



ommissioner of Lobbyists

Annual Report 2014-15

Message from the Commissioner

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes that lobbying is a necessary and legitimate activity, but one that must be conducted in a transparent manner. That is why on October 11, 2005, the government introduced the *Lobbyist Registration Act*, which defines appropriate lobbying activities. The *Act* also provided for the creation of a Registry of Lobbyists, governed by a Registrar, and the creation of the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to upholding standards of openness and accountability. All stakeholders, including government ministers, departments and agencies, lobbyists and perhaps most important of all, the general public, have the right to know who is doing the lobbying and whom is being lobbied.

Further to upholding its commitment to transparency, the Government has also put in place a Code of Conduct which puts forth the rationale for, and appropriate activities of, lobbyists. If the Commissioner determines that a lobbyist has breached the strict provisions of the *Act* or Code, serious disciplinary measures are imposed.

I am pleased to present the 2014-15 Annual Report of the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists. This report covers the period of April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015.

As Commissioner of Lobbyists, I am accountable for the preparation of this report and the actual results reported.



LEEANN MONTGOMERY
Commissioner of Lobbyists

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Overview

The Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists is located at 689 Topsail Road, St. John's. Administrative support is shared among the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Public Complaints Commission (RNCPC), the Criminal Code Mental Disorder Review Board (CCMDRB) and the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists and is provided by a manager (RNCPC) and a secretary.

The Registry of Lobbyists is maintained by the Director of Commercial Registrations, Service NL. This office is located at 59 Elizabeth Avenue, St. John's and the Registry of Lobbyists is available at <https://cado.eservices.gov.nl.ca/Lobbyist/Menu.aspx>. During the fiscal year, there were 85 active lobbyists. Of these, 31 were consultant lobbyists and 54 were organizations with in-house lobbyists.

A "consultant" lobbyist is one who, for remuneration or other gain, reward or benefit, undertakes to lobby on behalf of a client. A consultant lobbyist is not an employee of the client or organization, whereas an "in-house" lobbyist is employed by the organization to lobby on its behalf.

An "in-house" lobbyist is defined by section 6(1)(b) of the *Lobbyist Registration Act*, which states: *"in-house lobbyist" means a person who is employed by an organization:(i) 20% of whose duties as an employee, as assessed in a 3 month period, are to lobby on behalf of that organization; or (ii) a part of whose duties as an employee is to lobby on behalf of that organization if the employee's duties to lobby together with the duties of other employees to lobby would constitute 20% of time at work of one full time employee, assessed in a 3 month period, were those duties to lobby to be performed by only one employee."*

Who We Are

Commissioner of Lobbyists:

LeeAnn Montgomery Tel: (709) 729-2918

Administrative Support:

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Vision

An environment where lobbying of government entities can take place in an open and transparent manner.

Mandate

The mandate of the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists is contained in the *Lobbyist Registration Act*, Chapter L-24.1, SNL 2004. The Commissioner of Lobbyists is responsible for investigating alleged violations of the *Act* or the Code of Conduct, denying or cancelling a lobbyist's registration where the *Act* or Code has been breached, and ordering, upon application, that some or all registration information be kept confidential. The Commissioner may also recommend changes to the Code of Conduct.

Highlights of Accomplishments

Registrants

An online registry exists for registrants and there is no fee to access this information. The online registry can be found at <https://cado.eservices.gov.nl.ca/Lobbyist/Menu.aspx>.

Historical Total: There have been 210 lobbyist registrations since the *Act* came into force in 2005 – 70 by consultant lobbyists and 140 by organizations with in-house lobbyists.

Active Registrations: 85 registrations are active and ongoing - 31 by consultant lobbyists and 54 by organizations with in-house lobbyists.

Activities

Issue 1: Investigating Alleged Violations of the Act or Code of Conduct

The Commissioner of Lobbyists is responsible for investigating alleged violations of the *Lobbyist Registration Act* or the Code of Conduct. Section 27(1) of the *Act* states: “Where the commissioner believes, on reasonable grounds, that a provision of this Act or of the Code of Conduct has been violated, he or she may investigate that violation and where the commissioner believes there is sufficient reason to proceed, may conduct an inquiry into that violation”.

The focus of the Commissioner of Lobbyists remains consistent over the next two years, and the Commissioner will report on this objective and associated indicators again in 2015-16 and 2016-17.

Objective: By March 31, 2015, the Commissioner of Lobbyists will have addressed all alleged violations of the *Lobbyist Registration Act* or Code of Conduct.

Measure: All alleged violations addressed

Indicators	Actual Results
All alleged violations investigated	There was one alleged violation reported and investigated.
Reports prepared for each alleged violation	There was a report prepared, with the resolution that there was no violation of the <i>Lobbyist Registration Act</i> .

Issue 2: Confidentiality Orders

Pursuant to section 18(1) of the *Lobbyist Registration Act*, a lobbyist may request the Commissioner of Lobbyists to issue a confidentiality order. This is done when the lobbyist feels that the disclosure of some or all of the information contained in the registration may seriously prejudice his or her economic or financial interest or enterprise.

In smaller jurisdictions like Newfoundland and Labrador, it is not uncommon to receive no formal requests for Confidentiality Orders. However, this does not diminish the important function the office serves. Today, lobbying is more necessary, wide-spread and complicated and it requires oversight to ensure that it is open, professional and practiced within legislative requirements.

The focus of the Commissioner of Lobbyists remains consistent over the next two years, and the Commissioner will report on this objective and associated indicators again in 2015-16 and 2016-17.

Objective: By March 31, 2015, the Commissioner of Lobbyists will have addressed all requests for Confidentiality Orders.

Measure: All requests for Confidentiality Orders addressed

Indicators	Actual Results
Investigations conducted for each request	There were no requests for confidentiality orders and thus no investigations were needed.
Decisions rendered for each request	There were no requests for confidentiality orders and thus no decisions required.

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

Ensuring the public is informed about the mandate and authority of the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists continues to be an ongoing challenge. The Office relies on the public to report alleged non-compliance with the *Lobbyist Registration Act* and/or the Code, which will only happen if individuals know their rights and responsibilities under the *Act*. The public has an opportunity to become part of the process and contribute to ensuring that transparency and accountability remain key elements in any lobbying activity.

Financial Report

The budget of the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists is contained within the Administrative Support (Professional Services) budget of the Department of Justice and Public Safety and, as a result, the Office is not required to provide a separate audited statement. While the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists does not appear as a separate line in the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the approximate budget is provided below:

Approximate Budget Office of the Commissioner of Lobbyists	
Salaries	\$25,000
Operating Costs	\$20,000
Total	\$45,000

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