

1 - CLIENT SERVICES INITIATIVES

1.1 The Legal Awareness Resources

The Legal Awareness Program is delivered through Legal Service Units in government institutions. From the opening of the program on Law Day, April 17, 1991 until October 1991, Legal Service Units have delivered 31 seminars in 14 different government institutions. Of 24 reported evaluations, the unanimous result was that the participants found the seminars very good and recommended them to colleagues.

The program has been a novel collaborative effort between Justice lawyers who provided the legal content and adult education specialists from Training and Development Canada, Public Service Commission, who designed the program materials and trained the lawyers in adult education techniques.

The program is intended to be a practical program in "preventive law" designed to sensitize public servants, managers and others, to common legal problems and generally to further the rapport between Justice lawyers and the clients they serve. This program may have the effect of "demystifying" the law and the role of lawyers.

The program consists of 14 seminars of a half to a full day's duration on legal topics including administrative law, contracts, human rights, ethics and conflict of interest, the legislative and regulatory processes, environmental law, employment and labour relations law and the role of Justice lawyers. The seminars, including case studies, are presented to groups of approximately 20 participants by Justice lawyers.

Course participants, in addition to learning in stimulating, interactive legal awareness sessions, obtain a handy reference package. In the end, not only will lawyers and public servants be able to talk to each other about legal issues, public administrators will be more likely to identify potential legal issues and seek legal advice at the earliest possible moment.

The overall result of the Legal Awareness Program will be "preventive law".

Presently, the program materials are being considered as a partial source for legal courses being developed by Justice at the Canadian Centre for Management Development.