Annual Report

Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction 2022-2023

Albertan

Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction, Government of Alberta Service Alberta and Red Tape
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Preface

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*. The Public Accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each ministry.

On October 24, 2022, the government announced new ministry structures. As such, some responsibilities of the former Ministry of Service Alberta and responsibilities of Treasury Board and Finance related to red tape reduction were transferred to the new Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction ministry. The 2022-23 Annual Report reflects the 2022-25 ministry business plans, the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan, as well as the ministry's activities and accomplishments during the 2022-23 fiscal year, which ended on March 31, 2023.

The Annual Report of the Government of Alberta contains Budget 2022 Key Results, the audited Consolidated Financial Statements and Performance Results, which compares actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's strategic plan.

This annual report of the Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction contains the Minister's Accountability Statement, the ministry's Financial Information and Results Analysis, and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the ministry business plan. This ministry annual report also includes other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*, as separate reports, to the extent that the ministry has anything to report.

All ministry annual reports should be considered along with the Government of Alberta Annual Report to provide a complete overview of government's commitment to openness, accountability, and fiscal transparency.

Minister's Accountability Statement

The ministry's annual report for the year ended March 31, 2023, was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at June 1, 2023 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in the preparation of this report.

[Original signed by]

Dale Nally

Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction

Message from the Minister



Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction has a mission to drive economic growth and innovation. The ministry is focused on optimizing program and service delivery, protecting Albertans and businesses in an increasingly complex business and consumer environment, and leading government in reducing red tape for Albertans and Alberta businesses.

In October 2022, the new Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction was formed by combining divisions from the former Ministry of Service Alberta with the Red Tape Reduction Division

from the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance. With this renewed focus, we continued working to make it easier for Albertans to access information, programs, and services from their government.

Some highlights from the past year include:

- Taking action to address the backlog in the Land Titles Office (LTO) by hiring and training new staff to process transactions. By the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2023), we reduced the turnaround time from the LTO backlog by 25 per cent and by 65 per cent as of June 2023.
- Reducing red tape to support economic growth and competitiveness. Alberta was again
 recognized as a leader in cutting red tape by the Canadian Federation of Independent
 Business (CFIB). The CFIB ranked Alberta number one among Canadian jurisdictions and
 awarded Alberta a grade of A- in its annual red tape report card. As of fiscal year-end,
 government red tape has been reduced by more than 30 per cent since 2019.
- Investigating 1,986 consumer complaints, resulting in 765 enforcement actions being taken.
- Supporting Albertans' right to access government information by processing more than 2,500 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) requests.
- Helping evacuees from Ukraine understand Alberta's rental market by providing information in Ukrainian and establishing a Ukrainian Help Line.

Looking ahead, the Government of Alberta plans to modernize its five registry systems to make them more efficient and responsive to users' needs, starting with Land Titles and Motor Vehicles. We will also continue to update the government's procurement systems to keep pace with current business practices and make the most of taxpayer dollars. Through it all, the ministry will support Alberta's economic growth by continuing to reduce red tape, while protecting consumers by ensuring fairness in the marketplace; delivering important services Albertans count on, like drivers'

Introduction

licences, licence plates, and birth certificates; and responding to access to information requests under the $FOIP\ Act$.

I encourage you to spend some time reading the annual report to learn more about our ministry and the work it carries out on behalf of Albertans.

[Original signed by]

Honourable Dale Nally Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction

Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction includes the Department of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction.

The executives of the individual entities within the ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the respective entities. Collectively, the executives ensure the ministry complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Ministry business plans, annual reports, performance results and the supporting management information are integral to the government's fiscal and strategic plan, annual report, quarterly reports, and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the accompanying ministry financial information and performance results for the ministry rests with the Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction. Under the direction of the Minister, I oversee the preparation of the ministry's annual report, which includes the financial information, performance results on all objectives and initiatives identified in the ministry business plan, and performance results for all ministry-supported commitments that were included in the 2022-25 Government of Alberta Strategic Plan. The financial information and performance results, out of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The financial information is prepared using the government's stated accounting policies, which are based on Canadian public sector accounting standards. The performance measures are prepared in accordance with the following criteria:

- Reliable Information used in applying performance measure methodologies agrees with the underlying source data for the current and prior years' results.
- Understandable the performance measure methodologies and results are presented clearly.
- Comparable the methodologies for performance measure preparation are applied consistently for the current and prior years' results.
- Complete outcomes, performance measures and related targets match those included in the ministry's Budget 2022.

As Deputy Minister, in addition to program responsibilities, I am responsible for the ministry's financial administration and reporting functions. The ministry maintains systems of financial management and internal control which give consideration to costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and properly recorded so as to maintain accountability of public money;
- provide information to manage and report on performance;

- safeguard the assets and properties of the province under ministry administration;
- provide Executive Council, the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction the information needed to fulfill their responsibilities; and
- facilitate preparation of ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*.

In fulfilling my responsibilities for the ministry, I have relied, as necessary, on the executives of the individual entities within the ministry.

[Original signed by]

Deputy Minister Stephanie Clarke

Deputy Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction

June 1, 2023

Results Analysis

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Ministry Overview

SERVICE ALBERTA AND RED TAPE REDUCTION (SARTR) has a strategic role within government to support Alberta's economic recovery by driving innovation, modernizing government, and fostering efficient delivery of government programs, services, and information. The ministry's focus is to:

- optimize and modernize the delivery of current programs and services to meet existing and emerging needs and to provide good value for taxpayers;
- protect Albertans and businesses in an increasingly complex and changing economic and social environment; and
- lead, coordinate, track, and report on red tape reduction efforts across the Government of Alberta to eliminate unnecessary regulatory burden on businesses and Albertans.

Ministry Outcomes

The 2022-25 Business Plan for the former Ministry of Service Alberta listed three outcomes. Due to the October 2022 government reorganization, these outcomes will be reported as detailed below.

The Ministry of Technology and Innovation will report on:

- **Outcome One:** Government is modernized
- Outcome Two: Data and information management is enhanced

The Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction will report on:

• **Outcome Three**: Consumers are protected and a competative business environment is preserved

Similarly, the 2022-25 Business Plan for the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance included the following outcome that will now be reported on by the Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction:

• **Outcome One:** A strong and resilient financial foundation that supports sustainable government services and demonstrates excellence in accountability, transparency and risk management

Organizational Structure

In October 2022, the new Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction was formed by combining some divisions from the former Ministry of Service Alberta and the Red Tape Reduction division from the Ministry of Treasury Board and Finance.

Consumer, Registry and Strategic Services

Consumer, Registry and Strategic Services (CRSS) protects consumers and preserves a competitive business environment by developing, administering, and enforcing consumer-related legislation. Through education and awareness initiatives, this division helps consumers and businesses understand their rights and responsibilities. In collaboration with registry agents across the province, the CRSS Division provides Albertans with registry-related services and information essential to their everyday lives. This division also offers centralized expertise to the department on all strategic policy and legislative initiatives, as well as coordinating the department-specific red tape reduction efforts.

Key Highlights

- To address the Land Titles Office (LTO) backlog, LTO hired and trained more than 100 new staff throughout 2022-23, who have been deployed to process transactions and reduce the turnaround time by 21 business days by fiscal year end for document processing (84 to 63 business days) and cut survey turnaround times by 26 days (from 55 to 29 business days).
- To provide much needed knowledge about landlord and tenant information to evacuees, the Information for Tenants publication was translated into Ukrainian.

Financial and Administrative Shared Services

Financial and Administrative Shared Services (FASS) is one of the first places that Albertans go to get information about the Government of Alberta (GoA). Millions of people connect with GoA contact centres operated by this division or the partners it supports in other ministries.

The division also provides important corporate services across government, including financial operations services, employee payroll and benefits administration, procurement of goods, Surplus Sales, a Resource Centre to provide leadership in procurement, vehicle fleet evergreening, multifunction device lease coordination, centralized print services, and the management of the province's inter-departmental mail network in nearly 100 communities.

Additionally, the division provides Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) services to government ministries and provides print and publication services through the King's Printer to Albertans.

Key Highlights

- In collaboration with Public Services and Procurement Canada, the division completed the implementation of the Federal Single Point of Access (Canada Buys), which publishes all Canadian public sector procurement opportunities that apply to the Canada-European Union: Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement by August 31, 2022. This single point of access enables suppliers across all jurisdictions to locate all applicable public sector opportunities via a single solution.
- GoA departments received over 2,500 FOIP requests between April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. Performance measures and metrics on FOIP timelines for public bodies and local public bodies are located in the FOIP Annual Report.

Red Tape Reduction, Audit and Investigations

The Red Tape Reduction, Audit and Investigations Division consists of the Red Tape Reduction (RTR) Branch and the Audit and Investigations Branch.

The RTR Branch leads the cross-government priority to identify, reduce, and eliminate red tape to support economic growth, innovation, and competitiveness. The branch serves a central leadership function by providing strategic support to ministries in identifying regulatory and administrative burden and advancing transformational initiatives that reduce red tape for Albertans and businesses, while ensuring the ongoing protection of public interests, including those related to consumer, environmental, health and safety protections, and fiscal accountability.

The Audit and Investigations Branch undertakes actions to protect Albertans and the integrity of government services. This includes conducting audits and inspections on behalf of delegated regulatory organizations and businesses licensed under consumer regulation, and examining alleged Criminal Code offences connected to violations of legislation. The branch also investigates contraventions of Alberta's consumer protection legislation and takes enforcement action according to the applicable legislation.

Key Highlights

- Alberta continued to be recognized as a top performer by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, a leading national advocate for small business that publishes an annual report card grading Canadian jurisdictions on their RTR performance. In 2023, Alberta was awarded a grade of A-, making it the top performer of any Canadian jurisdiction.
- In 2022-23, a total of 3,947 consumer allegations were received, 1,986 were opened for investigation, and a total of 765 enforcement actions were taken by the Consumer Investigations Unit within the Audit and Investigations Branch.

Strategic Planning and Financial Services

Strategic Planning and Financial Services leads Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction in planning and performance measurement, budgeting, forecasting, and financial reporting. The branch ensures the ministry's financial resource requirements are met by providing professional financial advice and services. Typical activities include:

- coordinating the ministry's financial budgeting and forecasting process;
- developing financial policy, monitoring compliance, and implementing financial management best practices;
- developing the ministry's strategic plans, including the business plan and enterprise risk management framework; and
- developing the ministry's financial reports, including the preparation of the ministry's financial information.

Discussion and Analysis of Results

Actions that support the priorities of the Government of Alberta Strategic Plan

Priority One:

Enhancing government services now and for the future

Objective Seven: Building Better Communities

Detailed reporting found on pages 11 and 21 (Land Titles Backlog)

Priority Two:

Growing Alberta's economy

Objective Three: Reducing red tape

Detailed reporting found on pages 14-17 and 19 (Red Tape Reduction)

Red Tape Reduction

The Ministry of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction remains committed to regulatory approaches and program delivery that reduces unnecessary government oversight and emphasizes outcomes to improve access to government services, attract investment, support innovation and competitiveness, and grow Alberta businesses. Details on red tape reduction achievements can be found under Outcome One, Key Objectives 1.2 (Pages 14-17) and Outcome Three, Key Objective 3.2 (Page 19).

Content related to the Service Alberta Business Plan 2022-25

Outcome One: Government is modernized

In 2022-23, Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction accomplished several key objectives directed toward achieving this outcome.

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Based on best practices of global digital leaders, develop and implement a digital strategy that ensures all new systems are digital by default and improve Albertans' access to government services.
 - The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on the Key Objective.
- 1.2 Reduce red tape, and associated time and financial costs of compliance to make it easier for individuals and businesses to operate in Alberta.
 - The Motor Vehicles and Registries Administration Branch achieved a total reduction of 25.7 percent in red tape related to Motor Vehicles policies. Savings to registry agents due to red tape reduction changes are estimated at \$339,000 annually in operational costs, which also saved Albertans time when at a registry agent.
 - Through amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, as part of the *Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act* 2022, the GoA has modernized legislation to provide landlords with the ability to return security deposits and other documentation electronically to tenants, using modern methods such as e-transfer. Previously, the options for returning security deposits to tenants were limited to in-person delivery or registered mail, which cost time and money for rental companies and smaller private property owners.
- 1.3 Modernize the government's technology infrastructure, business applications and internal government services to generate efficiencies and improve productivity through innovation.
 - The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Key Objective.

Forward Looking Information

Going forward, the ministry will focus on completing the following in support of Outcome One:

• Implement a five-year plan to centralize the purchasing of common goods and services. In 2022-23, a business case was completed, which examined the cost savings of modernizing government procurement practices by adopting a hybrid-centralized procurement model, using a category management approach. The business case recommendation includes a five-year implementation plan for centralizing purchasing for common goods and services.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

Over the next four years \$390 million (\$150 million planned investment in 2022-23) will be invested to improve broadband services across the province and ensure that rural, remote, and Indigenous communities are included in the province's economic recovery.

• The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this initiative.

In 2022-23, \$10.1 million was allocated for registry transformation projects to modernize online services delivery for land, personal property, corporate, vital events, and motor vehicle registries. This includes enabling online renewals for driver's licenses and identification (ID) cards and enabling vital event certificate and document ordering processes. Highlights include:

- In 2022-23, the ministry spent \$683,000 to complete implementation of online driver's license and ID card renewals.
- Planning activities, costing \$3.92 million for Motor Vehicles and \$1.85 million for Land Titles, commenced for service modernization, including the replacement of both registry systems.
- The ministry spent \$972,000 to enable faster processing and electronic notifications for the Foreign Ownership of Land Administration registration tracking system.

In 2022-23, \$1.4 million was utilized by the RTR Branch to lead the government's efforts to reduce regulatory burden and red tape.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 1.a: Number of services released on modern digital platforms including MyAlberta eServices

• The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Performance Measure.

Content related to the Treasury Board and Finance Business Plan 2022-25

Outcome One: A strong and resilient financial foundation that supports sustainable government services and demonstrates excellence in accountability, transparency and risk management

In 2022-23, the ministry accomplished several key objectives directed toward achieving this outcome.

Key Objectives

1.2 Lead government's red tape reduction efforts to remove unnecessary regulatory and administrative burdens on Albertans and businesses, supporting economic recovery by reducing costs for business, eliminating regulatory barriers for job creators, attracting investment, and improving service delivery to Albertans.

The ministry continued to work closely with other ministries to develop strategies to reduce red tape. This included the development of Action Plans that identified the ongoing actions and mitigation approaches, and associated timelines, for further reducing regulatory requirements. The majority of ministries have now reached or surpassed a 33 percent reduction.

Industry-driven Engagement Process

The ministry continued to lead an industry-driven stakeholder engagement process informed by nine Red Tape Reduction Industry Panels that include representation from across Alberta's key sectors: oil and gas; chemical manufacturing; forestry; tourism and hospitality; agriculture, food

and bio-industrial; non-profit; small business; and industrial manufacturing. Collectively, the panels have submitted over 450 recommendations, almost 300 of which have been addressed, including over 50 in 2022-23 alone.

In addition to regular meetings with each panel throughout 2022-23, government held additional roundtable discussions in summer 2022 with emerging sectors that included aerospace, logistics, pharmaceuticals, and technology. These meetings have ensured fresh perspectives and ongoing recommendations to reduce red tape, while informing targeted action to remove the regulatory barriers that hinder business development and government's client service delivery in Alberta.

Public Red Tape Reduction Submissions

In 2021-22, SARTR enhanced its Cutting Red Tape website to bring greater prominence to the dedicated portal that enables the public to submit their suggestions to reduce red tape directly to government at alberta.ca/cutredtape.

In 2022-23, a number of recommendations from the public informed key initiatives implemented by government to reduce red tape, including the expansion of online registry services. This initiative addressed growing concern from Albertans that the requirement to travel to a registry for routine services, such as renewing driver's licences and obtaining vehicle registration certificates, was time consuming and inefficient.

Through changes implemented by SARTR, many personal services (including fine payments and birth certificates) and business services (including notary public renewals and commercial carrier permit applications) are now accessible through a centralized web portal. This improved access is particularly important for Albertans who live in rural areas that may not be able to easily access these services in person. It is estimated these changes will also save government \$2.7 million per year and more than 110,000 hours in administrative time, which can be better allocated to program and service delivery on Alberta's front lines.

Estimating the Cost of Regulatory Compliance

Ministries are required to use a regulatory cost estimation tool when submitting policy proposals to government for decision. This ensures that regulatory compliance cost analysis is included in the policy development and approval process, allowing government to consider the financial impact of policy changes on businesses and Albertans as part of its decision-making. The RTR Branch continues to support ministries in developing these analyses through ongoing training and guidance.

In addition, in 2022-23 the ministry quantified the savings generated by the most impactful RTR initiatives implemented to date. Altogether, RTR has saved Albertans an estimated \$2.6 billion since 2019.

Red Tape Reduction Legislation

SARTR continued to lead the development of RTR legislation to ensure an ongoing mechanism for government ministries to bring forward important legislative changes to reduce red tape and support job creators, enable economic growth, and improve the delivery of government services.

The seven RTR bills passed by government since 2019 have amended over 70 Acts from across 20 ministries, resulting in the elimination of over 4,000 unnecessary regulatory requirements while continuing to maintain important health, safety, and environmental protections for Albertans.

In 2022-23, two RTR bills were passed that amended 25 pieces of legislation to support these outcomes:

- Bill 9, the *Red Tape Reduction Implementation Act*, 2023 received royal assent on March 28, 2023. Bill 9 amended 14 pieces of legislation across nine different ministries to expedite access to compensation benefits, improve legislative and regulatory clarity for Alberta business and industry, and improve communication across government and with Albertans through digital innovation.
- Bill 21, the *Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act*, 2022 received royal assent on May 31, 2022. Bill 21 amended 15 pieces of legislation across nine different ministries, supporting economic development for municipalities, continuing to improve service delivery through digital solutions and speeding up approvals.

Forward Looking Information

Going forward, the ministry will focus on completing the following in support of Outcome One:

 Improve government's permit approval process by measuring, benchmarking, and ultimately reducing wait times for permit approvals across government.

Performance Measure 1.a: One-third red tape reduction by 2022-23

Description

This measure tracks the percentage of red tape reduction in the Government of Alberta.

Results and Analysis

In 2022-23, the GoA achieved red tape reduction of 31.5 percent.

One-third red tape reduction by 2022-23.

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Red Tape Reduced (%)	15.7%	25.3%	31.5%

Source: Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction, Red Tape Reduction Audit and Investigations Division

As of March 2023, government has achieved a 31.5 percent net reduction in red tape since May 1, 2019, which also represents an elimination of over 39 percent of inherited regulatory requirements that were in place when this initiative started. With an additional 6.2 percent reduction achieved in this last fiscal year, government expects to reach a 33 percent reduction within the 2023 calendar year.

Content related to the Service Alberta Business Plan 2022-25

Outcome Two: Data and information management is enhanced

The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Outcome.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Modernize the way government's data and information is managed, which includes the use of enhanced data analytics, and by introducing common and consistent ways of classification, organization, and access.
 - The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Key Objective.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

In 2022-23, \$5.4 million is targeted to modernize government's information management tools, including implementation of Microsoft 365 and Enterprise Content Management systems, which will enhance the way government manages information.

• The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Initiative.

In 2022-23, \$4.5 million is allocated to initiate implementation of the new Data Strategy; the GoA's vision of realizing the full potential of Alberta's data for the benefit of Albertans, while respecting privacy.

• The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Initiative.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 2.a: Total number of visits to the Open Government Portal

The ministry of Technology and Innovation is reporting on this Performance Measure.

Content related to the Service Alberta Business Plan 2022-25

Outcome Three: Consumers are protected and a competitive business environment is preserved

In 2022-23, the ministry completed several objectives to enhance consumer protection and to preserve a competitive business environment.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Improve consumer protection through education, inspections, investigations, enforcement actions and effective legislation.
 - SARTR continues to monitor the marketplace to evaluate trends and make recommendations to ensure consumers are protected. The Consumer Investigations Unit received 28 complaints in 2022 that were specific to price gouging (grossly overcharging for goods or services) within the marketplace, 11 of which were opened as investigations,

which is a significant drop from the 2020/2021 complaint numbers. The ministry is continuing to monitor concerns of price gouging, and other unfair practices, to ensure that Albertans are not unfairly impacted.

- SARTR paid out three substantial bond claims, totaling \$66,752, to consumers who were financially harmed by companies who breached the *Consumer Protection Act*.
- To help educate the public on Alberta's consumer protections, the ministry conducted virtual and in-person presentations and education sessions across Alberta at trade shows, as well as outreach to more than 30 RCMP detachments and police division offices. Another 25 sessions or presentations were provided to landlords, consumers, and other stakeholders. More than 3,800 officers and consumers were reached through the department's pro-active messaging and outreach in this last fiscal year. The ministry continues to provide education and awareness materials related to renting, condominium, and general consumer protection and these are publicly available through Alberta.ca.

3.2 Balance effective industry regulation and protection of consumer interests while enhancing governance and reducing unnecessary red tape.

- SARTR has been deliberate in balancing reductions to its regulatory requirement count and removing unnecessary red tape with the ministry's mandate to protect consumers, enable businesses to compete on a level playing field, and maintain public-facing operations and service delivery. This has resulted in noticeable improvements for Albertans and stakeholders. Some key major initiatives for the past fiscal year include:
 - Improvements to the Business Corporations Act to simplify processes, remove redundant or outdated requirements, update provisions to match modern communication methods, and provide flexibility in the preparation of financial statements and other documents. This was proclaimed into force on May 31, 2022.
 - Changes to the Cooperatives Act and regulation, made through the Red Tape Reduction Statutes Amendment Act, 2022, to incent cooperatives to locate in Alberta. Changes include revising residency requirements to allow cooperatives to choose the most qualified candidates, regardless of where they live, while still ensuring local representation; removing outdated, redundant, or overly prescriptive requirements; and enabling virtual meetings and electronic voting, which saves organizations time and money while harmonizing requirements with other provincial and federal corporate registry legislation.
 - Amendments to the Real Estate Ministerial Regulation to enhance ministerial oversight of the new Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA) while RECA's governance structure continues to stabilize.

3.3 Improve access to timely and efficient consumer dispute resolutions.

- The ministry continued to work toward developing options for a future condominium dispute resolution tribunal.
- The ministry continued to support the ongoing administration of appeal panels to ensure a fair process for appeals of ministry and agency issued penalties. This included a refreshing of the roster of individuals that is drawn upon to establish appeal panels when and where they are required, maintaining efficient administration to meet legislative timelines.

Department staff undertook a comprehensive recruitment process to ensure that there is a pool of qualified individuals in place to meet this need.

3.4 Ensure registry services are run in an efficient and effective manner.

- In 2022, the ability for Albertans to renew their driver's license or ID card was added as a new online registry service, and the department added functionality to allow Albertans with joint vehicle registrations to renew their vehicle registrations online.
- The ministry added the ability for registry agents to complete in-person applications for Affordability Payments, giving Albertans the option to apply in-person.
- A review of the Motor Vehicle Manual resulted in the following improvements:
 - When an Albertan loses their knowledge test permit, which shows they passed a knowledge test, they are no longer required to purchase a new knowledge test permit to replace it.
 - Registry agents are permitted to conduct eligibility checks for road tests over the phone.
 - Albertans are no longer required to surrender their previously issued Alberta driver's license/ID card. Previously, Albertans were required to surrender their Alberta driver's license or ID card when renewing their card or requesting an update to the information on the card. Now, Albertans may retain their previously issued card until they receive their new one in the mail.
 - O When registering a vehicle, non-original vehicle ownership documents (such as a bill of sale or lease agreement) are now accepted, where before the document had to be an original. In addition, government now accepts ownership documents that have electronic or digital signatures, where previously the signature had to be wet ink (or carbon copy). This change removes red tape and enables a faster, more efficient, and modernized process for Albertans and businesses when selling vehicles and obtaining their vehicle registration.
 - The GoA won two Service Awards from the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators: a regional award and an international award for "Improvement Through Efficiencies".

Forward Looking Information

Going forward, the ministry will focus on completing the following initiatives in support of desired Outcome Three:

- Continue to modernize legislation that protects consumers in order to address emerging issues and reflect how consumers engage with the marketplace in today's environment.
- Invest \$100 million over three years to modernize the outdated and aging registry systems, including land titles, motor vehicles, corporate, personal property, and vital events registries, with a particular focus on replacing land titles and motor vehicles systems. This work will include changes to legislation and policies to support a digital first registry.

 Work with the Ministries of Energy and Minerals, and Transportation and Economic Corridors to explore the private sector's ability to advance hydrogen fueling station infrastructure in Alberta. SARTR will also work with other public sector entities to advance hydrogen as a fuel source in the transportation sector including the GoA's vehicle fleet.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

In 2022-23, \$82,000 of existing funds were used to implement the final pieces of a prompt payment system, which will streamline payments and provide quick dispute resolution processes for the construction industry.

• The GoA protected jobs in the construction sector by bringing its prompt payment legislation into force in August 2022. Payment timelines for Alberta's construction industry, along with timelines for filing liens and rules for adjudication in the event of a payment dispute, are outlined in the *Prompt Payment and Construction Lien Act*, the Prompt Payment and Adjudication Regulation, and the Prompt Payment and Construction Lien Forms Regulation.

In 2022-23, \$9.1 million was spent to improve the Land Titles service model to reduce application backlogs.

- The LTO was able to hire and train 100 new staff to help process transactions to reduce the application backlogs. Training was reduced from 18 months to three months on high volume transaction types.
- The LTO examined other sources of innovation to improve processing times. This includes
 piloting changes such as workload redistribution when received in the mailroom, working
 with survey stakeholders to increase submission information on large subdivision packages
 to speed up processing, and working with the legal community to reduce error rates and
 improve document submission quality.
- It is expected that the backlog will continue to decline throughout this fiscal year, returning to normal processing times of 10-12 business days by the end of calendar 2023.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure 3.a: Percentage of investigations into alleged consumer protection legislation violations completed within established timelines

Description

This measure is based on the percentage of files completed by the Consumer Investigation Unit within six months.

Results and Analysis

In 2022-23, 87 percent of investigation into alleged consumer protection legislation violations were completed within established timelines.

Percentage of investigations into alleged consumer protection legislation violations completed within established timelines (87% target)

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Percentage Completed	85%	86%	87%

Source: Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction, Red Tape Reduction, Audit, and Investigations Division

The result met the target of 87 percent and continues to increase year after year. Consumers are better protected when complaint investigations are completed within established timelines as this results in earlier resolution and allows for any necessary enforcement action to occur more quickly.

Performance Measure 3.b: Percentage of urgent tenancy dispute resolutions completed within established timelines

Description

This measure tracks the percentage of urgent Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution Service (RTDRS) applications heard within 15 business days after the application is filed.

Results and Analysis

In 2022-23, 57 percent of RTDRS urgent applications were heard within the established timelines of 15 business days.

Percentage of urgent tenancy dispute resolutions completed within established timelines (85% target)

Year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Percentage Completed	94%	33%	57%

Source: Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction, Consumer, Registry and Strategic Services Division

Due to the increase in applications in 2021-22 and 2022-23, the target of 85 percent was not met. Significant gains were made over the second half of the year, which saw the average number of days to hear an urgent matter drop from 17 business days in 2021-22 to 13 business days for 2022-23. By March 2023, the average number of days had been reduced to six business days. The ministry will continue to track the results and adjust actions as required.

Performance Measure and Indicator Methodology

Performance Measure 1.a: Number of services available through MyAlberta eServices (Service Alberta Business Plan 2022-25)

The number of services available through MyAlberta eServices is calculated by tracking the cumulative number of completed on-boarding projects consisting of a product (or products) that can be obtained using MyAlberta eServices. Some projects consist of only one product, while other projects may consist of a few different iterations of the same product, or even a wide range of products (e.g., apparel/merchandise).

Performance Measure 1.a: One-third red tape reduction by 2022-23 (Treasury Board and Finance Business Plan 2022-25)

A regulatory requirement is any action that a citizen, business, or government must take to access government services or programs, carry out business, or pursue legislated privileges. These requirements can be seen in instances where stakeholders have the obligation to do something as referenced in various types of regulatory instruments: statutes, regulations, policies, and forms. Regulatory requirements are typically identified by words such as "shall," "must," or "required."

A baseline count of regulatory requirements in government's statutes, regulations, policies, and forms, as of May 1, 2019, was completed in February 2020 by all ministries in accordance with the methodology and guidelines developed by Red Tape Reduction Audit and Investigation. As regulatory instruments are revised, added, or repealed, ministries are required to update their counts of regulatory requirements by reporting any resulting changes in the number of regulatory requirements to Red Tape Reduction Audit and Investigation.

Performance Measure 3.a: Percentage of investigations into alleged consumer protection legislation violations completed within established timelines (Service Alberta Business Plan 2022-25)

The measure is based on the percentage of Consumer Investigations Unit investigations completed within six months. The method to calculate is the date the file is opened for investigation and the date it is closed.

Performance Measure 3.b: Percentage of urgent tenancy dispute resolutions completed within established timelines (Service Alberta Business Plan 2022-25)

The measure is based on the percentage of urgent RTDRS applications heard within 15 business days of filing.

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Ministry Financial Highlights

Statement of Revenues and Expenses (unaudited)

End of the year March 31, 2023

	2023		2022	Chan	ge from
	Budget	Actual	Actual	Budget	2022 Actual
			(Restated)		
	Ir	thousand	s		
Revenues					
Fees and Licences	705,865	703,848	679,070	(2,017)	24,778
Other Revenue	30,136	34,739	34,144	4,603	595
Ministry Total	736,001	738,587	713,214	2,586	25,373
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(28,511)	(29,410)	(29,033)	(899)	(377)
Adjusted Ministry Total	707,490	709,177	684,181	1,687	24,996
Expenses - directly incurred					
Program					
Ministry Support Services	4,542	4,571	4,426	29	145
Consumer and Registry Services	57,294	59,618	54,433	2,324	5,185
Red Tape Reduction	1,607	1,408	1,165	(199)	243
Financial and Admin Shared Services	76,670	73,761	74,718	(2,909)	(957)
Ministry Total	140,113	139,358	134,742	(755)	4,616
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(28,515)	(29,410)	(28,936)	(895)	(474)
Adjusted Ministry Total	111,598	109,948	105,806	(1,650)	4,142
				-	
Annual Surplus	595,892	599,229	578,375	3,337	20,854

Revenue and Expense Highlights

Revenues

- Revenues totaled \$738.6 million in 2022-23, which is an increase of \$25.4 million from 2021-22. The largest variance was in the fees and licences category.
- Revenues from fees and licences totaled \$703.8 million and includes fees collected for motor vehicles, land titles, corporate registry, vital events, and personal property registration services. This amount represents an increase of \$24.8 million from 2021-22, owing to an increase in the volume of land title registrations as well as an increase in commercial/passenger vehicles, operator's licences, and motor vehicle driver abstracts transactions.
- Other revenue includes costs recovered for providing shared services to other ministries and external entities. Overall, other revenues totaled \$34.7 million in 2022-23, which represents an increase of \$0.6 million from prior year.

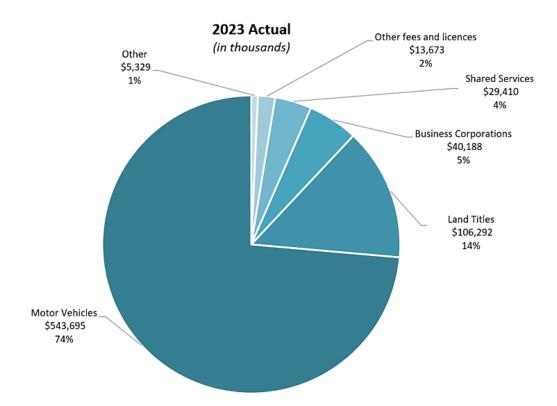
Expenses

- Ministry Expenses were \$0.76 million lower than the budgeted amount in 2022-23. This is mainly attributed to:
 - A \$2.3 million additional investment into registries modernization aimed at reducing processing times and eliminating the backlog in Land Titles registrations. This was offset by a \$2.9 million decrease in Financial and Admin Shared Services due to a delay in implementing the category management initiative, a modern procurement approach to streamlining processes and reducing administrative burden for businesses that want to work with the government.
- Expenses in 2022-23 totaled \$139.4 million, reflecting an increase of \$4.6 million from 2021-22 actuals. This can mainly be attributed to:
 - Increased investment in modernizing registry services for Albertans, to reduce processing times and eliminate backlogs. Alberta experienced a significant increase in real estate market activity since 2021, leading to an increased demand for land title registration documents. To ensure registry services were well equipped to manage this increase in demand for registry services, there was an additional investment of \$ 5.2 million.

Breakdown of Revenues (unaudited)

	20	2022	
	Budget	Actual	Actual
			(Restated)
		In thousands	
Revenues			
Fees and licences			
Land Titles	113,990	106,292	90,968
Motor Vehicles	542,560	543,695	537,051
Business Corporations	36,980	40,188	37,860
Other fees and licences	12,335	13,673	13,191
	705,865	703,848	679,070
Other revenue			
Shared Services	28,511	29,410	29,033
Other	1,625	5,329	5,111
	30,136	34,739	34,144
	736,001	738,587	713,214

Breakdown of Revenues (unaudited)



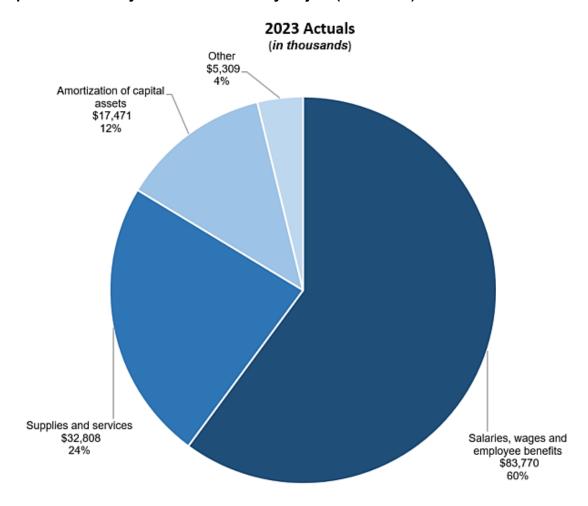
In 2022-23, Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction collected \$738.6 million in revenue:

- 96 per cent (\$709.1 million) of the revenue was generated from sources external to the Government of Alberta. \$703.8 million of the revenue primarily relates to fees and licenses collected from the five major registries (motor vehicles, land titles, business corporations, personal property and vital events).
 - The Ministry utilizes a network of 214 agents, located throughout the province, to deliver registry services, involving 8.7 million transactions. Transactions delivered by the registry agent network account for 44 per cent of the total registry transactions for 2022-23.
 - The amount of revenue collected is influenced by transaction volumes, which in turn are influenced by various factors such as the economic health of the province and demographic changes.
- \$5.3 million in other revenue is composed of:
 - \$1 million in revenue collected for surplus sales;
 - \$1.7 million in capital gains on asset sales;
 - \$0.86 million in revenue collected from external parties;
 - \$1.4 million in Alberta King's Printer sales.
- The remaining four per cent (\$29.4 million) was generated from sources internal to the government, including the cost of providing shared services.

Expenses – Directly Incurred Detailed by Object (unaudited)

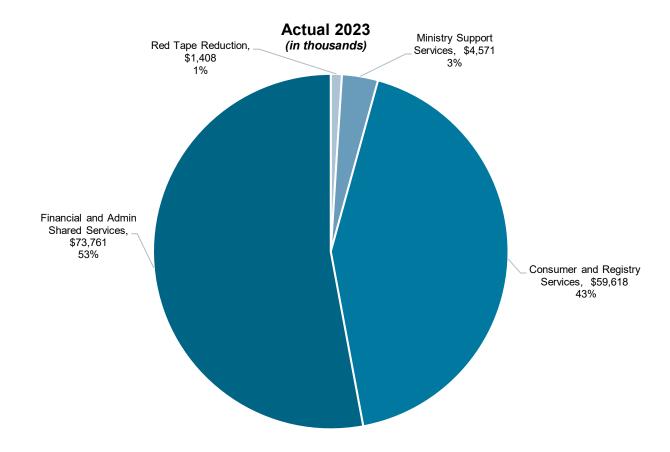
	2023			2022	
	Budget Ad		Actual		Actual
				(Restated)	
			In thousands		
Salaries, wages and employee benefits	\$	82,742	\$ 83,770	\$	84,336
Supplies and services		33,138	32,808		31,388
Amortization of capital assets		18,100	17,471		14,144
Other		6,133	5,309		4,874
	\$	140,113	\$139,358	\$	134,742





- Salaries and wages were the Ministry's largest operating expense at \$83.8 million, representing 76 per cent of the total expense and were primarily incurred in the provision of shared services to government ministries.
- Supplies and services are \$32.8 million of the total expense out of which \$29.4 million is funded by revenues received from ministries for mail services, print services, fleet management and imaging services.
- Amortization totaled \$17.5 million and accounted for 16 per cent of the Ministry's operating
 expense. Amortization is a non-cash expense representing the depletion or use of a capital
 asset. It is a proxy for the capital investment required to maintain and replenish assets
 owned by Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction. These assets are used to deliver the
 department's programs and the programs of other ministries, through shared services.
- Other expenses of \$5.3 million represent the remainder of the Ministry's expenses, which
 includes the cost of postage, consumption of supplies inventories, and valuation
 adjustments.

Expenses by Program (unaudited)



- \$73.8 million is for Financial and Admin Shared Services, of which \$29.4 million is funded by revenues received from ministries for mail services, print services, fleet management and imaging services.
- \$59.6 million is for Consumer and Registry Service, which includes Consumer Awareness and Advocacy, Land Titles, Motor Vehicles, Other Registry Services, and Registries Modernization.
- \$4.6 million is for Ministry Support Services and \$1.4 million is for Red Tape Reduction.

Supplemental Financial Information

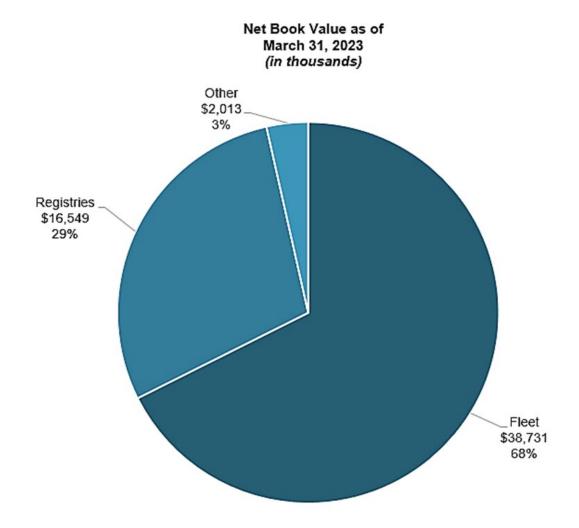
Tangible Capital Assets (unaudited)

		2023 In thousands					(F	2022 Restated)
	Eq	uipment ⁽¹⁾	На	Computer rdware and Software		Total		Total
Estimated Useful Life	,	3-25 yrs		3-15 yrs				
Historical cost (2)								
Beginning of year	\$	146,397	\$	97,413	\$	243,810	\$	242,551
Additions		12,682		9,910		22,592		11,000
Transfers to/from Departments		-		-		-		423
Adjustments		(24)		24		-		-
Disposals including								
write-downs		(8,385)		(5)		(8,390)		(10,164)
	\$	150,670	\$	107,342	\$	258,012	\$	243,810
Accumulated amortization								
Beginning of year	\$	104,129	\$	86,613	\$	190,742	\$	186,119
Amortization expense		14,024		3,448		17,471		14,144
Transfers to/from Departments		-		-		-		327
Disposals including								
write-downs		(7,495)		-		(7,495)		(9,848)
	\$	110,658	\$	90,061	\$	200,719	\$	190,742
Net book value at March 31, 2023	\$	40,013	\$	17,281	\$	57,293		
Net book value at March 31, 2022	\$	42,268	\$	10,800			\$	53,068

⁽¹⁾ Equipment is mostly composed of Government fleet vehicles.

⁽²⁾ Historical cost includes assets under construction at March 31, 2023 totalling \$20,755 comprised of: equipment \$7,820 and computer hardware and software \$12,935.

Tangible Capital Assets (unaudited)



Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction's \$57.3 million tangible capital assets are comprised of:

- The Government's vehicle fleet, valued at \$38.7 million and includes over 3,600 vehicles;
- Registry application systems valued at \$16.5 million, which enable the delivery of registry related services and information essential to the lives of Albertans; and
- Other assets worth \$2 million that support the delivery of a range of administrative, business and financial services to other departments, enabling the government to function as one coherent enterprise.

Other Financial Information

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Statement of Remissions, Compromises, Write-offs (unaudited) Department of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction Year Ended March 31, 2023 In thousands

The following statement has been prepared pursuant to Section 23 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

During 2022-23, 23 Motor Vehicle accounts receivable totaling \$6 were written off.

Statement of Credit or Recovery (unaudited)

Department of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction

Year Ended March 31, 2023

In thousands

The following has been prepared pursuant to Section 24(3) of the Financial Administration Act.

	Authorized Spending I		Revenue Recognized		(Shortfall)/ Excess (6)				
EXPENSE AMOUNTS Shared Services (1)	\$	17,250	\$	16,364	\$	(886)			
Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution (2)		777		1,003		226			
Specialty Licence Plates ⁽³⁾ Registry Data Information ⁽⁴⁾		500 50		531 -	\$	31 (50)			
Credit or Recovery (Shortfall)	\$	18,577	\$	17,898	\$	(679)			
FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS FUNDED BY CREDIT OR RECOVERY Shared Services (5) \$ 4,200 \$ 2,981 \$ (1,219)									
Credit or Recovery (Shortfall)	\$	4,200	\$	2,981	\$	(1,219)			

- (1) The Ministry receives revenue to recover the cost of providing standardized shared services.
- (2) The Residential Tenancy Dispute Resolution service offers landlords and tenants an alternative means of resolving disputes outside of court. The service is designed to be faster, less formal and less expensive than the courts.
- (3) Fee collected for specialty licence plates that allows Albertans to show their support for charitable organizations.
- (4) The provision of special reports and bulk data transfer of registry data information is recovered through third party agreements.
- (5) The Ministry receives revenue to replenish inventory for mail services.
- (6) Shortfall is deducted from current year's authorized spending.

Lapse/Encumbrance (unaudited)

Department of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction

Year Ended March 31, 2023

In thousands

	Voted Estimate	Supplementary Estimate	Adjustments	Adjusted Voted Estimate	Voted Actuals	Over Expended (Unexpended)	
EXPENSE VOTE BY PROGRAM							
Program 1 Ministry Support Services 1.1 Minister's Office 1.2 Deputy Minister's Office 1.3 Corporate Services	\$ 746 761 2,993	\$ - - 69	\$ - - -	\$ 746 761 3,062	\$ 681 780 3,010	\$ (65) 19 (52)	
·	4.500	69		4.569	4.471	(98)	
Program 2 Consumer and Registry Services 2.1 Consumer Awareness and Advocacy 2.2 Land Titles 2.3 Motor Vehicles 2.4 Other Registry Services	14,498 18,023 15,105 6,950	2,000		16,498 18,023 15,105 6,950	18,344 15,576 17,300 5,669	1,846 (2,447) 2,195 (1,281)	
	54,576	2,000	-	56,576	56,888	312	
Program 3 Red Tape Reduction	1,607	-	-	1,607	1,440	(167)	
Program 4 Financial and Administrative Shared Services							
4.1 Procurement and Administration Services	30,676	2,000	3,000	35,676	33,281	(2,395)	
4.2 Financial and Employee Services 4.3 FOIP & King's Printer	13,294 11,268	-	-	13,294 11,268	14,122 10,199	828 (1,069)	
	55,238	2,000	3,000	60,238	57,602	(2,636)	
Total Credit or Recovery Shortfall	115,921	4,069	3,000 (679)	122,990 (679)	120,401	(2,589)	
(Lapse)/Encumbrance	\$ 115,921	\$ 4,069	\$ 2,321	\$ 122,311	\$ 120,401	\$ (1,910) \$ (1,910)	
CAPITAL INVESTMENT VOTE BY PROGRAM							
Program 2 Consumer and Registry Services	\$ -	\$ 18,623	\$ -	\$ 18,623	\$ 9,974	\$ (8,649)	
Program 4 Financial and Administrative Shared Services	12,765	1,488	-	14,253	12,618	(1,635)	
Total	12,765	20,111		32,876	22,592	(10,284)	
(Lapse)/Encumbrance	\$ 12,765	\$ 20,111	\$ -	\$ 32,876		\$ (10,284) \$ (10,284)	
					=	(11,21)	
Program 4 Financial and Administrative Shared Services							
4.1 Procurement and Administration Services	\$ 5,500	\$ -	\$ (149)	\$ 5,351	\$ 4,067	\$ (1,284)	
Total Credit or Recovery Shortfall	5,500	-	(149) (1,219)	5,351 (1,219)	4,067	(1,284) 1,219	
·	\$ 5,500				\$ 4,067	\$ (65)	
(Lapse)/Encumbrance						\$ (65)	

Continued...

Lapse/Encumbrance (unaudited) - Continued

- (1) As per "Expense Vote by Program," "Capital Investment Vote by Program" and "Financial Transaction Vote by Program" pages 195 and 196 of 2022-23 Government Estimates.
- (2) Adjustments include encumbrances, capital carry over amounts, transfers between votes, credit or recovery increases approved by Treasury Board and credit or recovery shortfalls. An encumbrance is incurred when, on a vote by vote basis, the total of actual disbursements in the prior year exceed the total adjusted estimate. All calculated encumbrances from the prior year are reflected as an adjustment to reduce the corresponding voted estimate in the current year.
 - Adjustments also include supply vote transfers for "Contingency" as approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the direction of the Minister of Finance. The Contingency supply vote consists of a provisional funding authority transferable to any ministry. Upon approval by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance may either spend or transfer all or a portion of this supply vote to another minister for public emergencies, disasters or unanticipated costs.
- (3) Actuals exclude non-voted amounts as no cash disbursement is required (non-cash amounts), or because the Legislative Assembly has already provided the funding authority pursuant to a statute other than an appropriation act. Non-cash amounts (such as amortization, valuation adjustments, and other provisions are excluded as these amounts do not require any expenditure or payment of public money. Year-end expense accruals & payables which will immediately require a cash outlay (payment of public money) to settle or otherwise extinguish the liabilities are included in Actuals.

Payments Based on Agreements (unaudited) Department of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction Year Ended March 31, 2023 In thousands

The ministry has entered into agreements with Service Canada, Statistics Canada, and the Canada Revenue Agency for the sharing of vital event data between federal and provincial organizations. The ministry has also entered into agreements with Employment and Social Development Canada, Service Canada, and the Canada Revenue Agency for printing and collating costs of vital event information.

Costs based on these agreements are incurred by the ministry under the authority in Section 25 of the *Financial Administration Act*. Accounts payable includes \$42 (2022: \$46) relating to payments based on agreements. Amounts paid based on these agreements total \$569 (2022: \$185).

Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act Year Ended March 31, 2023

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* reads:

- 32(1) Every chief officer must prepare a report annually on all disclosures that have been made to the designated officer of the department, public entity or office of the Legislature for which the chief officer is responsible.
 - (2) The report under subsection (1) must include the following information:
 - (a) the number of disclosures received by the designated officer, the number of disclosures acted on and the number of disclosures not acted on by the designated officer;
 - (b) the number of investigations commenced by the designated officer as a result of disclosures;
 - (c) in the case of an investigation that results in a finding of wrongdoing, a description of the wrongdoing and any recommendations made or corrective measures taken in relation to the wrongdoing or the reasons why no corrective measure was taken.
 - (3) The report under subsection (1) must be included in the annual report of the department, public entity or office of the Legislature if the annual report is made publicly available.

There were no disclosures of wrongdoing filed with the Public Interest Disclosure Office for Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023.