



Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board Strategic Plan

2018-2021



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Executive Summary

As Alberta's economy continues to recover from the global recession and regain strength and resiliency, and as a large segment of the current trades workforce enters into retirement ages, it is more important than ever to have highly skilled, well educated trades workers in place to meet industry and society's needs, now and into the future.

Alberta's Apprenticeship and Industry Training System

Alberta's apprenticeship and Industry training system is developed in partnership with industry resulting in a highly skilled, well-educated and competitive workforce.

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board works collaboratively with a large community of dedicated and engaged partners including industry (employers and employees in designated trades and occupations), post-secondary institutions, the Government of Alberta, and other stakeholders, to attract, develop, retain and eventually, certify apprentices and occupational trainees into skilled trades professionals who have committed to a valuable career in the designated trades and occupations.

High quality training and certification standards

Alberta is well known and respected for its high-quality training and certification standards. One of the board's primary responsibilities under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act* (Act) is to make recommendations to the Minister of Advanced Education about the standards and requirements for training and certification in designated trades and occupations under the Act. The board completes this important work through the advice and recommendations of the Industry Committee Network (an extensive network of approximately 160 committees and more than 700 employer and employee representatives from grassroots industry).

Alignment with labour market demand

The board believes that Alberta's continued economic growth relies on developing a sufficient and long-term sustainable pool of highly skilled trades and occupations professionals. The board continues to encourage employers and industry partners to hire more apprentices and occupational trainees and for industry to become more involved in training and supporting their most valuable asset, their employees.

Attracting talent to careers in the designated trades and occupations

The board works collaboratively with its partners and stakeholders to promote careers in the designated trades to all Albertans including students in the education system, people of Indigenous heritage, women and others through a variety of programs and initiatives. These activities increase awareness of skilled trades and occupations as a "career of choice" amongst individuals who are starting to consider their future career path, as well as to individuals who wish to retrain or reskill for different career opportunities. It is essential that the public's perceptions of careers in the designated trades and occupations reflect the reality – that skilled trades and occupations are a valuable post-secondary learning choice, with the result of life-long fulfilling and productive careers that have great potential for advancement and growth.

Message from the Board Chair



On behalf of the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (board), I am pleased to present the board's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.

Alberta's economy is showing signs that it is on the path to recovery from the global recession and resulting decreased economic prosperity due to lower-than-expected natural resources revenue. The board strongly believes that it is more important than ever to have a sustainable and resilient skilled workforce ready to meet industry's increased activities. In addition, Alberta is still expecting a large portion of the current trades workforce to enter into retirement ages within the next several years. Unless there is concerted effort to attract and develop a next generation of skilled professionals now, many years of knowledge and experience will disappear when older generations leave the workforce. To combat this situation, the board is committed to focus its energies on activities that develop highly educated and skilled professionals to meet industry's needs, now and well into the future.

Over the next few years, the board will continue to work collaboratively with our industry partners to establish and maintain high quality training and certification standards in the designated trades and occupations that keeps pace with technology changes and industry best workplace practices. We will also pursue opportunities to influence the enhancement of the apprentices' and occupational trainees' knowledge and competency development, especially through improvements to the on-the-job component of an apprenticeship or occupational training program.

I would like to thank the employers and industry partners who hire, train and support the progress of apprentices and occupational trainees. Without meaningful employment, there would be no opportunities for these individuals to pursue valuable careers in the designated trades and occupations. These individuals, companies and associations understand the benefits of investing in the development of their people and industry. I commend industry for being strategic in their workforce development by hiring and implementing strategies that keep apprentices and occupational trainees progressing in their programs until certification.

The board is committed to achieving its mandate and influencing Alberta's economic and societal success. But, we cannot do it alone! Alberta's apprenticeship and industry training system succeeds because of the collaborative partnerships and determination to achieve our future goals. It is this determined forward-thinking that makes us proud.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

j'Amey Bevan
Chair

The Apprenticeship and Industry Training System

The Apprenticeship and Industry Training System

Alberta's apprenticeship and industry training system is built on strong partnerships with industry that ensures a highly skilled, professional, internationally competitive workforce in more than 50 designated trades and occupations.

Industry (employers and employees) sets training and certification standards and provides direction to the system through an industry committee network and the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (board). The Government of Alberta provides the legislative framework and administrative support for the system. The post-secondary institutions deliver the technical training component of apprenticeship programs and offer formal training in some designated occupations.

Through the combined efforts of industry, government and the post-secondary institutions, Alberta's apprenticeship and industry training system is able to respond to the labour market demand and contribute to developing a highly skilled workforce.



The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board

The board consists of a chair and 12 public members, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, who are knowledgeable about training in trades and occupations and the needs of the Alberta labour market for skilled and trained people. In addition to the board chair, eight of the members represent employers and employees in designated trades and four represent employers and employees in other industries. To ensure a balanced approach, employers and employees are represented in equal numbers.

Industry Committee Network

The board relies on the information brought forward from the industry committee network to make appropriate decisions and recommendations about training and certification that will meet industry's needs. The network is comprised of approximately 160 committees and 700 industry professionals who have front-line experience hiring and training apprentices and occupational trainees. The network includes the board, local and provincial apprenticeship committees, occupational committees, provisional committees, and ad hoc committees established by the board as needed. The committees are composed of equal numbers of employer and employee representatives. The board is responsible for establishing these committees and appointing their members.

Vision

Highly skilled and trained people in designated trades and occupations meeting the needs of industry and society.

Mission

To establish and maintain high quality training and certification standards in the apprenticeship and industry training system, and to promote training and employment in designated trades and occupations that meets the demands of Alberta industry and society.

Mandate

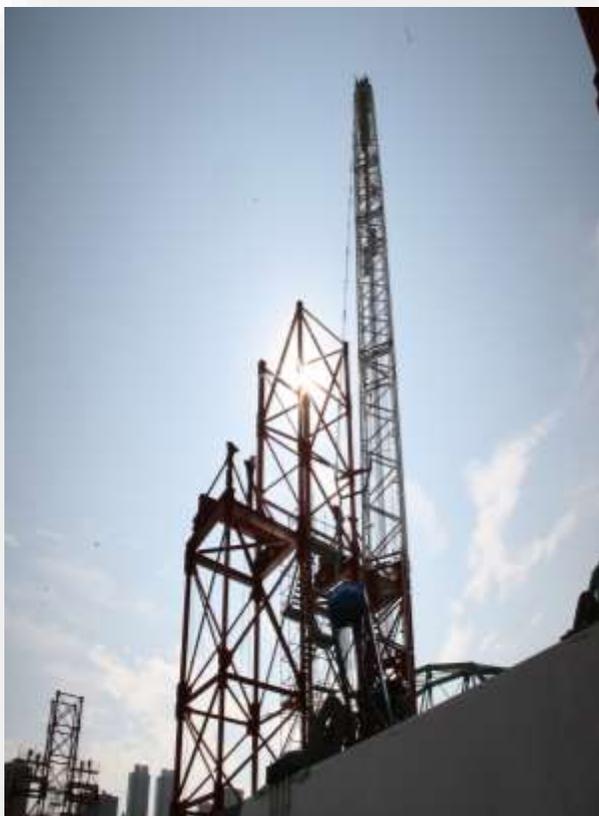
The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board (board) is accountable to the Minister of Advanced Education on matters under the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act. The board's primary responsibility is to establish the standards and requirements for the training and certification of persons in designated trades and occupations. It also provides advice and recommendations to the Minister about the needs of the Alberta labour market for skilled and trained persons. The board's full mandate is stated in its Mandate and Roles document.

Operating Principles

Accessible	Individuals wishing to pursue a career in the designated trades and occupations have access to apprenticeship and industry training.
Funded by All	Apprentices, trainees, employers, and government contribute to the financial cost of training.
Industry-driven	Industry is responsible for setting the standards for training and certification, and for providing on-the-job training and work experience for apprentices and trainees.
Collaborative	All stakeholders, the board, industry (employers and employees), the Government of Alberta, junior and senior high schools, and post-secondary institutions work collaboratively to help individuals train and acquire the skills needed to work successfully in the designated trades and occupations.
Integrated	An apprenticeship is a valuable post-secondary education and is a part of lifelong learning. Apprenticeship is a valued post-secondary program that models work integrated learning and ladders lifelong learning.

The State of the Economy *

In 2017, Alberta's economy surpassed expectations. Multiple sectors of the economy expanded at this time. Alberta's real gross domestic product (GDP), exports, housing starts, and retail trade all expanded in the last year. The Alberta economy is forecasted to expand at a constant rate in 2018 up to 2021.



Oil production is continuing to rise which results in the growth of exports and capacity expansion in the manufacturing sector. However, as the rate of oil production increases, growth will be driven less by exports and more by investments. While investment in the oil and gas sector is less, compared to previous years, investments in non-residential construction and manufacturing are expected to help in economic expansion. Beginning in 2019, the service sector is expected to contribute more to GDP growth than the goods sector as increased business activity and consumer spending will drive the demand for services such as finance, real estate, wholesale, and retail trade.

At the tail end of 2017, the labour market improved so much so that the number of jobs that were lost during the recession were recovered. This was due to increases in full-time private sector employment, which are expected to extend to 2018. Increases in full-time employment positively affect the average weekly earnings of Albertans. This will support household income growth and revitalize household income above pre-recession levels. With increases in the rate of employment, unemployment rates are expected to return to pre-recession levels by 2021.

As employment and average weekly earnings increase, so does housing starts and household spending. Residential building activity is expected to increase in the next four years due to gradual increase of the province's population as well as the gradual increase in the affordability of the housing market.

Although data shows that Alberta has emerged from the economic recession that was caused by a much-extended global oil price shock, the total number of registered apprentices in Alberta has not yet returned to pre-recession levels. In 2017, there were more than 50,600 registered apprentices in Alberta, which is down from the over 70,700 total apprentices registered in 2014.

* Sources: [Government of Alberta Budget 2018-2021 Fiscal Economic Outlook](#)
[Apprenticeship and Industry Training Statistical Profiles, 2017](#)

Goals – Directions for Future Success

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board has functions under the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act** including:

- Advising the Minister about the needs of the Alberta labour market for skilled and trained persons, and training and certification in trades and occupations,
- Making recommendations to the Minister about the designation of trades and occupations,
- Establishing or recognizing trade and occupation-specific committees and appointing members, and
- Promoting careers in trades and occupations and the training and certification of people in trades and occupations.

* For a complete list of the responsibilities of the board, please refer to [Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act](#).

Goal 1: Alberta has a highly skilled, professional workforce in the designated trades and occupations that meets the current and the future needs of industry.

What this means:

- The board collaborates with industry and stakeholder partners to establish, develop and implement high quality apprenticeship and industry training and certification standards that meet the current and future needs of Alberta industry.
- The board shows leadership in collaborating with industry and stakeholder partners to enhance both the technical training and on-the-job training aspects of apprenticeship and occupational training programs.
- The board advocates for the continuous review and enhancement of the apprenticeship and industry training system through technology and process advancements.

The partners achieving this goal are:



Partners:	What they will do:
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and approve apprenticeship and occupational trainee program training and certification standards. ● Monitor the health and effectiveness of the industry committee network.
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Through industry network, recommend training and certification standards in apprenticeship and occupational training programs to the board.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administer the apprenticeship and industry training system.
Post-secondary institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and deliver technical training curriculum based on course outlines approved by the board.

Goal 2 Alberta’s apprenticeship and industry training system is aligned with and responsive to labour market demand.

What this means:

- The board collaborates with government and industry stakeholders to identify strategies that will develop a resilient and diverse skilled trades and occupations workforce.
- The board collaborates with government, industry stakeholders, and post-secondary institutions to identify pathways into apprenticeship for all Albertans.
- The board supports Pan-Canadian apprenticeship strategies through research, discussion and collaboration within the apprenticeship community across the country.

The partners achieving this goal are:



Partners:	What they will do:
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with government, employers, industry stakeholders and others to develop strategies that impact the number of skilled trades and occupational workers to meet industry demand.
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire, train and implement retention strategies that enable apprentices and occupational trainees to progress and complete their programs.
Industry Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide recommendations to the board about their respective designated trade' or occupation's training and certification needs.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies attract and support apprentice's and occupational trainee's entrance, retention and progression in their programs. • Develop and promote pathways into apprenticeship.
Stakeholder Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote pathways into apprenticeship including dual credit and apprenticeship preparatory programs.
Post-secondary institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver apprenticeship preparatory programs and promote pathways into apprenticeship education.

Goal 3 Albertans are aware of and knowledgeable about the apprenticeship and industry training system.

What this means:

- The board encourages and motivates employers and industry stakeholders to hire, register and train more apprentices and occupational trainees to meet Alberta’s current and future economic and societal needs.
- The board promotes the availability, advantages, and life-long learning potential of careers in the designated trades and occupations to all Albertans.
- The board promotes the Industry Committee Network as a valuable mechanism for industry engagement in the success and future of the apprenticeship and industry training system.
- The board promotes and develops incentives such as scholarships and board awards to encourage apprenticeship and occupational program progression, completion and excellence.

The partners achieving this goal are:



Partners:	What they will do:
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Champion and promote careers in the designated trades and occupations to all Albertans. ● Encourage industry to engage in the apprenticeship and industry training system through the Industry Committee Network.
Industry Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Champion and promote apprenticeship and occupational training programs to Albertans. ● Encourage industry to engage in the Industry Network.
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide opportunities to Albertans to pursue learning opportunities and careers in the designated trades and occupations.
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and deliver materials and initiatives that promote career opportunities in the designated trades and occupations to all Albertans.
Stakeholders and Post-secondary Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote and deliver opportunities to explore careers in the designated trades and occupations to all Albertans.

Key Strategies and Priority Initiatives

In 2018-2021, in addition to the responsibilities outlined in the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*, the board will focus its attention to achieving the following key strategies and priority initiatives that are critical to the long term success and growth of the apprenticeship and industry training system:

Key Strategy 1: Building a high quality apprenticeship and industry training system

1. The board will continue to ensure that high quality training and certification standards are developed and implemented so that apprenticeship and occupational learning programs are relevant and keep pace with technology changes and industry best practices.
2. The board will show leadership in influencing employers to provide a high quality on-the-job learning experience to increase apprentices' and occupational trainees' skills, competencies, program progression and life-long career success.
3. The board will engage more efficiently and often with apprentices, employers, industry associations, and system stakeholders to gain their perspectives and knowledge about building a more efficient apprenticeship and industry training system.
4. The board will encourage the government to explore opportunities to diversify programs delivered through the apprenticeship model.
5. The board will encourage government to enhance apprenticeship and industry training system processes and technologies to better meet clients' needs.

Key Strategy 2: Alignment with labour market supply and demand

1. The board will collaborate with government and industry stakeholders to understand the cyclical nature of Alberta's labour market supply and demand in order to develop strategies that anticipate, rather than respond to, industry's need for resilient and diverse skilled professionals.
2. The board will continue to encourage and motivate employers to hire, register and train apprentices and occupational trainees through to the completion of their learning programs as the best means to control workforce costs and meet current and future workforce development requirements.
3. The board will support and champion the government's priority to ensure industry compliance to the certification requirements outlined in the *Apprenticeship and Industry Training Act*.
4. The board will encourage government, post-secondary institutions, and other stakeholders to develop and deliver alternate and traditional apprenticeship pathways, including apprenticeship preparatory programs.
5. The board will encourage increased diversity and inclusion in the skilled workforce by supporting stakeholder partners that offer programming and supports to under-represented or barriered individuals or groups.

Key Strategy 3: Building awareness of careers in designated trades and occupations

1. The board will advocate for increased promotion of the designated trades and occupations careers to young Albertans currently in their primary and secondary levels of the education system, women, people of Indigenous heritage, and other individuals and groups.
2. The board will encourage better and more effective communications to the apprenticeship community stakeholders through social media technologies and platforms.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The board, in consultation with the Government of Alberta, will operationalize the Board Strategic Plan by developing actions, performance measures and indicators. The board commits to reporting to the Minister its progress in achieving its strategic direction on an annual basis until the end of the current Strategic Plan's cycle.

For more information about the board, apprenticeship and industry training system, or the programs and initiatives outlined in this document, please visit the contact information as outlined at the beginning of this Strategic Plan.