



## 2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT

### National Advisory Committee

The Honourable Frank  
Iacobucci, C.C., Q.C.,  
*Chairperson*

The Honourable G rard V. La  
Forest, C.C., Q.C., *Honorary  
Chairperson*

The Honourable Peter Cory,  
C.C., C.D., Q.C., *Honorary  
Chairperson*

The Honourable John C. Major,  
C.C., Q.C., *Honorary  
Chairperson*

The Honourable Michel  
Bastarache, C.C., *Honorary  
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Owen Rees, *Executive Director*

Gr goire Webber, *Executive  
Director*

Sheila Block, L.S.M., *Member  
for Ontario*

Frank R. Foran, Q.C., *Member  
for Alberta*

Daniel Jutras, *Member for  
Quebec*

Richard Peck, Q.C., *Member  
for British Columbia*

Michael J. Wood, Q.C.,  
*Member for Atlantic Canada*

The Supreme Court Advocacy Institute has completed its second full Supreme Court of Canada term, during which it continued to provide counsel appearing for argument before the Court with a rigorous practice session. The Institute's advocacy program aims to increase the effectiveness and quality of advocacy before the Court by simulating for counsel the experience of oral argument before the highest court. A panel of seasoned Supreme Court advocates listen to counsel's argument and offer candid and constructive feedback to help maximize counsel's opportunity to present an informative oral argument.

During the 2008-2009 year, the Institute provided free, non-partisan advocacy sessions in approximately 20% of cases before the Supreme Court of Canada. Counsel from government and private practice took part in the Institute's advocacy program in both civil and criminal appeals. During some Court sessions, the Institute organized practice panels for up to 75% of cases from a given province. As in previous years, counsel making use of the Institute included seasoned advocates as well as first time counsel before the Court. Counsel from across the country relied on the Institute as part of their preparations.

Over 25 lawyers donated their time as advocacy advisors for their colleagues, offering advice based on their own experience before the Court. Several participated in more than one session, illustrating the commitment of lawyers to the bar and to the public. The testimonials from counsel who have used the Institute's advocacy program confirm the seriousness with which our advisors devote themselves to assisting their colleagues.

The reach of the Institute's advocacy program was expanded in the course of the 2008-2009 term. In March 2009, the Institute launched the Regional Committee for the Atlantic Provinces, with Michael J. Wood, Q.C. (Nova Scotia) as chair and Richard J. Scott, Q.C. (New Brunswick), M. Lynn Murray, Q.C. (Prince Edward Island), and Ian F. Kelly, Q.C. (Newfoundland and Labrador) as members for their provinces.

In addition to its advocacy program, the Institute sponsored and promoted a continuing legal education program in conjunction with the Canadian Bar Association's annual Canadian Legal Conference. In August 2009, the Institute showcased its program in Dublin, Ireland at a CLE session entitled *Winning Advocacy Skills: First Time Advocacy in the Supreme Court of Canada*. Institute Honorary Chairperson, the Honourable Peter Cory, C.C., C.D., Q.C. chaired the session, with Institute members Suzanne C t  (Quebec Regional

Committee member and advocacy advisory), D. Geoff Cowper, Q.C. (advocacy advisor), and Scott C. Hutchison (advocacy advisor) completing the panel. The CLE reproduced the experience of an advocacy session with the Institute, and was followed by a general discussion on effective oral advocacy in the highest court.

The membership of the Institute's National Advisory Committee was also expanded. As chair of the Atlantic Regional Committee, Michael J. Wood, Q.C. has joined the Institute's governing body. In addition, former Supreme Court Justices the Honourable Gérald V. La Forest, C.C., Q.C. and Michel Bastarache, C.C. joined the Honourable Peter Cory, C.C., C.D., Q.C. and John C. Major, C.C., Q.C. as honorary chairpersons with the Institute. We look forward to working with them to expand the reach of the Institute's activities. The Institute mourns the passing of the Honourable Charles Gonthier, C.C., Q.C. It is with great sadness that we lost one of our honorary chairpersons.

The Institute remains in a good financial position. Now a registered charity, the Institute's low-cost operations – due to the willingness of all members to donate their time on a pro bono basis – ensure the sustainability of our programs.