

Future of the Legal Profession

BACKGROUND

- In 1996, CBA Council approved an initiative on the Future of the Legal Profession, subject to funding. Funds were raised through Branches, law firms and individuals.
- In January 1999, the CBA cosponsored a Roundtable on the Delivery of Legal Services in 2020. Other sponsors were the Department of Justice, the Law Commission of Canada and the University of Windsor Faculty of Law.
- The CBA published the papers and report issuing from the Roundtable. They are available from the CBA, in print and on the CBA website (www.cba.org).
- Using data from the papers as part of the basis for its research, in August 1999 the CBA published its *Report on the Future of the Legal Profession*. The report was and continues to be well received by members.

CURRENT STATUS

- The report was distributed to CBA Branches, law societies, law faculties, and media. It is available on the CBA website (www.cba.org).
- Six *EPIIgrams* flow directly from the Report: [March 2001](#) featured the unbundling of legal services; [May 2001](#) dealt with prepaid legal services; [June 2001](#) dealt with collaborative lawyering; [September 2001](#) dealt with alternative billing methods; [January](#) and [October 2002](#); [November 2003](#) and April 2005 dealt with work-life balance; and [March 2002](#) dealt with preventive law.
- The CBA Futures Committee was established as the CBA forum for discussions of the future of the profession ([see separate note](#)). CBA Futures reported to Council in August 2005. Consultations were held within and beyond the CBA and the Committee issued its final report, "Crystal Clear: Strategic Directions for the CBA," to Council in August 2006 (see separate note). That Report forms the basis of the CBA's Strategic Plan.
- In January 2009, CBA engaged Professor Richard Susskind as "Special Adviser" on the future of the legal profession. In Spring 2009, CBA hosted the Canadian launch of his book, *The End of Lawyers?* and a series of consultations between Professor Susskind and managing partners of larger firms across the country. Professor Susskind presented to the 2008 and 2009 CBA Law Firm Leadership Conferences, as well as at the 2009 CLC in Dublin.

NEXT STEPS

- The Strategic Plan, adopted by Council in February 2007, includes a CBA commitment to ongoing futures analysis by the CBA.
- A renewed Futures Committee will be established pursuant to the Strategic Plan. Its focus will be on the legal profession as a whole, and the ways in which CBA can assist its members in adapting to a changing legal environment.