



**APPEALS
COMMISSION**

FOR ALBERTA WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Business Plan 2015-2017

Alberta 

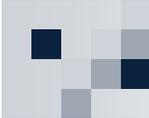


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Message from the Minister



Our Ministry's mandate focuses on the growth of a productive workforce in a safe and healthy work environment. The fulfillment of this mandate is central to Alberta's role as a driving force in the Canadian economy.

In our 2014 Business Plan, the development of fair workplaces was one of our key goals. An important component of this goal is the provision of timely and independent appeal process to bring finality to appeals filed by workers and employers from decisions of the WCB's review body.

As outlined in the Appeals Commission's Mandate and Roles Document, the Chief Appeals Commissioner, as Chair and Chief Executive Officer, reports directly to me. He is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations and management of the Appeals Commission, ensuring that its performance measures are met, and developing the Commission's Business Plan.

We have developed this year's plan in the context of the financial issues currently affecting the Government of Alberta. Prepared in conjunction with my office, this plan represents a balance between meeting the Commission's performance requirements and containing costs during a period of financial constraint.

I'm particularly pleased to report the initiative shown by the Appeals Commission in offering temporary housing to both the Occupational Health and Safety Council, for which it will provide administrative services and hearing rooms, and the staff of the Medical Panel Office. The initiative rationalizes the Commission's investment in its new facilities and defers capital and operating expenditure requirements. This resourcefulness, without incremental cost to the government, represents an excellent example of responsible cost containment without a corresponding reduction in service to the public.

I look forward to the Appeals Commission's implementation of its 2015-2017 Business Plan and to receiving ongoing reporting regarding its progress.

Ric McIver
Minister - Ministry of Jobs Skills Training and Labour

Message from the Chief Appeals Commissioner



Rifath Mohammed
Vice Chair



Douglass M Tadman, QC
Chief Appeals Commissioner



Donna Maxwell
Vice Chair

During our development of the 2015-2017 Business Plan, the projected revenue shortfall affecting the Government of Alberta encouraged us to rethink our business. While our mission remains the provision of an independent appeals process consistent with legislation and policy, our challenge is to meet our mission objectives while reducing costs and optimizing the use of our resources.

Our cost containment initiatives dovetail with our strategic initiatives for the next three years, allowing us to continue improving our business in a meaningful, but cost effective, way. Our strategic priorities result from the following major developments of the last year:

- **Amendments to the *Workers' Compensation Act*:** In 2014, the Alberta Legislature passed Bill 6, which amended the *Workers' Compensation Act* to allow for an electronic information sharing agreement between the Appeals Commission and the WCB. The passing of Bill 6 presents the opportunity to streamline our information systems by moving from a paper-based process to one that is primarily electronic, increasing the efficiency of our operations and reducing printing, distribution and storage costs. Concurrently, we will modify our Records and Information System (RIM) to insure the integrity and security of its electronic records.
- **Edmonton Office Relocation:** We completed the relocation of our Edmonton office to the Standard Life Centre in September 2014. As part of our relocation, we installed video conferencing equipment in all four hearing rooms and two of our meeting rooms. This virtual connection between the Edmonton and Calgary offices decreased the frequency of interoffice travel, reducing overall administrative costs, while increasing interoffice communication.

Message from the Chief Appeals Commissioner

The open area concept adopted by the Commission allowed the consolidation of our offices from three floors to one floor. Space allocation in accordance with current Government of Alberta guidelines resulted in a smaller footprint, while creating more usable space. The additional space allows to house the Medical Panel Office and the Occupational Health and Safety Council on a temporary basis, providing offices, hearing rooms, and administrative support at no additional cost to these independent government agencies.

- **Calgary Office Relocation:** Our Calgary offices have been located in the Braithwaite Boyle building since 1993. We could not modify our existing premises to meet current government security standards without undue cost and the building has proven unsuitable because of its peripheral location, lack of parking, and poor access to public transportation.

In coordination with Infrastructure Alberta, we addressed these shortcomings by entering into a long-term lease with AMEC Place, located in downtown Calgary. We expect occupancy in November 2015. As in Edmonton, our new offices will also house both the Medical Panel Office and the Occupational Health and Safety Council.

- **Self-Represented Litigants:** Our 2014-2015 statistics show that 8% of parties appearing at our hearings were self-represented. Presenting an effective appeal requires information about the policy and legislation affecting an appeal, as well as an understanding of our processes. Using published materials, such as our *Appeal Rules* and *Practice Guidelines*, we are committed to providing these individuals with the updated, online tools and information they need to facilitate effective appeal hearings.
- **Commissioner Recruitment and Attrition:** Over the last 24 months, we lost approximately 40% of our experienced appeals commissioners due to the combined effects of natural attrition and the 12-year term limit imposed by the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act*. We have addressed the continuous erosion of our corporate knowledge with the following strategies:
 - developing and introducing a knowledge management database;
 - enhancing our recruitment process by the introduction of testing;
 - increasing the scope and thoroughness of commissioner orientation;
 - initiating a continuous quality improvement program; and
 - strengthening our legal services department.

Message from the Chief Appeals Commissioner

- **Change in Workload:** In 2014-2015, we received 959 initial appeals, representing a 4% reduction in workload compared to the previous year. Levelled demand for appeal services along with increasing efficiencies influenced our planning and objectives for recruitment, staffing levels and other initiatives.

Based on these developments and the Government of Alberta cost containment goals, the following objectives are at the core of our current business plan:

1. Broaden our technology capacity to facilitate distribution and use of electronic files and initiate a electronic information sharing pilot project with the Office of the Appeals Advisor.
2. Develop a records and information management system to support the distribution and storage of electronic files, while protecting individual and institutional privacy and data security concerns.
3. Relocate our Calgary offices and provide temporary housing for the Medical Panel Office and the Occupational Health and Safety Council.
4. Enhance access to justice by expanding our web presence and the developing of web-based information and instructional tools.
5. Recruit and develop new appeals commissioners while seeking an exemption from the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* term limit for the commissioners employed as full-time hearing chairs.
6. Develop a comprehensive continuous quality improvement system to maintain corporate knowledge, support the development of commissioners and staff, and continue the enhancement of our knowledge management database.
7. Based on current workload projections, initiate cost effective cost containment while maintaining service levels.

Realizing these priorities for the coming three-year cycle will be demanding. It will take the combined effort of the adjudicators and staff who together comprise the Appeals Commission to realize our plan, but the effort will result in a more efficient Commission that continues to fulfill its legislative mandate.

Who We Are and What We Do

The Appeals Commission for Alberta Workers' Compensation is quasi-judicial tribunal operating under the authority of the *Workers' Compensation Act* as the final level of appeal from decisions made by a review body appointed by the system administrator, the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB). Our mission is to provide a timely, fair, and independent appeals process consistent with legislation, policy, and the principles of natural justice. As a Government of Alberta entity independent of the WCB, we report to the Minister of Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour. Our Mandate and Roles Document, which is housed with the Agency Governance Secretariat, guides this reporting relationship.

Adjudicators, including the Chief Appeals Commissioner, are merit-based appointments recruited through public competition. The Lieutenant Governor in Council appoints appeals commissioners as representative of either the interests of employers or the interests of workers. We recommend new commissioners for appointment with reference to a competency matrix, and all appeals commissioners are subject to a Code of Conduct. The Agency Governance Secretariat also houses the competency matrix and the Code of Conduct.

To ensure impartial and unbiased adjudication, legislation prohibits the appointment of WCB employees or members of the WCB Board of Directors as appeals commissioners. Presently, there are 55 adjudicators – 20 full-time hearing chairs and 35 part-time commissioners. The Chief Appeals Commissioner is the CEO of the Appeals Commission, and directs our operations with the support of an executive team comprising two Vice-Chairs, General Counsel, and a Director.

Appeals are heard by panels of three commissioners, who issue a decision that must be implemented by the WCB within 30 days. Our decisions are published on the Canadian Legal Information Institute website (www.canlii.org). These decisions are intended by legislation to be final and binding, but they are subject to appeal on a question of law or jurisdiction to the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta. An appeal from a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench lies to the Court of Appeal and subsequently to the Supreme Court of Canada. Our decisions may also be reviewed by the Alberta Ombudsman. The Ombudsman operates independently from the Alberta government and elected officials, promoting standards of fairness, and has the authority to make recommendations if an investigation identifies administrative unfairness.



Who We Are and What We Do

In the 2013-2014 fiscal year, we received over 1000 initial appeals and conducted more than 900 hearings, 85% of which occurred in-person. An appeal to the Commission provides an appellant with the opportunity to call witnesses, present evidence, and argue their position in a structured but informal setting. Appellants may argue their own case or may choose to rely on a professional or lay advocate. Adjudicators are independent of the WCB, but they are required by legislation to observe the policies established by the Board of Directors of the WCB. This requirement provides an objective basis for decision-making and ensures that all appellants are treated equally.

Of the initial appeals received, 84% were initiated by injured workers, dissatisfied with decisions of the WCB review body disqualifying or limiting their entitlement to benefits. Employers challenging decisions made on workers' claims or questioning assessment decisions filed the remainder.

Our Vision

“The Leader in Innovative Appeal Services”

Our Mission

To provide a timely, fair and independent appeals process consistent with legislation, policy and the principles of natural justice.

Our Values

Respect: We respect all persons treating them with honesty and integrity.

- In our dealings with people we are truthful, ethical and straightforward.
- We show respect by treating all people the way we would like to be treated. In doing so, we consider people’s thoughts, aspirations and feelings.

Excellence: We are committed to excellence in service through quality and consistency.

- We believe in setting high standards and striving to achieve them.
- In order to achieve standards of excellence, we recognize that we are accountable for our performance.
- We promote a learning environment by providing opportunities for developing and enhancing skills and knowledge.

Fairness: We achieve fairness through being impartial and unbiased.

- We achieve impartial decision-making by ensuring all of our actions are free of bias and prejudice.
- We believe in treating all individuals equitably.

Co-operation: We achieve co-operation through sincere, open communication and teamwork.

- We are committed to open communication with each other and all individuals who utilize our services.
- We value the freedom and comfort to share our thoughts and feelings, secure in the knowledge they will be given genuine consideration.
- We work together as a team focused on the achievement of common, well-defined goals.

Adjudication

The *Workers' Compensation Act* establishes the Appeals Commission as the final level of a two-step appeal process with respect to workers' compensation matters in Alberta. Appellants dissatisfied with a decision of a claims adjudicator must first appeal to a review body established by the Workers' Compensation Board.

Appeals Commission decisions are made by appeals commissioners who are appointed by the government through a merit-based recruitment process and remunerated pursuant to government regulation. The Commission, while independent of the WCB, is required by legislation to base its decisions on WCB policy to ensure appellants are treated equally and in a consistent manner.

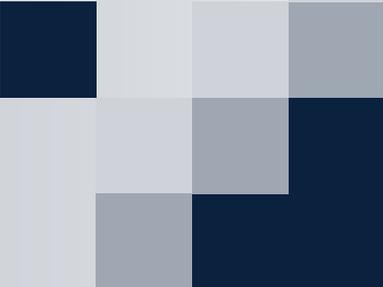
The Commission's key business is hearing and deciding appeals. Commissioners are supported by a highly-trained and educated team made up of appeals officers, appeal secretaries and a small, effective team of administrators. To support its business, the Commission is committed to ongoing recruitment, training and retention of its Commissioners and staff within the context of a comprehensive quality management program.

Access to Justice

For the Appeals Commission, ensuring access to justice means removing barriers to participation in our appeals, facilitating open access to information and providing education to our stakeholders. We are committed to evolving a technologically competent and modern environment facilitating efficient, open and prompt appeal resolution while identifying and eliminating participation barriers wherever possible.

Organizational Capacity

Organizational capacity means ensuring that we have the individuals, tools and processes necessary to meet our statutory obligations. Effective organizational capacity supports our vision, mission and values to maintain a timely, fair and independent appeal process. This means constant renewal of the Commission through effective tools, ongoing recruitment and training, supported by meaningful quality assurance processes.



Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Develop the Commission's Technology Capacity

What it Means

We are dedicated to the continuous improvement of our information technology and records management to facilitate the improvement of the appeal process, enhance access to justice, and increase productivity while reducing operational costs.

In 2010, we began a project to create a claims management application that would offer a single, integrated solution for the intake, review, case management, hearing, and decision-making process of an appeal. This project led to the creation of the Appeals Commission Electronic System (ACES), based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM 2011 technology. Completed in 2012, ACES is used to manage all appeals and performance metrics.

Although ACES increased our ability to manage our workload, the appeal process remains based on the copying and circulation of printed documents. We currently use about 1.5 million pieces of paper annually. This practice is discordant with our progression towards an efficient, electronic information management system, and it has unnecessary privacy risks associated with circulating and working on large paper files and expenses related to circulation, storage, and shredding costs.

As a first step towards an electronic interface, Legal Services, from both the Appeals Commission and the WCB, worked with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, our Ministry, and legislative staff to secure legislative change to facilitate electronic information sharing between the Appeals Commission and the WCB. This work resulted in the passage of legislation in 2014 permitting the Commission and the WCB to work together to share essential information electronically.

To complement direct access to WCB electronic claim files, we have deployed electronic annotation and sorting tools to create Appeal Documents Packages (ADP). To facilitate the acceptance and use of electronic ADPs, we will explore options with internal and external stakeholders for the secure distribution and use of electronic appeal materials.

Internally, we are conducting a pilot project to assess the use of tablets in the adjudication of appeals. Working with the Office of the Appeals Advisor, we will test the distribution of electronic documents to parties and representatives. We anticipate this development will both save time and increase quality. Despite our move towards electronic documents, we will continue accommodating individuals not yet ready to manage an electronic interface by providing paper files.

Priority 1: Develop the Commission's Technology Capacity

In conjunction with the move to electronic documentation, we will also begin to promote the attendance of witnesses located in remote regions through videoconference. We have wired our hearing rooms in Edmonton (Calgary will be completed by November 2015) to facilitate use of videoconferencing equipment. On a trial basis, we propose to conduct 5 appeals in 2015/16 using this equipment in preparation for a larger initiative that could permit witnesses to appear and participate in hearings from remote locations without travel and related costs.

Strategies

1. In compliance with privacy legislation, work with the WCB to facilitate direct access to electronic claim files.
2. Source and incorporate software to assist appeals officers in the preparation of electronic ADPs.
3. Source and incorporate software to facilitate the annotation and organization of electronic files by adjudicators.
4. Source and incorporate software to allow the secure distribution of electronic files to internal and external stakeholders.
5. Establish a pilot project with the Office of the Appeals Advisor to facilitate external use of electronic ADPs.

Performance Measures

July 30, 2015	100% of WCB file requests and responses are electronic.
September 1, 2015	Source and incorporate software to allow appeals officers to annotate and organize ADPs.
September 1, 2015	Source and incorporate software to allow the secure transfer of electronic files to tablets.
October 1, 2015	Identify and test software to transfer electronic data to internal stakeholders.
November 1, 2015	Migrate all decisions into SharePoint Directory and require Citrix to access secure data.
December 15, 2015	Complete a pilot project with the Office of the Appeals Advisors as-
January 15, 2016	Complete phase 2 of the tablet trial and make recommendations for implementation in 2016.
January 30, 2016	Complete updates to the Appeals Commission website.

Priority 2: Develop a Records and Information Management System

What it Means

A Records and Information Management (RIM) System plays a major role in the effective administration of a public body. It supports open and transparent business activities and transactions while also protecting individual privacy and the interests of the public body.

We are committed to developing a RIM System that manages, administers, controls, provides security for, and preserves all its records. Records include physical and electronic records in our custody or control, such as filing systems, databases and other paper or electronic records.

Developing a RIM System means:

- enabling comprehensive and efficient management of information assets;
- ensuring all processes and protocols are in compliance with the Government of Alberta's records management system and standards;
- supporting consistency, continuity and productivity in operations, administration and management;
- improving access to services and better performance of business activities;
- providing protection and support in hearings and litigation, including the better management of risks associated with the existence or lack of evidence of activities or events; and
- enabling the public body to meet legislative and regulatory requirements.

Strategies

1. Establish and maintain a records and information management framework to organize, control, store and protect recorded information, in alignment with the Information Technology Framework and in compliance with the FOIP Act's privacy protection provisions.
2. Establish and maintain records management protocols and processes in conformity with national and international standards.
3. Develop or update policies and practices for records management and security.
4. Identify and implement phased training on records and information management.
5. Regularly review and update records management protocols and processes, in alignment with Information Technology developments and Quality Management priorities.

Priority 2: Develop a Records and Information Management System

Performance Measures

May 1, 2015	Update records retention and disposition schedules.
June 1, 2015	Paper records classification system in place.
September 1, 2015	Electronic records classification system in place.
December 1, 2015	Security classification system in place.
December 1, 2015	Vital Records Framework in place.
April 1, 2016	List of the all Appeals Commission personal information banks complete.
April 1, 2016	Phased training of all employees completed.
September 1, 2016	Quality management plan implemented.

Priority 3: Redevelop Commission Offices

What it Means

In our 2014-2016 Business Plan, we projected the redevelopment of the Edmonton office for March 30, 2015. However, we were able to complete our relocation to the Standard Life Centre on September 23, 2014, both ahead of schedule and at approximately 70% of the predicted budget.

Our new Edmonton offices capture the efficiencies inherent in the modern standards adopted by the Government of Alberta for office space development. These standards encourage a reduction in individual offices, an increase in open area seating, the use of natural light and open space to create a pleasant, bright environment supporting both collaboration and efficient workflows.

The Standard Life Center features handicap access and facilities, while the central downtown location offers several advantages to the public including underground public parking and increased proximity to major bus routes and the LRT. The new design incorporates security measures protecting both our staff and the public. The expanded floor plate of the Standard Life Building facilitated the consolidation of our offices from three floors to one floor, for the first time permitting all of our departments to work together on the same floor.

The lease for our Calgary premises expires in 2015. We are using this opportunity to relocate and redevelop the Calgary office, applying the same standards and concepts used throughout the Edmonton redevelopment. Beginning November 1, 2015, our Calgary offices will be located in the AMEC building at 2300, 801 6 Ave SW. Our current Calgary premises were last developed in the early 1990s, and they no longer serve our needs. Parking is problematic, our offices are spread randomly over two floors, and the layout does not meet government standards for space usage or security expectations.

To fully capitalize on the efficiency of our new office layouts, we will provide temporary housing for the Medical Panel Office and the Occupational Health and Safety Council on our premises. In Edmonton, the Occupational Health and Safety Council has already conducted several hearings, and we anticipate that the staff of the Medical Office Panel will relocate in the spring. In Calgary, we anticipate these changes to take place in early 2016, after our relocation to the new office.

Priority 3: Redevelop Commission Offices

Strategies

1. Relocate office space for the Calgary Appeals Commission.
2. Enhance office security in the Calgary branch, including the installation of CCTV.

Performance Measures

June 1, 2015	Arrangements for the Occupational Health and Safety Council
June 1, 2015	Arrangements for the Medical Panel Office housing in Edmonton
November 1, 2015	Calgary offices relocated.
January 1, 2016	Arrangements for the Occupational Health and Safety Council
January 1, 2016	Arrangements for the Medical Panel Office housing in Calgary are

Priority 4: Enhance Access to Justice

What it Means

We strive to be an open and transparent organization and to provide our stakeholders with the assistance they require to be active participants in the appeals process. Enhancing access to justice means:

- fostering a friendly and receptive attitude amongst our staff and members;
- ensuring the diversity of the Appeals Commission matches the diversity of Alberta;
- simplifying our forms and processes;
- accelerating appeal preparation time by leveraging appropriate technology readily accessible to our stakeholders;
- facilitating the appearance of appellants not located in Edmonton or Calgary by video conference at hearings; and
- providing useful and accessible information to appellants electronically via an updated website.

Strategies

1. Redesign our website and update the content available online to reflect our standards and to emphasize our independence from the WCB and our accountability to the Government of Alberta.
2. Continue updating and creating reference materials, including *Appeal Rules* and *Practice Guidelines*, for internal and external stakeholders.
3. Create training videos for stakeholders.
4. Introduce videoconferencing equipment into every hearing room and identify secure software for its use.

Performance Measures

November 1, 2015	Training Video showing illustrating hearing process complete.
January 30, 2016	Website content update completed
February 28, 2016	Determine the strategy required for online form submission.
March 30, 2016	Business case for website redesign completed
March 30, 2016	Appellants who access our website report 75% good or better satisfaction with our online resources

Priority 5: Recruit and Develop New Commissioners

What it Means

The Lieutenant Governor in Council appoints commissioners to hear and decide appeals. Every other function and individual within the Appeals Commission exists to support and facilitate this responsibility. We offer every individual dissatisfied with a decision of the Dispute Resolution and Decision Review Body (DRDRB) the opportunity of a complete rehearing before an independent panel. On average, we conduct approximately 900 hearings per year. More than 85% of our hearings are in-person with oral evidence and argument.

Hearing panels consist of three appeals commissioners: one hearing chair and two part-time members. Every appeals commissioner appointed to a panel contributes equally to decision making. However, the hearing chair takes the lead in drafting the written reasons for the panel's decision.

As a result of retirement and the term limits imposed by the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act* (APAGA), we will lose the benefit of our existing complement of adjudicators over time. This means that we must recruit and train new commissioners to avoid the loss of institutional knowledge and effectiveness that can occur as experienced adjudicators depart.

Doing our work effectively means recruiting, developing, and retaining knowledgeable and experienced appeals commissioners. Regardless of a commissioner's credentials, additional work, in-service development, and experience are fundamental to developing and maintaining the competency of individual commissioners. We estimate that it takes 3 to 5 years to develop a new commissioner's ability to handle our most complex appeals. As a result, we follow a continuous process of recruitment and development in conjunction with extensive mentoring provided by experienced appeals commissioners.

This means that we and those we serve have a stake in maintaining the Commission's experience base. Accordingly, we will be recommending to the Minister that commissioners employed as full-time hearing chairs be exempted from the 12-year term limit imposed by APAGA but remain subject to performance management and three-year rotating terms in accordance with the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

Appeals commissioners employed as part-time members would continue to be subject to the 12-year term limits. As the primary purpose of this group of commissioners is to bring current industrial perspective to decision-making, their regular refreshment as term limits expire will contribute to our continued effectiveness.

Priority 5: Recruit and Develop New Commissioners

The projected reduction in incoming appeals has resulted in changes to our recruitment strategies. Over the next three years, we will allow attrition to reduce the number of both full-time and part-time appeals commissioners to better match our workload. At the same time, we will encourage more part-time members to act as *ad hoc* hearing chairs, allowing us the necessary flexibility to manage busy periods.

Strategies

1. Seek the exemption of full-time hearing chairs from the 12-year term limit established by the *Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act*.
2. Reduce the number of full-time hearing chairs from 20 to 18 through attrition.
3. Reduce the number of part-time appeals commissioners from 35 to 30 through attrition.
4. Revise the duties of vice chairs to increase the hearing load to 50%.
5. Establish 2 *ad hoc* hearing chairs to maintain monthly decision volumes and develop future hearing chairs.
6. Recruit appeals commissioners in November of 2015 as required.

Performance Measures

Quality Decisions – 98%	98% of decisions unchallenged, 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.
Timely Hearings – 150 days	85% of appeals receive a hearing date within 150 days of
Timely Decisions – 30 days	85% of decisions Issue within 30 days of the hearing

Priority 6: Develop a Comprehensive Quality Management Program

What it Means

We are committed to excellence in our decision-making and process. This means that the Courts consistently support our decisions and the Ombudsman consistently supports our administrative processes. Stakeholders can also expect our decisions to align with policy and legislation and to reflect previous Appeals Commission decisions, ensuring an orderly and predictable appeals environment.

Our processes meet the high standards the courts expect of administrative law tribunals. We process all appeals and issue all decisions within our performance standards relating to quality and timeliness. The first hearing date offered is generally within 150 days of the date the appeal is filed, and we aim to publish our decisions within a 30-day window following a hearing.

To ensure that our published decision documents and our operations continue to meet our high standards, we will enhance our existing quality management program by developing a continuous quality improvement program encompassing all of our activities.

A sound quality program begins with asking every stakeholder group to identify the criteria it considers important. In 2015/16, we will engage an independent contractor to begin stakeholder satisfaction surveys to support this objective. We will then build our quality assurance program in congruence with stakeholder expectations expressed in the satisfaction survey and standards expressed by staff at internal consultation sessions.

Priority 6: Develop a Comprehensive Quality Management Program

Strategies

1. Engage a social research firm to conduct independent client satisfaction surveys.
2. Identify stakeholder expectations and establish quality assurance expectations for all departments.
3. Develop objective assessment tools by department to measure and report on quality.
4. Establish a quality assurance committee to promote service excellence amongst all departments and make recommendations on best practices.
5. Update internal policy manual.
6. Update training resources.
7. Identify areas where training is required and prepare a schedule of training sessions along with establishing training expectations and a correlative budget for Order in Council Appointments and staff members.

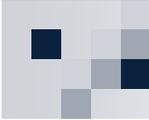
Performance Measures

May 1, 2015	Update and complete the appeals commissioner orientation manual and agenda.
November 1, 2015	Identify quality indicators for each department.
January 31, 2016	Internal policy manual reviewed and implemented.
March 31, 2016	One legal and one medical seminar scheduled for the fiscal year.

Priority 7: Cost Containment Measures

In order to align our budgetary practices with the Government of Alberta cost containment strategies, we have developed a range of initiatives that target all areas of the Commission. Each initiative underscores our primary mandate while promoting cost effective practices. In total, we anticipate these initiatives will save approximately \$1, 029, 600, which makes up approximately 9% of our total budget.

Initiative	Estimated Cost Savings
<p>Reduction of administrative costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Service Alberta printing services and reduction of associated costs for in-house printing staff • Elimination of unnecessary access and storage charges through the implementation of standardized records management practices • Deferral of conferences that require travel for all staff and adjudicators • Reduced travel between Calgary and Edmonton through the use of video conference • Additions to the Appeals Commission library reduced by 50% • Deferral of annual conference 	<p>\$54, 000</p> <p>\$2, 500</p> <p>\$40, 000</p> <p>\$24, 000</p> <p>\$2, 500</p> <p>\$25, 000</p>
<p>Effective human resources management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of full-time staff positions through attrition, the implementation of part-time work, and consolidation of supervisory positions • Reduced reliance on temp agency services • Deferred recruitment of medical consultant and knowledge officer 	<p>\$650, 000</p> <p>\$10, 000</p> <p>\$195, 000</p>
<p>Consolidation of office space and administrative support with the Occupational Health and Safety Council and the Medical Panel Office</p>	<p>\$26, 600</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>	<p>\$1, 029, 600</p>



Contact Information

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