





Legislative Assembly of Alberta

November 1, 2003

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta:

As required by Standing Order 109, I am pleased to submit the 14th annual report of the Legislative Assembly Office for the calendar year ending December 31, 2002, and the financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002. This report describes the activities of the Legislative Assembly Office focusing on four key areas of responsibility in which support is provided to Members. Also presented are the audited financial statements for the 2001-2002 fiscal year and the sixth annual report of the Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

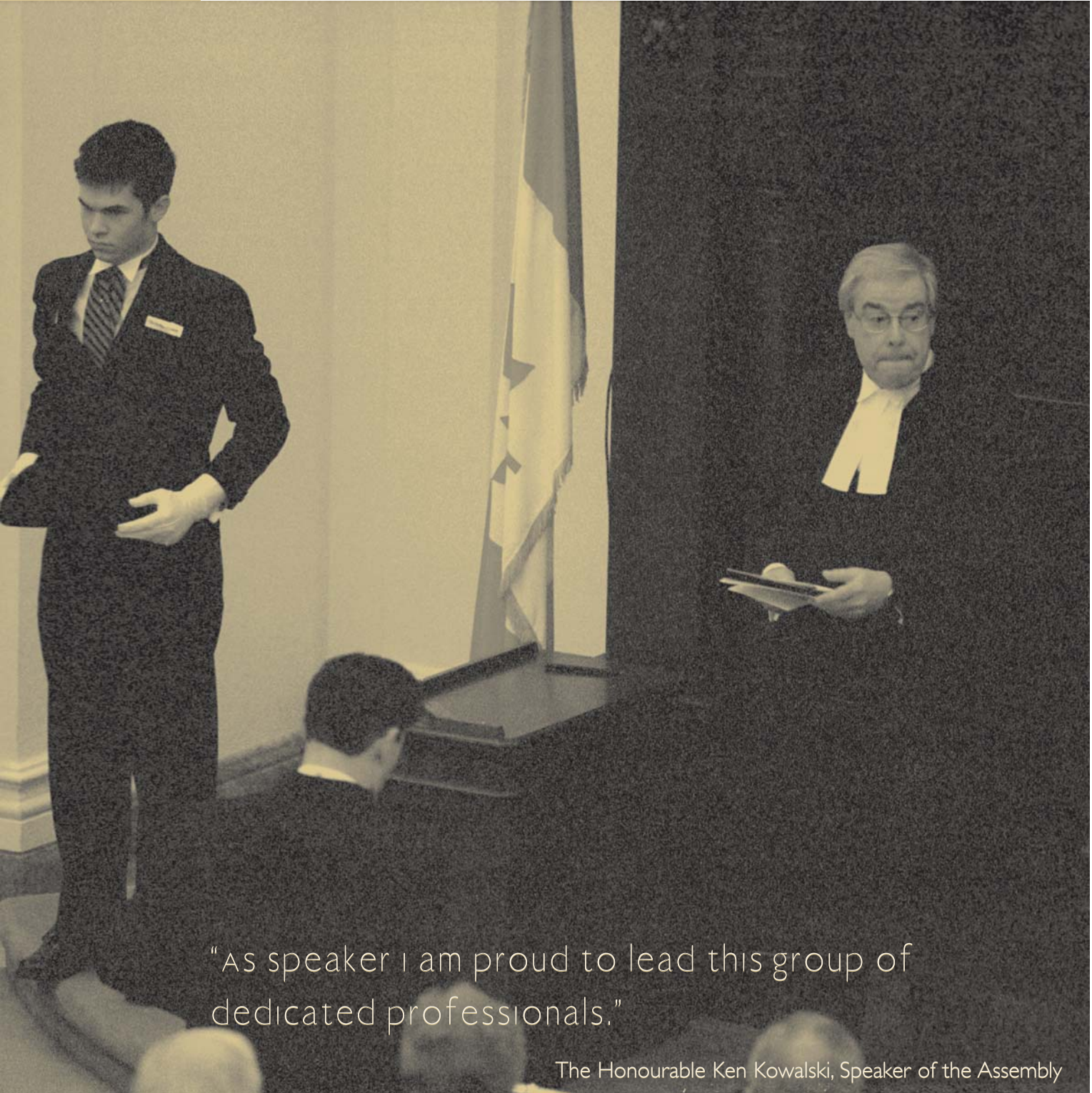
At the end of yet another successful year, the outstanding support that Legislative Assembly Office staff provide to the Assembly must be mentioned. Through hosting visiting parliamentarians and coordinating Assembly events, they serve the citizens of Alberta well. As Speaker I am proud to lead this group of dedicated professionals.

I would like to thank those Members who so ably represented Alberta or presented papers at various interparliamentary conferences, and I thank all MLAs for supporting the work of the Legislative Assembly Office and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Ken Kowalski, MLA

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



“As speaker I am proud to lead this group of dedicated professionals.”

The Honourable Ken Kowalski, Speaker of the Assembly



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

November 1, 2003

To The Honourable Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta:

I am honoured to present to you the 14th annual report of the Legislative Assembly Office and the sixth annual report of the Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The Legislative Assembly Office report includes the audited financial statements regarding the operation of the Legislative Assembly Office for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The Alberta Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association report outlines the various developmental opportunities afforded Members who attended interparliamentary conferences.

This Legislative Assembly Office report focuses on results-based reporting and includes highlights of events and conferences undertaken to further educate the public about the institution of parliament on behalf of Members, as well as support an exchange of information and ideas among parliamentarians.

I am privileged to work with Legislative Assembly Office staff, who bring a high level of commitment, flexibility and professionalism to the work they do.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. W.J. David McNeil

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly



“A high level of commitment, flexibility and professionalism.”

David McNeil, Clerk of the Assembly

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“our vision is to be the best parliamentary support organization through a commitment to excellence; i am confident we achieve that.”

Vivian Loosemore, Manager Public Information Branch

An introduction

The Legislative Assembly Office: In Service to Alberta’s Parliament

The origins of Alberta’s Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) can be traced to 14th century England, when Parliament elected the first Speaker and appointed the first Clerk. Today the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly is the head of the LAO, and the Clerk is the Speaker's deputy. The *Legislative Assembly Act* of 1983 made the LAO's current name official.

The most common misconception about the LAO is that it is a branch of government and that its staff are government employees. However, in the parliamentary system, the government is the executive branch, responsible for applying and enforcing laws; the Legislative Assembly is the legislative branch, responsible for establishing those laws. The Legislative Assembly Office provides various types of support to the entire Assembly – both members of government and opposition parties.

Although the LAO is sometimes called the Speaker's department, it is not a government department. The Speaker does not belong to the cabinet and cannot be asked questions during Oral Question Period or participate in the Assembly's debates. However, the Speaker does have administrative authority and responsibility similar to that of a minister of a government department. The Clerk is the Speaker's chief administrative deputy and has authority and responsibility similar to that of a deputy minister.

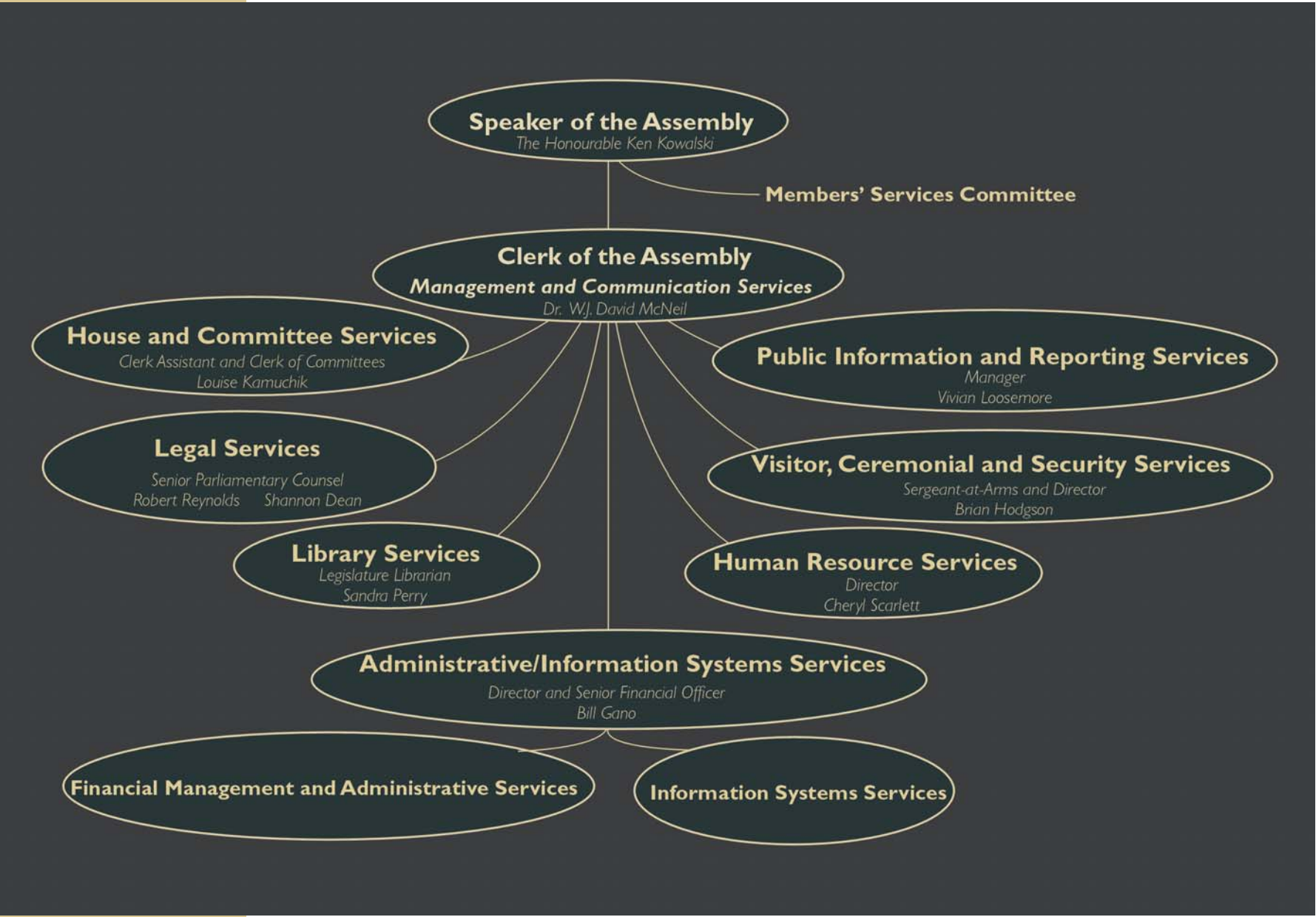
The Speaker has two distinct but related roles. In the Assembly, the Speaker maintains order and ensures that MLAs conduct their business according to the Standing Orders of the Assembly. Administratively, the Speaker is responsible for the Assembly's records and provides services to MLAs and the public.

The latter include financial administration, human resources, office automation assistance, public education, library services, legal services, House services, purchasing and communications services.

The LAO as a whole has the same procedural and administrative roles. This is a unique characteristic and is evident throughout the office, particularly during session, when the normal duties, work hours and office locations of many staff change significantly.

The LAO’s annual budget, as well as provisions for financial and human resource administration, are under the purview of the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services. As an all-party committee of the Assembly, the Members' Services Committee regulates constituency office support and Members' pay, allowances, benefits and group insurance plans, all of which the LAO administers. Traditionally, the Speaker chairs the Members' Services Committee.

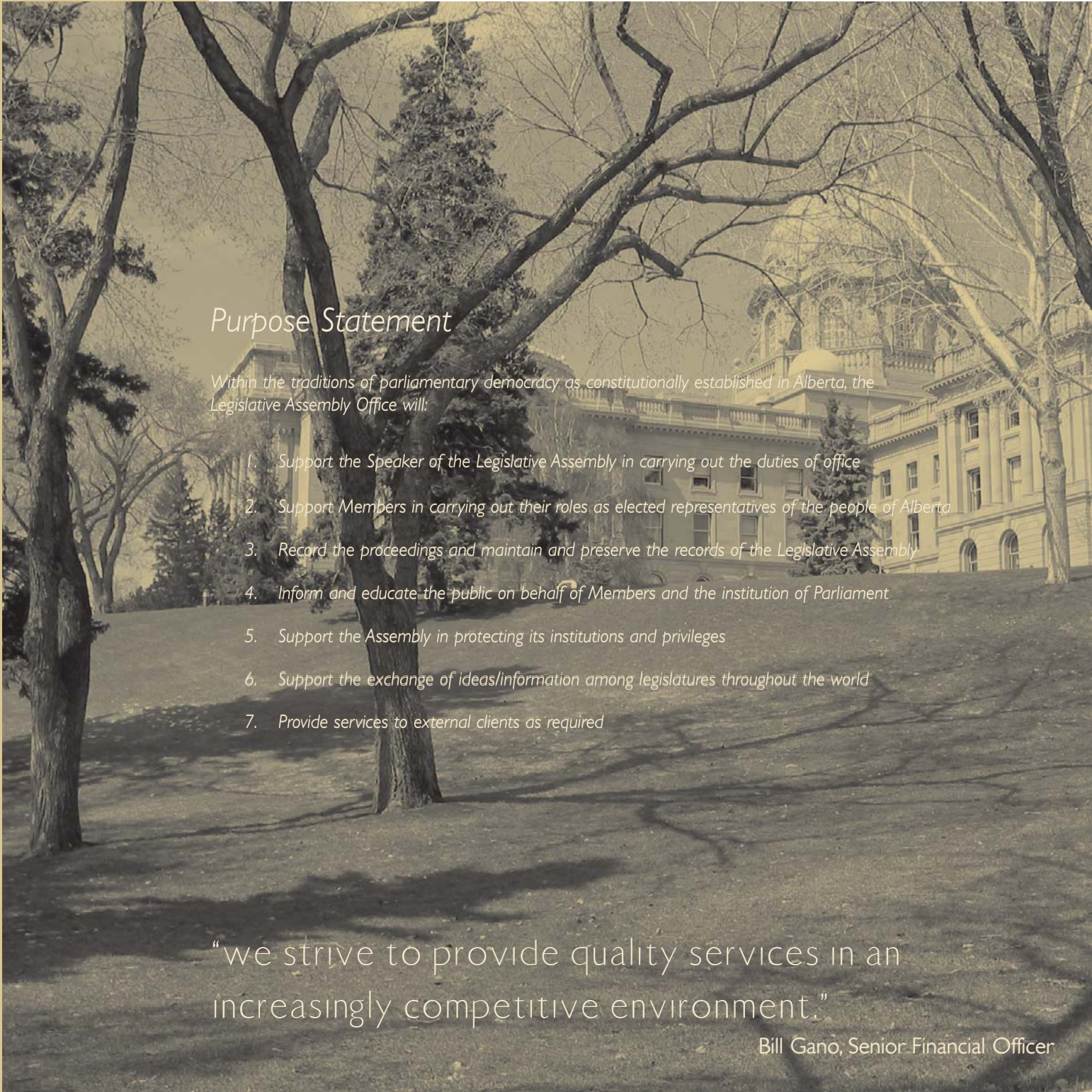
Each party of elected members, or caucus, is a branch of the Legislative Assembly Office. Although the Speaker technically has authority over the administration of each caucus office, for obvious reasons these branches operate with considerable autonomy. Therefore, the caucus branches are not part of this report; it only includes branches of the LAO under the Speaker's full control. However, since the caucuses receive financial, administrative and human resource services, as well as other support from other branches of the LAO, this report does comment on those services. In addition, the office's consolidated budget estimates and audited financial statements, which appear at the end of this report, include caucus finances.



“cooperation among branches ensures that our organizational goals are achieved.”
Rob Reynolds, Senior Parliamentary Counsel

strategic goals

- Assist the Speaker in fulfilling the duties of office
- Assist Members in carrying out their roles as legislators within the parliamentary system and as representatives of their constituencies
- Meet and exceed the service expectations of the Members
- Respond to increased demands for technology-related services from Members, staff and the public
- Provide Members with professional development opportunities and foster interparliamentary cooperation through participation in national and international parliamentary forums and exchange programs
- Increase public awareness of the Legislative Assembly within Alberta's democratic parliamentary system through information and outreach programs
- Continue to foster understanding of the division of powers among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government
- Ensure that the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) provides quality services in an increasingly competitive environment
- Ensure the continued development of the effectiveness and efficiency of the LAO workforce through the fostering and recognition of leadership and teamwork
- Develop plans for special centennial events and projects



Purpose Statement

Within the traditions of parliamentary democracy as constitutionally established in Alberta, the Legislative Assembly Office will:

1. Support the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in carrying out the duties of office
2. Support Members in carrying out their roles as elected representatives of the people of Alberta
3. Record the proceedings and maintain and preserve the records of the Legislative Assembly
4. Inform and educate the public on behalf of Members and the institution of Parliament
5. Support the Assembly in protecting its institutions and privileges
6. Support the exchange of ideas/information among legislatures throughout the world
7. Provide services to external clients as required

“we strive to provide quality services in an increasingly competitive environment.”

Bill Gano, Senior Financial Officer

Legislative Assembly office services

Office of the Clerk

Is responsible for the processing of the daily business of the House and provides management and communications support to all branches of the LAO. The Clerk acts as a liaison at the deputy minister level with government departments and assists in coordinating Member participation in interparliamentary activities.

Financial Management and Administrative Services (FMAS)

Provides full accounting services such as budget preparation and monitoring, payment processing and financial reporting, as well as administrative services including equipment and supplies procurement, telecommunications management, constituency office lease and credit card administration.

Information Systems Services (ISS)

Handles all technological issues including installation and support of software and hardware, remote access and network infrastructure. ISS also assists with records management and handles responsibilities under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for the LAO.

Human Resource Services (HRS)

Provides support to Members and staff in all matters of human resource management. This includes contract administration, pay and benefits management, recruitment and job classification, employee relations, training and development and all issues related to occupational health and safety.

Legal Services—Parliamentary Counsel

Provides legal advice on a wide range of matters including parliamentary procedure. They draft Private Members' Public Bills and Private Bills. Both Senior Parliamentary Counsel serve as Table Officers in the House and advise the Speaker on points of order and questions of privilege.

Library Services

Offers information, news, reference and research services to the Members and their staff using current library and information technology. As well, Library Services provides training in the use of the electronic services that are delivered to the Members' desktops.

Public Information and Reporting Services—Public Information Branch (PIB)

Is responsible for the recording and publication of print and electronic versions of *Alberta Hansard*, the official report of proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees. PIB also administers a subscription service to *Alberta Hansard*, *Votes and Proceedings* and bills and distributes sessional publications as well as operating a public information service and providing editing and proofreading services.

Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services (VCSS)

Plans and executes ceremonial and special events, as well as the coordination of school and public outreach programs, tours of the facilities and the production of several educational and orientation materials. Maintaining security in the Chamber and precincts, providing security-related advice to constituency offices and managing the Alberta Legislative Assembly Page Program are also the responsibility of VCSS.

House and Committee Services (HCS)

Along with providing advice on parliamentary procedures, producing the *Votes and Proceedings*, *Order Paper*, *Journals* and assisting in maintaining House records, such as bills and motions, HCS provides all the arrangements for the Assembly's Standing, Special Standing and Select Special Committee meetings. As well, HCS assists with expenses, budgets, historical records and transcripts relating to committees.



"we're always looking for new ways to provide more efficient services to the members."

Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant