



Tab 7

Report to Convocation June 28, 2018

Priority Planning Committee

Committee Members:

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Teresa Donnelly
Ross Earnshaw
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Purpose of Report: Information

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FOR INFORMATION

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE
LAW SOCIETY'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2019**

Introduction

1. In December 2015, Convocation received a report from the Priority Planning Committee (the Committee) setting out details of the priorities identified in the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan adopted by Convocation in October 2015.
2. The Committee's progress reports on work on the priorities were provided to Convocation in June 2016 and June 2017. The Committee has prepared this progress report for Convocation's information on the work completed or in progress since the June 2017 report.
3. The report provides a summary of the elements of the Strategic Plan and information on the progress to date on initiatives under the Plan.¹

Background to Convocation's Priority Planning

4. The strategic planning session held in October 2015, noted above, fulfilled a requirement Convocation established in March 2007 with respect to planning and prioritizing matters for Convocation's policy agenda and achieving strategic objectives in a bench term.
5. At that time, Convocation agreed on a process that included the planning session and establishing and utilizing the Committee to centralize and co-ordinate achieving the strategic priorities for the Law Society for the bench term. The structured approach to planning and prioritizing the Law Society's policy agenda, overseen by the Committee

¹ The Plan was formulated in 2015 with the knowledge that a number of initiatives that relate to subject areas described in the Plan would continue in the new bench term and should be incorporated in the Plan. These initiatives included:

- a. the Pathways Pilot Project on transitional training;
- b. the work of the Mentoring and Advisory Services Proposal Task Force,
- c. the Task Force to Create a Strategy to Promote Wellness and Address Mental Health and Addictions Issues and the Compliance-Based Entity Regulation Task Force,
- d. the work of the Challenges Faced by Racialized Licensees Working Group and the Alternative Business Structures Working Group;
- e. the Tribunal Three Year Review project; and
- f. the project to renew the Law Society's Aboriginal (now Indigenous) Initiatives Strategy.

and its reporting obligations to Convocation, assists in advancing and fulfilling the Law Society's mandate.

6. In confirming the Strategic Plan at the October 2015 planning session, Convocation provided direction to the Law Society on priorities for the 2015-19 bencher term.

The Committee's Views

7. Based on information received from operations and reports of progress on initiatives through other committees, the Committee reports that some initiatives have been completed ([Tab 7.1](#)) and that progress continues to be made on others ([Tab 7.2](#)) as the Law Society enters the last year of this bencher term.

Next Steps

8. The Committee will continue to monitor progress on the priorities and will present a final report on the priorities for this bencher term in June 2019.

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019

THE LAW SOCIETY WILL LEAD AS PROFESSIONAL REGULATOR

To enhance its regulatory effectiveness in the public interest, the Law Society will focus on improvements and adjustments to its regulatory process, with particular attention to developing mental health initiatives and equity-based principles in the regulatory process.

THE LAW SOCIETY WILL PRIORITIZE LIFE-LONG COMPETENCE FOR LAWYERS AND PARALEGALS

The Law Society will focus on enhancing licensing standards and requirements and their assessment, and ways to improve and increase practice supports for lawyers and paralegals and provide better mentoring.

THE LAW SOCIETY WILL WORK TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACROSS ONTARIO

In continuing efforts to fulfill its responsibility to act to facilitate access to justice for Ontarians, the Law Society will focus on improved planning and assignment of resources and establishing its leadership role for the Law Society with a concrete action plan to achieve access to justice goals.

THE LAW SOCIETY WILL ENHANCE ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND THE PUBLIC WITH RESPONSIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The Law Society will focus on:

- enhancing communication to the public through Law Society outreach and other efforts, and
- enhancing communication to lawyers and paralegals as a matter of accountability and transparency,

with the goals of building a better public understanding of and educate the public on the role of the Law Society, and better enabling input from and engagement with lawyers and paralegals.

THE LAW SOCIETY WILL INCREASE ITS ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The Law Society will:

- review and revise as appropriate the Law Society's policy development process, guided by the duty to protect the public interest;
- enhance measurement and assessment of current and proposed activities; and
- determine ways to improve the Law Society's governance structure, including better education for members of Convocation.

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-19 COMPLETED INITIATIVES

	INITIATIVE	TASK	RESULT
1	Evaluate and Enhance Current Admissions Standards and Licensing Requirements	<i>Explore expansion of areas of practice and delivery of services for paralegal licensees</i>	Bonkalo Report recommendations action plan approved by Convocation on December 1, 2017
2	Improve and Increase Practice Supports for Practitioners	<i>Improve educational supports</i>	CPD curriculum of learning aligned with stages of practice and updated to reflect those concepts. New training modules have been developed. Integration of competencies-based training will continue to evolve, including new modalities of learning such as expanding online "just in time" learning and other offerings.
3	Develop Mental Health and Equity Initiatives in the Regulatory Process	<i>Provide access to duty counsel at an early stage in the regulatory process in a one year pilot project</i>	Duty Counsel are available to provide general advice to licensees if they are facing a referral to the Proceedings Authorization Committee.
4	Increase Collaboration outside the Law Society with Stakeholders to Promote Better Access to Justice 1	<u>New task:</u> <i>Develop Indigenous Strategy (renamed Indigenous Framework)</i>	Indigenous Framework approved by Convocation June 2017. Implementation underway.

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-19 COMPLETED INITIATIVES

	INITIATIVE	TASK	RESULT
5	Increase Collaboration outside the Law Society with Stakeholders to Promote Better Access to Justice 2	<i>New task: Support and enhance the delivery of robust and sustainable legal aid services for Ontarians</i>	Recommendations in Legal Aid Working Group report approved at January 2018 Convocation. Access to Justice Committee engaged in oversight of implementation.
6	Increase Collaboration outside the Law Society with Stakeholders to Promote Better Access to Justice 3	<i>Collaborate with stakeholders to promote better access to justice</i>	Ongoing facilitation of work through The Action Group on Access to Justice.
7	Provide better communication outside of Profession – outreach, enhance public perception and education, focus on key messages	<i>Recommend enhancements for increased public and licensee awareness</i>	Final report to Convocation in February 2018; implementation of the public awareness and licensee engagement campaign approved. LSO name change approved November 2, 2017, effective January 1, 2018 ; Legislative amendments effective May 8, 2018.

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-19 COMPLETED INITIATIVES

	INITIATIVE	TASK	RESULT
8	Adjust and improve the Regulatory Process 1	Alternative Business Structures Working Group – Civil Society Organizations	In September 2017, Convocation approved licensees' delivery of legal services through civil society organizations to clients of such organizations in order to facilitate access to justice; framework in development for implementation in 2019
9	Adjust and improve the Regulatory Process 2	<i>New Task:</i> Review Panel on Regulatory and Hearing Processes Affecting Indigenous Peoples	Review Panel recommendations approved by Convocation May 2018; operational implementation phase to begin

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-19 REMAINING TASKS

AS OF JUNE 2018

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	TASK	TIMELINE	STATUS
1 Provide better Communication with Practitioners – Accountability, Transparency and Input from the Professions	<i>Redesign the Law Society website</i>	August 2018 for anticipated launch	Design and development is ongoing. Anticipated launch for the new site is aligned with launch of Public Awareness Communications Campaign.
2 Evaluate and Enhance Current Admissions Standards and Licensing Requirements 1	<i>Enhance entry level standards for lawyer licensees</i>	Final recommendations anticipated for late Fall 2018	Consultation Report on the Licensing Process options released May 2018. Extended consultation into the Fall of 2018 planned. Seeking input and feedback through focus groups and stakeholder comment.
3 Evaluate and Enhance Current Admissions Standards and Licensing Requirements 2	<i>Assuring quality of instruction in pre-licensing institutions for paralegal licensing candidates</i>	January to June 2019	Awaiting completion of Licensing Process Review. Data collection/analysis relevant to this work, its relationship to anticipated licensing changes and stakeholder impact will require further discussion of objectives, scope and impact.
4 Adjust and Improve the Regulatory Process 1	<i>Compliance-Based Entity Regulation</i>	Determination of next steps planned for late Fall 2018	Consultation Report released May 2018. Draft self-assessment tool will be provided. Feedback to be provided to Task Force to determine next steps.
5 Adjust and Improve the Regulatory Process 2	<i>Advertising and Fee Arrangements Issues Working Group – Contingency Fee agreement, rules and guide</i>	Mid-2018	Call for comment completed on proposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory Standard Contingency Fee Agreement • Know Your Rights Guide for the Public • Related rule amendments

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-19 REMAINING TASKS

AS OF JUNE 2018

	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	TASK	TIMELINE	STATUS
				Working group is reviewing feedback and will prepare report for Convocation when review is complete.
6	Adjust and Improve the Regulatory Process 3	<i>New Law Society Tribunal Rules of Practice and Procedure and Practice Directions</i>	Year end 2018	A complete review and rewriting of the Rules of Practice and Procedure is underway to develop new rules that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are more user-friendly; • use plain language; • allow for greater use of written processes, active adjudication and technology; • are uniform and less repetitive; • are more flexible.
7	Improve the Governance of the Law Society Including Better Education for the Board	<i>Review the Law Society's governance structure including achieving the goals of transparency, inclusiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, and costs and, where appropriate, obtain the opinions of experts.</i>	Year end 2018	Report on proposals for change anticipated for September 2018; consultation period to be determined; governance policies work continuing into summer. Following fall update, final report is expected late 2018.
8	Improve the Efficiency of the Law Society – Improve Our Measurement and Assessment of Current and Proposed Activities	<i>Undertake a program review, maximizing staff resources for information gathering, for each program and service, why it exists, what it costs and how it serves the public interest.</i>	First quarter 2019	Development of program review - scale and protocol - to be completed for September 2018; reviews to be conducted and reported late in the fall of 2018 or early 2019.
9	Develop Mental Health and Equity Initiatives in the Regulatory Process	<i>Provide clear authority for a hearing panel to convert a conduct application to a capacity application.</i>	First quarter 2019	Professional Regulation Division and Office of the General Counsel are to develop options and a plan for realization of procedure. Consultation to

LAW SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-19 REMAINING TASKS

AS OF JUNE 2018

	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	TASK	TIMELINE	STATUS
				begin with relevant Committees on next steps.
10	Improve and Increase “Practice Supports” for Practitioners 1	<i>Needs/Gap analysis to direct development of practice supports including possible enhanced practice management programs</i>	Operational analysis to be undertaken from September 2018 to February 2019	Framework for needs analysis, with emphasis on sole and small supports and resources, is in development.
11	Improve and Increase “Practice Supports” for Practitioners 2	<i>Extend practice advisory service</i>	Fall 2018 to Spring 2019	Draft analysis, including best practices, risks and benefits, to be developed and presented to the Professional Development and Competence Committee.