

Communiqué

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During the past decade The Law Society of Upper Canada has experienced tremendous growth. Membership has doubled to more than 15,000, and is increasing by over 1000 per year; professional practice and insurance claims activity has quadrupled, and new or expanded services have been put in place. At the same time, Secretariat resources have doubled to more than 150, with annual operating budgets (including Errors and Omissions Insurance Program) now in excess of \$14 million, reflecting both the increased numbers of staff, and inflationary pressures. It has been a concern of the Society that during this period of expansion there has been little fundamental change in the modus operandi of the Society, and administrative and executive management practices have not kept pace with the Society's growth and increasingly complex role. Accordingly, in the fall of 1980, the firm of Peat, Marwick Management Consultants was retained to investigate the administration and executive practices of the Society and their report was received in March, 1981.

An Ad Hoc Committee, under the chairmanship of George Finlayson, Esq., Q.C., was formed to examine the Peat, Marwick Report and the recommendations of this Committee, along with the full Peat, Marwick Report, were considered at a Special Convocation today.

The Report of the Ad Hoc Committee, which approved in principle the recommendations of the Peat, Marwick Report, was adopted by Convocation. One of the more significant recommendations in the "proposed operating management structure" is the division of the Society's operations into three areas - Professional Purposes, Legal Education and Finance and Administration.

The division contemplates the positions of Deputy Secretary Professional Purposes, Director of the Bar Admission Course, Director of Continuing Legal Education and Deputy Secretary Finance and Administration reporting to the chief administrative officer of the Society (designated Secretary by The Law Society Act).

There will be senior staff in each of the three areas of Professional Purposes, Legal Education and Finance and Administration reporting to the Deputy Secretaries and Directors. The Report provides for certain new positions such as Senior Counsel-Discipline, Director-Finance and Director-Practice and Insurance. It is contemplated that the Society's personnel will be considered for all positions along with others who may apply. In addition, there may be advertising for candidates to fill new positions.

Various activities of the Society have been grouped under particular senior officers for administrative and reporting purposes. For example, the Director-Practice and Insurance will be responsible for the Errors and Omissions Insurance Program, the Compensation Fund and the Practice Advisory Service.

The report of the Committee does not, however, recommend any change in the direct reporting relationship which now exists between the staff of the Secretariat and committees of Convocation. This is deliberate. The Committee felt very strongly that the long-established committee system which has served the Society so well through the years should be preserved, and strengthened. Indeed, it is hoped that the recommendations as adopted by Convocation will revitalize the committee system by providing the support staff which will reduce detail to the minimum and permit committees to concentrate on broad administrative and reporting responsibilities and still permit sufficient time for the policy-making function. The Committee strongly recommended that the direct reporting relationship between the Secretariat and committees be kept.

A new committee will be formed forthwith to implement the recommendations of this Report.

John D. Bowlby,
Treasurer.