

Moving forward...

## Message from the Deputy Minister

Alberta must have a productive labour force that meets the needs of the economy today and in the future. Right now Alberta's economy is hot, and Alberta is facing skills and labour shortages which will challenge us for many more years. Industry and employers need innovative solutions to ensure they have the supply of skilled and knowledgeable workers they require to move forward.

AHRE will always provide supports to those in need; we will always ensure workplaces are fair, safe and healthy. However, our focus must also be to help those who can work, find work – meaningful work. If they need training, we will help them get it.

We will continue to increase our efforts with industry, employers and individuals to ensure Albertans have the skills, supports and information they need to succeed in the labour market and contribute to Alberta's economic prosperity.

In the next few years, we will continue to make great strides in our contribution to Alberta's economy and productivity. I look forward to working with all our stakeholders on this important strategic direction.

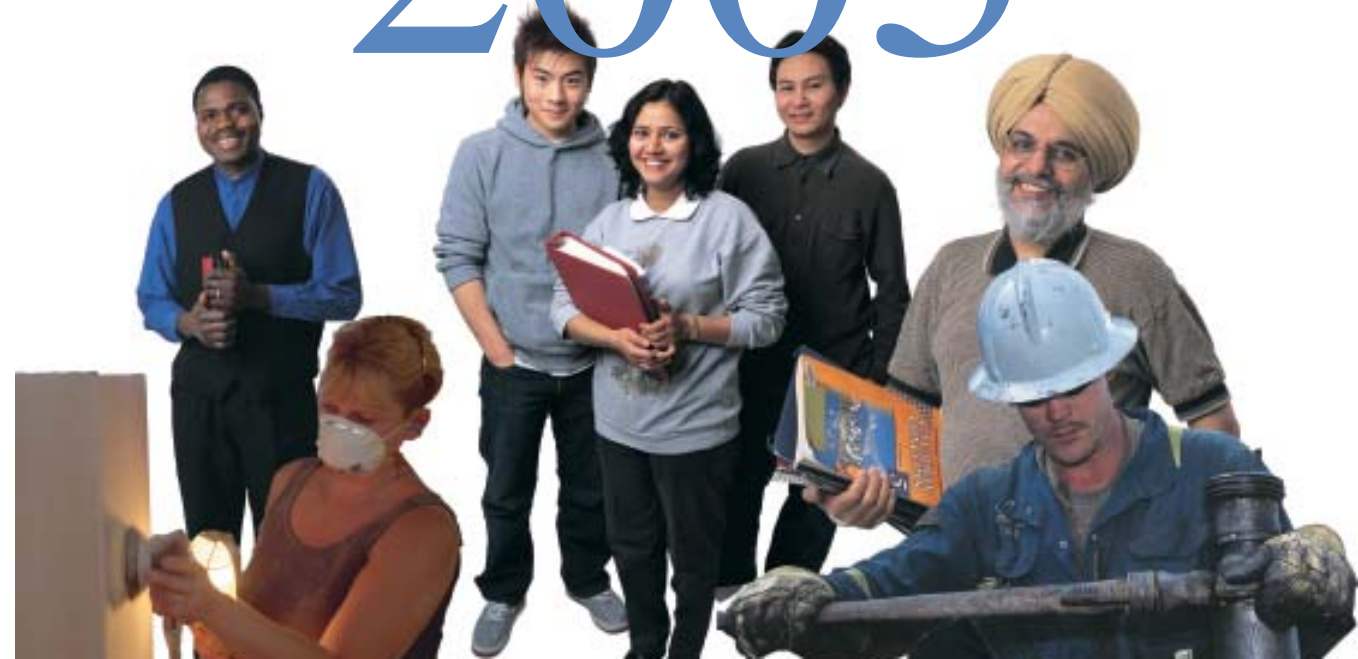
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Ulysses Currie  
Deputy Minister, Alberta Human Resources and Employment

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# Alberta Human Resources and Employment the people & workplace department

# 2004 *highlights* 2005



Deputy Minister  
Ulysses Currie  
Alberta Human  
Resources and  
Employment



**Minister Mike Cardinal  
Human Resources  
and Employment**

## Message from the Minister

Last year, the department of Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE) met or exceeded most of its business plan performance targets and invested over \$713 million in programs and services for Albertans.

We don't have welfare offices anymore. We have employment and training centres. In 2004-2005, we supported over 23,000 Albertans to participate in training, including over 4,300 apprentices.

We made it easier for families to qualify for the Child Health and Adult Health Benefits, and extended the Adult Health Benefit to young adults attending high school. We increased the minimum wage, saw the lost-time injury claim rate hit an all-time low, and settled 99% of expired collective agreements amicably.

AHRE also took on responsibility for aligning immigration policy and programs last year. At the same time, the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) program was transferred to Alberta Seniors and Community Supports.

AHRE's activities are based on five goals. The following pages provide examples of how the work done by our staff made a positive difference in the lives of Albertans over the past year.

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Honourable Mike Cardinal  
Minister, Human Resources and Employment

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## Goal 5:



## Albertans receive effective and efficient programs and services

The **Student Funding Contact Centre** replied to over **150,000** inquiries. **1-800-222-6485**  
[www.alis.gov.ab.ca/studentsfinance](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/studentsfinance)

Partnering ministries were **91% satisfied** with our collaboration and contributions to **Cross Ministry Initiatives**.

We **improved service delivery** at Alberta Service Centres to focus on **helping people who can work find jobs**.

Can we help you?  
**Click, Call or Come In.**

A record **89,000 jobs** were posted to the Canada-Alberta Job Order Bank Service (JOBS), which introduced **job-match**, a feature to match job seekers with potential employers.  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/jobs](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/jobs)

We supported the **People, Prosperity and Preservation** core business of the Government of Alberta by participating in all four cross-ministry initiatives: **Alberta Children and Youth, Aboriginal Policy, Health Sustainability** and the **Economic Development Strategy**.

Seven AHRE teams received **Premier's Awards of Excellence: Gold**, ALIS Website Redesign; **Silver**, Cumulative Impact Assessment Work Group; **Bronze**, AHRE Leadership Program Pilot; Amalgamation of City Centre Area Project; Calgary Community and Business Services; and Edmonton North Area Front End Services Unit.

For more information about AHRE, visit our website at [www.gov.ab.ca/hre](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre), call Service Alberta toll-free at **310-0000**, or visit the nearest **Alberta Service Centre**.

Click on: [www.gov.ab.ca/hre](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre)

## Goal 4:

### Alberta has a fair, safe and healthy work environment

The **provincial workplace injury rate dropped to 2.6** serious injuries per 100 full-time jobs. This represents about 10,000 prevented lost-time injuries each year, and over \$150 million in annual WCB claims cost savings since 2000.  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/whs/publications/pdf/OID\\_2004.pdf](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/whs/publications/pdf/OID_2004.pdf)

We committed to **increasing the minimum wage** by nearly 20%, to **\$7.00 per hour from \$5.90 per hour**, effective September 1, 2005.  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/employmentstandards](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/employmentstandards)

The updated *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Code Explanation Guide* helps employers clarify the content and application of the OHS Code requirements. We also posted a Small Business Toolkit for Health and Safety.  
[www.worksafely.org](http://www.worksafely.org)

Alberta continued to have one of the most **stable labour relations climates in Canada**.

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## Goal 1:

### Low-income Albertans can meet their basic needs

We completed the implementation of **Alberta Works**, a blended approach to helping people through job-search assistance, training, income support, health benefits and child support services.

*The Income Supports and Benefits Regulation* was introduced, which provides additional benefits for clients escaping family violence, clients requiring special medical diets, and an increased transportation allowance.

We increased income-qualifying levels by \$2,000 to make the **Child Health Benefit** and **Adult Health Benefit** more accessible to families. Last year, over 64,000 families received the Child Health Benefit, and 98% reported they were satisfied with the program.

We expanded **Income Support** to provide benefits to people who need babysitters while looking for a job or working. **Child Support Services** are now provided to Adult Health Benefit recipients and clients who recently left Income Support.

Click on: [www.gov.ab.ca/hre](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre)



Call the Workplace Health and Safety Contact Centre at **1-866-415-8690** or visit [www.worksafely.org](http://www.worksafely.org)

Call the Employment Standards Contact Centre: **(780) 427-3731**, toll-free via **310-0000**.



**99%** of expired collective agreements were settled **without a work stoppage**.



**Alberta Works Contact Centre connects low-income people to our programs and services.** **1-866-644-5135, or in Edmonton 644-5135.**

For info on Alberta Works funding and benefits: [www.gov.ab.ca/hre/albertaworks](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/albertaworks)

**Adult Health Benefit**  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/ahb](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/ahb)  
**Child Health Benefit**  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb)

**Income Support**  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/isp](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/isp)  
**Child Support Services**  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/css](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/css)

## Goal 2:

### Albertans will have the skills, supports and information they need to succeed in the labour market

AHRE has employment and training offices across the province that help people who can work, find work. We spent almost **\$270 million** to train over **23,000 people**, including over **4,300 apprentices**.

New information resources included: *Working in Alberta: A guide for internationally trained and educated immigrants*; *Alberta Careers Update 2004*; *Skills by Design: Strategies for employee development*; and *Time to Choose a Post-Secondary Education Program*.

We provided **training** and other **employment services** to workers affected by mine closures and downsizing in manufacturing and food processing businesses. **83%** of participants who completed **27 First Nations Training to Employment projects**, got jobs.

More than **3,500 students got jobs** and more than **2,700 employers** filled research, recreation, child or elder care, event and administration positions through the \$8 million Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP).  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/step](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/step)

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**81% of people who participated in AHRE training programs became employed.**

More than **1.6 million visits** were made to Labour Market Information Centres (LMICs).  
[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/lmic](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/lmic).

The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website attracted over **2 million visitors**.  
[www.alis.gov.ab.ca](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca)

**87% of participants in AHRE employment and training programs said the training helped prepare them for future employment.**

## Goal 3:

### Alberta has a productive workforce that meets the needs of the economy today and in the future



The *Annual Labour Market Review* included Alberta's **unemployment rate of 4.6%**, Canada's lowest in 2004.

AHRE took on the responsibility for developing **immigration policy** last year.

We funded bridging programs to help **internationally trained professionals** upgrade their skills and get work experience in Canada.

We initiated a **Youth Apprenticeship Project** to increase the awareness of students in grades 7 to 12 of **careers in the trades and agriculture**.

We continued to release the monthly **Labour Force Survey data** on employment growth, industry and occupation growth, and unemployment rates including Labour Force Survey data for Aboriginal (Off-Reserve) people. [www.gov.ab.ca/hre/lfstats/index.asp](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/lfstats/index.asp)

We released *Integrating Skilled Immigrants Into the Alberta Economy*, focusing on getting Albertans with an international credential into the province's labour market.  
[www.advancededucation.gov.ab.ca/other/immigration/IntSkilledImmigrants.pdf](http://www.advancededucation.gov.ab.ca/other/immigration/IntSkilledImmigrants.pdf)

We published *Better Balance, Better Business: Options for Work-Life Issues*, a resource that informs employers about the business case for work-life balance and how to adopt it in their workplace.

In partnership with the Federal government, we created the **Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS)** program – designed to provide training to lower income farm families, enabling them to enhance their financial position.

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