administrative and legal support to the Tribunal and to pursue enhancements. It implemented a new hearings scheduling system in May 2014 that allows for more hearing dates and better utilizes adjudicator time.

On April 7, David Draper joined the Law Society Tribunal as a contract Senior Counsel, Tribunal Chair, providing project-based advice to Tribunal staff. In particular, he will support the development of a new Law Society Tribunal electronic case management system.

The Tribunal Office continues to manage a very busy caseload with 36% more files and 48% more hearings scheduled before the Hearing Division in the first quarter of



2014 as compared to the year prior. Conversely, while it is still early in 2014, it appears that the number of appeals is declining.

SERVICES FOR MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC

TORONTO LAWYERS FEED THE HUNGRY PROGRAM

The Toronto Lawyers Feed the Hungry Program, which operates through the cafeteria and with in-kind support from the Law Society, has made changes to its program operations in order to address funding challenges.

In December 2013, brown bag take-away lunches, which were previously provided to guests attending the Thursday, Friday and Sunday meals, were eliminated. To coincide with the elimination of the take-away lunches, modifications were made to the menu options resulting in reduced costs per meal.

Attendance at the meals, based on the first few months of 2014, has dropped by about 26% compared to the same time period in 2013. With the significant drop in attendance, the elimination of the brown bag take-away lunches and the more economic menu options for the program, the average cost of operating the Program has decreased significantly from approximately \$48,000 per month to \$26,500.

MEMBER ASSISTANCE PLAN (MAP)

There have been 643 cases opened in 2013. Counselling cases represented 74% of overall utilization; Plan Smart cases accounted for 16% of overall utilization and 10% of overall utilization related to Eservices.

Legal Professionals in Private Practice represented the largest number of users at 29% (188) of overall cases. Family members represented 7% (45 cases) of overall utilization.

Peer Support Program

From its inception, the Member Assistance Program committed to creating and operating a comprehensive, professional and effective peer volunteer program for members of the legal profession; to that end, peers were actively recruited and comprehensively trained to carry out the role. Recently completed training added six more peer volunteers, all of whom gave high marks to their training and readiness experience.



The peer volunteer program has been actively receiving requests for peers over the last 12 months, resulting in a total of 15 effective pairings between peer and client, making a difference in the lives of licensees.

PARENTAL LEAVE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PLAP)

On January 1, 2014, the Law Society modified its PLAP to institute a means test by which an applicant must have a net annual practice income of less than \$50,000 to be eligible for the PLAP. As of May 26, 2014, thirteen lawyers had applied to PLAP in 2014 under the new criteria (one man and twelve women). Since the program launch in March 2009, there have been 280 applicants (58 men and 222 women).

JUSTICIA PROJECT

On May 28, 2014, the Law Society hosted a very successful symposium to celebrate the public launch of the Justicia Project resources and to recognize the founding law firms that made it possible.

Launched in 2008 in partnership with law firms throughout the province, the Justicia Project was created to identify and develop best practices to retain and advance women lawyers in private practice. The first of its kind in Canada, Justicia has grown to include 57 participating law firms across Ontario, with one out-of-province firm. The symposium offered seven workshops on leadership and mentorship skills, flexible work arrangements, leaves, advancing to partnership — and more.

Four provincial law societies, the Law Society of British Columbia, the Law Society of Alberta, the Law Society of Manitoba, the Law Society of Saskatchewan and the Barreau du Québec have followed Ontario's lead by launching Justicia Projects.

CONCLUSION

It is useful to me, and I hope to you, to review this summary report. I hope it reflects both the high level of activity that has characterized the past half year, but also the rich diversity of that activity. Our work is intense, but rewarding, and we are all privileged to be part of it.

The report also signals that the next few months will be equally busy and present interesting challenges. The Trinity Western University decision has become the subject of litigation. The Action Group initiative on Access to Justice will challenge us to think and work collaboratively on new ideas and initiatives. The Law Practice Program begins in September and will be closely watched by us, by the legal



profession in Ontario, and our colleagues across the country. Our Tribunal reform initiative will begin to consider adjudicator development and evaluation. Our ABS, Real Estate and Legal Information working groups or committees will be reporting, and generating ideas and recommendations. We will begin to look to 2015 and a Bencher election, and focus on planning for that, and for refining and defining priorities in the Bencher term beyond that. We will be considering limitations on resources, and the need to find efficiencies and address both philosophically, and practically our priorities in relation to our budget. All of these and many other issues will present challenges, in which we will also find opportunities.

No report would be complete without my acknowledgement of the enormous contribution made by our staff who sustain us in all of this activity, but sustain us with a results – focused attitude. The accomplishments of the past six months, many of which have culminated years of active work, would not be possible without them, and to them I offer my most sincere thanks.

I want as well to reiterate my sincere thanks to each of you as Benchers of the Law Society of Upper Canada. I often muse about how much I admire the very substantial, and generous gifts of your time and talent to us, and the professions of which you are a part. I don't think that the amount of time and energy that you give to us, both in governance, and adjudication is adequately understood or appreciated by your professional colleagues, our stakeholders or the public. I do assure you, however, that we as staff see it, and are very grateful for your support and willingness to work with us on so many fronts.

Finally, I want to extend my warmest thanks to our departing Treasurer, Tom Conway. To say that it has been a pleasure to work with him would be an understatement in the extreme. The past couple of years have made enormous demands on him, and he has always met those with a wealth of skill, deft management, and thoughtful consideration. The pressures on him have been enormous. Somehow, he has always managed them with grace and incredible good humour. On behalf of all of the staff at the Law Society, I add that we will miss Tom very much, and wish him well as he moves to his new role as President of the Federation of Law Societies. Many of us look forward to the opportunity to work with him in that capacity.