

our involvement

Our office is headed by David Agnew, the Ombudsman since 2005. The Ombudsman is appointed by the Board of Directors, and must be independent of both industry and government.

The appointment of the Ombudsman is made on the recommendation of the Independent Directors Committee for a renewable term of up to five years. The Ombudsman cannot have been a government employee or have worked for or been closely associated with a participating firm for five years prior to appointment.

Our People

OBSI's experienced and professional staff is drawn from a variety of fields and disciplines such as law, accounting, finance, banking and investments. Our staff is committed to conscientious, fair and timely dispute resolution, which is evident in their dealings with all parties.

We currently have 35 full- and part-time staff members across Canada. Our team of consumer assistance officers responds

to the thousands of initial inquiries and complaints that are received by phone, email, online, letters and faxes each year. We have two teams of assessment staff and investigators, one for banking services and the other for investments, responsible for reviewing files in more depth. Each is headed by a Senior Deputy Ombudsman. Our manager of administration is responsible for overseeing the office and the manager of public affairs oversees outreach and communications activities.

35

Full- and part-time staff members across Canada

“The OBSI is providing a very good service for people in my situation. I want you to know I appreciate it very much”

OBSI Client Comment

“When I made my decision to take my dispute with my financial services firm to OBSI, people around me were very discouraging. I am glad I did not listen to them”

OBSI Client Comment

Reaching Out

We continued to expand our outreach initiatives in 2008 on a number of fronts: participating in different conferences, roundtables and presentations, publishing our e-newsletter and receiving media coverage in both national and local media.

OBSI is also part of the Joint Standing Committee on Retail Investor Issues, an Ontario-based initiative made up of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada (IIROC), Mutual Fund Dealers Association of Canada (MFDA), the Ontario Securities Commission (OSC) and OBSI.

The committee focuses on matters relating to retail investors, such as enhancing investor education, promoting greater transparency of

investment products offered for sale to retail investors, and strengthening the effectiveness of retail investor protection.

Through the year we also received coverage in publications and media including: *The Globe and Mail*, *Investment Executive*, *La Presse*, *Protégez-vous*, *CARP Action Online*, *BNN-TV*, *Toronto Star*, *Advisor.ca*, *National Post* and many others.

OBSI publishes a quarterly e-newsletter for its stakeholders including participating firms, consumer groups and other interested parties. The newsletter is also available on our website.

Here are some of the conferences and meetings we participated in in 2008:

- Reaching Higher: Canadian Conference on Financial Literacy, Montréal
- BCSC Capital Ideas, Vancouver
- IFIC Conference, Investment Complaint Handling: Navigating the Process, Toronto
- Osgoode Hall, Industry Roundtable on Dispute Resolution in Retail Investors Loss Cases, Toronto
- International Financial Ombudsman Conference, New York
- L'Union des consommateurs, Consumer advisor training session, Québec City
- Osgoode Hall, 2nd Annual Managing Internal and Regulatory Investigations Program
- Canadian Conference on Elder Law, Vancouver

We also made presentations on our service to individual firms in Ottawa, Vancouver and Toronto.