



Government of
Saskatchewan

Annual Report 2003 - 2004

Law Reform Commission
of Saskatchewan

Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan

The Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan was established by An Act to Establish a Law Reform Commission, proclaimed in force in November, 1973, and began functioning in February of 1974.

The Commissioners are:

Ms Merrilee Rasmussen, Q.C., Chair
Mr. Kenneth P. R. Hodges, Q.C.
Ms Michaela Keet
Mr. Alan McIntyre
Ms Susan Amrud, Q.C.
Ms Bonnie Missens
Ms Carole Lavallee
Mr. Brian Evans
Mr. Justice R.D. Laing

Mr. Michael Finley is Director of Research.

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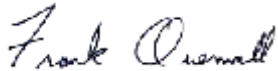
Letters of Transmittal

The Honourable Lynda Haverstock
Lieutenant Governor
Province of Saskatchewan

Your Honour:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan for the period April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



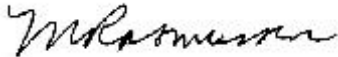
Frank Quennell, Q.C.
Minister of Justice
and Attorney General

The Honourable Frank Quennell, Q.C.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Regina, Saskatchewan

Sir:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan for the period April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



Merrilee Rasmussen, Q.C.
Chair

Objectives

The Law Reform Commission Act provides that:

"The Commission shall take and keep under review all the law of the province, including statute law, common law and judicial decisions, with a view to its systematic development and reform, including the codification, elimination of anomalies, repeal of obsolete and unnecessary enactments, reduction in the number of separate enactments and generally the simplification and modernization of the law."

Topics for the Commission's research program are brought before meetings of the Commission for consideration. These topics may originate from a recommendation of the Minister of Justice, from the Commission and its staff, from the judiciary, from the legal profession, from other professional organizations, or from the public generally.

Once the research study in a particular project is completed, the matter is placed before the Commission for discussion and consideration. The Commission may decide to issue background papers or tentative proposals for circulation to the public in order to obtain criticism and comment prior to the preparation of a final report. This may entail public meetings, hearings and workshops. The Commission's recommendations are embodied in its final report to the Minister of Justice.

The Commission works closely with the Department of Justice in formulating research projects and facilitating adoption of its proposals. The Commission has also made an on-going contribution on behalf of the Province to the national work of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. Commissioners and the Director of Research have served as members of the Conference for many years.

The Commission is a member of the Federation of Law Reform Agencies of Canada.

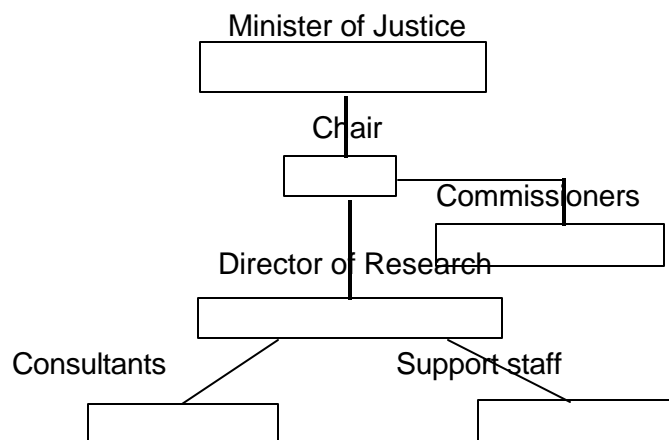
The Commissioners and Staff

The Law Reform Commission Act provides that the Minister of Justice shall appoint a Chair and not less than two other members of the Commission. Ms. Merrilee Rasmussen, Q.C., is Chair of the Commission. The other Commissioners are Kenneth P.R. Hodges, Q.C. (who was Chair from 1992-2000), Professor Michaela Keet of the College of Law, University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Alan McIntyre, a member of the Robertson Stromberg law firm in Regina, Ms Susan Amrud, Q.C., of the Saskatchewan Department of Justice, and Ms Bonnie Missens, a member of the Worme, Semaganis and Missens law firm in Saskatoon. In 2003, two lay commissioners were appointed to assist the Commission in its work by providing a non-legal perspective on the issues before it. The lay Commissioners are Ms Carole Lavallee of the Cowessess First Nation and Mr. Brian Evans, of Saskatoon. Mr. Justice Laing, of the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench, was also appointed as a Commissioner in 2003.

Mr. Michael Finley is Director of Research.

Previous members of the Commission are Professor Brian A. Grosman, Q.C. (Chair 1978-82), Professor R.C.C. Cuming, Q.C. (Chair 1978-82), Dr. D.A. Schmeiser, Q.C. (Chair 1982-87), Mr. Dale Linn, Q.C. (Chair 1987-92), Chief Justice E.D. Bayda (1974-76), Mr. George J.D. Taylor, Q.C. (1974-82), Madam Justice Marjorie A. Gerwing (1976-92), Mr. Gordon J. Kuski, Q.C. (1982-92), Madam Justice Gene Anne Smith (1992-98), Ms Gailmarie Anderson (1992-2001), Judge Dianne Morris (1992-2002) and Mr. Douglas Moen, Q.C. (2000-2002).

Organization Chart



Financial Information

The Law Reform Commission is financed by the Province of Saskatchewan and the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan, and receives annual matching grants of \$60,000.00 from each.

Commissioners receive honoraria from the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan based on the Order in Council by which they are appointed. The Chair receives \$235 per day when engaged in work of the Commission and Commissioners receive \$155 per day. The Director of Research is employed on a contractual basis at the rate of \$70,000.00 per annum.

Research Program and Activities

1. Research Completed 2003-2004

The Commission completed two research projects during the current fiscal year and issued the following reports:

Research Paper: *The Saskatchewan Evidence Act*

The Commission completed a review of the history of *The Saskatchewan Evidence Act*. This research is intended to facilitate modernization of the legislation by the Department of Justice.

Report on the Liability of Directors and Officers of Non-Profit Organizations

This report, issued in March 2003, completed the Commission's project on the personal liability of board members in the not-for-profit sector. A consultation paper issued in July 2001 was the basis for consultations with the sector, the bar, and regulators. The final report proposed significant limitation on the personal liability of directors and officers of volunteer organizations.

The consultations conducted by the Commission and its final report relating to liability of directors and officers of non-profit corporations led to the introduction of amendments to *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995* in the Saskatchewan Legislature on May 1, 2003. The amendments (Bill 29) were given third reading on June 5, 2003, and came into force on June 27, 2003.

These reports can be found on the Commission's website at www.lawreformcommission.sk.ca.

2. Inventory of Law Reform Issues

The Commission has compiled an inventory of law reform issues in Saskatchewan. The inventory process was designed to identify emerging trends in law and society as well as more discrete topics for law reform. Consultation with interested groups, individuals, and

organizations focused on identification of issues and challenges, grouped about eight major themes:

- Democracy
- Aboriginal Peoples
- Human Rights
- Families and Children
- Vulnerable Adults
- Communities and the Environment
- Administrative Law and Procedure
- Technical Legal Issues

The inventory serves as a basis for the future work of the Commission. The Commission is also hopeful that it will assist legislators, researchers, and others interested in law reform to identify emerging needs of the justice system in Saskatchewan.

3. Current Research Program

Aboriginal Peoples:

The Commission is working jointly with the Law Commission of Canada to investigate issues relating to Aboriginal self-government in a broad social and political context.

The first phase of the project was the preparation of a paper that was presented at a national conference on "Governance, Self-government and Legal Pluralism" sponsored by the Assembly of First Nations and held in Hull, Quebec on April 23-24, 2003. The paper was prepared in consultation with the Commission Chair, Merrilee Rasmussen, by John Whyte, Q.C., former Deputy Minister of Justice for Saskatchewan. It is anticipated that the paper will lead to a second phase of the project that will focus on practical implementation of Aboriginal Self-government as a means to community development.

Human Rights

The Vulnerable Worker: The Law Commission of Canada has prepared a report that reviews this issue in terms of the federal government's legislative authority. The Commission has determined that it could usefully add to this discussion by reviewing the issues from a provincial perspective.

Vulnerable Adults:

Powers of Attorney: At the initiative of the Saskatchewan Law Reform Commission, representatives of law reform agencies in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba have met to discuss joint projects. The first such joint project was initiated in 2003 in relation to enduring powers of attorney, and specifically facilitating recognition of the enduring power of attorney document, clarifying the duties of attorneys, and issues for persons interacting with attorneys. A joint consultation paper was approved by all western law reform agencies by March 31, 2004, and consultations in the four jurisdictions will occur during 2004-2005.

Provincial Steering Committee on Abuse of Adults in Vulnerable Circumstances : The Commission continues its involvement with the Steering Committee, whose work led to the development of *The Powers of Attorney Regulations* and enactment of *The Powers of Attorney Act* on April 1, 2003. The work of the Steering Committee is now focusing on development of legislation respecting personal powers of attorney.

Administrative Law and Procedure:

The Commission's Administrative Law project responds to a perceived need for clear and accessible legislative guidance for the wide range of decision-making by boards and tribunals operating under provincial law.

The first phase of the project focuses on the concept of a model procedural code to guide the work of administrative tribunals established under Saskatchewan legislation. A consultation paper, *A Model Code of Procedure For Administrative Tribunals*, was issued in May, 2003 and can be found on the Commission's web site. The Commission has circulated the draft to interested individuals and organizations and has met with several groups and individuals as part of its consultation process. It expects to issue a final report in Fall 2004.

The second phase of the project considers procedure before disciplinary committees and tribunals of self-governing professions regulated by Saskatchewan legislation. A third phase will look at appeals from administrative tribunals.

Legal Issues:

Wills and Estates: During the course of consultations with members of the Saskatchewan bar as part of the Commission's inventory of law reform issues, concern about several matters involving the law of wills and administration of estates was identified. The Commission has engaged in research on the issues of revocation of wills by marriage and divorce and expects to release a discussion paper in relation to these topics in Spring 2004. The Commission has also commenced a project to examine the issue of electronic wills and, in addition, a project relating to probate reform.

Title Insurance: The Commission has embarked upon a Joint Project with the Manitoba and Alberta law reform agencies on the issue of title insurance in a Torrens system of land title registration. A joint research paper has been prepared to form the basis of consultations in the three jurisdictions, which consultations will occur in 2004-2005

Research in consultation with the Department of Justice: The Commission has assisted the Department of Justice in its review of *The Limitation of Actions Act*. This legislation has been the topic of several reports issued by the Commission.

Other topics to be explored:

"New Projects" is a standing item on the Commission's agenda. At present, the Commission is exploring the following with a view to bringing forward more specific proposals in respect of each:

- Neighbour and Neighbour Relations: the numerous issues within provincial jurisdiction that affect the relationships between people who live

on neighbouring land, e.g., pesticide use, noise, trees;

- Appeals to the court from administrative tribunals: a review of existing appeal provisions and recommendations respecting model provisions.
- Duties of decision-making boards that are not statutorily required to hold hearings: whether a codification of the duties of these boards would be useful.

A complete list of the Commission's reports can be found on the Commission's website at www.lawreformcommission.sk.ca.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the integrity of the financial information reported by the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan. Fulfilling this responsibility requires the preparation and presentation of financial statements and other financial information according to the recommendations of the Public Sector Accounting Board. These recommendations are consistently applied, with any exceptions specifically described in the financial statements.

The accounting systems used by the Commission include an appropriate system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that:

- ! transactions are authorized;
- ! the Commission's assets are properly kept and financial reports are properly monitored to ensure reliable information is provided for preparation of financial statements and other information;
- ! the accounts are properly kept and financial reports are properly monitored to ensure reliable information is provided for preparation of financial statements and other financial information.

To ensure management meets its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal control, the members of the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan discuss audit and reporting matters with representatives of management at regular meetings. The members of the Commission have also reviewed the financial statements with representatives of management.

The Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan has audited the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan's statement of financial position as at March 31, 2004 and the related statements of operations and changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. The Provincial Auditor's responsibility is to express an opinion on the fairness of management's financial statements. The Auditor's Report outlines the scope of the audit and the Provincial Auditor's opinion.

Merrilee Rasmussen, Q.C.
Chair
Regina, Saskatchewan
June, 2004

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

COMMERCIAL AND CONTRACT LAW

Personal property security legislation

Background Paper, Reform of Personal Property Security Law in Saskatchewan, May 1975

Tentative Proposals for a Saskatchewan Personal Property Security Act, February 1976

Report to the Attorney General, Proposals for a Saskatchewan Personal Property Security Act, 1977

A Handbook on the Saskatchewan Personal Property Security Act, August 1987

Tentative Proposals for a New Personal Property Security Act, 1991

Proposals for a New Personal Property Security Act, June 1992

Consumer credit

Tentative Proposals for a Consumer Credit Act, Part I: Background and Underlying Considerations, Part II: Statistics, August 1980

Tentative Proposals for a Consumer Credit Act, Part III: Secured Consumer Credit Transactions, Summary of Recommendations, May 1981

Proposals for a Consumer Credit Act, February, 1989

Frustrated contracts

Tentative Proposals for a Frustrated Contracts Act, April, 1987

Proposals for a Frustrated Contracts Act, November, 1988

Other

The Bulk Sales Act, June 1990

Validation of Electronic Documents (background Paper), 1994

FAMILY LAW

Matrimonial Property

First Mini-Working Paper, Division of Matrimonial Property, Problems Within the Present Law, June 1974

Second Mini-Working Paper, Division of Matrimonial Property, Possible Solutions to Problems Within the Present Law, September 1974

Third Working Paper, Division of Matrimonial Property, Tentative Proposals for Reform of Matrimonial Property Law, October 1974

Report to the Attorney General, Proposals for a Saskatchewan Matrimonial Homes Act, May 1976

Tentative Proposals for Reform of The Matrimonial Property Act, September 1984

Proposals Relating to Matrimonial Property Legislation, December 1985

Matrimonial Property Act: Selected Topics, 1996

Common law Relationships Under the Matrimonial Property Act, 1997

Maintenance

Background Paper, Family Maintenance Between Husband and Wife, November 1975

Background Paper, Children's Maintenance, January 1976

Tentative Proposals for an Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, March 1982

Custody

Tentative Proposals for Custody Law Reform, Part I: Substantive Law, August 1979

Tentative Proposals for Custody Law Reform, Part II: Procedures and Support Services, May 1980

Proposals on Custody, Parental Guardianship and the Civil Rights of Minors, December 1981

Tentative Proposals Relating to Testamentary Custody and Guardianship of Children, October 1984

Civil rights in the family

Tentative Proposals Relating to the Civil Rights of Children, December 1979

Tentative Proposals for an Equality of Status of Married Persons Act, May 1981

Proposals for an Equality of Status of Married Persons Act, May 1982

Other

Proposals Relating to the Change of Name of Children of Divorced Parents, March 1985

LEGISLATION, PROCEDURE AND COURTS

Limitation of Actions

Tentative Proposals for Changes in Limitations Legislation, Part I: The Effect of Limitations on Title to Real Property, July 1981

Saskatchewan Limitation Periods (Sask. Law Review), 1982

Tentative Proposals for Changes in Limitations Legislation, Part II: The Limitation of Actions Act, May 1986

Proposals for a New Limitation of Actions Act, April 1989

Comparison of Proposals for the Reform of Limitations of Actions, 1998

Jury Act

Tentative Proposals for Reform of The Jury Act, May 1979

Proposals for Reform of The Jury Act, December 1979

English Statutes

The Status of English Statute Law in Saskatchewan, February 1990

Proposals Relating to Distress for Rent, May 1993

The Statute of Frauds, 1996

Co-ownership of real property, 2001

MEDICAL-LEGAL

Consent of minors to health care

Tentative Proposals for a Consent of Minors to Health Care Act, November 1978

Proposals for a Consent of Minors to Health Care Act, February 1980

Legal definition of death

Tentative Proposals for a Definition of Death Act, June 1980

Proposals for a Definition of Death Act, December 1980

Commitment of the mentally ill

Tentative Proposals for a Compulsory Mental Health Care Act, November 1981

Proposals for a Compulsory Mental Health Care Act, March 1985

Tentative Proposals for a Lieutenant Governor's Review Board in Saskatchewan, January 1984

Adult guardianship and related matters

Tentative Proposals for a Guardianship Act, Part I: Personal Guardianship, January 1981

Proposals for a Guardianship Act, Part I: Personal Guardianship, January 1983

Ensuring Continuity, March 1995

Enduring Powers of Attorney (Discussion Paper), 1999-2000

Enduring Powers of Attorney (Consultation Paper) 2001

Artificial insemination

Tentative Proposals for a Human Artificial Insemination Act, November 1981

Proposals for a Human Artificial Insemination Act, March, 1987

Coroners

Proposals for a New Coroners Act, September, 1984

Living Wills

Proposals for an Advance Health Care Directives Act, December 1991

TORT AND INSURANCE LAW

Guest passengers and other automobile insurance matters

Proposals Relating to Guest Passenger Legislation, August 1983

Proposals for Restoring Civil Remedies Lost Upon Forfeiture Under The Automobile Accident Insurance Act, October 1984

Occupier's liability

Tentative Proposals for an Occupiers' Liability Act, June 1980

Proposals for an Occupiers' Liability Act, October 1980

Survival of Actions

Proposals for a Survival of Actions Act, May 1985

Joint liability

Proposals Relating to Joint Obligations, June 1990

The Insolidum Doctrine and Contributory Negligence, 1998

Interspousal Tort Immunity

Tentative Proposals for Reform of the Law Affecting Liability Between Husband and Wife and Related Insurance Contracts, March 1979

Proposals for Reform of the Law Affecting Liability Between Husband and Wife and Related Insurance Contracts, November 1979

Structured Judgments

Proposals for a Structured Judgments Act, April 1993

Liability of Volunteers

Liabilities of Volunteers and Organizations in the Not-for-profit Sector (Discussion paper), 1999

Liability of Board Members in the Not-for-profit sector (Consultation Paper), 2001

Report on the Liability of Directors and Officers of Non-Profit Organizations (2003)

TRUSTS

Proposals Relating to the Rules Against Perpetuities and Accumulations, June 1987

The Rule in *Saunders v. Vautier* and the Variation of Trusts, 1994

The Investment Powers of Trustees, 1995

Retirement and Removal of Trustees, 1996 (not released)

Proposals for Reform of *The Trustees Act* (2002)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

A Model Code of Procedure for Administrative Tribunals (Consultation Paper) (2003)

OTHER

Strict liability in provincial statutes

Working Paper, Provincial Offences: Tentative Recommendations for Reform, April 1977

Tentative Proposals for Defences to Provincial Offences, February 1981

Compensation on acquittal

Tentative Proposals for Compensation of Accused on Acquittal, July, 1987

Conflict of interest in government

Report to the Attorney General, Conflict of Interest, March 1977

Unclaimed property

Unclaimed Intangible Property: Constitutional and Conflict-of-laws issues, 1998 (prepared for the Uniform Law Conference)

Ademption by Equitable Conversion

Proposals Relating to Ademption by Equitable Conversion, October 1984