

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick



Annual Report 2011-2012

Mission Statement

“Helping the Public Know the Law!”

PLEIS-NB is a non-profit organization and a registered charity. Our mandate is to develop bilingual educational products and services about the law for the general public in order to promote access to the legal system. Our goal is to assist the public in identifying and understanding their legal rights and responsibilities, and attaining self-help skills where appropriate, to improve their ability to deal with legal issues.

To meet the diverse information needs of New Brunswickers, PLEIS-NB has adopted the following objectives:

- (i) To respond to individual and community requests for information about the law, the legal system, sources of legal assistance and law reform;
- (ii) To increase the availability of easily understood general information about the law, as well as law-related information on specific topics;
- (iii) To promote a greater understanding of how the law affects everyday activities and to facilitate self-help skills; and,
- (iv) To act as a clearinghouse for information about the law by promoting awareness of and access to legal resources in the community, while encouraging the coordination of public legal education initiatives.

Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick

P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 5H1

Tel (506) 453-5369
Fax (506) 462-5193
E-mail pleisnb@web.ca
Web site www.legal-info-legale.nb.ca



Public Legal Education
and Information Service
of New Brunswick

June 2012

ISBN: 978-1-55471-418-6

Executive Director's Report



Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS-NB) enjoyed another successful year delivering core law information services to the public while undertaking a number of special projects as well. We were extremely pleased to receive funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario / Access to Justice Fund for a two year project to develop a strategic framework to deliver monthly family law workshops for the public around the province. Another special project, funded by the federal New Horizons Fund, enabled us to create resources for senior volunteers and to share them at workshops on the legal aspects of volunteering followed by a volunteer recruitment fair.

Our publications are in very high demand. In response to requests, we distributed over 110,000 publications to individuals, service groups, courts, libraries and other public places. Our Speaker's Bureau was very popular this year and we were able to find speakers for over 50 community groups on a range of topics. Some of the most popular included wills and estate planning, non-profit governance, youth justice issues and elder law. We researched and drafted a number of "health law" publications, some of which are still at professional review. The feedback has been positive and the health sector is anxious to have these resources available in the next fiscal year. We also introduced some new resources for youth, including an eye-catching quiz called "*How Old Do I Have To Be in NB?*" and a teen dating violence pamphlet and poster. These youth products are a huge hit with schools, youth groups and libraries.

As always, we worked diligently to establish fruitful collaborations with other agencies and government departments. Public Safety, Victim Services contracted with us to create new resources for victims of crime including a booklet on "restitution". Of particular note is our partnership with Mental Health and Addiction Services to create a new publication called *Accused of a Crime: Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System*. We also teamed up with the Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre to produce teen dating resources. Finally, our on-going partnership with Court Services included reviewing and updating several important family law publications such as the *Parenting: Rights and Responsibilities of Young Parents* and *Living Together*.

The staff and Board of PLEIS are appreciative and thankful to our "core funders" whose support contributes immensely to our success. Our core funders are Justice Canada, the New Brunswick Law Foundation, and the New Brunswick Office of the Attorney General. Many thanks as well to the important role played by our dedicated staff, volunteers, speakers, pro bono law students, and Board members.

Deborah Doherty, Ph.D.
Executive Director

People

We were pleased to welcome new full-time bookkeeper, Haley Shannon and to have Emily Bell back from maternity leave.

Board of Directors - 2011-2012

Judith Keating (President)

Chief Legislative Counsel,
Legislative Services
Office of the Attorney General

Janet Cameron (Vice-President)

Lawyer, retired

Suzanne Bonnell Burley

Assistant Deputy Minister, Justice Services,
Department of Justice

Robert LeBlanc

Faculté de droit, Université de Moncton
Moncton

Chief Barry McKnight

Fredericton City Police Force

Clea Ward

Faculty of Law,
University of New Brunswick
Fredericton

Jason Dempsey

Dempsey Law
Moncton

Staff - 2011-2012

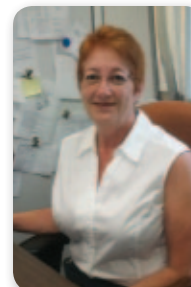
Deborah Doherty, Executive Director
Chantal Lajoie, Family Law Information Officer
Emily Bell, Project Coordinator
JD Blizzard, Law Line Operator/ Assistant
Haley Shannon, Bookkeeper

Pro-Bono Students

Danielle Harding, UNB Law School
Zachary Rogers, UNB Law School
Megan Sheppard, UNB Law School
Brigitte Dupuis, Faculté de droit, Université de Moncton
(not pictured)
Julie Lussier, Faculté de droit, Université de Moncton
(not pictured)

Summer Law Student 2011

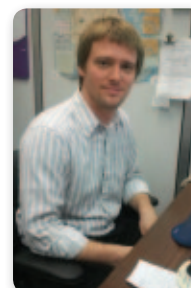
Danielle Harding, UNB



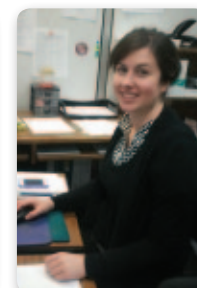
Chantal



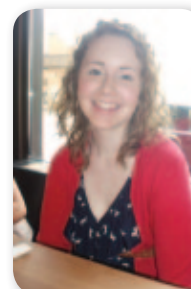
Emily



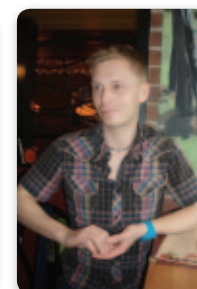
J.D.



Haley



Danielle



Zachary



Megan



Annual PLEIS-NB BBQ: From left to right: JD, Chantal, Deborah, Danielle, Emily and Callum, Haley

Thanks to the many volunteers from the private bar, the legal community, law schools, and community agencies who contributed in a myriad of ways to our efforts to educate and inform the public about the law.

Programs and Services

Toll-Free Family Law Line – 1-888-236-2444

With the support of Court Services Division, Department of Justice, PLEIS-NB was pleased to enhance our toll free family law line. In addition to administering the 'For the Sake of the Children' program for parents living separately, we were able to hire a new family law line officer to help explain family law forms and court procedures to individuals attempting to navigate the family justice system. This service complements our Family Law NB website. The following are some statistics on the usage of this line for both services.

For the Sake of the Children: Of the 1,661 callers, 74% (1223) were registering for the For the Sake of the Children information sessions. Another 1% requested For the Sake of the Children pamphlets, posters and related family law publications. Organizations, law firms, court offices and schools seeking more information on the For the Sake of the Children program, as well as individuals who wished to confirm the date/time of the sessions for which they had registered accounted for 15%. Finally, the remaining 10% were administrative type calls including individuals wanting to cancel their enrolment, or instructors cancelling and rescheduling sessions or replenishing course materials. Referrals to the For the Sake of the Children program were typically from word of mouth (40%), private lawyers (23%) and the Courts (15%), as well as counselors/social workers and the Family Law NB website.

Family Law Line – Procedural Assistance: From April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012, our first full year of enhanced service, our family law line officer received 1,719 unique calls. This represented a 69% increase in usage from last year suggesting that the popularity of the line is clearly well established. The majority of callers wanted help with their personal family law matters – a few were calling on behalf of others. Three-quarters of the callers asked for assistance with procedural matters and the remainder wanted general information on family law questions such as common-law partner rights, domestic contracts, breach of court orders, and so on. More than half of the callers were women. The two most popular topics were child support variation and divorce proceedings. The greatest proportion of calls came from the Moncton region, followed by Bathurst and the Acadian Peninsula.

Websites

PLEIS-NB has a number of websites. Our main site (www-legal-info-legale.nb.ca) features access to most of the resources that can be found on the specialized sites as well. This past year, the PLEIS-NB site had 75,810 unique visitors, with a total of 234,298 page views. Visitors from Canada accounted for 97% of the visits. Overall the top two most viewed/downloaded documents in English were: "Custody and Access" (4,464 downloads) and "Going to a Nursing Home" (5,342 downloads). Other popular viewed and/or downloaded resources included "Doing Your Own Divorce", "Peace Bonds and Restraining Orders", "When You Can't Manage Your Affairs, Who Will?", "Child Support", "Being an Executor", and "Living Together".

Our Family Law NB website (www.familylawnb.ca) was also extremely popular. It generates separate English and French statistics. Combined, there were 32,753 visits to the two websites and 124,335 page views. Most users were searching for family law forms, self-help guides and information on child support, living common law and divorce.

Enhancing our family law information services for the public especially for individuals representing themselves was another priority. We addressed evaluative feedback and streamlined access to the self-help information on the Family Law NB website. Greater awareness of our services resulted in a significant increase in calls to our toll-free family law information line.

PLEIS-NB staff responded to over 400 email questions for general information about the law. Just over 40% of these requests related to family law issues and forms.

Speaker's Bureau and Video Lending Library

Working in partnership with the Canadian Bar Association – NB Branch, PLEIS-NB helped 35 community groups find legal speakers on a range of topics – one of the most popular being wills and estate planning, followed by "powers of attorney", youth criminal justice, and family law. PLEIS staff also made over 15 presentations, often on the topic of family violence or family law. Staff attended various "fairs" and exhibitions that enabled us to profile our resources. Over 1,000 individuals attended these presentations.

PLEIS also offers a video lending library of close to 60 videos on a variety of legal topics. Many of the videos are available in both official languages, although some may be available only in the language of production.

Publications and Dissemination Activities

Our publications are in high demand and most are available free of charge for quantities under 50. Over the past year, PLEIS-NB distributed 112, 427 publications. This represented a 37% decrease over the previous year which is attributed to the fact that in the previous fiscal year we conducted two national mail outs including new resources for the Healing Journey project and a DVD and resources for the Welcome Aboard project. This year, the top user/purchaser of our resources was government departments, accounting for 20% of our publication distribution. Other top users were law firms (11%), courts (9%), schools (7%), and non-profit groups (6%). First Nation organizations, police, transition houses, and hospitals each requested about 4% of our publications. The remainder of the distribution was sent to various service providers across the province. The most requested resources included our updated booklet on powers of attorney and our new pamphlet on violence in teen dating relationships, followed by family law, wills and estate planning, abuse and neglect of seniors and family violence pamphlets. Self-help guides also were in high demand; we distributed 723 child support variation kits and sold 455 divorce guides. New Publications in 2011-2012 included:

Revised Wills and Estate Planning brochures

Early in the year we updated our extremely popular "Wills and Estate Planning" publications and gave them a fresh new look. Towards the end of the year, we updated and transformed Making a Will and Dying Without a Will into the new format.



How Old Do I Have To Be in NB?

With a view to helping agencies working with youth, we created a quiz called “**How Old Do I Have To Be in New Brunswick?**”. The quiz answers many common questions that youth ask about their rights in association with age. For example, when does a youth have the right to vote, to consent to medical treatment or get married? It offers a fun and simple way to engage youth about how the law affects their everyday life. The quizzes have been distributed to libraries, schools, counselors, boys and girls clubs and a variety of youth serving agencies.



From left: Deborah Doherty, executive director, Public Legal Education and Information Service – New Brunswick; Marie-Claude Blais, Minister of Justice and Attorney General; and Lorraine Whalley, director, Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre

Teens and Dating

This new publication called, **Teens and Dating: Tips for keeping abuse out of your relationship**, is intended to help teens recognize the signs of abuse and keep it out of their relationships. There is also a new poster to help create public awareness in schools, teen centres, libraries and other public places. The pamphlet includes a quiz that refers to some of the most common forms of relationship abuse. It warns teens that if they answered “yes” to any of the questions, they may be in an abusive relationship. In addition to setting out the signs of an unhealthy relationship, it offers tips for staying safe and encourages friends who notice abusive behavior to offer support. These new resources were produced in collaboration with the Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre.

Accused of a Crime: Mental Health and the Criminal Justice Process

This new publication entitled **Accused of a Crime: Mental Health and the Criminal Justice Process**, explains how and why the criminal justice system can take the mental health of a person charged with a crime into account. The pamphlet clarifies the legal concepts ‘unfit to stand trial’ and ‘not criminally responsible on account of a mental disorder’ and explains the types of dispositions possible and the role of the Review Board. PLEIS-NB worked collaboratively with the Addiction and Mental Health Services Unit of the New Brunswick Department of Health to produce this pamphlet which was distributed to Community Mental Health Centres, Legal Aid offices, Crown Prosecutors’ offices, libraries, community agencies, Bar Admission, and other places where the public can access them. At the invitation of the project partner, PLEIS-NB was pleased to attend the official launch of the pamphlet in Bathurst in November.

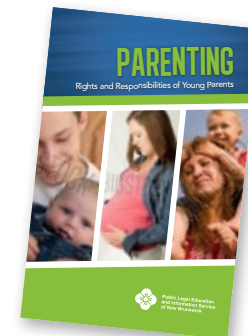


Health Law Publications

PLEIS-NB is committed to enhancing our “health law” publications. As such, we have created a booklet called **Patients’ Rights**, whose aim is to answer some of the questions that people commonly ask about their legal rights and responsibilities as a patient in a variety of health care situations such as the hospital, the doctor’s office, as a resident of a nursing home and so on. The booklet will be printed and distributed to appropriate organizations in the next fiscal year, along with a related new booklet dealing with psychiatric patients’ rights. We have also revised an older PLEIS-NB publication, called **When You Can’t Manage Your Affairs... Who Will?** with updates to some of the content and by extracting some of the information to create a new publication on mental competency.

Parenting: Rights and Responsibilities of Young Parents

With financial support from the Court Services Division of the New Brunswick Department of Justice and Attorney General, PLEIS-NB completed a thorough revision of one of our most popular family law publications, **Parenting: Rights and Responsibilities of Young Parents**. This booklet, originally published in 2005 with project funding from Justice Canada, needed a ‘facelift’ in addition to substantive updates to the legal information and resources. We were able to work with a graphic artist to create an entirely new look and feel while revising the content. We feel this new edition will appeal more readily to the young parents and parents-to-be who are the intended audience.



Living Together

This booklet, originally published in 2005, is another of our more popular Family Law publications. It defines what it means to be in a common-law relationship and sets out the distinctions between common-law ‘status’ and legal marriage. With funding from the Court Services Division of the New Brunswick Department of Justice and Attorney General, we were able to update this booklet to reflect changes in various areas of the law, such as same-sex couples and pension benefits. In addition to revisions to the content, PLEIS-NB also undertook to create a new, more appealing full-colour layout with more up-to-date pictures and graphic elements.

Special Projects and Contracts

Senior Volunteer Workshops and Quiz

With funding from the Community Participation and Leadership Fund of the federal New Horizons for Seniors Program, PLEIS-NB implemented a project on seniors and volunteering. It included the development of a new tool for potential volunteers called the Volunteer Self-Assessment Quiz. It helps individuals analyze their interests, skills and life experience to determine what sorts of volunteer opportunities would be appropriate.



The quiz was developed as part of a larger project for senior volunteers. The project also included 2 successful volunteer training days for seniors in Moncton and Saint John, which incorporated workshops and Volunteer Recruitment Fairs. A bilingual PowerPoint presentation with embedded speaking notes on Volunteers and the Law was also developed with this project funding. Project advisory committee members included volunteer centres and seniors' organizations.

Legal Aid website launched www.legalaid.nb.ca



The New Brunswick Legal Aid Services Commission (NBLASC) worked in collaboration with PLEIS-NB to develop a website to assist in increasing awareness of the legal aid services that are available to the citizens of New Brunswick. A bookmark was created and a mailout conducted to alert family law service providers about the new site. The site is divided into six main areas:

- **About Us:** offers an overview of the board of directors, senior management, history, funding and job opportunities;
- **Getting Help:** provides information about the criminal and family law services offered by the commission;
- **Applying for Legal Aid:** outlines the criteria used in determining eligibility for representation and what applicants should bring to their appointment;
- **Publications:** provides links to publications;
- **Resources:** identifies some of the other resources available;
- **Contact Us:** details head office and regional office contact information.

Navigating the Family Justice System: Workshops for individuals handling their own family law matters.

PLEIS-NB received a grant from the Law Foundation of Ontario / Access to Justice Fund for a two-year project entitled **Navigating the Family Justice System**. This project involves piloting and evaluating monthly bilingual workshops in every judicial district to educate the growing number of individuals handling their own family law matters. The workshops will explain rules of court and proper legal procedures associated with the most common family law matters such as uncontested divorces, support variation and applications for custody/access. PLEIS-NB is consulting and collaborating with the legal community, courts, law schools and community-based stakeholders to identify a range of cost efficient models for the delivery of these bilingual workshops. The goal is to help address barriers to accessing the family justice system for those who do not have access to legal representation. A recruitment campaign among the family law bar has started and the first pilot workshop on child support variation was delivered in Moncton in March 2012.



Family Law Hub Evaluation Report

In September, 2011, we released the Final Report of the evaluation of our "family law hub project" which had been implemented over the past two years. The project was funded by Justice Canada and included the development of our bilingual website "**Family Law NB / Droit de la famille NB**". Using a "mixed methods" approach, such as baseline and follow-up surveys, interviews, and focus groups with court staff, judges, lawyers and website users, the evaluation explores the project's success in (1) creating awareness of the new website and related resources, (2) assisting SRLs to 'navigate' the family justice system, and (3) reducing the strain on the family justice system by providing a referral resource to deal with the information and education needs of SRLs.



Overall, the results of the evaluation were extremely positive. Many of those surveyed said the website was an important and valuable resource that helped SRLs become better informed. Website users who were interviewed stressed the value and importance of the toll-free Family Law Information Line to compliment the function of the website. Unfortunately, the evaluation was not able to determine whether the availability of the website and resources resulted in any reduction in the time and workload of front line staff.

We are extremely thankful for the strong support provided by our family law advisory committee, as well as the staff of Court Services Division, Department of Justice in the development and evaluation of this initiative. PLEIS-NB continues efforts to respond to the findings and recommendations in the report, with a view to enhancing our educational support to self represented family law litigants, as resources permit.

Victims of Crime Projects

The Department of Public Safety, Victim Services, contracted with PLEIS-NB to review, update and reprint some of the existing resources for victims of crime, such as the police referral card, **Picture this... a guide to the criminal justice system**, and **Victim Impact Statements**. We will also produce several new resources including a publication on "restitution" that touches on recent changes to the Criminal Code that provide for restitution and community victim impact statements for fraud. Another area of focus will be on developing resources dealing with child internet exploitation for children and for parents. This work commenced in February 2012 and the various resources will be developed or revised over the next three years, followed by an evaluation of the usage and helpfulness of the resources.

Other News

Logue Memorial Award

Each year on the International Day of Older Persons, the Third Age Centre presents the Logue Memorial Award at a special breakfast organized in Fredericton. The award is given to a volunteer group or organization within New Brunswick that has made a notable and long lasting contribution toward the improvement of services for seniors in a particular area.

The 2011 recipient was Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick.



Left to right: Deborah Doherty receiving the award on behalf of PLEIS-NB from Ada Rogers, Third Age Centre President

Public Awareness Events

PLEIS-NB participated at numerous events and set up exhibits to create awareness of our publications – sometimes we focused on particular areas of law, and other times we promoted our service generally. Here are a few examples:

- CBA-NB Mid Winter Meetings, Saint John, NB, February 2012
- Kingsclear First Nation. PLEIS-NB participated at an exhibitor's fair on March 20, 2012
- International Women's Day – a one day conference and service provider exhibition
- Social Justice Forum, Wilmot United Church
- Fredericton Regional Resource Centre
- International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women – display and presentation at UNB – Saint John, and the York Public Library, Fredericton
- Law Day Exhibit, Fredericton, April 2011



Committees

The executive director of PLEIS-NB sits on numerous provincial and national committees that relate to topical issues such as family violence, or specific PLEI-related concerns. The following is a profile of the work of a few committees of particular note:

Family Law Working Group: Representing the Public Legal Education Association of Canada, the executive director was invited to join this national working group which is one of four such groups reporting to the National Access to Justice Committee.

Stakeholders Working Group: This committee was established and the project directed by the Policy Implementation Directorate, in collaboration with the Research and Statistics Division of Justice Canada. The role of the committee was to oversee the consultation that defined research priorities in relation to the need to assess the degree to which recent evaluation research addresses outcomes and benefits of PLEI. This project resulted in a review and analysis of recent Canadian PLEI evaluation research and a telephone survey of a small group of PLEI providers, policy staff, and researchers by Focus Consultants. The findings are shared in a report entitled Building a Case for Public Legal Education and Information: Lessons Learned Report (April 13, 2011)

Silent Witness Committee: As a member of this committee, the executive director administers the website and has conducted the research and analysis of domestic homicide cases in New Brunswick and reported on the findings. On request, several domestic homicide presentations were shared at conferences and community events.

Safe For Pets Too: in transition with you: PLEIS-NB first focused attention on the connection between family violence and the abuse of pets in its Safer Families...Safer Communities initiative. This public awareness campaign included a fact sheet called "You Can Know the Link Between the Abuse of People and the Abuse of Animals". PLEIS-NB continues to sit on a provincial committee that is comprised of key stakeholders such as the NBSPCA, the NB Medical Veterinarian Association, transition houses, outreach workers, police/RCMP, Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries and others. During the first year of offering shelter to pets of abused women, over 30 animals were placed in safe havens.

Public Legal Education Association of Canada (PLEAC): The annual PLEAC conference was hosted in Edmonton, Alberta, in December 2011. The conference piggybacked on a 2-day provincial conference. A strategic planning session was held to help PLEAC move forward. The new chair of PLEAC is Patricia Byrne and Deborah Doherty became the vice-chair.

PLEIS sets up a Facebook Account



With the Twitter feeds established, we turned our attention to Facebook as yet another way to connect with the public.

Financial Overview 2011-2012

Suite 102
Priestman Centre
565 Priestman Street
Fredericton
New Brunswick
E3B 5X8

Tel (506) 458-8727
Fax (506) 450-3777
E-mail tsdfr@tsdca.com

TEED SAUNDERS DOYLE & CO. Chartered Accountants

An Independent Member of
DFK Canada Inc. and DFK International

AUDITORS' REPORT

Stockholders and Board of Directors
Public Legal Education & Information Service of New Brunswick Inc.

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick Inc. Core Fund which comprise the statement of receipts and disbursements for the year ended March 31, 2012 and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the receipts and disbursements of the Core Fund of Public Legal Education & Information Service of New Brunswick Inc. for the year ended March 31, 2012 in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

June 25, 2012
Fredericton, NB

Fredericton Partners
Brian J. Saunders David H. Bradley
Jeffrey E. Saunders John H. Landry
T.J. Smith Kenneth H. Kyle



TEED SAUNDERS DOYLE & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Saint John Partners
Andrew P. Logan Peter L. Logan
Jean-Marc Poirier

PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION SERVICE OF NEW BRUNSWICK INC.

CORE FUND

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2012

	Actual 2012	Budget 2012	Actual 2011
Receipts			
Justice Canada	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
New Brunswick Law Foundation	70,000	70,000	70,000
Other	19,145	20,000	9,129
	<u>159,145</u>	<u>160,000</u>	<u>149,129</u>
Disbursements			
Conference and travel	5,818	8,000	5,932
Office expense	5,743	6,000	6,230
Printing and distribution	49,113	34,000	38,116
Professional services	11,324	10,000	11,290
Salaries and benefits	87,147	100,000	87,486
Translation	-	2,000	75
	<u>159,145</u>	<u>160,000</u>	<u>149,129</u>
Excess Of Receipts Over Disbursements For The Year	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

TEED
SAUNDERS
DOYLE & CO.
Chartered Accountants