

# Fresh Approaches



The Agency for Co-operative Housing  
L'Agence des coopératives d'habitation

ANNUAL REPORT 2005

# **Our Vision**

The Agency aspires to be a superlative administrator of co-operative housing programs, recognized for its leadership by governments across Canada and valued by housing co-operatives as a partner in their success.

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## OUR VALUES

We hold to these values, which govern our conduct with the general public, our government and co-operative partners, and our employees and other stakeholders.

- Respect  
*We esteem our clients and at all times treat them fairly and with consideration.*
- Transparency  
*We promote the open and honest sharing of knowledge and information, while guarding the privacy of individuals.*
- Trust  
*We earn the confidence of our co-operative and government partners through exceptional service and consistent performance.*
- Excellence  
*We pursue superior results and continuous improvement. Success, for us, is getting the right things done as well as possible.*
- Innovation  
*We challenge ourselves constantly to find fresh approaches that will lead to ever-better outcomes for our partners.*
- Co-operation  
*We work in concert with our stakeholders to achieve separate but complementary goals.*
- Accountability  
*We answer to our government and movement partners for the results we achieve as responsible stewards of the programs entrusted to us.*

**PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

May 2006

**OUR MISSION**

The Agency administers co-operative housing programs, deploying risk-based strategies, superior information management and client-centred service to safeguard the public's investment and help our government and co-operative partners attain their goals.

**OUR MANDATE**

The mandate of the Agency is to assist the federal government in

- ensuring that public funds committed for co-operative housing programs are used as intended and are properly accounted for
- safeguarding the public's investment in co-operative housing.

The Agency will operate within an agreed accountability framework that will leave it the authority it will need to perform its duties efficiently and effectively on CMHC's behalf, while protecting the public interest.



*Ray Hession, President*

*As President, I have enjoyed the opportunity of leading the Agency during this exciting period of growth. I became involved with this initiative because of my conviction, held for nearly 30 years, that the third sector has a superior capability to deliver and manage non-profit housing in our communities. It is time for Canada to mature by giving responsibility for managing programs to the sector that has most reason to care about their successful administration.*

It is a pleasure to head up a board of directors that has attracted so many senior people. The Agency's board is a reservoir of varied skills and strong convictions. Board members combine expertise in development, financial matters, financing, government relations, co-operative housing and the administration of organizations of various sizes. Yet it is a unified board with all the directors believing in the co-op form of organization and committed to creating a model of non-governmental service delivery to a defined constituency for the benefit of Canadians.

The most significant event of this start-up period was the signing of the service agreement with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation last May. With the agreement in place, the Agency moved quickly to complete the development of information systems, a specialized risk-rating model and monitoring techniques for early identification of co-ops in financial difficulty, which will be critical to the success of the Agency business model.

Now we have to build confidence in the Agency's ability to deliver results. And we must be accountable for those results. As we come to the end of our start-up period, the Agency is about to be put to the test. I believe we will meet the challenge ahead as successfully as we have met the many tests of the past.

Yours sincerely,

*Ray Hession, President*

## FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Chaired by the Treasurer, the Finance and Audit Committee meets four times a year, or more often, if necessary. The auditor may choose to be present.

The committee liaises with the auditor and reviews Agency compliance with financial policies and resolutions. Overseeing all aspects of the Agency's finances, the committee reports to the Board on the Agency's financial position and operating results, viewed against approved plans and goals.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Peter Crawford, Treasurer  
 Carol Davis  
 Barbara Millsap

## GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Consisting of the President, Vice-President and Treasurer, the Governance and Human Resources Committee meets four times a year, or more often, if necessary.

The committee makes sure that the Agency is observing its by-laws, policies and client agreements and the laws and regulations of the land. The committee advises the board about human-resources issues and ensures that the Agency's governance is solid and its senior staff competent and appropriately compensated.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ray Hession, President  
 Jill Kelly, Vice-President  
 Peter Crawford, Treasurer

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ray Hession, PRESIDENT  
 Jill Kelly, VICE-PRESIDENT  
 Peter Crawford, TREASURER  
 Carol Davis  
 Barbara Millsap  
 Stuart Thomas



"CMHC's rigorous approach forced us to think clearly and look at our decisions from every angle..."

#### CURRENT DIVISION STAFF

Melanie Clement, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Pat Poirier, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (OTTAWA)

Huguette Ferraton, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
(OTTAWA)

Marianne Smith, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
(TORONTO)

Dave Sullivan, INFORMATION SYSTEMS  
ADMINISTRATOR

Dyanpro (CONTRACT ACCOUNTING)

## GAIL CHURCH, CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION



*Gail Church, Director*

*I joined the Agency in December 2005 after being out of the co-operative movement for 15 years. I was looking for a challenge and I got it. The Agency needed someone who could hit the ground running, because it was faced with all the problems of starting up a new business. So I had my task list to work through.*

Our immediate challenge was to establish credit with no history at all, so that we could set up the support centre here in Ottawa. We had a location, but nothing more, so I had to work with an interior designer and arrange for furniture and equipment and see the work to completion. We needed errors and omissions insurance, which we finally got from Lloyd's of London. We had received our first fee from CMHC, and so we had to establish a banking structure. Then we had to find a location for the Ontario/P.E.I. Regional Service Centre in Toronto and contract with a designer.

My division and the Agency itself have done very well throughout this start-up period. I'm proud of the fact that we developed a complete package of human-resources policies and met all our corporate obligations, which were my responsibility as corporate secretary. The Agency chose people for the management team who had a track record and a solid understanding of co-op housing, and we bonded as a team.

We owe a huge debt to CHF Canada for paying the bills for so long and to our directors for their hard work and good faith. Once the decision was made to go forward, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation appointed someone to work fulltime on the Agency project and allowed us much more access to their senior staff, as well as providing start-up funding. In addition, CMHC's rigorous approach forced us to think clearly and look at our decisions from every angle to be sure our planning was solid, which it was and is. Edward de Bono calls this tactic "wearing the black hat" and says that it is essential, in moderation.

*~ Gail Church, Director, Corporate Services*

## OLGA TASCI, INFORMATION SERVICES AND BEST PRACTICES DIVISION



*Olga Tasci, Director*

*I joined the Agency in May 2005 on a secondment, before accepting a permanent position in December. It was a great opportunity to help set the stage for the Agency, after having followed the story for many years with the Co-operative Housing Association of Eastern Ontario (CHASEO) and taken part in various lobby campaigns over the last decade. I could see that the Agency's general approach appealed to CHASEO's members, and we were all very excited to see it coming to fruition. I was also interested by the new tools and techniques*

*the Agency was preparing to use, such as the Co-op Housing Agency Information System (CHAIS).*

For much of 2005, our small team of three staff collaborated with many consultants in preparing the groundwork. Working closely with CHF Canada, I headed a task group that developed the Agency's property-inspection report. Over the summer and fall, we also had many meetings with CMHC to flesh out details and develop the schedules attached to the agreement.

Among our achievements in 2005 are some that are now part of my division's responsibilities. We launched the co-op information update, an on-line consultation through which co-ops could review and correct the information we had about them. We conducted a client-satisfaction survey with co-ops and analysed their responses, which guided us when we came to develop the Agency's service standards. And of course, by the end of the year, our permanent office space had been chosen, the management team was hired and the curtain was rising on 2006.

*~ Olga Tasci, Director, Information Services and Best Practices*

"I could see that the Agency's general approach appealed to CHASEO's members..."

### CURRENT DIVISION STAFF

Maggie Keith, COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Julie Lapalme, INFORMATION OFFICER

Sergei Pershukovich, DATA ADMINISTRATOR

Stan Piechocinski, PROJECT MANAGER, SYSTEM TESTING AND IMPLEMENTATION (CONTRACT)

Chantal Roy, CLIENT SERVICE CHAMPION

## PENELOPE WINTER, PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

"...very much a collective effort on the part of the management team."



*Penelope Winter, Director*

*I joined the Agency in December 2005, but I began to attend meetings in the fall, as soon as I learned that I had been hired. I was excited by the opportunity of helping to create something new.*

*Even before that, I was involved in the Agency set-up. In my last year at CHF Canada, I worked on a research contract for the development of the Annual Information Return (AIR). In late 2005, I was part of the working group that created the Agency's property-inspection system and report forms.*

### CURRENT DIVISION STAFF

Michel Brière, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Marg Callaghan, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Donna Charbonneau, RELATIONSHIP  
MANAGER

Jacqueline Cooper, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Jane Davidson-Neville, RELATIONSHIP  
MANAGER

Peter Gesiarz, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Hans Handratno, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Dave Howard, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Ken Lawson, AIR HELP DESK OFFICER  
(CONTRACT)

Lori-Anne McDonald, ONTARIO/P.E.I.  
TEAM LEADER

Joanne Mick, PRAIRIES/B.C. TEAM LEADER

Michel St-Denis, MANAGER, TECHNICAL  
SERVICES

Sandeep Thethy, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Scott Wylie, RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Jamie Ritchie, ANALYST (CONSULTANT)

Nick Van Dyk, ANALYST (CONSULTANT)

Once the Agency had signed the service agreement with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, confirming that it would go ahead, there was an immediate need for systems and processes of all kinds. Many of these are now part of the work of my division.

By our December deadline, we had developed the key structural tools fundamental to our accountability. We finalized the plain-language program guidelines, our supervisory and intervention protocols and the property-inspection system. The Annual Information Return (AIR) was effectively complete.

Division lines were not nearly as clear in 2005 as they are now, with the completion of the various reports we had to give to CMHC being very much a collective effort on the part of the management team. By the end of the year, recruitment plans for the rest of the staff were well underway. And when we engaged the invaluable Sylvie Moreau as our hiring consultant, we began to build our divisional teams. She and many other consultants have made important contributions that have helped us on our way.

*~ Penelope Winter, Director, Program Management Services*



## ALEXANDRA WILSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Alexandra Wilson,  
Chief Executive Officer

*The Agency for Co-operative Housing has been in the making since 1996. "At last," as someone said to me, "a real agency, not a dream." When I look forward, I feel as if I were standing on the deck of a ship that is moving out of harbour and beginning to ride the waves and shoulder the sea winds. The Agency's maiden voyage must succeed. What will it take?*

*"Our people will make the difference."*

The past year has been devoted to putting a strong structure in place and ensuring that the Agency will be a responsible steward of public assets, fully accountable to its government client under the terms of the service agreement signed in May 2005. Our challenges, looking ahead, are many. Housing co-operatives are faced with aging buildings and, in some places, weak markets. We must work as partners to ensure that the valuable property in their care lasts for the benefit of future generations. Yet the Agency is beginning its work ten years later than was hoped. This must limit the extent of our success.

We know that our plan for a risk-based, data-driven, co-op-focused approach is sound. We have confidence in the systems we have developed for managing information and risk. We are working with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation towards a smooth transfer of responsibilities. But the real test of our success will lie with our ability to deliver the quality of client service that we are committed to. We've made a lot of promises. We will be judged on whether we can put them into practice.

Our people will make the difference. The members of our team have come to us from many different backgrounds, bringing with them impressive talents. What they have in common is their belief in the Agency's vision and their commitment to making it a reality. Our results will depend on their ability to work effectively with housing co-ops in the spirit of mutual self-help, inspiring them, if not always to excellence, at least to be the very best they can.

*~ Alexandra Wilson, Chief Executive Officer*

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS \***

	<b>December 31 2005</b>	<b>December 31 2004</b>
<b>Assets</b>	\$ 1,265,603	\$ - 0 -
<b>Liabilities</b>	1,249,719	- 0 -
<b>Operating Reserve</b>	15,884	- 0 -
<b>Fund Balance Invested in Capital Assets</b>	5,617	- 0 -

  

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	\$ 380,519	\$ - 0 -
<b>Expenses</b>	359,018	- 0 -

*\*The full financial statements, audited by Marcil Lavallée, have been provided to the member and other parties, as required.*



**The Agency for Co-operative Housing**

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