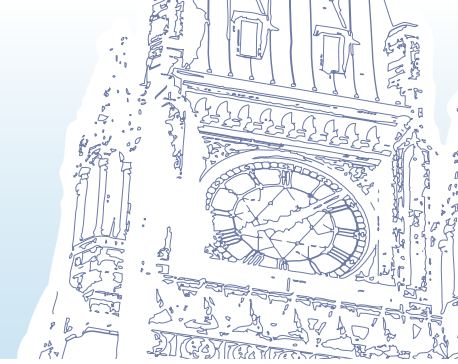




# Lobbying Act Implementation Notice #8



## The Lobbyists Registration System

Date: February 1, 2009

### Background

The Lobbyists Registration System (LRS) was originally developed in the mid-1990s. At the time, it was a state-of-the-art computer application, designed to handle small volumes of transactions with a minimal administrative interface. Over the years, the system underwent a number of transformations; however, the extent to which the *Lobbying Act* changed the registration requirements of lobbyists called for such extensive modifications to the LRS that it was no longer possible to use the same system infrastructure.

### New Registration Module

The system's registration module has been overhauled to be more intuitive and to permit partial entry of required information until all questions have been answered. The layout of this module was completely redesigned with clearer instructions for users and improved flow from one section to the next. Additional prompts were also incorporated into the system to help new users avoid errors.

Guides to Registration and online video tutorials are available to assist lobbyists and others in familiarizing themselves with the new system and its new search and reporting features.

### Improved Search System

A more refined search engine has been developed for the new system. New reporting tools have been created to enable users to generate reports that will include more complete and precise data.

### Registrant and Representative Dashboards

Some registrants, in particular large consulting firms and associations, have many registrations to manage, sometimes numbering in the hundreds. Feedback from users of the previous version of the LRS indicated they would welcome the implementation of a registration management interface. The redesign of the LRS using a new system infrastructure has allowed the OCL to develop such an interface, called a Dashboard, to be used by registrants and their representatives to manage their portfolio of registrations. By means of the Dashboard, users are able to create, modify, copy, correct, sort and monitor their registrations more efficiently.

### Historical Links

One of the main concerns expressed by members of the public was that registrations currently accessible via the Registry were not interlinked. This created difficulties whenever users tried to understand relationships between lobbyists and their clients. To display the content of the Registry in a more transparent manner, the improved LRS features a new way to present data so that the various versions of a given registration are linked together, thus providing a clearer picture of lobbying activities over time.

## Built-in Annotation System

In order to improve the flow of information between registrants and the OCL, the new LRS includes a built-in message exchange interface that allows OCL registration staff and registrants to better track information contained in registrations as well as facilitate the submission of corrections requested by the OCL to returns. This new functionality is expected to streamline the registration approval process and reduce processing time.

## Communication Log Module

The *Lobbying Act* requires that registrants file monthly returns to disclose oral and arranged communications with designated public office holders (DPOHs), which occurs through the Communications Log module of the LRS. The new system allows lobbyists to enter their communications in draft form and complete their entries at a later time. Registrants and their representatives are able to manage their communications disclosures through the Dashboard, allowing them to monitor the status of their returns in real time.

As well, to provide additional flexibility to registrants and representatives, users have the choice between publishing their monthly Communication Log entries immediately upon filing or instructing the system to publish their entries automatically on the last filing date of the month. Consistency checks were incorporated into this module to reduce the possibility that discrepancies could occur between Communication Log entries and the lobbyist's underlying registration.

