

Alberta Human Resources and Employment

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# annual report

1999 | 2000

the people & workplace department



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## Preface

### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS 1999 - 2000

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Government Accountability Act*. The Public Accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each of the 18 Ministries.

The annual report of the Government of Alberta is released in June and contains the Provincial Treasurer's accountability statement, the consolidated financial statements of the Province and a comparison of the actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's business plan, including the Measuring Up report.

**This annual report of the Ministry of Alberta Human Resources and Employment contains the Minister's accountability statement, the audited financial statements of the ministry and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the ministry business plan. This Ministry annual report also includes**

- The financial statements of entities making up the ministry including the department of Alberta Human Resources and Employment
- Other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Government Accountability Act*, either as separate reports or as part of financial statements, to the extent that the ministry has anything to report
- Additional information relating to Alberta Labour Relations Board, Personnel Administration Office, and Workers' Compensation Board

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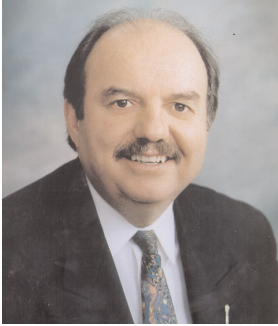
## Minister's Accountability Statement

The Ministry's annual report for the year ended March 31, 2000 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at June, 30, 2000, with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware, have been considered in the preparation of this report.



Clint Dunford, MLA  
Minister

August 2000



## Message from the Minister

In May of 1999, Alberta Human Resources and Employment was created with a new mandate to support the development of all Albertans so they can contribute to and share more fully in our province's prosperity. Alberta has long recognized that our economic prosperity and quality of life is directly linked to the ingenuity, skills and talents of all Albertans.

As the new "People and Workplace" department, we provide a continuum of services to help Albertans move forward in their lives. We provide resources to meet their basic needs, prepare them for the world of work and ensure they participate in healthy, safe and productive workplaces.

For those who are unable to support themselves, the Supports for Independence and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped programs provide both financial assistance and the opportunity for Albertans to learn and work towards independence.

The Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program (AISH) is among one of the most generous programs of its kind in Canada. We refocused this program in 1999/2000 and approximately 25,000 recipients saw an increase to their benefits. AISH recipients who now wish to participate in employment may do so with continued medical coverage and without jeopardizing their eligibility for future benefits.

The Alberta Child Health Benefit helps to keep low-income families in the workforce and ensures their children are healthy. We have expanded the Alberta Child Health Benefit by raising the qualifying income thresholds and making them sensitive to family size. In 1999/2000, over 53,500 children received coverage for dental care, optical services, drug prescriptions, emergency ambulance services and essential diabetic supplies.

Helping Albertans become more self-reliant in an ever-changing marketplace is an important focus for my department. Our various labour market programs and services are important supports in helping unemployed Albertans to prepare for and obtain employment. In the past year, more than 42,000 Albertans participated in these programs. Our employment and training programs are clearly a success, as 72 per cent of program participants were employed after leaving these programs.

We also connect Albertans to a wealth of career, learning and employment information so they can succeed in the labour market. Our printed resources, labour market information centres, on-line materials, workshops and stakeholder partnerships help Albertans acquire the knowledge they need to make informed career decisions. Last year, we distributed over 677,000 career-related products and have processed and displayed more than 44,000 job orders through the Canada-Alberta Job Order Bank Service (JOBS).

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We are breaking down barriers for youth and other individuals who have the skills and talents, but just need the opportunity to participate in our economy. Alberta's Youth Employment Strategy is making tremendous strides in helping young people make the transition from school to work and to gain employment.

In the past year, our partnerships with more than 2,500 Alberta businesses provided mentoring, work experience and other employment opportunities for youth. Our Youth Connections program, which has been expanded from two to 23 sites across the province, helped over 28,000 young people connect with further learning opportunities, job training, work experience and employment.

With more Albertans moving into the workforce, we have a responsibility to ensure they benefit from healthy, safe and productive workplaces.

1999 was an outstanding year for job growth and productivity in Alberta. In the area of labour relations, our facilitation and mediation services played an important role in helping labour and management deal more effectively with workplace disputes. As a result, Alberta has one of the lowest rates of person- days lost to strikes or lockouts in Canada.

In our workplaces, Albertans have never been healthier or safer. In 1999/2000, a year of increased economic activity, Alberta had the lowest lost-time claim rate related to employee occupational injury and disease that has ever been recorded for the province.

Within the Ministry of Alberta Human Resources and Employment, I am also responsible for the Personnel Administration Office (PAO). Human resource management continues to be a priority for government and PAO works in partnership with departments to respond to emerging human resource issues.

All departments have leadership continuity strategies in place to address issues around an aging workforce. We provided 529 opportunities for young people making the transition from school to work through a variety of work experience, co-op and internship placements. Current employees are provided with learning supports and leadership development tools to enhance their skills now and for the future. In the latest survey of employees, 80 per cent reported they are satisfied with their employment in the public service. As we continue with these efforts, we are building a strong public service that provides Albertans with quality programs and services.

I am proud of the contributions my staff and our partners have made in helping Albertans. This has been a challenging year for department staff and I want to thank them for always putting their clients first during this period of transition.

As we continue to build a strong organization, we are committed to fully integrating our programs and services to help Albertans make positive transitions in their lives and ensure our workplaces are safe, healthy and productive.



Clint Dunford  
Minister

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## Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The executives of the individual entities within the Ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the respective entities. Collectively, we 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 business plans, annual report, quarterly reports and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the financial statements and performance results for the Ministry rests with the Minister of Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Under the direction of the Minister, we oversee the preparation of the Ministry's annual report, including financial statements and performance results. The financial statements and the performance results, of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgements. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the government's stated accounting policies.

The Deputy Minister and the Public Service Commissioner are responsible for establishing and maintaining 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 Cabinet, Treasury Board, the Provincial Treasurer and the Minister with any information needed to fulfill their responsibilities
- Facilitate preparation of Ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Government Accountability Act*

In fulfilling our responsibilities for the Ministry, we have relied, as necessary, on the executives of the individual entities within the Ministry.



Ron Hicks  
Deputy Minister  
Alberta Human Resources  
and Employment

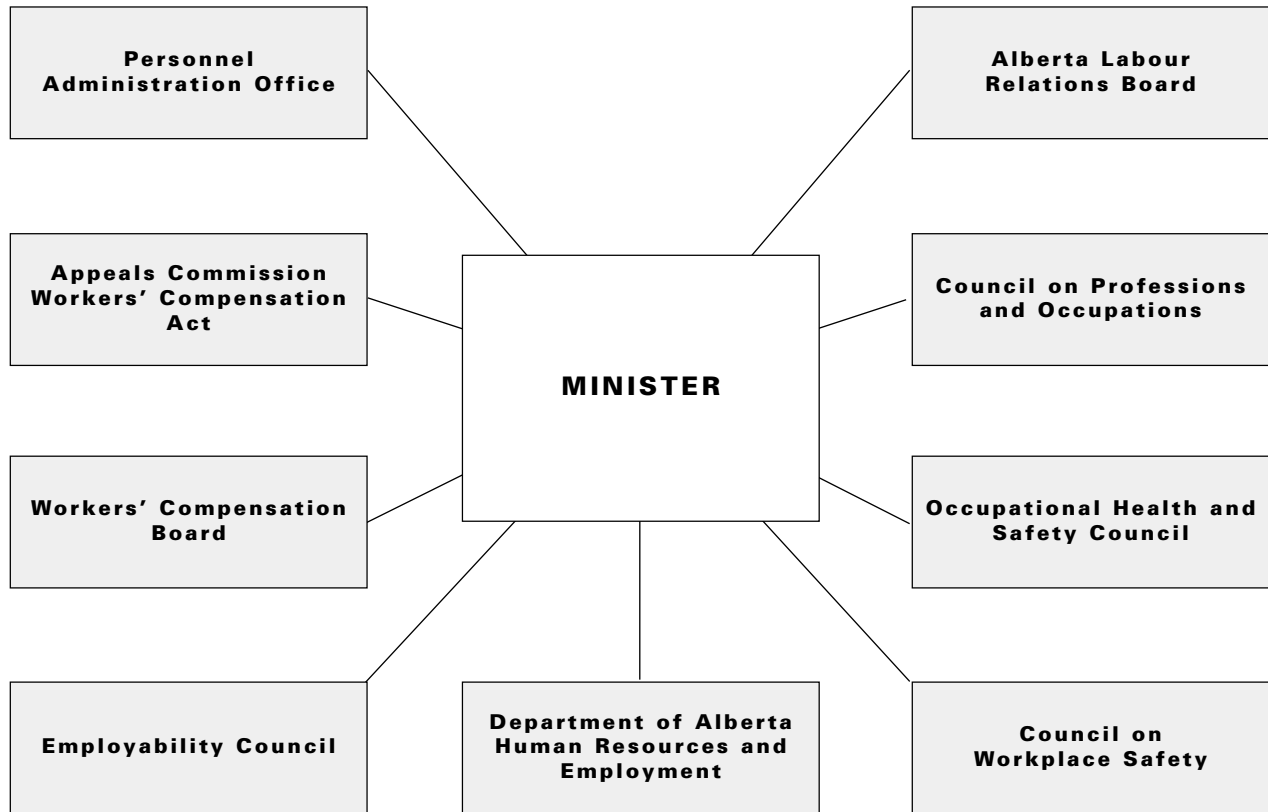


Jim Dixon  
Public Service Commissioner  
Personnel Administration Office



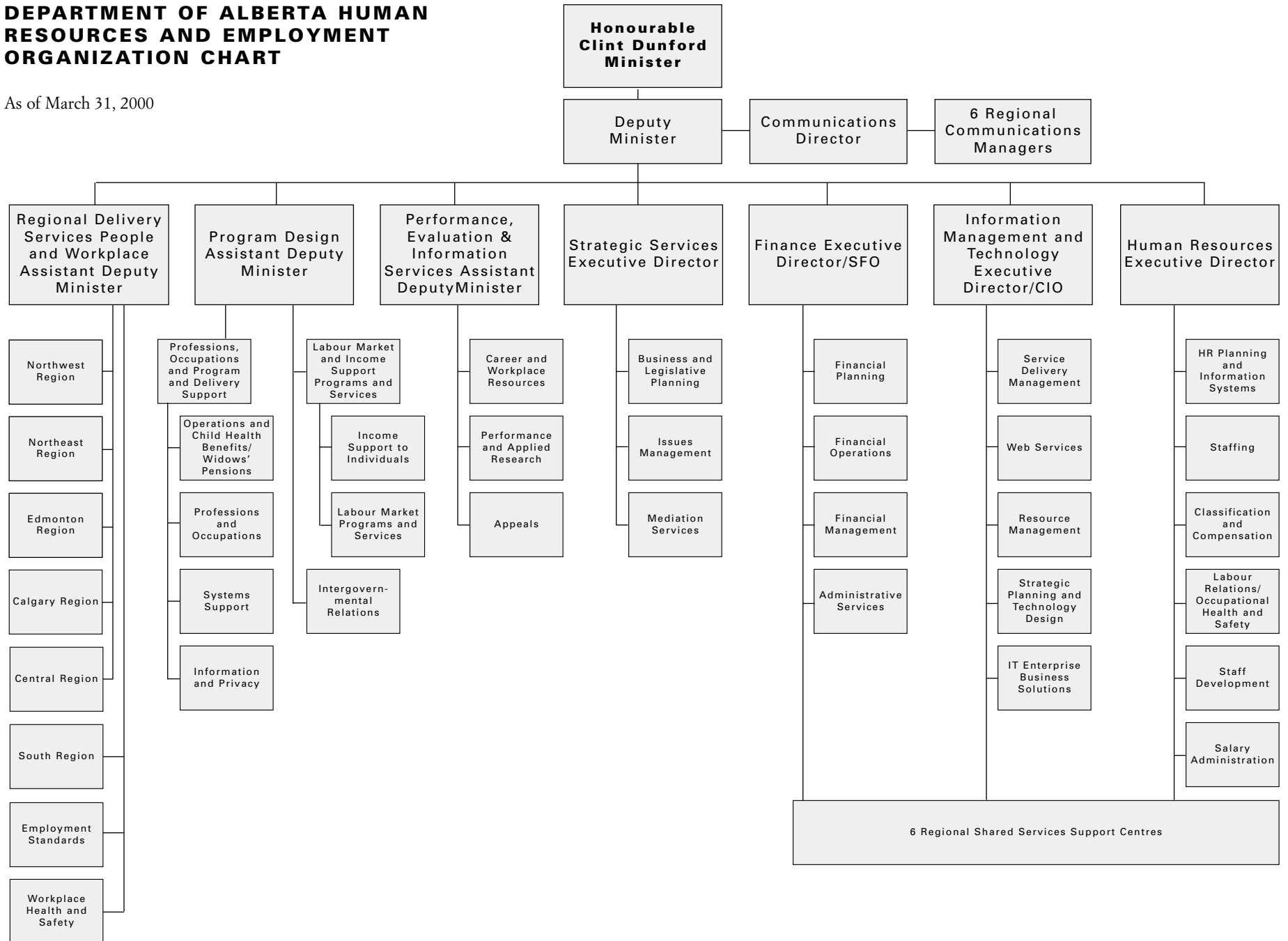
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## Ministry of Alberta Human Resources and Employment



# DEPARTMENT OF ALBERTA HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT ORGANIZATION CHART

As of March 31, 2000



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## Ministry Overview

The Ministry of Alberta Human Resources and Employment includes:

- Department of Alberta Human Resources and Employment
- Personnel Administration Office
- Alberta Labour Relations Board
- Workers' Compensation Board
- Council on Professions and Occupations
- Occupational Health and Safety Council
- Council on Workplace Safety
- Employability Council
- Appeals Commission Workers' Compensation Act

The Personnel Administration Office and the Alberta Labour Relations Board annual reports are incorporated in this Ministry's annual report.

Financial information for the Workers' Compensation Board is also included in this annual report.

### **DEPARTMENT OF ALBERTA HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT**

Alberta Human Resources and Employment is composed of seven departmental divisions. The department's programs and services are delivered through a network of over 80 offices in six regions. Mobile services are available for communities without service sites. There are 19 Labour Market Information Centres located in Career Development Centres and the Canada Alberta Service Centres across Alberta providing career and labour market information to Albertans.

The department's delivery network also includes ties with training providers across the province, including post-secondary institutions, private schools, high schools, and contracts with private trainers. The department also works with a variety of stakeholders such as industry, labour groups, professional associations, Indian Bands, Metis Settlements, community groups, federal and municipal governments and other provincial departments.

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During 1999/2000, the department's staff and services were supported through a corporate structure and six regional Shared Services Support Centres (SSSCs). The SSSCs include human resources, information technology, financial, communications and administrative support functions. (Note: The SSSCs have been incorporated into the Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC) in 2000/01.)

Alberta Human Resources and Employment's seven divisions are:

### **Regional Delivery Services – People and Workplace Division**

Through a regional and district office system, the Regional Delivery Services, People and Workplace division provides:

- Career advice and information through Labour Market Information Centres
- Training programs
- Student finance support
- Income support programs (Supports for Independence (SFI), Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH))
- Family maintenance program
- Temporary employment initiatives
- Guardianship services for dependent adults
- Worksite health and safety management programs, investigations and inspections
- Employment standards information and client resolution services

### **Program Design Division**

The division is responsible for:

- Creating discussion papers, policy options, Minister's reports, and policy manuals
- Developing standards and guidelines to ensure provincial consistency in programs and services
- Working jointly with other Ministries to develop government strategy on issues which transcend Ministries (e.g. policies on housing, homelessness, children's initiatives and seniors' benefits)
- Providing provincial programs (e.g. Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP), Provincial Local Labour Market Partnerships (LLMP), Alberta Child Health Benefit (ACHB), Employment Skills Program, and Widows' Pension)
- Negotiating agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (e.g. National Child Benefit, Labour Market Development Agreement,

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Employment Assistance for Persons with Disabilities, medical services agreements, information and data matching)

- Providing consulting services regarding Professions and Occupations and Information and Privacy

### **Performance, Evaluation and Information Services Division**

The division is responsible for:

- Performance measurement and reporting
- Designing and implementing evaluation
- Developing management information
- Monitoring of programs and identification of best practices
- Environmental scanning
- Developing, promoting and distributing career, labour market and workplace information products
- Administering Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) web site as Albertans' Internet gateway to career, learning and employment information
- Providing a Career Information Hotline for consultation and referrals
- Job Order Bank Service (JOBS) that provides job seekers with access to employers who are looking for workers
- Supporting and advising appeal panels on Supports For Independence (SFI), Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH), dependent adults, child welfare, Widows' Pension, Seniors' Benefits and Aids to Daily Living

### **Strategic Services Division**

The division is responsible for:

- Promoting the use of process management principles, tools and techniques by coaching, mentoring and facilitating work groups to solve issues, and help them identify and improve processes and results
- Conducting environmental scanning to identify emerging trends and issues
- Developing legal and legislative options and strategies
- Managing the processes to develop the department's strategic, business and operational plans and the Ministry annual report
- Promoting positive labour relations and workplace innovation by helping Alberta workplaces to solve problems and promote co-operation between management and labour groups
- Providing mediation and arbitration services to resolve labour disputes

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### **Finance Division**

The division is responsible for:

- Providing consultation and training in the areas of payments, finance and administration systems operations, budgets and forecasts, accommodations, purchasing, asset and fleet management, records management, insurance, contract administration and other finance and administration policy and procedures, and audit programs
- Developing frameworks for various finance and administration activities
- Providing reconciled financial data for reporting and analysis
- Ensuring the integrity of cross-departmental finance and administration information technology systems

### **Information Management and Technology Division**

The division provides leadership in information technology and is responsible for:

- Ensuring technology investment supports the achievement of the Ministry business plan
- Ensuring that staff have the information and tools available to them to effectively and efficiently carry out their work
- Continually improving organizational communications: network, e-mail, intranet, internet, externet
- Managing the data environment for the Ministry

### **Human Resources Division**

The division operates under the framework of the Personnel Administration Office. Human Resources is responsible for providing:

- Consultation, technical support and interpretation of personnel policies in the area of benefits, salary administration, classification and compensation, labour relations, occupational health and safety, performance management, training and development, staffing and workforce adjustment
- Representing the department in collective bargaining and providing consultation and support in the administration of the employee assistance programs available for public service employees

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## **Communications**

Communications supports the department in reaching its goals by:

- Providing strategic communications planning, consulting and specialized communication services to the Minister and the department

The divisions of Finance, Information Management and Technology, Human Resources and Communications also provide support to the Ministry of Children's Services, and to the Provincial Persons with Developmental Disabilities Boards (Ministry of Health and Wellness).

## **PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

The Personnel Administration Office (PAO) is the central human resources arm of government. PAO works with departments to develop government-wide human resource strategies and policy frameworks in a variety of human resource functional areas to support departments in achieving their business plan goals. PAO is also responsible for the delivery of specific services which are considered corporate strategic services.

## **ALBERTA LABOUR RELATIONS BOARD**

The Alberta Labour Relations Board is a quasi-judicial body responsible for the application and interpretation of the *Labor Relations Code*, the *Public Service Employee Relations Act* and the *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act*. Both the Minister and Deputy Minister maintain an "arms-length" relationship with the Board.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD (WCB)**

The Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) is an employer-funded organization providing employers and workers with efficient and affordable disability and liability insurance. The WCB is an independent, board-governed organization operating under the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

## **APPEALS COMMISSION, WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT**

The Commission operates at arms length from the Workers' Compensation Board and government. It provides an independent appeals process for workers and employers.

## **COUNCIL ON WORKPLACE SAFETY**

The Council on Workplace Safety was established to oversee the current regulatory review processes, examine issues and make recommendations to ensure Alberta's regulatory framework is effective in reducing work place injuries and illnesses.

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### **EMPLOYABILITY COUNCIL**

The Employability Council was established in November 1999. It provides advice to the Minister on enhancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The membership of the committee includes persons with disabilities, employers and association representatives.

### **COUNCIL ON PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS**

The Council on Professions and Occupations advises and assists the Minister with the policies governing, and administering the legislation relating to professions and occupations in Alberta.

### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL**

The Occupational Health and Safety Council is composed of public, employer, and worker representatives and advises the Minister on matters pertaining to the health and safety of Alberta workplaces. The Council also hears appeals of orders given by Occupational Health and Safety Officers.



# Alberta Human Resources and Employment departmental highlights

1999 | 2000

In June 1999, the Ministers of Alberta Human Resources and Employment and Alberta Learning announced the Alberta Youth Employment Strategy to ensure young Albertans are able to contribute to, and take advantage of, the social and economic opportunities of the future. As part of this framework for action, Youth Connections helped over 28,000 Albertans improve their employment prospects in 1999/2000. During this period, over 2,500 businesses offered mentoring, work experience, job shadowing and other employment opportunities to youth. Launched in 1997, Youth Connections nearly doubled its original 1999/2000 expansion targets of 13 new sites, opening 21 additional sites.

The department contributed to the Alberta Advantage through programming that builds a skilled and competitive workforce. Through a province-wide network of regional offices, over 42,000 Albertans participated in labour market programs that resulted in over 72 per cent of participants being successfully employed after their participation.

Over 394,000 users visited the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) ([www.alis.gov.ab.ca](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca)) website to obtain career, learning and employment information. The website features articles on career, learning or employment topics under "Tip of the Week", on-line career planning tools, electronic student loan application service, information on new scholarships, updated Alberta post-secondary education programs, occupational descriptions, employment and workplace links. The department also assisted Albertans in obtaining career, workplace and labour market information by developing, publishing, and distributing more than 677,000 information products.

The Career Information Hotline responded to 37,000 requests for career, training and labour market information, referrals and consultative services. In addition, the Job Order Bank Service (JOBS) processed more than 44,000 job orders from Alberta employers.

**Alberta Youth  
Employment Strategy**

**Labour Market  
Programs**

**Alberta Learning  
Information Service  
(ALIS)**

**Career Information  
Hotline**

<b>Alberta's Minimum Wage</b>	<p>In response to the Alberta Growth Summit and public consultations, Alberta's minimum wage was increased twice last year to \$5.90. The increase to the minimum wage reflected increases to other economic indicators such as the consumer price index, average weekly earnings and the gross domestic product. A separate minimum wage for students was also eliminated. Now, all workers, regardless of age, receive one minimum wage.</p>
<b>Employment Standards</b>	<p>A new partnership was formed with the Alberta Restaurant and Food Services Association to enhance the industry's overall compliance with the Employment Standards Code. This partnership arrangement is the first of its kind in Canada and will provide the department with an opportunity to educate the industry and ensure that employees are being treated fairly in the workplace.</p>
<b>Labour Relations</b>	<p>The department's Employment Standard's Compliance Program continued to target chronic violators of the Employment Standards Code. Five prosecutions were initiated against employers in 1999/2000.</p>
<b>Labour Relations</b>	<p>The department continued to provide support to industry partners through facilitation, mediation and information sharing to help maintain Alberta's stable labour relations climate. Relationship building initiatives were successfully completed with the County of Strathcona and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees; the Town of Taber and its unions; the City of St. Albert and the Firefighters Union; and the Building Trades Council and the Construction Labour Relations Association at Nova's Joffre site and Suncor and Syncrude in Fort McMurray. Through these and other initiatives, Alberta's rate of person-days lost to work stoppages was the second lowest in Canada.</p>
<b>Mediation</b>	<p>Provincially appointed mediators played a key role in helping clients in health care, education and other sectors reach mediated settlements. Of the 435 collective agreements that expired in 1999/2000, 107 (25 per cent) required the assistance of provincially appointed mediators. Ninety per cent of the mediated cases were resolved without job action.</p>
<b>Workplace Health and Safety Programs</b>	<p>Alberta had the lowest lost-time claim rate ever recorded in the province related to employee occupational injury and disease. This reduction is due, in part, to our partnerships with industry to expand certified workplace health and safety programs and the department's strategic compliance programs that targeted industries with uncontrolled hazards.</p>
<b>Labour Mobility</b>	<p>Alberta continued to lead changes to ensure that workers qualified for any occupation in any jurisdiction in Canada have access to employment opportunities. Through the Labour Mobility Chapter of the Agreement on Internal Trade, over 75 per cent of Alberta's regulated professions have, or are in the process of developing, mutual recognition agreements with other jurisdictions.</p>

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Approximately 25,000 Albertans receiving Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) saw an increase in their benefits. AISH benefit levels increased to a maximum of \$855 per month from \$823 per month (this includes a \$5 drug plan co-payment). An asset limit of \$100,000 was also introduced to ensure the program supports those who truly need it. Under the Supports for Independence program, Assured Support clients saw an increase of \$58 to their monthly benefits. AISH and Assured Support recipients are now eligible to participate in employment programs without losing their benefits and will receive extended medical benefits when they leave assistance to go to work.

The Alberta Child Health Benefit was expanded by introducing higher qualification levels for families with more children. In 1999/2000, 53,500 children received coverage for dental care, optical services, drug prescriptions, emergency ambulance services and essential diabetic supplies. This initiative helps low-income families remain in the workforce and ensures that children of low-income families are healthy.

The *Dependent Adults Act* was amended to allow an individual who resides outside of the province to be a guardian for a dependent adult who resides in Alberta. This change ensures the most appropriate individual is able to represent the needs of a dependent adult. The department also streamlined the guardianship process, making it easier for individuals to obtain guardianship or have their guardianship order reviewed.

In November 1999, the Minister's Employability Council was formed to explore ways to enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Alberta Human Resources and Employment employees continued to demonstrate leadership in the public service by finding innovative ways to improve service to Albertans. The following two teams were Silver recipients in the Premier's Awards of Excellence:

- The Employment Standards Consolidated Telephone Unit's recommendations resulted in a consolidated telephone system in Edmonton that provides employees and employers with easy access to employment standards information
- The Alberta Child Health Benefit Implementation Team was responsible for designing, developing and implementing a program that provides extended health benefits to children in low-income families

**Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped Program (AISH)**

**Alberta Child Health Benefit Program**

**Dependent Adults Act**

**Minister's Employability Council**

**Premier's Awards of Excellence**

# Personnel Administration Office

## highlights

1999 | 2000

Highlights for 1999/2000 business plan year for the Personnel Administration Office (PAO) include the following:

### Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy

The Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy was a cross-government priority for the second year in a row. PAO provided leadership and coordination for the development of the strategy and worked with departments on implementing initiatives. The strategy is part of the overall Corporate Human Resource Plan which is updated annually in conjunction with departments and approved by Deputy Ministers. It addresses priority areas for human resource management in the Alberta public service.

### Building Your Future Symposium

A one-day *Building Your Future* symposium was held in December, followed by a half-day knowledge fair available to all employees. The knowledge fair provided a number of information and demonstration booths on topics related to learning and leadership development. The virtual knowledge fair ([www.gov.ab.ca/pao/employee/knowledge-fair/frameset.htm](http://www.gov.ab.ca/pao/employee/knowledge-fair/frameset.htm)) was established to provide employees with on-line access to the same learning and leadership development resources.

### Career Management

A *Career Management Guide* was developed as a four-part series for employees to assist them with self-directed career planning.

### Employee Satisfaction

Each year a survey is conducted that collects data on core measures of employee satisfaction. Results for 1999/2000 included:

- 81 per cent of employees report that they understand how their work contributes to their department's business plan, a 4 per cent increase from 1997/1998
- 80 per cent of employees are satisfied with their employment in the Alberta public service, a 12 per cent increase since 1997/1998

### Leadership Continuity Strategies

Most departments are in the process of implementing their leadership continuity strategies that are designed to address issues such as an aging workforce and overall recruitment and retention in the public service. In 1999/2000, there were over 400 developmental moves reported for executive managers and managers within the public service.

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The public service continues to demonstrate strong support for work experience, co-op and internship programs through the 529 placements that were reported. These placements are part of our strategy to market the public service as an attractive employer and provide a variety of opportunities for young people making the transition from school to work.

Negotiations were successfully completed on the wage opener with the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees including extending the term of the agreement by one year to September 2001.

**Work Experience,  
Co-op and Internship  
Programs**

**Wage Opener  
Negotiations**



Department of Alberta Human  
Resources and Employment

# vision, mission and core business

april 1, 1999 - march 31, 2000

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Alberta Human Resources and Employment is a new Ministry, established in May 1999. The Ministry incorporates parts of the former Ministries of Advanced Education and Career Development, Alberta Labour, and Family and Social Services.

Although each of those Ministries had business plans approved by Standing Policy Committee for this fiscal year, the business plans were amalgamated to reflect the new Alberta Human Resources and Employment Ministry.

As required by the *Alberta Government Accountability Act*, the department of Alberta Human Resources and Employment completed a new business plan for the 1999-2000 fiscal year that integrated content from each of the three earlier business plans. The business plan included a new vision, mission, values and core business.

## **VISION**

Alberta's people, communities and workplaces are safe, healthy, responsible and productive.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Alberta Human Resources and Employment contributes to the Alberta Advantage by working with partners to:

- Assist Albertans to reach their full potential in society and the economy
- Foster safe, fair, productive, innovative workplaces
- Support those in need

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## VALUES

We are committed to:

- High standards and ethics
- Quality, client-focused services
- Valuing our staff
- Achieving excellence in everything we do
- Being proactive and accountable for actions and results
- Providing appropriate leadership

Our staff are:

- Skilled and knowledgeable
- Empowered to act
- Respected and valued
- Encouraged to reach their full potential
- Innovative and creative

Our services are:

- Focused on serving people
- Accessible, responsive, relevant, affordable and effective
- Respectful of all individuals and cultures, communities and partners

Our operations are:

- Open, collaborative, and accountable
- Interdependent
- Focused on the future



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## **CORE BUSINESSES**

The department works to achieve its vision and mission through its core businesses:

### **Supporting Albertans in achieving and maintaining economic independence**

- Helping people plan their careers
- Helping people become more employable
- Providing people with loans and grants to achieve their career ambitions
- Helping people obtain and maintain employment

### **Supporting Alberta's workers and employers in creating safe, fair, healthy and productive workplaces**

- Promoting the development of effective worksite health and safety management systems and compliance programs
- Supporting fair and effective resolution of labour disputes and workplace issues
- Promoting fair and effective employment standards protection for employers and employees

### **Supporting Albertans in need**

- Providing people with income or supplements to meet their basic needs
- Providing people with benefits and services that help them achieve or maintain financial independence
- Providing guardianship services or facilitating alternative surrogate decision-making mechanisms for dependent adults in need of protection

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## **Report of the Auditor General On the Results of Applying Specified Auditing Procedures To Performance Measures**

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly:

I have performed the following procedures in connection with the Ministry of Human Resources and Employment's performance measures included in the *1999-2000 Annual Report of the Ministry of Human Resources and Employment* as presented on pages 25 to 56.

Information obtained from an independent source, such as Statistics Canada, was agreed with the information supplied by the stated source. Information provided internally was agreed to the reports from the systems used to develop the information.

The calculations which converted source information into reported measures were tested.

The appropriateness of the description of each measure's methodology was assessed.

As a result of applying the above procedures, I found no exceptions. However, these procedures do not constitute an audit of the set of performance measures and therefore I express no opinion on the set of performance measures included in the *1999-2000 Annual Report of the, Ministry of Human Resources and Employment*.

[Original Signed by Peter Valentine] FCA  
Auditor General

Edmonton, Alberta  
August 18, 2000

# results analysis

## goals, measures, results

### core business

#### **Supporting Albertans in achieving and maintaining economic independence**

Maintaining Alberta's advantage in the global economy through the continued development of a skilled competitive work force remains a key strategy for Alberta Human Resources and Employment. The department is working to ensure Albertans are economically independent and able to achieve their career ambitions by providing career planning, training opportunities, short-term financial assistance and employment information and services.

#### **Goal 1**

**Enable Albertans to reach their full potential  
and achieve self-sufficiency in the workforce**

#### **STRATEGIES**

- Under the Labour Market Development Agreement, continue to provide programs and services needed by unemployed Albertans seeking to join the workforce
- Rationalize program delivery and ensure effective and affordable client service through a network of co-located offices with Human Resources Development Canada
- Redesign labour market programs and delivery systems to improve their efficiency and responsiveness to integrating Supports for Independence clients into the workforce
- Improve programs and services for those with special needs, including financial assistance available to those working in marginal employment who may wish to pursue further learning on a part-time basis
- Lead changes to provide interprovincial mobility of workers as committed to in the *Labour Mobility Chapter of the Agreement on Internal Trade*

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**Description of Programs:**

**Job Placement** services are designed to match unemployed, job-ready Albertans with employers needing to fill jobs.

**Self Employment** provides formal instruction in business plan development, one-to-one business counseling, coaching, and guidance during business plan implementation.

**Skills for Work** provides clients with a combination of life management skills, occupational training, academic upgrading and work experience needed for jobs in demand.

**Training on the Job** helps Albertans gain on-the-job experience and training in jobs that are in demand.

**Skills Development Program** provides clients with access to basic foundation skills programs, apprenticeship programs, skills training or integrated training from approved public or private training providers.

**RESULTS**

Labour market employment/training programs and services help unemployed Albertans as well as other eligible Albertans acquire the skills they need to prepare for and obtain employment. In December 1996, Alberta signed the Labour Market Development Agreement with the federal government and assumed responsibility for the design and delivery of employment/training programs and services to Employment Insurance (EI) clients in addition to other eligible Albertans.

During the past year, over 42,000 Albertans participated in Job Placement, Self-Employment, Skills for Work, Training on the Job, Skills Training, and Basic Foundation Skill Training interventions. Follow-up surveys show that 72 per cent of program participants found employment after participating in the programs. The province's efforts to return EI clients to work resulted in savings of over \$110 million to the Employment Insurance account\*.

The department provided an additional 4,800 individuals with work experience through the Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP). This program provides seasonal wage assistance to not-for-profit employers.

Special employment and training responses were designed to assist those with particular needs, (e.g., youth, the disabled, aboriginal clients), or those relying on government income assistance (e.g., Supports for Independence (SFI), Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)). The responses include broadened eligibility criteria for some programs, part-time as well as full-time employment and training opportunities, and introduction of graduated entry into programming where necessary.

A Minister's Employability Council was established in November 1999. This new committee, which includes persons with disabilities, employers and association representatives, provides advice to the Minister on enhancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Alberta continues to ensure workers have access to employment opportunities in other jurisdictions across Canada. Over 75 per cent of Alberta's regulated professions have, or are in the process of developing, mutual recognition agreements with regulators in other jurisdictions, through the *Labour Mobility Chapter of the Agreement on Internal Trade*.

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\* These results are preliminary estimates and subject to revision by Human Resources Development Canada.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Labour market employment/training programs and Job Placement provide clients with the skills necessary to quickly re-enter the workforce. These programs are usually one year or less in duration.

### Performance Measure 1.1

#### Number of learners participating in employment/training programs and job placement and overall employment results of participants

	1998/99		1999/2000	
	Number of Participants	Percent Employed	Number of Participants	Percent Employed
Job Placement	10,490	69%	6,547	71%
Self-Employment	1,021	62%	1,780	87%
Skills for Work	6,607	66%	5,471**	61%
Training on the Job	1,808	Not available*	1,948	65%
Skills Development -				
Short Term Skills - (non-Apprentices)	7,153	80%	4,155	75%
Apprentices	6,938	94%	8,115	94%***
Basic Foundation Skills Training	14,082	61%	14,150	62%
All Programs and Job Placement****	48,099	71%	42,166	72% <sup>1</sup>
		70% (target)	49,000 (forecast)	70% (target)
<p><b>Notes:</b><sup>2</sup> * The employment results for the Training on the Job program was not available for 1998/99, as this was a transitional year for the program.  ** In 1998/99, Employment Alternatives Program (EAP) and the Enhanced Employment Alternatives Program (EEAP) clients were added to the total number of Skills for Work participants. This year, the 801 EAP and EEAP clients have not been included. Program participants will be phased into the Skills for Work program, as EAP and EEAP are phased out.  ***The results are based on a biennial survey conducted in the 1998/99 fiscal year.  **** The numbers of learners are not comparable between years as the definition of 'participant' has been refined from clients "accepted" into the initiatives to clients "started" in the initiatives.  <b>Sources:</b> Alberta Learning, Graduates of Apprenticeship Satisfaction Survey, 1999; Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Work Outcome Reporting Project (WORP); Alberta Learning, Students Finance System Reports; Career Assistance Information System (CAIS), Clients in Training Program with Follow-up Outcomes; Human Resources Development Canada, HRDC/AECD April 2000 Results Dataset Analysis.</p>				

1. This is a weighted average (based on the number of participants in these initiatives) of the employment results of all programs and Job Placement.

2. **Further notes:** Alberta Learning; Graduates of Apprenticeship Satisfaction Survey, 1999. Results are based on 3,141 telephone interviews with graduates. Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Work Outcome Reporting Project (WORP). This is a census survey of all Short Term Skills (non-Apprentices) and Basic Foundation Skills Training program leavers who are followed up by an independent contractor at either three months (LMDA clients) or six months after leaving the program. This is an on-going project. Data presented include follow-up data as at March 31, 2000 (total of 2,502 respondents); Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Career Assistance Information System (CAIS), Clients in Job Placement, Self Employment, Skills for Work and Training on the Job Programs. Employment results for these programs are reported by contracted agencies.

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## **ANALYSIS**

The overall employment results of participants who left employment/training programs and job placement exceeded the departmental target. Employment results of programs vary as some individuals may be referred to other, more appropriate interventions while others go on to further training (e.g., those completing Basic Foundation Skills Training). Employment outcomes may vary between years, depending on the types of clients entering the programs and the difficulties they face in obtaining work. For example, Employment Insurance (EI) clients have more recent work histories that help their return to the labour market.

Fewer individuals participated in employment and training programs and Job Placement in 1999/2000. The decline in individuals requiring additional training to re-enter the workforce is due in part to Alberta's favourable economy and low unemployment rate. Decreased enrollment in programs for the most job-ready clients, e.g., Job Placement and Short-Term Skills Training (non-Apprentices), is consistent with the premise that clients with previous work experience can successfully maintain or quickly regain employment without further intervention in good economic conditions.

Alberta Human Resources and Employment provides learners with financial assistance to pursue training. Individuals who are enrolled in an approved program, and have financial need, may be eligible for financial assistance. EI-eligible clients may receive Alberta Student Loans and/or grants, while non-EI clients receive grant funding for upgrading programs.

**Performance Measure 1.2**

**Total number of learners awarded financial assistance to attend employment/training programs and the total amount (dollars) awarded**

	1997/98*		1998/99		1999/2000 (Forecast)		1999/2000 (Actual)	
	# of Learners Receiving Financial Assistance Total Dollars	Awarded (millions)	# of Learners Receiving Financial Assistance	Total Dollars Awarded (millions)	# of Learners Receiving Financial Assistance	Total Dollars Awarded (millions)	# of Learners Receiving Financial Assistance	Total Dollars Awarded (millions)
Skills Development Training Grant (non-LMDA)	10,882	\$81.5	11,493	\$89.0	12,500	\$93.6	12,531	\$104.5
Skills Development Training (LMDA)								
Alberta Student Loan	693	\$0.8	2,949	\$3.5	3,000	\$3.6	3,041	\$4.6
Grant	1,118	\$4.6	6,503	\$40.6	7,000	\$37.0	6,446	\$44.0

**Notes:** \* The Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) was implemented in November 1997. The number of funded LMDA learners is low for 1997/98 as it represents a partial year.  
**Source:** Alberta Learning. Students Finance Reports.

**ANALYSIS**

A similar number of EI-eligible Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) learners were awarded financial assistance for Skills Development training in 1999/2000 compared to the previous year. The number of non-LMDA clients awarded grants to attend academic upgrading programs increased approximately nine per cent.

The average loan and/or grant award per learner has increased as a result of higher financial need, longer duration of funding in programs, and higher tuition costs (e.g., computer training).

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## Goal 2

### **Improve the knowledge and skills of Alberta youth in relation to employability and the transitions between learning and work**

#### **STRATEGIES**

- Improve information and counseling for high school students on career and learning opportunities and financial assistance programs
- Develop partnerships with Alberta Learning to provide parents with information and advice related to financing their children's future education costs
- In partnership with Alberta Learning, support career transition partnerships and initiatives
- Expand the Youth Connections Program to provide young adults with opportunities to connect with promising careers
- Establish local co-ordination mechanisms to implement Alberta's Youth Employment Strategy
- Introduce case management strategies for clients requiring financial assistance to pursue further training, and to support effective career planning and decision-making

#### **RESULTS**

Alberta's ongoing prosperity and quality of life depend on the development of its young people and their participation in the workforce. In June 1999, the Alberta Youth Employment Strategy was announced by the ministers of Alberta Human Resources and Employment and Alberta Learning. This framework for action will assist Alberta's youth, ages 16 to 24, to take advantage of economic and educational opportunities, and make appropriate connections between learning and work. The many successes include:

- Developing community-based partnerships with 24 school districts, as well as numerous businesses and industry partners
- Presenting the first national Employers of Youth Awards, a federal/provincial initiative, to Alberta companies who demonstrated outstanding contributions to the development of youth
- Expanding the highly successful Youth Connections Program from 2 sites to 23 sites. This program helps young people who have entered the workforce directly from high school, make a connection to promising careers
- Coordinating efforts with service providers throughout Alberta to help over 28,000 youth become better equipped to make career choices
- Partnering with more than 2,500 Alberta businesses to provide mentoring, work experience, job shadowing and other employment opportunities for youth



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- Introducing new features to the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website, which provides electronic access to information about career, learning and employment services in the province through the World Wide Web

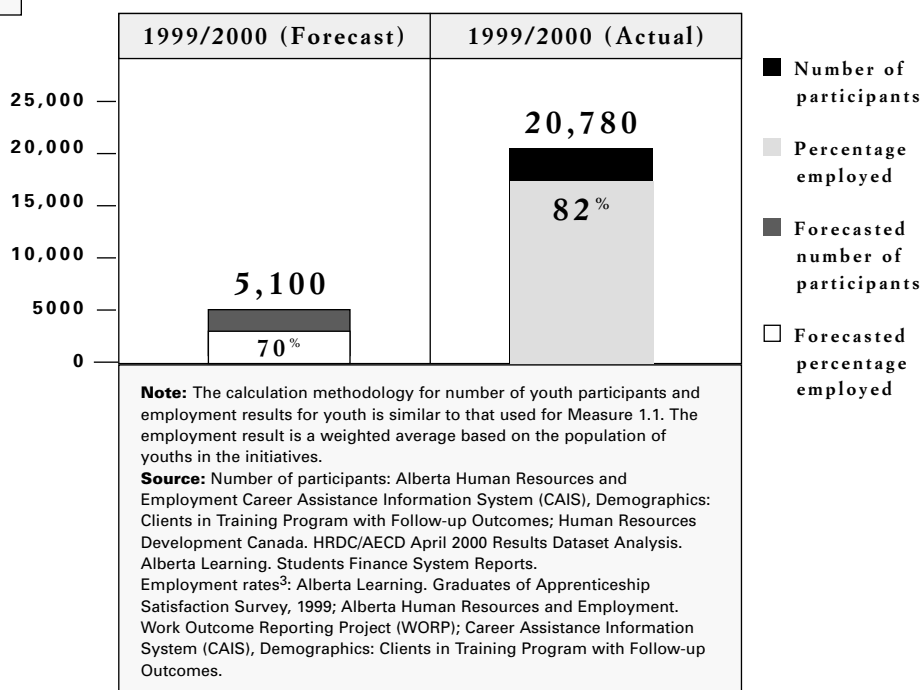
The department continues to educate youth and other Albertans about career planning through printed publications (such as *Money 101* and *It's About Time*), on-line materials, and workshops. For example, workshops for students and parents were held in several regions to provide information regarding financing education costs.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The department's employment and training programs provide youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain and maintain employment.

**New Measure**

### Performance Measure 2.1 Number of youth participating in employment/training programs and employment rate of participants



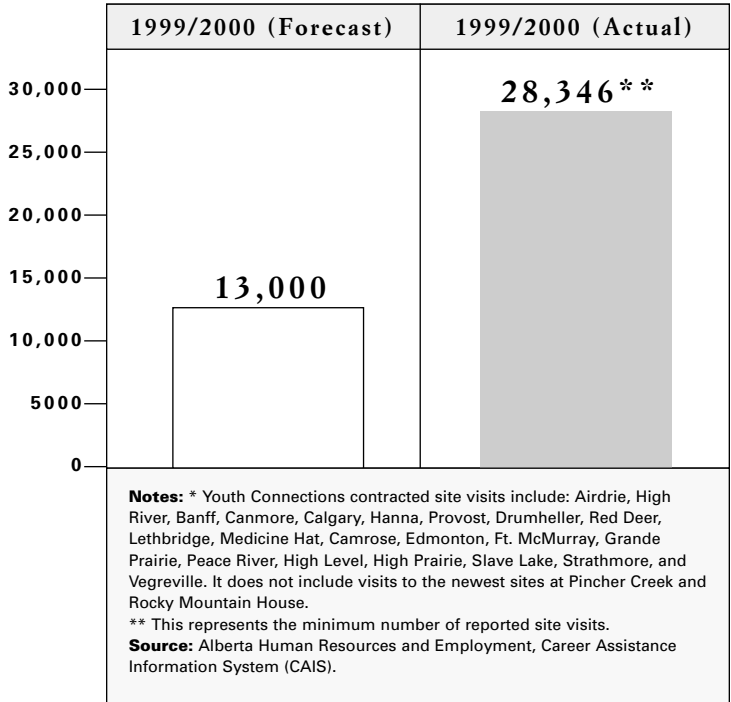
## ANALYSIS

More youth than expected participated in employment and training programs, and their employment results upon leaving the intervention exceeded the target. These results are among the many achievements of the Alberta Youth Employment Strategy. The percentage of youth employed (82 per cent) after leaving employment and training programs is higher than that for participants overall (72 per cent). These results show that given the opportunity to acquire the skills they need to enter the work force, young people will be successful in obtaining employment.

**3. Notes:** Alberta Learning: Graduates of Apprenticeship Satisfaction Survey, 1999. Based on 3,141 telephone interviews with graduates completed in 1999. The results are based on a biennial survey conducted in the 1998/99 fiscal year. Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Work Outcome Reporting Project (WORP). This is a census survey of all Short Term Skills (non-Apprentices) and Basic Foundation Skills Training Program participants who are followed up by an independent contractor at either three months (LMDA clients) or six months after leaving the program. This is an ongoing project. Data presented include follow-up data as at March 31, 2000 (total of 717 youth respondents).

**Performance Measure 2.2  
Career and labour market information  
and services provided to youth:  
Youth Connections contracted site visits\***

**New  
Measure**



**ANALYSIS**

The number of youth accessing services and information through Youth Connections contracted sites exceeded expectations. Eight more Youth Connections sites than the original expectation of 15 sites were established, providing additional opportunities for youth to access these services. The high degree of enthusiasm for this initiative at the community level has allowed for increased access while containing operational costs.

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## Goal 3

### A skilled, competitive Alberta workforce

#### STRATEGIES

- Introduce case management strategies for clients requiring financial assistance to pursue further training, to support effective career planning and decision-making, including providing financial supports that lead to employment
- In partnership with Alberta Learning, expand the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS), a website providing information and services for all Albertans seeking learning, career or employment opportunities
- Continue to partner with business and industry to identify knowledge and skill requirements and facilitate human resource development

#### RESULTS

Career and Employment Assistance Services help people prepare for, find and maintain work. Services include labour market information, career assistance (e.g., career advising, group workshops), career consulting, assessment of work readiness, training needs, referral services and case management (i.e. assisting clients move through the transitions to employment). As Albertans become more knowledgeable about career and labour market opportunities, they are better able to assess their skills and interests, build a career plan, and connect to further learning and employment.

To ensure Albertans have access to the most current information, the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website was enhanced, in partnership with Alberta Learning, to include:

- On-line student loan application
- More postings of publications and other information
- Links to career planning tools
- "Tip of the Week" that provides concise information on a variety of career, learning and employment topics
- Current information on more than 500 Alberta occupational profiles

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In addition, the department enhanced Albertans' abilities to make better choices through:

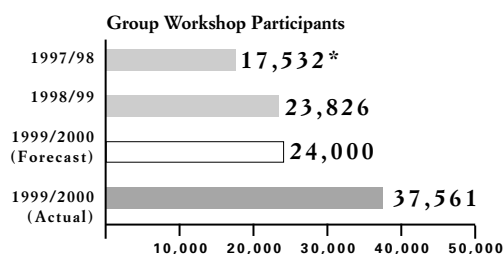
- Distributing over 677,000 career-related products. Career-related products include publications, posters, videos, audio tapes and other career planning materials
- Processing and displaying more than 44,000 job orders through the Canada-Alberta Job Order Bank Service (JOBS). Job opportunities are posted in JOBS kiosks throughout Alberta, on the Internet, and recorded employment tele-messages. This service is national in scope and is available in both official languages

Alberta Human Resources and Employment continues to collaborate with business and industry to obtain information about the present and future skills needed in Alberta, and to design programs and services to meet these needs. Province-wide partnerships include the Alberta Food Processors Association; the Alberta Tourism Education Council; the Information, Communications and Electronics Technologies Alliance; the Conference Board of Canada; Employability Skills Forum and the Alberta Chambers of Commerce.

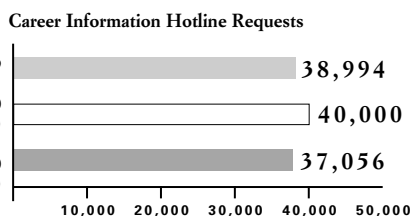
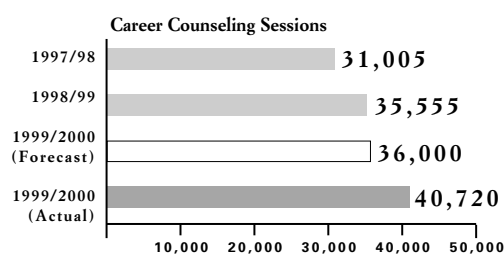
## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Career consulting and information services are provided at local centres throughout the province, through a toll-free telephone information and referral service (the Career Information Hotline) as well as on-line resources. Career development workshops for clients are offered in career planning, educational planning, self-development, job search and labour market information.

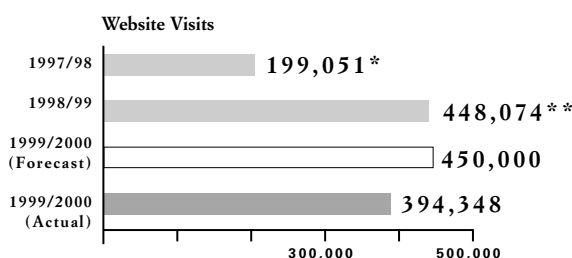
### Performance Measure 3.1 Use of career and labour market information services\*



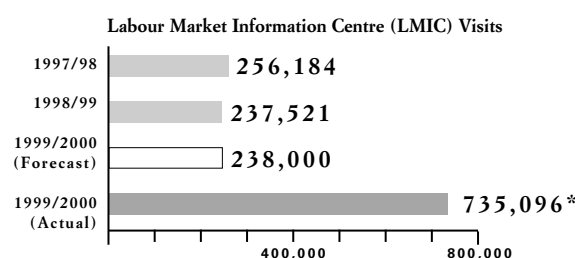
\* The 1997/98 workshop participants count has been revised.



\* Historical number has been revised based on changed counting methodology.



\* The 1997/98 website number has been revised to include use of Job Order Bank.  
\*\* The career and labour market information website moved servers in early 1999. This move created a challenge for counting website visits and as a result some visits might have been counted more than once in 1998/99.



\* The 1999/2000 LMIC number reflects better client awareness and more comprehensive reporting of visits to departmental LMIC's as well as visits and telephone calls to contracted sites.

**Notes:** \* Counts include the number of visits and telephone calls to the Labour Market Information Centres, the Career Information Hotline and the number of participants in the Career Counseling/Planning Sessions and Workshops for each delivery centre and the number of user sessions on ALIS Website and associated databases.

**Sources:** Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Career Assistance Information System (CAIS); Annual Client Services Report: Information/Consulting; Web Trends TM Executive Summary Report.

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**ANALYSIS**

Overall use of career and labour market information services has increased each year since 1997/1998. The additional responsibility emerging from the 1997 Labour Market Development Agreement has resulted in a broader client base. In addition, marketing of services has heightened Albertans' awareness of the many resources available.

Client satisfaction with labour market programs and selected services is an additional measure of the quality of services provided to individuals.

**Performance Measure 3.2  
Client satisfaction with employment/training programs,  
Career Information Hotline services, workshops, information  
development and marketing**

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	
Employment/Training Programs and Job Placement	information is not reported in annual report in this year	91%*	92%*	
Career Information Hotline	87%	n/a	95%	
Career development workshops	98%	90%	88%**	
Customer satisfaction with information materials and tools	95%	n/a	96%	
Overall client Satisfaction	-	-	85% Target	92% <sup>4</sup> Actual

**Note:**<sup>5</sup> \* This number is a weighted average based on volume counts from Measure 1.1.  
**\*\*** The current study to measure client satisfaction with career development workshops used an externally administered survey procedure. Therefore, these results are not fully comparable to previous years.  
**Sources:** Alberta Human Resources and Employment: Client Satisfaction with Careers and Labour Market Information and Services; A Customer Services and Satisfaction Survey of Career Information Hotline Clients; Summary Report: 2000 CEAS Client Satisfaction Survey; Career Assistance Information System (CAIS); Work Outcomes Reporting Project (WORP).

**ANALYSIS**

Client satisfaction with department programs and services is high and exceeds the overall target of 85 per cent. In 1999/2000, 92 per cent of surveyed clients indicated they were satisfied with the labour market programs, services or information the department provided.

The satisfaction results achieved each year are related to the types of clients accessing the programs and their ability to obtain work. Improvements in the method(s) used to assess satisfaction yielded results that are not fully comparable to previous years.

**4.** This is a weighted average based on volume counts described in Performance Measure 3.1 and Career and Labour Market Information's current mailing list.  
**5. Further notes:** Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Client Satisfaction with Careers and Labour Market Information and Services (2000). A total of 310 career practitioners completed this biennial survey either through self-completed questionnaires or telephone interviews. An independent contractor contacted these respondents about their satisfaction with information and services received during the past year.  
 Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Summary Report: 2000 CEAS Client Satisfaction Survey. An independent contractor conducted this telephone survey from January to March 2000. The 1,422 former clients involved in this survey were asked about various services.  
 Alberta Human Resources and Employment. A Customer Services and Satisfaction Survey of Career Information Hotline Clients. During December 1999 to March 2000, 385 Hotline users were contacted by an independent contractor one-month after they had accessed the service to participate in this biennial telephone survey that they had accessed between November 1999 and March 2000.  
 Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Career Assistance Information System (CAIS). Satisfaction with Training on the Job, Self-Employment, Skills for Work and Job Placement was determined by clients' responses as to whether they believe the training helped them find a job. Satisfaction rates with these programs are reported by contracted agencies.  
 Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Work Outcome Reporting Project (WORP). This is a census survey of all Short Term Skills (non-Apprentices) and Basic Foundation Skills Training program leavers who are followed up by an independent contractor at either three months (LMDA clients) or six months after leaving the program. This is an on-going project. Data presented include follow-up data on the question regarding overall satisfaction with the program (Total of 1324 respondents).



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# core business

## **Supporting Alberta's workers and employers in creating safe, fair, healthy and productive workplaces**

The department helps employers nurture a workplace climate that focuses on innovation, productivity and excellence. This is accomplished by promoting the development of effective work site health and safety management systems and compliance programs, supporting fair and effective resolution of labour disputes and workplace issues, and promoting fair and effective employment standards protection for employers and employees.

### **Goal 4**

#### **Safe and Healthy Workplaces**

##### **STRATEGIES**

- Promote a preventive approach to workplace health and safety by working with industry partners to encourage employers and workers to build effective health and safety programs
- Provide compliance programs targeting poor health and safety performers and uncontrolled hazards
- Respond promptly to workplace complaints and provide advice and recommendations to customers to enable them to address health and safety issues
- Work with industry groups and associations in the development of codes of practice, recommended practices, safe operating procedures and standards, identification and management of hazards and safety information
- Ensure legislation and regulations support meaningful and productive standards of practice. The review of health and safety regulations will be conducted from spring 1999 through 2002

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## RESULTS

Alberta's productivity remained high in 1999/2000 due in part to the department's continuing efforts to ensure a workplace climate that promotes fairness in the workplace, protects the health and safety of our workers, and fosters stable labour relations.

Reductions in employee injuries and disease were maintained in part to the development and implementation of effective health and safety systems and the department's compliance programs. Over 3,000 companies participated in the Partnerships in Health and Safety program, and about 350,000 Alberta workers are covered by certified health and safety programs. Through its focus on partnership and compliance, the department provides workers, employers and other groups with expertise and support to ensure safe and healthy workplaces for Albertans. In 1999, Alberta reported the lowest provincial lost-time claim rate ever recorded in the province.

Compliance efforts continued to target companies with poor health and safety performance. The department proactively addressed health and safety issues in Alberta in 1999/2000 with a 52 per cent increase in workplace health and safety inspections and over 100 per cent increase in workplace health and safety orders.

With the involvement of industry and standards-writing groups, the department produced 20 new information publications and revised 18 others in the past year. Both new and revised materials are posted on the department's Internet site. A health and safety awareness campaign for the welding industry was completed, and awareness campaigns related to falling from heights and first aid began and remain ongoing.

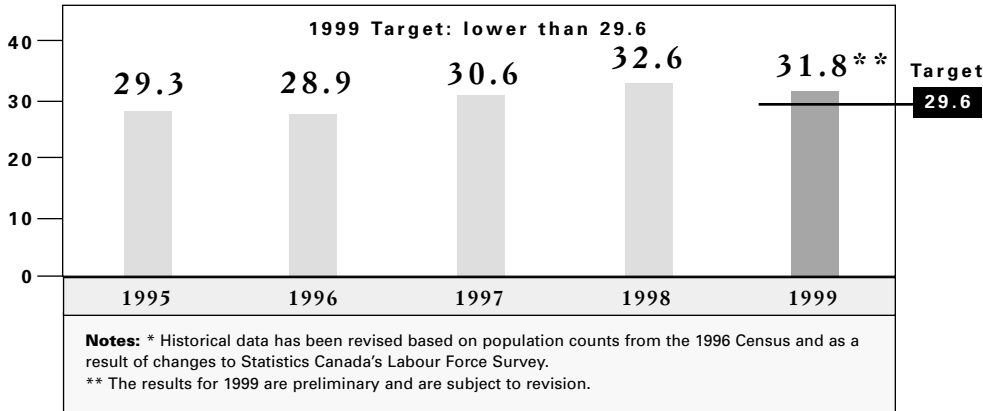
A review of workplace health and safety legislation and regulations was initiated to ensure clarity and to simplify government procedures. Consultation with industry and labour is ongoing and the comprehensive regulatory review will be completed by 2000.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The Workplace Climate Measure has two components: person-days lost due to injury or disease and person-days lost due to work stoppages (i.e. strikes and lockouts).

- The number of person-days lost due to injury or disease, expressed as a rate of the number of person-days worked, provides an indication of overall health and safety in the workplace. This measure incorporates the effects of claims incidence as well as duration and severity, but does not include fatality rates
- The number of person-days lost to work stoppages (strikes and lockouts) reflect labour stability in Alberta. The measure is restricted to unionized workplaces in Alberta. Alberta's reputation as a good place to work and to do business is partly dependent on its ability to nurture and sustain a high level of stability in union/employer relations

**Performance Measure 4.1a  
Workplace climate person-days lost to injury and disease:  
Number of person-days lost to injury or disease per 10,000 person-days worked\***



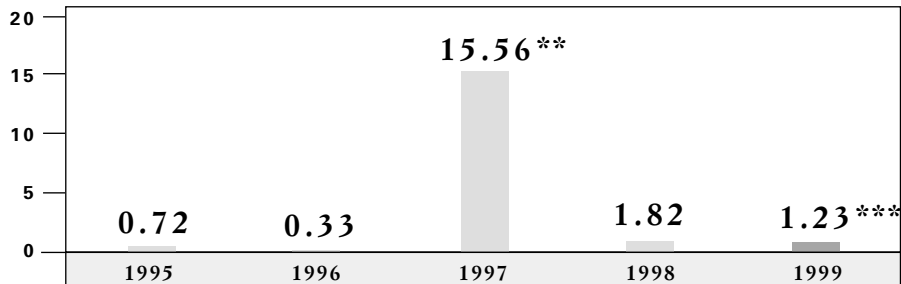
**Performance Measure 4.1b  
Interprovincial ranking of person-days lost to injury and disease\***

1995	1996	1997	1998 (Target)	1998*** (Actual)
1st	1st	1st	3rd**	1st

**Notes:** \* For interprovincial ranking, a ranking of one indicates the lowest rate of all provinces.  
\*\* Target: to be ranked among the 3 lowest of all provinces.  
\*\*\* These rankings are reported one year after they are produced by Human Resources Development Canada

**Sources:** Workers' Compensation Board; Human Resources Development Canada; Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey; Alberta Human Resources and Employment.

**Performance Measure 4.1c  
Person-days lost to work stoppages:  
Number of person-days lost to work stoppages per 10,000  
person-days worked\***



**Notes:** \* Historical data has been revised based on population counts from the 1996 Census and as a result of changes to Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey.  
\*\* The 1997 number reflects the effect of the Canada Safeway strike.  
\*\*\* The results for 1999 are preliminary and are subject to revision.

**Performance Measure 4.1d  
Interprovincial ranking of person-days lost to work stoppage\***

1995	1996	1997	1998	1999 (Target)	1999 (Actual)
1st	2nd	9th	4th	3rd**	2nd

**Notes:** \* For interprovincial ranking, a ranking of one indicates the lowest rate of all provinces.  
\*\* Target: to be ranked among the 3 lowest of all provinces.

**Sources:** Workers' Compensation Board; Human Resources Development Canada; Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey; Alberta Human Resources and Employment.

**ANALYSIS**

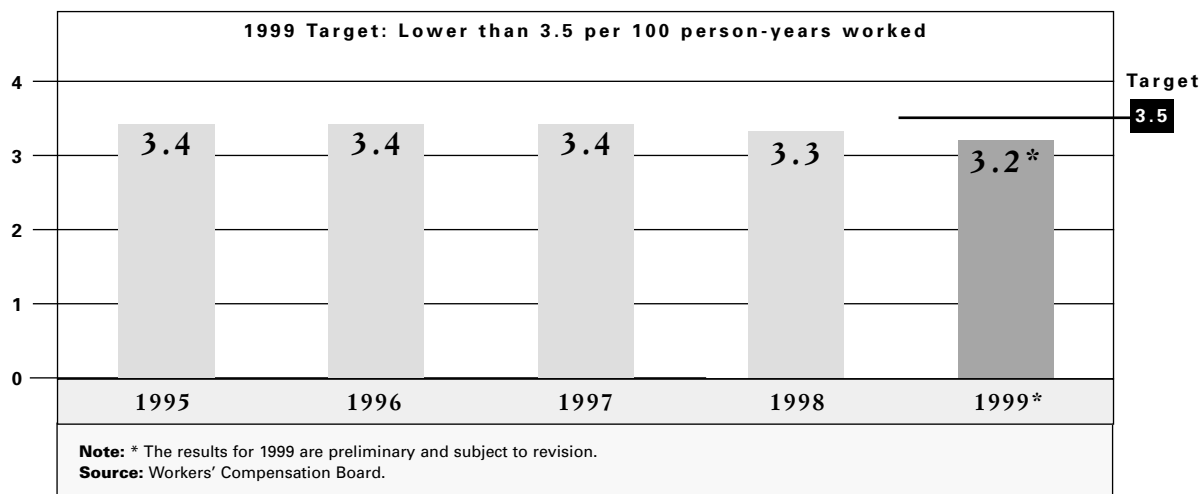
This rate of time lost owing to workplace injury and disease can be attributed to improvements in overall workplace health and safety, as well as better injury claims management by employers. Alberta's rate of time lost to workplace injury and disease remains the lowest in Canada.

Generally, Alberta's workplace stoppage rate is below Canada's overall average. In the 1999 calendar year, Alberta's rate of person-days lost to work stoppages per 10,000 person-days worked (1.23) was the second lowest in Canada and below the national rate of 7.84. This result exceeded our target for 1999/2000, that is, to be ranked among the three lowest provinces.

The Workplace Climate Measure is also a Government Measure, reported in *Measuring Up*. To avoid duplication, this measure will not be reported in the Ministry's future annual reports.

The lost-time claim rate provides an estimate of the probability, or risk, of disabling injury or disease to a worker during a period of one year's work. A lost-time claim occurs when a worker receives wage loss compensation for one or more days after the date of injury. The establishment of effective systems in occupational health and safety should be reflected in reductions in the incidence of lost-time claims relative to person-years worked.

**Performance Measure 4.2 Lost-time claim rate:  
Number of lost-time claims per 100 person-years worked<sup>6</sup>**



**ANALYSIS**

Workplace health and safety in the province is improving. The lost-time claim rate of 3.2 per 100 person-years worked is the lowest ever recorded in the province. The continued reduction in lost-time claim rate since 1993 is a notable achievement as it occurred during a period of strong economic growth, a time when companies expand and recruit less experienced workers.

Although the rate may vary by sector and size of employer, the overall provincial lost-time claim rate has remained below the target of 3.5 per 100 person-years worked. Departmental initiatives such as working with key partners to foster the establishment of effective health and safety management systems among Alberta employers have contributed to the low rate. Other factors that affect the claim rate include economic conditions, industry activities, changing industrial processes and new workplace technology.

**6. Note:** The Lost-Time Claim Rate is calculated as the ratio of WCB compensated lost-time claims to person-years worked. Claims are included in a calendar year if they were made within that year and compensated for by March 31 of the following year. Person-years are an estimate of those worked by employees with WCB coverage.

## Goal 5

### Fair and balanced labour relations

#### STRATEGIES

- Provide strategic labour relations advice, information and options to the Ministry and its customers
- Monitor the effectiveness of Alberta's labour relations legislation and provide strategic policy analysis and advice in consultation with customers
- Build partnerships with, and among, customers to enhance constructive industry and workplace relationships, and promote innovations/best practices that increase the productivity and competitiveness of Alberta organizations
- Promote alternative dispute resolution approaches through consultation, relationship building, interest-based bargaining, and labour/management partnerships to enable labour and management to resolve issues without the need for third party intervention
- Provide impartial third-party mediation assistance, on request, to prevent and resolve labour disputes

#### RESULTS

The department continued to work with industry stakeholders to promote innovations/best practices to increase the workplace productivity and competitiveness of Alberta organizations. During the fiscal year, the department participated in numerous multi-stakeholder initiatives, including joint sessions with the Alberta Building Trades Council and owners/contractors, the Construction Safety Summit, and contributions to the Construction Sector Best Practices Committee.

With the assistance of mediation and facilitation services, stakeholders were encouraged to design workplace practices and solutions to meet their needs. Based on a positive experience with the City of Edmonton and the Firefighters Union, relationship-building initiatives were completed with:

- The County of Strathcona and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees
- The Town of Taber and its unions
- The City of St. Albert and the Firefighters Union
- The Building Trades Council and the Construction Labour Relations Association at Nova's Joffre site, as well as Suncor and Syncrude in Fort McMurray

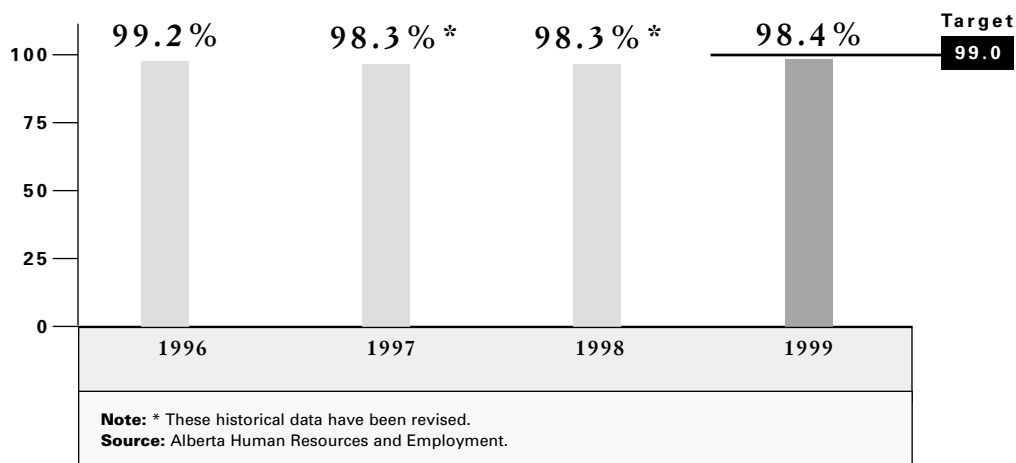
Provincially appointed mediators played a key role in helping clients in health care, education and other sectors reach mediated settlements. Of the 435 collective agreements that expired in 1999/2000, 107 (25 per cent) required the assistance of provincially appointed mediators. Over ninety per cent of the mediated cases were resolved without job action.

Strategic labour relations advice and information was made available to stakeholders and clients through briefings and website services. Effective monitoring of Alberta's labour relations climate resulted in the development of proactive strategies to address disputes in the health care and education sectors.

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The percentage of collective bargaining negotiations that avoid work stoppages provides an indication of labour stability in unionized workplaces in Alberta, and provides an indication that the parties involved are resolving disputes and managing workplace issues. Both employees and employers have access to a framework for the resolution of disputes and the management of workplace issues.

**Performance Measure 5.1**  
**The percentage of collective bargaining negotiations that avoid work stoppage.** <sup>7</sup>



### ANALYSIS

The percentage of expired collective bargaining agreements that are settled without work stoppage continues to remain close to the target of 99 per cent. A number of combined factors influence this measure such as the low unemployment rate, wage freezes and rollbacks by major employers in the 1990s as well as a highly competitive economic environment that can increase the influence of unions in negotiations.

<sup>7</sup> The measure is calculated using the number of Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) filed with Alberta Human Resources and Employment that have expired, and the number of legal strikes and lockouts initiated, in the calendar year. The measure is a ratio of the number of expired CBAs, less legal strikes and lockouts, to the number of expired CBAs.

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## Goal 6

### Effective employment standards and practices, which accurately reflect a changing workplace

#### STRATEGIES

- Educate industry groups, employees and employers about employment standards rights and responsibilities
- Establish a customer advisory group, and consult with our customers to ensure that employment standards delivery and policies serve the needs of Albertans
- Emphasize policy and processes to ensure employment standards services are impartial, consistently customer focused, and meet the needs of the workplace
- Provide compliance programs to deal with chronic violators of the *Employment Standards Code*
- Target industries with poor employment standards compliance performance and implement strategies to improve compliance
- Resolve complaints through the increased use of counseling and mediation
- Increase service productivity resulting from economic growth and maintain stable operational costs

#### RESULTS

The department continued to promote Alberta's *Employment Standards Code* and regulations by offering workshops, Train-the-Trainer sessions, and seminars to employers and employees to inform them about their rights and obligations. Client input to the evaluation of client services resulted in improved self-help information to assist employees resolve their disputes without government intervention. A comprehensive client consultation regarding Employment Standards regulations was completed in March 2000.

On March 31, 2000 the department formed a new partnership with Alberta Restaurant and Food Services Association to improve the industry's compliance. This targeted educational and compliance initiative will lay the foundation to educate employers and employees on employment standards. The department continued to target chronic violators of the *Employment Standards Code* with five prosecutions initiated in 1999/2000.

Resolution assistance was provided where complaints required investigation, prompt and timely information, counseling and impartial dispute resolution. In the past year, 69 per cent of all registered complaints were completed within 120 days, 81 per cent within 180 days, and 97 per cent within 365 days.

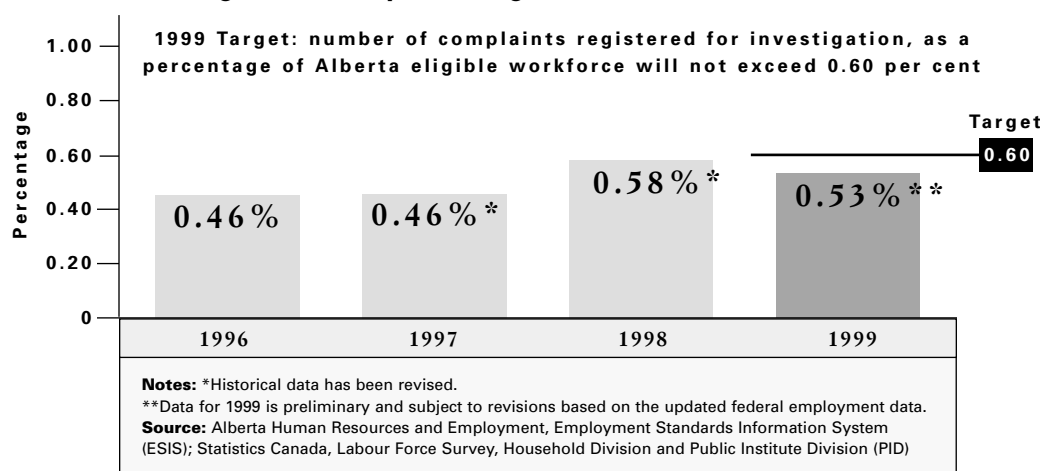


More than 180,000 clients received assistance interpreting and applying employment standards legislation through the Employment Standards Information Line. The Employment Standards Consolidated Telephone (Counseling) Unit was awarded the 1999 Silver Premier's Award of Excellence in recognition of its achievements.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This measure provides an indication of the success of efforts to maintain good working relations between workers and employers primarily in the non-union environment.

### Performance Measure 6.1 Number of complaints registered with Employment Standards for investigation as a percentage of Alberta's workforce.<sup>8</sup>



## ANALYSIS

The department continues to work with employers and employees to create a fair and level playing field in the workplace. The effectiveness of these efforts is reflected in the registered complaints, which have not risen over the last year. Typically, decreased unemployment and significant increases in economic activity, as was experienced this fiscal year, results in an increase in registered complaints. However, most cases in the past year were resolved before they became registered complaints, indicating the success of proactive educational initiatives and compliance programs.

<sup>8</sup> The measure is calculated as the number of Employment Standards complaints registered for investigation in a calendar year, as a percentage of the eligible workforce. Registered complaints are maintained in the Employment Standards Information System (ESIS) at Alberta Human Resources and Employment. The eligible workforce is defined as the total number of agricultural and non-agricultural paid workers in Alberta, less employees under federal jurisdiction who have their own employee grievance procedures. Eligible workforce data are derived from the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Household Division and Public Institute Division (PID).

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# core business

## Supporting Albertans in Need

The department continues to provide support to families, individuals, and those who are the most vulnerable. Albertans requiring assistance can receive help in the form of services, income, or income supplements to meet their basic needs. For dependent adults in need of protection, guardianship services and the facilitation of alternate surrogate decision-making mechanisms are provided.

### Goal 7

#### Assist low income Albertans to achieve economic self-sufficiency

##### STRATEGIES

- Continue helping people move towards independence while providing last resort financial support to those in need
- Provide training and employment supports to help clients who are expected to return to the workforce
- Continue to strengthen the Ministry's strategic alliance with federal programs and other Ministries to deliver an effective range of employment and training programs
- Continue to support the development and implementation of the National Child Benefit by creating or enhancing supports for low-income families
- Increase Alberta Child Health Benefit to 100% coverage for optical, dental, ambulance and drug prescription services, as well as providing essential diabetic supplies for children in low-income families
- Work with Alberta Health and Wellness, the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission and the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities on providing employment supports for Albertans with disabilities in the Canada/Alberta Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (EAPD) cost sharing agreement

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## RESULTS

The department provides job experience and training opportunities to help people on government assistance get back to work. Follow-up data shows that 72 per cent of those who ended an employment program or service in 1998/99 were not receiving Supports for Independence (SFI) benefits 12 months later. However, the changing profile of clients who access Support for Independence, is presenting challenges to maintain these results. Unattached individuals make up a smaller percentage of the caseload while a greater proportion of individuals have multiple barriers to address as they prepare for work.

During 1999/2000, Alberta continued to work with the federal government and other provinces/territories on several initiatives with benefits for low-income Albertans.

- Through the Labour Market Development Agreement, Alberta continues to work with the federal government to provide interventions for unemployed Albertans eligible for Employment Insurance.
- As part of the ongoing Forum of Labour Market Ministers, federal, provincial and territorial governments examined the changing requirements for participation in the labour market and client accessibility to an array of labour market interventions. Alberta took a lead role in identifying gaps in labour market programming and developing the First Annual Profile on Youth in the Canadian Labour Market.
- Benefits and programs for low-income families with children were enhanced in July 1999 under the National Child Benefit (NCB) program, a federal/provincial/territorial initiative carried out by the Ministers Responsible for Social Services.
- Alberta enhanced the Alberta Child Health Benefit by raising qualifying income thresholds in May, 1999, making it sensitive to family size. Approximately \$10.6 million was used to provide benefits for a total of 53,500 children in 1999-2000.
- In February 1999, NCB reinvestment funding was used to increase shelter benefits for families with children on welfare. Shelter allowance increases ranged from \$33 to \$41 monthly per family.

*Employment initiatives designed especially for people on Supports for Independence include:*

***The Alberta Community Employment (ACE)***

*Program helps people to gain or relearn skills while they are on the job.*

***The Employment Skills Program (ESP)***

*provides clients with work experience and training in provincial government departments for up to six months, to give them a chance to refine their job skills.*

***The Alberta Job Corps (AJC)***

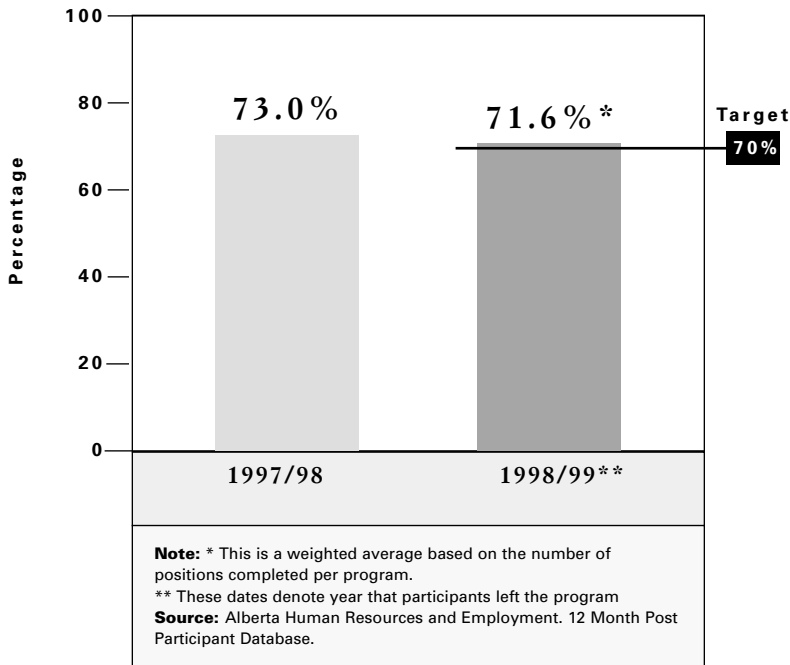
*is available where there is need for the program. Currently available in Northern Alberta, Edmonton and Calgary, it helps people to find their way into the job market.*

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- Alberta is also actively involved in a variety of federal/provincial/territorial disability-related initiatives:
    - During the past year, Alberta actively participated in developing an accountability framework for In Unison, a federal/provincial/territorial vision for ensuring full participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of Canadian society
    - Alberta is currently negotiating with the federal government the exact nature and cost-shareability of employment supports included under the the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) cost-sharing agreement between Alberta and the federal government
  - In addition, the department works with Alberta Health and Wellness, Alberta Learning and the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission to provide disability related employment supports to Albertans under the Employment Supports to Persons with Disabilities (ESPD).
  - From November 1998 to November 1999, Alberta was the lead province in the social services sector. The department's lead role entailed advancing work an all federal/provincial/territorial initiatives.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The department provides job experience and training initiatives for those able to work but who temporarily require financial assistance through Support For Independence (SFI). Client records are monitored after leaving a work experience or training/employment initiative.

### Performance Measure 7.1 Proportion of employment initiative program graduates not receiving SFI benefits 12 months after graduation or placement



## ANALYSIS

The proportion of clients not receiving benefits 12 months after leaving SFI continues to exceed the target. However, the number of SFI clients assessed as being suitable for participation in employment and training initiatives has declined from the previous year. Maintenance of these levels will be a challenge because of the changing composition of the caseload (more families with children) and a more highly barred clientele, resulting in these individuals having more difficulty in returning to and remaining in the workforce.

As part of supporting Albertans in need, the Family Maintenance program helps single parents and parents of blended families obtain financial support from the other parent of their children. It is a mandatory service for all single parents or parents of a blended family who are receiving Supports for Independence (SFI) or Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) benefits.

**Performance Measure 7.2  
Proportion of single parent SFI files with  
child support orders or agreements\***

1998/99	1999/00 (Target)	1999/00 (Actual)
61.8%**	65%	56.3%

**Note:** \* Measure includes all SFI clients referred to Family Maintenance Program who have the potential for child support income plus Maintenance Enforcement Program Collection count (Alberta Justice) divided by SFI single parent caseload.

\*\* The 1998/99 number has been revised from the previously reported result.

**Sources:** Alberta Human Resources and Employment, InfoPac; Alberta Justice.

**ANALYSIS**

The percentage of single parents on SFI with an agreement or order that is being collected is lower than in the previous two years. Department staff negotiate maintenance agreements, obtain court orders for maintenance, and register the agreements and orders with the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) of Alberta Justice. Alberta Justice enforces and collects the support payment. The reasons for the decline are under review.

## Goal 8

### Provide Financial Assistance to Albertans in Need

#### STRATEGIES

- Continue providing last resort financial assistance to meet the basic needs of low-income Albertans
- Continue providing benefits to severely disabled Albertans through the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped program (AISH)
- Review the AISH program and implement changes to help focus on people's abilities

#### RESULTS

Although the department encourages Albertans to participate in the workforce, it also provides support to those who are unable to fully support themselves. In 1999/2000, an average of 31,112<sup>9</sup> clients received Supports for Independence each month, which is less than the forecast 33,000 cases. In addition, approximately 2,500 individuals received the Alberta Widows' Pension.

Following extensive public consultation, improvements to the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program were implemented in October 1999. These included an increase to the income exemption level for single recipients, and extended medical benefits. These changes ensure that AISH recipients can take the step toward independence without jeopardizing their eligibility or chances of returning to the program if they do not succeed. On average, during 1999/2000, 24,760 Albertans received AISH each month.

*The department offers a variety of income support to those who are unable to meet their basic needs. These include:*

***Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)*** provides a basic level of income to persons with severe and permanent disabilities that prevent them from earning a livelihood. The AISH program is income and asset tested, but not needs tested.

***Alberta Widow's Pension*** provides a basic level of income to widows and widowers between the ages of 55 and 64 who have limited financial resources. The program recipients are income tested, but not asset and needs tested.

***Supports For Independence (SFI)*** provides financial and employment assistance for individuals and families who cannot meet their monthly needs. Assistance is also provided to help people access other services, programs, and supports to become more self-reliant. Individuals and families must meet a number of income, asset, and needs criteria, and must have exhausted all alternative means of support. Those who cannot work, or who face significant barriers to being able to work, may receive benefits from the Assured Support sub-program of SFI.

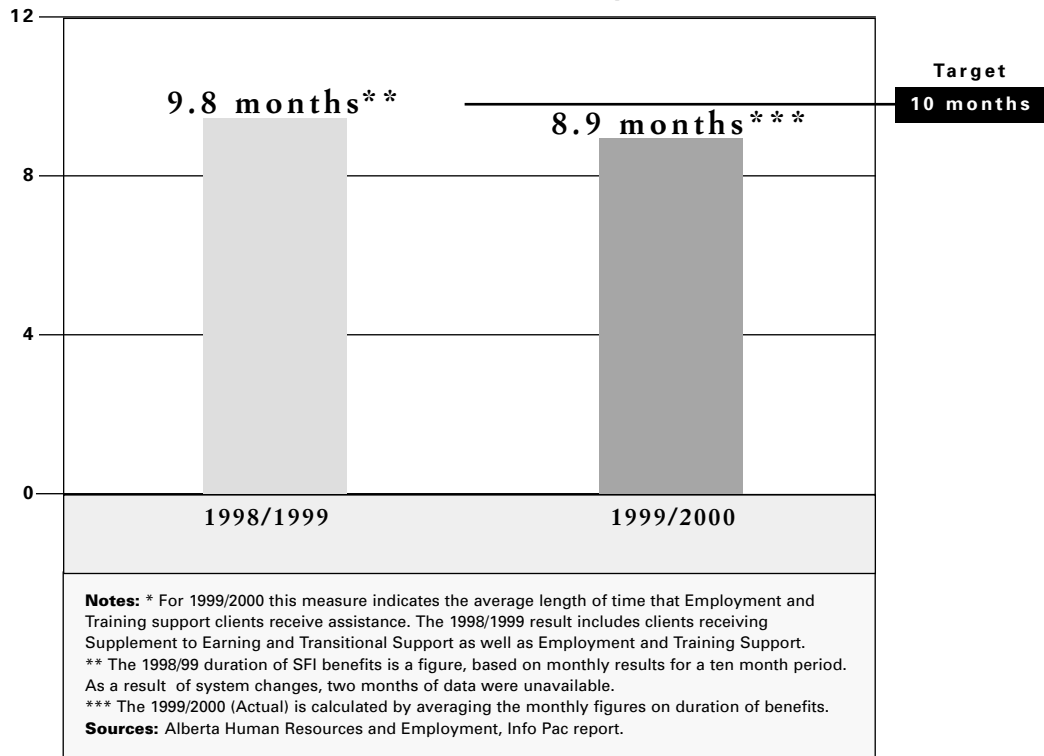
<sup>9</sup> Alberta Human Resources and Employment, InfoPac report

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Albertans who are temporarily unable to participate in the labour market can receive short-term financial assistance. A decrease in the average length of time 'expected-to-work' clients receive assistance indicates greater economic independence.

### Performance Measure 8.1

#### Duration of SFI benefits for Clients Expected to Work.\*



## ANALYSIS

During 1999/2000, Employment and Training Support clients receiving assistance spent less time accessing benefits than the target. Decreased duration of SFI benefits indicates decreasing dependence on social assistance.



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## Goal 9

### Support Vulnerable Albertans

#### STRATEGIES

- Work with other Ministries to simplify administrative processes under the *Dependent Adults Act*
- Evaluate the implementation and administration of the *Personal Directives Act* and of the *Mental Health Act* amendment assigning the Public Guardian the role of a decision-maker of last resort

#### RESULTS

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG):

- Continues to support adult Albertans who cannot make their own decisions and helps people plan for their own future with personal directives
- Continues to assist private individuals in obtaining a guardianship order on an adult who is unable to make independent decisions
- Continues to appoint public guardians for those dependent adults who do not have family members or any other interested person who might apply to become a guardian

During the past year, the OPG streamlined the administrative process for obtaining guardianship orders. Working with Alberta Justice, self-help kits were made more user-friendly and legislation was amended to allow individuals living outside of the province to become guardians for dependent adults residing in Alberta.

The *Personal Directives Act* promotes self-determination by enabling adult Albertans to appoint a substitute decision-maker and provide instructions regarding personal non-financial matters in the event of future loss of capacity. A review of the Act was coordinated with the departments of Alberta Justice, Health and Wellness, and Community Development. While the study determined that the legislation is serving its intended purpose, it also yielded a number of recommendations for program improvements, such as:

- Inform and educate Albertans including service providers about their responsibilities under the Act
- Provide information to professional organizations and groups about the importance of developing policies and protocols respecting the implementation of the Act, and
- Gather information about the ongoing performance of the Act, including court challenges

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Client satisfaction is a measurement of how effectively the supports and services respond to clients' needs.

### **Performance Measure 9.1 Percent of dependent adults and/or their guardians/families satisfied with the supports and services provided by the OPG.**

	1999/00 (Target)	1999/00 (Actual)
Degree of satisfaction reported by survey participants	90.0%	Not yet available*
<b>Note:</b> * Service providers rather than dependent adults and/or their guardians/families were surveyed in 1999/2000.		

## ANALYSIS

The OPG measured satisfaction with supports and services provided for the first time in 1999/2000. In the initial phase, service providers who access the services on behalf of their clients (dependent adults and/or their guardians/families) were surveyed. Over three quarters of these respondents indicated they were satisfied with the services of the OPG.\*

The department intends to survey dependent adults and/or their guardians and families in 2000/2001. The results of these surveys will assist the OPG in developing future key strategies and in responding more effectively to its clients.

## Dropped Performance Measures

The restated 1999-2002 Alberta Human Resources and Employment business plan tabled in November 1999 was derived from business plans tabled in February 1999 by the former Ministries of Advanced Education and Career Development, Alberta Labour, and Alberta Family and Social Services.

While developing the business plan for the new department, some performance measures were deemed to be no longer relevant.

**Appendix #2 reflects past measures and their related status**

\* Alberta Human Resources and Employment (2000) Satisfaction Survey Report. Results are based on 207 questionnaires completed by service providers across the province in February 2000.

Department of Alberta Human  
Resources and Employment

# future challenges

goals, measures, results

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Alberta Human Resources and Employment will face various challenges during the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The department is committed to helping Albertans reach their full potential and fostering healthy, safe and productive workplaces. As we build our new business plan, we will continue to explore new and innovative ways of addressing these challenges to develop effective strategies and actions.

Key challenges include:

#### **SUPPORTING ALBERTANS TO BE INDEPENDENT**

The disposable income of working Albertans should be greater than that of Albertans on income support. However, low-income earners who are not on income support programs are finding it harder to meet their needs based on their income. Incentives to become self-supporting and independent must be further encouraged. To this end, the department will focus on developing strategies to address issues faced by low-income earners. Programs must be designed so that clients leaving the assistance programs do not experience a sudden and steep rise in the cost of basic needs (including medical, shelter, schooling and daycare). Program resources will shift to assist individuals in their employment plans such as: skills development, retraining and upgrading, job search and retention, social skills, and financial management.

#### **EARLY INTERVENTIONS**

Finding ways to intervene at an early stage with prospective and existing members of the workforce remains a challenge. Young people and high school students need to understand the changing requirements in the workplace and what those changes mean for adequate career preparation. Helping potential applicants for Supports for Independence (SFI) receive timely employment assistance, rather than accessing income support, minimizes the difficulties of re-entering the workforce after a lengthy absence from it. By implementing a new case management process, we can improve the quality support provided to clients by ensuring success for the client in overcoming barriers.

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## **RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF A DIVERSE WORKFORCE**

The opportunity exists to involve an increasingly diverse population in Alberta's workforce. The challenge is to design, develop and deliver programs that meet the identified needs of individuals. Persons with disabilities, aboriginal people, people who lack work experience and skills and those who lack the resources to further develop their skills, may encounter difficulty making a permanent attachment to the workforce. Some programs are in place but creative solutions to emerging problems must be developed.

## **A RAPIDLY CHANGING ECONOMY**

Globalization and change are rapidly transforming Alberta's economy, especially in sectors such as oil and gas, and technology. This creates new challenges for the Alberta workforce to adjust to changing requirements by acquiring new skills and methods of work. With above average growth rates projected for Alberta's economy, industry leaders are identifying difficulties in obtaining workers for peak periods of high construction. The Alberta Construction Workforce Supply/Demand Forecast (five year forecast 2000/04) indicates moderate to severe shortages for the following trades: millwrights, electricians, carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers and pipefitters and ironworkers.

Within some industrial sectors, aging and retirements are expected to be a concern within some industrial sectors such as agriculture, finance, public administration and community service. Teachers and those in the construction trades will be particularly affected.

New technologies will continue to change Alberta's workplaces as it tends to create jobs requiring a higher level of education. With fewer jobs requiring manual or clerical skills, accessing career training, skills development and learning opportunities will be critical for the majority of Alberta's workforce. Improving educational and training opportunities for Alberta's young people, and other groups that have typically not participated fully in the province's economic opportunities, will be an important challenge.

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## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

For most people, education, particularly post-secondary education will be the key to participating in Alberta's economic future. Of all the new jobs created from 1999 to 2008, approximately 58 per cent will require some form of post-secondary training. Only 12 per cent of new job openings will not require a high school diploma. The remaining 30 per cent of new jobs will require high school graduation and/or work experience.

Lifelong learning or training enables workers to adapt to a rapidly changing labour market. Essential skills or the ability to learn is the key to employability.

## **WORKPLACE STABILITY**

There is a general trend towards more highly skilled and educated workers in Alberta's workplaces. In the next few years, these workers may expect to play a greater role in determining workplace issues. The department's challenge is to help build collaborative relationships that will address this trend and result in greater labour/management co-operation. The department is currently developing a strategy to deliver collaborative workplace relationships and interest-based problem solving training throughout Alberta's workplaces to reduce workplace disruptions.

It is important for the province's labour relations framework to remain relevant and innovative to meet emerging workplace challenges. The department will continue to monitor national and international labour relations initiatives to ensure the province's labour relations practices are leading edge.

The challenges for the department's mediation services include maintaining a roster of qualified arbitrators who provide neutral third-party adjudication of workplace disputes where the parties cannot mutually agree on an arbitrator. Recently, there has been a trend to use government appointed arbitrators more. The number of qualified arbitrators in the province is shrinking due to such factors as retirement. The department is currently working with key workplace stakeholders to develop a strategy to ensure the availability of qualified arbitrators.

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### **HEALTH AND SAFETY OF WORKERS IN A GROWING ECONOMY**

The department will be challenged to respond to the demands of a continuously expanding client base. Over the past ten years, Alberta's workforce has been increasing. Although there has been a reduction in the rate of injuries in the province, the department is striving to become more innovative by promoting health and safety management systems and strategic enforcement focusing on industries with poor performance and uncontrolled hazards.

### **LABOUR MOBILITY**

In the *Agreement on Internal Trade*, federal, provincial and territorial governments have agreed to remove or reduce interprovincial barriers to the movement of workers, goods, services and capital. Differences in how occupational qualifications are recognized, licensed, or certified have limited the ability of Canadians to work in other locations within the country. The ability of labour to move back and forth across national and international boundaries is seen as an important step in furthering our economic growth. The department is working toward the goal of ensuring that qualified workers in Alberta will have access to employment opportunities anywhere in the country. Meeting the July 2001 deadline for the removal of all barriers to the free movement of professionals within Canada is a priority.

### **TEAMWORK WITH AND AMONG GOVERNMENTS**

Departmental income support, disability and labour market programs are just one component of a broader system of federal and provincial programs to help people meet basic needs and connect to the labour market. The challenge for inter-governmental co-operation, is to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear, in order to reduce duplication and simplify access to the various services.