



House of Assembly Service

2011-2014 Business Plan



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Message from the Speaker

I am pleased to present the House of Assembly Service Business Plan for 2011-2014. This plan has been prepared as appropriate for a Category 2 entity in accordance with the provisions of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

During the last planning cycle, much of the focus for the House of Assembly Service has been on implementing the recommendations outlined in Chief Justice Derek Green's 2007 report, *Rebuilding Confidence - A Report of the Review Commission on Constituency Allowances and Related Matters* (Green Report). I am delighted to report the majority of the recommendations have now been implemented allowing us to shift our focus for this planning cycle. This plan sets out the values, goals and mission that will move the House of Assembly Service positively forward, while still maintaining the environment that was established through the implementation of the Green Report.

This Business Plan was prepared by the House of Assembly Service and, in accordance with my obligations under the *Act*, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the specific goals and objectives contained therein.

Honorable Roger Fitzgerald
Speaker
House of Assembly



OVERVIEW

The House of Assembly Service was established by statute in the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act*, which was proclaimed on June 14, 2007. It was established to support the functioning of the House of Assembly and its committees, the House of Assembly Management Commission and Members of the House of Assembly.

The House of Assembly Service has a total of 55 employees. It includes the Speaker, the Clerk, and employees of the Office of the Clerk, Corporate and Members' Services Division and Information Management Division.

The Speaker is the impartial presiding officer of the House and is the guardian of its rights and privileges. As established by statute, the Speaker must also act as the Chair of the House of Assembly Management Commission. The Speaker's Office provides support to the Speaker in carrying out these duties and responsibilities.

The Office of the Clerk supports the activities of the Clerk of the House of Assembly in all parliamentary and administrative matters. The Clerk is the non-partisan, chief permanent officer of the House whose duties can be divided in two main areas: Chief Parliamentary Officer and Chief Administrative Officer.

As the Chief Parliamentary Officer the Clerk provides advice to the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly on matters pertaining to parliamentary procedure. He or she is responsible for interpreting the Standing Orders, conventions, precedents and usages of the House and must ensure the preparation of the Order Paper and Minutes of proceedings. The Clerk also has a responsibility for the safe keeping of all records of the House of Assembly.

As the Chief Administrative Officer the Clerk is responsible for the management of the operations of the House of Assembly Service and the administration of the Statutory Offices. The Clerk also serves as Secretary to the House of Assembly Management Commission and is responsible for providing full administrative support to the Commission.

The Corporate and Members' Services Division provides services in Accounts Payable; Financial Planning and Reporting; General Operations and Purchasing; and Human Resources and Payroll Administration. The Information Management Division includes the services of the Legislative Library, Broadcast Centre, Hansard and Records Management.



BUDGET

The House of Assembly has a budget of **\$16,063,100** for 2011-12 fiscal year. The details are noted below:

Salaries	\$11,578,700
Employee Benefits	26,500
Transportation and Communications	373,900
Supplies	173,600
Professional Services	256,100
Purchased Services	521,700
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	216,600
Allowances and Assistance	2,829,000
Grants and Subsidies	87,000
Total	<u>16,063,100</u>

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MANDATE

The House of Assembly Service derives its mandate from the provisions of the *House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act* (the Act). It is also informed by the *House of Assembly Act* and the *Elections Act, 1991*.

The mandate of the House of Assembly Service is contained in subsection 25 (1) of the Act, which states:

25 (1) The House of Assembly Service consists of operations established, whether by law or otherwise, for the purpose of supporting the functioning of the House of Assembly, its committees and members, and includes

- (a) the speaker;*
- (b) the office of the clerk and other officers of the House of Assembly;*
- (c) the law clerk;*
- (d) the financial and administrative services;*
- (e) the legislative library;*
- (f) the office of Hansard;*
- (g) the broadcast centre; and*
- (h) other divisions that may be assigned by law or designated and provided for by the commission.*

The House of Assembly Service supports the work of the Speaker, the Clerk, the House of Assembly and its Committees, Members, and the House of Assembly Management Commission by:

- Coordinating and supporting the decision-making process of the House of Assembly Management Commission;
- Providing advice and interpretation on parliamentary procedure and protocol;
- Providing financial, budgetary, human resources, payroll, administrative and information services;
- Providing legal advice on Parliamentary matters to the Speaker, the Clerk and to the House of Assembly;



- Providing parliamentary library, records and information services to all Members and Officers of the House of Assembly, including reference, research and records organization and control;
- Providing compliance with Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
- Providing official transcript of debates and proceedings of the House of Assembly and the House of Assembly Management Commission;
- Broadcasting the House of Assembly proceedings and meetings of the House of Assembly Management Communications; and
- Providing strategic communications advice and support to the Speaker, the Clerk, and the House of Assembly Management Commission.



LINES OF BUSINESS

In fulfilling its mandate, the House of Assembly Service provides the following lines of business.

1. Support to the House of Assembly and the Committees of the House

The House of Assembly Service provides executive, administrative, and advisory support to the House of Assembly and its Committees. It advises the Speaker and Members on parliamentary procedure, provides procedural advice to Committees, drafts minutes and reports, keeps records, and organizes meetings.

The House of Assembly Service, through the Law Clerk, provides legal advice on Parliamentary matters to the Speaker, the Clerk and to the House of Assembly, and provides in-house corporate legal advice. The Law Clerk provides drafting services on amendments in committee where required and for Private Members' Bills.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for preserving order and maintaining security in the galleries, corridors and other areas in the Parliamentary Precinct.

Hansard provides the official and complete transcript of debates and proceedings of the House of Assembly, its Committees and the meetings of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

The Broadcast Centre is responsible for televising the House of Assembly proceedings and meetings of the House of Assembly Management Commission.

2. Support to the Speaker and the House of Assembly Management Commission

The House of Assembly Service is the primary support for the Speaker and the House of Assembly Management Commission. This role incorporates the preparation of briefing materials, the coordination and facilitation of Commission meetings, and the maintenance of all Commission records.

Strategic communications advice and support are provided to the Speaker and the House of Assembly Management Commission. This role includes developing communications policy and procedures and advising on communications issues.

3. Support to Members of the House of Assembly

The House of Assembly Service supports the Members of the House of Assembly in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. This includes providing Member orientation and relevant training as required, setting up Members' offices,



purchasing required supplies and services for Members, processing Members' expense claims, and providing payroll and human resources services.

The Legislative Library provides parliamentary library and information services to all Members and Officers of the House of Assembly in the execution of their duties, including reference and research services and information access and awareness.

4. Support to Statutory Offices

The House of Assembly Service supports the Statutory Offices in carrying out administrative responsibilities. This includes financial, budgetary, human resources, payroll, and information management services.



VALUES

The following values are fundamental to all interactions and communications between the House of Assembly Service and its clients.

<u>Value</u>	<u>Action Statement</u>
Impartiality	Each employee provides services in a non-partisan manner to all Members and their staff.
Fairness	Each employee performs his or her duties in an unbiased and independent manner.
Respect	Each employee performs his or her duties in a manner that respects the rights of other employees, Members of the House of Assembly and the public.
Confidence	Employees will not abuse their official position for personal gain and will not accept any gift or benefit which may result in an obligation to a third party.
Trust	Each employee exercises due care and control of records created or collected in the exercise of their responsibilities, ensuring that records are organized, secured and managed according to applicable policy and legislation.
Integrity	Each employee performs his or her duties honestly, ethically and free of personal interests and activities which may appear to interfere with their duties.
Quality Service	Each employee builds and sustains relationships by assessing, anticipating, and fulfilling needs of the clients.



PRIMARY CLIENTS

The House of Assembly Service defines its primary clients as those individuals, groups and organizations who are the principal beneficiaries of its lines of business. These clients include the following:

- a) House of Assembly and its Committees
- b) Members of the House of Assembly
- c) House of Assembly Management Commission
- d) Caucus Offices of the House of Assembly
- e) Statutory Offices of the House of Assembly
- f) Executive Branch of Government

VISION

The vision of the House of Assembly Service is one where the public, clients, and employees are well informed on the operations of the Legislature.



MISSION

The work of the House of Assembly Service in recent years has been guided through the implementation of recommendations included in the 2007 report of the Review Commission on Constituency Allowances and Related Matters (Green Report). The intent of the Green Report was to establish a transparent and accountable administrative framework for the Legislature. That has been accomplished through the implementation of the 2007 recommendations. The House of Assembly Service is now able to shift its focus to the achievement of other goals which will move it positively forward, while continuing to maintain the solid foundation of openness and accountability that has been built.

The House of Assembly Service recognizes the value in having a public, client base and employees that are well-informed. Through effective efforts in education, outreach and communications, the House of Assembly Service can create awareness and understanding while also building confidence and trust in the Legislature and its operations.

By March 31, 2017, the House of Assembly Service will have implemented initiatives to build awareness, confidence and trust in the operations of the Legislature.

Measure:

Will have implemented initiatives to build awareness, confidence and trust in the operations of the Legislature.

Indicators:

- Implemented strategy to support Public Education and Outreach.
- Implemented an Internal Communications strategy.



ISSUES

Maintaining the principles of accountability and openness established by the implementation of the Green recommendations will always be a priority for the House of Assembly Service. However, there is an opportunity to direct its focus to other important areas of its operations. A review of its lines of business has identified three priority areas over the next planning cycle.

ISSUE 1: SUPPORT TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

The House of Assembly Management Commission establishes, implements and controls financial and administrative policies applicable to the House of Assembly, the House of Assembly Service and all Statutory Offices of the House of Assembly. The Commission oversees the finances of the House of Assembly including its budget, revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities. It ensures the proper administration of allowances for Members and reimbursement and payment of their expenditures in accordance with the House of Assembly Accountability, Integrity and Administration Act. The support of the House of Assembly Service is critical to the Commission as it carries out its governance responsibilities in an environment of public accessibility.

Goal:

By March 31, 2014, the House of Assembly Service will have supported the House of Assembly Management Commission in carrying out its financial and administrative duties for the House of Assembly, the House of Assembly Service and all Statutory Offices of the House of Assembly.

Measure:

Will have supported the House of Assembly Management Commission in carrying out its financial and administrative duties for the House of Assembly, the House of Assembly Service and all Statutory Offices of the House of Assembly.

Indicators:

- Reviewed and revised existing resource materials.
- Reviewed processes and procedures for Commission meetings.
- Implemented, as necessary, new processes and procedures.



Objectives:

By March 31, 2012, the House of Assembly Service will have reviewed and revised, as necessary, existing resource materials.

Measure:

Will have reviewed and revised, as necessary, existing resource materials.

Indicators:

- New Administrative Guide for Members of House of Assembly produced.
- New Parliamentary Handbook for Members produced.
- Commenced revision of House of Assembly Management Commission Policies and Procedures Manual.

By March 31, 2013, the House of Assembly Service will have reviewed processes and procedures for Commission meetings.

By March 31, 2014, the House of Assembly Service will have implemented, as necessary, new processes or procedures identified.



ISSUE 2: PUBLIC EDUCATION & OUTREACH

The House of Assembly Service recognizes the value of a public that has confidence and trust in elected officials and the democratic process, and is well-informed about the role and operations of the legislature. Education and outreach are important components to increase awareness and understanding of the role of the House of Assembly, and will help to build confidence and trust in elected officials and the legislative processes that exist. Public Education and Outreach was a priority in the previous business plan, and while there has been significant progress made in this area, there is much more which can be done.

Goal:

By March 31, 2014, the House of Assembly Service will have continued development and refinement of the Public Education and Outreach strategy to increase awareness and understanding on the role and operations of the House of Assembly.

Measure:

Will have continued development and refinement of the Public Education and Outreach strategy to increase awareness and understanding on the role and operations of the House of Assembly.

Indicators:

- Reviewed and evaluated the current outreach strategy.
- Identified and developed additional content for House of Assembly channel and website.
- Developed new materials to support public tours of the House of Assembly.

Objectives:

By March 31, 2012, the House of Assembly Service will have identified and begun development of additional content for House of Assembly channel and website.

Measure:

Will have identified and begun development of additional content for House of Assembly channel and website.

Indicators:

- Script for informational video on the Legislature developed and approved.
- Content of informational brochures incorporated into the website.
- Glossary of parliamentary terms posted to channel and website.
- Developed implementation plan for additional channel and website content for the planning period.



- Developed plan for public communications and promotion respecting House of Assembly channel and website.

By March 31, 2013, the House of Assembly Service will have continued development of additional content for the House of Assembly channel and website and developed new materials to support public tours of the House of Assembly.

By March 31, 2014, the House of Assembly Service will have reviewed and evaluated the current outreach strategy.



ISSUE 3: INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The House of Assembly Service recognizes the importance of having employees and internal clients who are aware and informed. Each division of the House of Assembly Service has its own distinct roles and responsibilities; however, it is the efforts of all employees collectively which allows the Legislature to fulfill its mandate and serve its clients effectively. Communication within an organization acts as a channel or network that links all parts of the organization. Developing an internal communications strategy for the House of Assembly will provide effective, accessible internal communication tools, build strong relationships and ensure that employees and internal clients are better informed on all issues. It will play a key role as the House of Assembly Service moves forward in developing and improving its operations and help maintain the foundation of openness and public accountability which has been built.

Goal:

By March 31, 2014, the House of Assembly Service will have implemented components of an internal communications strategy to ensure that all employees and internal clients are fully aware and well-informed with respect to the operations of the House of Assembly.

Measure:

Will have implemented components of an internal communications strategy to ensure that all employees and internal clients are fully aware and well-informed with respect to the operations of the House of Assembly.

Indicators:

- Consultations held with employees and internal clients.
- Internal communications strategy developed.
- Internal communications strategy implementation commenced.

Objectives:

By March 31, 2012, the House of Assembly Service will have consulted with employees and internal clients of the House of Assembly respecting internal communications.

Measure:

Will have consulted with employees and internal clients of the House of Assembly respecting internal communications.



Indicators:

- Developed consultation strategy.
- Conducted consultations.
- Analyzed feedback from consultations.

By March 31, 2013, the House of Assembly Service will have developed an internal communications strategy.

By March 31, 2014, the House of Assembly Service will have begun implementation of an internal communications strategy.