




Activity Report

of the National Assembly of Québec 2003-2004





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This publication was accomplished with the collaboration of the executive personnel and staff from all administrative branches of the National Assembly. Unless otherwise indicated, the data provided in this report concerns the activities of the National Assembly from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004.

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Preface



I am proud to present to you the *Activity Report of the National Assembly of Québec* for the 2003-2004 fiscal year. This period was marked by a general election at the outcome of which 48 new Members were elected. On 4 June 2003, the Members of the 37th Legislature entrusted me with an important responsibility in our parliamentary system, that of presiding over the National Assembly. The work of these Members, essential to the vitality of our democracy, was carried out in the Assembly but also in the standing committees, which were most active with regard to legislation and the consultation of citizens. For instance, 663 groups and individuals came to the Parliament to discuss, express their views and propose solutions with regard to the issues under consideration in 2003-2004.

Firmly committed to providing access and openness to the citizenry, the National Assembly continued its efforts to promote better knowledge of Québec parliamentarism. This concern was especially demonstrated in the welcoming of numerous cultural communities to the Parliament Building and in the tour of Québec's educational institutions, during which I had the opportunity to heighten the awareness of young people to the importance of taking part in democratic life. The last fiscal year will also have been the occasion for celebrating the 25th anniversary of the broadcasting of debates and of the Jean-Charles-Bonenfant Foundation, both of which have contributed to reaching this goal.

As always, the National Assembly has been mindful of promoting the political heritage of Québec and, by the same token, of enriching our collective memory. In 2003-2004, this concern manifested itself at the Assembly by the acquisition of items relating to the legacy of the Patriots, the recording of testimonials given by former parliamentarians, the historical property classification of the Chauveau collection and the conservation of Québec Members' archives. Furthermore, in collaboration with the National Capital Commission of Québec, the Assembly erected a commemorative monument dedicated to Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine.

This report also provides information on the activities of the institution on the international scene and within the interparliamentary networks, whether at the bilateral or multilateral level or within the framework of interparliamentary cooperation activities.

I trust that through this report you will have the opportunity to fully grasp the scope of the efforts and the work of the parliamentarians and of the personnel of the National Assembly for the benefit of democracy in Québec.

The President of the National Assembly,

Michel Bissonnet

Foreword

For the past five years, the National Assembly has published an activity report highlighting the achievements of the parliamentarians and the employees of the institution at the parliamentary, institutional and administrative levels. Citizens wishing to understand the work of their elected representatives and to learn more about them will find within these pages a vast array of information on parliamentary work, the activities focussing on the citizens, diplomacy, the protection of our heritage and the administration of the Assembly.

The last fiscal year at the Assembly was indeed marked by the holding of a general election on 14 April 2003. Immediately the following day, the Assembly began an important operation in order to enable the harmonious integration of the new Members. In this regard, the administration of the Assembly focussed its energy on the organization of welcoming days and training sessions for the Members and on the distribution of personalized documents to the elected representatives such as the *Members' Handbook*, which contains a wealth of information on the work of the Member at the Assembly and in committee, as well as on the numerous services provided by the administration.

This report is also an opportunity to make a comprehensive assessment of the *Strategic Plan of the Administration of the National Assembly, 2002-2004*. This assessment indicates that the Assembly has substantially met its objectives and provides a sound foundation for the preparation of the institution's next strategic plan, which will cover the period from 2004 to 2009.

As regards parliamentary work, the National Assembly held 56 sittings, for a total of 325 hours, while the standing committees met on 348 occasions for a total of 1157 hours. Moreover, the Assembly held an extraordinary sitting in July 2003.

With regard to the institutional activities, in 2003-2004, the National Assembly hosted 226 welcoming receptions, protocolary ceremonies and private activities which brought together 12,726 individuals. Furthermore, the first edition of the *Journée du livre politique* and the launching of the CD-ROM entitled *Écrire l'histoire de demain* enabled the citizens of Québec to connect more intimately with their parliamentary institution.

I wish to acknowledge the sustained efforts made by the personnel of all of the administrative units of the Assembly who contributed to the realization of this Activity Report.

The Secretary General,

François Côté





THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



ITS MISSION

The mission of the National Assembly consists in legislating in the areas of its jurisdiction, exercising control over the Government's actions and examining matters of public interest. The maximum duration of the collective mandate of Members, called a «legislature», is expressly provided for in the Constitution and cannot exceed five years. However, the lieutenant-governor, at the request of the Government, may dissolve the Assembly before the expiry of this five-year period, which brings about the holding of a general election.

GENERAL ELECTION IN QUÉBEC

On 14 April 2003, a general election was held in Québec. This key event in our democratic life results in major changes in the membership of the National Assembly. Of the 124 Members in office before 14 April, 77 were reelected in the general election, while 25 did not run again and 22 were defeated. For its part, the National Assembly's administrative team did all that was necessary in order to welcome and adequately inform these parliamentarians.

As at 31 March 2004, the membership of the Assembly was as follows:

Number of seats	
Québec Liberal Party	74
Parti Québécois	45
Action démocratique du Québec*	4
Independent Member	1
Vacant	1

** Independent Members*

THE THREE POWERS OF THE STATE OF QUÉBEC

LEGISLATIVE POWER	EXECUTIVE POWER	JUDICIAL POWER
Examines, discusses, amends and passes laws.	Determines policies to guide the actions of the State.	Interprets the laws passed by the legislative power.
Exercises a control over the action of the executive power.	Administers and controls the State in accordance with the laws passed by the legislative power.	Decides whether a citizen or a group has acted in accordance with the law.
↓	↓	↓
Parliament	Government	Courts

The swearing-in of Members

Before sitting in the National Assembly, Members must take two oaths of allegiance. The first stems from the Constitution Act, 1867, and reads as follows: «I, (name of the Member), do swear (or solemnly affirm), That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II».

The second, which is taken under the provisions of the Act respecting the National Assembly, reads as follows: «I, (name of the Member), declare under oath that I will be loyal to the people of Québec and that I will perform the duties of Member honestly and justly in conformity with the constitution of Québec.»

The taking of the oath by the Members is one of the most important events in parliamentary life. It is the gateway to the most valuable privilege a Member may enjoy, that of freedom of expression and its corollary, parliamentary immunity. This is a solemn act, a commitment on the honour of the person who takes the oath to be loyal to the authority, to respect the will of the people and to act honestly and justly for the benefit of his fellow citizens.

After having taken these oaths before the Secretary General of the Assembly, the Members sign the Oath Book of the National Assembly. They then receive the Member's medal, on the back of which is inscribed the oath of loyalty to the people of Québec, as well as the Member's lapel pin. The Members of the 37th Legislature took their oaths during six ceremonies which took place between 24 April and 3 June 2003.

The welcoming of Members

General elections constitute the beginning of parliamentary life for a great number of elected candidates: the day following the holding of an electoral event, the Assembly commences an important operation to ensure the harmonious integration of the new Members.

Hence, the day following the general election of 14 April, the Assembly contacted the new Members to provide them with all of the necessary information with regard to the decisions they needed to take in the first weeks of their term of office.

Furthermore, beginning on 30 April 2003, the Members, their spouses and their staff were invited to attend open-house and training days concerning the operation of the National Assembly, the organization of parliamentary proceedings, the work conditions and the services provided by the administration of the Assembly. Moreover, the Members had the opportunity to become better acquainted with the role and mandates of the Public Protector, the Chief Electoral Officer, the Auditor General and the Lobbyists Commissioner.

In the weeks following the general election, the Assembly also ensured the moving of furniture and equipment to the riding offices, in addition to providing computer equipment as well as cable broadcasting and Internet services in the constituencies and at the Parliament Building.

Election of the new President of the National Assembly

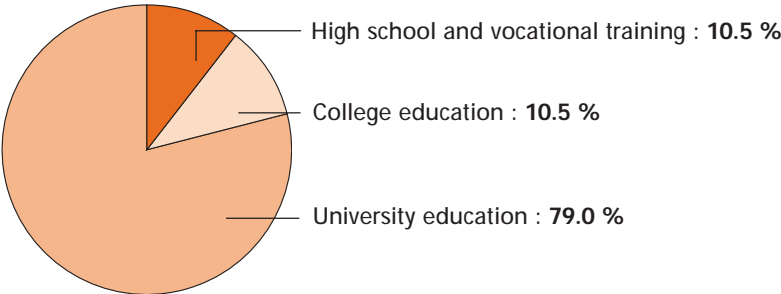
Following a general election, the Members must elect a new President, whose role is to chair the proceedings of the Assembly, administer its services and represent it in its relations with other Parliaments.

At the opening sitting of 4 June 2003, immediately after the Secretary General tabled the list of candidates returned as well as the letters of appointment to the various parliamentary duties, the Premier, Mr. Jean Charest, moved that Mr. Michel Bissonnet, the Member for Jeanne-Mance-Viger, be appointed President of the National Assembly of Québec. This motion was carried unanimously by the Members of the Assembly. The Members also carried two other motions by the Premier for the appointment of the First and Second Vice-Presidents, Mr. Christos Sirros, the Member for Laurier-Dorion, and Mrs. Diane Leblanc, the Member for Beauce-Sud. Following that, Mr. François Gendron, the Member for Abitibi-Ouest, was appointed Third Vice-President, this time on a motion by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

THE MEMBERS OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

Who are our Members?

As at 31 March 2004, the Assembly was composed of 38 women (30.6 %) and of 86 men (69.4 %). As a reflection of the Québec society they are elected to represent, these Members come from various professional and educational backgrounds.



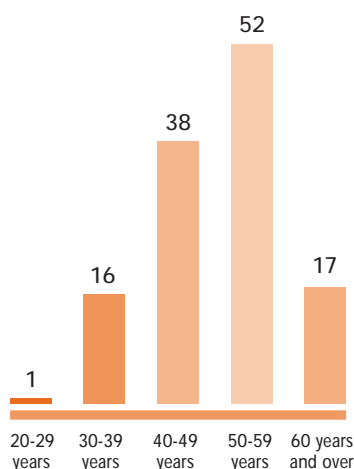
- Among the most represented academic disciplines are the following :
- Law 24 Members
 - Political science 10 Members
 - Administration 9 Members
 - Teaching 9 Members



Following his election, the new President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, is congratulated by the Third Vice-President of the Assembly, Mr. François Gendron. The President is shown here with the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Premier.

There are 16 former mayors among the Members of the 37th Legislature.

**DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS
PER AGE GROUP**



Forty-eight Members who were elected in the general election sat for the first time in the Assembly. These new Members have an average age of 47 years and 11 months.

On the average, as at 31 March 2004, the Members of the 37th Legislature were 50 years and seven months of age and had seven years of experience as a Member at the National Assembly. The youngest among them was 26 years of age and the eldest, 68 years and seven months.

The role of the Member

The primary activity of the Member is his participation in the legislative process. As a legislator, he examines, analyzes and votes on bills at the National Assembly. This duty is exercised in several stages, both in the Assembly and in the standing committees.

Furthermore, as the controller of the Government's actions, the Member has several methods at his disposal to scrutinize the Government's operations.

Finally, he also acts as an intermediary between his electors and the public administration. Ever attentive to the needs of his constituents, he divides his time between the Parliament Building and his riding.

In addition to these duties, the Member sometimes plays the role of «ambassador». Since the National Assembly belongs to a number of international parliamentary associations, the Members share their knowledge and know-how with foreign parliamentarians on economic, political and cultural issues.

Resignations and changes of allegiance

Section 16 of the *Act respecting the National Assembly* stipulates that a Member may resign his seat verbally at a sitting of the Assembly. He may also resign in a writing countersigned by two other Members and sent to the President or the Secretary General of the Assembly.

One Member resigned
in 2003-2004:



Russell Williams (QLP)
Nelligan

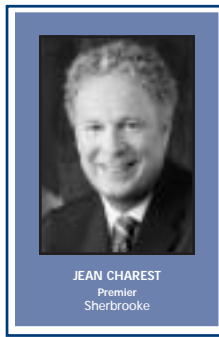
25 September 1989 - 9 March 2004

One Member
changed allegiance during
the same period, to sit as
an independent Member:



Daniel Bouchard (QLP)
Mégantic-Compton

Change of allegiance: 16 March 2004



JEAN CHAREST
Premier
Sherbrooke



JACQUES P. DUPUIS
Government
House Leader
Saint-Laurent

THOMAS J. MULCAIR
Deputy Government
House Leader
Chomedey

MICHELE LAMQUIN-ÉTHIER
Deputy Government
House Leader
Crémazie

YVON VALLIÈRES
Chief Government
Whip
Richmond

MARGARET F. DELISLE
Deputy Government
Whip
Jean-Talon

NICOLE LOISELLE
Deputy Government
Whip
Saint-Henri—Sainte-Anne

NORMAN MACMILLAN
Caucus Chair
Papineau



VINCENT AUCLAIR
Vimont



MICHEL AUDET
Laporte



CLAUDE BACHAND
Arthabaska



LINE BEAUCHAMP
Bourassa-Sauvé



CLAUDE BÉCHARD
Kamouraska-Témiscouata



MARC BELLEMARE
Vanier



LAWRENCE S. BERGMAN
D'Arcy-McGee



DANIEL BERNARD
Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue



RAYMOND BERNIER
Montmorency



KARL BLACKBURN
Roberval



YVAN BORDELEAU
Acadie



JULIE BOULET
Lavolette



BERNARD BRODEUR
Shefford



JACQUES CHAGNON
Westmount-Saint-Louis



NANCY CHAREST
Matane



LUCIE CHARLEBOIS
Soulanges



ANDRÉ CHENAIL
Huntingdon



ROCH CHOLETTE
Hull



MAURICE CLERMONT
Mille-Îles



RUSSELL COPEMAN
Notre-Dame-de-Grâce



PIERRE CORBEIL
Abitibi-Est



PHILIPPE COUILLARD
Mont-Royal



MICHELLE COURCHESNE
Fabre



WILLIAM CUSANO
Viau



PIERRE DESCOTEAUX
Groulx



MICHEL DESPRÉS
Jean-Lesage



JEAN DUBUC
La Prairie



JEAN-MARC FOURNIER
Châteauguay



ANDRÉ GABIAS
Trois-Rivières



MONIQUE GAGNON-TREMBLAY
Saint-François



FRANCINE GAUDET
Maskinongé



FRANÇOISE GAUTHIER
Jonquière



HENRI-FRANÇOIS GAUTRIN
Verdun



SAM HAMAD
Louis-Hébert



FRANCE HAMEL
La Pétrie



FATIMA HOUDA-PEPIN
La Pinière



MONIQUE JÉRÔME-FORGET
Marguerite-Bourgeoys



GEOFFREY KELLEY
Jacques-Cartier



RÉJEAN LAFRENIÈRE
Gatineau



CHARLOTTE L'ÉCUYER
Pontiac



DIANE LEGAULT
Chambly



LAURENT LESSARD
Frontenac



YVON MARCOUX
Vaudreuil



PIERRE MARSAN
Robert-Baldwin



ERIC R. MERCIER
Charlesbourg



PIERRE MOREAU
Marguerite-D'Youville



NORBERT MORIN
Montmagny-L'Islet



NATHALIE NORMANDEAU
Bonaventure



FRANÇOIS OUIMET
Marquette



ALAIN PAQUET
Laval-des-Rapides



JEAN-PIERRE PAQUIN
Saint-Jean



PIERRE PARADIS
Brome-Missisquoi



BENOÎT PELLETIER
Chapleau



SARAH PERREAULT
Chauveau



PIERRE REID
Orford



JEAN RIOUX
Iberville



YVES SEGUIN
Outremont



JEAN-PIERRE SOUCY
Portneuf



CAROLE THÈBERGE
Lévis



LISE THÉRIAULT
Anjou



TONY TOMASSI
LaFontaine



DOMINIQUE VIEN
Bellechasse



DAVID WHISSELL
Argenteuil

E MEMBERS

THIRTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE
S AT 31 MARCH 2004



BERNARD LANDRY
Leader of the Official Opposition
Verchères



MICHEL BISSONNET
President of the National Assembly
Jeanne-Mance—Viger



CHRISTOS SIRROS
First Vice-President
Laurier-Dorion



DIANE LEBLANC
Second Vice-President
Beauce-Sud



FRANÇOIS GENDRON
Third Vice-President
Abitibi-Ouest



ANDRÉ BOISCLAIR
Opposition
House Leader
Gouin



STÉPHANE BEDARD
Deputy Opposition
House Leader
Chicoutimi



MICHEL MORIN
Chief Opposition
Whip
Nicolet-Yamaska



NICOLE LÉGER
Deputy Opposition
Whip
Pointe-aux-Trembles



AGNÈS MALTAIS
Caucus Chair
Taschereau



MAXIME ARSENEAU
Îles-de-la-Madeleine



DENISE BEAUDOIN
Mirabel



ROSAIRE BERTRAND
Charlevoix



CAMIL BOUCHARD
Vachon



CLAUDE BOUCHER
Johnson



ANDRÉ BOULERICE
Sainte-Marie—Saint-Jacques



ALEXANDRE BOURDEAU
Berthier



JOCELYNE CARON
Terrebonne



NOELLA CHAMPAGNE
Champlain



JEAN-PIERRE CHARBONNEAU
Borduas



SOLANGE CHAREST
Rimouski



JACQUES CÔTÉ
Dubuc



CLAUDE COUSINEAU
Bertrand



SERGE DESLÈVES
Beauharnois



LÉANDRE DION
Saint-Hyacinthe



RITA DIONNE-MARSOLAIS
Rosemont



DANIELLE DOYER
Matapédia



MARJOLAIN DUFOUR
René-Lévesque



LOUISE HAREL
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve



NORMAND JUTRAS
Drummond



FRANÇOIS LEGAULT
Rousseau



RICHARD LEGENDRE
Blainville



GUY LELIÈVRE
Gaspé



DIANE LEMIEUX
Bourget



MICHEL LÉTOURNEAU
Ungava



PAULINE MAROIS
Tallon



SYLVAIN PAGE
Labelle



LUCIE PAPINEAU
Prévost



CLAUDE PINARD
Saint-Maurice



LORRAINE RICHARD
Duplessis



HÉLÈNE ROBERT
Deux-Montagnes



SYLVAIN SIMARD
Richelieu



JEAN-CLAUDE ST-ANDRÉ
L'Assomption



LUC THÉRIAULT
Masson



STÉPHAN TREMBLAY
Lac-Saint-Jean



DANIEL TURP
Mercier



JONATHAN VALOIS
Joliette



CÉCILE VERMETTE
Marie-Victorin



MARIO DUMONT
Rivière-du-Loup



JANVIER GRONDIN
Beauce-Nord



MARC PICARD
Chutes-de-la-Chaudière



SYLVIE ROY
Lotbinière



DANIEL BOUCHARD
Mégantic-Compton



THE SEATING PLAN OF THE ASSEMBLY AS AT 31 MARCH 2004

Definitions

- **Parliamentary group forming the Government**

The group of Members whose party won the majority of seats in a general election. Their leader becomes the Premier, and he chooses, generally among the Members of this group, those who shall become Ministers.

- **Parliamentary group forming the Official Opposition**

The group of Members whose party won the second largest number of seats in a general election. The leader of this parliamentary group becomes the Leader of the Official Opposition.

- **Independent Member**

A Member of Parliament who is not a member of a recognized political party under the Standing Orders of the National Assembly or who, during a term of office, leaves a group without joining another. An independent Member may join a parliamentary group at any time during a legislature.

Parliamentary duties

President

He is elected among the Members and his duties are threefold: to ensure that the Standing Orders are observed and that the rights and privileges of the National Assembly and of its Members are protected during each sitting; to oversee the services of the Assembly; to represent the Assembly in Québec and abroad in its relations with other Parliaments.

Vice-Presidents

There are three vice-presidents, the first two of which are elected among the Members of the parliamentary group forming the Government and the third, among the Members of the parliamentary group forming the Official Opposition. They assist the President in his duties and enjoy the same prerogatives and the same authority as the latter when they replace him in his parliamentary functions.

Leader

A Member who is responsible for the parliamentary activity of his party.

House Leader

A Member who is responsible for establishing the parliamentary strategies of his group.

Deputy House Leader

A Member who assists and replaces the House Leader in his duties.

Whip

A Member who is responsible for discipline within his group and who coordinates the activities of the Members in the Assembly, in committees, and within delegations.

Deputy Whip

A Member who assists and replaces the Whip in his duties.

The National Assembly and PARLIAMENTARY WORK



As legislators, Members play an active role in the drafting of bills that concern the everyday lives of Quebecers. The bills are the result of complex and elaborate work to which each Member contributes in the Assembly and in the standing committees. Members also control the Government's actions during Oral Questions and Answers, but also during debates upon adjournment and the annual consideration of the estimates of expenditure. Finally, parliamentarians engage in the public debate by addressing important questions for the future of Québec society.

SCHEDULE OF PROCEEDINGS

The Standing Orders of the National Assembly establish a work calendar that is divided into two periods: from the second Tuesday in March until 23 June at the latest, and from the third Tuesday in October until 21 December at the latest. The Standing Orders also provide for «intensive» periods of work, beginning on 25 May and 25 November, during which an extra sitting day is added to the weekly schedule and the sitting hours are extended.

The standing committee sittings may take place throughout the year. However, no standing committee sittings may be held when Routine Proceedings are underway in the National Assembly Room.

Calendar of Assembly sittings

Schedule	Ordinary session	Intensive session 25 May to 23 June / 25 Nov. to 21 Dec.
Monday	*	*
Tuesday	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wednesday	2 p.m. - 6 p.m.	3 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Thursday		8 p.m. - 12 a.m.
Friday		

* The Assembly may sit on Monday on motion by the Government House Leader.

Outside of the periods provided for in the Standing Orders, the Assembly, at the request of the Premier, may hold extraordinary sittings. This request is addressed to the President or, in his absence, to the Secretary General.

Upon the conclusion of the examination of the annual estimates of expenditure in the standing committees, which took place exceptionally this year from 2 to 15 July, the Members of the National Assembly were summoned to such an extraordinary sitting, on Wednesday, 16 July 2003, in order to conclude the consideration and adoption of the estimates of expenditure for the 2003-2004 fiscal year and to pass the consequent appropriation bill.

The object of this sitting was also to examine and pass Bill 1, An Act respecting proposals for the administrative reorganization of certain municipalities and amending various legislative provisions.

ASSESSMENT OF WORK AT THE ASSEMBLY

The following table provides a breakdown of the sittings held and of the work hours completed, both in the Assembly and in committees, in the course of the 2003-2004 fiscal year.

N.B.: Owing to the holding of a general election on 14 April 2003, the Assembly and the committees did not sit in April and May.

	ASSEMBLY		COMMITTEES	
	Sittings	Hours	Sittings	Hours
June	12	68 h 43	25	16 h 40
July	1	4 h 29	46	206 h 46
August	0	0	1	1 h 55
September	0	0	43	150 h 04
October	6	29 h 27	37	100 h 21
November	13	72 h 29	41	114 h 26
December	13	106 h 23	38	123 h 08
January	0	0	15	69 h 39
February	0	0	41	200 h 38
March	11	44 h 27	61	174 h 03

IN THE ASSEMBLY	56 sittings 325 h 58
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IN COMMITTEES	348 sittings 1157 h 40
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A sitting of the Assembly is divided into two periods: the Routine Proceedings and the Orders of the Day.

The Routine Proceedings are composed of nine items of business set aside for information given by the Government to the Assembly, while the Orders of the Day are devoted mainly to debates on bills at either of the stages of their consideration.

Items of business under Routine Proceedings

1. Statements by Ministers

At this stage, a Minister may make a statement to the Assembly on any subject he deems to be relevant, such as the announcement of a governmental policy or the Government's reaction to a given event. In 2003-2004, three statements by Ministers were made.

2. Introduction of Bills

It is also during Routine Proceedings that a bill may be introduced. Members do not discuss the content of the bill at this point but simply allow the text thereof to be submitted for examination during the subsequent stages of the legislative process. Fifty bills were introduced during the past fiscal year.

3. Tablings

The parliamentarians table various documents of public interest on a regular basis. In 2003-2004, 782 documents were tabled in the Assembly, primarily annual reports from ministries and public bodies, reports from committees and petitions.

4. Complaints of Breach of Privilege or Contempt and Personal Explanations

At this stage, any Member may raise a breach of the privileges or immunities of the Assembly or give personal explanations on a matter concerning him as a Member of the Assembly. In 2003-2004, the Chair gave four rulings in cases such as the latter, in which a Member may wish to raise a misstatement in relation to one of his speeches, deny accusations made against him in a publication or explain the meaning of comments that were misinterpreted.

5. Oral Questions and Answers

This item of business is without a doubt the most familiar to citizens. During this 45-minute period, Members may question Ministers on matters of public interest, stemming from current events or urgent matters, within their competence or that of the Government.

Any Member who is of the opinion that a matter he raised during Oral Questions and Answers has not been sufficiently discussed may request a debate upon adjournment. He must give notice to the President of the matter he wishes to discuss no later than 30 minutes after the end of oral question period. In 2003-2004, 40 such debates were held, on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week, at the time appointed for the rising of the Assembly.

Not more than three debates may be held upon adjournment on any sitting day. The Member who raised the matter and the Minister responding thereto may each speak for up to five minutes and the Member may thereafter speak for up to two minutes in reply.

During the 41 hours and 15 minutes set aside for Oral Questions and Answers at the Assembly this year, **513 main questions** were asked, and **700 supplementary questions** were granted by the Chair. Furthermore, two written questions were placed on the *Order Paper*.

GLOSSARY

Motion

Procedural act by which a Member places some matter before the Assembly for its decision. He may thus ask the Assembly to carry out an action, order that an action be carried out or express an opinion on a given subject.

6. Deferred Divisions

At the request of the Government House Leader, the President may defer a recorded division to a later moment during the same sitting or until the Routine Proceedings on the next sitting day.

7. Motions Without Notice

Routine Proceedings also enable Members to present motions without notice, thus bringing a matter to the attention of the Assembly despite a motion thereon not having first been placed on the *Order Paper*.

This year, 111 motions without notice were carried. Several of these motions were carried unanimously, including the following:

« THAT the National Assembly take great satisfaction in the contents of the royal proclamation officially announced today, which designates 28 July as the day commemorating The Great Disturbance and which acknowledges in its preamble the historic wrongdoings unnecessarily inflicted in the name of the British Crown upon the Acadian people during its deportation from 1755 to 1763;

THAT it also congratulate the Société nationale de l'Acadie, its partners and the Acadian people for the success of the steps they proudly took to obtain this acknowledgement.» (10 December 2003)

8. Notices of Proceedings in Committees

9. Information on the Proceedings of the Assembly

These two last items under Routine Proceedings allow the Government House Leader and the President to give information on the parliamentary proceedings to the Members.

Items of business under Orders of the Day

With very few exceptions, the motions debated during this period are placed on the *Order Paper*. Notwithstanding Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition, it is generally the Government House Leader who indicates which item of business on the Order Paper will be discussed. However, he must observe the order in which these items are to be taken.

1. Business Having Precedence

These items of business, as the name indicates, have precedence over all other matters, owing to their importance or urgency. The Opening Speech of the Session, delivered by the Premier, ranks first among the items of business having precedence, and, within the framework of the ensuing debate thereon, the speeches by the Leaders of the parliamentary groups or their representatives. Among other business having precedence, the Budget Speech and want of confidence motions should be mentioned.

2. Urgent debates

Any Member may request the holding of an urgent debate. The President authorizes the holding of such a debate if he deems that the request concerns a specific and important matter involving the responsibility of the Assembly and which cannot be otherwise discussed.

3. Debates on Reports from Committees

The reports from committees containing recommendations are placed on the Order Paper immediately after they have been tabled in the Assembly and must be taken into consideration within 15 days following this tabling.

4. Other Business Standing on the *Order Paper*

During this period, the Assembly engages in the various stages of the consideration of a bill, including the passage in principle, the clause-by-clause consideration in committee of the whole and the passage of the bill.

The Assembly carries out the translation from French to English of all bills in view of their introduction in the National Assembly, as well as the translation of amendments adopted by the standing committees and the House, pursuant to section 133 of the Constitution Act and section 7 of the Charter of the French Language.

Only a Minister may introduce a bill having a financial impact. However, barring this exception, any Member has the right to introduce a bill at the National Assembly, and he may thereupon entrust its drafting to the legal and legislative services of the Assembly.

During the past year, the National Assembly passed 38 bills:		
30	introduced by Ministers	15 of which were adopted unanimously
2	introduced by Members	both adopted unanimously
6	private bills	five of which were adopted unanimously
On average, 47 days elapsed between the introduction of these 38 bills and their passage. The French versions of these bills represent over 1200 pages of legislation.		

5. Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition

The debates on Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition take place every Wednesday, excepting during the period of extended hours of meeting or when business having precedence is underway.

This year, 15 motions were placed on the Order Paper and debated. Several of these motions were carried unanimously, including the following:

«THAT the National Assembly ask the Government to protect the personal disposable income of Québec families in its policy development.»
(12 November 2003)

GLOSSARY

Chairman

A Member of one of the parliamentary groups, elected by the members of the committee for a two-year term, he organizes and chairs the proceedings of his committee. The chairman of the committee takes part in the debates and has the right to vote.

Vice-chairman

A Member of a parliamentary group other than that of the chairman, elected by the members of the committee for a two-year term, he assists the chairman in his duties and replaces him when necessary.

Temporary chairman

A Member appointed by the President of the Assembly to preside over the debates of a committee, at the request of a committee chairman or when the Assembly so directs in an order of reference. The Committee on the National Assembly approves a list of Members who may act in such capacity. The list of temporary chairmen was as follows as at 31 March 2004:

QLP

Bordeleau, Yvan (Acadie)
Charlebois, Lucie (Soulanges)
Clermont, Maurice (Mille-Îles)
Dubuc, Jean (La Prairie)
Hamel, France (La Peltre)
L'Écuyer, Charlotte (Pontiac)
Paquin, Jean-Pierre (Saint-Jean)
Paradis, Pierre (Brome-Missisquoi)
Tomassi, Tony (LaFontaine)

PQ

Boucher, Claude (Johnson)
Charest, Solange (Rimouski)
Deslières, Serge (Beauharnois)
Doyer, Danielle (Matapédia)
Robert, Hélène (Deux-Montagnes)
Vermette, Cécile (Marie-Victorin)

THE STANDING COMMITTEES

It is mainly through the standing committees that Members exercise their duties as legislators and controllers of the Government's actions and the public administration. A standing committee is composed of a limited number of Members who are responsible for the examination of any matter within its competence. An important part of parliamentary work is not carried out in the Assembly as such, but in the committees. The latter give detailed consideration to bills, closely examine the activities of the ministries and governmental agencies, study the budgetary estimates of the Government, and may also choose, on their own initiative, to examine any other matter in relation to their field of jurisdiction. It is also in committee that the population can be heard during public consultations on bills or on the various issues of particular concern to society.

Calendar of standing committee sittings

Schedule	Ordinary session	Intensive session 25 May to 23 June / 25 Nov. to 21 Dec.
Monday	2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.
Tuesday Wednesday Thursday	9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	
Friday	9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	

There are 11 parliamentary committees, nine of which are sector-based. Six of the sector-based committees are chaired by Members from the group forming the Government and three by Members of the Official Opposition. The chairmanship of the Committee on Public Administration is set aside for a Member of the Official Opposition, and the President of the National Assembly chairs the Committee on the National Assembly. On 5 June 2003, the Committee on the National Assembly established the membership of each of the standing committees and adopted the list of temporary chairmen. The chairmen and vice-chairmen of the standing committees subsequently were elected by the members of each committee during elections held on 6 June 2003.

Members of the standing committees

Before taking a look at the work completed in 2003-2004, the following outlines the terms of reference and the members of each committee as at 31 March 2004:

COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



Standing Orders of the National Assembly and the Rules for the Conduct of Proceedings; coordination of the proceedings of the other committees

ex-officio members:

- The President of the Assembly
- The Vice-Presidents
- The House leaders and whips of the parliamentary groups
- The committee chairmen

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION



accountability and examination of financial commitments

members:

The chairman	Rita Dionne-Marsolais (Rosemont) PQ
The vice-chairman	Sarah Perreault (Chauveau) QLP

QLP

Raymond Bernier (Montmorency)
Nancy Charest (Matane)
Henri-François Gauthrin (Verdun)
Laurent Lessard (Frontenac)
Alain Paquet (Laval-des-Rapides)

PQ

Alexandre Bourdeau (Berthier)
Solange Charest (Rimouski)
Cécile Vermette (Marie-Victorin)

COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONS



Executive Council, justice, public security, intergovernmental relations, the Constitution

members:

The chairman	Sylvain Simard (Richelieu) PQ
The vice-chairman	Lise Thériault (Anjou) QLP

QLP

Yvan Bordeleau (Acadie)
Bernard Brodeur (Shefford)
Pierre Descoteaux (Groulx)
André Gabias (Trois-Rivières)
Pierre Moreau (Marguerite-D'Youville)
David Whissell (Argenteuil)

PQ

Jacques Côté (Dubuc)
Michel Létourneau (Ungava)
Daniel Turp (Mercier)

ADQ

Mario Dumont (Rivière-du-Loup)

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC FINANCE



finance, the budget, the public accounts, the public administration,
the public service, and supply and services

members:

The chairman	Alain Paquet (Laval-des-Rapides) QLP
The vice-chairman	Rosaire Bertrand (Charlevoix) PQ

QLP

Raymond Bernier (Montmorency)
Nancy Charest (Matane)
Roch Cholette (Hull)
Henri-François Gautrin (Verdun)
Jean-Pierre Paquin (Saint-Jean)
Jean Rioux (Iberville)

PQ

Denise Beaudoin (Mirabel)
François Legault (Rousseau)
Guy Lelièvre (Gaspé)

ADQ

Marc Picard (Chutes-de-la-Chaudière)

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS



family, health, social and community services, status of women,
income security

members:

The chairman	Russell Copeman (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce) QLP
The vice-chairman	Jean-Pierre Charbonneau (Borduas) PQ

QLP

Vincent Auclair (Vimont)
Claude Bachand (Arthabaska)
Daniel Bernard
(Rouyn-Noranda—Témiscamingue)
Lucie Charlebois (Soulanges)
Charlotte L'Écuyer (Pontiac)
Pierre Marsan (Robert-Baldwin)

PQ

Camil Bouchard (Vachon)
Lorraine Richard (Duplessis)
Jonathan Valois (Joliette)

ADQ

Sylvie Roy (Lotbinière)

COMMITTEE ON LABOUR AND THE ECONOMY



industry, trade, tourism, labour, science and technology,
energy and resources, manpower

members:

The chairman	Diane Lemieux (Bourget) PQ
The vice-chairman	Claude Bachand (Arthabaska) QLP

QLP

Daniel Bernard
(Rouyn-Noranda—Témiscamingue)
Karl Blackburn (Roberval)
France Hamel (La Peltre)
Jean-Pierre Paquin (Saint-Jean)
Tony Tomassi (LaFontaine)

PQ

Claude Boucher (Johnson)
Danielle Doyer (Matapédia)
Marjolain Dufour (René-Lévesque)

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD



agriculture, fisheries, food

members:

The chairman Fatima Houda-Pepin (La Pinière) QLP
The vice-chairman Normand Jutras (Drummond) PQ

QLP

Lucie Charlebois (Soulanges)
André Chenail (Huntingdon)
Charlotte L'Écuyer (Pontiac)
Jean Rioux (Iberville)
Jean-Pierre Soucy (Portneuf)

PQ

Léandre Dion (Saint-Hyacinthe)
Michel Morin (Nicolet-Yamaska)
Hélène Robert (Deux-Montagnes)

COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN



local communities, municipal planning, housing, recreation

members:

The chairman François Ouimet (Marquette) QLP
The vice-chairman Richard Legendre (Blainville) PQ

QLP

Karl Blackburn (Roberval)
Maurice Clermont (Mille-Îles)
Laurent Lessard (Frontenac)
Norbert Morin (Montmagny-L'Islet)
Tony Tomassi (LaFontaine)
Dominique Vien (Bellechasse)

PQ

Serge Deslières (Beauharnois)
Agnès Maltais (Taschereau)
Sylvain Pagé (Labelle)

ADQ

Janvier Grondin (Beauce-Nord)

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION



education, vocational training, consumer protection

members:

The chairman Geoffrey Kelley (Jacques-Cartier) QLP
The vice-chairman Maxime Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine) PQ

QLP

Vincent Auclair (Vimont)
Yvan Bordeleau (Acadie)
Francine Gaudet (Maskinongé)
Éric R. Mercier (Charlesbourg)
Sarah Perreault (Chauveau)

PQ

Noëlla Champagne (Champlain)
Claude Cousineau (Bertrand)
Pauline Marois (Taillon)

Parliamentary control constitutes the major part of the work done in the standing committees, as the following table indicates:

Parliamentary control

Government estimates of expenditure	199 h 42	17 %
Interpellations	12 h 36	1 %
Other orders of the Assembly	263 h 56	23 %
Delegated legislation	0 h 00	0 %
Surveillance of agencies	20 h 01	2 %
Examination of financial commitments	0 h 00	0 %
Accountability	34 h 28	3 %
Other orders under the Standing Orders	54 h 45	5 %
Orders of initiative	74 h 43	6 %

Subtotal	660 h 11	57 %
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Legislative process

Consideration of public bills	457 h 56	40 %
Consideration of private bills	2 h 32	0 %

Subtotal	460 h 28	40 %
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General organization and election of the chairmen and vice-chairmen

Subtotal	37 h 01	3 %
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TOTAL	1157 h 40	100 %
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COMMITTEE ON CULTURE



culture, communications, cultural communities, immigration,
relations with the citizens

members:

The chairman	William Cusano (Viau) QLP
The vice-chairman	André Boulerice (Sainte-Marie—Saint-Jacques) PQ

QLP

France Hamel (La Peltre)
Diane Legault (Chambly)
Éric R. Mercier (Charlesbourg)
Pierre Moreau (Marguerite-D'Youville)
Dominique Vien (Bellechasse)

PQ

Jocelyne Caron (Terrebonne)
Nicole Léger (Pointe-aux-Trembles)
Lucie Papineau (Prévost)

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT



transportation, public works, the environment, wildlife

members:

The chairman	Louise Harel (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) PQ
The vice-chairman	Bernard Brodeur (Shefford) QLP

QLP

Jean Dubuc (La Prairie)
André Gabis (Trois-Rivières)
Réjean Lafrenière (Gatineau)
Norbert Morin (Montmagny-L'Islet)
Jean-Pierre Soucy (Portneuf)

PQ

Claude Pinard (Saint-Maurice)
Luc Thériault (Masson)
Stéphan Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean)

MANDATES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

The sector-based parliamentary committees may carry out three types of mandates: orders of reference, orders of initiative, and statutory orders (for example, the examination of annual reports of certain Government agencies). The complete list of mandates carried out by the standing committees in 2003-2004 can be found in appendix. It is interesting to note that several of these mandates are preceded by preparatory meetings and followed by deliberative meetings for the purpose of making an assessment of the proceedings and of drafting a final report that sometimes contains observations and recommendations addressed to the Government. The documents produced by the standing committees, such as consultation papers, reports and communiqués, may be consulted on the Internet site of the National Assembly.

1. Orders of initiative

In the course of 2003-2004, the committee members took the initiative to more closely examine the issues affecting various sectors of community life. The following are a few examples thereof.

Within the framework of its mandate on food safety in Québec, the **Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food** began by hearing experts with regard to food inspection, traceability and genetically modified organisms, which enabled it to produce a consultation paper that was released at a press conference. Following the publication of a notice for the holding of a general consultation, the Committee received 80 submissions, and 49 individuals and organizations were heard during the public hearings.

The Internet site of the National Assembly enabled citizens to participate in the proceedings of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food on food safety. The citizens taking part in this «on-line consultation» were required to fill out a form containing 21 questions. One hundred and twelve citizens submitted their opinion to the Committee and this section of the site was visited over 3600 times.

The **Committee on Public Finance** chose to take a closer look at the implementation of the Agence nationale d'encadrement du secteur financier which, since 1 February 2004, replaces the many regulatory bodies of the financial industry, in particular in the fields of insurance, securities, depository institutions and the distribution of financial products and services. The Committee published a study paper and heard a dozen organizations within the framework of special consultations. It also heard the members of the Bureau de transition de l'encadrement du secteur financier on three occasions.

GLOSSARY

Orders of initiative

On their own initiative, the committee members examine draft regulations and regulations, the orientation, activities and management of public agencies and any other matter of public interest.

The **Committee on Institutions** held a deliberative meeting to hear the Minister for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs and Native Affairs in order to make an assessment of the recently established Council of the Federation. Also, the Committee has decided to place on the Internet site of the National Assembly the 134 briefs forwarded in the course of the previous Legislature by various organizations, experts and citizens concerned by the electoral representation procedure, which will be the topic of upcoming debates. Finally, the Committee carried out a mission in Northern Québec from 22 to 26 February 2004. Eight Committee members met with members of the Cree, Inuit and Jamesian communities in the Chibougamau, Nemiscau, Radisson and Kuujjuaq regions. The Committee thus reviewed the implementation and future prospects of the Northern Québec Development Policy, which dates back to 2001, and of the agreements signed with the Cree and Inuit Nations in 2002 (Peace of the Brave and Sanarratik).

Some standing committees also carried out orders of surveillance of agencies in order to examine the orientation, activities and management of public agencies that fall within their terms of reference. For example, the Committee on Public Finance heard the chief officers of the Commission administrative des régimes de retraite et d'assurances (CARRA) and those of Investissement Québec. The Committee also held special consultations, within the framework of each of these mandates, to hear several persons concerned by these two public agencies.

GLOSSARY

Orders of reference

At the request of the Assembly, the committees examine bills, the estimates of expenditure, and any other matter that may be referred to them.

General consultation

A general consultation is addressed to the population in general. Prior to its holding, a public notice must be published in selected newspapers and on the Internet site of the Assembly inviting any individuals and organizations interested in the matter under consideration to forward a submission to the committee. Public hearings are then held by the committee in order to discuss the submissions received.

Special consultations

Special consultations are limited to individuals and organizations chosen by the committee or by the Assembly owing to their knowledge or expertise regarding the matter under consideration.

2. Orders of reference

Clause-by-clause consideration of bills

The standing committees gave consideration to over 40 bills. Included therein are Government bills, two private Members' public bills, six private bills and some bills that were still at the committee stage for clause-by-clause consideration.

General and special consultations

In 2003-2004, no less than 663 groups and individuals came before the committees to give their opinion on the various matters on which consultations were held, and 793 submissions were received by the committees. This is a very high number, given that a general election was held this year and that the Assembly did not sit during the spring of 2003. They generally take place prior to the decision-making process and enable the Government to properly assess the issues arising from a matter under consideration. The following is an overview of the main consultations held in 2003-2004.

The **Committee on Planning and the Public Domain** was ordered to hold a general consultation on Bill 9, An Act respecting the consultation of citizens with respect to the territorial reorganization of certain municipalities. The Committee received 99 briefs and heard 84 groups and individuals from various sectors. It also held special

consultations on Bill 1 in relation to proposals for the territorial reorganization of certain municipalities (three groups were heard) and on Bill 33 which amends the Charter of Ville de Montréal (the mayor of the city and the leader of its official opposition were heard).

The **Committee on Social Affairs** held five special consultations and two general consultations during which 114 individuals and organizations were heard. The special consultations dealt with the following issues:

- Bill 25 respecting local health and social services network development agencies (26 individuals and organizations heard);
- Bill 30 respecting bargaining units in the social affairs sector (14 individuals and organizations heard);
- Bill 8 which amends the Act respecting childcare centres and childcare services (eight individuals and organizations heard);
- Bill 11 respecting intercountry adoption (two individuals and organizations heard);
- Bill 7 which concerns intermediate resources and family-type resources in the health network (eight individuals and organizations heard).

Both general consultations, which were held in February and March 2004, had reference to the document entitled *Adapting the Pension Plan to Québec's new realities* (29 individuals and organizations heard) and on Bill 38 concerning the Health and Welfare Commissioner (27 individuals and organizations heard).

The **Committee on Institutions** held special consultations on Bills 4 and 35 which amend the Act respecting administrative justice. The first bill establishes that proceedings brought before the Administrative Tribunal of Québec shall be heard and determined by a single member rather than two and the second bill proposes the creation of the Administrative Review Tribunal of Québec. The Committee heard 71 organizations with regard to these bills and was also mandated to hold special consultations on three other subjects:

- the white paper on private security in Québec (nine organizations had been heard as at 31 April 2004);
- Bill 6 which amends the Highway Safety Code and the Code of Penal Procedure as regards the collection of fines (four organizations were heard);
- Bill 21 which amends the Civil Code and the Code of Civil Procedure as regards the determination of child support payments (11 organizations were heard).

The **Committee on Education** held a general consultation on the issues surrounding the quality, accessibility and financing of Québec universities. A working paper was published (it contains some 40 specific questions) and 92 individuals and organizations forwarded a submission. The Committee held 19 hearings during which 87 briefs were presented.

The **Committee on Labour and the Economy** held special consultations as part of the consideration of Bill 31 which amends the Labour Code as regards particularly the transmission of rights and obligations upon the transfer of part of the operation of an undertaking. The Committee heard 19 individuals and organizations and also heard, for two full days, the head officers of Hydro-Québec in order to examine the strategic plan 2004-2008 of this Crown corporation.

The **Committee on Culture** held a general consultation on the three-year immigration plan for 2005-2007 with particular reference to the document entitled *La planification des niveaux d'immigration 2005-2007*. This document proposes three scenarios with regard to the number of admissions for this three-year period. The Committee heard 50 individuals and groups.

Lastly, the **Committee on Public Finance** held a general consultation on the document entitled *Report from the working group on the Québec Government's role in venture capital*, during which 80 submissions were presented and 61 individuals and groups were heard.

Consideration of the estimates of expenditure for 2003-2004

As every year, the members of committees examined the estimates of expenditure for 2003-2004. The Chair of the Conseil du trésor tabled these estimates in the Assembly on 13 June. This parliamentary control activity, which generally takes place in April, was held this year between 2 and 15 July owing to the holding of the general election. For the first time since 1970, the estimates of expenditure were examined during the summer. Upon the conclusion of their mandate, the committees had devoted more than 200 hours to the examination and adoption of the estimates of expenditure granted to the ministries and agencies, totalling over 50 billion dollars.

3. Statutory orders and orders provided for in the Standing Orders

The **Committee on Culture** heard some forty organizations within the framework of a general consultation on the document entitled *Reforming Access to Information: Choosing transparency*. This is the fourth five-year report from the Commission d'accès à l'information on the implementation of the Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information and of the Act respecting the protection of personal information in the private sector. These Acts stipulate that a general consultation is to be held on the five-year report and that the members of the appropriate committee must examine the advisability of maintaining or, if need be, amending the Act. The members of the Committee on Culture held over a dozen deliberative meetings to prepare the final report that is to be tabled in the National Assembly during the spring of 2004.

In compliance with certain provisions of the Act respecting educational institutions at the university level, the **Committee on Education** heard the head officers of six universities on the documents that each university is required to produce. They include the financial statements, the reports on performance and development prospects, the salary statements of the executive personnel as well as the performance contracts signed between the Government and the 19 universities. The Committee will hear the head officers of 13 other universities in the coming months within the framework of this triennial exercise.

The **Committee on Public Finance** held public hearings as part of a special consultation on the draft code of conduct for lobbyists. Provided for in section 37 of the Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act, this statutory order enabled the Committee to hear seven individuals in addition to the Lobbyists Commissioner. Aside from the persons and groups who were heard, the Committee received ten other submissions that were taken into consideration in the drafting of its report, which contains several observations and recommendations. It also met for approximately 10 hours within the framework of the debate following the Budget Speech.

Finally, the **Committee on Labour and the Economy** heard the chief officers of the Fonds national de formation de la main-d'œuvre to examine the financial statements and annual report of this Fund, pursuant to section 43 of the Act to foster the development of manpower training.

G L O S S A R Y

Statutory orders and orders provided for in the Standing Orders

Statutory orders stem from an act or regulation arising therefrom. Furthermore, certain committee orders arise from provisions in the Standing Orders of the National Assembly.

INTERPELLATION

Pursuant to the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, every Member sitting in opposition may interpellate a minister on a matter of general interest for which he is officially responsible. The interpellation is held at a meeting of the appropriate standing committee, on Friday morning from 10.00 o'clock a.m. to 12.00 o'clock noon. One interpellation may be held each week during the periods in which the Assembly ordinarily meets (excepting during intensive session, when none may be held).

The Government ministers were interpellated in the standing committees on the following subjects:

- the impact of reengineering on the health system in Québec;
- the impact of the Government's decisions in the education sector;
- the state of public finance in Québec;
- the impact of reengineering on Québec's regions;
- the impact of the Government's decisions regarding support to families;
- the Government's commitments regarding health.

GLOSSARY

Accountability

The Committee on Public Administration is required to hear public administrators on their management. The Committee carries out this mandate by inviting the deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies to publicly express their reaction to the observations contained in the Auditor General's report stemming from the examination of resources optimization. This report is tabled in the National Assembly in December and in June of each year.

Accountability

In December 2003, the Committee on Public Administration tabled in the Assembly its eleventh report on the accountability of deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies, which contains 16 recommendations that were adopted unanimously by its members. This report stems from the hearings with deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies and concerns the various issues that were examined by the Committee members, including:

- the management of the improvement of services to citizens;
- the examination of the annual management reports of the Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec and of the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration;
- the examination of the report on the implementation of the Public Administration Act;
- Government grants to non-profit organizations;
- the development of the information systems of the Ministère du Revenu.

The Committee also carried out the following mandates:

- heard the Auditor General on the annual management report, the strategic plan 2003-2006 and the financial commitments for 2002-2003;
- heard the chief officers of the Centre de conservation du Québec on the annual management report 2002-2003 of this Government agency (the members also visited the facilities of the Centre);
- heard the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services concerning mental health services;
- heard the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks on the document entitled *Étude bénéfice-coût de la Corporation Innovation-papier*;
- heard the Deputy Minister of the Environment concerning water monitoring and control.

The National Assembly and THE CITIZENS

Resolutely focussed on accessibility, the National Assembly has pursued its efforts to publicize its mission and its activities. Indeed by welcoming tens of thousands of visitors in 2003-2004, by informing the population via modern communication tools and by educating tomorrow's citizens on its educational activities, the Assembly has fostered the exercise of better citizenship.

VISITING THE ASSEMBLY

In the company of guides, the citizens are invited to visit the Parliament Building, which was designed by architect Eugène-Étienne Taché and built between 1877 and 1886 on what has become the first national historic site of Québec. During the tour, the guides explain the history and operation of the National Assembly of Québec. This gives visitors the opportunity to discover and to admire the special features of the building's architecture and the richness of the art displayed therein. Tours are given in French and English and, upon reservation, in Spanish and Italian.

Guided tours		Visitors by place of origin	
In French	54,107	Québec	67 %
In English	20,077	Other provinces	11 %
In Spanish	532	United States	10 %
In Italian	401	Other countries	12 %
Total	75,117		

Several visitors take the opportunity to attend the proceedings of the Assembly and of the standing committees. One hundred and forty seats are available in the galleries of the National Assembly Room and seats are reserved for the public in each of the standing committee rooms. In 2003-2004, 9468 persons thus attended the proceedings in the National Assembly Room, and 7107 in the standing committee rooms.

Young people are also given special attention. In collaboration with the Commission de la capitale nationale du Québec (national capital commission), the National Assembly offers several visit programmes for elementary and high school students, some of which are specifically developed for immigrant students and contribute to their French language learning. These activities not only include a visit of the Parliament Building but also a tour of the Premiers' Promenade and of the Observatory of the Capital.



Citizens who wish to attend the parliamentary proceedings, to get in touch with their Member of Parliament or to obtain information on the *Le Parlementaire* restaurant or on the Assembly *Boutique* are invited to call (418) 643-7239 or, toll free, 1 866 DÉPUTÉS (1 866 337-8837). Over 28,000 citizens contacted the Assembly in 2003-2004.

In addition to the school population that participates in the various programmes offered by the Commission de la capitale nationale, **15,271 students** from various levels took a guided tour of the National Assembly, including:

- 8142 elementary school students
- 5720 high school students
- 1128 college students
- 281 university students

Programmes in collaboration with the Commission de la capitale nationale du Québec

Programme features / themes	Level	Participants
<i>Québec, a history of the capital</i> interactive visit, simulation of a vote	Elementary	9116
<i>Québec, Gibraltar of America</i> right to vote, representation	Secondary 1, 2, 3	1573
<i>Québec, a political capital</i> parliamentary institutions, democracy	Secondary 4, 5	2159
<i>Québec, a capital for Quebecers</i> Integration and French language learning	Immigrant students in 5 th and 6 th grades	1926
<i>Québec, a capital for Quebecers</i> Integration and French language learning	Immigrant adults	1588
Total participation		16,362

In 2003-2004, the National Assembly hosted 226 official visits, protocolary ceremonies and activities that brought together 12,726 persons. Among these events are the following:

- the Ordre national du Québec awards ceremony
- the Prix du Québec 2003 awards ceremony
- the ceremony marking the classification as cultural property of the Pierre-Joseph-Olivier-Chauveau collection, former Premier of Québec from 1867 to 1873
- the Ordre de la Pléiade awards ceremony

The welcoming of cultural communities

Ever-mindful of promoting the work of Members and of reinforcing relations between the parliamentary institutions and the citizens that make up Québec society, irrespective of their origin, the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, invited some representatives of Québec's cultural communities to visit the Parliament Building in 2003-2004.

In November and December 2003, representatives of the Vietnamese, Portuguese, Black and Algerian communities of Québec thus had the opportunity to take a guided tour of the Parliament Building, attend Oral Question Period and meet some of the Members.

The President of the National Assembly
with members of the Portuguese
community.

The Library

A place of knowledge and reflection, the Library is the ideal location for exchanges between citizens and the players on our political and cultural scenes. Over 7900 individuals came to the Library for their information and research requirements or to visit the premises. By the same token, the «open house» day held on 24 June 2003 attracted close to 475 visitors who were interested in exploring its collections.

The first edition of the *Journée du livre politique* was held on 9 April 2003. This day aims to encourage authors who write about subjects related to Québec politics by awarding them prizes and holding various activities, such as round tables and an exhibition of political works. The Prix de la Présidence de l'Assemblée nationale (President's award), given to an author whose work is characterized by quality, originality and subject pertinence, was awarded to Joseph Yvon Thériault, sociologist, professor at the University of Ottawa and author of the essay entitled *Critique de l'américanité*. Holder of a Master's degree in sociology from the University du Québec in Montréal, Julie Jacques, for her part, was awarded the Prix de la Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant for her work entitled *L'engagement politique des jeunes femmes au Québec*. This award marks the work of the author of a Master's thesis or of a doctorate dissertation on politics in Québec. The award winners received the medal of the National Assembly, as well as a \$5000 bursary.



Award ceremony of the first edition of the *Journée du livre politique*. In the usual order, Mr. Joseph Yvon Thériault, the Vice-President of the Assembly, Mrs. Diane Leblanc, Mrs. Julie Jacques and the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet.

The Le Parlementaire restaurant

Located in the inner courtyard of the Parliament Building and accessible to all citizens, this dining room designed in the Beaux-Arts style is distinguished by its interior decoration, the work of architects Marchand & Tanguay. In 2003-2004, 41,203 persons chose to eat at *Le Parlementaire* and thus sample a variety of dishes from all regions of Québec. The *Mini-Débat* cafeteria, for its part, served over 49,000 meals.

THE HIGH SCHOOLS TOUR

In order to further instruct students on the role of the National Assembly, its history and its achievements, during winter 2004, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, the President of the National Assembly, conducted a tour of 13 Québec high schools, during which he met with over 4000 students. This tour, whose theme was The Challenge of Democracy, falls within the framework of the educational activities programme established by the Assembly. Its aim is to heighten the awareness of young people on the importance of taking part in the democratic process and to present the National Assembly as the forum for debates and discussions on the issues affecting their daily lives.

The internship programme for professional culinary students was extended to include all schools on Québec territory. This project, carried out in partnership with the Ministère de l'Éducation, enables students to promote the products of their home region. Hailing from **12 schools**, the **72 culinary students** accompanied by their **13 teachers** demonstrated their talents to the clientele of the *Le Parlementaire* restaurant by taking part in the planning of menus and the preparation of numerous dishes.

According to a survey carried out among cable distributors in Québec, 75 % of Québec households have access to the proceedings of the National Assembly.

THE COMMUNICATION TOOLS OF THE ASSEMBLY

The 25th anniversary of the broadcasting of debates

Twenty-five years ago, more precisely on 3 October 1978, Québec television moved into a new era with the broadcasting of the debates of the Québec National Assembly. Parliamentary life thus entered the homes of Quebecers. The integral television broadcasting of the National Assembly debates was made available to ensure the population's right to information and, by the same token, to open the doors to improved participation in the democratic process.

Since then, the Assembly channel has constantly evolved. Several special events, press conferences, press briefings and parliamentary simulations are now included in the broadcast programme. The parliamentary proceedings can be viewed via live broadcast, delayed broadcast or rebroadcast on the Assembly channel, and live on the Internet site of the Assembly. The following table highlights the broadcast activities carried out in 2003-2004.

Broadcasting	Number of events	Duration
Cable broadcasting and satellite	961	1738 h 14
	continuous electronic hosting	7045 h 46
Total		8784 h 00

Web broadcasting	679	1563 h 01
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The Internet site of the Assembly

In 2003-2004, the Assembly continued to develop the content of its Internet site. The Parliamentary Proceedings section of the site was reorganized by placing emphasis on the information intended for citizens and by creating a section for each standing committee. Furthermore, new documents were added to the historical information section of the site, such as *Les résultats électoraux depuis 1867* and the *Le Parlement de A à Z* glossary.

In order to highlight the work of parliamentarians, a link to the press conferences and bills in which they delivered speeches were added to their biographical notes.

Moreover, five parliamentary session reconstructions dating back to the turn of the century were added to the site, thereby simplifying the work of parliamentarians and researchers who, through the reconstruction of these debates, are able to paint a picture of how Québec society has evolved.

www.assnat.qc.ca



The CD-ROM of the Assembly

In June 2003, the National Assembly launched a CD-ROM on its history, its role and its operation. Entitled *Écrire l'histoire de demain* (Writing tomorrow's history), it comprises information designed for citizens who wish to better understand Québec parliamentarism. This multimedia tool, which is available at the *Boutique* of the Assembly, was one of three finalists in the «Education/Entertainment CD/ROM» category at the 9th Boomerang awards ceremony, which marks the excellence of interactive and multimedia material produced in Québec. Close to 5000 copies were made, 1700 of which were distributed in the school system.



The CD-ROM entitled *Écrire l'histoire de demain* may be purchased at the National Assembly Boutique (1-866-DÉPUTÉS (1 866 337-8837)).

THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSEMBLY

The purpose of the Assembly's educational activities is to develop citizens who are responsible and aware of their rights but also of their obligations and of the privilege they have of living in a democratic society. Complementary to the school curriculum, the educational programmes of the Assembly have enabled thousands of young and not so young people to increase their knowledge of the political and parliamentary institutions and to understand the fundamental role of the legislative power within Québec's democratic system. The simulations allow young people to understand the operation of the Assembly, its rules, its advantages and its restrictions. Thanks to this role playing, they draft and discuss bills while learning the art of compromise, consensus and the respect of others.

Activities	Date	Clientele	Participation outside of the Assembly	Participation at the Assembly
11 th edition of the Young Democrats' Tournament	11-13 April 2003	sec. 4-5 and coll.	600	335
7 th Legislature of the Pupils' Parliament	16 May 2003	6 th grade	3100	124
4 th Legislature of the Seniors' Parliament	15-17 September 2003	55 years and over	225	108
54 th Legislature of the Youth Parliament	26-30 December 2003	coll. and univ.	350	98
18 th Legislature of the Student Parliament	2-6 January 2004	coll. and univ.	145	145
12 th Legislature of the Student Forum	11-15 January 2004	college	700	124
2 nd Legislature of the Young People's Parliament	18-20 February 2004	sec. 3 and 4	570	76
Total			5690	1010

The following are a few examples of bills that were considered by the apprentice Members in 2003-2004.

- **Pupils' Parliament 2003**

An Act obliging school boards to permit the organization of educational, cultural or sports outings one weekend per month during the school year

- **Student Forum 2004**

An Act respecting a national natality policy

- **Young People's Parliament 2004**

An Act abolishing general instruction at the college level and introducing a post-secondary year of schooling

• **Seniors' Parliament 2003**

An Act respecting a national strategy to fight abuse and violence against seniors

• **Youth Parliament 2003**

An Act fostering the reintegration of offenders

• **Student Parliament 2004**

An Act establishing the Fonds métropolitain de développement du transport en commun

The Jean-Charles-Bonenfant Foundation: partner of the Assembly

On 12 November 2003, the National Assembly carried the following motion:

« THAT the National Assembly, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant, which was established through an act of the Assembly, mark the important contribution of this non-profit, non-partisan organization to the outreach of democracy and parliamentarism.»



The interns of the Jean-Charles-Bonenfant Foundation for 2003-2004, in the company of the President of the National Assembly, of the Second Vice-President and of the Director of Corporate Affairs of Alcan Primary Metal-Québec, Mr. Alexis Ségal.

Since its creation on 21 June 1978, the mission of this foundation has been to promote, among the general public and young people in particular, better knowledge of our political and parliamentary institutions, through parliamentary simulations and internships.

For a quarter of a century, more than 70 Québec university graduates have benefitted from this parliamentary internship programme. Each year, for a 10-month period, the interns enjoy a hands-on experience of the numerous aspects of Québec parliamentary life. They become familiar with the operation of the National Assembly and of the institutions that are subject thereto, namely the Auditor General, the Public Protector, the Chief Electoral Officer and the Lobbyists Commissioner.

Subsequently, they are paired with Members of the Government and of the opposition. The interns also take part in missions abroad and draft a dissertation concerning an aspect of parliamentary institutions in order to contribute to the study of these institutions and research thereon. The following are the subjects submitted by the interns in June 2003:

- *La ligne de parti : un mal nécessaire ?* (Ariane Beauregard)
- *Pour une mise en valeur du député dans sa circonscription* (Sophie Doucet)
- *Nouvelle gestion publique : l'Assemblée nationale et le ministère des Relations internationales à l'heure de la modernisation administrative* (Gabriel Jean-Simon)
- *Lobbyisme : portrait de l'activité au Québec et impacts de la nouvelle législation* (Stéphanie Yates)

The financial partnership between the Bonenfant Foundation and the Alcan company has enabled the addition of a fifth bursary until 2006-2007.

The National Assembly and PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY



The internationalization of life in society and its undisputed impact on social, cultural, economic and political issues prompt Parliaments to position themselves on the international scene through the exchange of information, expertise, experiences and ideas. Parliamentary diplomacy is also exercised within various international organizations as well as with members of the diplomatic and consular corps. Hence, for over half a century, the National Assembly has developed an important network of relations which fall into the three broad categories that follow:

- multilateral relations (relations between the Assembly and organizations bringing together several Parliaments);
- bilateral relations (relations between the Assembly and one other Parliament);
- interparliamentary cooperation (support to the reinforcement of parliamentary institutions in developing countries or to the consolidation of democracy therein).

In our democratic systems based on the separation of powers, Parliaments conduct their international relations independently. With freedom of action, the respect of political pluralism is the basis of the international action of Parliaments and imparts a specific character thereto. It is the President of the National Assembly who has the responsibility of representing the institution during international activities, whose non-partisan nature is ensured by the forming of delegations of Members hailing from the various political groups represented at the Assembly.

MULTILATERAL RELATIONS

The Parliamentary Francophonie

A delegation of the National Assembly attended the 29th Session of the *Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie* (Parliamentary Assembly of French-speaking peoples), held in Niamey, Niger, from 5 to 10 July 2003. During this session, the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, brought to a close the mandate of the Québec section as international chair of the APF, which ended in Niamey. The Québec section now holds a position of vice-chair. Furthermore, the Québec section concluded its mandate as chair of the transitional steering committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the APF. Following elections, Québec Members were reappointed to exercise duties within the four standing committees of the APF as well as on the first elected steering committee of the Women's Network.

Two young Quebecers took part in the second session of the *Parlement francophone des jeunes* (Francophone Youth Parliament), a fringe activity of the APF Session. The Declaration of the *Parlement francophone des jeunes* on sustainable development was adopted on this occasion and was tabled in the National Assembly on 17 March 2004, as part of the *Semaine internationale de la Francophonie*.

GLOSSARY

APF

Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (Parliamentary assembly of French-speaking peoples); founded in 1967, composed of 73 Parliaments of unitary, federal and federated States from 54 countries. (National Assembly: full member since 1974)

CPA

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association; founded in 1911, composed of 171 Parliaments of unitary, federal and federated States from 54 countries. (National Assembly: full member since 1933)

CSG

Council of State Governments of the United States; created in 1933, composed of representatives of the legislative, executive and judicial powers from the 50 United States and territories. (National Assembly: international associated member since 1995)

COPA

Confédération parlementaire des Amériques (Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas); created in 1997 on the initiative of the National Assembly of Québec, composed of the parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated States, the regional Parliaments and the interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.

NCSL

National Conference of State Legislatures; founded in 1975, composed of the legislative assemblies from the 50 United States and territories. (National Assembly: associated member since April 2000).



The President of the National Assembly takes the floor at the opening of the 29th Session of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie.

At the suggestion of the Québec section of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the APF, the National Assembly held an information session for parliamentarians on 4 December 2003, concerning female genital mutilation, a harmful traditional practice affecting the health of millions of women and young girls throughout the world. The purpose of this activity was to heighten the awareness of Members who are likely to face this human problem in the context of interparliamentary relations as well as in their community. Several experts addressed the parliamentarians on the sociohistoric foundation of female genital mutilation and its consequences on health and also discussed the strategies and cooperative actions underway in order to eliminate this practice.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

The Québec branch has held one of the positions in the International Executive Committee of the CPA since September 2001 and will continue to do so until September 2004. It is in this capacity that the President of the Assembly attended the meeting of the Executive Committee preceding the Annual Conference of the CPA held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in October 2003, on the theme of partnership for world peace and prosperity. He was also asked to participate in the 17th Conference of Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth which took place in January 2004, in Montebello.

These participations provided an opportunity to promote the holding, in September 2004, of the 50th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference, which will be jointly hosted by the National Assembly, the Federal Parliament and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)

The 5th General Assembly of the COPA was held in Caracas, Venezuela, from 23 to 27 November 2003. Some 180 parliamentarians hailing from 20 countries met for the purpose of monitoring developments in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations. The Chief Electoral Officer of Québec presented the election observation activities conducted by his agency to the members of the Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. Also, the recommendation made by the Québec delegation for the COPA to be directly associated with the negotiation process of the FTAA was adopted. Finally, the Québec delegation proposed amendments to the statutes of the COPA which will ensure the organization's financial sustainability and the stability of committees operations.

This general assembly was preceded, on 24 November 2003, by the 4th Annual Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas. Forty women parliamentarians from some 15 countries of the Americas participated therein. This meeting notably led to the adoption of a recommendation on the impact of the future FTAA on women.

The Secretariat of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, hosted by the National Assembly, also contributed actively to the organization of the Seminar on Governmental Gender Budgets in collaboration with the Latin American Parliament (PARLACEN) and the Mérida Anaya Montes Association. The Seminar was held on 19 and 20 September 2003 in San Salvador. For this event, the Network Secretariat put together the GAIA document databank on gender budgets. This databank is available on the Network Internet site at the following address: www.copa.qc.ca/Anglais/Femmesang/femmes.html.

The United States

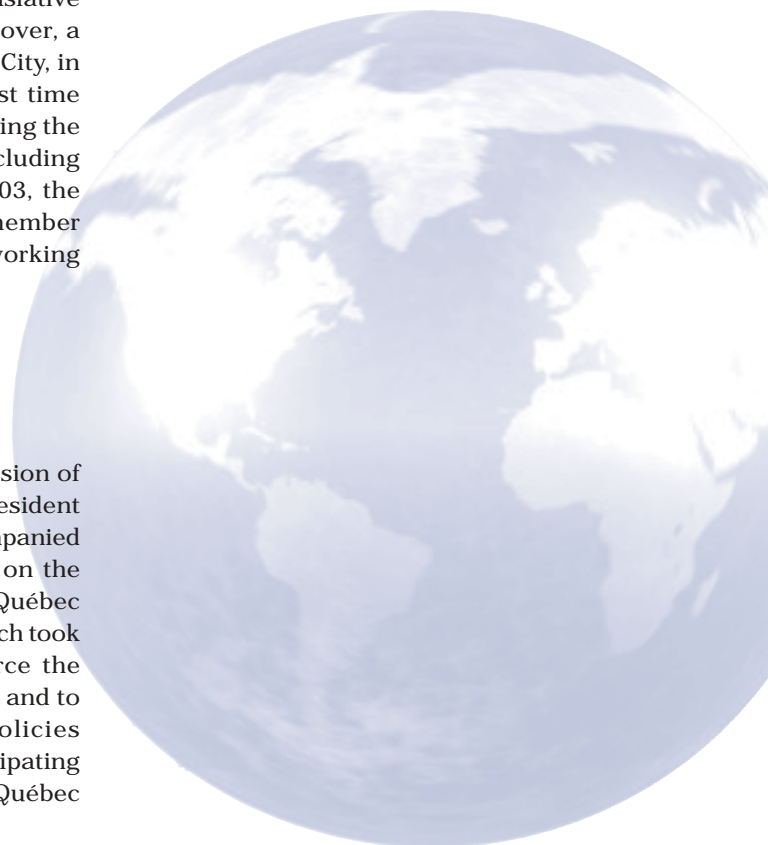
In the capacity of associated member of the *Council of State Governments* (CSG), the Assembly sent a delegation of parliamentarians to the annual meeting of this organization, which took place in Pittsburgh in August 2003. The first official meeting of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus, to which the Assembly also belongs, was held at the same time as the annual meeting. The mandate of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus is to monitor the debates on the environmental and economic issues having an impact on the populations living in the Great Lakes region. The main theme of this meeting was the opposition to the Great Lakes water diversion project.

The National Assembly is also an associated member of the *National Conference of State Legislatures* (NCSL). It is the only legislative assembly outside of the United States to have this status. Moreover, a meeting of the NCSL Executive Committee was held in Québec City, in May 2003, at the invitation of the Assembly. This was the first time that this group held a meeting outside of the United States. During the various annual activities conducted by this organization, including the annual meeting that was held in San Francisco in July 2003, the Assembly continued to take measures in view of becoming a member of the NCSL Executive Committee as well as of its thematic working committees.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

France-Québec interparliamentary cooperation

In 2003, the French National Assembly hosted the 17th session of the Commission interparlementaire franco-québécoise. The President of the National Assembly of Québec, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, accompanied by four Québec Members, took part in the working meetings on the two themes under consideration: the assessment of France-Québec cooperation and immigrant integration policies. This activity, which took place from 15 to 19 September 2003, contributed to reinforce the partnership between both assemblies through shared expertise and to foster an exchange on legislations and governmental policies concerning the integration of immigrants. In addition to participating in this committee, the President of the National Assembly of Québec met with his French counterpart, Mr. Jean-Louis Debré.





Mission to Germany.
In the usual order, Mr. Peter Paul Gantzer, Vice-President of the Bavarian Landtag, Mrs. Lucie Charlebois, Member for Soulanges, Mrs. Diane Leblanc, Second Vice-President of the Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, President of the Assembly, Mr. Alois Glück, President of the Bavarian Landtag, and Mr. Michel Létourneau, Member for Ungava.

Relations with Europe

In conducting its relations with its European partners, the National Assembly of Québec has developed closer relations with Italy. Indeed the National Assembly plans to welcome the Italian regional council presidents in September 2004, and also intends to establish closer relations with the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Republic, an objective that was welcomed by Mr. Clemente Mastella, Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies upon his visit to the National Assembly, on 15 October 2003.

On 31 October and 1 November 2003, the National Assembly also welcomed the European Parliament delegation for relations with Canada. On this occasion, the Members of the National Assembly delegation for relations with Europe enjoyed very informative exchanges on policies concerning immigration and the integration of immigrants in Québec and Europe.

Furthermore, on 1 to 5 March 2004, the President of the National Assembly, as head of a delegation of four parliamentarians, carried out a mission in Munich and in Berlin. This mission provided the opportunity to hold the first meeting of the Québec-Bavaria Joint Parliamentary Committee, which was established in April 2002 following an agreement between the National Assembly of Québec and the Bavarian Landtag. The delegation then went on to Berlin, where they attended working meetings with parliamentarians of the Bundestag (House of Members) and of the Bundesrat (House of Federated States). These sittings, in Munich and Berlin, enabled the participants to discuss the voting procedure reform, parliamentary reform and cultural diversity.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

For several years now, the National Assembly has played an active part in the strengthening of parliamentary democracy by offering technical support to parliamentary institutions in developing countries or to those experiencing democratic consolidation, hence enabling these countries to reinforce their parliamentary and administrative organization.

Within this framework, an exploratory mission was conducted at the National Assembly of Benin from 2 to 6 February 2004. This mission allowed for exchanges with the highest political and administrative authorities of this partner assembly with a view to defining the terms and conditions of a proposed interparliamentary cooperation. Furthermore, the Assembly welcomed to Québec City, from 21 to 29 February, a delegation of four Members of the House of Representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco. The various working meetings on the agenda enabled the Moroccan parliamentarians to increase their understanding of the National Assembly's organization in general and of Québec's parliamentary system.

THE OFFICIAL VISITS

The international commitments of the National Assembly bring a great number of foreign dignitaries to Québec.

In 2003-2004, the National Assembly welcomed several assembly speakers, including:

Clemente Mastella	Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Republic of Italy
Christian Mejdahl	Speaker of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Denmark
Aldo Michele Radice	Chairman of the Regional Council of Basilicate (Italy)
Martin Stephens	Speaker of the House of Representatives of Utah (United States of America)
Giuseppe Tagliante	Chairman of the Regional Council of Abruzzi (Italy)

Government representatives were also welcomed at the Parliament Building:

Abdou Diouf	Secretary General of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie
James H. Douglas	Governor of the State of Vermont (United States of America)
Brian Dubie	Lieutenant-Governor of the State of Vermont (United States of America)
Dwight Duncan	Minister of Energy of the Government of Ontario
Hervé Hasquin	Minister-President of the French Community of Belgium
Zhai Hongxiang	Deputy Mayor of Peking (China)
Jean-Pierre Raffarin	Prime Minister of the French Republic
Edmund Stoiber	Minister-Speaker of the State of Bavaria (Federal Republic of Germany)

Overview of the national and international figures on official visits at the Assembly in 2003-2004:

- 27 Government representatives
- 20 foreign diplomats
- 27 parliamentarians

The Assembly also welcomed many other parliamentarians, including:

Abdoulaye Faye	Chairman of the Interparliamentary Committee on the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa and Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Senegal
Sven Gatz	Member of the Parliament of Flanders and of the Parliament of Brussels-Capitale region, Leader of the VLD (Vlaamse Liberalen Democraten) at the Parliament of Brussels
Philippe Marini	President of the France-Québec Interparliamentary Group of the Senate of the French Republic
Bernard Patry	First Vice-President of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF)
Members of the European Parliament, members of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with Canada	
Members of the Maine-Québec Legislative Exchange Commission	
Members of the House of Representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco	
Section Chairmen of the Americas Region of the <i>Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie</i> (APF)	

The National Assembly and ITS HERITAGE

THE DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

The conservation of Québec's political heritage

The Pierre-Joseph-Olivier-Chauveau Collection

On 16 March 2004, the President of the National Assembly and the Minister of Culture and Communications announced the classification as historical property of the Chauveau Collection. This collection of 3660 brochures and rare books was constituted by Pierre-Joseph-Olivier Chauveau (1820-1890). Author and political figure recognized for his contributions to literature, the public administration and education, Chauveau became the first Premier of Québec in 1867. His collection, the oldest of the National Assembly, includes valuable editions of famous European printers, such as Albe, Elzévir, Estienne, Jenson and Crispin, books dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries, works written in Amerindian languages, books of sermons given by Protestant preachers, as well as works written by Chauveau himself.

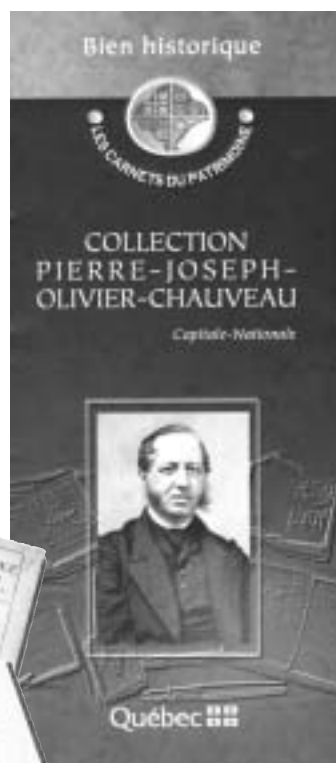
It is the first time that a set of documents is thus classified. Hence, the collection may not be altered, modified or destroyed, in its entirety or in part, nor taken outside of Québec without ministerial authorization.

Members' archives

The National Assembly signed a memorandum of agreement with the National Archives of Québec (ANQ) to ensure that the archives of Québec Members be conserved either at the Assembly, at the ANQ, or in a private archives centre in the Member's home region. In application of this agreement, in the weeks following the general election of 14 April 2003, the Members having left politics were all informed of the importance of conserving their archives. Subsequently, the Assembly, in collaboration with the Amicale des anciens parlementaires du Québec and the ANQ, undertook a tour of several Québec regions to meet former Members and to retrieve their archives groups. Finally, in March 2004, several training sessions were provided to the personnel of Members to instruct them on the management of the archival documents of Members.



The Minister of Culture and Communications of Québec and the President of the National Assembly unveil a plaque to mark the classification of the Chauveau Collection. They are accompanied by Mrs. Marie Sénécal, great-grand-daughter of Chauveau.



Historical items relating to the Patriots

At the auction of the Rosanna Seaborn collection, which was held in Montréal in January 2004, the National Assembly acquired the following historical documents relating to the Patriots and the Rebellions of 1837 and 1838:

- a speech by Louis-Joseph Papineau delivered at the Institut canadien de Montréal in 1867;
- a document entitled «À tous les électeurs du Bas-Canada» (Québec City, 1810);
- a brochure including the text of the 92 resolutions (Québec City, 1834);
- a compilation of British parliamentary documents on the union of Upper and Lower Canada (London, 1840);
- the report on the trial of Member and Patriot Joseph Cardinal (Montréal, 1839);
- a document entitled «Report from the select committee on the civil government of Canada» (London, 1829);
- the manifesto of an association going by the name of Constitutional Association of Montreal (Montréal, 1837).

The National Assembly worked in concert with the Québec and Federal institutions committed to conserving the political heritage in order to safekeep these documents within public collections. They are now a part of the National Assembly's substantial collection of historical items relating to the Patriots.

THE RECORDING OF HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS GIVEN BY FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS

In collaboration with the Amicale des anciens parlementaires, the Assembly undertook a programme to record historical accounts given by former parliamentarians. Eight of these persons were interviewed in January and February 2004. These accounts, which are to be broadcast on the Assembly channel, address three principal stages in the life of the parliamentarian: the reasons why he entered politics, his work at the Assembly and in his constituency and life after politics. The interviews concentrate largely on anecdotes and the lesser-known events having marked the Member's career, as well as on his participation in the main debates that have shaped Québec.

The Library collections

As at 31 March 2004, the Library boasted over 1.8 million documents, which are distributed as follows:

Printed matter monographs, fascicles and brochures	436,545
magazines	243,631
newspapers	626,983
Microform documents microfilms	34,195
microfiches	528,095
Electronic documents (diskettes and CD-ROMs)	1473
Audio recordings	178
Videocassettes	475
Posters, maps and photographs	905
Total	1,872,480

The management of administrative documents

The year 2003-2004 was marked by the moving of semi-active and inactive documents to a more adequate storage facility which meets the conservation standards for archival documents and monographs.

In 2003-2004, the body of documents produced or received by the branches and services of the Assembly was enriched with 11,205 active files (frequently used for administrative, legal or financial purposes and conserved in the file stations of each unit) and with 16,821 semi-active files (occasionally used and conserved in a warehouse).

The Library collections' computerized catalogue, which may be accessed via the Internet site of the Assembly, contains 14,975 additional entries. Of this number, 10,494 are printed and 4481 titles are available on some other medium. There are now 241,368 titles in the catalogue.

THE ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN HERITAGE

Owing to the care taken in their restoration, the parliamentary buildings retain all of their original splendour while meeting modern requirements. As was the case in previous years, important masonry work was carried out on the Parliament Building in 2003-2004.



The statue of Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine is erected in the area reserved for the great politicians of the 19th century at *Place de l'Assemblée-nationale*, in close proximity to the monuments honouring Louis-Joseph Papineau and Honoré Mercier.

The monument dedicated to Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine

The commemorative monument dedicated to Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine was unveiled in November 2003 in the presence of the President of the National Assembly and of several Members.

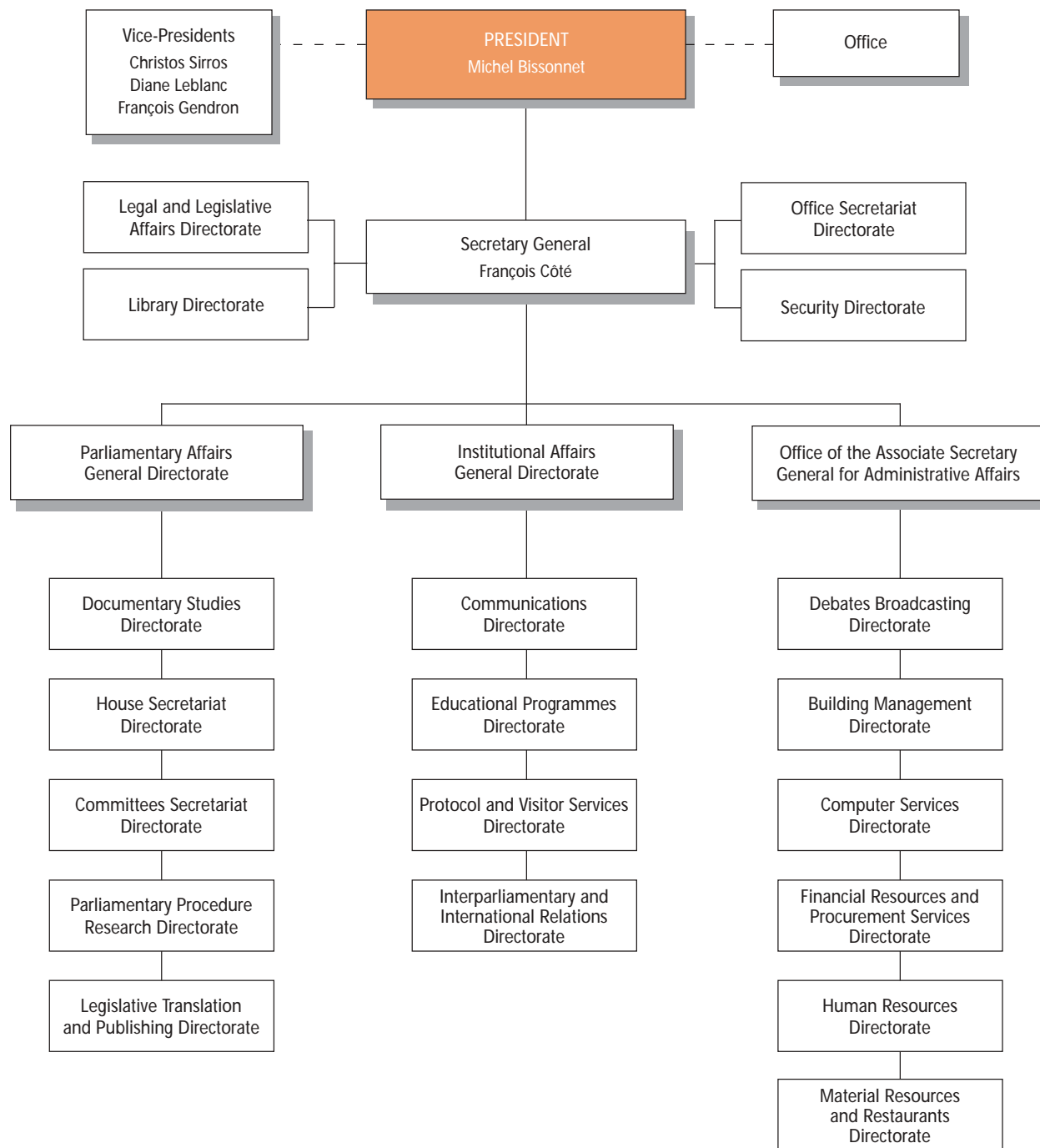
A man of politics who marked the second quarter of the 19th century, Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine held the office of Leader of the Government of the Province of Canada from 1848 to 1851. As a staunch Reformist, he wagered that the constitutional regime at that time - the Union - could be improved to meet the principal claims of the Patriots. His actions were crowned with great success when, after having won the elections of 1848, the Reformists he led with Robert Baldwin were invited by Governor Elgin to form the Government, thus confirming the principle of ministerial responsibility. It is notably during this term of office, in the course of which La Fontaine also held the office of Attorney General of Lower Canada, that the French language took its place along with the English language in the Legislative Assembly.



The National Assembly and ITS ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION



THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



The mandates of the administrative units are in appendix.

THE NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION PLAN

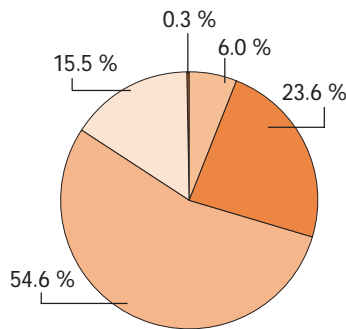
On 11 September 2003, the Office of the National Assembly adopted a new administrative organization plan. The objectives of this reorganization are to provide better support to the Chair and to the Secretary General by consolidating the main operations of support to parliamentary affairs, institutional affairs and administrative affairs. The creation of two general directorates and of an Associate General Secretariat will ensure greater cohesion and better integration of each of these operations.

THE PERSONNEL

The workforce

As at 31 March 2004, the authorized workforce of the administrative sector of the Assembly consisted of 504 regular employees and 82 casual employees, for a total of 586 employees. The political sector, composed of Cabinet directors, political attachés, advisors and support staff, comprises 558 persons, both on Parliament Hill and in the Members' riding offices.

Statistics on the distribution of the administrative sector workforce per employment category



Senior executives	6.0 %
Professionals	23.6 %
Public servants	54.6 %
Workers	15.5 %
Others	0.3 %
Women	53 %
Men	47 %

Statistics on the age of the administrative sector workforce

35 years and under	25.6 %
36 - 40 years	9.0 %
41 - 45 years	13.8 %
46 - 50 years	18.5 %
51 - 55 years	19.5 %
56 years and over	13.6 %

The Assembly established a joint committee on occupational health and safety whose purpose is to eliminate the cause of accidents and occupational diseases. From September to December 2003, its ten members followed a forty-five hour training course and, since January 2004, the committee has been taking part in the identification and assessment of risks related to the work environment of persons working in the five buildings under the management of the Assembly.

Employee development

Any organization that is mindful of improving the services it provides to its clientele must make employee development a priority. The Assembly thus conducted this year a series of activities enabling employees to improve their skills, namely with regard to information and communications technologies and to parliamentary procedure.

After having been offered to the parliamentary affairs professional staff in 2002-2003, the development courses in parliamentary procedure were continued in 2003-2004. Two days of development courses were given to the parliamentary affairs support staff as well as to the professionals of seven administrative units. Over 120 persons were thus able to benefit from these courses, accordingly improving service to Members.

Three volumes intended for persons wishing to acquire knowledge of the rules governing parliamentary proceedings were published in 2003-2004.

- The second edition of *La procédure parlementaire du Québec* integrates recent developments in parliamentary jurisprudence. It also includes the temporary amendments to the Standing Orders and Rules for the Conduct of Proceedings of the National Assembly for the 36th Legislature, concerning more particularly the election of the President by secret ballot, petitions and exceptional procedure.
- The *Recueil de décisions concernant la procédure parlementaire* comprises the summary of the main decisions rendered by the Chair of the Assembly and of the committees until the end of the 36th Legislature.
- The *Règlement annoté de l'Assemblée nationale*, prepared by the former Secretary General of the Assembly, Mr. Pierre Duchesne, provides the Chair, the Members and advisors with a practical and user-friendly tool whose role is to clarify the great majority of the Standing Orders.



The intranet Portal of the Assembly

The Assembly is constantly improving its intranet Portal for the purpose of providing parliamentarians and personnel with high-performance technological tools that are adapted to their needs, as well as of enabling easy access to useful sources of information and documentation to meet their work requirements. The statistics for the past year indicate that, on the average, 86 % of the political and administrative personnel of the Assembly consults and uses the Portal more than three times a day.

Furthermore, 15 sections set aside for specific subjects were added to the Portal, including a section on the welcoming of personnel and another on the correspondence protocol in use at the National Assembly, and 725 information bulletins were broadcast thereon to provide employees with information on what is going on at the Assembly.

In October 2003, the National Assembly entered into an agreement with the *Réseau de transport de la Capitale* (RTC) in order to offer its employees a practical and economical way of using public transportation. A 10 % rebate was granted to the employees who took a one-year plan with deduction from salary. Over 10 % of the employees of the administrative and parliamentary sectors took advantage of this offer, the programme thus meeting the goal of the RTC.

The quality of the French language being a constant concern of the institution, the Assembly has developed a correspondence protocol which establishes the rules to be observed in correspondence and various mail exchanges, and which standardizes official correspondence from the National Assembly. This document was converted into over 150 electronic documents for its use as an interactive linguistic reference tool available on the intranet Portal of the Assembly.

In March 2004, it received an honourable mention at Les Mérites du français au travail contest organized by the Office québécois de la langue française.

EMPLOYEES HAVING ATTAINED 25 YEARS OF SERVICE AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

A quarter of a century of devotion

In 2003-2004, the National Assembly showed its consideration and its recognition to the 23 employees who, in the course of 2003, reached 25 years of service at the National Assembly or in the public service of Québec. Of this number, 10 persons had been in the employ of our institution for a quarter of a century.

LIST OF EMPLOYEES HAVING ATTAINED 25 YEARS OF SERVICE...



The employees having attained 25 years of service at the National Assembly and within the public service were honoured by the President of the National Assembly.

AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Line Bergeron
Marthe Bussi res
Maria Buttazzoni
Nelson Chouinard
Claude Filion
Jean Fortin
Colette Lamontagne
Michel Rh aume
Danielle Simard
Chantal Tondreau

WITHIN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Michel Boivin
R jeanne Bouchard
France Carrier
 laine Dub -Towner
Jean-Claude Duval
L o Gagnon
Lisanne Gagnon
R jeanne Gaudreault
Claude Guay
Suzanne H bert
Claude Julien
Gaston Proulx
Gilles Roussy

THE TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

The office technology resource pool of the National Assembly comprises a total of 1344 micro-computers and 459 printers installed on Parliament Hill and in the riding offices. The magnitude of such a network requires constant monitoring to ensure high-level computer security to users and to the institution.

In 2003-2004, new technologies were used to reach this goal. Virtual private network technology enables Members and their riding office personnel to exchange sensitive information with the Parliament Hill offices. Furthermore, a firewall ensures improved protection to the overall network of the Assembly against Internet intrusions, while an anti-spam system saves the personnel a significant amount of time in e-mail inbox management. Lastly, the upgrading of the operating systems, the new configuration of servers and the installation of Windows XP on all workstations ensure improved data protection.

The broadcasting of debates

The Assembly initiated a technological consolidation phase of its new control rooms and infrastructures in André-Laurendeau Building, in order to enable the optimization of its reception, television broadcasting and web broadcasting procedures.

To handle and simplify the multiple simultaneous recording operations of the parliamentary proceedings, the control rooms can now rely on an all-new system of broadcast technology digital video servers. These servers have the capacity to contain several sittings and hundreds of continuous recording hours, thus facilitating delayed broadcasting and repeat broadcasting operations. In line with that which is found in the modern televisual and multimedia industry, this new technology allows for greater efficiency of work procedures and improves production quality.

Moreover, the recording and public address systems of the standing committee rooms and of the Premiers' Room were replaced by advanced digital audio technology equipment.

Closed captioning is available on the National Assembly channel. Generally speaking, repeat programmes are closed captioned, particularly Oral Question Periods, debates upon adjournment, interpellations, some of the standing committee proceedings, the Budget Speech delivered by the Minister of Finance and the reply by the Official Opposition, as well as certain special events.

THE ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, 2002-2004

Brief summary regarding the approach and follow-up to the strategic plan

In publishing its Strategic Plan, 2002-2004, according to the principles stated in the *Public Administration Act*, (2000, c. 8), the National Assembly put into place its very first development and organizational integration framework, providing structure and an outlook for the future.

This document, in which are entrenched the fundamental values and the mission of the organization, is centred on a more dynamic, open and transparent management framework based upon the participation and support of all personnel as the key to a successful development policy designed to serve parliamentarians, the population and to promote the institution's outreach.

Assessment: highlights

ORIENTATION 1 - Improved and better adapted services to reinforce the efficiency of the National Assembly and to provide better support to Members in the exercise of their duties.

This first strategic orientation essentially focussed on supporting the implementation of the parliamentary component of the Public Administration Act, the consolidation and development of training and skills improvement activities, the development and updating of the technological tools and easy access to information sources and to useful and pertinent documentation.

Support to the implementation of the parliamentary component of the Public Administration Act

Firstly, the support process to the Chair and to the Committee on the National Assembly (CNA) in defining regulatory terms continued, with regard to the definition of regulatory modes pertaining to the analysis of the impact on parliamentary proceedings of the implementation of the Public Administration Act, the preparation of recommendations and the drafting of amendment proposals to the Standing Orders. In addition to this are the deployment of professional, technical and documentary support services to the standing committees through the development of document analysis grids and models submitted by the ministries and agencies.

The consolidation and development of training and skills improvement activities

The concern for planning and providing professional development programmes to Members has encouraged several administrative units of the parliamentary and institutional sectors to hold training sessions for the benefit of the parliamentarians elected in the general election of 14 April 2003, their spouses and the political personnel, in order to inform them more particularly on the operation of the National Assembly and on the organization of parliamentary proceedings. Training sessions regarding protocol and the Internet were also provided to the Members.

The participation of the Chair and of the parliamentarians in interparliamentary and international activities was supported by sustained efforts with a view to developing documents and strategies that contribute to the continuation and growth of the leadership of the National Assembly and of its Members among Parliaments and interparliamentary organizations with which it maintains relations. Through the improvement of consulting services and support to the Chair of the Assembly and to the section chairmen and delegation presidents of the National Assembly, it was possible to assist the President of the Assembly in his capacity of president of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, to ensure the participation of Assembly Members in the thematic committees of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) and to conduct a strategic repositioning of the Québec secretariat of the COPA with our Brazilian and Mexican partners, who have established sector-based secretariats. The development of networks of women parliamentarians (Francophonie, Commonwealth and COPA) was also carried out owing largely to the interventions of women parliamentarians of the National Assembly.

The expertise of the Assembly's specialized directorates also gave parliamentarians the necessary support in hosting major international events, including a meeting of the Steering Committee of the National Conference of State Legislatures from the United States and the Symposium on Parliamentarism in the 21st Century. A meticulous preparation of the 50th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference will ensure the maximization of benefits for Québec City in hosting this event that will be attended by over 600 parliamentarians from the member States of the Commonwealth.

Finally, as regards interparliamentary cooperation, the development of contents and specialized tools has increased the expertise of Members and of the administrative personnel of the Assembly with regard to knowledge transfer. The National Assembly provided its technical support to five parliamentary assemblies of African States that are emerging or undergoing democratic consolidation, thus allowing for the reinforcement of their parliamentary and administrative operation.

The desired consolidation of the National Assembly's bilateral relations took the form of institutional agreements with several new partners (Bavaria, Catalonia, California, French Senate, Walloon Parliament).

The development and updating of technological tools

In order to provide the parliamentarians and the personnel with high-performance technological tools that are better adapted to their needs, the National Assembly continued its reflection on the computerization and automation of services relating to the clerk's sector (Geoffrion project).

The Debates Broadcasting Directorate completed the construction of a mobile videoconference unit in anticipation of parliamentary, institutional and administrative activities. The use of videoconferencing in parliamentary work is currently being examined by the advisory committee on television broadcasting, web broadcasting and the use of technologies in parliamentary proceedings.

Moreover, the modernization of the radio and television technologies infrastructures and their integration into a sole medium were completed. At the same time, the Assembly deployed the new Windows XP environment. Furthermore, all riding offices were linked via network cabling to enable data sharing, and the computer cabling in the Parliament Building was replaced in order to increase transmission speed.

Easy access to information sources and to useful and pertinent documentation

The increase in availability of digital documents and the maintaining of personalized documentary and research services for parliamentarians were manifested by the creation of electronic documentary banks on the decisions and regulations of the Office of the Assembly and on parliamentary procedure. In the same fashion, a virtual library was established, and the acquisition of an ARIEL workstation will henceforth facilitate the electronic exchange of digital data via the Internet. Moreover, the production and distribution process of the Argus press summary was reviewed. The Internet site of the Assembly also underwent some improvement with regard to ergonomics, user-friendliness and information retrieval, while work on developing the second generation of the intranet Portal continues.

For the purpose of producing, completing or updating documents and reference tools, the National Assembly published the second edition of *La procédure parlementaire du Québec*, the first edition of *L'état de la jurisprudence parlementaire* and the *Règlement annoté de l'Assemblée nationale*.

Within the framework of the updating of the computerized parliamentary bibliography, the Secretariat of the Assembly published its bound volumes of *Votes and Proceedings* and *Order Paper and Notices* covering the period of 22 March 2001 to 12 March 2003 and placed the *Order Paper and Notices — special winter 2004 edition* on the Internet site of the Assembly.

ORIENTATION 2 - A better known National Assembly, more accessible and further emphasized.

The promotion of the role of the Member and of the National Assembly, increased accessibility of citizens to the Members, the National Assembly and its proceedings, as well as the conservation and promotion of our heritage are at the heart of this second major orientation.

The promotion of the role of the Member and of the National Assembly

Two successive tours were conducted by the President in Québec's schools, under the theme *The Challenge of Democracy*. Their purpose was to further instruct students on the parliamentary institutions, the role of the Member and of the National Assembly, and to make them more aware of the importance of taking part in the democratic process.

A new parliamentary simulation for high school students was developed in February 2003, and the strategy designed to foster the holding of such pedagogical events in educational institutions was consolidated, notably with the help of various documents and the support of the teachers. Support was also provided for the development of the Jean-Charles-Bonenfant Foundation management plan to ensure the participation of young people in the educational activities of the Assembly, on the basis of a communication plan, the production of promotional brochures and the creation of an exhibition booth.

In order to elaborate and implement a global and coherent communication strategy, a *National Assembly communication policy statement* was drafted and tabled with the Secretary General in April 2003. In this regard, a study on the population's perception of the Assembly and of the communication tools used by the institution to reach the citizens was conducted in spring 2004, and will lead to the updating of the signature and of the institutional message of the Assembly as well as the redesigning of the various communication tools.

By the same token, the efforts undertaken to consolidate, develop and promote the communication and information services led to the development of a web broadcasting policy, the improvement of the content, navigation and presentation of the Internet site as well as the constant improvement of the Assembly channel content and the promotion of its programming. The analysis and standardization project regarding the audio and video broadcasting of the parliamentary proceedings and other activities broadcast on the Assembly channel and on its Internet site has given rise to a reflection on the use of videoconferencing within the framework of parliamentary proceedings and television distribution. Furthermore, a survey was carried out among Québec cable distributors to determine the exact broadcasting range of the National Assembly proceedings.

Increased accessibility of citizens to the Members, the National Assembly and its proceedings

In the perspective of facilitating citizen participation to standing committee consultations, the committee established for the purpose of analyzing the advantages and limitations of using videoconferencing during standing committee consultations submitted a proposal early in 2004 that will serve as the basis for drafting the rules of procedure concerning the use of videoconferencing in committees. These rules should be included in the parliamentary reform proposal that will be presented to the Committee on the National Assembly by the President in the course of 2004. Two consultations via the Internet were carried out: one on the new issues regarding food safety in Québec and the other on the voting procedure reform.

Furthermore, the improvement of visitor services at the Assembly was achieved by the consolidation of a multilingual guided tour service (French, English, Spanish and Italian). It should be noted that the guided tour service will soon be available for the hearing impaired. Added to this are the installation of new information signs at the exterior of the Parliament Building and the continuation of the regional cuisine promotion programme.

The conservation and promotion of our heritage

In order to ensure the conservation and promotion of its documentary, architectural and urban heritage, the National Assembly has undertaken the restoration and retrofitting of its parliamentary buildings. This operation has allowed more particularly the interior renovation of the Pamphile-Le May Building and the masonry restoration of the Parliament Building. Silvicultural work on the wooded area (phase 6 of Place de l'Assemblée nationale) was conducted in the summer of 2002, while the drawings and specifications to complete the reorganization of the parliamentary buildings premises were drafted. Moreover, new documents were added to the historical section of the Internet site of the Assembly, such as *Les résultats électoraux depuis 1867* and the *Parlement de A à Z* (glossary), along with some 20 sessions of reconstructed parliamentary debates spanning from 1908 to 1927. Lastly, the Library Directorate adopted a new archives acquisition policy including that of Members and signed an agreement with the National Archives of Québec in order to oversee the actions of both institutions. The Library of the National Assembly rented a warehouse that meets conservation standards for the archival documents and monographs that are under its responsibility.

In collaboration with the Commission de la capitale nationale du Québec, projects to commemorate the places and persons who marked Québec's democratic institutions were also carried out by the erection of the statues of Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine and of Louis-Joseph Papineau, as well as the installation of an Inuksuk on the Parliament Building grounds.

ORIENTATION 3 - An administration that focusses on the competence and mobilization of its personnel as well as on the modern and efficient management of its resources.

Two fundamental elements were prioritized in this third strategic orientation, owing to their unavoidable nature, namely personnel mobilization and management modernization.

Personnel mobilization

For the purpose of ensuring the further development of personnel skills, the National Assembly has established a senior management development plan focussing especially on self-knowledge, resources management and knowledge of the organization. A 2003-2004 skills improvement plan for the administrative personnel was also developed and implemented. Furthermore, a professional development programme on parliamentary procedure was established and offered to all parliamentary affairs professional staff.

As regards work force planning and turnover, the holding of internships at the *Le Parlementaire* restaurant kitchen, in collaboration with various training schools, was very successful and continued this year.

The efforts undertaken towards increasing employee participation and improving internal communications were achieved particularly through the continuation of the programme on information and training of personnel with regard to the Assembly services and the work related to the deployment of the second generation of the intranet Portal, but also through the regular holding of department and staff meetings in all sectors. Committees on work organization, on health and safety at work and on professional relations were also set up.

In order to improve the quality of working life and to foster the conciliation of family and professional demands, the Assembly extended accessibility to the employee assistance programme (whose satisfaction rate is of 90 % for a utilization rate of 8.2 %).

The Assembly implemented an awareness-raising campaign on energy efficiency (conclusion in June 2002), in order to carry out improvement projects of a mechanical or electrical nature and to develop among the personnel new daily energy habits.

Management modernization

As regards the use of resources, the National Assembly set up a committee in order to provide guidelines and appraise security measures. Furthermore, accounting procedures were reviewed, and the development (in 2002-2003) and installation (in 2004-2005) of the INFINI system will allow the Assembly Members, administrators and employees concerned to have at their disposal an integrated budget management tool enabling budget follow-up. Furthermore, the rationalization of the parliamentary documents distribution service inventory permitted a reduction of their number from 55,000 to less than 20,000. Added to this are concrete measures to financially readjust the food services (increase in patronage, inventory management, etc.). Moreover, an action plan for the implementation of a domestic waste recycling programme is being drafted and should be implemented gradually beginning in spring 2004.

Parallel to these developments, the reflection on the technological shift with regard to the transcribing and editing process of the *Journal des débats* (Hansard) continued, just as the strategy for the implementation of light solutions to the technological needs and the carrying out of the computer security institutional action plan.

It should also be mentioned that the analysis of the replacement of telephone equipment in riding offices and of cellular phones was carried out, thus improving services to the Members and their staff through the acquisition of 129 new telephones.

Conclusion

With regard to the inventory presented, it is possible to grasp the magnitude and diversity of the realizations obtained within the framework of the Strategic Plan 2002-2004 and the issues on the basis of which the National Assembly has had to define its actions.

The planning efforts and the achievements of the past two years clearly demonstrate the extent to which the administration of the National Assembly is committed to anticipating and building the future by improving and continually adapting its services and its activities to the new needs of citizens and parliamentarians.

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY EXPENDITURE FOR 2003-2004

	Expenditure (\$000)	Authorized staff positions	
		Permanent employees*	Casual employees*
SECRETARY GENERAL, LEGAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARY & SECURITY			
Office of the Secretary General	1,658.2	14	1
Legal and Legislative Affairs Directorate	479.1	6	0
Library Directorate	3,677.0	63	2
Security Directorate	1,632.2	28	8
	7,446.5	111	11
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS			
General Directorate of Parliamentary Affairs	0.0	0	0
Documentary Studies Directorate	988.9	17	0
House Secretariat Directorate	617.5	8	6
Committee Secretariat Directorate	1,109.4	22	0
Parliamentary Procedure Research Directorate	433.4	9	0
Legislative Translation and Publishing Directorate	368.6	18	0
	3,517.8	74	6
INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS			
General Directorate of Institutional Affairs	0.0	0	0
Communications Directorate	1,063.1	21	1
Educational Programmes Directorate	610.6	9	0
Protocol and Visitor Services Directorate	1,777.6	26	9
Interparliamentary and International Relations Directorate	2,323.8	26	0
	5,775.1	82	10
ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT			
Associate General Secretariat for Administrative Affairs	789.3	15	0
Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate	4,397.9	53	29
Building Management Directorate	5,539.9	31	3
Computer Services Directorate	5,086.4	42	1
	15,812.6	141	33
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT			
Financial resources and Procurement			
Services Directorate	1,073.2	24	0
Human Resources Directorate	7,897.3	20	0
Material Resources and Restaurants Directorate	3,485.5	52	22
	12,456.0	96	22
STATUTORY SUPPORT SERVICES TO MEMBERS	48,050.2		
FIXED ASSETS DEPRECIATION	5,748.3		
TOTAL EXPENSES	98,806.5	504	82

* Authorized FTEs (full-time equivalents).



APPENDICES



THE BILLS PASSED IN 2003-2004

The initialism in the second column identifies the parliamentary committee that gave consideration to the bill. The committees are identified as follows:

Committee of the Whole (CW)
 Committee on the National Assembly (CNA)
 Committee on Culture (CC)
 Committee on Public Administration (CPA)
 Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (CAFF)
 Committee on Planning and the Public Domain (CPP)
 Committee on Labour and the Economy (CLE)
 Committee on Education (CE)
 Committee on Social Affairs (CSA)
 Committee on Public Finance (CPF)
 Committee on Institutions (CI)
 Committee on Transportation and the Environment (CTE)

Government Bills

1	CPP	An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning municipal affairs (modified title)
3	CW	An Act to amend the Taxation Act, the Act respecting the Québec sales tax and other legislative provisions
5	CPF	An Act to amend the Act respecting insurance
6	CI	An Act to amend the Highway Safety Code and the Code of Penal Procedure as regards the collection of fines
7	CSA	An Act to amend the Act respecting health services and social services
8	CSA	An Act to amend the Act respecting childcare centres and childcare services
9	CW	An Act respecting the consultation of citizens with respect to the territorial reorganization of certain municipalities
10	CPF	An Act giving effect to the Budget Speech delivered on 1 November 2001, to the supplementary statement of 19 March 2002 and to certain other budget statements
12	CLE	An Act to amend the Act respecting the land regime in the James Bay and New Québec territories
13	CLE	An Act to amend the Mining Act
14	CLE	An Act to amend the Forest Act and other legislative provisions and to enact certain special provisions applicable to forest management activities prior to 1 April 2006
16		Appropriation Act N ^o 1, 2003-2004
17	CLE	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Ministère des Ressources naturelles and other legislative provisions
18	CW	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant
19	CE	An Act to amend the Act respecting financial assistance for education expenses
22	CLE	An Act to amend the Cooperatives Act
23	CPP	An Act to again amend various legislative provisions concerning municipal affairs
24	CPF	An Act to amend the Act respecting financial services cooperatives
25	CSA	An Act respecting local health and social services network development agencies

26	CPF	An Act to ensure the protection of veterans' graves and war graves
27	CAFF	An Act respecting commercial aquaculture
28	CAFF	An Act to amend the Animal Health Protection Act
29	CTE	An Act to amend the Highway Safety Code and other legislative provisions
30	CSA	An Act respecting bargaining units in the social affairs sector and amending the Act respecting the process of negotiation of the collective agreements in the public and parapublic sectors
31	CW	An Act to amend the Labour Code
32	CW	An Act to amend the Act respecting childcare centres and childcare services as regards places giving entitlement to grants
33	CPP	An Act to amend the Charter of Ville de Montréal
34	CLE	An Act respecting the Ministère du Développement économique et régional et de la Recherche (modified title)
37		Appropriation Act No. 2, 2003-2004
43		Appropriation Act No. 1, 2004-2005

Private Members' Public Bills

190	CW	An Act to proclaim Tartan Day
194	CC	An Act to proclaim Armenian Genocide Memorial Day

Private Bills

200	CPF	An Act respecting the Corporation du cimetière Mont-Marie
201	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Gaspé
202	CPF	An Act respecting Hillcrest Protestant Cemetery of Deux-Montagnes
203	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Victoriaville
204	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Rivière-du-Loup
205	CPP	An Act respecting the Northern Village of Kuujuaq and the Northern Village of Tasiujaq

Bills at the stage of their clause-by-clause consideration in committee

2	CI	An Act respecting the reciprocal issue and enforcement of support orders
4	CI	An Act to amend the Act respecting administrative justice
35	CI	An Act to amend the Act respecting administrative justice and other legislative provisions
36	CPF	An Act to amend the Taxation Act and other legislative provisions
38	CSA	An Act respecting the Health and Welfare Commissioner
39	CLE	An Act to amend the Forest Act

Bills that were introduced but not referred to committees

40		An Act to amend the Code of Civil Procedure with respect to the time limit for inscription
41		An Act to amend the Professional Code
42		An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning professional artists

THE MANDATES COMPLETED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEES IN 2003-2004

Committee on the National Assembly

Selection of membership of the standing committees and adoption of the list of temporary chairmen

Examination and approval of the election regulations

Committee on Public Administration

Accountability of deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies concerning:

- the management of the improvement of services to citizens (Relations with the Citizens and Immigration)
- the development of the information systems at the Ministère du Revenu
- the Government grants to non-profit organizations (Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks)
- the annual management reports of the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration and the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec
- the report on the implementation of the Public Administration Act (Treasury Board)
- the management of the Centre de conservation du Québec
- the mental health services (Health and Social Services)
- the costs-benefits study of the Corporation Innovation-Papier (Natural Resources, Wildlife and Parks)
- water monitoring and control (Environment)

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Hearing of the Auditor General on her annual management report, her strategic plan 2003-2006 and her financial commitments for 2002-2003
- Election of the committee vice-chairman

Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Clause-by-clause consideration: 2 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Order of initiative:

- Examine the issues in the bio-food industry from the farm to the table, particularly as regards food inspection, traceability and genetically modified organisms, in order to improve the level of food safety in Québec

Other mandate:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman

Committee on Social Affairs

Clause-by-clause consideration: 5 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Interpellations:

- The impact of reengineering on the health system in Québec
- Regarding health: the Québec Government's commitments and Federal transfers
- Financial support to families: the impact of the Government's decisions

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 8, An Act to amend the Act respecting childcare centres and childcare services
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 7, An Act to amend the Act respecting health services and social services
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 25, An Act respecting local health and social services network development agencies
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 30, An Act respecting bargaining units in the social affairs sector and amending the Act respecting the process of negotiation of the collective agreements

in the public and parapublic sectors

- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 11, An Act to implement the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption and to amend various legislative provisions in relation to adoption
- General consultation within the framework of the consideration of Bill 38, An Act respecting the Health and Welfare Commissioner
- General consultation: Adapting the Pension Plan to Québec's new realities

Committee on Planning and the Public Domain

Clause-by-clause consideration: 3 public bills 4 private bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Interpellation:

- The impact of reengineering on Québec's regions

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 1, An Act respecting proposals for the administrative reorganization of certain municipalities and amending various legislative provisions
- General consultation within the framework of the consideration of Bill 9, An Act respecting the consultation of citizens with respect to the territorial reorganization of certain municipalities
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 33, An Act to amend the Charter of Ville de Montréal

Committee on Culture

Clause-by-clause consideration: 1 public bill

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- General consultation: Reforming Access to Information: Choosing transparency
- General consultation: Planning immigration levels 2005-2007

Committee on Education

Clause-by-clause consideration: 1 public bill

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Interpellation:

- The impact of the Government's decisions in the education sector

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- General consultation: the issues surrounding the quality, accessibility and financing of Québec universities
- Hearings with the head officers of universities on their financial statements for 2001-2002

Committee on Labour and the Economy

Clause-by-clause consideration: 5 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 31, An Act to amend the Labour Code
- Examination of Hydro-Québec's strategic plan, 2004-2008
- Examination of the 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 financial statements and annual reports of the Fonds national de formation de la main-d'œuvre

Committee on Public Finance

Clause-by-clause consideration: 5 public bills 2 private bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Interpellation:

- The state of public finance in Québec

Surveillance of agencies:

- Investissement Québec
- Commission administrative des régimes de retraite et d'assurances

Order of initiative:

- examination of the creation of the Agence nationale d'encadrement du secteur financier

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Debate on the Budget Speech
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 20, An Act to amend the Act respecting the Ministère du Revenu and other legislative provisions
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 24, An Act to amend the Act respecting financial services cooperatives
- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of the draft Code of conduct for lobbyists
- General consultation: Report from the working group on the Québec Government's role in venture capital

Committee on Institutions

Clause-by-clause consideration: 4 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Other mandates:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 4, An Act to amend the Act respecting administrative justice
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 6, An Act to amend the Highway Safety Code and the Code of Penal Procedure as regards the collection of fines
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 35, An Act to amend the Act respecting administrative justice and other legislative provisions
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 2, An Act respecting the reciprocal issue and enforcement of support orders
- Special consultations within the framework of the consideration of Bill 21, An Act to amend the Civil Code and the Code of Civil Procedure as regards the determination of child support payments
- Special consultations: private security, partner of internal security

Committee on Transportation and the Environment

Clause-by-clause consideration: 1 public bill

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2003-2004

Other mandate:

- Election of the committee chairman and vice-chairman

THE ALLOWANCES AND AMOUNTS GRANTED TO MEMBERS IN 2003-2004

Wage bill of Members :

Regular remuneration (includes base allowance and additional allowance)	\$10,989,662
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Other allowances :

Allowances for expenses, attendance and political activities	\$2,754,616
Transition allowances (includes allowances granted when Member leaves)	\$1,974,331
Travel from electoral riding to the Parliament Building	\$1,064,374
Lodging in or around Québec City	\$1,335,191
Additional allowance for the purchase of furniture or office equipment during the first term of office	\$87,983
Electoral riding operation expenses	\$4,364,694

Other expenses :

	Members' staff	Office of Members holding parliamentary functions	Total
Wage bill	\$10,491,336	\$5,224,808	\$15,716,144
Travel expenses	\$323,545	\$514,960	\$838,505
Research services of political parties			\$1,681,717

THE MANDATES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

The Secretary General

The Secretary General is the highest-ranking civil servant of the Assembly and chief advisor to the President and the deputation in the interpretation of parliamentary procedure. The Secretary General oversees and manages the personnel of the Assembly, sees to the administration of routine business and carries out the other duties that are assigned to him by the Office of the National Assembly, of which he is the secretary.

Office Secretariat Directorate

The Secretariat of the Office sees to the organization and follow-up of the proceedings of the Office of the National Assembly and provides Members with all of the information concerning their working conditions and the services that are available to them.

Legal and Legislative Affairs Directorate

The Legal and Legislative Affairs Directorate advises the Assembly in legal matters and provides all professional services regarding the drafting of private Members' bills and private bills.

Library Directorate

The Library Directorate ensures the conservation of parliamentary documents, manages the archives and facilitates the retrieval thereof. It is responsible for maintaining a collection that meets current and future needs.

Security Directorate

The Security Directorate counsels Assembly authorities on security measures and is responsible for the protection of persons and property as well as for the security of buildings and offices at the Assembly.

General Directorate of Parliamentary Affairs

The Parliamentary Affairs General Directorate coordinates, plans, and supervises the activities of the parliamentary sector and assists the Secretary General in his role of advisor to the Chair of the Assembly.

Documentary Studies Directorate

The Documentary Studies Directorate carries out studies and research required by Members and administrative units, more particularly in relation to the mandates of parliamentary committees and to interparliamentary relations.

House Secretariat Directorate

The House Secretariat ensures the preparation, proper conduct and follow-up of the sittings of the Assembly. It assists the Secretary General in the preparation and coordination of the opening and closing of sessions.

Committee Secretariat Directorate

The Committee Secretariat provides all professional and administrative services required by parliamentary committees for the organization and conduct of their activities.

Parliamentary Procedure Research Directorate

The Parliamentary Procedure Research Directorate assists the Secretary General in advising the President, the Assembly and the parliamentary committees on parliamentary procedural matters.

Legislative Translation and Publishing Directorate

The Legislative Translation and Publishing Directorate is responsible for providing all professional and technical services as regards the translation, revision, editing and printing of legislative texts and for answering the translation needs of other administrative units.

General Directorate of Institutional Affairs

The General Directorate of Institutional Affairs coordinates, plans and supervises the institutional affairs directorates and assists the Secretary General in managing the institutional affairs of the Assembly.

Communications Directorate

The Communications Directorate promotes outreach by informing the public on the role of the Assembly in democracy. It is responsible for the communications of the institution and provides services to the Press Gallery journalists.

Educational Programmes Directorate

The Educational Programmes Directorate develops, organizes and conducts educational activities for target clienteles and provides professional and technical support during parliamentary simulations.

Protocol and Visitor Services Directorate

The Protocol and Visitor Services Directorate coordinates protocol activities and ceremonies at the Assembly and is responsible for visitors and information services, as well as for guided tours.

Interparliamentary and International Relations Directorate

The Interparliamentary and International Relations Directorate advises Assembly authorities on interparliamentary and international relations and coordinates the activities of the Assembly in this area.

Associate General Secretariat for Administrative Affairs

The Associate General Secretariat for Administrative Affairs plans, directs, coordinates and supervises the activities of the administrative directorates. It also coordinates the deployment of information technologies at the Assembly.

Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate

The Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate is responsible for the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings, press conferences and certain special events, and for the audio recording of debates for the purpose of transcribing, revising, editing and publishing the *Journal des débats* (Hansard).

Building Management Directorate

The Building Management Directorate provides all goods and services at the Assembly relating to the management and furnishing of buildings, and telecommunications.

Computer Services Directorate

The Computer Services Directorate is responsible for planning and providing advice and services in the area of office automation and computer systems (software, applications, equipment, training) and manages the computer population and the local and extended networks.

Financial Resources and Procurement Services Directorate

The Financial Resources and Procurement Services Directorate advises and provides services to the administrative units and the Members as regards financial management, budget planning and accounting operations. It also provides procurement services.

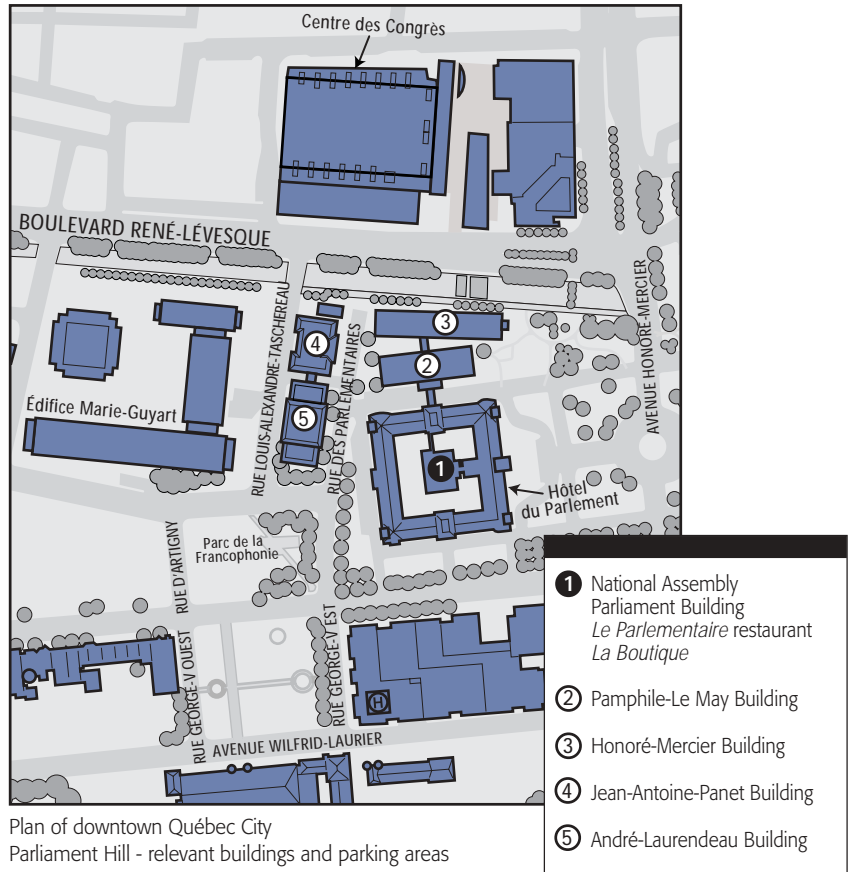
Human Resources Directorate

The Human Resources Directorate is responsible for all operations and support and counselling services relating to the management of human resources for the benefit of the administrative units and the Members.

Material Resources and Restaurants Directorate

The Material Resources and Restaurants Directorate provides support services to the Members and the administrative units, particularly as regards mail delivery and messenger services, printing, photocopying, the distribution of parliamentary documents, and office supplies. It is also responsible for food services and the management of restaurants at the Assembly.

SOME PRACTICAL INFORMATION



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Parliament Building, Québec (Québec)
G1A 1A3

General information

Telephone: (418) 643-7239
Toll free number: 1 866 DÉPUTÉS
(1 866 337-8837)
Fax: (418) 641-2638
www.assnat.qc.ca

GUIDED TOURS

Schedule*

Monday to Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

June 23 to Labour Day:

Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays:
10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Reservations are required for groups
of 10 or more.

Information

Telephone: (418) 643-7239
Fax: (418) 646-2638
E-mail: accueil@assnat.qc.ca

LE PARLEMENTAIRE RESTAURANT

Opening hours*

Tuesday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

25 May to the end of June and

25 November until the end of December:

Tuesday to Friday: from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
and from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

28 June to Labour Day:

Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Reservations

Telephone: (418) 643-6640
Fax: (418) 643-6378
E-mail: resto@assnat.qc.ca

LA BOUTIQUE

Opening hours*

Monday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

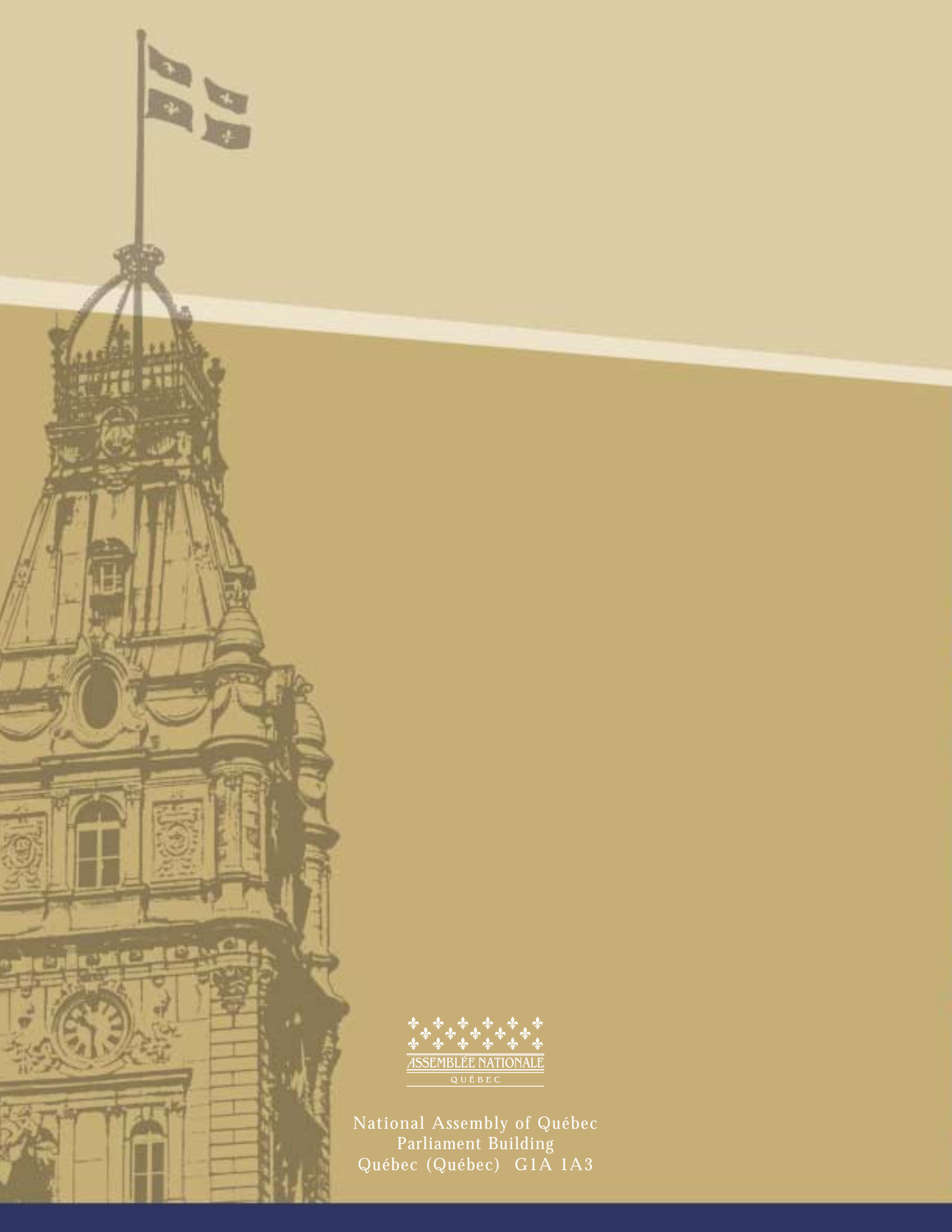
24 June to Labour Day:

also open on weekends,
from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Information

Telephone: (418) 643-8785
Fax: (418) 528-6022
E-mail: laboutique@assnat.qc.ca

* May be changed without notice



National Assembly of Québec
Parliament Building
Québec (Québec) G1A 1A3