

Annual Report Structure

The structure of this year's annual report highlights the accomplishments of the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) holistically. All branch information has been integrated to emphasize how the branches work together to achieve common goals and support the mandate of the LAO.

The Mission of the LAO is to provide the best advice and a full range of quality services to Members as parliamentarians and support the preservation of the Assembly's history and maintain its accessibility to the public. Performance of the Assembly must therefore be measured according to how well the LAO performs the aforementioned tasks.

The Legislative Assembly Office has organized its results into four key responsibility areas (KRAs):

- 1 Provision of timely, professional, impartial, accurate information and advice to Members
- 2 Provision of services, equipment, supplies and facilities on a timely basis
- 3 Provision of an effective workplace to support Members
- 4 Provision of support to maintain and develop the parliamentary system in Alberta



Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament.

Key Responsibility Area I

Provision of timely, professional, impartial, accurate information and advice to Members

Election and Transition Support

All branches of the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) participated in dissolution and election planning relevant to their area. This involved providing information and procedural advice to 23 new Members and preparing material for orientation sessions held in Edmonton and Calgary for constituency office staff. LAO managers met with each new Member to provide an overview of the services provided by each branch.

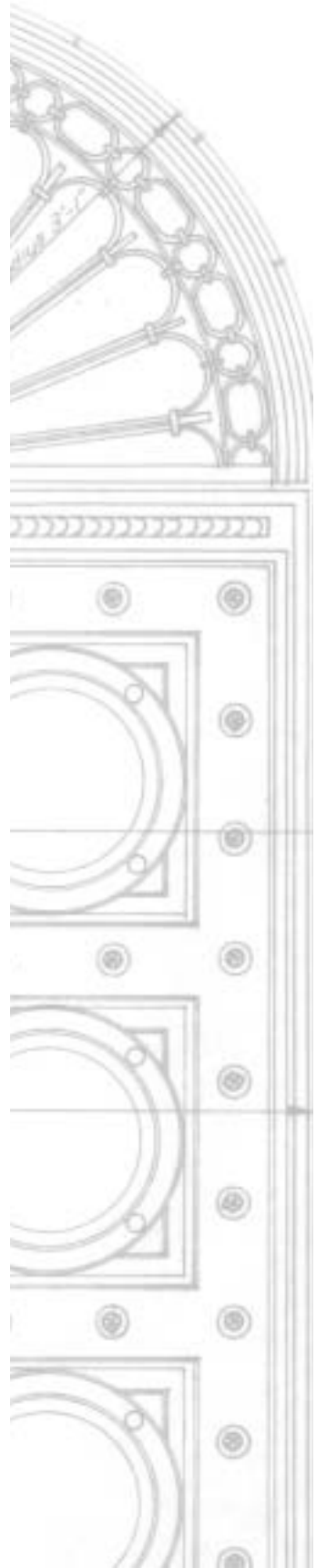
Human Resource Services (HRS) assisted Members of the 24th Legislature with issues related to dissolution of the Legislature, supported retiring and newly elected Members regarding pay, benefits and transition allowances and addressed individual issues related to caucus and constituency staff for new and returning Members.

House and Committee Services (HCS) revised and expanded the Procedural Orientation information binder for Members.

Financial Management and Administrative Services (FMAS) provided advice to new Members relating to constituency office accommodations and administration and assisted all Members with allowances, expenses and financial reporting. As well, FMAS assisted retiring Members in finalizing the transfer of constituency offices and telecommunications services and completing final allowance and expense claims.

Parliamentary Counsel provided legal services to the Chief Electoral Officer during all stages of the election. Following the 2001 election, counsel developed and participated in an orientation on legislative procedure and processes for caucus staff.

Library Services completed a nine-month research project on the electoral history of Alberta, and information relevant to each Member's constituency was included in his/her orientation package.





Assembly and LAO Documents

HCS revised the *Practical Guide for Committees of the Alberta Legislative Assembly*, which provides committee chairs with information about their duties, committee procedures and issues. HCS also maintained the database of statistical and historical information on each aspect of House business, including such items as the *Journals*, Speaker's Rulings, Questions of Privilege, Oral Question Period and sitting day statistics.

In addition to providing Members and presiding officers with ongoing procedural and legal advice, Parliamentary Counsel provided procedural and drafting expertise in preparing significant amendments to the *Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta*. These were approved in the 2001 fall sitting and published the following February. Counsel also prepared the Annual List of Required Tablings twice in 2001, circulating it to Members and senior government officials. Following changes to the Standing Orders, counsel revised the *Guidelines for Petitioning the Legislative Assembly* and the *Petitioner's Guide to Private Bills: How to Petition the Alberta Legislature to Pass a Private Bill*. Both documents appear on the Assembly's Web site. During session, counsel also reviewed amendments to bills, private members' motions, motions for returns, written questions and petitions.

HRS produced the annual personalized Members' Benefits Statements and developed and produced benefit and entitlement information for Members and staff in addition to standard periodic reports. HRS also participated in several information sessions for constituency staff.

Public Information Branch (PIB) met their goal of posting Blues, the unofficial first draft of *Hansard*, on the Assembly network within one to one-and-a-half hours of the words being spoken approximately 80 per cent of the time, with the earlier proceedings of each sitting generally being available in under one hour. *Hansard* staff met the deadline for posting the final edition on the web and delivering it to the printer on all occasions except when the House sat for 21 hours and 18 minutes, from 8 p.m. on Monday, May 28, to 5:18 p.m. on Tuesday, May 29. As in the past, PIB continued to provide Members with speech reprints on request, as well as reprints of Recognitions and Members' Statements suitable for framing.

Committee transcripts were provided to Committee Clerks within 48 hours of each meeting. To provide more detailed access to the text, PIB began indexing standing and special committees of the Legislature, with indexes completed for the 1999 to 2001 meetings. Indexing of meetings prior to 1999 is proceeding as time permits.

The Publications Officer in the Clerk's Office began revising the *Members' Guide* with input from all LAO branches and produced a handbook titled *Biographies of Members: Legislative Assembly of Alberta, 25th Legislature*.

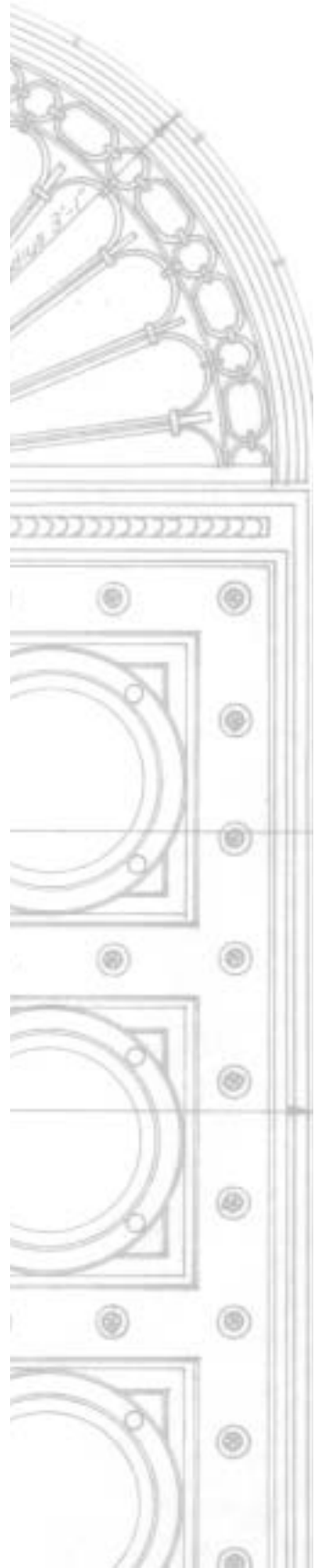
Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services (VCSS) produced a new Legislative Assembly Gift Shop catalogue for Members.

The Sergeant-at-Arms or the Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms personally visited 51 constituency offices to provide advice on office and personal safety issues. A constituency office security brochure was developed and distributed to constituency staff at the post-election orientation seminar in Edmonton, at constituency office visits and following requests by Members or constituency staff.

At the Library's 3rd Annual Spring Tea and Open House, the Speaker introduced Library Services' new electronic customized news service, Alberta Daily News, which is available at the Members' desktops by 8:15 each morning. Prior to both the spring and fall sittings, Library Services provided a series of full-text bibliographies on several topics.

Library staff also completed developmental work on an Access database that can produce customized reports of information on Members. Data entry is already completed for 37 Members; eventually the database will have biographical information on the 736 Members who have served in the Assembly from 1905 to present.

As part of its commitment to microfilm weekly newspapers, Library Services completed microfilming the Okotoks and Didsbury papers. Older editions of 22 newspapers were donated to communities.



Key Responsibility Area 2

Provision of services, equipment, supplies and facilities on a timely basis

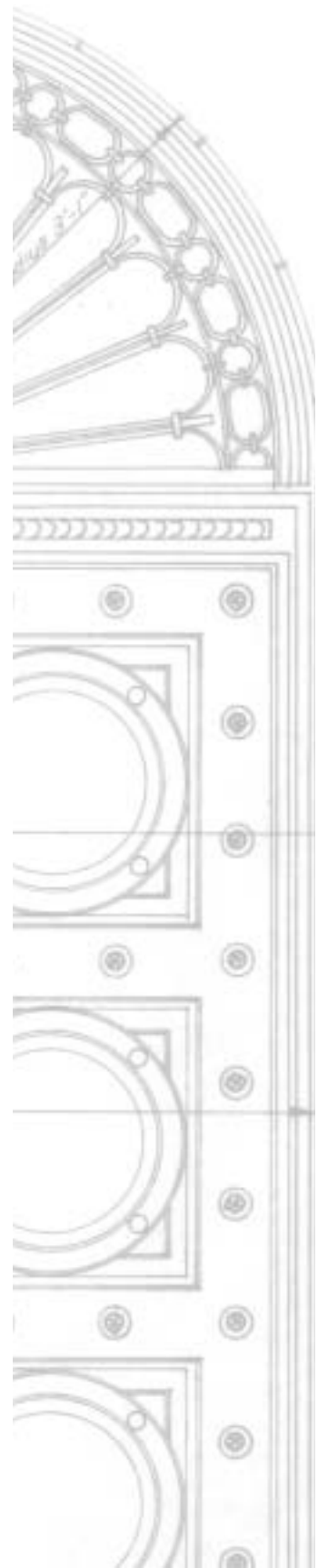
Assembly Internet and Intranet Sites Important Communications Tools

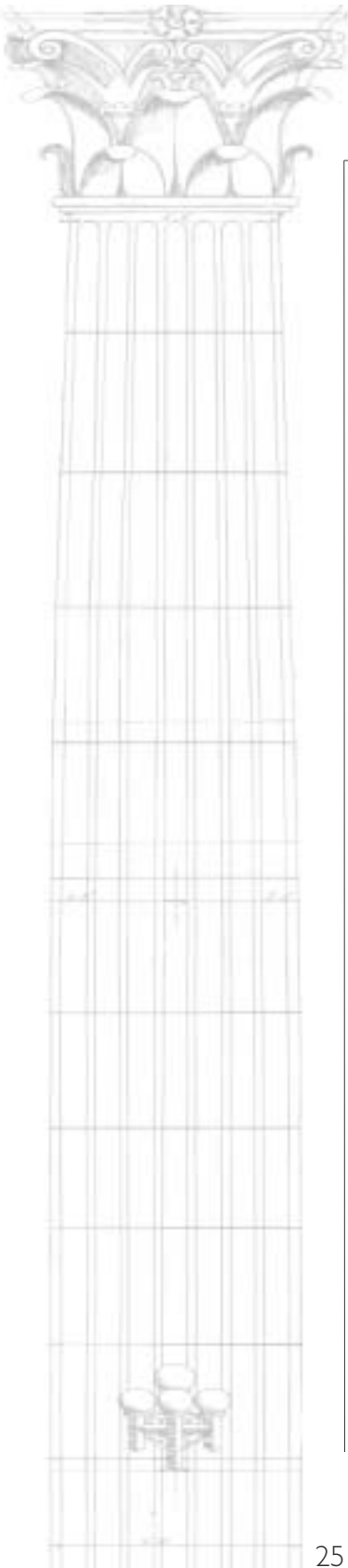
The Legislative Assembly's external and internal sites have become a key focus for the distribution of information about Members, Assembly events and House documents, to name a few. For this reason, the content on the Web site is continually being revised and upgraded. Site maintenance is shared among all of the branches of the Legislative Assembly Office through the Web Committee.

Notices of Assembly committee meetings are now posted by House and Committee Services (HCS) on both the Intranet and Internet. As well, transcripts of committee meetings, committee membership lists, special committee reports and discussion papers are available. Sessional documents, including *Votes and Proceedings*, the *Order Paper* and all House records continue to be posted on the external Web site approximately one hour following the evening adjournment. The Archived House Records have been updated to make them more accessible and readable. The Bill Status Report is available on the Web site and is updated within minutes of any bill activity. When the Legislature is in Session, a schedule of the projected Weekly House Business is also posted on the Web site for public access and is updated each Friday.

Public Information Branch (PIB) posted the order form for congratulatory scrolls on the Web site. Staff from Members' offices as well as the public can now send requests for scrolls electronically thereby expediting the process. *Hansard* for afternoon sittings continues to be posted by 10:30 p.m. the same day while evening proceedings are posted by noon the following day. Committee transcripts continue to be posted within 48 hours.

Library Services upgraded the Horizon integrated system and implemented an acquisitions module. The Library partnered with the University of Calgary to assist with the digitization of all bills introduced in the Alberta Legislature since 1905. This material will complement other electronic statutory services currently provided on the Assembly Web site. In cooperation with the Alberta Government Library (AGL) and The Alberta Library (TAL), the Legislature Library promoted access to government information in digital format. Through its membership in TAL, the Library saved 90 per cent of the projected cost of providing Members with network-wide access to specialized databases.





The Wilson suite of fulltext databases, the Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS) and Boardwise, the electronic version of the Conference Board of Canada publications, were all added to the Library's electronic resources on the internal site.

In addition to providing a broad scope of financial and administrative services to Members and the LAO, FMAS along with ISS staff developed an on-line supplies ordering service that will eventually be available across the LAO.

ALADDIN (Alberta Legislative Assembly Data Distribution and Information Network)

Following a presentation by House of Commons Deputy Principal Clerk on PRISM—an integrated information system allowing users to create a number of documents based on one set of data—the LAO put together a team to develop a similar project. The team's first task was to prepare a business plan for evaluation and possible implementation.

Information Support

Parliamentary Counsel drafted 16 Private Members' Public Bills and four Private Bills. Additionally, counsel reviewed a wide range of contracts and agreements: licensing, lease, employment and fee-for-service contracts, as well as other service arrangements.

Library Services responded to all information and reference requests within a 48-hour period; the majority of these were completed within 24 hours. Ninety-four per cent of requests for material were met through the Library's in-house print and electronic resources.

Public Information Branch (PIB) coordinated the production of several documents for Members. Electoral scrolls were presented to each of the newly-elected MLAs. *Hansard* staff coordinated production of the 24th Legislature photo montage and distributed it to each Member of that Legislature. As usually occurs during an election year, the number of congratulatory scrolls issued by the branch was down slightly.

New Committee Rooms

While Information Systems Services (ISS) led the project, Committee Clerks, PIB, FMAS, and other Legislature staff assisted with the initial planning, construction, and furnishing of the new committee rooms on the fourth floor of the Legislature Annex. Committee Clerks are responsible for booking the rooms, notifying branches whose services may be required and contacting the building superintendent regarding room set-up.

Support Services

Information Systems Services (ISS) provided laptops to 73 Members, giving them remote and on-site access through their offices and the Legislature Chamber. Ninety-four per cent of constituency offices were provided with high-speed Internet access. The branch also created a focus group to better meet constituency office needs. Six constituency representatives from across the province will work with ISS to identify priorities and solutions for technological issues. ISS also implemented a new point-of-sale system in the Legislative Assembly Interpretive Centre and Gift Shop.

Human Resource Services (HRS) continued the enhancement of its services in regards to development of self service online personal payroll options and general Web services, implementation of autonomous banking and in-house printing services. HRS also introduced auto debit services.

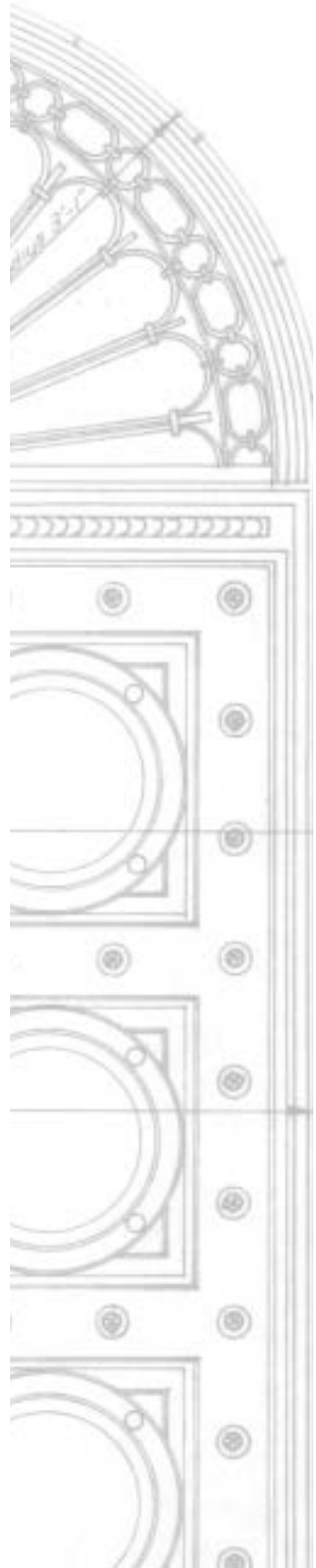
HRS continued to support constituency, caucus and LAO staff in regards to career training and counseling, first aid training, and ergonomics and wellness in the workplace.

Security Issues

Security in the Legislature Building became a key issue following the events in the United States on September 11. The Sergeant-at-Arms worked closely with the Solicitor General Protection Services staff to improve security in and around the Legislature Building and Annex. Considerable work was also dedicated to an evacuation plan for both buildings, and information was circulated to make sure all were aware of the procedures. In April, the Speaker's Office and the Sergeant-at-Arms launched a new pass card system for the House and its precincts to keep the Members' and opposition Members' lounges secure and prevent delays for those entering.

The Sergeant-at-Arms chaired the Legislature Business Resumption Planning Committee, which meets to ensure continuity of Legislature operations if a catastrophic event affected its operation. In addition, the Sergeant-at-Arms continued to serve on the Security Coordination Committee, to discuss and coordinate security issues related to the Legislature Building and surrounding areas.

The Sergeant-at-Arms' Office coordinated the provision of alarm permits on behalf of constituency offices for both the Edmonton and Calgary police service alarm bylaw programs and provided security for Members and the almost 9,000 spectators that were present in the galleries during the 2001 sittings.



Key Responsibility Area 3

Provision of an effective workplace to support Members

LAO staff attended various developmental conferences throughout the year. These conferences provided opportunities to network with others in similar fields, gain fresh perspective on issues and ensure that LAO staff and services are on par with national and international standards.

Constituency Staff attended orientation seminars in Calgary and Edmonton to introduce them to LAO services.

Training and Courses

Several LAO staff participated in first aid training over a two-day period.

Three new *Hansard* input editors from the Public Information Branch (PIB) took part in an intense three week in-house training program for the spring and fall sittings, with four being recruited in December 2001 to train in January 2002.

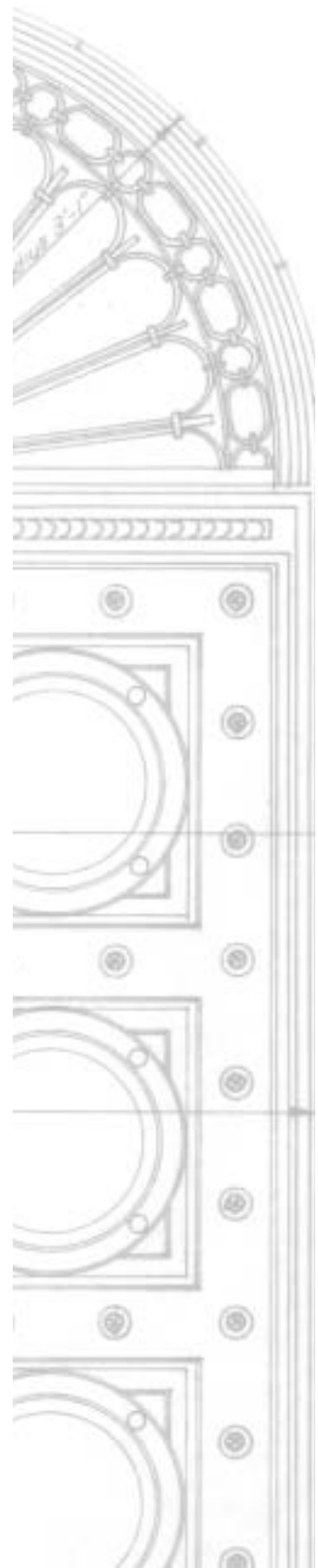
Library staff participated in several training programs, including sessions on Quicklaw, Infomart and Amicus. In addition, Legislature Library staff trained Members and their staff, as well as LAO staff, in the use of subscription databases and the use and evaluation of Internet resources.

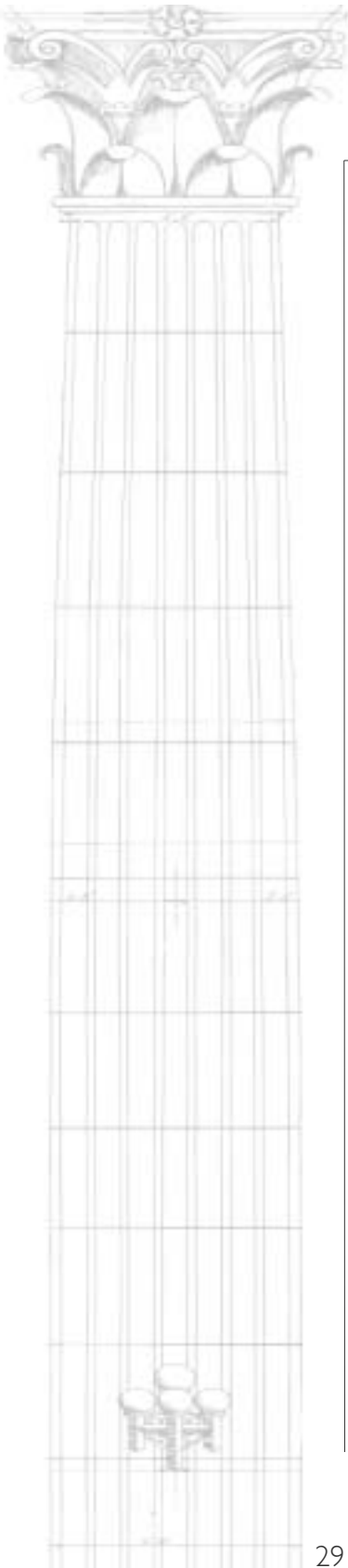
New Staff

Human Resource Services (HRS) assisted branch managers in recruiting both permanent and sessional staff: 42 new employees were hired throughout the year. Some of those hires are as follows:

On November 13, a new Committee Clerk joined House Services to replace the previous Committee Clerk who left to pursue another opportunity.

The Web Coordinator and Publications Officer were transferred to the Clerk's Office to lay the ground work for the development of a communications function.





The Legislature Library hired a number of staff to cover the positions of those who were on leave, had transferred to other positions in the Library, or left to pursue other opportunities. This affected the positions of Library Clerk, Librarian/Researcher, Serials Librarian, Systems Librarian and Government Documents Librarian. The Assistant Legislature Librarian managed the Library while the Legislature Librarian was on leave.

In conjunction with LAO reorganization, Public Information Branch (PIB) hired an Editorial Assistant, who trained and worked as an input editor for the fall session, then began training as a copy editor. Between sessions, this employee undertook a number of writing, proofreading and research projects.

Ten new Pages were hired through the Provincial Page Program.

Organizational Changes

The Visitor Services Branch was placed under the Sergeant-at-Arms to form a new branch called Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services. An administrative assistant was seconded from Visitor Services to assist the Sergeant-at-Arms' Office with new branch responsibilities.

In response to the changing needs of the LAO and large projects on the horizon, ISS established two groups: Client and Network Services, which handles daily operation activities, technical support and network infrastructure, and Planning and Development, which manages long-term projects, planning and application development.

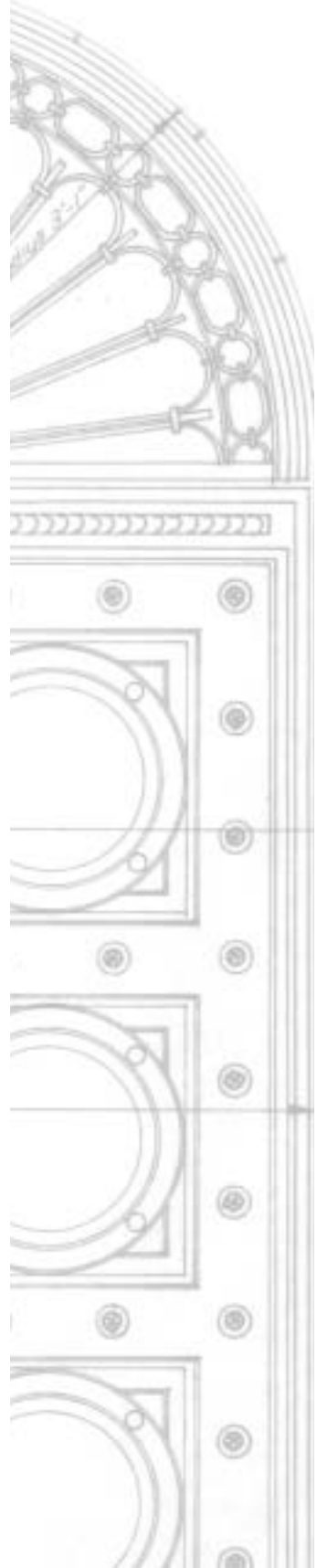
Organizational Events

Annually, the Honourable Speaker Kowalski hosts a Staff Recognition Dinner. Staff from across the organization volunteered their time to plan and organize the festivities to ensure a successful event.

The Legislative Assembly supports its community by involvement with the United Way. LAO staff volunteered to be part of a committee that planned and participated in several fundraising events.

Professional Development and Training

The Clerk Assistant was appointed Vice-President of the Canadian Association of Clerks-at-the-Table, the Legislature Librarian served as Vice-President of the Association of Parliamentary Librarians in Canada (APLIC), the Digital Services Librarian served as Chair of the Alberta Government Libraries' Council Electronic Services Sub-Committee, and the Head of Visitor Services was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Capital Cities Organization (CCCO), which promotes tourism in Canada's capital cities. As well, the Director of Administrative and Information Systems Services served as Chair of the Canadian Association of Parliamentary Support Services (CAPSS), which provides a forum for knowledge sharing and development of contacts with participating parliaments.



Key Responsibility Area 4

Provision of support to maintain and develop the parliamentary system in Alberta

School Outreach Activities

Supporting the LAO's mandate to inform and educate the public on behalf of Members and the institution of Parliament, Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services maintains several school programs. Two such programs are School-at-the-Legislature, which is targeted to Grade 6 students, and Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament, which targets Grade 10 students.

School-at-the-Legislature

In June 2001, VCSS held a workshop in the School-at-the-Legislature classroom to prepare teachers for program participation. The School-at-the-Legislature Program involved 17 classes with a total of 464 students.

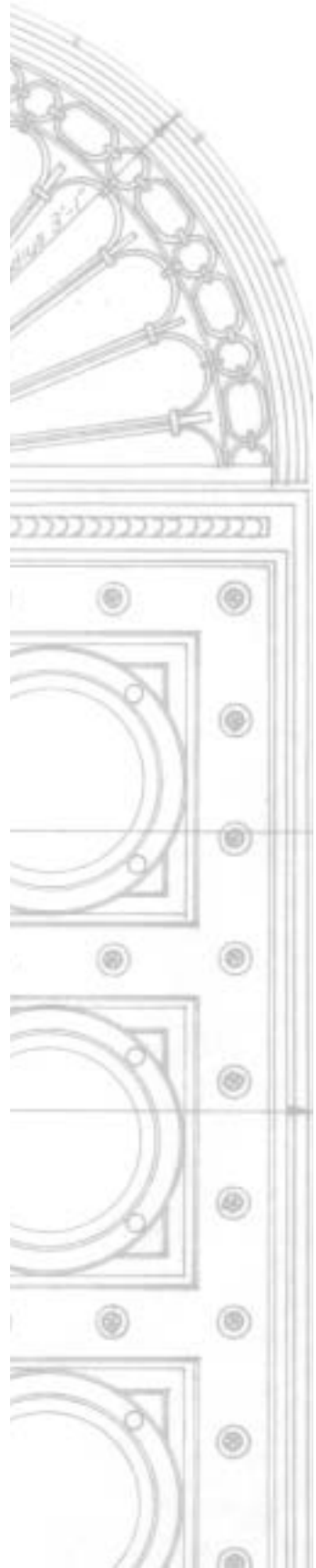
Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament

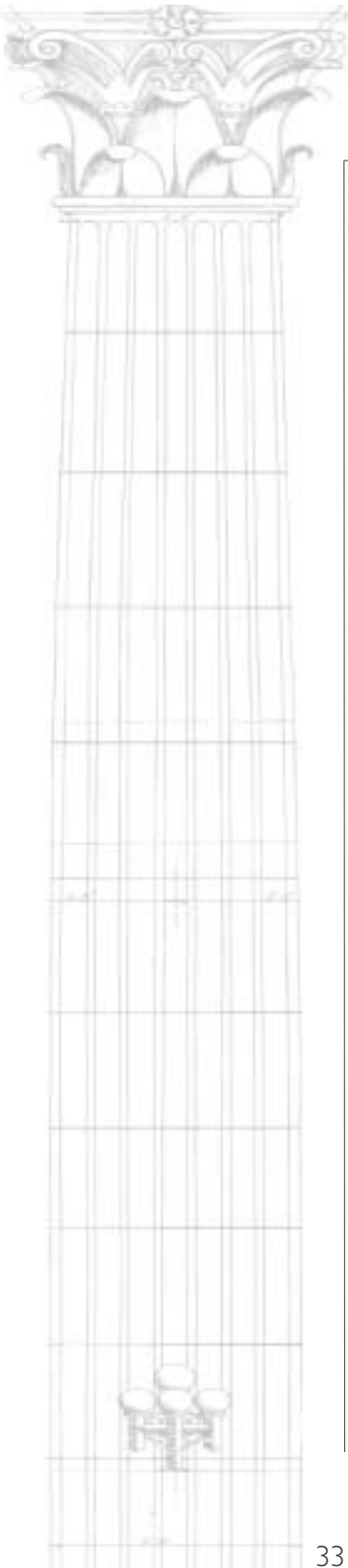
The Sergeant-at-Arms and the Procedural Clerk attended two Alberta teachers' conferences to promote the Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament that was held April 5 and 6, 2001. The youth parliament was a collaborative effort: Table Officers worked as advisors to students and teachers who attended the parliament, and *Hansard* staff produced the transcript. Additionally, the Sergeant-at-Arms, in conjunction with the Speaker's Office, facilitated the use of the Chamber and precincts for five other model parliaments.

Community Outreach Activities

Parliamentary Counsel remained the Alberta correspondent for two parliamentary publications: *Canadian Parliamentary Review* and the *Table Review*.

The Sergeant-at-Arms' Office produced a newsletter for Sergeants-at-Arms in Canada, which was also distributed to others in the Commonwealth. Throughout the year, the Sergeant-at-Arms spoke on security issues at the Strathcona Youth Justice Committee as well as other community organizations.





Public Information Branch (PIB) created a hands-on display for the Interpretive Centre that encourages visitors to sit at a computer station and transcribe portions of Members' speeches or complete a quiz.

The Library is gathering information from print and electronic sources and from a series of interviews with Speakers from 1963 to present to produce a book on the Speakers of Alberta.

Interparliamentary Relations

Headed by the Director of Human Resource Services and the Director of Administrative and Information Systems Services, LAO staff hosted the 40th Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. This conference welcomed delegates from across Canada and other Commonwealth countries.

The LAO formed the Canadian Association of Parliamentary Support Services (CAPSS). This group is comprised of human resource, finance, administration and information technology professionals from all legislatures across Canada. The first CAPSS conference was hosted in Edmonton. (See CPA section)

Ceremonial Events

Staff of House and Committee Services and Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services provided extensive support to several ceremonial events over the year as outlined in the special events section of this report.