

Earning
the public's trust
for **35** YEARS
1978-2013

STRATEGIC PLAN **2013** **2018**

CONSEIL DE LA  MAGISTRATURE
DU QUÉBEC

Earning
the Public's
Trust



It is my pleasure to present to you the Conseil de la magistrature's strategic plan for 2013–2018. Taking the time to chart our strategic course is always beneficial for the organization.

It invariably gives us an opportunity to take stock, an exercise that, this year, allows us to see just how far the Conseil has come in its 35 years of existence.

While today's Conseil differs in many ways from that of 1978, its primary objective – earning the public's trust – hasn't changed. These words are more than a slogan; they allude to the mindset and motivation of those who make up the Conseil.

As a legal institution, the Conseil is responsible for maintaining and strengthening the bond of trust that exists between citizens and the justice system. This takes the form of specific actions that are described in this document.

The strategic plan reiterates the Conseil's commitment to act with its characteristic discipline and attests to its determination to fulfill, with all due integrity, the functions conferred upon it by the *Courts of Justice Act*.

Chair of the Conseil
de la magistrature,

Élizabeth Corte
Chief Judge of the Court of Québec



Earning the public's trust.

By embracing this title, the framers of the Conseil's strategic plan have sought to establish clear program priorities for the institution's various players. Our team is already at work and, in keeping with its assignment, will develop activity reports that track the progress we make toward achieving these priorities. Readers can use these public reports to ascertain what has been accomplished.

The strategic plan and annual activity plan reports are integral to the ideal of transparency and accountability the Conseil has long aspired to. We invite you to monitor our progress and, in the spirit of today's participatory democracy, let us know how we are doing.

In its dealings with legal professionals, private citizens, and those who come before the court, the Conseil de la magistrature is committed to discharging its duties with discipline, dignity, and empathy, ensuring that rule of law is upheld.

Secretary of the Conseil
de la magistrature

André Ouimet
Lawyer

Our mission

The Conseil de la magistrature du Québec is a legal institution tasked with ensuring that judges have access to the best professional development programs, guaranteeing that the judiciary has access to complete legal documentation on all available media, receiving and examining complaints about the judiciary, and promoting the efficacy and standardization of proceedings before the courts.

The Conseil's mission also involves working closely with organizations outside Québec that are engaged in similar pursuits.

Our vision

To actively contribute to improving the bond of trust between the public and judicial institutions, and to ensure leadership in judicial ethics.

Our values

In its daily undertakings, the Conseil's actions are dictated by ethics, listening, and the following values:

Independence and impartiality

Creativity and innovation

Quality of service

Context

The Conseil was established nearly 35 years ago to help uphold and strengthen public trust in the judiciary through its actions in five key areas.

Ensure that the judiciary always has access to the best professional development programs

The Conseil provides organized training activities for courts and tribunals based on a pre-approved program. It verifies implementation and ensures that budgets are respected.

In addition, it works closely with judges to organize an annual conference and English language training activities. The Conseil also provides financial support so recent appointees from Québec can attend a training session for new Canadian criminal court judges.

Propose a technology vision and solutions that enable judges to access legal documentation in real time and in a user-friendly manner.

To keep their knowledge current, judges must have access to the tools of their trade: laws, regulations, and reference works.

To provide it, the Conseil has put information online and created an intranet giving users access to myriad databases and numerous reference volumes.

A partnership agreement with Centre d'accès à l'information juridique (CAIJ) also provides access to various databases and libraries located throughout Québec.

Receive and examine complaints against judges

Private citizens may file complaints about the performance of judges. These complaints are examined in light of judicial codes of ethics which, while not prescriptive, set forth general principles relating to judges' behavior in court and in public. Complaints are reviewed by the Conseil in full session, with the Secretariat providing support to those who examine the complaints and investigate judicial conduct. The Secretariat also responds to queries and information requests, and ensures that the website remains user-friendly.

Enhance the efficacy and standardization of court proceedings

The justice system faces numerous challenges, many of them involving courts under Conseil oversight. The Conseil can help them improve the administration of justice.

To remain a dynamic organization widely known for its leadership

The Conseil must cooperate with international bodies outside Québec that play a role similar to its own. The [*Courts of Justice*] Act requires us to do as much. If the Conseil is to benefit from such relationships, it must remain a leader in matters that fall under its purview, including judicial codes of conduct and professional development of judges. It must remain at the vanguard of the field.

Strategic guidelines

In accordance with its mission and current conditions, the Conseil will pursue the following strategic priorities over the next five years:

Organize professional development programs for judges

3
AREAS

The Conseil's efforts fall into three areas of activity.

AREA OF ACTIVITY

A responsive and responsible Conseil

OBJECTIVE

- > Work closely with those responsible for professional development in the courts and tribunals to obtain all information needed to fully take on its mandate in this area

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Training that meets all needs

OBJECTIVES

- > Coordinate the organization of the annual conference and all Conseil-approved activities
- > Foster a collaborative mindset among all professional development partners and provide technical support as needed
- > Suggest innovative training activities that reflect the realities of the judiciary

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Optimal professional development

OBJECTIVES

- > Stay abreast of advances in adult learning techniques so as to continually enhance professional development for judges
- > Recommend to courts and tribunals tools that have proven effective for on-site, online, or remote training
- > Take part in discussion forums held by the National Judicial Institute and other organizations devoted to judicial training and professional development

Propose a technology vision and solutions that judges can use to access current legal documentation in real time, and in a user friendly manner

2
AREAS

Conseil actions fall within 2 areas of activity

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Provide easy access to legal documentation

OBJECTIVES

- > Seek out the most advanced means of accessing legal documentation
- > Propose a vision for accessing legal documentation that takes into account advances in information technologies, and urge judges to adopt them
- > Make all legal documentation pertaining to judges' responsibilities available in commonly used formats

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Optimize the use of technology to encourage responsible handling of requests

OBJECTIVES

- > Provide judges with comprehensive information enabling them to fully understand regulations governing the acquisition of legal documentation
- > Promote training in conjunction with various legal databases

Receive and examine complaints against judges

2
AREAS

Conseil actions fall within 2 areas of activity

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Advice for the public and training for judges

OBJECTIVES

- > Respond promptly to information requests from the public
- > Monitor requests from the public
- > Collaborate at new judge orientation, ethics and code of conduct training sessions, and share expertise developed by the Conseil with the judiciary

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Analyses, examinations, and investigations

OBJECTIVES

- > Exercise due diligence in examining complaints
- > When examining complaints against judges, show thoroughness and respect for the rule of law
- > Analyze how other judicial councils operate in order to compile an assessment and learn from it

Promote procedural efficacy and standardization in the courts

2
AREAS

Conseil actions fall within 2 areas of activity

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Opinions for the Minister of Justice

OBJECTIVES

- > Survey best practices regarding procedures and access to justice
- > Examine laws and the workings of the courts in order to present a recommendation for improving Québec's justice system to the Minister of Justice

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Accessible justice

OBJECTIVE

- > Contribute to various initiatives aimed at making justice more accessible for the public

Remain a dynamic organization known worldwide as a leader

3
AREAS

Conseil actions fall within 3 areas of activity

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Human resources

OBJECTIVES

- > Ensure ongoing training for personnel tasked with responding to requests from the public
- > Promote ongoing training for members, particularly in the area of ethics and codes of conduct
- > Maintain an organization that is reputed for discipline and leadership

AREA OF ACTIVITY

External communications

OBJECTIVES

- > Ensure that all decisions rendered by the Conseil are conveyed to the judiciary and general public
- > Establish a communications plan while continuing to disseminate information about the Conseil's role and accomplishments

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Influence and cooperation

OBJECTIVES

- > Coordinate the updating of *Applied Judicial Ethics*
- > Add information on legal ethics to the "Judicial Ethics online" site
- > With Conseil partners, establish a network of French-language judicial councils, working with the Association of Judicial Disciplinary Counsel

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