



Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly

Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight

Report on Board Governance Issues

Chair: Mr. Charles Dent, MLA



MAR 06 2003

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Speaker:

Your Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has the honour of presenting its Report on Board Governance Issues, and commends it to the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Dent".

Charles Dent
Chairperson

MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT

Charles Dent
MLA Frame Lake
Chair

Floyd Roland
MLA Inuvik Boot Lake
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MLA Yellowknife South

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MLA Hay River North

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Leon Lafferty
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MLA Deh Cho

Steven Nitah
MLA Tu Nedhe

STAFF MEMBERS

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Colette Langlois
Director, Research
Services

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Committee Coordinator

BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

Over the years, the Government of the Northwest Territories has come to rely on a growing number of boards, councils, authorities and other agencies to assist in the delivery of services to citizens. In some cases these bodies are advisory in nature; some provide direct management, while many have responsibilities somewhere in between.

Members are elected to some and appointed to others. Some entities have extensive legislation setting out their roles, specifying how appointments will be made, levels of service delivery and funding. There are varying degrees in the level of responsibility and delegation of authority. The residents who make up these various committees, councils and boards are mostly hardworking volunteers.

Citizens in the Northwest Territories, like the rest of Canada, expect to be consulted on issues affecting their lives and this often leads to the establishment of a committee structure.

It is always prudent to review major programs and services on a regular basis to ensure that the program aims are being achieved. The variety of committees, boards, and councils and their structures raises a number of questions. For example – how many total current structures are there? What is the make up of these entities? Are they funded to deliver programs for the GNWT? Are their roles clearly defined? Is there support for training, both for board members and staff? How is their performance measured and reported?

Should board members be appointed or elected? Whom do the board members represent? To whom are they accountable?

The Committee is aware that through the Government's Corporate Review and Transition Planning process, a Task Team has been established to review board structure. However, there has not been any public political debate on the Government's underlying philosophy with respect to boards.

Today, during Member's Statements, Committee Members will focus on the issue of board governance. A broad range of views will be presented as the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has not taken a position with respect to the operations or future of the various committees, councils and boards. However, Members feel that a public debate would be timely. As this Assembly enters its last few months of operation, we would encourage the Government to lead such a debate on the continuing and future role of committees, boards and councils.

