

14 November, 2006

MDC licensing: The *Catch 22* Days are Over

Those of you who have read MDC's recently published annual report for the year ending March 31, 2006, would have learned how overwhelmed our slim staff resources had been in attempting to efficiently process motor dealer and salespeople licences each year, including comprehensive background checks on all new people and businesses.

An extract from the Registrar's message in the annual report reads as follows:

"Media headlines this past year about MDC enforcement activities - fines, administrative penalties, imposed receiverships, suspensions and licence cancellations - along with multifaceted communications - generated a tsunami response for the small MDC staff team. . . This impacted our small licensing staff that did their best to answer all incoming calls but were unable to keep up with the vast demand on their services."

That was the Catch 22: our investigations and communications threatened serious consequences for non-compliance. Each story about dealers being fined for licensing violations would create a rush of applications and requests for information.

The service structure

MDC now has six licensing officers with enough support staff to manage the files of 1,700 dealers and over 8,000 salespeople. Complementing the administrative systems and electronic resources of MDC's head office, a new service structure enables licensees to have a first point of contact for any licence-related issues or inspection/investigation related issues. This primary contact may not be able to address all issues but will come to know the file and be able to assist licensees with required services or information

The province has been broken into regions with one licensing officer and one investigator assigned to each region. In due course, you should get to know the people responsible for your area. Consult the MDC web site for a complete list of all regions and their MDC staff contacts.

Yet those who responded quickly often faced a frustrating wait.

Experience, a better idea of demand and the revised fee structure last spring, facilitating more staff and resources, has addressed this problem. Renewals are being efficiently processed within a few days of when they are received, and even faster for those who take advantage of the on-line renewals through the MDC web site. New applications for both dealers and salespeople require more extensive processes, but these, too, are being managed expeditiously.

"There were times last year when we operated under a siege mentality," said Earl Manning, MDC's Director of Licensing. "I am very grateful to both our staff and all the patient people in the industry who helped us endure the deluge, and pleased to report that we are now consistently delivering appropriate levels of service for new licence applications, renewals, off-site sale permits, changes, information and administration."