



To: Members of the Law Society of Nunavut

From: Nalini Vaddapalli, CEO

Re: Report for the 2023-2024 Annual General Meeting

Date: June 26, 2024

A year in review

- 2023 has been a **year focused on advancing several special projects**, both operational and regulatory-based, and taking important steps **to implement recommendations outlined in the [May 2023 Nunavut Statutes Examination Taskforce Report](#)**.
- In summary, they include but are not limited to:
 - An **audit program** based on an educational approach, with related toolbox, is being finalized with a scheduled launch this coming fall. A Notice to the Profession will be issued by July 31, 2024.
 - All **applications and renewals are now processed online** with the exception of lawyers practicing under a Restricted Appearance Certificate (RAC) who need to re-apply for a new RAC. Final details are currently underway to allow these lawyers to re-apply online. Changes to both the website and portal are always ongoing to ensure the information and user experience is comprehensive and streamlined.
 - One example is the Continuing Legal Education (CLE) online reporting framework which was updated with several changes to facilitate the reporting with respect to the mandatory CLE hours related to ethics & professional responsibility, and cultural competency.

- The **Legal Professional Act overhaul** with a proposal soon to be submitted to the Department of Justice.
- An **Articling and Bar Admissions (ABA) Committee** was formed by the Executive Committee but still remains without sufficient interest to proceed as a Committee, an information session with Q & A to learn about next steps arising from the NSE Taskforce Report and students-at-law roundtables created opportunities for open dialogue and informed the Executive members as they considered next steps for the NSE and CPLED Bar Course. The results of the surveys seeking substantive qualitative feedback were shared at the February 2024 Special Meeting which led to positive discussions with the CPLED national office to **create a Nunavut-specific remedial plan** that is currently underway for student-at-law currently enrolled or previously enrolled in CPLED. While there is still much work to be done, progress has been made with tangible changes. Steps have been taken to ensure the ABA Committee is well supported as soon as its work will commence.
- The enforcement of ss. 57(2) of the Legal Profession Act with respect to **interest-bearing trust accounts** as applicable for members of the private bar has brought several challenges that are being addressed with full implementation to be completed in 2024.
- **Corporate and operational knowledge** is being transferred into handbooks and documents. The ongoing efforts invested will allow for an increased understanding of the gaps and the needs to create a new in-house position later in 2024 to meet the demands arising from the continuous growth in both the membership and RACs.
- Additional special projects that are in the early stages include a new **lawyer referral system** as the current online system no longer meets the need of the public. Designated funding must be secured in 2024 before moving forward with next steps.
- A **cyber security attack** occurred on April 5th (2024), where members advised the Law Society that a third party attempted to impersonate a previous president of the Law Society. I am providing an update on the steps taken since the incident:

- The Law Society has engaged with their cybersecurity insurer regarding the incident and a report is being filed. Additionally, the Law Society is working with the insurer and utilizing resources created by other Law Societies to actively put together a training toolbox on cybersecurity prevention, identification and threat management. The Law Society will provide the toolbox to the membership just after Labor Day weekend.
- As the security incident did not result in a misappropriation of money, a security breach or indication of criminal activity related to the phishing email, there are no additional steps to take as indicated by the insurer.
- **CLE activities** continued to be offered at no cost to the membership and the Law Society provided close to 25 CLE hours in 2023 in addition to the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program delivered in Iqaluit in September, and CLE events offered by both the Law Societies of Northwest Territories and Yukon. The designated YouTube channel continues to provide access to CLE recordings.
 - No member was suspended for failure to meet their CLE requirements. A courtesy approach with reminders remained as our approach as we finalize **the CLE audit program** in 2024. A communication blitz will take place with sufficient notice ahead of the 2025 membership renewals.
- To meet the needs of a growing membership, **communication and standards of service** play an important part:
 - In 2022, the Law Society had launched its info@lawsociety.nu.ca.
 - In the near future, a designated CLE@lawsociety.nu.ca email account to assist members with questions related to their CLE hours and reporting will be available as well.
 - The designated email account for discipline-related complaints launched in 2022 remains as a necessary channel to ensure the Law Society can meet the National Discipline Standards.
 - The **Mailchimp E-news** resumed in late 2023 and further improvements in its current structure and message delivery are expected over this coming summer period.

- The Law Society heavily relies on **dedicated volunteers** who share their knowledge and expertise to assist us in meeting our mandate. In addition to the invaluable work undertaken by the Chairs and members of the Standing Committees, several members continue to volunteer their time to represent our jurisdiction and the Law Society in various capacities:
 - Julie Bedford, representative on the Legal Services Board of Nunavut;
 - Daisy McCabe-Lokos, representatives on the Access to Justice file;
 - Mark Mossey, Council Member for the Federation of Law Societies of Canada (FLSC);
and
 - Marion Sandilands, Nunavut representative on the Model Code Liaison Group (FLSC);
Ms. Sandilands took over from the Legal Ethics and Practice Committee Chair, Nikolai Sittman.
- The **2023 fiscal year** ended on a positive note after three years of noticeable increased deficits essentially related to greater operational costs and professional fees. Raising membership fees was a necessary step after five years of status quo.

The Statement of Revenues and Expenses on p. 1 of the Audited Financial Statements demonstrate, when reviewing the numbers under the General Fund, the ongoing conservative approach to the Law Society's operations including its travel budget.

One expense to note allocated to the Office and Postage budget line is the overall costs related to translation which is roughly \$20,000 for this fiscal year. To this end, providing information in Inuktitut and in the other official languages of the Territory (on demand) is based on the Law Society's Inuit Language Plan (to be presented in the fall of 2024) and remains a commitment included in the annual budget. The Law Society's updated Plan was submitted to the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut for review in 2023.

On a fine note in regard to financials, the work undertaken by the Finance Committee members and the Executive Treasurers over the past 5 years have resulted in a first time significant return

on the Law Society's investments in all three funds: General, Insurance and Assurance as confirmed on p. 1 of the Audited Financial Statements.

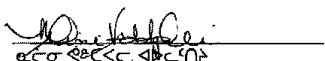
I take this opportunity to thank member Kyle DeYoung for his commitment, guidance and immense contributions over these past 5 years for the Law Society as well as for the Nunavut Law Foundation. His dedication in guiding both organizations in taking necessary and strategic steps to improve their respective investment portfolios will not be forgotten.

- Our **open front door policy** remains allowing anyone in need of information or assistance to navigate the system, including Elders, to be welcomed by Law Society staff and myself. The Law Society continues to deliver its services in English, Inuktitut and French. Our ongoing efforts to deliver public legal education and information sessions through the Law Society's Access to Justice Program have proven to be positive with a well-established network across the territory, both government and non-government, and in southern hubs to better meet the needs of Nunavummiut. The encouraging outcomes would not be possible without invaluable partnerships and financial support provided by the Government of Nunavut since 2023.
- As the CEO, I am committed to offering a workplace environment that provides opportunities for on-the-job training and flexibility all of which contribute to a healthy, positive and respectful environment. 2024 will be dedicated year to develop and implement a robust OHS Program. I remain thankful to the Law Society staff team and the many casual staff and administrative support consultants. Each one plays a key role in our overall operations and contributes to making our office a welcoming environment: Adel, Ferdinand, François, Frantcel, Kiele, Lisa, Marie, Nancy, Rachel and Stenette.
- While there have been many transitions within the Executive Committee over the past two years and in the early part of 2024, it remains a privilege to support the Committee and equally a pleasure to support the work of the various Standing Committees. The Committee members are instrumental in ensuring the core statutory responsibilities are met in a defensible, efficient and streamlined manner. Committee members address statutory and regulatory-based matters including in relation to entry-level skills and admissions generally, they ensure financial stability

and growth, they provide insight and expertise leading to meaningful learning opportunities with an overarching goal of having a membership that meets high standards of competency and is culturally competent to serve Nunavummiut. Last but not least, Committee members carry out the statutory mandate to protect the public of Nunavut.

- On many occasions, I seek guidance from the Committee members on what should be an appropriate approach for a designated matter or initiative. I thank the Committee members and their respective Chairperson for their willingness to engage in these open conversations.
- I very much look forward to the future as we continue to move forward with fruitful discussions to advance strategic initiatives and regulatory-based action items. They include **a membership consultation on the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 27, adoption of the updated Nunavut Code of Conduct, implementation of the Law Society's Inuit Language Plan, update on a Nunavut-specific Bar Admission Course and the announcement of an improved lawyer referral system to be launched hopefully by the end of 2024. And certainly, advancing the overhaul of the Legal Profession after more than two decades of minimal amendments represents a massive accomplishment.** I wish to welcome both Santana Stallberg and Rebecca Jaremko Bromwich as part of the Law Society's core project team since the end of 2023 and wish the very best to Rachel Kohut and Stenette van den Berg as they have moved on to new exciting journeys. In particular, both Rachel and Stenette have made significant contributions to advance the mandate of the Nunavut Statutes Examination Taskforce and to assist with next steps arising from the Taskforce Report recommendations.
- I invite you to take note of the [President's report and all other reports submitted by the Chairs and representatives](#). The work that has been completed or is ongoing in the past year is invaluable to support the Law Society in meeting its mandate; and what lies ahead are opportunities that I hope will encourage new members to join in.

Respectfully Submitted,



Nalini Vaddapalli, CEO – Deputy Secretary