

Transforming Alberta's Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship System

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Minister

Minister's Industry Roundtable
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Agenda

1. Outcomes of transformation
2. Strengthening apprenticeship education
3. Meeting labour supply
4. Period Exams

Outcomes of Transformation

Outcomes

1. Increase flexibility, nimbleness, and create educational pathways.
2. Expand the apprenticeship model to other occupations.
3. Strengthen the parity of esteem of apprenticeship education and skilled trades.
4. Strengthen the quality of education provided to apprentices.
5. Support Alberta's economic recovery while addressing future skill development needs.
6. Modernize roles and governance and reduce red tape.

1) Increase flexibility

- *Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act* (STAEA) allows for expansion to new careers and occupations.
- STAEA increased flexibility and nimbleness, and provides multiple options for industry, including:
 - Apprenticeship Education Programs
 - Industry Training Programs
 - Designated Trades

2) Expanding Apprenticeship

- *Industry Pathways* initiative launched Feb 2023
- Combination of apprenticeship education programs, industry training programs and credentials

Five Pathways for Industry

New options to train and certify professionals

Background
The Industry Pathways initiative empowers industry to develop highly skilled and job-ready professionals and create a strong talent pipeline for Alberta businesses. Made possible by the legal separation of apprenticeship and trade designation introduced by the *Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Education Act (STAEA)*, Alberta's industries can explore five pathways to train and/or certify professionals.

Programs
STAEA establishes two work-integrated learning program options, which industries can adopt with or without trade designation.

Apprentice Education Program (AEP)

- Are post-secondary programs consisting of:
 - paid on-the-job instruction at a worksite, supported by a sponsor and a mentor (~80%), and
 - interspersed classroom instruction at a publicly funded post-secondary institution (~20%).
- Require between two and four years to complete, depending on the depth of skill and knowledge required in the occupation.
- Provide graduates with job-ready skills, knowledge, and competencies in the full scope of an occupation.
- Provide graduates with a credential (e.g. a diploma) to acknowledge completion of a post-secondary program.
- Are developed and administered by the Alberta government in consultation with industry experts.

Industry Training Program (ITP)

- Provide a flexible education option for occupations that are better suited to industry training rather than a full apprenticeship education program.
- Have less complexity and/or a shorter duration than a full apprenticeship education program.
- Establishes standardized industry-provided training for workers across the province.
- Are completed mainly on-the-job, but may also include industry-provided lab or classroom training or other recognized training.
- Provide graduates with a government-issued Certificate of Achievement to recognize completion of training.
- Are developed and administered by the Alberta government in consultation with industry experts.

Designation
Designation is an option regardless of how journeypersons are trained—whether it's through an AEP, an ITP, or other training.

Designated Trades

- Are occupations regulated under STAEA.
- Establishes industry-driven requirements for journeyperson certification, which shows someone is:
 - highly skilled and competent in their trade, and
 - authorized to work anywhere in Alberta.
- Creates a model for restricting activities to people who are considered qualified.
- Typically require hands-on work and specialty knowledge and skills.

The Five Pathways
Programs and designation can be combined into five pathways.

AEP in a Designated Trade
The classic apprenticeship and designated trade model that exists today in 47 trades.

ITP in a Designated Trade
Offer an ITP to train journeypersons in occupations where apprenticeship does not meet the needs of employers and learners.

AEP Only
Offer an AEP to develop skilled professionals in any occupation using the apprenticeship learning model and post-secondary training, resulting in a government-issued post-secondary credential.

ITP Only
Offer an ITP to develop skilled professionals in any occupation using the apprenticeship learning model and industry-driven training, resulting in a government-issued credential.

Designated Trades Only
Create standards for the occupation, journeyperson certification requirements, and/or restrict who can perform select activities within the occupation, without an associated learning program under STAEA.

tradesecrets.alberta.ca
February 2023

Alberta Government
Apprenticeship and Industry Training

3) Parity of Esteem

- Ensuring Alberta's skilled trades occupations are recognized as valuable career choices that provide life-long careers and growth opportunities.
- Recent advances and ongoing efforts include:
 - Recognition of apprenticeship as post secondary education.
 - Professionalization of the designated trades.
 - Formalizing coaching opportunities through mentorship supports.
 - Increasing pathways beyond certification.

Discussion Questions

- What affects the reputation of the trades?
- What additional actions should we (Government and Industry) be taking?

4) Addressing Workforce Talent

- Increasing workforce talent quality (skills for the # of workers) is being supported through access, capacity, and program improvements
 - Strengthening on the job (OTJ) education through mentorship
 - Competence portfolio (blue book) overhaul
 - Investing in post-journeyperson credentials

Discussion Question

- When it comes to meeting your talent needs today, what additional skills (beyond a ticket) does your workforce need?
 - Business?
 - Financial?
 - Project Management?
 - Additional technical skills?

Strengthening Apprenticeship Education

Strengthening Apprenticeship Education

- Opportunities exist to strengthen elements of Alberta's apprenticeship education system.
- Education in apprenticeship programs have historically focused on classroom instruction ("the 20%", (actually ~13%))
 - Period exams assess the knowledge & theory taught in classroom.
- An increased focus on the on-the-job component can support better skill development and assessments.
 - OTJ hour requirement only assess time-in trade, opportunity to strengthen with skill assessments.

TrailBlazers

- Working with 6 TrailBlazer Sponsors (1 – Ironworker, 1 – Automotive Service Tech, 4 – Plumber)
- The pilot is focused on the evaluation of an evolved version of competence portfolio
- Evaluation will involve low number of AEP's, sponsors, and apprentices, and will occur over the next year.
- Expected outcome is improved supports for the on-the-job learning environment and mentors

New Competence Portfolio

**CORE COMPETENCE:
WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS**

Standard	Mandatory / Optional	Mentor Endorsement
Thread a pipe to an industry standard.	Optional	Name: _____ --- Date: _____
Assemble tubing to an industry standard.	Optional	Name: _____ --- Date: _____
Solder a joint to an industry standard.	Mandatory	Name: _____ --- Date: _____
Determine a piping offset to an industry standard.	Optional	Name: _____ --- Date: _____
Perform a pressure test to an industry standard.	Optional	Name: _____ --- Date: _____

End of Period 1 Sponsor's Competence Endorsement:

I am satisfied that (a) qualified mentor(s) has assessed competence for the apprentice and that the mentor(s) has determined that the apprentice has demonstrated competence.

End of Period 1 Apprentice's Competence Acknowledgement:

I acknowledge that a minimum of **seven (7)** standards have been completed with the mentor(s) that are listed above.

Sponsor Printed Name and Phone Number	Sponsor Endorsement	Apprentice Acknowledgement
Name: _____ ----- Phone Number: _____ -----	_____ ----- Date: _____ -----	_____ ----- Date: _____ -----

Mentorship Research

- Throughout 2023, STP is conducting research with industry and PSIs to gain a better understanding of what successful mentorship looks like on-the-job.
- Expected outcomes:
 - Strengthen awareness within industry of the apprenticeship learning model.
 - Understand how industry is applying on-the-job learning through mentorship.
 - Understand barriers and best practices in utilizing a mentorship approach.

Discussion Questions

- Is there appetite to expand TrailBlazers at this time?
- How do we continue to raise awareness among industry and apprentices of shifting to “competencies”?

Meeting Labour Supply

Labour market demand

- STP is supporting Alberta's need for skilled workers through numerous initiatives:
 - Increased partnerships
 - Access for under-represented Albertans
 - Policy and process amendments
 - Domestic and international strategies
 - Increased apprenticeship seat funding*
- *STP is committed to providing additional apprenticeship seat funding in high-demand programs.
 - Closely monitoring industry feedback & PSI registration data

Supporting International skilled workers

- Alberta businesses have identified challenges with existing immigration policies and processes.
- STP leading cross-ministry initiative to identify barriers and opportunities to address immigration challenges.
 - Primary focus on reducing red tape while maintaining quality standards for skilled labour.
 - Acknowledge immigration pathways involve Provincial Government AND Federal Government.

Federal Advocacy

- Alberta's economic recovery and growth depends on local, domestic, *and* international talent.
- The Government of Canada has responsibility for:
 - International student admissions,
 - Temporary foreign workers,
 - International mobility programs,
 - Express entry, and
 - Canadian experience class
- Alberta is committed to leading advocacy to ensure businesses have short-term and long-term prosperity.

Discussion Questions

- What opportunities exist to strengthen labour market supply locally, domestically, and internationally?
 - Quantity (# of workers)
 - Quality (skills for workers)
- Are you able to help with Federal advocacy?

Discussion Questions

- How are AIT statistical publications used to support your strategic workforce planning?
 - How may this resource be improved?
- Link: <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/regulation-resources/publications/>

Discussion



Break



Period Exams

Period Exams

- Suspension of AIT period exams due to Covid
 - In place since March 2020
- Classroom marks replaced period exam marks for calculation of pass rates
- Gathered information to examine efficacy of period exams as part of apprenticeship training

History of Period Exams/Assessments

- History
 - First training programs had final exam (1947)
- Development of period exams
 - AIT facilitates the process of exam development
 - Work with industry SMEs and training staff from PSIs
 - Exam questions are based on curriculum guides
 - Section weighting is determined by industry SMEs
 - Exams are reviewed annually and updated when curriculum guides are updated or as required
 - 6-9 year cycle

Red Seal Program Information

- Assesses the skills of a tradesperson to a common standard across Canada
- 54 Red Seal trades across Canada
- 45 of 59 trades in Alberta are Red Seal
- Historically allowed individuals to work in jurisdictions across Canada
 - No longer the case – provision is now contained within the Canada Free Trade Agreement (Provincial-Territorial Apprenticeship Mobility Agreement)
- Alberta currently uses the Red Seal as endorsement of excellence that is placed on a journeyperson's certification
- For Trades Qualifier program, Red Seal exams are used as the certification exam (in Red Seal trades).

Period Exams - Purposes

Apprentices

- Measures proficiency on required outcomes/objectives, requirement for progression

Industry

- Indicator of employee competence in required areas and level of training provided by sponsor/employer (80% of an apprentice's total training time)

Post-secondary Institutes

- Indicator of effectiveness of program delivered by post-secondary institute

Government

- Audit of development and administration of programs by Registrar
- Exams used by other jurisdictions for certification purposes

Prior Learning Assessments/Qualifications*

- Entrance requirement for those wishing to enter midstream
- Requirement for those wishing to achieve certification through alternative route

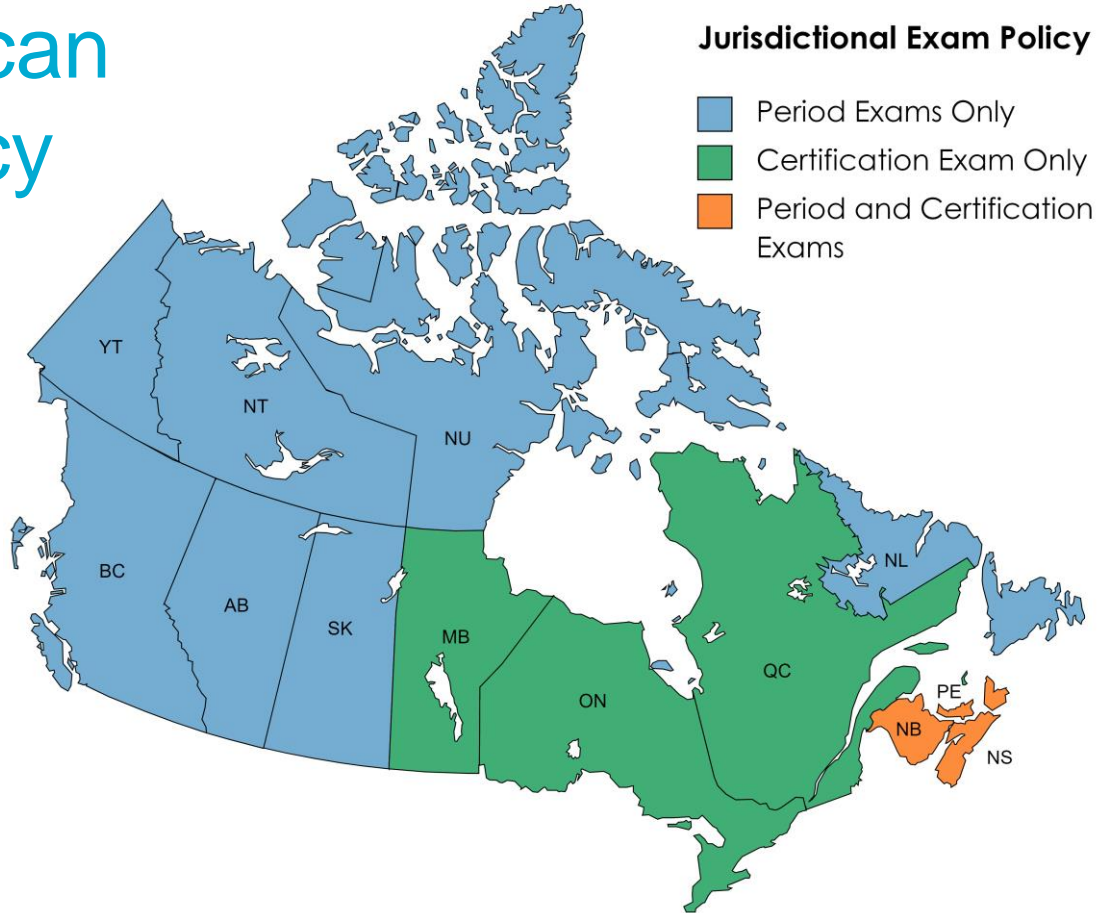
***This requirement was not waived during Covid**

Jurisdictional E-Scans

National & International

Jurisdictional E-Scan Period Exam Policy

- Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec have no period exams (certification exams only)
- Alberta responses are pre-Covid



Provinces and Territories

	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	NL	PEI	YT	NWT	NU
Period Exams	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cert Exams				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Pass Mark	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Levels	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Admin & Dev	Gov	Gov	Gov	TT	Gov	Gov	Gov	Gov	Gov	Gov	Gov	Gov	Gov
PLA & Qual	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y Limited	Y Limited	Y Limited	Y Limited	Y Limited

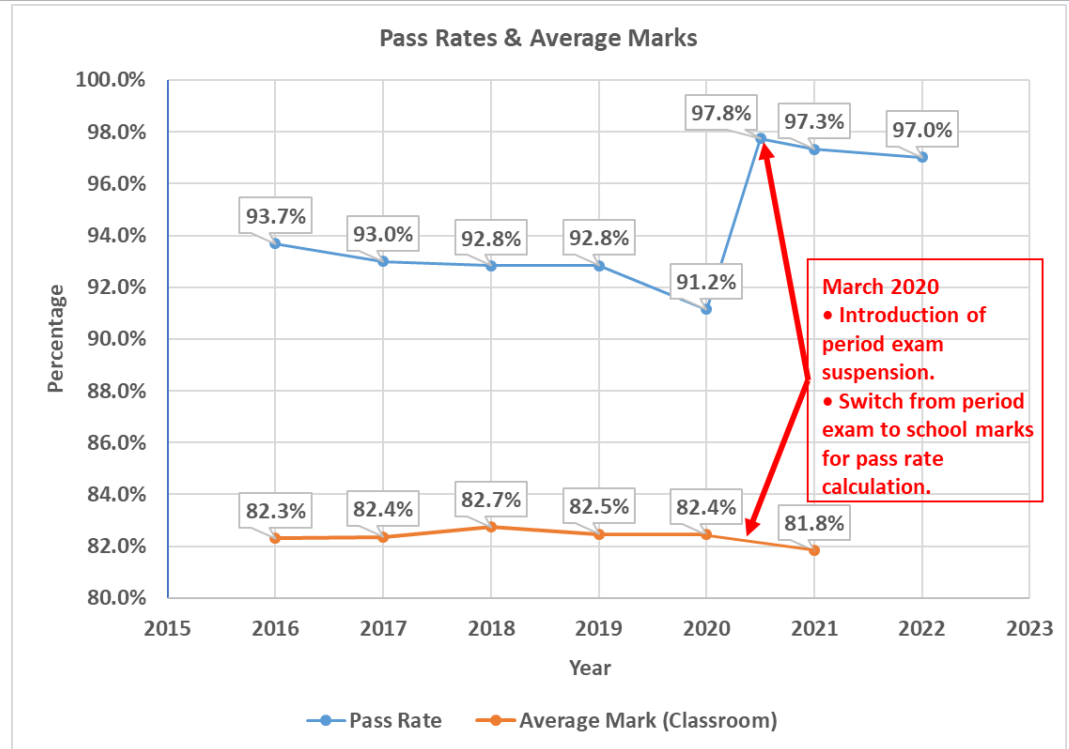
International Jurisdictions

	Germany	Ireland	South Korea	Austria	Switzerland	Alberta
Duration	2.5-3 years	2-4 years	Varies	2-4 years	2 years/3-4 years	1-4 years
Assessments	Mid-term and final	Final exam	Final exam	Final exam	Final exam	Period exams
Credential	Certificate issued by chamber	Certificate issued by government	Certificate issued by government	Certificate issued by government	Certificate or diploma issued by government	Credentials issued by government
Development	Government, local councils, industry	Industry, education partners	Government, industry	Government, industry	Government, industry	Government, industry, trainers
Assessment Types	practical, short and long answer, case studies, multiple choice, matching, sequencing	Theory-based	Short-answer, descriptive, practical, portfolio	Theory-based and practical	Theory-based	Multiple choice, practical

Assessment Data

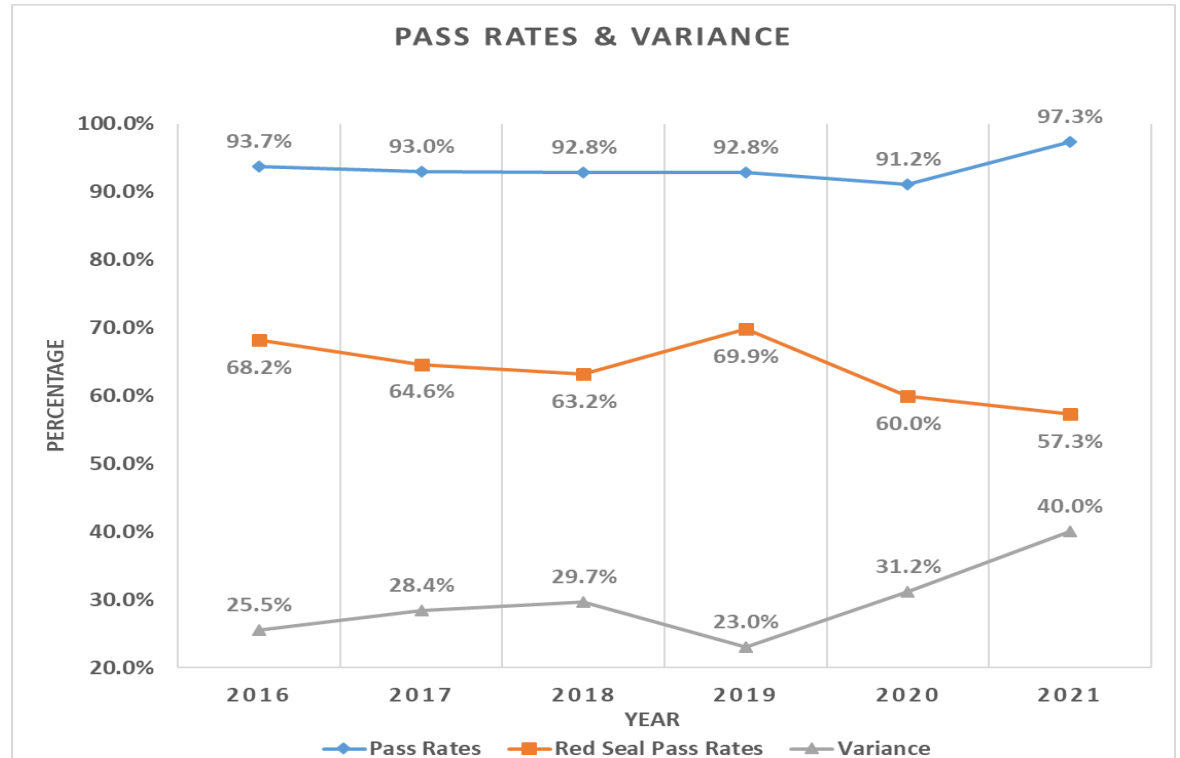
Pass Rates – Pre-Covid vs Post-Covid

- Pass Rates
 - Pre - 91.7%-93.7%
 - Post - 97.0%-97.8%
- Average Grades
 - Pre - 82.3%-82.7%
 - Post - 81.8%
- Pass rates rose after exam suspension while grades remained flat



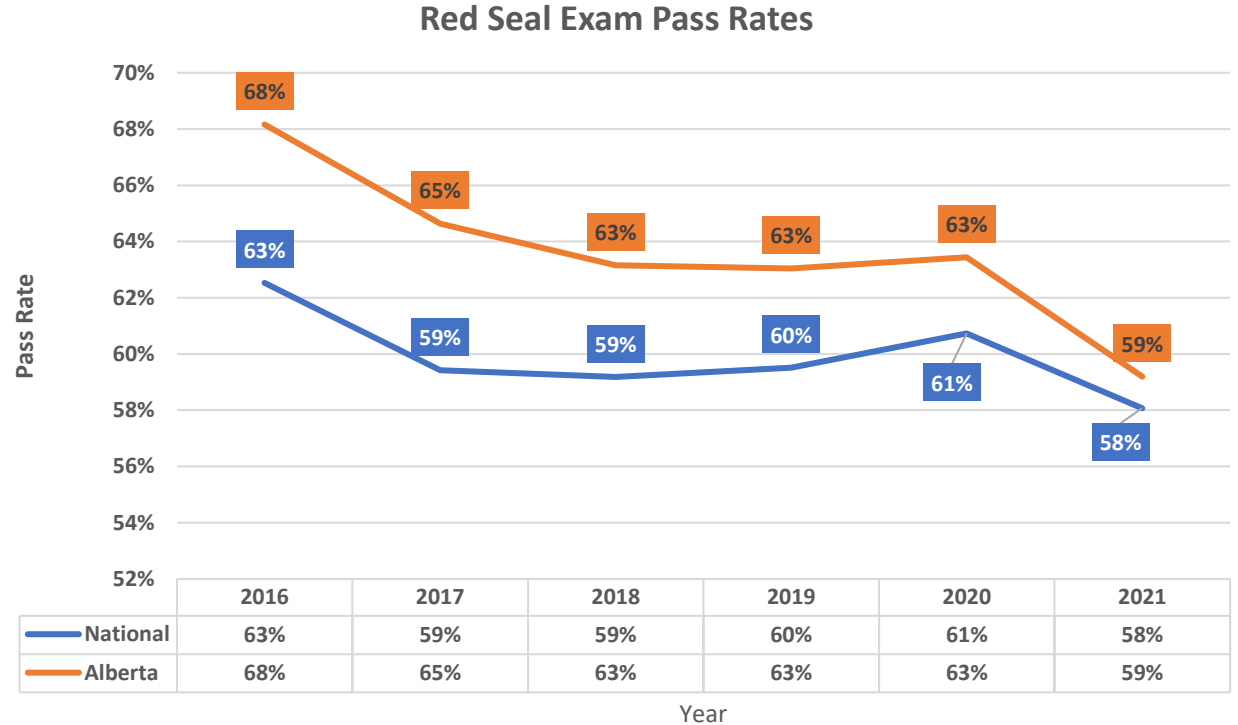
Pass Rates – Apprenticeship Program vs Red Seal

- Apprentice Pass Rates
- Red Seal Pass Rates
- Variance
 - Pre-Covid – 23%-30%
 - Post-Covid - 40%



Other Data – Red Seal Pass Rates

- Apprentice pass rates only
- Alberta above the national average
- Variance shrinking since 2016



Considerations

- 2023-24 timing
- Reinstate period exams
- Reinstate final period exams
- GOA delivery vs. PSI
- Age of exams (6-9 years old)

Commence the next round of analysis

- Compare the value of instituting a certification exam in lieu of/in addition to period exams
- Consider how learner assessment on-the-job evolves
 - And creates greater or lesser need for period exams
- Clearly define role of PSI's in period exam delivery (if pursued)
- Consider adjusting classroom exam pass threshold (in lieu of or in addition to period exams)
- Assess how to provide greater transparency to all assessments
- Examine assessment methodology in other jurisdictions
- Assess resource needs (FTE and \$\$\$) of desired examination approach

Discussion Questions

- What can we (GOA and Industry) do to increase the number of learners who choose to write Red Seal exams?
- Should Alberta consider a final standardized certification exam (in lieu of period exams).
 - Similar to ON.
- Should we consider using the Red Seal as a final certification exam?

Next Steps

Assessment Working Group

- Consist of government and industry (50-50)
- Review reports of current state - make recommendations
- Review research into other jurisdictions/models
- Focus will be ensuring best practices for Alberta
 - Classroom based assessments, on-the-job assessments, other
- Initial meeting to take place after May 29 election
- Work has begun on terms of reference and mandate
 - Size, meeting frequency

Additional Data

- Set up dashboard on MyTradeSecrets to provide aggregated data
 - AIT assessments
 - Red Seal exam results
 - Completion rates
 - Pass rates
 - Other

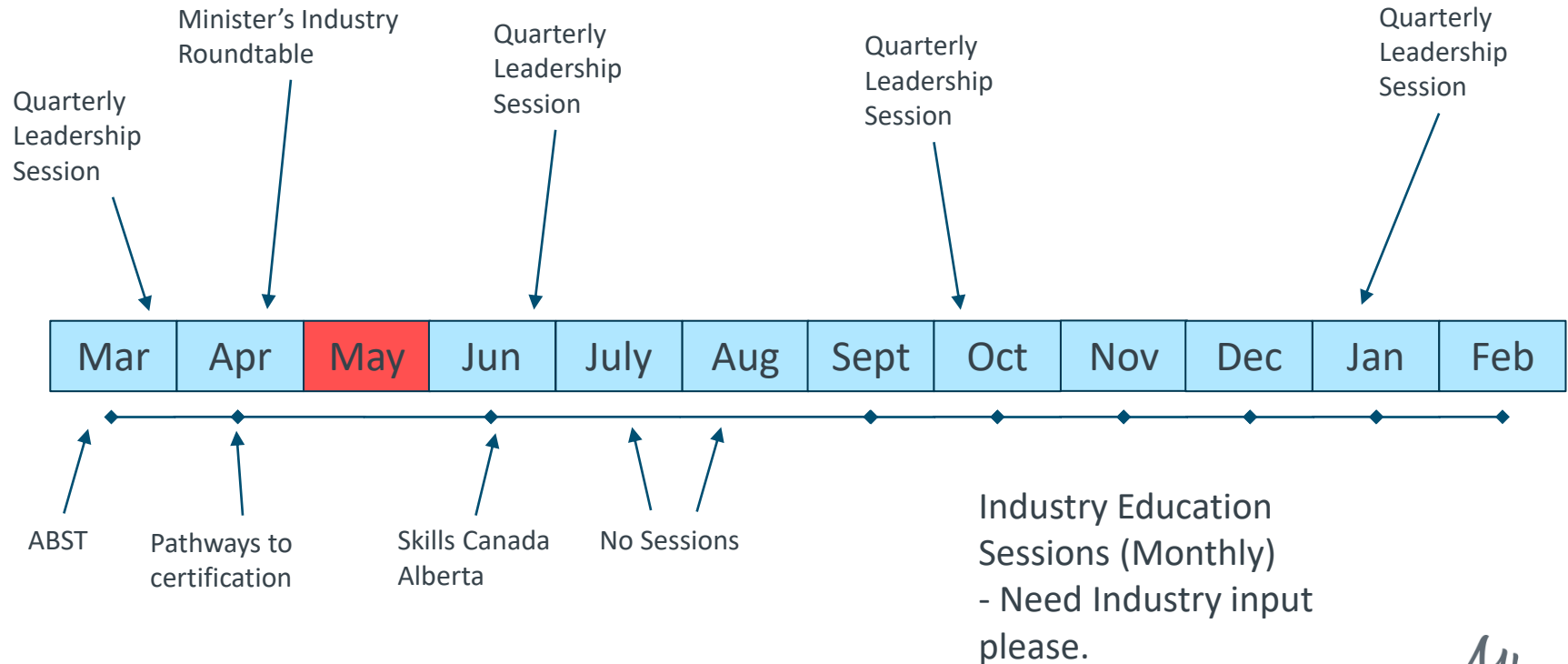
Competence Portfolios & Trail Blazers

- Newly developed curriculum guides, competence portfolios and competence statements
- Initiated beta testing with a small number of trades and classes at select institutes
 - Signing up apprentices into beta test
 - Ironworker, automotive service technician, plumber
- Competence portfolio lists a number of specific tasks that must be completed by apprentice

Engagement and Collaboration

- Alberta's apprenticeship education and skilled trades system is built on industry input and collaboration.
- STP is creating new opportunities to facilitate collaboration - outside of normal program-development and maintenance activities:
 - Monthly Industry Education Sessions
 - Quarterly Leadership Sessions with Industry
 - Minister's Industry Roundtable

STP Engagement Activities



Questions?

