



SHAREHOLDER'S LETTER OF EXPECTATIONS

BETWEEN

**THE MINISTER OF ADVANCED EDUCATION
(AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SHAREHOLDER,
THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA)**

AND

**THE CHAIR OF THE OPEN LEARNING AGENCY
(AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CORPORATION)**

PURPOSE

This Shareholder's Letter of Expectations (SLE) between the Shareholder and the Corporation is an agreement on the respective roles and responsibilities of each, and serves as the basis of agreement between the Shareholder and the Corporation on corporate mandate including high-level performance expectations, public policy issues and strategic priorities¹. It will be reviewed annually and updated as required. The SLE is the basis for the development of the Corporation's Service Plans and Annual Service Plan Reports. The Letter applies to the Shareholder and the Corporation. This Letter does not create any legal or binding obligations on the part of the Shareholder or the Corporation but rather is intended to define and promote a positive and co-operative working relationship.

¹ The Province of British Columbia's Crown Agency Accountability System (CAAS) (http://www.gov.bc.ca/cas/down/crown_agencies_reader.pdf) establishes guiding principles for the governance of Crown corporations. The CAAS also identifies roles and responsibilities for the Shareholder and Crown corporations, and provides for a Shareholder's Letter of Expectations (Letter) to be jointly developed.

CORPORATION ACCOUNTABILITIES

Government has provided the following mandate and public policy direction to the Corporation with respect to the Knowledge Network (KN):

- The mandate for KN is to provide unique, quality educational programming that is relevant to British Columbians.
- The public policy objectives for KN are to:
 - Promote life-long learning in British Columbia by providing quality educational programming;
 - Inform and educate British Columbians about their province;
 - Provide British Columbians with a unique television experience;
 - Inform and educate British Columbians about issues relevant to them; and,
 - Support the independent television and web media production sectors in British Columbia.

In responding to government's performance expectations and the general and specific frameworks and direction of the Shareholder, the Corporation will:

- conduct its affairs to achieve its mandate and the performance expectations and objectives of the Shareholder, including establishing and implementing corporate strategies, policies, programs, plans and financial outcomes that are consistent with the Shareholder's general direction and consistent with principles of efficiency, effectiveness, and customer service;
- prepare Service Plans with clearly articulated goals, objectives, strategies and performance measures and targets, and Annual Reports that detail progress toward achieving those goals, and post both documents on its website;
- display all annual Statement of Financial Information schedules prepared under the *Financial Information Act* in an easily accessible location on its website (some of this information is included in annual reports and does not need to be otherwise displayed);
- conduct its operations and financial activities in a manner consistent with the legislative, regulatory and policy framework established by the Shareholder;
- develop and implement strategies to manage risks identified in the Service Plan;
- provide the Shareholder with reports and other information that would enable the Shareholder to carry out its responsibilities;
- provide information to the Shareholder if the Corporation is unable to meet the targets identified in its Service Plan; and,
- take appropriate action to ensure that if Shareholder-directed transactions affect the Service Plan or financial targets of the Corporation, the Shareholder is informed of any impacts.

The Shareholder directs the Corporation to take the following specific actions:

- Execute the final elements of the Open Learning Agency wind-up plan as approved by the Shareholder;
- Develop a business plan that will support KN's mandate and government's public policy objectives and guide KN's future activities. In developing the business plan, consideration should be given to alternative business models, revenue sources and

partnerships with other provincial agencies and jurisdictions (extra-provincial and federal), educational broadcasters, non-profit organizations and the private sector. The business plan will reflect an intention to expand the reach of KN and to bring in outside partners that can use KN to deliver provincially-related objectives. The Corporation will submit the business plan to the Shareholder for approval before the plan is implemented;

- Retain the building and property at 4355 Mathissi Place, Burnaby, British Columbia until such time that the Shareholder directs that it be transferred to another public post-secondary institution; and,
- Maintain and manage the Mathissi Place building and property, and report to the Shareholder on matters pertaining to operating costs, tenant issues, major repairs, capital upgrades and any other matters that materially affect the value and future use of the building by the public post-secondary system.

SHAREHOLDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Shareholder is responsible for the legislative, regulatory and public policy framework in which Crown corporations operate. In order to meet these responsibilities and support achievement of government's performance expectations, the Shareholder will:

- establish, review, revise and communicate Crown corporations' mandates;
- establish the overall and Crown-specific financial frameworks under which Crown corporations operate (borrowing, investment, and payment to the Shareholder);
- issue performance management guidelines, including guidelines for service planning and annual reports (<http://www.gov.bc.ca/cas/rpts/>);
- provide strategic input and advice to Crown corporations in the development of their Service Plans and Annual Reports;
- provide broad policy direction and confirmation of general frameworks/principles to Crown corporations, within which the Crown corporations may establish and apply specific policies/processes;
- advise Crown corporations of government's priorities, strategic decisions and public policy and performance objectives and expectations that may impact the Crown corporations; and,
- issue directives or orders or sponsor submissions on behalf of Crown corporations that may be required to seek decisions or policy direction by the Executive Council or its committees, in order to facilitate Crown corporations fulfilling their mandates and achieving the performance targets outlined in Crown corporations' Service Plans.

The Shareholder has developed policies for ministries and Crown corporations for Capital Asset Management (<http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/tbs/camf.htm>) and Board remuneration policies for Crown agencies. The shareholder has also issued Best Practice Guidelines for board governance and disclosure to be implemented by April 2006 (<http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/oop/brdo/corporateguidelines.pdf>). During the term of this Letter, the Shareholder may provide policy direction to the Crown agency sector, and will communicate any such direction, including implementation expectations, to Crown corporations as decisions are made.

The Shareholder will also, on a continuing basis, monitor the achievement of the goals, objectives and targets identified in Crown corporations' Service Plans.

Specific to the Corporation, the Shareholder:

- will review and approve the Corporation's business plan, which the Corporation will develop to guide the future activities of KN as stipulated in the OLA wind-up plan;
- will support the development of legislation and regulations for KN, as required;
- will approve the Corporation's mandate to operate broadcasting undertakings devoted primarily to the field of educational broadcasting under the *Open Learning Agency Act*
- will confirm the right of the Agency to hold land;
- may make grants to the Agency; and,
- will review the Corporation's recommendations concerning alternative business models, revenue sources and partnerships with other provincial agencies and jurisdictions (extra-provincial and federal), educational broadcasters, non-profit organizations and the private sector, and provide the Corporation with approval and direction as appropriate.

AREAS OF SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

Communications

It is agreed by both the Shareholder and the Corporation that, to ensure effective and efficient day-to-day communications and relationship building, officials representing both parties will be tasked with implementing the contents of this Letter and keeping the Minister Responsible and the Board of Directors informed of progress in a timely fashion.

Reporting

The Shareholder and the Corporation are committed to enhanced transparency and accountability to the public. The Shareholder has put in place a public reporting structure set out in the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, the *Financial Administration Act*, and the *Financial Information Act*. The Shareholder has provided the Corporation with a reporting calendar which sets out financial and performance reporting requirements. The Corporation agrees that it will meet these financial and performance reporting requirements. If government determines that changes to the reporting requirements are necessary, the Shareholder will communicate these to the Corporation.

It is agreed by both the Shareholder and the Corporation that there will be advance discussion and review of key strategic documents such as Service Plans, Quarterly Financial Reports and Annual Reports. These discussions will be completed sufficiently in advance of deadlines to ensure effective and timely input by the Shareholder.

In addition to these financial and performance reporting requirements, the Corporation agrees to provide information to the Shareholder related to risks and opportunities anticipated in achieving financial forecasts.

The Shareholder and the Corporation agree that, as a matter of course, each will advise the other in a timely manner of any issues that may materially impact the business of the Corporation or the interests of the Shareholder.


It is agreed that the Corporation will post the most recent signed copy of the Shareholder Letter of Expectations on its website. Crown Agencies Secretariat will also post a signed copy of the Letter on its website.

Review and Revision of this Letter

The Minister of Advanced Education is accountable for undertaking reviews of the Letter and monitoring its implementation. If deemed necessary by either party, the Shareholder and the Corporation will discuss any issues and may agree to amend this letter.


Honourable Murray Coell
Minister of Advanced Education

Sept 6/06
Date


Dr. Ronald Burnett
Chair, Open Learning Agency

Sept 12/06
Date

pc: Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier

Ms. Jessica McDonald
Deputy Minister to the Premier and Cabinet Secretary

Ms. Dana Hayden
Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy, Office of the Premier

Ms. Tamara Vrooman
Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board
Ministry of Finance

Ms. Molly Harrington
Chief Executive Officer
Crown Agencies Secretariat

Dr. Moura Quayle
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Advanced Education

Mr. Bill Harlan
Chief Executive Officer
Open Learning Agency