

Assessment of Implementation Report

Alberta Labour and Immigration

Systems to Update Alberta's Workforce Strategies

(November 2018)

Summary of Recommendations

In November 2021, we completed our assessment of implementation from our 2018 audit of Alberta Labour and Immigration's *Systems to Update Alberta's Workforce Strategies*. We found that the recommendation has been implemented.

IMPLEMENTED Recommendation:
Report on results of workforce strategies

Introduction

In 2018, we audited whether the department could:

- demonstrate successful implementation of Alberta's workforce strategies
- report on and evaluate results of performance
- provide reliable and useful labour market information to users

Our audit focused on processes to monitor, report and update the 10-year *Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce Strategy (BETW)*. During our audit, the BETW ended, and the department decided not to continue with a formal multi-ministry collaborative approach.³³

In 2018, we found that the department was unable to demonstrate that it monitored and reported on the progress in achieving the planned results of the strategy. Further, the department did not demonstrate if the BETW achieved its planned results or whether the resources dedicated to it over the prior 10 years were well placed. We recommended the department regularly measure and report on the results of its current workforce strategies, including lessons learned.

In November 2021, we completed our assessment of implementation based on the department's current strategies and found that the department has implemented our recommendation.

³³ Report of the Auditor General—November 2018, page 7.

Recommendation: Report on results of workforce strategies

IMPLEMENTED

Context

The process of monitoring, reporting, and analyzing planned against achieved results improves outcomes by providing the information needed to adjust future plans, activities and spending. In our 2018 audit, we found that the department did not do this for the BETW.

Our current findings

The department has implemented our recommendation to regularly measure and report on the results of its current workforce strategies, including lessons learned.³⁴

Supporting the current Government of Alberta's strategic plan, one of the department's 2021-2024 business plan key outcomes is: "Albertans get back to work through job creation and supporting skills and resilience." To support the achievement of this outcome, the department delivers workplace training and employment programs. These programs include skills development, upgrading and workforce transition training, plus immigration and settlement services for newcomers to Canada and Alberta.

We found management has:

- developed program performance measure, indicator and reporting frameworks for use internally and externally. We examined five programs or groups of programs and found each documented desired outcomes and measures or indicators. We noted that the department mainly used directional targets. The department could further enhance its processes by using quantified, time-bound performance targets for its measures.
- conducted reviews of Workforce Strategies Division programs and services. The cyclical reviews used consistent criteria to track alignment with the department's desired outcomes and recommended some program adjustments.
- improved data collection capabilities by implementing comprehensive, centralized data warehouse and analysis systems to collect information on labour markets and for program measures and indicators. This has facilitated the generation of standard internal monthly reporting as well as required reporting for Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTA) with the federal government.³⁵
- developed and implemented survey work plans for its programs. The surveys solicited feedback from employers and individual applicants to identify lessons learned on how programs were meeting stakeholder needs.
- developed program evaluation methodologies and a five-year evaluation work plan for its programs. We examined department evaluation plans for three new program proposals. Work plans were followed when program evaluations were performed. The plans documented performance measures, indicators and program outcome considerations and included logic models showing linkages between resource requirements, activities, outputs and short to long term outcomes.

³⁴ *Report of the Auditor General—November 2018*, page 8.

³⁵ LMTA between Alberta and the federal government provide funding for the delivery of skills training and employment programs. There are currently two LMTA in place: the Canada-Alberta Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) and the Canada-Alberta Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA). In 2020-21 the department received \$43 million and \$11 million through the WDA and LMDA (2019-20-\$34 million and \$22 million respectively per Annual Report, Labour and Immigration 2020-2021, page 91). These transfer agreements have the flexibility to develop and adapt training and assistance programs that align with Alberta government labour market and immigration priorities.

- generated an internal monthly report with metrics on all workforce strategies division programs to enable staff and department leadership to monitor programs. The monthly metrics report included demographic and skills/education information on program participant groups. In addition to program monitoring, management used this information for planning and evaluation of program results, as well as to identify measure and indicator trends for follow-up.
- prepared and submitted annual reports and a program evaluation required as part of Alberta's involvement in LMTA. The department's 2018 Canada-Alberta Labour Market Development Agreement program evaluation report³⁶ was posted on the Employment and Social Development Canada website. The Canada-Alberta Workforce Development Agreement 2019 and 2020 annual reports were posted on the Government of Alberta open government website. The annual reports provided descriptions of the programs and activities under the agreement, expenditures, and results analysis on measures and indicators.
- reported on its workforce programs in the department's 2020-2021 annual report. The reporting included an overall performance measure for training for work programs along with variance analysis to target. Individual and grouped program level summary results analysis as well as selected measures and indicators were also reported.
- performed program evaluations to determine and report on lessons learned and incorporated the lessons learned into its program work plans. We found one program had a basic cost/benefit analysis completed. The department could further enhance its management decision making information with the consistent inclusion of cost/benefit analyses in its program planning and evaluation reports.

³⁶ The last LMDA evaluation report was published in 2018, with the next publication planned for 2023.