

APPOINTMENT AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

APPOINTMENT

The Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly appointed a panel to examine the allowances and benefits of retiring members of the Legislature as provided by the Members' Retiring Allowance Act and any other relevant or related legislation, rules or regulations. To this end the Speaker of the Assembly appointed a three member Panel consisting of a retired judge, who shall appoint two citizens who are neutral, independent and who, by virtue of their professional backgrounds and experience are qualified to review objectively the present allowances and benefits of retiring members and to make such recommendations as they may deem appropriate.

The Speaker appointed the Honourable David Gruchy, Q.C., a retired justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia to chair the Panel. Mr. Gruchy has appointed Mr. John Morash, C.A., a former chair of the Utility and Review Board of Nova Scotia and Mr. Ronald Smith, a former Chief Financial Officer of Aliant Telecom and later a senior vice-president and Chief Financial Officer of Emera Inc. and Nova Scotia Power Inc. to serve with him.

The Speaker requested the Panel to prepare and submit to him the Terms of Reference for the review, which terms the Speaker has approved.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. As a retirement plan is important to a person considering whether to enter the political arena it is essential that a Panel shall conduct a full review of the present plan and to make recommendations arising from such review publicly available.
2. The Panel shall examine all aspects of MLA pensions and other retirement benefits including the plans already in effect, their effectiveness and the cost of administration.
3. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly shall provide administrative services and support to the Panel as required. The Panel may seek the assistance of consultants to provide it with advice and analysis and to ensure an arm's length relationship with the Legislative Assembly. Without restricting the Panel, they may obtain such actuarial advice and reports as they may deem necessary, which advice and report will be appended to the Panel's report to the Speaker.
4. The Speaker, on the recommendation of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, will approve funding for the Panel and may approve honoraria and expenses reasonably incurred.

5. The Panel shall be guided by the following principle respecting MLA Pension benefits:

Members of the Legislative Assembly should be entitled to retirement benefits at a fair and reasonable level to ensure that capable individuals continue to offer themselves for public service. That level should not be so small as to discourage qualified persons from running, or so generous as to be a major inducement for seeking office.

6. Within six months after the MLA Pensions Panel is established and announced, the Panel shall deliver a report to the Speaker that sets out any recommendations for changes it determined should be made to MLA pensions and retirement benefits and shall give reasons therefor.

7. An appointment of an individual to the Panel terminates on the day the report is filed with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly unless the appointment is earlier revoked or otherwise terminated.