

Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour

BUSINESS PLAN 2015–18

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of October 15, 2015.

original signed by

Lori Sigurdson, Minister

THE MINISTRY

The ministry consists of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour. Within the department's budget, funding is provided for the Alberta Labour Relations Board, the Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation, the Workers' Compensation Medical Panels and the Occupational Health and Safety Council, which are accountable to the minister. The Workers' Compensation Board, which is an employer-funded, non-profit organization legislated to administer the workers' compensation system for Alberta, is a separate entity that is also accountable to the minister.

The ministry's role in workforce and workplace policy and program development contributes to a better quality of life for Albertans. It supports the needs of workers, employers and Albertans by focusing on growing a skilled workforce for the jobs of today as well as tomorrow, through a workplace environment that is safe, fair and healthy.

A more detailed description of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour and its programs and initiatives can be found at www.work.alberta.ca.

LINK TO GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The desired outcomes and priority initiatives identified in this business plan are aligned with the strategic direction of the Government of Alberta.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The ministry bridges the gap between Albertans who need work and businesses that need workers. By helping Albertans have the right skills and helping workers find and retain employment, Alberta will become even stronger and more prosperous.

The ministry provides legislation, policy development, program design, education, compliance and enforcement programs to ensure adequate health, safety and employment standards for Alberta workers. Additionally, a fair and balanced framework for collective bargaining contributes to a stable labour relations environment.

The ministry will be working toward ensuring all workers are treated equally and that Alberta is more closely aligned with international standards with respect to workers' rights. This includes providing workers in the farm and ranch sector with the protections workers have in other sectors.

For too long, Alberta has been the only Canadian jurisdiction that maintains broad exemptions for the farm and ranch sector with respect to core labour legislation.

Even with fluctuations in the economy there are still industries where labour shortages persist. The ministry works with its partners to attract, retain and develop the workforce Alberta needs. The ministry works with the federal government to ensure labour and immigration policies are flexible and responsive to the unique needs of Alberta. The ministry also directly intervenes, as necessary, with a view to ensuring the rights of Alberta workers are respected. In addition to a sound strategy and plan, businesses require a social licence to operate. This is achieved, in part, by understanding and embracing Alberta's standards related to treating employees fairly, as well as proactively assessing work site operations to protect workers from harm.

The ministry works with its partners to plan and develop programs that promote a skilled and adaptable workforce that supports a sustainable and prosperous economy. The ministry has a leadership role in working with labour, industry and other ministries to develop labour market information, to help workers acquire the right skills to be nimble and productive and to enhance the health, well-being and rights of all workers.

DESIRED OUTCOMES, PRIORITY INITIATIVES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES UNDER DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Desired Outcome One: Albertans have the skills demanded by Alberta's labour market

The ministry focuses on policy leadership, development of labour market information and targeted programs and services that support skills training for Albertans. It works with Albertans and employers to address skill mismatches and under-employment.

Priority Initiatives:

- 1.1 Target skills training funds to support Albertans and their employers to ensure that programs are relevant and expected outcomes are achieved in collaboration with other ministries.
- 1.2 Develop and administer workplace training and employment programs to assist Albertans in attaching to the labour force and maintaining employment and increasing employer engagement and investment in workplace training.
- 1.3 Contribute to the implementation of recommendations outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 1.4 Develop career awareness tools and targeted initiatives to support and assist all Albertans and, in particular, underrepresented groups, in being better prepared to fully participate in Alberta's economy.
- 1.5 Develop and implement a new labour market information and intelligence system to support informed decision-making by Albertans, government, communities, training providers and employers.

Performance Measure	Last Actual 2013	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
1.a Interprovincial rank of Alberta's labour force participation rate (#1 is the highest) ¹	#1	#1	#1	#1

Note:

- ¹ Labour force participation rate represents the percentage of Albertans aged 15 to 64 who are either employed or actively seeking employment.

Performance Indicator	Actual 2010	Actual 2011	Actual 2012	Actual 2013
1.a Labour force participation rate of:				
• All Albertans	73.0%	73.6%	73.6%	73.1%
• Aboriginal Albertans living off-reserve	70.4%	67.5%	71.0%	71.9%
• Alberta's immigrant population	68.9%	70.2%	70.1%	68.4%
• Alberta youth (aged 15–24)	69.1%	69.9%	68.2%	67.9%

Desired Outcome Two: Alberta is able to attract and retain a skilled, resilient and productive workforce

Many Alberta employers face challenges in finding and retaining workers at all skill levels and in high-demand occupations. The ministry focuses on programs and services that attract workers to Alberta, assist Albertans in upgrading their skills and support employers as needed. It leads the work with other ministries, industry and the federal government to shape Alberta's labour market policy. The ministry develops and implements policies, legislation, strategies and programs to address labour force needs, including skills shortages. The ministry also works to increase labour mobility and reduce barriers to employment to improve participation in Alberta's labour force. Key areas of focus for the ministry include policy and program development and/or delivery in areas such as increasing participation of all Albertans who are willing and able to work, workplace productivity, governance and licensing of professions, foreign qualification recognition, labour mobility, international marketing, labour attraction and selection of immigrants.

Priority Initiatives:

- 2.1 Improve participation in Alberta's workforce, particularly among underrepresented groups.
- 2.2 Encourage job creation through the Job Creation Incentive Program and by connecting Alberta employers to the programs and services that support their role as job creators and the builders of a skilled workforce.
- 2.3 Leverage targeted attraction and retention strategies and the implementation of labour mobility priorities to assist Alberta employers in supplementing their workforce. Further address productivity through targeted work with employers to increase workplace essential skills.
- 2.4 Develop and implement initiatives to strengthen the recognition of qualifications of workers coming from outside Alberta, including increasing the capacity of professional regulatory organizations.

Performance Measure	Last Actual 2013	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
2.a Number of principal economic applicants that choose Alberta as their destination ¹	9,064	8,900	8,900	8,900

Note:

- ¹ The principal economic applicant means the person who was approved to enter Canada based on an assessment of their education, work experience and language ability. It does not include their spouse or dependent children.

Performance Indicator	Actual 2009	Actual 2010	Actual 2011	Actual 2012
2.a Percentage of Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program nominees who report that they are still residing and working in Alberta one year after obtaining permanent residency	90.4%	87.8%	82.4%	88.5%

Desired Outcome Three: Alberta has safe, fair and healthy workplaces

Alberta's workplace legislation, policies and programs help keep workers safe, ensure employees and employers are treated fairly and provide a fair and balanced framework for the process of collective bargaining. The ministry promotes, regulates and monitors Alberta's workplaces and encourages positive relations through effective communication, education, enforcement and dispute resolution. Safe, fair and healthy workplaces contribute to labour productivity and improve the quality of life for Albertans. They also make Alberta a more attractive place to live and work.

Priority Initiatives:

- 3.1 Improve the ability to identify workplace trends and continuously improve occupational health and safety and employment standards policy, legislation and programs.
- 3.2 Ensure Alberta's labour legislation and policies remain effective, efficient, relevant and provide effective dispute resolution services.
- 3.3 Improve the delivery of employment standards to Albertans with a focus on providing quality, timely and fair services.
- 3.4 Develop a comprehensive strategic framework for injury and illness prevention, in collaboration with partners and other government ministries.
- 3.5 Improve workplace compliance with occupational health and safety legislation by enhancing evidence-based proactive program initiatives, while balancing education and enforcement activities.
- 3.6 Promote safe, fair and healthy workplaces that support a positive workplace culture through improved knowledge, attitudes and behaviours.
- 3.7 Incorporate the farm and ranch sector into Alberta's labour laws to ensure farm and ranch workers enjoy the same protections as workers in all other sectors.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
3.a Lost-time claim rate: • Number of lost-time claims per 100 person-years worked	1.35 (2013)	1.35	1.33	1.31
3.b Disabling injury rate: • Number of disabling injuries per 100 person-years worked	2.67 (2013)	2.60	2.55	2.51
3.c Percentage of employment standards complaints completed within 180 days of date complaint received	61% (2013-14)	63%	65%	67%
3.d Percentage of employment standards complaints with voluntary resolution	78% (2013-14)	79%	80%	81%
3.e Percentage of employed Albertans who perceive Alberta workplaces are safe	93% (2013-14)	94%	95%	95%

Desired Outcome Four: Alberta's collective bargaining laws are fairly and equitably applied

The Alberta Labour Relations Board is an independent and impartial tribunal responsible for the day-to-day application and interpretation of Alberta's labour laws. It processes applications and holds hearings. The Board actively encourages dispute resolution, employs officers for investigations and makes major policy decisions. Governing legislation related to this program includes the *Labour Relations Code*, *Public Service Employee Relations Act*, and *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act*. The Board also has limited responsibility under various other pieces of legislation.

The Board's mission is to administer, interpret and enforce Alberta's collective bargaining laws in an impartial, knowledgeable, efficient, timely and consistent way.

Priority Initiatives:

- 4.1 Continue to provide efficient, timely, effective and consistent services to the Alberta labour relations community.
- 4.2 Promote the use of alternative dispute resolution methods to solve issues before reaching formal hearings.
- 4.3 Continue to issue clear and timely decisions.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2013-14	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
4.a Average number of days from the acceptance of an application to the date of the first hearing	58	70	70	70
4.b Percentage of decisions rendered by the Labour Relations Board within 90 calendar days from the completion of the hearing(s)	84%	85%	85%	85%

Desired Outcome Five: Albertans have access to timely, fair and independent appeal services through the Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation

The Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation is the final level of appeal for workers' compensation matters in Alberta. The Appeals Commission operates under the authority of the *Workers' Compensation Act*. Its mission is to provide a timely, fair and independent appeals process consistent with legislation, policy and the principles of natural justice. The Appeals Commission is independent of the Workers' Compensation Board and is accountable to the Minister of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour.

Priority Initiatives:

- 5.1 Continue to provide timely and fair appeal services through the Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation.
- 5.2 Enhance the existing quality management program to ensure the quality and timeliness of the decisions published by the Commission.
- 5.3 Enhance access to justice by providing stakeholders with the assistance they require to be active participants in the appeals process.
- 5.4 Enhance information technology resources, including transitioning to electronic document management, to enable the Commission to be more responsive and timely in the course of an appeal.

Performance Measure	Last Actual 2013-14	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17	Target 2017-18
5.a Percentage of decisions not challenged, or if challenged, supported by the Appeals Commission's reconsideration process, the Court of Queen's Bench, the Court of Appeal or the Alberta Ombudsman	99%	98%	98%	98%

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
Consolidated Financial Statements Basis

(thousands of dollars)	Comparable			
	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Estimate	2016-17 Target	2017-18 Target
REVENUE				
Labour Market Development	15,247	22,941	30,758	38,566
Premiums, Fees and Licences	1,325	2,185	2,185	2,185
Transfers from Government of Canada	1,212	1,075	413	-
Other Revenue	50,357	57,846	58,072	58,083
Total	68,141	84,047	91,428	98,834
EXPENSE				
Ministry Support Services	9,002	10,318	10,381	10,381
Workforce Strategies	67,373	97,433	114,492	121,837
Safe, Fair and Healthy Workplaces	56,874	61,616	64,918	63,938
Labour Relations Board	3,183	3,631	3,698	3,698
Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation	12,115	13,294	13,816	13,686
Job Creation Incentive Program	-	22,250	89,000	66,750
Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment	(20,127)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Total	128,420	188,542	276,305	260,290
Net Operating Result	(60,279)	(104,495)	(184,877)	(161,456)
CAPITAL INVESTMENT				
Ministry Support Services	6	-	-	-
Workforce Strategies	367	-	-	-
Safe, Fair and Healthy Workplaces	172	900	900	900
Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation	214	300	-	-
Total	759	1,200	900	900