



***Strategic orientations
2004–2007***

Building trust in our political and administrative institutions

To the President of the National Assembly:

It is with great pride that I present to you the 2004–2007 Strategic Plan—the first of its kind by the organization I oversee. The plan, entitled “Building trust in our political and administrative institutions,” lays out the foundation and scope of our future actions.

After the *Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act* was unanimously adopted by the National Assembly on June 13, 2002, I took up my new position on August 5 of the same year. My first efforts focused not only on initiating work on our organization’s first strategic positioning, but also on gathering the necessary resources together to quickly assume my duties and, in particular, develop a draft code of conduct for lobbyists for tabling in the National Assembly within the prescribed 180 day deadline.

The year 2003–2004 saw the adoption of the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists and the continuation of activities to explain and promote the Act. On the administrative side, we continued to develop the organizational structure required to fulfill our mandate. With the devoted efforts of our staff, we completed a thorough analysis of every aspect of the mission, context, and challenges to put together the strategic plan presented here.

For the next three years, our priority will be to monitor and control the activities of those seeking to lobby public office holders. This will notably involve gaining a clearer understanding of the phenomenon and practice of lobbying, and promoting the Act and the Code of Conduct among lobbyists, public office holders, and Quebecers at large. Efforts will also be made to develop an effective and exemplary organization with regard to the values we are mandated to enforce.

I believe these priorities are essential for the improvement of our democratic life and the reinforcement of the public’s confidence in its political and administrative institutions.

Context and challenges

Our mission: a real challenge

Monitoring and controlling the activities of those who lobby public office holders is a huge challenge due to the vast scope of the *Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act* and all that entails, both in terms of thoroughly understanding the new Act and the phenomenon itself, and delivering on the objectives of the Act despite our limited resources.

Monitoring and controlling the activities of those who lobby public office holders

The scope of the Act extends to parliamentary, government, and municipal institutions. It covers a wide array of administrative decisions and has precise objectives with regard to the declaration of the purpose of lobbying activities. It also requires compliance with a code of conduct, although the field of application is not easy to define. These challenges are an indication of the ambitious mandate the legislators have given the Lobbyists Commissioner.

Gain a clearer understanding of the phenomenon and practice of lobbying

Lobbying is a little known phenomenon, one that is poorly documented and often the subject of negative biases. There is a need to gain a better understanding of lobbying in every target institution and a wide range of administrative areas so the practice can be monitored and controlled effectively by the Lobbyists Commissioner.

Promoting the Act and the Code of Conduct among lobbyists, public office holders, and Quebecers at large

Considerable time and energy must be spent to raise awareness of the Act and inform the people and organizations affected by it. This means professional lobbyists, of course, but also employer and union organizations, and members of a range of professions who may not immediately perceive themselves as engaged in lobbying activities. The Act also concerns public decisionmakers, who must safeguard the integrity of the public decisionmaking process. Citizens must also be made aware of the fact that the Act entitles them to access to information, so they may express their opinions in a timely manner on issues of concern to them.

Defending the values we are mandated to protect

The Lobbyists Commissioner calls on the skill and versatility of its human resources to develop and promote leading-edge expertise in this new field. The media often remind us of the importance of values in the management of public affairs. Since the role of the Lobbyists Commissioner is to ensure the respect of such values by lobbyists, we must conduct ourselves in an exemplary manner and ensure that ethics play a central role in our work.

Our mission

Ensure transparency and proper lobbying practices in dealings with public office holders through monitoring and control efforts

Our vision

Help improve democratic life and reinforce the public's confidence in its political and administrative institutions

Our values

In addition to respecting the fundamental values laid out in the Québec Government's Statement of Values (skill, impartiality, integrity, loyalty, and respect), the Lobbyists Commissioner strives to uphold the values inherent to its mandate—transparency, confidence, and a marked concern for ethics.

Our jurisdiction

Our jurisdiction extends to all activities by those seeking to lobby public office holders in parliamentary, government, and municipal institutions, that is to say over 300 government departments, agencies, and corporations; 75 cities of 10,000 or more inhabitants (to date); and, starting July 1, 2005, the 1,025 other municipalities in Québec.

Policy Direction 1

Monitor and control lobbying with regard to the transparency and ethics objectives and obligations stemming from the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists

Action: Conduct audits, inquiries, and inspections

Objectives 1.1 Systematize monitoring and control initiatives through audits

1.2 Conduct followup inquiries

1.3 Respond to calls for inquiries in a timely fashion

Action: Provide legal advice and interpretation

Objectives 1.4 Provide the support required to enforce the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists to the Commissioner, the staff of the Audit and Investigation Department, and the Communications Department

1.5 Provide advice outside government circles on the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists

1.6 Examine possible legislative changes and state our position with regard to proposed changes

Action: Process applications

Objective 1.7 Process applications for confidentiality orders or extensions within 15 days of receiving complete files

Action: Handle disciplinary cases

Objective 1.8 Handle disciplinary cases and release the Commissioner's decisions, where warranted, by the prescribed deadline

Policy Direction 2

Gain a clearer understanding of the phenomenon and practice of lobbying

Action: Acquire knowledge

Objectives 2.1 Understand the phenomenon of lobbying in Québec and around the world to gain a better perspective and enhance our knowledge with regard to the ethics and deontology of lobbying

2.2 Enhance our knowledge of the practices and purposes of lobbying in Québec to get a clearer idea of the situation

Action: Share knowledge

Objective 2.3 Ensure that lobbying is practiced by the rules and in a transparent manner, and that it helps decisionmakers make informed decisions and promotes equal access to political and administrative institutions

Policy Direction 3

Promote the goals of the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists among lobbyists, inform public office holders of the issues raised by the Act and of its effects, and raise public awareness

Action: Promote understanding of the transparency and ethical behavior the Act and Code of Conduct for Lobbyists aim to encourage

Objectives 3.1 Convince lobbyists to uphold and comply with the objectives of the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists

3.2 Promote among public office holders an awareness of the issues raised by the Act and the Code of Conduct, their effect on the work of public office holders, and the obligations lobbyists have toward them

3.3 Spur public interest and active participation in the public decisionmaking process

Action: Optimize external communications

Objective 3.4 Optimize external communication initiatives already underway to further promote the objectives of the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists

Action: Forge networks and partnerships

Objectives 3.5 Maintain the formal coordination structure with the registrar of the Lobbyists Registry at Ministère de la Justice, where the Registry is kept

3.6 Examine the possibility of creating partner networks and cooperative agreements to promote the objectives of the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists

Action: Assess changes brought about by the Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists

Objective 3.7 Implement monitoring processes to keep track of and assess changes

Policy Direction 4

Develop an effective organization built on the strengths of its staff and the values that guide the administration of public institution

Action: Support human resources

Objectives 4.1 Maintain and upgrade the professional skills of staff, notably with a view to promoting greater versatility

4.2 Develop and promote a feeling of belonging to ensure consistency between our mission and actions

Action: Improve internal communications

Objectives 4.3 Facilitate the inhouse dissemination of information and improve the efficacy of the Lobbyists Commissioner

4.4 Promote employee participation

Action: Improve information systems and operational processes

Objective 4.5 Provide optimum support for operations and followup

Action: Follow up on strategic plan

Objective 4.6 Implement a dashboard to track strategic plan indicators