



2008-2011 Strategic Plan



A WORD FROM THE

CHAIR

I am delighted to present the 2008–2011 strategic plan for the Secrétariat du Conseil de la magistrature du Québec.

This year is the 30th anniversary of the Conseil de la magistrature du Québec, an organization dedicated to fostering public trust in legal institutions. The year 2008 and subsequent years will be marked by change, movement, and repositioning. Release of the 2008–2011 strategic plan is part of this period of transformation.

The plan stems from a strategic exercise begun in May 2007. This not only enabled to get a clear idea of what had been accomplished over the years, but also better understand the actions of the Secretariat du Conseil and suggest a course of future work. The strategic plan presented today sets out five major priorities, identifies our objectives for the next three years, and discusses our approach to achieving them.

Guy Gagnon
Chair of the Conseil de la magistrature
Chief Judge, Court of Québec

Québec city, October 2008



A WORD FROM THE

SECRETARY

All organizations, public organizations at least, have adopted a strategic plan. The *Public Administration Act* (R.S.Q. c. A-6.01) requires most Québec organizations to have one. Strategic plans are management tools that provide metrics not only for monitoring results but also, through associated management indicators, for monitoring the real-time progress of work, with a view to achieving set objectives.

Over the last thirty years, Conseil de la magistrature members and those working in its Secretariat have contributed, each in their own way, to building an organization with an enviable reputation. As secretary of the Conseil de la magistrature, I intend to maintain this reputation, in particular by providing high quality service to all who are served by the Secretariat.

To continue this tradition of excellence, the strategic plan for the Council Secretariat sets forth five major priorities to guide its actions from 2008 through 2011.

André Ouimet, Lawyer
Secretary of the Conseil de la magistrature

THE CONSEIL DE LA MAGISTRATURE

The Council's mandate is multi-faceted. Most of the Council's effort is devoted to fulfilling primary mandates, and secondary mandates are addressed less frequently.

Main mandates

- Professional ethics: To receive and examine all complaints lodged against a judge;
- Legal documentation: To look after purchasing legal documentation for the judges;
- Training: To look after setting up training activities for the judges.

Other mandates provided for under the Act

- To promote the efficiency and standardization of the procedure before the Courts;
- To receive suggestions, recommendations and requests in relation to the administration of justice, to examine them and make recommendations to the Minister;
- To act on an appeal, upon the recommendation of the Chief Judge of the Court of Québec, with regard to a modification to a notice of appointment of a judge in relation to his place of residence or to the decision to assign him to another division;
- To conduct an investigation, at the request of the Minister of Justice, in order to decide on a judge's permanent disability;
- At the request of the Minister of Justice, to conduct an investigation of a municipality that refuses to remedy a situation that has been subject to a complaint (section 91, *Act respecting municipal courts*);
- To cooperate with any body that is pursuing similar objectives outside Québec.

The Council has jurisdiction over all provincially appointed judges, i.e., judges of the Court of Québec, Human Rights Tribunal, Professions Tribunal, and municipal courts, as well as presiding justices of the peace. In all, there are nearly 400 judges under the jurisdiction of the Council.

COMMITMENTS

By drawing on specific values and criteria, the Secretariat seeks to support the Council in its objective of fostering public trust in legal institutions. The Council carries out this duty with the assistance of qualified, loyal, and honest staff who are innovative, flexible, and respectful of the people who use their services.

In their communications, members of the Secretariat team are inspired by the values of courtesy, tact, and discretion.

In the services they provide, staff members work to the highest standards by developing expertise based on quality and efficiency.

Consequently, any judge or citizen who contacts the Secretariat can expect to receive the best service and information available. Secretariat staff are committed to doing everything in their power to respond to client concerns under the authority of the Council.

CLIENTS

The Conseil de la magistrature helps maintain public trust in legal institutions. In theory, all citizens can be considered clients of the Council. More specifically, the Council's clientele consists of:

- Anyone who directs a complaint to the Council regarding a judge;
- The fifteen Council members, as well as the members of its committees;
- Judges under the authority of the Council, to the extent that the Secretariat must ensure the training and development of the judicial branch.

DIRECTION

1

The Conseil de la magistrature has various types of mandates. Given the ties that bind the Council and the *Secretariat*, one is an integral part of the other. The Secretariat's main concern is correspondingly obvious: to support the Council's action.

OBJECTIVE

- To support the action of the Council and its committees by preparing meetings and ensuring their follow-up.

HOW TO REACH IT

- Put the finishing touches on setting up the Council's Intranet;
- Ensure that the documents are of excellent quality;
- Facilitate the members' work;
- Provide pertinent information;
- Quickly communicate the decisions of the *Council* and the committees;
- Provides secretariat services for the *Council's* committees.

DIRECTION

2

The public's confidence in its judicial institutions depends, in particular, on a judiciary that respects the rules of professional ethics, based on ethical behaviour. The adoption of a code of ethics is not sufficient for guaranteeing respect. By ensuring prompt handling of complaints, the Secretariat plays a role in strengthening the public's relationship of trust in judicial institutions.

OBJECTIVE

- To handle complaints, to provide pertinent information on how the Council operates and the complaint handling procedure.

HOW TO REACH IT

- Act as the first responder when complaints are received;
- Act promptly and provide appropriate information to complainants and judges;
- Update the hearing roll of the inquiry committees and support their proceedings;
- Respond, upon request, to the various media.

DIRECTION 3

As a legal professional, the judge must ensure his own professional development. Such development takes various forms: seminars, courses, conferences, legal documentation—yet the objective is always the same: to ensure quality justice to the people subject to the Court's jurisdiction. The Québec government allocates substantial funds to this purpose. Through its contribution, the Secretariat recommends directions to the Council, looks after managing the funds devoted to training and collaborates on the reflection relating to the establishment of a judicial training centre.

OBJECTIVES

- In relation to legal documentation, to develop the required ties with those in charge in the courts and handle all the requests submitted by the judges, by providing them with the information they need.
- To recommend training-related directions as well as prepare and ensure follow-up of the documentation and training budget, with those in charge and with the members of the Council.

HOW TO REACH IT

- Recommend overall training-related objectives to the Council;
- Take part in the examination of the courts' programs, as carried out by the executive committee and the Council;
- Prepare a draft budget allocation and submit it to the Council;
- Allocate the budget and forward it to the courts;
- Handle judges' requests;
- Follow up on purchases and send budget reports to those in charge, on a monthly basis;
- Carry out periodical follow-up by presenting an outline at each Council meeting;
- Act as coordinator for following up on the implementation of the judiciary's Intranet;
- Handle the reimbursement requests of judges taking part in training activities;
- Submit to the Council a report on the activities carried out by the courts;
- Take part in organizing the annual conference;
- Act within the committee on the establishment of a judicial training institute.

DIRECTION 4

A small organization like the Conseil de la magistrature especially depends on versatile staff who develop state-of-the-art expertise, particularly on the original topic of judicial ethics. Given its mandates, the organization advocates values that prompt ethical conduct.

OBJECTIVE

- To develop an organization where expertise combines with ethics.

HOW TO REACH IT

- Design and write an annual report on activities;
- Update the website;
- Identify the ethical issues of day-to-day activities;
- Keep abreast of the latest developments with regard to training and judicial ethics.

DIRECTION 5

The Conseil de la magistrature is not very well known, yet it has accomplished many high-quality and often original achievements. It is important to share the expertise that has been developed and, in return, to make the most of experiences outside Québec.

OBJECTIVES

- To cooperate with organizations outside Québec that are pursuing similar goals and to provide appropriate information on the Council's mandates and activities.
- To make the Conseil de la magistrature known as well as its role and its mandates.

HOW TO REACH IT

- Develop ties with the Canadian Judicial Council, the National Judicial Institute and all other organizations that have the mandate of ensuring compliance with rules of professional ethics and the professional development of the members of the judiciary;
- Take advantage of the Council's 30th anniversary to increase the awareness of judges, lawyers, the media and the public, of the importance of a judicial council for ensuring the independence of the judiciary.



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