

# Management's Statement of Responsibility for Financial Reporting

Preparation of the consolidated financial statements accompanying this annual report and the presentation of all other information in the report is the responsibility of management. The consolidated financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and reflect management's best estimates and judgements. All other financial information in the report is consistent with that contained in the consolidated financial statements.

Management of the Company has established and maintains a system of internal control that provides reasonable assurance as to the integrity of the consolidated financial statements, the safeguarding of Company assets, and the prevention and detection of fraudulent financial reporting.

The Board of Directors, through its Audit Committee, oversees management in carrying out its responsibilities for financial reporting and systems of internal control. The Audit Committee, which is chaired by and composed solely of directors who are unrelated to, and independent of, the Company, meet regularly with financial management and external auditors to satisfy itself as to reliability and integrity of financial information and the safeguarding of assets. The Audit Committee reports its findings to the Board of Directors for consideration in approving the annual consolidated financial statements to be issued to shareholders. The external auditors have full and free access to the Audit Committee.



**Paul D. Sobey**  
President and  
Chief Executive Officer

June 29, 2006



**Paul V. Beesley**  
Executive Vice-President,  
Chief Financial Officer and Secretary

June 29, 2006

## Auditors' Report

To the Shareholders of Empire Company Limited

We have audited the consolidated balance sheets of Empire Company Limited as at May 6, 2006 and May 7, 2005, and the consolidated statements of earnings, retained earnings, and cash flows for the 52 week and 53 week fiscal years then ended, respectively. These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Company's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the consolidated financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall consolidated financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Company as at May 6, 2006 and May 7, 2005, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the fiscal years then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.



**Grant Thornton LLP**  
Chartered Accountants  
New Glasgow, Canada

June 15, 2006