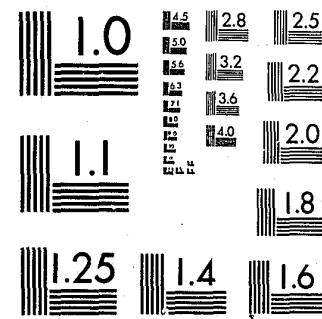


National Criminal Justice Reference Service



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Annual Report
of the Attorney-General
YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1978

81603



Annual Report of the Attorney-General

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1978

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Alberta
ATTORNEY GENERAL



ATTORNEY GENERAL

403/427-2339

Office of
the Attorney General

404 Legislative Building
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2B6

October 11, 1978

The Honourable The Speaker of
the Legislature
Province of Alberta
219 Legislative Building
Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report of the Department of the Attorney General for the year ended March 31, 1978.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Foster, Q.C.
Attorney General

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7810 1700

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LETTER FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER



403/427-5032
6th Floor, Madison Building
9919 - 105 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5K 2E8

Office of
the Deputy Attorney General

September 18, 1978

The Honourable James L. Foster, Q.C.,
Attorney General of Alberta,
404 Legislative Building,
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Sir:

I have the honour to submit to you the fourth annual report of the Department of the Attorney General for the Province of Alberta for the fiscal year April 1, 1977 to March 31, 1978.

As the Province of Alberta continues its dramatic growth both economically and population wise, the responsibilities of this department become more demanding and more complex. The department and its valued employees must continue to be ever vigilant and sensitive to the need for improvement in the administration of justice. The achievements of the department this year are in no small measure attributable to the many dedicated employees in the department.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. W. Paisley".

Ross W. Paisley, Q.C.
Deputy Attorney-General

RWP/fd

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THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

The Attorney-General, holder of an office which has existed in Canada for over 200 years, is unique among ministers of the Crown. Although he must function politically in administering a major government department, he must be above all political considerations in the exercise of his responsibilities as attorney to the Queen.

In this respect, he is responsible to the Queen and not to the government. In deciding when to prosecute and when to discontinue a prosecution, he is not under the jurisdiction of the cabinet, nor should such decisions be influenced by political considerations. They are decisions made as the Queen's attorney and not as a member of the government of the day.

As a cabinet minister and member of the Legislative Assembly, the Attorney-General is in all matters ultimately answerable to the Legislature, but in matters relating to criminal prosecutions he is open to questioning and censure only after the termination of any particular criminal proceedings. Any suggestions of political pressure in relation to the administration of criminal justice would be abhorrent to the most fundamental constitutional precepts.

This barrier between the Attorney-General and politics is somewhat less rigid when he is serving as legal advisor to the government in civil or non-criminal matters. Here, however, he must be constantly aware that the public depends on him for protection from legislative invasion of civil rights. Accordingly, in advising on legislation, the Attorney-General must ensure that government policy and political considerations are secondary to the trust that he holds for the public at large. This general duty to the public also includes representation of the Crown in the courts in all matters in which rights of a civil nature come into question.

In Alberta, the specific functions and duties of the Attorney-General fall under six headings:

Administration of Justice

In broad outline, supervision of the machinery of justice involves administration of the courts, appointment and supervision of the staff necessary for the administration of justice, supervision of Crown Counsel, the Public Trustee, and all matters connected with judicial offices. In addition, the Attorney-General is responsible for recommending the appointment of judges to the Provincial Courts.

Criminal Justice

Directing the prosecution of criminal cases remains one of the most important historic and traditional duties of the Attorney-General. This is to be distinguished from the policing aspects of law enforcement, which are now the responsibility of the Solicitor-General. This division of duties helps to ensure a judicial approach to the exercise of the Attorney-General's unique and absolute prosecutorial discretion. All prosecutions on behalf of the Crown are conducted by or are subject to the supervision of agents of the Attorney-General.

Civil Law

Civil litigation on behalf of the government or government agencies covers a wide field ranging from tort law to involved matters of judicial review of decisions of tribunals. Lawyers in the civil law section of the Department represent the interests of the province and of various other departments of government in such disputes. They have the further duty of advising the heads of the departments or agencies of

the government upon all matters of law connected with their affairs. All lawyers for the various departments are in the employ of the Attorney-General whether or not they have been seconded to those departments. This helps to maintain the lawyers' independence for the operating necessities of particular departments, thus ensuring that the legal opinions which guide government action are given from positions of objective neutrality.

Constitutional and Energy Law

Difficult questions of constitutional law and matters having to do with energy are of special concern to the Attorney-General of Alberta. Advice and litigation in these matters is the specialty of lawyers in a section of the Department established to deal with these questions.

New Legislation

The Attorney-General is specifically charged by statute with a duty to advise the government upon all matters of law connected with legislative enactment, and to supervise all government measures of a legislative nature. In performing these duties, the Attorney-General employs legislative counsel, who prepare draft legislation to implement departmental programs.

Again in the area of new legislation, the Attorney-General employs lawyers whose responsibility is to conduct research into the need for changes in the law and to make recommendations in law designed to give effect to such changes.

Other Areas

In addition to the broad responsibilities of supervising all government legislation which he bears as chief law officer of the Crown, the Attorney-General has the specifically delegated duty to administer certain statutes of Alberta. In this area, departmental staff function much as solicitors in every department, developing and adjusting legislative programs for Cabinet approval.

The Attorney-General fulfills these widespread responsibilities through the staff of the Department of the Attorney-General directed by the Deputy Attorney-General. The Department has specialized sections dealing with each of the Attorney-General's functions.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Courts and Court Services

- The Supreme Court Trial Division acquired two more justices, and eight additional judges were appointed to the Provincial Court.
- Legislation was introduced which, when enacted, would combine the Trial Division of the Supreme Court and the District Court.
- The departmental task force, Project Omega, developed a hearing officer system to handle minor provincial offences outside the criminal court.
- The fine option program was established and extended to most Provincial Courts, providing an alternative to incarceration by offering community work to persons unable to pay imposed fines.
- A program to co-ordinate the administration of justices of the peace was established.
- An automated case calendaring system was introduced in Edmonton Provincial Court.
- Plans were made for installation of \$650,000 worth of court recording equipment.

Legal Representation and Advice

- A Crown counsel case reporting system was established. A summary of the year's cases shows there were 9,957 charges laid under the Criminal Code, of which 7,028 resulted in conviction.
- Civil Law solicitor staff increased by 14 to 45.
- There were 103 acts and 1,427 orders-in-council prepared.
- A computer-controlled automated system for printing government bills became fully operational, and the Legislative Counsel office was linked to this system by word-processor terminals.
- Legislation was developed which removed processing of traffic and other offences from the criminal courts.
- The case of Regina v Hauser was brought before the Supreme Court of Canada, and at issue was the question of which level of government has the right to determine who shall prosecute criminal cases.

Public Services

- Vehicle Registry documents registration increased by 13% and searches conducted increased by 21%. Central Registry document volume rose by 18%, which includes registration of partnerships and tradenames.
- Gaming revenue in Alberta increased to \$110.8 million in 1977 from \$25.2 million in 1974.
- An Inspector of Land Titles was appointed to act as District Registrar for Edmonton and Calgary.
- The Fatality Inquiries Act was proclaimed June 1, 1977, implementing a medical examiner system for investigating sudden, unexpected or unexplained deaths.
- Cash deposits to Public Trustee bank accounts increased by 18.6% to \$38.2 million.

Boards and Associated Agencies

- The first appeal of a Crimes Compensation Board decision was heard by the Alberta Supreme Court Appellate Division and, upon reconsideration, a maximum award of \$10,000 was made in this case.
- The Public Utilities Board issued 488 orders and decisions, most of which concerned natural gas and electric utilities whose applications to change rates result from changes in the provincial support price for natural gas or from requirements to adjust to the economic climate.
- An amendment to the Expropriation Act enables an owner and an expropriating authority, under agreement between themselves, to proceed directly to the Land Compensation Board for determination of final compensation.
- The cumulative deficit of the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Fund was \$4.6 million; fees increased to \$3 for everyone buying a motor vehicle licence.
- The Alberta Law Foundation allocated \$2,689,876 in grants to 40 organizations and projects, leaving an unallocated surplus of \$2,168,079.
- Civil and criminal cases disposed of by the Legal Aid Society increased by 8%, while applications for assistance dropped 12% and approvals of applications decreased by 14%.

Support Services

- All ten Supreme and District branch libraries outside Edmonton and Calgary were reorganized.
- The department's revenue increased by 14.2% to \$29,862,931 and expenditures increased by 19.4% to \$43,754,906.
- A labour relations officer was employed to help management deal with complaints.
- Records totalling 2,446 cubic feet were transferred to the Alberta Records Centre, 1,453 cubic feet were destroyed, and 90 cubic feet were transferred to the Provincial Archives.

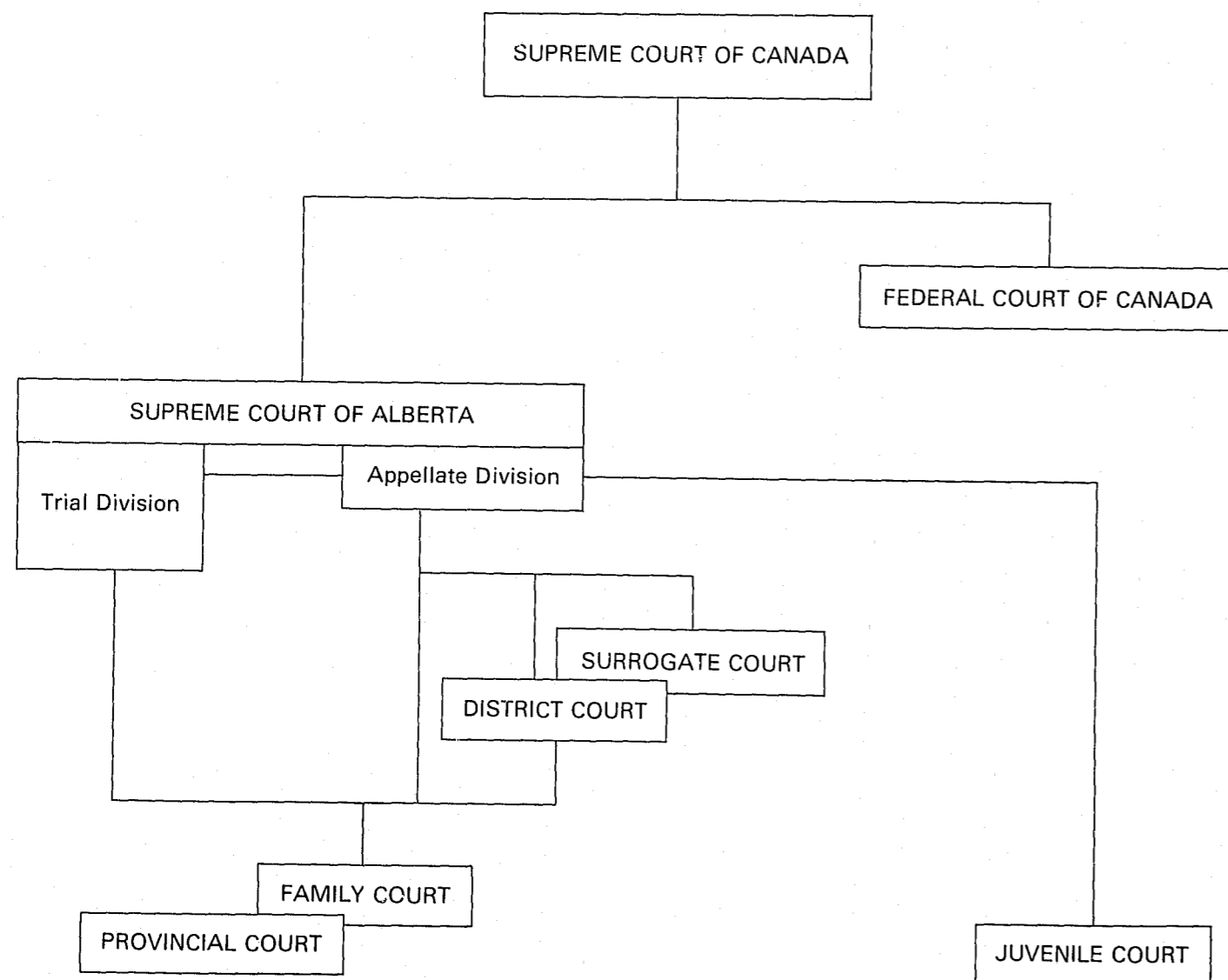
COURTS IN ALBERTA

There are six courts of Alberta, all constituted by provincial statute, which are administered by the Attorney-General in Alberta, through his principal operating division, Court Services. They are:

- The Supreme Court
- The District Court
- The Surrogate Court
- The Provincial Court
- The Family Court
- The Juvenile Court

In addition, registries are maintained by the Attorney-General's staff for the Federal Court of Canada in Alberta. This is a federally constituted court which has jurisdiction principally in claims for or against the Government of Canada, claims against federal administration Boards, income tax and admiralty matters.

The Supreme Court of Canada, although not constituted or administered provincially, has been shown to reflect its position as the court of last appeal from the courts of provincial jurisdiction.



Supreme and District Courts

Chief Justice of Alberta: William A. McGillivray
 Chief Justice of the Trial Division of the
 Supreme Court of Alberta: J. V. H. Milvain

Chief Judge of the District Court: John N. Decore

There is, in and for the province, a superior court of civil and criminal jurisdiction known as The Supreme Court of Alberta. It consists of two branches or divisions, the Appellate Division and the Trial Division.

The Appellate Division is presided over by the Chief Justice of Alberta; and, in addition to him, consists of eight other judges of the Court, assigned to it by the Governor General in Council and called justices of appeal. It sits in appeal, usually in panels of three justices, over all other courts in the province; and, its decisions may, upon leave, be appealed only to The Supreme Court of Canada, in Ottawa. In addition, it acts as the Court of Appeal for the Northwest Territories and usually sits there twice a year.

The Trial Division consists of the Chief Justice of the Trial Division and eighteen other justices assigned to it by the Governor General in Council. In addition, it has two Masters in Chambers assigned to it by the Lieutenant Governor in Council whose duties are prescribed by law and the rules of practice. It is the superior court of record for the province and has original jurisdiction in all civil and criminal matters not expressly excluded by statute.

The District Court consists of the Chief Judge, the Associate Chief Judge and eighteen puisne judges, appointed by the Governor General in Council. All judges of the District Court can act as local judges of the Supreme Court, with the permission of that Court, and are ex officio justices of the peace. Although technically an inferior court of record, the District Court has, with only a few minor exceptions, jurisdiction which is now concurrent with that of the Supreme Court. It sits in appeal over the Provincial Court in summary conviction and small claims matters and over the Family Court.

Appointments

During the current fiscal year, the personnel of the Trial Division was increased in size by the appointment of two additional justices. The number of supernumerary judges was reduced by one, from three to two, by a resignation.

Amalgamation

The Supreme and District Courts presently exercise, to all intents and purposes, concurrent jurisdiction, and they are administered in most respects as a unit. Accordingly, near the end of this fiscal year, the Attorney-General introduced legislation which, when enacted, would combine the Trial Division of the Supreme Court and the District Court to form a new superior court of original jurisdiction which would be called The Court of Queens Bench, and would convert the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court into a separate court to be called The Court of Appeal.

Trial Co-ordination

Both the Supreme and the District Courts introduced improved procedures for reserving trial dates and co-ordinating the activities of all persons involved in a trial. These improvements reflected more

progressive techniques in caseload management and have produced one of the more effective systems in dealing with court congestion and delay presently in operation in the nation.

Caseload Statistics

Civil

During the current fiscal year, a total of 57,169 civil actions were commenced in the Supreme and District Courts; 41.4% in the Supreme and 58.6% in the District Court. Although the total number increased by 1,881 cases or 3.4% over the preceding year, the number commenced in the District Court decreased by 3.0%. The Supreme Court attracted an additional 3.9% of the total cases commenced and increased its volume by 14.1% over the preceding year.

Excluding divorce, appeals were filed in 18.5% of the civil cases heard (20.4% last year); however, appeals were heard in only 9.2% of cases (12.3% last year). The number of civil appeals heard dropped between this year and last by 10.8% or 27 cases; and the rate of civil appeals heard to those filed decreased from 60.4% to 49.9% between the two years.

Criminal

Total criminal caseload decreased during the year by 8.7% from 2,627 trials to 2,399 trials. The Supreme Court heard 29.6% or 710 trials while the District Court heard 70.4% (1,689 trials). Last year, the Supreme Court heard 28.6% (752 trials) and the District Court heard 71.4% (1,875 trials).

This year, 51.1% or 1,227 of the total criminal trials were appealed. (34.3% or 902 cases last year); however, appeals were heard in 41.5% (996 cases) of the total criminal trials this year (up substantially from 28.8% or 757 cases last year). The number of criminal appeals actually heard decreased from 83.9% in those files last year to 81.2% this year.

Surrogate Court

Chief Judge of the District Court: John N. Decore

The Surrogate Court is a court of record. It has jurisdiction and authority in relation to testamentary matters and covers the issuing or revoking of grants of probate and administration and all matters arising out of or connected with the issue or revocation of grants of probate and administration. It also has jurisdiction in matters relating to the appointment of guardians and to the person and property or children under guardianship. The Supreme Court can exercise all of the jurisdiction given to the Surrogate Court.

The Chief Judge, the Associate Chief Judge and the other judges of The District Court of Alberta are the Chief Judge, Associate Chief Judge and judges respectively of the Surrogate Court.

Caseload Statistics

During the current fiscal year, the volume of applications for probate decreased marginally by 2.7% from 5,966 applications last year to 5,804 applications. This is a relatively low volume, little-known, and specialized court; however, it plays an important role in the administration of justice in the province.

Provincial Court

Chief Provincial Judge: R. A. Cawsey

The Provincial Court consists of a Chief Judge, four Assistant Chief Judges, and eighty-two other judges appointed to it by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council on the recommendation of the Attorney-General. The Court exercises both civil and criminal jurisdiction: civil by virtue of The Small Claims Act under which it has jurisdiction to try and adjudicate upon claims and counterclaims for debts and damages, not exceeding \$1,000; criminal by virtue of The Criminal Code and a variety of provincial statutes, under which it can hear summary conviction offences and certain indictable offences where the accused is given a choice as to the mode of trial. In general terms, it is usually the court of first appearance in criminal matters and for this reason has the greatest impact of any court on the general public.

Caseload Statistics

Clearly, the Provincial Court is the court with the highest volume in the Province and handles more than three times the number of hearings of all other courts combined during a given year.

This year, it handled 340,435 cases, which is 23,848 cases or 7.5% more than the preceding year. Further particulars which include the Family and Juvenile Courts are reflected in the accompanying table.

Reorganization

The initiatives undertaken during the previous years to strengthen and improve the administration of this court were carried forward into this year.

The Provincial Court Reorganization Agency, established in 1976, continued to initiate, co-ordinate and supervise implementation of the recommendations of the Provincial Court, Board of Review headed by The Honourable, Mr. Justice W. J. C. Kirby.

Project Omega, the departmental task force established in November 1976 to develop and facilitate implementation of short and long-range plans for the more effective and efficient administration of this court, pursued its initial priorities: the adult criminal and traffic courts.

In the traffic courts, the priorities of Project Omega to develop alternatives to the traditional methods of handling minor traffic and parking offences, resulted in a series of actions. These included:

- The implementation of specified penalties for provincial traffic offences previously requiring mandatory court appearances.
- The development of objectives, policy, procedures and administrative systems to support the concept of Hearing Officers handling all matters, *other than the hearing of trials*, with regard to minor traffic, parking and certain provincial offences.
- The co-ordination of the development of specified penalties for certain provincial offences, for example, illegal possession, and;
- The co-ordination of a joint Attorney-General's and Solicitor-General's study to determine the short and longer-term requirements needed to support the Traffic Diversion Proposal previously agreed to in principle, by Cabinet.

Concluded during the year, was an in-depth analysis of the operations of the Provincial Courts and the Supreme and District Courts criminal

section. The documentation of these findings by organizational units — administration, prosecution, and judiciary — included:

- Description of existing systems, procedures and practices.
- Analysis of workloads and performance indicators.
- Preliminary forecasts of caseloads.
- Preliminary analysis of reasons for adjournments.
- Identification of features of the system requiring improvements and,
- Identification of the various interface points of the various participants within the system.

Automation was introduced into the courtroom in Edmonton through a pilot project combining a word processor and sophisticated communications equipment to facilitate case calendaring. A project in the Crown Prosecutor's Office on case file control and tracking was also initiated in Edmonton and Calgary.

In the area of witness management, a witness questionnaire was administered in Edmonton to determine civilian witness problems and assess the magnitude of their problems in terms of their effect on witness co-operation. As a result of the findings, projects were initiated to:

- Implement free witness parking.
- Re-design subpoenas to highlight items important to witnesses, and
- To develop a witness central concept which will be the focal point for civilian witness problems, requests and needs.

Judicial Appointments

Twelve additional judges were appointed during the year, three retired and one resigned. As a result, the total number of judges increased by eight or 10.1%, from 79 to 87. The appointments were: two judges to each of Calgary, Edmonton and Medicine Hat and one judge to each of Red Deer, Lethbridge, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Fort Macleod and Wetaskiwin.

STATISTICS

Supreme and District Courts

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Supreme Court Trial Division				
Civil actions commenced	20,724	23,653	2,929	+14.1
Civil trials heard	6,550	6,665	115	+ 1.8
Criminal trials heard	752	710	(42)	- 5.6
Supreme Court Appellate Division				
Civil appeals filed	414	447	33	+ 8.0
Civil appeals heard	250	223	(27)	-10.8
Criminal appeals filed	902	1,227	325	+36.0
Criminal appeals heard	757	996	239	+31.6
District and Surrogate Court				
Civil actions commenced	34,564	33,516	(1,048)	- 3.0
Civil actions heard	1,309	1,559	250	+19.1
Criminal trials heard	1,875	1,689	(186)	- 9.9
Applications for probate	5,966	5,804	(162)	- 2.7
Sheriff				
Writs of execution filed	14,205	15,990	1,785	+12.6
Distress warrants filed	11,755	12,977	1,222	+10.4
Seizures made	7,263	6,929	(334)	- 4.6
Attempted seizures	5,419	6,696	1,277	+23.6
Process served	18,830	21,054	2,224	+11.8
Revenue				
Sheriff's Revenue	\$ 353,883	\$ 380,689	\$ 26,806	+ 7.6
Court Revenue	\$1,529,870	\$1,702,942	\$173,072	+11.3

Provincial Court — Hearings

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Fines assessed and collected	158,343	154,453	(3,890)	- 2.4
Fines assessed and unpaid — end of year	13,743	18,638	4,895	+35.6
Committed to gaol	18,084	19,264	1,180	+ 6.5
Dismissed	11,008	11,861	853	+ 7.7
Withdrawn	67,804	84,198	16,394	+24.2
Special sentences (Committals, probation orders, discharges, etc.)	12,248	13,361	1,113	+ 9.1
Sub-total	281,230	301,775	20,545	+ 7.3
Miscellaneous	1,752	1,901	149	+ 8.5
Master and Servants	105	42	(63)	-60.0
Labour Act	1,086	1,191	105	+ 9.7
Small Claims	15,063	18,340	3,277	+21.8
Family Courts	7,415	7,358	(57)	- .8
Juvenile Courts including provincial judges acting as ex officio judges of the Juvenile Court	9,900	11,729	1,829	+18.5
Total	316,551	342,336	25,785	+ 7.5

Provincial Court — Charges

(Including Small Claims Act and Family and Juvenile Court)

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Disposed of in court	316,587	340,435	23,848	+ 7.5
Airport and government property tags	8,597	15,665	7,068	+82.2
Traffic tickets paid out of court	281,387	308,777	27,390	+ 9.7
Total	606,571	664,877	58,306	+ 9.6

Provincial Court — Judges

	As at Mar. 31/77	As At Mar. 31/78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Barristers and Solicitors	66	76	10	+15.1
Without Law Degree	13	11	(2)	-15.4
Total	79*	87*	8	+10.1

*Three of these are part-time appointments.

Family and Juvenile Courts

Assistant Chief Judge: W. G. W. White

The Family Court is a court of record which consists of provincial judges specifically appointed to it by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. It has original jurisdiction in a variety of charges and offences directly related to the family unit, such as separation, maintenance, truancy, child welfare matters and common assaults on spouses or children triable on summary conviction.

The Juvenile Court exercises all of the powers vested in a court under the Juvenile Delinquents Act (Canada). Its jurisdiction is limited to young offenders who, because they have not reached the age of majority, cannot be tried in adult court. Each justice of the Supreme Court and each judge of the District and Provincial Courts is ex officio a judge of the Juvenile Court; however, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may appoint other persons as judges of the court.

Due to the nature of these courts, they are normally operated as a unit under the administrative direction of an Assistant Chief Judge. There are presently twelve provincial judges who work almost exclusively in these courts throughout the province. Separate court operations have been established in five centres: Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. Where a separate operation has not been established, the work of these courts is conducted in conjunction with a Provincial Court by properly appointed judges and administrative staff.

Circuit Changes

Attempting to improve their service to the general public, the Family and Juvenile Courts have expanded the number of locations where they provide their specialized service. With the appointment of the resident Provincial Judge at Jasper as a Family Court Judge, Family and Juvenile Court sittings are now held at Grande Cache. This increases the number of locations where special Family and Juvenile Court sittings are held to eight base points and forty-two circuit locations.

Court Services

Acting Director of Court Services: David W. Boyd

Court Services is the principal operating division of the Department of the Attorney-General, which maintains and administers all of the courts within the province. It also has responsibility for all services directly related to the administration of these courts, such as court reporting and sheriffs' services.

Relationship

In recognition of its significance to the total operation of his Department, the Attorney-General segregated the operating unit commonly referred to as Court Services from the general area of administration during this year and established it as an identifiable operating division reporting directly to the Deputy Attorney-General. This change will have significant, long-term and beneficial effects.

Management

Thomas J. Adamson was replaced as Director by David W. Boyd, who

had been the Administrator of the Supreme and District Courts, Judicial District of Edmonton.

Staffing

During the year, a move was initiated to break with tradition and replace all lawyers who had been acting in administrative positions in the division with qualified legal administrators. This move reflected a change in the nature of the demands placed upon these positions. The position of Legal Advisor, Court Services was established. This position requires a qualified lawyer to provide all advice necessary to the administrative and management staff.

Staffing levels were further increased during the year by the appointment of sixty-nine additional employees, principally to contend with increases in volume and to continue with the implementation of the recommendations of the Kirby Board of Review's second report.

At year-end, the total staff consisted of approximately 930 permanent positions, which represents almost one-half of the department.

Training

This year, the department in conjunction with the Department of Advanced Education, established an approved program of studies at community colleges throughout the province, which leads to accreditation in court administration. This program has been well received and will, in future years, be a pre-requisite for advancement in the system. Initial year enrolment amounted to approximately fifty employees, province-wide.

Interest and participation in the para-legal training program conducted exclusively by the department remained at a high level this year. Sixty-eight employees successfully completed the two-week program, bringing the number who have completed the program to over 150.

Fine Option Program

The fine option program, introduced in the Provincial Court at Edmonton as a pilot project in February 1976, was successfully established and extended to most Provincial Court locations throughout the province during the year. The program, operated jointly by the Department of the Attorney-General and the Solicitor General, provides an alternative to incarceration by offering community work to persons unable to pay imposed fines.

Justices of the Peace

A separate program was established during the year to ensure that the administration of the approximately one thousand justices of the peace throughout the province was properly co-ordinated. The co-ordinator works closely with the Chief Provincial Judge and the administrative staff, as well as law enforcement agencies; and, ensures that all justices of the peace are properly investigated prior to appointment, appointed, trained and performing the relatively onerous duties imposed by law.

Machine-Assisted Case Calendaring

An automated case calendaring system utilizing advanced electronic text-editing equipment was introduced to the Provincial Court at Edmonton during the year. The system, one of the more advanced ones of its type, is designed to facilitate the scheduling of cases before the courts, the arrangement of persons involved in a matter and the rational management of the caseload.

Court Reporting System

During the year, the Department designed and developed a fully integrated system for court reporting which not only uses the conventional tools of manual and mechanical shorthand but accommodates the use of advanced techniques such as electronic recording equipment and computer-assisted transcription in a rational and non-competitive manner. The department documented and has published this system in its Court Reporting Systems Manual.

The establishment of this system will allow the department to install decentralized electronic court recording equipment throughout the province. The commitment to purchase this equipment amounting to approximately \$650,000 was made this year.

Court Facilities and Construction

Court services are provided in 102 centres in the province. Twenty of these are base points where there are usually resident staff and Provincial Court Judges (Edson, Hanna and Vegreville have resident staff only). These base points are also served by District Court on circuit from Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge, and by the Supreme Court Trial Division on circuit from Edmonton and Calgary. Court facilities at the base points are housed in thirteen courthouses, ten provincial buildings, three municipal buildings, and four private rental accommodations.

During the year, the construction of new and replacement facilities continued at a high rate with approved expenditures for capital projects at approximately \$6.8 million.

LEGAL REPRESENTATION AND ADVICE

Criminal Justice

Director: Yaroslav Roslak, Q.C.

The Criminal Justice Section is responsible for the administration of criminal justice throughout the province.

Staffing

The section has a general prosecutorial staff of 91 full-time Crown counsel positions located at the following centres: head office 10; Edmonton 35; Calgary 24; Red Deer 4; Lethbridge 7; Medicine Hat 2; Wetaskiwin 3; Grande Prairie 2; Peace River 3; Drumheller 1. Retainer agents are employed in Lloydminster and Edson.

A group of five Crown counsel in Edmonton and Calgary make up the special prosecutorial section, which handles cases involving complex corporate or commercial problems or particularly sensitive matters.

The head office section in Edmonton is charged with general prosecutorial duties, special projects and research projects. It includes responsibility for the judicial district of Vegreville. Certain boards and government agencies, for example gaming control, refer special criminal considerations to this section. Suggestions for amendments to the Criminal Code and other statutes are researched and proposed through this section, which is staffed by ten Crown counsel.

The practice of having police officers appear as prosecutors in the province of Alberta has been almost eliminated.

Student Programs

The Criminal Justice Section works with the Civil Law Section providing a program for articling students. This program is preliminary to a person being admitted to the Alberta Bar Association. Seven students are articulated to senior members of this section, participating in courtroom work as well as providing research and briefing material.

Case Reporting System

In September 1976, a Crown counsel case reporting system was established. This system reports and catalogues the more serious cases heard in Alberta and the Supreme Court of Canada. It provides a means of monitoring the effectiveness of the criminal justice system regionally and province-wide, as well as a review of the disposition of individual cases. The case reporting system also forms a basis for the consideration of an appeal in any given matter.

Pilot Projects

The Criminal Justice Section continued its involvement in the pre-trial disclosure project begun in January 1977. The purpose of this pilot project is to test the usefulness of a formalized system in which Crown and defence counsel could meet prior to trial to reveal the Crown's case to the accused. Designed to save time and to eliminate the calling of unnecessary witnesses, this project was in progress in Edmonton during 1977. A similar project commenced in Calgary before the end of the reporting year.

This section is participating in a diversion project in the northern part of the province. This project is designed to divert citizens from criminal court to other agencies and to programs designed to provide assistance, or an alternative to the court system, and/or counselling.

Professional Development

Crown counsel attend in-service training and seminars sponsored by the Alberta Crown Attorneys' Association and the Federal Law Society of Canada, as well as meetings of the Alberta and Canadian Bar Associations.

In March 1978, Alberta hosted the first annual meeting of Crown counsel from Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Seminars were conducted by senior Crown counsel and practitioners and jurists from across Canada. It will serve as the prototype of future interprovincial meetings.

The Alberta Crown Attorney's Association held meetings in May and September 1977. Discussions, lectures and panels were conducted on legal subjects. Association business was dealt with at the September meeting.

Proceedings by Location of Crown Agents and Nature of Court

April 1, 1977 — March 31, 1978

	Edmonton	Edmonton Dist.	Calgary	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Medicine Hat	Peace River	Grande Prairie	Drumheller	Wetaskiwin	TOTAL
PROVINCIAL COURT											
Preliminaries	264	13	364	1	6	—	13	4	7	10	682
Trials	3232	133	2253	329	387	415	220	182	27	237	7415
DISTRICT COURT											
Trials — Judge	784	35	451	13	25	17	86	25	2	19	1457
Trials — Judge and Jury	31	3	29	—	3	—	3	—	—	—	69
SUPREME COURT — TRIAL											
Trials — Judge	129	30	527	19	5	—	33	8	8	4	803
Trials — Judge and Jury	31	1	76	3	2	—	—	—	2	4	119
Appeals — By Accused	18	—	4	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	25
Appeals — By Crown	12	1	—	—	—	—	3	1	—	—	17
Other	18	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24
SUPREME COURT — APPELLATE											
Appeals — By Accused	199	62	233	10	16	11	—	1	3	—	535
Appeals — By Crown	89	15	70	7	7	1	—	—	1	—	190
SUPREME COURT OF CANADA											
Appeals — By Accused	3	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
Appeals — By Crown	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Provincial, District and Supreme Court Trials — Verdicts

April 1, 1977 - March 31, 1978

Offence	Charges	Conviction	Acquittal	Stays/Withdrawals	Other
Murder	25	16	4	1	4
Attempted Murder	28	7	4	16	1
Manslaughter	25	24	1	—	—
Rape	63	25	23	14	1
Other Sexual Offences	256	156	51	46	3
Wounding	90	47	22	21	—
Assault	434	288	63	81	2
Robbery	439	282	48	107	2
Break & Enter	2767	2202	164	399	2
Theft — Auto	155	121	13	21	—
Theft	983	689	103	190	1
Possession — Stolen Goods	1228	742	142	344	—
Prostitution	34	11	10	13	—
Gaming & Betting	10	7	1	2	—
Offensive Weapons	491	278	75	137	1
Other Indictable	2929	2131	276	515	7
Total Criminal Code	9957	7026	1000	1907	24
Other Federal Statute	2	1	—	1	—
Provincial Statute	—	—	—	—	—

Civil Law

Director of Civil Law: Alexander Hogan, Q.C.

The responsibilities of the Attorney-General include acting as legal advisor to all departments in government and representing the Crown in all courts of civil jurisdiction. The department's Civil Law Section is concerned with these matters.

Legal Advice

Lawyers are seconded to other government departments where they act in advisory capacities on the interpretation of statutes, contracts and other matters of civil law. The advantages of this system are the professional nature of legal supervision through the department of the Attorney-General, as well as uniformity in the interpretation of statutory and case law when legal positions, policies, and procedures affect two or more departments of government. In addition, the rotation of departmental assignments of lawyers in the Civil Law Section provides for greater opportunity for career development and specialization. Separation of lawyers from subordinate allegiance to particular departments is consistent with the necessary independence of the Attorney-General who has statutory authority to determine the legality of administrative decisions in the provincial government.

Staff Changes

All lawyers in the Civil Law Section are presently based in Edmonton, and report to the Director of Civil Law. Legal staff has increased by 14 to a total of 45 solicitors at March 31, 1978.

Legislative Counsel Office

Legislative Counsel: Glen Acorn, Q.C.

The Office of the Legislative Counsel prepared the 103 public and general Acts assented to during the year ended March 31, 1978 and the 1,427 orders-in-council which were passed by Cabinet during that period. It also drafted the majority of the 423 regulations which were filed under The Regulations Act.

The office has a total staff of 22, including nine lawyers, three of whom are assigned primarily to drafting of regulations. Another is assigned to preparing a revision of the Statutes of Alberta, expected to be available by the fall of 1981.

By March 31, a computer-controlled automated system for printing government bills became fully operational. Word processor terminals in the office were linked with the Government Services computer, and legislative draftsmen edited their work on terminal screens. All the printing for the 1978 spring session of the Legislature was done using computer technology and an automated photocomposition process.

Legal Research and Analysis

Director: Margaret Donnelly

This section provides legal advice to the Attorney-General and his Deputy in law reform and policy planning. Members of the section serve on interdepartmental committees studying law reform, the Rules of Court Committee, the joint Alberta government/Law Society Advisory Committee which is responsible for the provision of law

libraries in Alberta, and the Institute of Law Research and Reform. This section also maintains a liaison with other law reform bodies and with the Uniform Law Conference.

During the fiscal year the Director and the staff of three solicitors developed legislation which removed the processing of traffic and other provincial offences from the criminal courts, and legislation which reformed the law relating to the distribution of matrimonial property on marriage breakdown. They were involved in research projects on family law, personal property security registration, as well as laws relating to juries, children, the constitution and land titles, and other matters.

Constitutional and Energy Law

Assistant Deputy Attorney-General: William Henkel, Q.C.

Legal Opinions

The Constitutional and Energy Law Section prepares opinions and gives advice on all matters of constitutional law as they arise within the department and other departments of government. It does the same when requested by bodies such as the Motor Transport Board and Alberta Housing Corporation. In a similar fashion it prepares opinions and offers advice on matters of energy law particularly those involving a constitutional law question. The section also appears on the trial of civil and criminal cases to which the government is a party which involve a constitutional law issue, as well as cases where notice has been given under the Judicature Act that a constitutional law question has been raised during the course of criminal or civil litigation. The section also sits on committees established from time to time where constitutional law matters are likely to arise such as the interdepartmental committee concerned with the new Alaska pipeline through Canada to the United States.

Bill of Rights

In addition the section assumed the responsibility for all Bill of Rights matters, whenever a challenge to the operation of federal or provincial legislation is made during the course of criminal or civil litigation.

Principal Cases

The principal cases which the section has been involved in during the past year include R. v Hauser before the Supreme Court of Canada. In that case the question of which level of government has the right to determine who shall prosecute criminal cases was in issue. The second major case in which the province appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada was The Government of Saskatchewan v Central Canada Potash. The case at issue was the jurisdiction of a provincial government to limit the production of a natural product destined for export and to control the price at which it is marketed. The third case, Commission du Salaire Maximum v Construction Montcalm, concerns the limit of provincial jurisdiction in the field of labour relations.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Central and Vehicle Registrations

Registrar, Central Registry: H. J. Corie
Registration Clerk, Vehicle Registry: J. G. Banks

The Central Registry office records documents and conducts searches on all chattels other than motor vehicles, aircraft, trailers, oil drilling equipment and railway rolling stock which are the responsibility of the Vehicle Registry. Both registries are now in the same location to provide the public with a one-stop service for lien and encumbrance registrations and searches.

Vehicle Registry

During the year 1977-78 the Vehicle Registry registered 347,804 documents which was a 13% increase over the previous year. A total of 250,553 searches were conducted representing a 21% increase over the year 1976-77. In addition a total of 3,433 Notices of Seizure were filed and 1,170 Customs Import Notices were recorded.

Statutes controlling the Vehicle Registry's function are the Bills of Sale Act, Conditional Sales Act, Garagemen's Lien Act and the Chattel Security Registries Act.

Central Registry

In addition to personal property, this Registry also registers limited partnerships as well as partnerships and tradenames. During the year 1977-78 a total of 106,703 documents were registered and 42,038 searches conducted representing an increase of 18% over the previous year.

Statutes controlling the Central Registry are the Chattel Security Registries Act, the Bills of Sale Act, the Conditional Sales Act, the Assignment of Book Debts Act, and the Partnership Act.

Gaming Control

Chief Inspector: Ronald Sheppard

The Gaming Control Section has a full-time staff of 12 attending to the three main areas of responsibility — Licencing, Audit and Investigation.

Growth in Gaming

In 1977, Albertans spent \$110.8 million on bingos, casinos, raffles and pull tickets. The 1977 total is one-third larger than that of the year before. It is up from \$25.2 spent in 1974.

The most significant increase is in spending at casinos. In the last three years casino gross proceeds have increased by 779 per cent. In 1974 Albertans spent \$4.3 million, but by 1977 they increased their spending at casinos to \$38.6 million. During that time, bingo spending increased by 83 per cent, and raffles were up 70 per cent. Licencing for pull tickets began in 1975, and since then Albertans have increased pull ticket grosses from \$13.7 million in 1975 to \$34.6 million in 1977.

New Rules and Regulations

Meetings were held with organizations, groups and individuals to explain proposed control procedures for bingos, raffles, casinos and pull tickets. Because of the increase in licenced gaming events and of proposed control procedures, new systems for financial accountability are being developed to ensure proceeds go to charitable or religious objectives or to exhibitions operated on a non-profit basis.

Gaming Control 1977

	No. of Licences	No. of Events	Licence Fees	Gross Proceeds	Paid Out Prizes	Paid Out Expenses	Net Profit
Bingos	2,431	24,654	\$ 51,729	\$ 28,129,741	\$18,888,291	\$ 2,193,485	\$ 6,327,965
Casinos	377	700	\$226,485	\$ 38,604,680	\$27,393,268	\$ 4,219,576	\$ 6,991,835
Raffles	2,850	7,214	\$ 37,735	\$ 9,374,176	\$ 3,197,754	\$ 1,761,306	\$ 4,415,116
Pull Tickets	839	839	\$194,445	\$ 34,694,441	\$25,623,905	\$ 1,368,179	\$ 7,702,357
Total	6,497	33,407	\$510,395	\$110,803,038	\$75,103,218	\$10,262,546	\$24,437,273

Land Titles Registration

Inspector of Land Titles: Harris McCombs

There are two Land Titles offices, one in Edmonton and one in Calgary. Their responsibilities are to examine incoming land-related documents and register those which conform to all legal requirements, to issue titles, to keep custody of all original titles and documents and to provide searches of them according to a prescribed tariff of fees.

Organization Changes

An Inspector of Land Titles Offices was appointed January 1, 1978. The Inspector acts as District Registrar for each office. This change was made to achieve consistency in legal and administrative practices between the two District Offices.

Public Service

The volume of documents registered rose by 17.6% over the previous fiscal year, and the number of titles issued increased by 28.1%. Searches, including photocopies of titles, documents and plans, rose by 23.1%. A 24-hour maximum registration time on normal

documents was maintained. Special one-day seminars on land titles practices were attended by 375 representatives from client firms and other government departments. Five thousand copies of the information booklet "An Introduction to Alberta Land Titles" were distributed to educational institutions, clients and office staff.

Productivity

The number of documents registered annually per established permanent staff position rose by 33.3% since 1974/75 from 1,004 to 1,338 in 1977/78. This is a benefit of a new format title, a loose title filing system and a team method of document registration. Conversion to this format began in 1973 in Calgary, and is complete there. It started in Edmonton in 1975 and productivity is expected to rise until the conversion there is complete.

Legislative Changes

The Agricultural and Recreational Land Ownership Act was passed in May 1977 and Land Titles examiners assumed the duty of ensuring that any dispositions of controlled lands to foreign persons or foreign corporations were within the limits permitted by the new legislation and regulations.

Land Titles in Alberta

Document Registration

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Transfers	118,726	128,236	9,150	+ 8.0
Mortgages	77,962	99,362	21,400	+ 27.4
Caveats	47,345	52,725	5,380	+ 11.4
Liens	6,997	7,657	660	+ 9.4
Withdrawals/Discharges	90,864	122,136	31,272	+ 34.4
Easements	17,942	12,417	(5,525)	- 30.8
Miscellaneous	33,794	40,472	6,678	+ 19.8
Total	393,630	463,005	69,375	+ 17.6

Survey Plan Registrations

Subdivision Plans	1,574	2,083	509	+ 32.3
Condominium Plans	182	162	(20)	- 11.0
Road Plans	550	672	122	+ 22.2
Right-of-Way Plans	1,780	1,916	136	+ 7.6
Others	198	202	4	+ 2.0
Total	4,284	5,035	751	+ 17.5

Tax Recovery

Titles Endorsed	5,790	6,514	724	+ 12.5
Tax Notices Issued	13,035	14,679	1,644	+ 12.6

Certificates of Titles Issued

On Transfers	150,626	192,020	41,394	+ 27.5
New Subdivision Plans	26,029	34,236	8,207	+ 31.5
New Condominium Plans	5,591	7,149	1,558	+ 27.9
Total	182,246	233,405	51,159	+ 28.1

Services

TWX Searches	103,615	115,334	11,719	+ 11.3
Phone Searches	31,469	37,035	5,566	+ 17.7
Photocopies	2,798,706	3,446,028	647,322	+ 23.1

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Chief Medical Examiner: Dr. John C. Butt

The Chief Medical Examiner has a head office in Calgary with responsibility for the entire province as well as for the Southern Region, from Hobbema south. The Northern Region is administered through the Edmonton office.

New Legislation

The Fatality Inquiries Act was proclaimed on June 1, 1977. This implemented a medical examiner system for investigating sudden, unexpected, or unexplained deaths in the province. This was pursuant to recommendations made by the Kirby Board of Review Report No. 1.

Medical Examiner System

Medical examiners are required to be practising physicians, which was not a requirement of the Coroner's Act. The types of deaths investigated under the medical examiner system are clearly identified under the legislation. Consistent reporting and investigating procedures have been developed.

Part of the new system is a requirement for the Medical Examiner's Office to be involved in documentation over disposal of some dead bodies. For example, it is now necessary for certificates to be issued by the Medical Examiner's Office in cases of cremation in Alberta, or where bodies are to be shipped out of Alberta or dissected under the Universities Act. It is also necessary to have a medical examiner countersign the burial permit accompanying bodies shipped into Alberta for disposal.

Publicity

Prior to and following the implementation of the new act, extensive efforts were undertaken to educate medical and related personnel such as police agencies, fire departments, ambulance operators, funeral directors, etc. in the new law and procedures. An extensive advertising campaign was carried on through direct mailing and in the daily press.

The production of a short film feature on the medical examiner system was commissioned. This was produced through the facilities of ACCESS. The Attorney-General co-operated with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary in funding this film, entitled "Investigating Sudden Death — A Team Approach".

Public Inquiries

Decisions regarding the holding of a public inquiry under the Fatality Inquiries Act are made by the Fatality Review Board. This is composed of a lawyer (chairman), a physician and a lay person. Public inquiries are now held before a Provincial Court judge. These procedures have resulted in fewer inquiries than under the Coroner's Act. There were 106 inquests in 1975; after removing the responsibility for inquests from the medical investigative system the number of inquiries dropped to 67 in 1976 and 84 in 1977.

Death Notifications

As anticipated, the new Fatality Inquiries Act has resulted in more sudden death notifications and investigations under the supervision of the Chief Medical Examiner's Office. This is in part due to a broader list of notifications which, for example, includes many institutional deaths

and all deaths within ten days of surgery. In 1977, there were 3,553 deaths reported compared to 3,186 in 1976*. It is also hoped that the new procedures will eventually result in a decreased number of autopsies through instruction and encouragement to medical examiners to conclude more of their investigations by external examinations of bodies.

Medical Investigators

The number of medical investigators in Calgary and Edmonton has increased to four in each city. These are lay persons with a nursing or paramedical background who are in the public service and assist medical examiners in investigations of sudden death. In rural areas, police officers assume the role of investigators under the Fatality Inquiries Act.

*Statistics are based on a calendar year

Continuing Education

A two-day symposium was held in May, 1977 at the Hotel Macdonald in Edmonton. This served as an introduction to the Fatality Inquiries Act and was well attended by interested parties. Rural visits were made throughout Southern Alberta and to several places in the north to meet with persons required to work under the new law.

Ongoing Program — Facilities

A temporary morgue was opened in a building at the University Hospital, Edmonton, in April, 1977. A study was commissioned to review the long term needs of the Chief Medical Examiner's Offices in Calgary and Edmonton. A recommendation, which was approved, outlined the requirements for purpose-built facilities in both cities and a programme was completed in September, 1977. Included in this proposal was the need for toxicology laboratories.

Deaths Reported 1976 (Calendar year)

Manner of Death	Calgary	Edmonton	Southern Rural	Northern Rural	Total
Natural	312	268	246	240	1,066
Accidental	62	60	94	138	354
Motor Vehicle Accidents	67	74	182	222	545
Suicide	80	95	64	80	319
Homicide	13	20	11	16	60
Unclassified	50	39	27	25	141
Undetermined	22	41	8	22	93
Medical Examiners' Cases	606	597	632	743	2,578
Other Deaths Notified	229	248	79	52	608
Total Reported	835	845	711	795	3,186

Deaths Reported 1977 (Calendar year)

Manner of Death	Calgary	S. Rural	Total S. Reg.	Edmonton	N. Rural	Total N. Reg.	Prov. Total
Natural	392	324	716	300	277	577	1,293
Accidental	51	105	156	75	141	216	372
Motor Vehicle Accident	82	235	317	93	242	335	652
Suicide	89	76	165	90	98	188	353
Homicide	13	16	29	16	22	38	67
Unclassified	35	29	64	50	27	77	141
Undetermined	16	15	31	34	20	54	85
Total Medical Examiner's Cases	678	800	1,478	658	827	1,485	2,963
Other Deaths Notified	271	29	300	257	33	290	590
Total Reported	949	829	1,778	915	860	1,775	3,553
Cremations, Ship-outs,							
Dissections **			584			474	1,058
Ship-ins			76			26	102

*Final Death Certificate Signed by Family Physician

**Reportable Form 01-06-77 (Does Not Include Forms Signed On Medical Examiner's Cases)

Public Trustee

Public Trustee: L. W. Gardiner, Q.C.

The Public Trustee acts as guardian of the estates of missing persons and children under 18 years of age, administrator of the estates of persons who are unable to handle their own affairs by reason of mental or physical disability, and administrator of the estates of deceased persons who die intestate with no relative in the province. The Trustee also administers the estates of deceased persons whose next-of-kin do not want to accept the responsibilities of administration and request the Public Trustee to do so.

Funds Under Administration

Assets at the close of the fiscal period totalled \$81.4 million, an increase of 10.6% over the previous year. Cash deposits to Public Trustee bank accounts increased by 18.6% to \$38.2 million.

Official Guardian

The Official Guardian Division opened 1,118 new administrations, down from 1,141 in the previous year. Most of the funds received for

minors which exceeded their maintenance and education requirements were invested in trustee securities. Cash held on deposit for current requirements earned 7½% interest compounded semi-annually from the Consolidated Investment Fund.

Estates of Mentally Incapacitated Persons

This division opened 152 new administrations, down from 206 for the previous period. Authorization under court order rather than by certificate of incapacity under the Mental Health Act has resulted in increased size and complexity of individual estates administered.

Deceased Estates

The Public Administration Section opened 789 new administrations, down by 120 from the previous year. Administrative problems involving capital gains tax have increased because of the combination of continued inflation and increased time since imposition of the tax.

New Estates and Trusts

A total of 2,059 new estate and trust administrations were commenced by offices in Edmonton and Calgary. This table compares the values of these transactions with those in the previous year.

	In millions			
	1977	1978	Increase	% Change
Bank deposits of trust funds	\$32.2	\$38.2	\$6.0	+ 18.6
Disbursements from trust bank accounts	31.6	38.4	6.8	+ 21.5
Assets under administration (at book value)	73.6	81.4	7.8	+ 10.6

BOARDS AND ASSOCIATED AGENCIES

Crimes Compensation Board

Chairman: Ernest S. Watkins, Q.C.

Alberta's Crimes Compensation Board was established in 1969 to help victims of violent crime who suffer pecuniary loss as a direct result of injuries.

Awards up 10%

Awards totalled \$411,658, up 10% from \$371,332 for the previous year. Of these, \$267,759 compensated for lost earnings, \$31,354 for medical and dental expenses, and \$20,665 for other financial losses such as clothing and eyeglasses. Funeral expenses awards totalled \$21,297 and dependents of victims received \$36,370. Counsel fees amounted to \$8,012.

The board is required to deduct from total loss all payments the victim receives from social assistance, unemployment insurance, or sickness and accident insurance.

First Appeal

The board awarded \$26,200 for pain and suffering, which includes one award of \$10,000. In this case, the first appeal of a board decision was heard by the Appellate Division of the Alberta Supreme Court. The victim had been in a house when someone fired several shots from a rifle through the window. The victim dropped to the floor, but stood up to pull a girl down to safety. He was hit in the neck and left a paraplegic. The board awarded him compensation for loss of earnings, but felt it did not have jurisdiction to award for pain and suffering as the victim was not "preserving the peace" when he was hit. The Appellate Division judgment was that the victim was trying to prevent a crime from happening and directed the board to reconsider. The board awarded the maximum of \$10,000 for pain and suffering.

Applications Received

The board received 192 applications, up from 176 for the previous year. Of those 100 originated in Edmonton and 42 in Calgary. Applications came from 45 different localities.

Criminal Causes

Of the total applications, 65 involved alcohol, 23 the use of firearms, and 18 the use of a knife. Two were based on rape. Of the crimes involved, 90 fell within the category of assault causing bodily harm. Fifteen arose from non-capital murders, 11 from attempted murder, and two from manslaughter. Three cases involved kidnapping, and one arson.

Public Awareness

The board is grateful to the media for publishing its decisions and thereby making its existence and functions known to the public. However, board members feel progress is slow and not everyone with a potential claim is aware of his or her rights.

Public Utilities Board

Chairman: William Horton

The board reports budgetary and administrative matters to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council through the Attorney-General on a calendar year basis. The following is the board's report for 1977.

Responsibilities

The board has the responsibility for regulating public utilities and gas utilities under its jurisdiction, to ensure that the customers of such utilities receive safe and adequate service at just and reasonable rates.

The board is also responsible for:

- approving franchise agreements,
- approving taxation agreements,
- hearing appeals regarding utility rates charged by municipally-owned utilities,
- hearing appeals on decisions of certain other boards, agencies and departments,
- fixing compensation regarding the sale of assets of rural electrification associations,
- fixing compensation for seepage claims and environment damage claims,
- fixing compensation regarding municipal expropriations,
- fixing the minimum price of milk,
- conducting inquiries on its own motion or as directed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council,
- issuing Natural Gas Rebates Certificates.

Changes in Legislation

On May 18, 1977 amendments to the Gas Utilities Act and the Public Utilities Board Act were made, which permit the board to consider all revenues and costs of the owners of a utility which are in the board's opinion applicable to the fiscal year in which the application is made. The amended sections require the board to state the manner in which excess revenue received or revenue deficiency incurred is to be dealt with by the utility.

On May 31, 1977, a regulation under the Natural Gas Pricing Agreement Act was approved. It establishes generally procedures to be followed when an estimation or determination of the Alberta Cost of Service, made by the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission, becomes the subject of an appeal to the board.

Regulatory Approach

The board determines the rate base for utilities, considering the original cost of the property when it was first devoted to public use, the prudent acquisition cost to the owner, depreciation, amortization, or depletion, and necessary working capital. It believes that the return on the rate base must be fair to both the investors and the customers of the utility. In fixing just and reasonable rates, the board ensures that the revenue requirement is distributed, by means of rates, among the various classes of customers on an equitable basis and that no rate, charge, regulation or classification is unjustly preferential or unduly discriminatory. Three primary rate design criteria are that the rates should provide sufficient revenue to ensure a fair return, that costs should be fairly apportioned to customers, and that wasteful use should be discouraged.

Interim Rate Approvals

The board generally approves applications for interim refundable rate increases, when a regulatory lag in establishing rates in times of serious inflation tends to impair the financial integrity of the utility to the customer's disadvantage. These become effective at the commencement of the rate hearing process, providing the applicant will refund revenue in excess of the requirement determined by the board.

Customer Rates

In recent years there have been dramatic increases in utility rates across Canada. Utility rates in Alberta have been mitigated as a result of the Alberta government's Natural Gas Price Protection Plan.

Complaints

The pressure of increasing costs of utility services to consumers during a period of already high inflation has caused considerable consumer concern. During the year, 117 written complaints were received and dealt with by board staff. The majority focused on apparent inequities resulting from the effects the federal government's Anti-Inflation Program had on wages while utility rates remained regulated under provincial legislation.

Public Information

The public appears to have a general lack of understanding of the role of public utility regulation within society and the purpose and responsibilities of the board. A paper entitled "The Alberta Public Utilities Board — A Brief Overview" was presented at a seminar of senior officers of the utilities industry in May. Favourable reaction prompted a further presentation and wide distribution of the paper. Interviews of the chairman and board officials in the media have contributed to an improvement of the public's awareness of the board's role.

Utility Company Reviews

The board conducts reviews of the affairs, earnings, and accounts of public utilities and gas utilities at least once in every three years. During the year, reviews were completed for seven gas utilities, and one public utility and five reviews were still in progress at year end.

Reviews and Appeals

In 1977 the board received only one application to vary a decision. Orders and decisions are subject to appeal in the Supreme Court of Alberta Appellate Division, and in 1977 four of the board's orders or decisions were appealed.

Application for Exemption

The board has the power to declare by order an applicant not be a utility, or to declare by order that a provision of any section of the Public Utilities Board Act does not apply to an applicant. The board has exempted one group of utilities, which consists of individuals or firms distributing water to the public by tanker truck.

The board ordered that the distributor price of propane be unregulated effective June 30, 1977, that the price to be charged by producers be increased by three cents per gallon effective August 1, 1977, and that the producer price be unregulated effective March 31, 1978. These

decisions were accomplished by exempting producers and distributors from certain restrictions, but these exemptions are subject to revision.

Orders/Decisions Issued

During the fiscal year 1977/78 the board issued a total of 488 orders and decisions. The major emphasis of the board's regulatory activity concerned the natural gas and electric utilities whose applications to change rates result from changes in the provincial support price for natural gas or from requirements to adjust to the changing economic climate.

Staff

To meet evolving responsibilities, the board has consolidated its technical staff in Edmonton and has recruited professional assistance in the fields of accounting, economics, engineering and law.

Cost of Service Inquiry

On September 21, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council directed the board to conduct an inquiry into the principles and methods which should apply in the determination of the Alberta cost of service as defined in the Natural Gas Pricing Act, to hold hearings on this subject, and to make a report and recommendations. The board will submit its report in June 1978.

Land Compensation Board

Chairman: Kenneth Boyd

The Land Compensation Board began the fiscal year with 18 active cases in its docket. During 1977 it received 39 additional applications, of which 25 were applications for determination of compensation and 14 were applications by way of notice of motion asking the board to decide issues relating to specific provisions of the Expropriation Act.

The board heard 25 cases during 1977 and issued 11 orders determining final compensation for expropriated property and 14 orders on notices of motion. Eight cases were settled by the parties without need of formal hearings before the board, leaving 24 cases in the docket at the end of the year.

Legislative Amendments

A significant amendment to the Expropriation Act was passed in May 1977 which enables an owner and an expropriating authority under agreement between themselves to proceed directly to the Land Compensation Board for the determination of final compensation. This amendment was made in consideration of situations where, after negotiations, the only unresolved issue between an expropriating authority and a land owner was that of the amount of compensation to be paid. Now, under these circumstances, it is not necessary to go through the entire expropriation procedure to establish jurisdiction in the board to determine compensation.

Staffing

The board consists of five members, including the chairman, two full-time members and two part-time members. At year-end there were two vacancies on the board. The board has a support staff of three.

Board Orders

All decisions of the board are given in writing with reasons. Copies of each decision are filed in provincial courthouses, in the law libraries of the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary, with Canada Law Book Limited, and in the board's office in Calgary. The board provides free copies of specific decisions if requested.

Motor Vehicle Accident Claims

Administrator: Nick Semotiuk

The Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Fund offers financial protection to the public against uninsured hit-and-run motorists who cause property damage, injury and death. The fund was established in 1947. Since April 1, 1976, protection has been extended to include hit-and-run accidents involving off-highway vehicles.

Alberta's Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Fund now pays claims up to \$50,000 for personal injury and property damage when the person responsible cannot be located or the person suffering damages cannot collect.

Deficit Position

At March 31, 1978, the fund had a cumulative deficit of just over \$4.6 million. Over the thirty-year period since its inception, the fund has paid out a total of \$33.6 million in claims for personal injury, property damage, hospital, medical and ambulance charges, auto repairs and other costs which have increased substantially. Receipts in the same period have been \$28.5 million. Up to this point, the fund had been financed by annual assessments of \$1 per vehicle per year included in motor vehicle licence fees.

Fee Increase

Although there had been no increase in the annual fee for thirty years, it was announced in February that everyone who purchased a motor vehicle licence for 1977 would pay a fee of \$3 per year. The \$2 increase will go toward covering the accumulated deficit.

Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Fund

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase
Receipts	\$2,028,528	\$4,709,804	\$2,681,276
Expenditures	2,545,159	2,540,410	995,251

Law Foundation

Chairman: Don Sabey, Q.C.

The Alberta Law Foundation was established by amendments to the Legal Profession Act April 1, 1973. It is funded by interest paid to the Foundation on lawyers' general trust accounts and income from the investment of these funds. It has money which can be made available

to projects which help disseminate legal information to the public.

Objectives

The Foundation's objectives are: to conduct research into and recommend reform of law and the administration of justice; to maintain law libraries; to contribute to the education and knowledge about the law of the people of Alberta; to assist native peoples' legal programs, student legal programs and the like. The funds are administered by a board of seven directors, three of whom are appointed by the Attorney-General, two by the benchers of the Law Society, and two by the directors themselves.

Programs Supported

Some of the programs supported by the Foundation are:

The Institute for Law Research and Reform
Calgary Legal Guidance
The Legal Resource Centre of Alberta
Native Counselling Services of Alberta
Indian Association of Alberta
Canadian Law Information Council
Status of Women Action Committee

Financial Position

The Foundation's revenue for the year ended March 31, 1978 was \$2,512,845, up \$261,779 from the previous year. Its assets totalled \$4,141,565. More than 40 organizations and projects were allocated \$2,689,876 in grants, and the Foundation had an unallocated surplus of \$2,168,079. Native legal programs and student legal aid programs were assisted with \$423,593. A total of \$1,198,945 was granted to organizations contributing to the education and knowledge about the law of Albertans. Research into reform of law and administration of justice was aided by \$617,313 from the Foundation, and the Foundation awarded \$353,229 for establishing, maintaining and operating law libraries.

Obligations of Recipients

Organizations who receive grants are expected to submit a report to the Foundation once the particular project is complete. The report should outline results obtained, and include a statement of funds expended. Any unspent funds must be returned.

Legal Aid

Director: S. M. Barnett (Acting)

The Legal Aid Society of Alberta arranges to supply legal services to people who are not able, by reason of poverty, to obtain the services of a lawyer. All serious criminal charges and most civil matters are covered by the plan. Guidelines are used to determine financial eligibility. Where practical, the people assisted are asked to contribute, in full or in part, towards the costs of retaining counsel. The Society does not employ staff counsel to appear in the courts; all clients are represented by practicing members of the Alberta Bar at a reduced tariff.

The Society's Board of Directors, called the Joint Committee, is composed of fifteen persons representing the provincial and federal governments, the Law Society of Alberta, and the general public. The Society has a staff of 51, an increase of 6.25% over the previous year.

Funding

The Legal Aid Society received \$3,300,000 in funds from the Alberta government in 1977, and the budget was increased by 17% for 1978. The federal government contributes toward the cost of legal aid in criminal matters on the basis of 75¢ per capita, but it is likely that the federal contribution will be increased.

Applications for Assistance

In the fiscal year the Society received 17,673 applications for assistance, down 12% from the 20,195 received in the previous year. In the 1977-78 year, 11,728 applications were approved, a decrease from the previous year of 14%. The annual report of the Society by Ms. Wallis Kempo, Q.C., Chairperson of the Joint Committee, explains this decrease under four heads:

1. This term has been the first full year of the Duty Counsel program in effect in the Edmonton and Calgary Provincial and Juvenile Courts.
2. This fiscal year's budget was a no-growth budget with a conscious tightening up of policy concerning verification of financial eligibility of the applicants as well as determination of need for legal services in civil matters.
3. There has been no increased publicity of legal services under the Plan.
4. A "peaking" appears to have been reached in criminal applications. This phenomenon has also been noted in the Province of Ontario, and other jurisdictions.

There were 9,354 criminal cases disposed of in the current 1977-78 period, and 3,108 civil cases, for a total of 12,462. The result is a net increase of 8%.

Administrative Matters

The Tariff Sub-Committee of the Joint Committee, inactive since the tariff increase in 1976, was reactivated and is presently reviewing the adequacy of the present legal aid tariff.

In June of 1977 the Joint Committee increased the eligibility guidelines by 10% in recognition of the effect of inflation on the poverty level.

A new agreement between the Law Society and the Attorney-General's department is presently being studied, but at the end of the 1977-78 fiscal year no action had been concluded in this respect.

Mr. Pat Sommerville, the Society's Executive Director, tendered his resignation at the end of January of 1978 and recruitment for a replacement was commenced immediately. During the interim period this position was covered by the appointment of Mr. S. M. Barnett who has been for many years a member of the Joint Committee. It is expected a permanent appointment will be made early in the 1978-79 fiscal year.

In pursuance of a recommendation in the Management Consultant's report of May, 1977, two Directors' positions were created, a Southern Director and a Northern Director, and the position of Deputy Director was abolished. Olga Dobrowney, B.A. LL.B., who came to the Society in 1974 as Deputy Director, was appointed to the Southern Directorship. Halyna Freeland, B.A. LL.B., was appointed to the Northern Directorship.

Native Counselling and Co-operative Programs

The Society continues its close liaison with the Native Counselling Service as mentioned in previous Annual Reports. It has also worked very closely with the Legal Guidance Service in Calgary and the Students' Legal Services in Edmonton, although not directly assisting in the funding of these organizations.

Legal Aid Handbook and Tariff

A comprehensive Legal Aid Handbook, prepared by the Legal Aid Society of Alberta, was approved for distribution by the Benchers of the Law Society of Alberta and was forwarded to active practicing members of the Law Society of Alberta in January, 1978.

Alberta Bar Admission Course

The Society participated by invitation in the Bar Admission Course both in Edmonton and Calgary, supplying speakers at the sessions to outline the Society's functions and responsibilities to articling students.

Receipts and Disbursements

For the year ended March 31, 1978, receipts totalled \$4,161,672. These monies were received from the provincial government (93%), from recoveries from clients and from interest on funds on deposit (7%). The Alberta Law Foundation did not in this fiscal year make a grant to the Society, which in the previous fiscal year amounted to \$4,000 and was ear-marked for a special research project.

Disbursements for the 1977-78 year totalled \$4,139,259, an increase of 18% over the previous year. Of the total disbursements, 75% represented fees paid directly to solicitors in criminal and civil cases, 13% represented direct service costs, and 12% represented administrative costs.

Actual recoveries and contributions for the year ended March 31, 1978 totalled \$267,901 (an increase of 23%) and ancillary savings amounted to \$56,960 (a decrease of 5½%). The average cost of criminal cases (federal) was \$225 (a 6½% increase), and the average cost of a civil case was \$257 (an increase of 7-1/3%).

SUPPORT SERVICES

Administrative Services

Administrator: L. Olson

Administrative Services is responsible for the administration of the appointments of commissioners for oaths, notaries public and the administration of the Provincial Secretary's Office. Comparative statistics are outlined in the following table:

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Commissioners for Oaths				
Appointments	20,685	22,460	1,775	+ 7.9
Revenue	\$69,672	\$73,352*	\$3,680	+ 5.0
Notaries Public				
Full Appointments	17	14	(3)	- 21.4
Limited Appointments	372	377	5	+ 1.3
Revenue	389	391	2	+ .5
Revenue	\$2,090	\$2,485	\$395	+ 15.9
Provincial Secretary's Office				
Notarial Certificate Issued	29	43	14	+ 32.5
Certificates of Authentication Issued	930	1,079	149	+ 13.8
Total Fees Collected	\$2,039	\$2,264.50	\$225.50	+ 9.9

*A remission of \$20,895 was the result of the appointment of Commissioners without Fee.

Law Libraries

Chief Librarian: Dr. George Solt

Law libraries in Alberta have been established for Supreme and District Courts, as well as for the Provincial Court system, and are centrally administered from Edmonton by the Chief Law Librarian.

Supreme and District Court Libraries

Alberta's 12 judicial districts are served by Supreme and District Court law libraries, a system which consists of 14 libraries including a judges' library in Edmonton and in Calgary. The 1977-78 budget for the system was \$100,000 and the Alberta Law Foundation provided a grant of \$132,000. Reports, financial and administrative policy, reference policy and co-ordination of book selection subcommittees are the main responsibilities of the Joint Library Committee. The Committee consists of representatives from the Attorney-General's department, the Law Society of Alberta, with the participation at meetings of the Chief Librarian, the Calgary courthouse librarian, and the Provincial Courts librarian.

By the end of the 1977-78 fiscal year, 21 of the 30 staff members were employed full-time. Five of them are professional librarians. The book collection in Edmonton is about 33,000 volumes, and in Calgary about 37,000 volumes. Collections in the two judges' libraries have reached 12,000 and in the branch libraries 33,000 volumes.

Attorney-General's Library

The Attorney-General's department library in the Madison Building has about 9,000 volumes.

Library Organization

All the 10 branch libraries outside Edmonton and Calgary were physically reorganized, and recatalogued. All except those in Vegreville and Hanna acquired full time or part time staff. About 35% of book funds were spent on branch libraries.

Grants and Acquisitions

The amount spent on books totalled \$100,000. The amount spent by the government on books (\$50,000) is matched by the Law Society of Alberta. The library system received an annual grant of \$132,000 from the Alberta Law Foundation. All non-book expenses are financed by the government.

Provincial Court Libraries

The headquarters of this system is in Edmonton, and a Calgary regional office was established in the summer of 1977. In addition to fulfilling the major functions such as acquisition, the Edmonton office continues to provide services to all branch libraries in Red Deer and north.

At March 31, 1978 there were 35 operational Provincial Court libraries and 15 proposed.

Budget

The 1977-78 book budget was \$210,000, of which \$85,000 was spent on counsel libraries and \$122,000 on judges' libraries. About \$142,000 was spent on maintenance of the existing collection and on carry-over costs of materials ordered but not supplied in the previous fiscal year. In addition, \$66,600 was spent on new acquisitions and \$1,400 on binding material.

Branch Development

The following libraries were put into operation during the 1977-78 fiscal year: Calgary Defense Counsel Reference Library, Camrose Counsel Reference Library, Fort McLeod Judges' Reference Library, Fort McMurray Counsel Reference Library, High Prairie Counsel Reference Library, Lethbridge Counsel Reference Library, Medicine Hat Judges' Reference Library, Vermilion Counsel Reference Library.

Policy Change

It was decided that in most centres collections could be common, with separate working facilities for counsel and judges' maintained. Separate judges' reference libraries will remain in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge and Red Deer.

Finance

Director: Taylor Gordon

The Finance Division provides financial administrative support to all other divisions and sections of the department. It has the responsibility of ensuring the proper receipt and expenditure of funds. The day-to-day function of this division is to assist all levels of management in an overview of their allocated funding and the proper expenditure of same.

Fines Levied — Years ended March 31

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Fines paid to province	8,957,077	10,597,471	1,640,394	+ 18.3
Costs paid to province	1,151	159	(992)	- 86.2
Fines paid to federal government	971,092	1,087,169	116,077	+ 11.9
Costs paid to federal government	450	28	(422)	- 93.8
Costs paid to municipalities	8,175,938	8,576,456	400,518	+ 4.9
Fines paid to municipalities	721	87	(634)	- 87.9
Fines paid to Oil and Gas Conservation Board	9,864	1,000	(8,864)	- 89.9
Fees paid to Justices of the Peace	38,463	45,549	7,086	+ 18.4
Total	18,154,756	20,307,919	2,153,163	+ 11.9

Budgeting

The budgeting process was restructured through the management committee, whose members act as budget program coordinators.

Fines and Statistics

Statistics were supplied by the division to various agencies and government departments throughout the year, including the planning group known as Project Omega. The division is responsible for the redistribution of fines and costs that were levied in the Provincial Court. During the period this amounted to \$20,307,919 as noted in the accompanying table.

Materials Management

The basic reorganization of this section is complete, and effectively centralizes the purchase of all stationery supplies and the acquisition of fixed and rental assets.

Facilities Management

A Facilities Management Group was established to coordinate the departmental planning of space needs for both rentals and capital construction projects and the acquisition of furnishings. All requests for these needs are centralized in this group.

Revenue and Expenditure

Revenue has increased by 14.2% to \$29,862,931 from \$26,150,373 for the previous year. Details are in the accompanying statement. A schedule of expenditures for the year ended March 31, 1978 is also listed. Expenditures increased by \$7,095,091 to \$43,754,906, which is an increase of 19.4%.

Receipts — Years ended March 31

	1976-77	1977-78	Increase (Decrease)	% Change
Land Titles Act — Registration Fees	10,975,438	13,994,022	3,018,584	+ 27.5
Land Titles Act — Assurance Fund	1,640,487	—	(1,640,487)	-100.0
Government of Canada — Statutory Fines	4,454,368	5,459,864	1,005,496	+ 22.6
Province of Alberta — Statutory Fines	3,327,498	4,434,745	1,107,247	+ 33.3
Clerks of the Court Act — Fees	1,327,415	1,684,074	356,659	+ 26.9
Public Trustee Act — Fees and Earnings	997,814	1,089,488	91,674	+ 9.2
Government of Canada — Legal Aid	884,000	1,369,500	485,500	+ 54.9
Other	2,543,353	1,831,238	(712,115)	- 28.0
Total	26,150,373	29,862,931	3,712,558	+ 14.2

Expenditures — Years ended March 31

Minister's Office	100,225	105,775	5,550	+ 5.5
General Administration	3,560,222	4,381,873	821,651	+ 23.1
Law Libraries	737,749	571,877	(165,872)	- 22.5
Supreme and District Courts and Sheriff's Offices	3,415,740	3,940,753	525,013	+ 15.4
Provincial Courts	6,462,918	8,650,044	2,187,126	+ 33.8
Office Court Reporters	3,371,533	3,698,859	327,326	+ 9.7
Witnesses, Interpreters & Jurors	865,697	1,033,647	167,950	+ 19.4
Crown Counsel and Legal Services	5,036,195	6,694,306	1,658,111	+ 32.9
Legal Aid Plan	3,300,000	3,870,000	570,000	+ 17.7
Land Titles Office — Calgary	1,651,102	1,656,631	5,529	+ 0.3
Land Titles Office — Edmonton	2,574,947	2,819,539	244,592	+ 9.5
Public Trustee	1,944,713	2,110,844	166,131	+ 8.5
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims	247,892	238,663	(9,229)	- 3.7
Central and Vehicle Registry	654,772	764,678	109,906	+ 16.8
Medical Examiners	969,451	1,195,927	226,476	+ 23.4
Crimes Compensation Board	495,750	482,548	(13,202)	- 26.6
Land Compensation Board	152,361	180,367	28,006	+ 18.4
Public Utilities Board	1,118,548	1,358,575	240,027	+ 21.5
Total	36,659,815	43,754,906	7,095,091	+ 19.4

Facilities Management

Special Advisor and Planning Co-ordinator: Peter Jenner

Headquarters Relocation

Final approval was given to proceed with the relocation of headquarters offices to the Natural Resources Building on 109th Street, north of the Legislature Building. The building, originally constructed in the early 1930's, is to undergo extensive internal renovations while maintaining the present exterior. Final occupancy is to occur in the summer of 1980.

Courthouse Projects

The first of a new prototype for Provincial Court circuit point facilities was completed in Evansburg, with the initial scheduled sitting to occur in April 1978. Six other similar facilities were nearing completion in other parts of the province. Designs for new courthouses in Hinton, Fort Saskatchewan, Leduc, St. Albert, and Stony Plain were commenced, and construction in Hinton started in February 1978.

The facilities program for a major addition to the Edmonton Law Courts was completed in July 1977 and the project architects commenced preliminary design development. Twenty-seven new courtrooms are to be operational in the new building in 1981 in addition to the existing number of 20. Provisions for additional growth of courtrooms and related space are provided within the structure to accommodate needs to at least 1986.

Programs for new courthouses in Lethbridge and Grande Prairie and additions to courthouses in Fort Macleod, Medicine Hat, Drumheller and Peace River were initiated in 1977.

For new courthouses, the Attorney-General is responsible for proposing capital expenditure budgets for the cost of these facilities. The first budget in 1976/77 was approximately \$4.7 million and in 1977/78 was \$6.8 million.

Plans for new court facilities in Boyle, Fox Creek, Okotoks and Vulcan were initiated. Also, a number of new Provincial Buildings with court facilities were started, including Bashaw, Bonnyville, Drayton Valley, Smoky Lake, Valleyview, and Whitecourt.

Provincial Court in Lethbridge was relocated from the police station to the Administration Building in January 1978. The newly renovated facilities with three courtrooms should adequately accommodate all Provincial Court needs until the new courthouse is completed. Minor renovations were completed in Fort McMurray, where a second courtroom was constructed, and in Jasper. There were also new leased premises provided in Redwater.

Personnel

Director: C. R. Shank

A professional human resource management advisory service is offered to assist management and employees in meeting organizational objectives.

New and Replacement Positions

A heavy demand for new and replacement positions, resulting from

growth, attrition, internal transfer and promotion, and from the final stages of implementation of the Kirby report, has been met.

Organization Analysis and Classification

The section undertook several major reviews involving alterations to both classification standards and pay structure. In addition, advice was provided to line management regarding a major re-organization in Court Services.

Training and Development

Human resource planning is continuing, with the goal of an integration of training, appraisal and skills inventory. This approach will provide management with a complete picture of the organization's human resource capabilities and requirements so that a systematic approach to goal achievement can be made.

Labour Relations

An officer has been employed in this function on a full time basis over the past year. Advice and service has been provided, which has enabled management to deal effectively with a number of complaints and grievances.

Records and Information

Director: H. A. Brinton

This division is responsible for correspondence, forms, reports, directives, word processing, file operations, subject classification, records equipment and supplies, vital records, information retrieval, records disposition, mail-messenger services, photocopying services, and micrographic services. It also provides all records services to head office, and assists branch offices.

New Systems

During the period a formal Reporting Systems, Reports, Forms Management Program was instituted. Assistance was given in the development of a Human Resources Planning System and in the development of improved records classification systems for several branches. Also this area assumed responsibility for the micrographic services area including the two microfilm labs in Edmonton and Calgary.

Records Disposition

Records disposition schedules were developed, approved and implemented for the Supreme and District Courts, Provincial Court, Public Trustee, General Administration and Small Claims Courts. Records totalling 2,446 cubic feet were transferred to the Alberta Records Centre, 1,453 cubic feet were destroyed, and 90 cubic feet transferred to the Provincial Archives.

Communications/Public Affairs

Special Advisor: Harold A. Sellers

Most branches of the department used the services of Communications/Public Affairs during the year, including news releases, advertising, and printing of reports and other material. Communications counselling on the information needs of the public was also requested from this section.

A Public Affairs Officer joined the staff June 1, 1977. Communications/Public Affairs now consists of three people who frequently call upon the government's Public Affairs Bureau for advice and assistance to complete projects.

Royal American Shows Inquiry

To offer assistance on public relations requirements, the Special Advisor attended about 75 hearings and briefing sessions during the time the judicial inquiry was being held into Royal American Shows Inc.

Print Projects

This section produced and distributed Report No. 3 of the Kirby Board of Review on The Juvenile Justice System in Alberta. Every second month the departmental newsbulletin Docket was issued. Other publications issued by the section include a services directory, a booklet on the Family Court Conciliation Service, a folder on expropriation for the Land Compensation Board, and special material for the Crimes Compensation Board, Gaming Control, the Chief Medical Examiner and the Management by Objectives consultant. Communications/Public Affairs provided delegates to the March 1978 Western Canada Crown Seminar in Banff with a variety of conference material.

Projects Initiated

Other important projects begun during the year include a booklet on the court system written for the lay person, and another on the role of the witness in the justice system. Recommendations were developed on official opening of new court facilities and public use of those facilities.

News Releases

During the year approximately 65 news releases were issued covering about 155 awards made by the Crimes Compensation Board. There were 41 releases issued to announce 79 fatality inquiries. Other releases covered provincial judicial appointments, senior level departmental appointments, and grants awarded by the Alberta Law Foundation.

Advertising

This section co-ordinated advertising announcing hearings of the Royal American Shows Inquiry, hearings on Crimes Compensation Board legislation, proclamation of the new Fatality Inquiries Act, applications for the Fatality Review Board, and other important public information.

Consultation Service

Communications/Public Affairs was asked for public relations advice on the disclosure court experiment, judicial conduct and judicial appointments, media coverage of criminal cases, specified penalties, the role of the bailiff, credit information for credit reporting agencies, resignations in the Legal Aid Society, and other matters investigated by the news media.

APPENDIX

Acts Administered by the Attorney General

Administration of Estates Act
Administrative Procedures Act
Age of Majority Act
Alberta Emblems Act
Alimony Orders Enforcement Act
Arbitration Act
Assignment of Book Debts Act
Bills of Sale Act
Blind Persons' White Cane Act
Builders' Lien Act
Bulk Sales Act
Chattel Security Registries Act
Clerks of the Court Act
Commissioners for Oaths Act
Common Parties Contracts and Conveyances Act
Conditional Sales Act
Condominium Property Act
Constitutional Questions Act
Contributory Negligence Act
Court Forms Act
Criminal Injuries Compensation Act
Dangerous Dogs Act
Daylight Saving Time Act
Defamation Act
Defence of Common Employment Act
Demise of the Crown Act
Department of the Attorney General Act
Devolution of Real Property Act
District Courts Act
Domestic Relations Act
Dower Act
Alberta Evidence Act
Execution Creditors Act
Exemptions Act
Expropriation Act
Extra-Curial Orders Act
Extra-Provincial Enforcement of Custody Orders Act
Factors Act
Family Court Act
Family Relief Act
Fatal Accidents Act
Fatality Inquiries Act
Federal Courts Jurisdiction Act
Fraudulent Preferences Act
Frustrated Contracts Act
Garagemen's Lien Act
Gas Utilities Act
Guarantees Acknowledgement Act
Infants Act
Innkeepers Act
Interpretation Act
Intestate Succession Act
Judicature Act

Jury Act
Justices of the Peace Act
Juvenile Court Act
Land Titles Act
Land Titles Act Clarification Act
Landlord's Rights on Bankruptcy Act
Legal Profession Act
Legitimacy Act
Limitation of Actions Act
Liquor Control Act*
Alberta Lord's Day Act
Maintenance Order Act
Married Women's Act
Masters and Servants Act
Mechanical Recording of Evidence Act
Mentally Incapacitated Persons Act
Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Act
National Housing Loans Act (Alberta)
Notaries Public Act
Oaths of Office Act
Occupiers Liability Act
Partnership Act
Perpetuities Act
Petty Trespass Act
Police Act, 1973*
Possessory Liens Act
Private Streets Act
Proceedings Against the Crown Act
Provincial Court Act
Public Inquiries Act
Public Trustee Act
Public Utilities Board Act
Queen's Counsel Act
Reciprocal Enforcement of Judgments Act
Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act
Regulations Act
Reports of Judicial Proceedings Act
Road Building Machinery Equipment Act
Sale of Goods Act
Seduction Act
Seizures Act
Sex Disqualification Removal Act
Sheriffs Act
Small Claims Act
Statutes Act
Summary Convictions Act
Surrogate Courts Act
Survivorship Act
Tort-Feasors Act
Transfer and Descent of Land Act
Trustee Act
Ultimate Heir Act
Unconscionable Transactions Act
Uniformity of Legislation Act
Warehouse Receipts Act
Warehousemen's Lien Act
Wills Act
Women's Institute Act
Woodmen's Lien Act

*Jointly administered by the Solicitor General
and the Attorney General