

Office of the  
*fairness*  
commissioner

Bureau du  
commissaire à  
*l'équité*



## Business Plan 2013 - 2016

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Strong People Strong Economy” through maximizing the economic and social benefits of immigration and women's economic security is one of the three government priorities of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. The Fairness Commissioner plays an important role in meeting this goal.

As a result of the work of the Fairness Commissioner, all regulated professions in Ontario that are subject to the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006 (FARPA)* or the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA)* are aware that their registration practices must be fair, and are working towards improvement. The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) continues to work to remove unnecessary barriers preventing individuals, particularly newcomers, from practising in their professions.

## Performance

OFC met or exceeded the majority of its performance targets for 2012. Assessments of registration practices were completed in the spring of 2012. OFC made numerous recommendations to improve registration practices and continues to monitor each regulatory body to ensure implementation. To date, the majority of recommendations issued by the OFC have been addressed by regulators.

OFC's communications efforts have been robust with the publication of assessment summary reports and enhancing OFC's website with updated facts, data, projects and information about its work. High profile meetings and successful conference participation throughout the year continued to raise the visibility of the office and educate audiences about its mandate.

Requests for OFC's input from government officials, qualifications assessment agencies, other Fairness Commissioners and stakeholders indicate that it is recognized as an important voice in the regulatory sector, and is meeting its goal of becoming a centre of expertise in fair registration practices.

## Income and Expenses 2012-2013

	<b>2012-13</b>
<b>Total Other Income</b>	1,692,100
<b>Total Expense</b>	(1,688,300)
<b>Income/Loss</b>	3,800

## Commitments for the Planning Period

In 2013-16, the office will continue to drive its key strategy forward. Feedback from several regulatory bodies shows that they are eager to implement OFC's recommendations. There continue to be some regulators that require additional attention and the OFC will work with them to affect change.

To encourage proactive improvements in registration practices, the OFC is developing an online compendium of promising registration practices so that regulators can access a collection of exemplary practices and learn from what other regulators have done.

The office will focus on pressing research issues related to registration, such as competency assessments, language and academic credential assessments.

Determining the feasibility of revising audit and fair registration practices reporting guidelines and processes will also be undertaken.

Education and outreach activities will continue, as the Commissioner and her staff make presentations, provide advice and educate stakeholders about fair access to the professions.

The establishment of the Ontario College of Trades will require significant attention from the OFC. OFC leadership will determine how to realign the workload among existing staff.

A second round of assessments will begin in 2013-14 and run through to 2014-15. It is anticipated that work with the five new health colleges and the Ontario College of Trades will escalate through this period as they develop registration regulations and practices.

## Income and Expenses 2013-2016

The OFC will face financial pressure throughout the planning horizon due to its flat-lined budget.

	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>
<b>Total Other Income</b>	1,689,900	1,689,900	1,689,900
<b>Total Expense</b>	1,689,900	1,689,900	1,689,900
<b>Income/Loss</b>	0	0	0

# INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration seeks an Ontario where diversity is valued as a source of strength and where all people, including newcomers, seniors and women, are capable of contributing to a strong economy, caring society and enhanced quality of life. The goal of this vision is to create a province where newcomers are able to find work in their fields of expertise.

To achieve this, the barriers preventing newcomers from participating in the economic and social life of the province must be addressed. To this end, the Government proclaimed *The Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006 (FARPA)* in March 2007 - the first legislation of its kind in Canada. FARPA also amended the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*.

The act requires Ontario regulators to have a quicker, fair and open registration process by means of:

- Transparent and objective assessment of qualifications;
- Timely response to applicants;
- Reasonable fees; and
- Fair and open licensing processes.

The legislation called for the appointment of a Fairness Commissioner to assess and oversee the compliance with the act. In March 2007, the Honourable Jean Augustine, P.C., C.M. was appointed the first Fairness Commissioner in Ontario.

This plan sets out how the Commissioner and her office can successfully achieve its mandate.

# MANDATE

The Fairness Commissioner is responsible for assessing the registration practices of certain regulated professions. The purpose is to make sure these practices are transparent, objective, impartial and fair for anyone applying to practise his or her profession in Ontario.

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) requires the bodies that regulate the professions, sometimes called colleges, to review their own registration process, submit reports about them and undergo compliance audits.

Specifically, the responsibilities of the office are to:

- Assess registration practices of the regulatory bodies to ensure their practices are transparent, objective, impartial and fair
- Provide advice to the regulated professions about registration and other issues
- Set out guidelines for the content and form of the regulatory bodies' yearly reports to the office
- Consult with the regulated professions about the scope, timing and cost of audits
- Specify criteria and standards for audits
- Monitor third parties relied upon by regulated professions to assess qualifications
- Look into systemic problems with registration practices
- Issue compliance orders to the non-health professions, if necessary
- Report to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration about its work
- Advise other government ministries about issues relating to the registration practices of the regulated professions in their domains

The OFC has no mandate to advocate or intervene on behalf of individuals or to assess credentials. It works with the regulated professions to make sure everyone gets fair treatment.

## **Accountabilities and Reporting**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Fairness Commissioner was signed in 2012. It is in effect until 2015 at which time the MOU must be renewed or revised and affirmed by both parties.

Under the current MOU the Commissioner is accountable to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration for the performance of the OFC in fulfilling its mandate and for carrying out the

roles and responsibilities assigned to the Commissioner. She is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the OFC, for the supervision of its staff and carrying out the mandate and policies established by the OFC.

The Commissioner submits an annual report on the affairs of the OFC to the Minister for tabling in the Legislature within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year. She submits an annual three-year business plan to the Minister for review and approval. Any promotional or informational materials, reports or documents required by the Minister and quarterly financial reports are submitted by the Commissioner to the Minister.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

Section 13 (3) of FARPA sets out the functions of the Fairness Commissioner. They are to:

- a) assess the registration practices of regulated professions based on their obligations under this Act and the regulations;
- b) specify audit standards, the scope of audits, times when registration practices shall be reviewed, times when fair registration practices reports and auditors' reports shall be filed, the form of all reports and certificates required under this Act and the regulations and the information that they must contain;
- c) consult with regulated professions on the cost, scope and timing of audits;
- d) monitor third parties relied on by regulated professions to assess the qualifications of individuals applying for registration by a regulated profession to help ensure that their assessments are based on the obligations of regulated professions under this Act and the regulations;
- e) provide information and advice to regulated professions and to professions that may be named as regulated professions to assist them in understanding how to comply with the requirements of this Act and the regulations;
- f) advise regulated professions, government agencies, community agencies, colleges and universities, third parties relied on by regulated professions to assess qualifications and others as the Minister may direct with respect to matters under this Act and the regulations;
- g) advise ministries with respect to matters under this Act and the regulations that affect a ministry or a regulated profession that falls under the jurisdiction of the ministry;
- h) establish eligibility requirements that a person must meet to be qualified to conduct audits;

- i) establish a roster of persons who in the opinion of the Fairness Commissioner have satisfied the eligibility requirements established under clause (h);
- j) advise the Minister on matters related to the administration of this Act;
- k) report to the Minister on registration practices related to internationally trained individuals and their registration by regulated professions and to other ministers in respect of those same issues as they relate to regulated professions that fall under the jurisdiction of their respective ministries; and
- l) perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. 2006, c. 31, s. 13 (3).

In addition, sections 19-21 of the act require the regulated professions to submit to the OFC yearly registration practices reports, undergo audits and conduct mandatory or voluntary reviews to determine relevance and necessity of registration requirements.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

### **OFC's External Environment**

The following is a discussion of the environment in which the OFC operates. It is intended to provide context for the office, to identify sectors and groups that impact the organization or affect issues that are important to its work.

#### **Government**

- OFC was consulted by Ontario's Expert Roundtable on Immigration about its work and immigration issues relevant to fair access to the regulated professions.
- The federal government has undertaken changes to various aspects of Canada's immigration system. The proposed reforms generated significant media coverage. CIC issued 82 news releases between January and October 2012 alone. The regulation changes continue to be of concern to many of OFC's key stakeholders, namely immigrant serving organizations, credential assessment agencies and regulatory bodies.
- The OFC submitted comments to Citizenship and Immigration Canada about the proposed regulation changes to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. These comments can be found on OFC's website at

[http://www.fairnesscommissioner.ca/files\\_docs/content/pdf/en/submission\\_to\\_proposed\\_cic\\_federal\\_skilled\\_worker\\_class-sept\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fairnesscommissioner.ca/files_docs/content/pdf/en/submission_to_proposed_cic_federal_skilled_worker_class-sept_2012.pdf) .

- Regulators have been changing their registration regulations to comply with the Ontario Labour Mobility Act (OLMA). OFC has reviewed and commented on numerous regulation proposals and amendments. OFC is also monitoring the impact of labour mobility on registration practices.
- As a result of Premier McGuinty's announcement in July 2011: health colleges will have to make publicly available any comments made about them by the OFC, and the government will work with the OFC to remove unnecessary barriers in registration, including Canadian experience requirements. OFC is working on these issues.
- The Premier also announced that international medical graduates will have the opportunity to undergo assessment rather than complete a residency and that employers will receive a tax credit for hiring newcomers. OFC continues to monitor these issues.

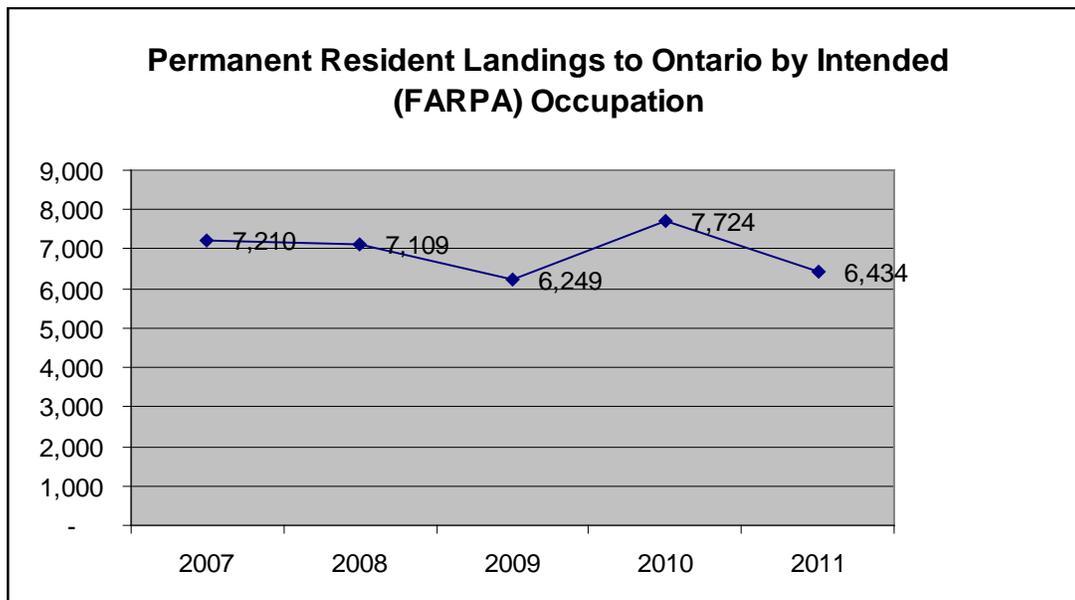
## **Regulatory**

- There are six newly regulated health professions, most in alternative or complementary health care fields. OFC has been working with those that have started laying the foundation for self-regulation.
- The College of Trades and Apprenticeship of Ontario, a new regulatory body has started to establish operations. OFC anticipates that this new college will significantly increase its workload.
- There is continued discussion in the sector about alternatives to academic credential assessments such as prior learning and competency assessments. OFC has examined academic credential assessments, examinations and competency assessments.

## **Demographic**

- Based on 2011 Fair Registration Practices Report, India and the Philippines are the top two source countries for internationally trained applicants to the regulated professions under the purview of the OFC. The Philippines overtook the USA as second most important source country for applicants to regulated professions under FARPA in 2010.
- Media coverage about challenges faced by immigrants related to certification and employment continues on a regular basis.

- Canadians are divided on the actual effect of immigration.<sup>1</sup>
- Permanent resident landings in Ontario by FARPA occupation:



- The increase in total landings from 2009 to 2010 can be primarily attributed to accountants, physicians and nurses.
- The decline in total landings from 2010 to 2011 was driven primarily by engineers, physicians and teachers.
- Landings from all categories of engineers have been on the decline from 2007. Although 2010 saw a spike in specialist and general physicians it was followed by declines in both categories in 2011.
- 2010 saw a significant increase in landings over 2009 from registered nurses (143%). According to information provided to the OFC from the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO), the top three source countries for applicants remained the same from 2008 through to 2011. They were Philippines, India and Nigeria in that order.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.angus-reid.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/2012.01.31\\_Immigration\\_CAN.pdf](http://www.angus-reid.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/2012.01.31_Immigration_CAN.pdf)

## Labour Market

- According to the August 2012 Ontario labour market bulletin, the province's labour market has been quite volatile over the past year and has not managed to gain any meaningful traction. The province has not recorded more than two consecutive months of employment growth since 2010. Ontario has added only 24,300 jobs since August 2011, which is too small a gain to absorb a sufficient number of new labour market entrants.<sup>2</sup>
- National initiatives such as labour mobility are consistent with the notion of fair access to regulated professions, and OFC continues to be consulted for its expertise. Access to professions by newcomers or across borders will continue to be topical in the regulatory sector. OFC's key strategy as outlined later in this report is designed to promote continuous improvement which is best suited to respond to this evolving environment.

The environment in which OFC exists is constantly changing. The regulatory sector is dynamic and is set to welcome new professions, trades and new approaches to qualifications assessment and recognition.

Media coverage often contextualizes the issue of fair access to regulated professions within the broader topics of immigration and employment. News stories may cover struggles faced by newcomers, some of whom are not in regulated professions, or who are facing difficulties unrelated to registration practices.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/on/offices/2012/08-olmb-aug.shtml>

## Stakeholders

OFC's key stakeholders include the regulatory bodies named in FARPA and RHPA, third party assessment agencies, provincial Ministries that are responsible for those same regulatory bodies. Immigrant serving organizations and the general public are also interested parties. The table below presents a summary of stakeholders, and the OFC's relationship with them.

### Profile of Stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Regulatory bodies	Third Party Assessment Agencies	Other Ministries	Other Organizations and Groups
<b>Description</b>	40 Regulatory Bodies currently, and the College of Trades and Apprenticeship, for a total of 41.	Relied upon by regulatory bodies to assess qualifications of registration applicants	OFC works at arm's length from MCI.  Annual report includes a ministry by ministry update.  MOHLTC receives reports from OFC on RHPA governed regulatory bodies	Immigrant serving organizations, post-secondary institutions, professional associations, unions and other relevant organizations
<b>Relationship</b>	OFC works with regulatory bodies to ensure compliance with the relevant Acts	FARPA and RHPA specify that the OFC monitor third party agencies  Undertook study to review Third Party Assessment Agencies.  Two	Advisory relationship between OFC Executive Director and Ministry representatives	Communication and outreach. OFC promotes general awareness and communications on registration practices and the role of the OFC

		Recommendations for Action made to third parties.		
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### **Commentary on Stakeholder Relationships**

Since 2007 the OFC has established positive working relationships with regulatory bodies. Its collaborative approach is appreciated by regulators and is effective in gaining their agreement and participation. The OFC’s ability to persuade and influence regulators, particularly health colleges with whom the Commissioner’s enforcement powers are limited, is central to ensuring improvement in registration practices.

The Commissioner is also responsible for monitoring qualifications assessment agencies. Since the legislation does not provide enforcement measures with regard to these agencies, the OFC’s ability to influence third parties and the regulators that use their services is the most effective approach to encourage them to improve their practices.

OFC interacts with a number of government Ministries that have responsibility for the professions under its purview. Ministries are kept informed of developments in their professions with regard to registration practices and key OFC initiatives.

Other organizations and groups include but are not limited to immigrant serving agencies and MPPs. They are important target audiences and are kept abreast of developments in fair access to the professions on a regular basis.

### **OFC’s Internal Factors**

The following is a discussion of internal factors that support the Commissioner in delivering her mandate.

#### **Workforce**

OFC’s staff complement includes 1 Fairness Commissioner, 1 Executive Director, 1 Communications Officer, 1 Education and Outreach Officer, 2 Policy Advisers, 4 Program

Advisers, 1 Operations Manager, 1 Receptionist/Administrative Assistant, 1 Executive Assistant to the Commissioner.

The Commissioner is part-time and all other staff are full-time. One Program Adviser is on a one-year contract. Four staff are bilingual French/English and there is a diversity of ethnicities, ages and genders.

All staff have appropriate levels of education for their roles. Two of the four Program Advisors have less than one year of experience in their current roles; the remaining staff have been in service for up to five years at the OFC.

### **Compensation and Benefits**

OFC employees are not part of the Ontario Public Service (OPS). Salaries and benefits are administered by the OFC independent of the OPS. The OFC is a non-unionized environment. Starting salaries and benefits are benchmarked against comparable roles in the Ontario Public Service (OPS). However cost of living increases are not set according to OPSEU or AMAPCEO agreements. No merit pay or pay-for-performance is awarded to OFC employees, nor are they entitled to participate in the OPS pension plan; therefore, over time salaries awarded to OFC employees fall behind their OPS counterparts. This discrepancy poses a challenge in recruiting new staff and for retaining existing personnel.

Cost of living increases were previously set at 2% per year; however, OFC was advised that given the spending restraint throughout the broader public sector, salary and wage increases have not and will not be offered until further notice.

### **Learning and Development**

Learning opportunities for staff such as courses, conference attendance and training are limited due to budgetary constraints. This limits the organization's ability to adequately develop new staff and prepare existing staff for new roles and responsibilities.

### **Workload**

OFC staff have full workloads and all documents are vetted by the Executive Director for quality control purposes prior to the Commissioner's approval. There is a potential for employees to be overloaded, particularly in peak times, when peer support is needed or during times of extended absence.

The Transitional Council of the Ontario College of Trades has started to establish operations. OFC has been and will continue to consult with the new college as it develops regulations, registration procedures and begins to register members. While the precise number of distinct procedures that will be established in order to register members of different trades is unknown at this time, there are 21 compulsory trades. It is possible that additional trades will become compulsory and therefore require registration.

Some regulatory bodies establish distinct registration procedures to address individual professions that they regulate. It is possible that the College of Trades will implement a number of distinct registration practices in order to register members in the 21 trades. Accordingly, OFC expects a significant increase in its workload associated with this new college.

### **Organizational Structure**

The organizational structure is flat and has few reporting layers. Usually approvals require only one or two reviews by senior staff and can be completed within 1-2 business days. There is no room for vertical advancement and lateral opportunities are also limited with a small organization.

### **Employee Turnover**

Since 2008 eight permanent staff have resigned, been dismissed or not had their contracts renewed. Reasons for resignations include family relocation, career or educational opportunities.

### **Budget**

OFC's budget of \$1.7 million per annum has been flat-lined. This poses a challenge to the organization and its ability to meet increasing obligations and mitigate risks.

Additional financial pressures are expected in fiscal 2013-2014 resulting from three maternity leaves and the need to back-fill these temporary vacancies.

At this time it is still difficult to assess the additional workload that will result from the Ontario College of Trades.

### **Facilities**

There is one office location in Toronto for all staff. In the summer of 2011 renovations to the OFC's office space were completed to accommodate up to 13 work stations. The current

physical space is expected to adequately accommodate staff for the time period covered by this business plan.

OFC's rent increased and is likely to increase further in the next three years.

## **Information Technology**

Desktop, e-mail services and telecommunications are provided to the OFC by the Ontario Public Service Infrastructure Technology Services organization. This arrangement is set out in the MOU between the Minister of Citizenship Immigration and the Fairness Commissioner and is expected to continue.

### *Compendium of Promising Registration Practices IT Plan*

The purpose of this project is to develop an online repository of information about registration practices, to facilitate continuous improvement by enabling Ontario regulatory bodies to learn from their colleagues in other professions.

One of the desired mid-term outcomes of OFC's performance is that "regulators perceive OFC as an effective facilitator of continuous improvement"; this initiative is an important part of meeting that objective.

OFC has procured a vendor to develop the technical infrastructure of the compendium and to advise staff on matters including web hosting. It is expected that the compendium will be accessed by users via the OFC's main website [www.fairnesscommissioner.ca](http://www.fairnesscommissioner.ca).

The main users will be Ontario regulatory bodies. However, additional stakeholders may be added in the future. Ontario's Regulators for Access (ORAC) previously prepared a compendium of promising practices containing 29 entries, and that is now archived. The content of the practices planned for OFC's compendium is significantly more detailed and includes OFC's perspective on why the practices are fair. No other compendium of practices is in existence with this information.

# ACTIVITIES

## **Completed Activities**

## **Continuous Improvement**

OFC staff met with twenty six regulatory bodies between April and November 2012 as part of its ongoing monitoring of registration practices and the implementation of recommendations. In, addition 20 action plans were received during that time period.

## **Education and Outreach**

In total the office engaged in 39 speaking engagements and “Big Picture” meetings between April 2012 and November 2012.

“Big Picture” meetings are a major outreach initiative to connect with the broader stakeholder community and place OFC’s work in a larger context.

**April:** Meeting with Attorney General John Gerretson; Canadian Centre for Ethics & Corporate Policy, Institute for Global Citizenship and Equity, Workforce One-Stop 2012 (Conference Board of Canada); Partners in Education & Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses (Winnipeg)

**May:** Toronto Board of Trade, Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Sheridan College provincial conference for Social Service Workers (Mississauga); Dr. Ilse Treurnicht, CEO of MaRS Discovery District, MTCU Minister Glen Murray; MPPs Briefing at Queen’s Park

**June:** Education Minister Laurel Broten, Professor Richard Florida, Ontario College of Teachers, Centennial College Convocation, Social Service Workers Convocation, Sheridan College, Mississauga; Ontario Bar Association, Dorset Park Employment Work Group; Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives; Intergovernmental Deputies Committee, Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation

**July:** Schulich School of Business, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, Gordon Nixon, CEO of Royal Bank of Canada; Mitzie Hunter, CEO of Toronto Civic Action Alliance, Dean Carol Stephenson of Western’s Ivey School of Business, Dean Lorne Sossin, Osgoode Law School

**August:** President Sheldon Levy, President of Ryerson University; Austria’s Secretary of State for Integration, Sebastian Kurz; C.D. Howe Institute, Professor and Research Chair Arthur Sweetman, Human Health Resources, McMaster

**September:** President David Naylor, University of Toronto; Women’s Canadian Club of Ottawa, Alliance of Sector Councils (Ottawa). John Manley, President & CEO of Canadian Council of Chief Executives; Centre for Immigration Policy Reform. Economic Club of Canada, Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR).

**October:** ASALH Conference. Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), live phone interview with Paulet Biederman, University of Waterloo radio, Sound-FM 100.3, Etobicoke Canadian Federation of University Women, Canadian Race Relations Foundation Symposium, TRIEC's Professional Immigrant Networks, The Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA), York Region Gateway Conference, Kababayan Community Centre Multicultural Services, Council of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario

**November:** University of Manitoba Educational Conference, Assistant Deputy Minister MCI, Canadian Network of National Associations of Regulators (CNNAR), Consular Corps Association of Toronto, Alumni Awards Dinner at York University, Ministry of Government Services, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Skills for Change

### **Advice to Stakeholders**

OFC provided advice on the proposed registration regulations of the College of Trades of Ontario and to the Transitional Council of the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists, Transitional Council of the College of Kinesiologists. Comments were also provided to the Law Society of Upper Canada about their Five Year Review of Paralegal Regulation in Ontario.

OFC provided input on registration regulation amendments to:

- College of Nurses of Ontario
- College of Opticians of Ontario
- College of Optometrists of Ontario

At the request of the Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators OFC provided commentary on possible revisions to their credentialing procedures.

Staff participated in a terminology working group of the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) and the Ontario Centre for Excellence in Communication Competency Assessment (OCECCA) working group.

The OFC provided feedback to Ontario's Expert Roundtable on Immigration regarding its proposals for and Ontario immigration strategy.

Representatives of the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) met with OFC to discuss the proposed changes to federal immigration policy. OFC provided them with information about academic credential assessments.

## **Research**

Research is an important component of OFC's work. Policies, recommendations and advice produced by the OFC are evidence based and rely on research undertaken by staff. In addition, specific research projects are completed that add to the office's body of knowledge and expertise.

Staff undertook analysis of Fair Registration Practices Reports to identify the role of academic credential assessments in entry to the regulated professions in Ontario. Research about Canadian experience requirements, the role of examinations in registration practices and competency assessments was also produced.

## **Communications**

The OFC's 2011-2012 annual report was delivered to MCI in June 2012. The Office's quarterly newsletter was issued in September 2012 with spotlights on the Commissioner's comments on federal immigration changes, Canadian experience and the completion of OFC's first assessment cycle.

OFC's website has been updated with updated facts and figures, summaries of assessment reports, comments on federal immigration policy, and a projects section containing comprehensive information about some of OFC's major initiatives.

The Commissioner, Executive Director and staff have been meeting with thought leaders in a broad range of organizations and sectors that are related to OFC's work. The objective of the meetings is to raise awareness of the link between fair access to the professions and current issues.

## **Current/Ongoing Activities**

### **Assessments of Registration Practices**

A review of OFC's assessment process was undertaken in 2012. Results of the analysis, feedback from key stakeholders and staff are being used to fine tune the process. OFC is consulting regulatory bodies on the next cycle of assessments of registration practices. Sessions are taking place in December 2012 and a briefing session is planned for late March 2013.

Annual meetings with regulatory bodies are ongoing through fall 2012 and winter 2012/2013.

### **Advice to Stakeholders**

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) is consulting with the OFC about a draft policy that they are developing about Canadian Experience as a Requirement for Employment.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) asked OFC to organize a briefing for regulatory bodies about changes to federal immigration regulations. The briefing took place on November 23, 2012.

### **Consultative Committee**

OFC has established a consultative committee consisting of stakeholders. The committee meets twice per year for information sharing and collaboration at a strategic level. A meeting took place in May 2012. Meeting with a consultative committee will enable the OFC to maintain key relationships and support for its strategic direction. Another meeting took place on November 27, 2012.

### **Compendium of Promising Registration Practices**

The compendium project has been simplified to align with resource constraints.

OFC staff is currently working with the vendor to revise plans for its technical infrastructure. Development is underway.

### **Education and Outreach**

The Commissioner and staff are meeting with the following groups before the end of December 2012:

Munk Centre at the University of Toronto  
Canadian Ethnic Media Association  
Ontario Association of Osteopathic Manual Practitioners  
Professional Immigrant Network Doctor's group  
Centre for Information & Community Services  
Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium

## **Communications**

OFC is working on publishing a major report to be launched in January 2013. The title is to be determined. The year 2012 marks five years of fair access work and completion of the first comprehensive assessment of professional registration practices ever to be conducted in Canada. Reflecting on this work, the OFC report assesses progress and persistent problems in order to arrive at a future agenda for improving fair access to the regulated professions.

The compendium of promising registration practices will be an externally facing website that is accessible from OFC's main website. Significant communications work is involved in this project.

Communications is working with Program staff on the review of the assessment process and in particular the consultation with regulatory bodies.

## **Looking Ahead**

### **Audits and Entry-to-Practice Reviews**

OFC will establish when and how audits and entry-to-practice (ETP) reviews will be used in the future. In keeping with its commitment to collaboration, OFC will consult with regulatory bodies on any changes.

## **Continuous Improvement**

OFC will continue to conduct annual meetings through the winter of 2012 and early 2013. Managing the implementation of recommendations be monitored

Non-compliance with OFC's recommendations will result in enforcement of the Commissioner's powers under the act.

A new round of assessments will begin in 2013.

## **Education and Outreach**

Education and Outreach activities will proceed through 2016 as the OFC continues to raise awareness of its work in improving registration practices. Staff plan to participate in relevant conferences such as the Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA), The Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR), Conference Board of Canada Round Table on Immigration. Outreach to various Ontario municipalities, local immigration partnerships and immigrant serving organizations will continue.

## **Advice to Stakeholders**

Activity in this area is expected to increase. OFC expects to provide advice to the Transitional Councils of the Homeopaths and Naturopaths in late 2012 or early 2013. In addition as the Ontario College of Trades is expected begin to register members in 2013. OFC typically provides advice to new regulators about registration regulations, registration practices and their obligations under the legislation. This will be in addition to the office's usual work of providing guidance to stakeholders seeking the OFC's input on matters related to fair registration practices.

Similarly, the office expects to continue providing input and feedback to HRSDC on the Foreign Qualifications Recognition program and to the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials on the pan-Canadian quality standards in international credential evaluation.

## **Fair Registration Practices Guidelines and Website**

OFC will review the current FRP guidelines and website. The guidelines and website have been in place since 2008. The purpose of the review is to ensure that they continue to enable the office to gather sufficient information to fulfil legislative and operational needs.

## **Research**

Research will continue to play an important role in OFC's work. Policies, recommendations and advice produced by the OFC will rely on the office's ability to conduct research.

A number of emerging issues pertinent to registration will be examined by the OFC in order to inform its advice to regulators and policy positions. Language fluency and academic credential requirements are specific research areas that have been identified for the upcoming months.

Since 2007 the OFC has collected information and data about registration from regulatory bodies in Ontario. Policy Advisers will conduct analysis of these reports to identify issues, trends and insights to inform the work of the office.

## **Ontario College of Trades**

OFC staff will continue to monitor the establishment of the College of Trades of Ontario as it moves closer to being able to register members.

There is a great diversity of trades to be regulated by the College. Although it is yet to be decided, it is possible that the College will have to submit multiple Fair Registration Practices Reports and other reports to the OFC to address several distinct registration requirements and procedures.

## **Communications**

The need for ongoing communication with regulators and other stakeholders will continue to evolve as the OFC moves forward with its continuous improvement strategy.

Communications initiatives will also support the OFC in achieving its medium-term and ultimate objectives. The website, newsletter, annual report, brochures and other materials will continue to be important communications tools.

The pre-eminent role of the Fairness Commissioner as the spokesperson of the OFC will continue. As is currently the case, the Commissioner will be an important asset to the organization in generating interest in and coverage of the work of the organization.

# KEY STRATEGY

## **Continuous Improvement of Registration Practices**

This strategy addresses how the OFC monitors the implementation of the fairness legislation, facilitates the improvement of registration practices and fosters a culture of continuous improvement of registration practices in regulatory bodies.

## **Vision and Guiding principles**

The following vision is the foundation from which the OFC conducts its work. The OFC has also developed new guiding principles to support its strategy and its work going forward.

### **Vision**

The OFC's long-term vision is that Ontario will be known as a place where all professionals are qualified and all qualified individuals have access to their profession.

### **Guiding principles**

#### ***Policy work is grounded in research***

The OFC endeavours to inform its strategic approach through extensive research and broad consultations with a range of stakeholders. It has developed its Strategy for Continuous Improvement of Registration Practices based on this approach and will continue to do so going forward.

#### ***Stakeholder viewpoints are considered in a balanced manner***

The OFC obtains a clear picture of registration practices from studying the regulatory bodies themselves, the processes of qualifications assessment agencies relied upon by the regulators and the views of the applicants.

#### ***The OFC works collaboratively with the regulators***

The OFC works with sensitivity to the self-governing status of the professions and in the spirit of continued collaboration. It has involved regulators closely in its work to develop the Registration Practices Assessment Guide and it is committed to consulting with regulatory bodies on its tools and initiatives going forward.

***The OFC works with the regulators on an individual basis***

The OFC strategy is based on individual work with each regulator in a continuous improvement model. This model is the opposite of a one-size-fits-all approach, which would set a uniform bar for each regulator as well as a uniform timeline to meet this bar. The OFC favours continuous improvement and individualized work because it fully recognizes the differences in size, resources, legislation, subject matter and processes between regulatory bodies as well as the highly dynamic context in which they operate.

***Reporting requirements are reasonable***

The OFC understands the reporting burden on regulatory bodies required by legislation and it will make every effort to limit reporting requirements.

## **Continuous Improvement Philosophy**

The continuous improvement philosophy promotes fairer registration practices. It is based on the following three underpinnings:

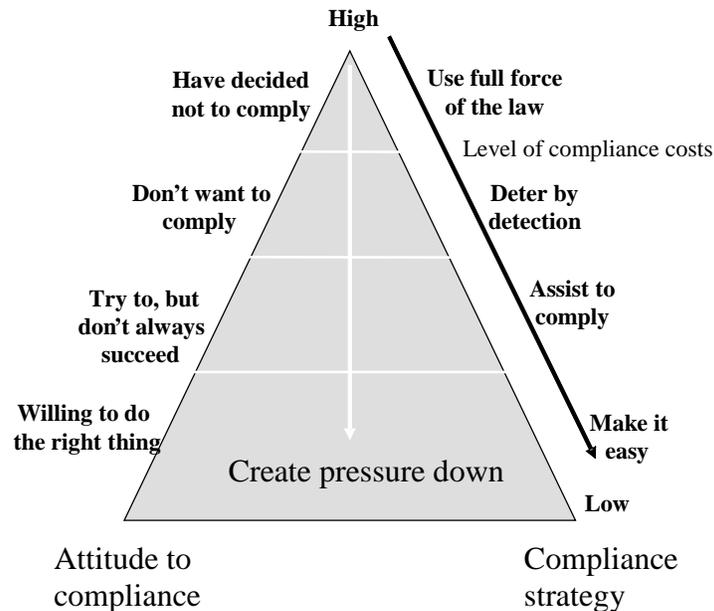
1) **Holding Regulators Accountable**

The OFC expects regulators to improve and requires them to report on an annual basis. Those that fail to report or to improve their practices will be subject to the enforcement measures provided by the legislation.

2) **Providing Support to Regulators Who Want to Improve**

A report provided by KPMG in 2011 included an illustration of the “Compliance Continuum” (see below). It shows that the most effective approach to those that are making efforts to improve is to offer support and facilitation.

## Compliance Continuum (KPMG's report)



After laying the groundwork for fair registration practices, the OFC has determined that the majority of regulators are at least attempting to improve registration practices. KPMG's model of compliance supports OFC's approach, which is to assist regulators in meeting their obligations under the law.

The nature of the support provided to regulators includes working individually with regulators to provide advice on registration practices, sharing the experiences of other regulators and encouraging the adoption of good practices.

### 3) Creating a Climate that is Conducive to Improvement

The OFC will take a number of steps to create a climate that facilitates continuous improvement. Collaboration with regulatory bodies has proven to be an effective way to achieve progress. The development of an assessment methodology with the

assistance of a working group that included regulators and other stakeholders resulted in minimal resistance and proved to be an efficient approach.

Highlighting the achievements of individual regulators who have improved registration practices is intended to reinforce positive actions and provide them with feedback that they can be shared with their own stakeholders.

On an ongoing basis, the OFC will take the opportunity to communicate on an aggregate level about progress being made by regulators to improve their practices. This will provide a comprehensive picture of how the regulatory sector is doing and will enable each regulator to measure its achievements relative to the group.

## **Implementation of Strategy for Continuous Improvement**

### **Assessment**

In order to assess registration practices, OFC developed the Registration Practices Assessment Guide with the help of representatives from regulatory bodies and qualifications assessment agencies.

The guide sets out two types of practices: Required Practices, i.e. specific duties articulated in FARPA and RHPA, and Good Practices that exemplify the broader principles of transparency, objectivity, impartiality and fairness.

OFC staff determine which of the practices the regulatory body is demonstrating and where there may be opportunities for improvement based on the individual situation of the body.

OFC is working with each regulator to ensure that required practices are met and to encourage the implementation of good practices that are achievable for each individual organization.

### **Continuous Improvement Cycle**

This continuous improvement strategy involves biennial cycle wherein the OFC assesses registration practices, makes recommendations for improving practices as needed, and monitors the implementation of action plans developed by the regulators themselves to address the recommendations. The main aspects of the continuous improvement cycle are as follows:

- Information about registration practices is consolidated based primarily on Fair Registration Practices Reports. Other reports and information are also included.
- Registration practices are assessed to determine if each body is demonstrating practices that are specifically listed in the legislation, and the broad principles of transparency, objectivity, impartiality and fairness.
- Recommendations to improve registration practices are developed if necessary.
- OFC meets on an individual basis with regulators to discuss their practices and the feasibility of implementing recommendations for improvement.
- The assessment report is finalized, and the regulator is asked to submit an Action Plan if recommendations were issued.
- Action plans are received by OFC and implementation progress is monitored.
- Each year, after the regulatory body files its FRP report, the process described above starts anew.

A Registration Practices Assessment Manual and detailed implementation plan for internal use were developed by OFC staff and are used to ensure that assessments are developed and delivered in a consistent manner.

The OFC will provide ongoing support for continuous improvement by gathering and disseminating examples of promising practices. The OFC will share initiatives that regulatory bodies have taken that may help other regulators to implement any recommendations for improvement.

#### **ASSESSMENT CYCLE 2013-14**

OFC staff intend to keep similar dates for the upcoming assessment cycle. However the cycle is subject to modification and will be informed by the stakeholder consultation planned for fall 2012 on the assessment process.

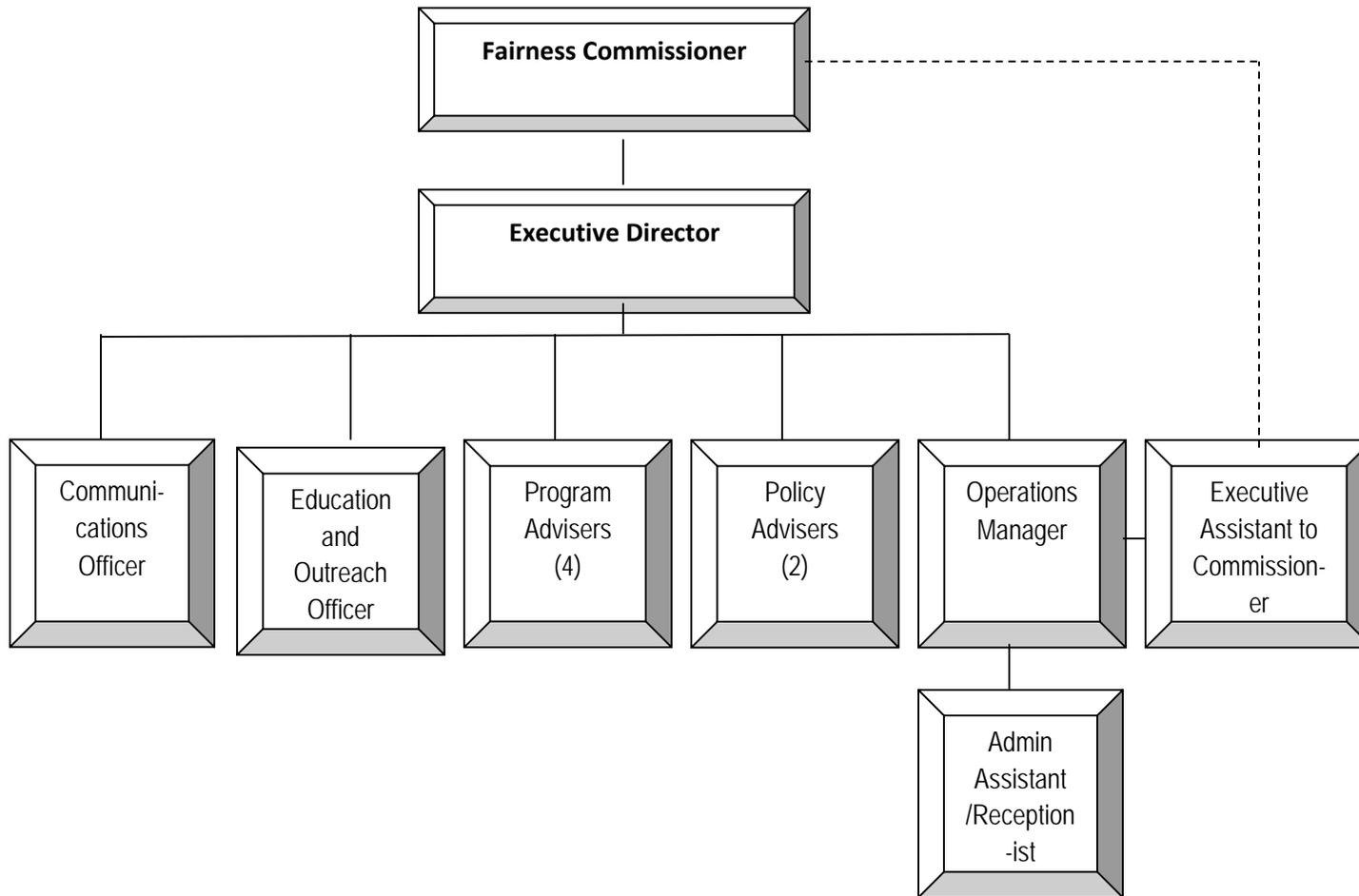
<b>Regulatory Body</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
Ontario College of <b>Pharmacists</b>	September 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pharmacists</li> <li>• Pharmacy Technicians</li> </ul> College of <b>Chiropractors</b> of Ontario	September 2013

<b>Regulatory Body</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
Institute of <b>Chartered Accountants</b> of Ontario	September 2013
College of <b>Opticians</b> of Ontario	September 2013
College of <b>Psychologists</b> of Ontario	September 2013
College of <b>Dental Hygienists</b> of Ontario	October 2013
Association of Professional <b>Geoscientists</b> of Ontario	November 2013
College of <b>Massage Therapists</b> of Ontario	November 2013
Ontario Association of <b>Architects</b>	November 2013
<b>Law</b> Society of Upper Canada	November 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawyers</li> <li>• Paralegals</li> </ul>	
Certified <b>General Accountants</b> of Ontario	November 2013
College of <b>Optometrists</b> of Ontario	December 2013
College of <b>Dietitians</b> of Ontario	December 2013
Royal College of <b>Dental Surgeons</b> of Ontario	December 2013
Ontario College of <b>Teachers</b>	January 2014
Association of Ontario <b>Land Surveyors</b>	January 2014
College of <b>Midwives</b> of Ontario	January 2014
College of <b>Early Childhood Educators</b>	January 2014
College of <b>Physiotherapists</b> of Ontario	January 2014
College of <b>Medical Laboratory Technologists</b> of Ontario	January 2014
College of <b>Chiropodists</b> of Ontario	February 2014
Professional <b>Engineers</b> Ontario	February 2014
Ontario College of <b>Social Workers and Social Service Workers</b>	February 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Workers</li> <li>• Social Service Workers</li> </ul>	

<b>Regulatory Body</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
College of <b>Medical Radiation Technologists</b> of Ontario	February 2014
Ontario Professional <b>Foresters</b> Association	March 2014
Certified <b>Management Accountants</b> of Ontario	March 2014
College of <b>Physicians and Surgeons</b> of Ontario	March 2014
Ontario Association of Certified <b>Engineering Technicians and Technologists</b>	March 2014
College of <b>Veterinarians</b> of Ontario	May 2014
College of <b>Occupational Therapists</b> of Ontario	April 2014
College of <b>Dental Technologists</b> of Ontario	April 2014
College of <b>Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists</b> of Ontario	June 2014
College of <b>Nurses</b> of Ontario	July 2014
College of <b>Respiratory Therapists</b> of Ontario	August 2014
College of <b>Denturists</b> of Ontario	tbd

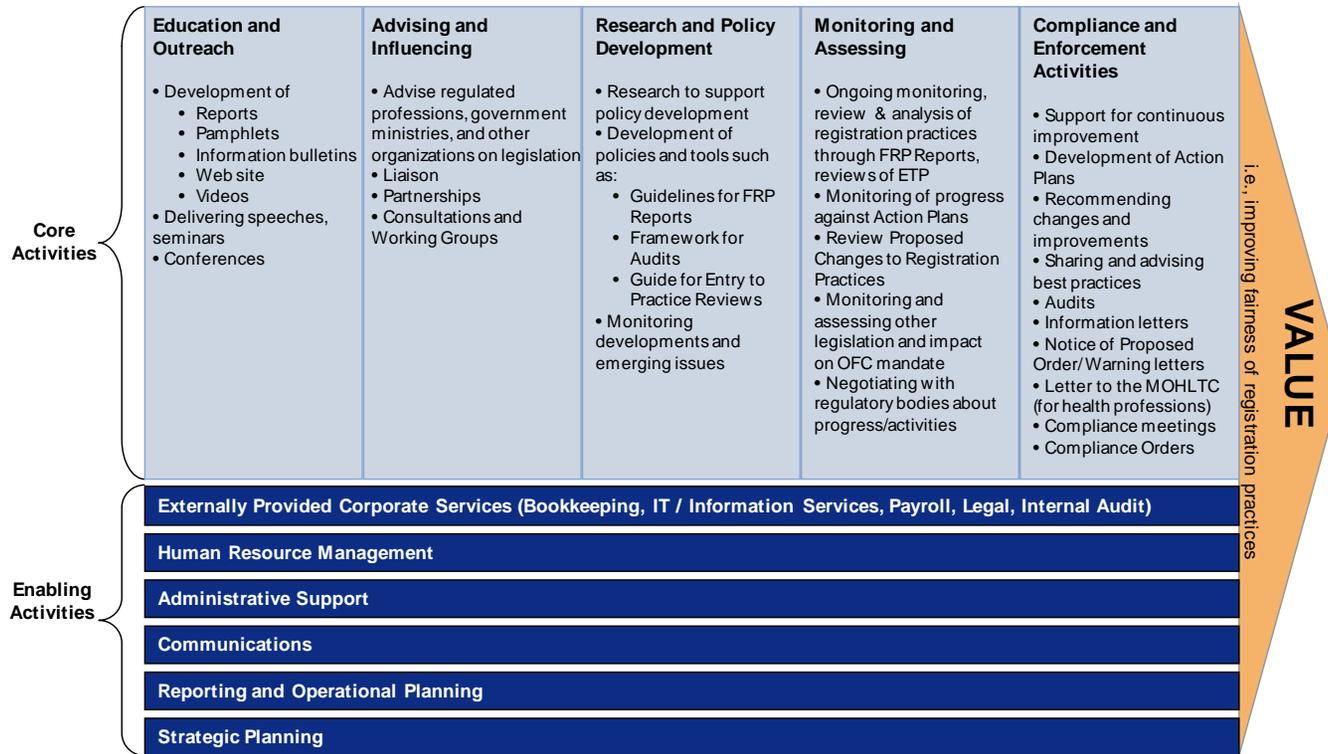
# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## Organizational Chart

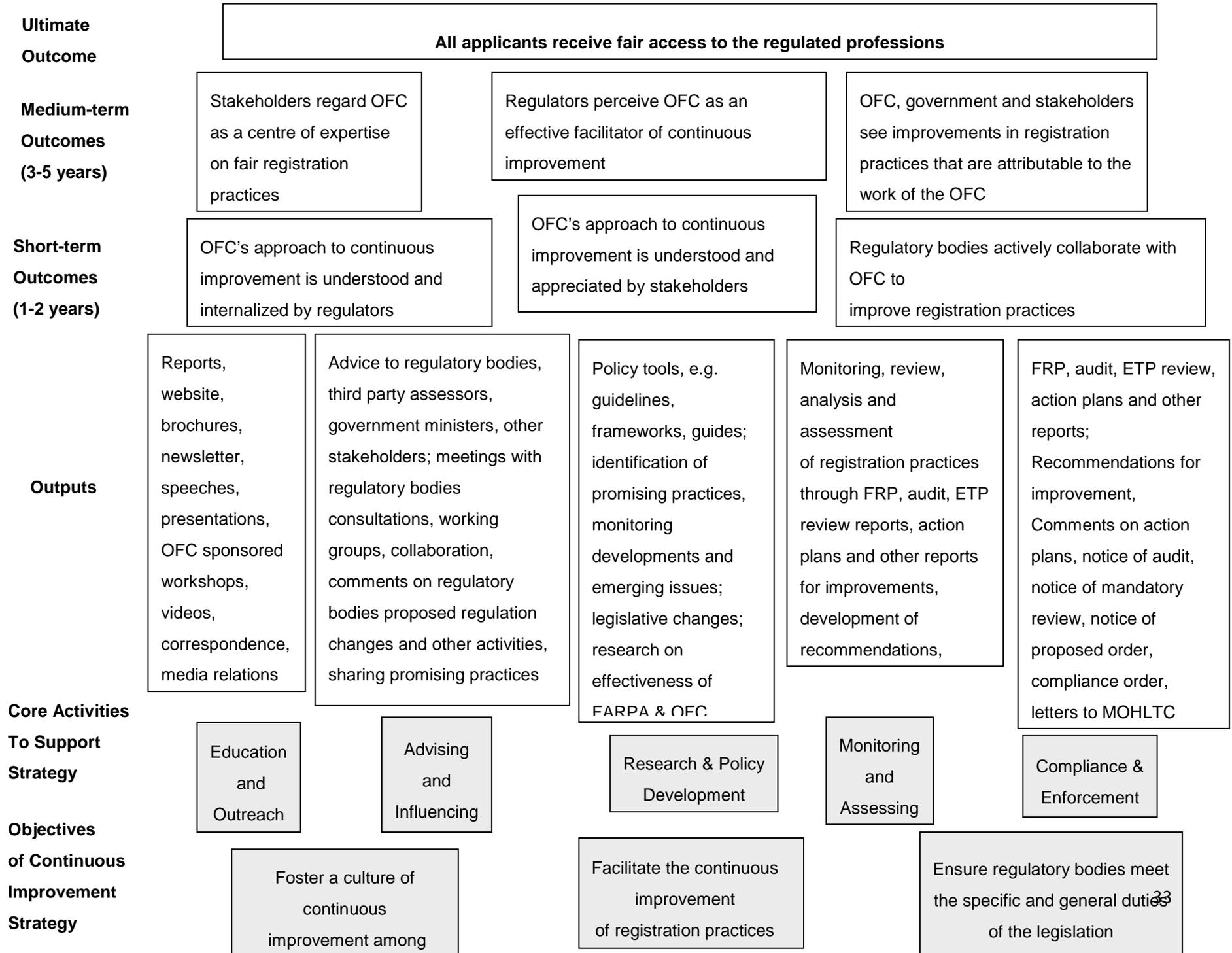


## Value Chain

The following value chain represents OFC's five core activities with associated functions listed within each one. The organizations six enabling activities are also listed.



## OFC LOGIC MODEL



# OFC PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

**Ultimate Outcome:** All applicants receive fair access to the regulated professions

- Objectives:**
- 1) Foster a culture of continuous improvement among regulatory bodies
  - 2) Facilitate the continuous improvement of registration practices
  - 3) Ensure regulatory bodies meet the specific and general duties of the legislation

Outputs/outcomes	Indicators	Data sources for indicators <sup>3</sup>	Frequency of Data collection <sup>4</sup>	Timing of analysis and reporting <sup>5</sup>	Status April – November 2012
<b>Outputs</b>					
<b>Reporting</b>					
Reporting guidelines (New audit framework, ETP guidelines, new FRP guidelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting guidelines accurately reflect FARPA, RHPA and/or registration assessment guide</li> </ul>	Guidelines, legislation, assessment guide	Annually	Annually	Review of guidelines (timing tbd)
Recommendations (e.g. following assessment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 75% of final recommendations made by OFC to regulators following an assessment are implemented</li> </ul>	Action plans, reports and information submitted to OFC	Annually	Annually	A total of 338 recommendations were issued to regulatory bodies. 337 recommendations were addressed in action plans (99%).

<sup>3</sup> Where indicator will be found e.g. website, survey etc.

<sup>4</sup> How often information will be collected

<sup>5</sup> Deadlines e.g. concurrently with annual report, business plan

Outputs/outcomes	Indicators	Data sources for indicators <sup>3</sup>	Frequency of Data collection <sup>4</sup>	Timing of analysis and reporting <sup>5</sup>	Status April – November 2012
Assessment Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflect registration assessment guide</li> <li>▪ Completed in a timely manner</li> </ul>	Assessment reports, assessment guide	Annually	Annually	<p>37 assessment reports prepared on time and in accordance with the assessment guides. No late or errant reports produced.</p> <p>No assessment was conducted for the College of Denturists of Ontario because the Ministry of Health and Long Term care ordered an operational review and audit of the College.</p>

<b>Communications</b>					
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 10% increase in number of unique visitors annually</li> <li>▪ 10% increase in pages/visit annually</li> </ul>	Google analytics	Annually	Annually	<p>Comparing April 01 to Nov 15, 2011 with April 01 to Nov 15, 2012</p> <p>Unique visitors</p> <p>2011: 22,059</p> <p>2012: 27,433</p> <p>Change: +24.36 %</p> <p>Average page views</p> <p>2011: 2.35</p> <p>2012: 2.45</p> <p>Change: +4.11 %</p>
Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase the number of recipients by 75 annually</li> <li>▪ Exceed the industry average click through rate</li> <li>▪ Exceed the industry average open rate</li> </ul>	Mail chimp	Annually	Annually	<p>Comparing June 2012 with September 2012 issues</p> <p>Number of recipients</p> <p>June 2012: 1,375</p> <p>Sept 2012: 1,372</p> <p>Open rate</p>

					<p>June 2012: 33.4 %  Sept 2012: 36.3 %  Industry average:  June 2012: 22.6 %  Sept. 2012: 22.6 %</p> <p>Click-through rate  June 2012: 19.4 %  Sept. 2012: 21.8 %  Industry average  June 2012: 4.0 %  Sept. 2012: 4.0 %</p>
Media coverage/contact, interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 10 times per year</li> </ul>	Media outlets, phone calls to communications officer, interviews with the Commissioner, Executive Director or staff, consulted by media	Annually	Annually	<p><b>TV:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rogers Television</li> <li>2. Fairchild TV</li> <li>3. Omni TV</li> <li>4. CBC Local TV 5:00 p.m. newscast</li> <li>5. Professionally Speaking TV</li> </ol> <p><b>Radio:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. University of Waterloo radio, Sound-FM 100.3</li> <li>2. G 98.7 FM</li> </ol> <p><b>Editorial Boards:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Toronto Star</li> </ol>

					<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Globe and Mail (Toronto)</li> <li>3. National Post (Toronto)</li> <li>4. Ottawa Citizen</li> <li>5. Canadian Ethnic Media Association</li> </ol> <p><b>Media Inquiries:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Toronto Star Nicholas Keung re. CIC changes</li> <li>2. Kenneth Kidd</li> </ol> <p><b>Magazines:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engineering Dimensions</li> </ol>
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<b>Outreach</b>					
Presentations/speaking engagements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 14 speaking engagements with key stakeholders</li> </ul>	Biweekly communications meetings, presentations, outreach spreadsheet	Annually	Annually	50 presentations and/or speaking engagements plus three briefings for Ministers and an ADM
<b>Policy/Organizational tools</b>					
Revised FRP reporting website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Captures all information required for assessment</li> <li>▪ Captures registration data</li> </ul>	Revised FRP reporting website, registration assessment guide	Annually	Annually	Review of website (timing tbd)

Performance frameworks, work plans and reporting (business plan, quarterly reports, annual report)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting meets requirements of MOU and/or FARPA and RHPA</li> </ul>	Reports, FARPA, RHPA, MOU	Annually	Annually	All reports submitted as per MOU requirements
<b>Short-term outcomes</b>					
OFC's approach to continuous improvement is understood and internalized by regulators in a proactive manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulators attend meetings</li> <li>Regulators respond to recommendations</li> <li>Regulators make improvements voluntarily</li> <li>Regulators voluntarily request OFC comment on regulation changes</li> </ul>	<p>Registration assessment reports</p> <p>FRP reports</p> <p>correspondence, websites, newsletters</p>	<p>Research/surveys - Two years after implementation of continuous improvement.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Upon completion of research</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>Regulators have attended all scheduled meetings to date</p> <p>OFC has been heavily involved in providing input on regulation changes at the request of regulators and MOHLTC</p>
OFC's approach to continuous improvement is understood and appreciated by key stakeholders (government ministries, umbrella ISOs, qualification assessment agencies, selected post-secondary institutions, bridging programs, professional associations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive feedback from key stakeholders (excluding regulatory bodies)</li> </ul>	Correspondence	Ongoing	Annually	<p>Positive feedback on OFC's work received from:</p> <p>Elizabeth Mclsaac, TRIEC</p> <p>Richard Florida, Director, Martin Prosperity Institute</p> <p>Jeffrey Reitz, Director, Ethnic, Immigration and Pluralism Studies; Munk Inst.</p> <p>Sheldon Levy, President Ryerson University</p> <p>David Naylor, President</p>

					<p>University of Toronto</p> <p>Philip Kelly, Principal Investigator,</p> <p>Tony Fang, Principal Investigator Toronto Immigrant Employment Data Initiative</p> <p>Alan Middleton, ED Executive Education Centre, Schulich School of Business</p> <p>Art Noordeh, Faculty Lead, Norah Priestly, Program Manager, York University</p> <p>Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals</p> <p>Carol Stephenson, Dean, Ivey School of Business</p> <p>Naomi Alboim, Maytree Senior Fellow and Adjunct Professor, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University</p> <p>Lorne Sossin, Dean Osgoode Law School</p> <p>Matthew Mendelsohn, Director Mowat Centre for</p>
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					<p>Policy Innovation</p> <p>Colin Busby, Senior Policy Analyst C.D. Howe Institute</p> <p>Mitzie Hunter, CEO, Toronto Civic Action Alliance</p> <p>CERIS (the Ontario Metropolis Centre)</p> <p>Dr. Mehrunnisa Ali, Ryerson University Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS); Director, Graduate Program: M.A. in Early Childhood Studies</p> <p>The Women's Canadian Club</p> <p>Economic Club of Canada</p> <p>Carol Wilding, President &amp; CEO, Toronto Board of Trade</p> <p>Gordon M Nixon, President &amp; CEO, Zabeen Hirji, Chief HR Officer, RBC</p> <p>Allan O'Dette, President &amp; CEO, Ontario Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Craig Alexander, Sr VP &amp; Chief Economist; Derek</p>
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					<p>Burleton, VP &amp; Dpty Chief Economist; Francis Fong, Economist. TD Bank</p> <p>Hon. John P Manley, President &amp; CEO, Canadian Council of Chief Executives</p> <p>Ilse Treurnicht, CEO. MARS Discovery District</p> <p>Danny Young, Acting CEO,(Ms) Allourdes Sully, President and Chair of the Board. Ontario Society of Professional Engineers</p> <p>Paul R. Sweeney, President (Evans, Sweeny, Bordin LLP, Hamilton). Ontario Bar Association</p> <p>Sam Hammond, President. Gene Lewis, General Secretary. Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario</p> <p>Andrew Cardozo, ED. Alliance of Sector Councils</p>
<b>Medium-term outcomes</b>					
Stakeholders regard OFC as a centre of expertise for fair registration practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of inquiries for information or advice from organizations, institutions, academics and</li> </ul>	Correspondence, telephone requests, ESRD database	Biweekly communications meetings	Annually (correspondence)	Requests from stakeholders for OFC's advice, consultation or input:

	<p>other fairness regulators</p>		<p>As comments received</p>	<p>Annually (action plans, meetings)</p>	<p>Nova Scotia's Fair Registration Practices Review Officer regarding OFC's FRP reporting system.</p> <p>Manitoba Fairness Commissioner</p> <p>Ontario Centre for Excellence in Communication Competency Assessment (OCECCA)</p> <p>Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC)</p> <p>Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)</p> <p>Professional Engineers Canada (PEO)</p> <p>Supervisor for the College of Denturists of Ontario</p> <p>College of Massage Therapists of Ontario</p> <p>Ontario Human Rights Commission</p> <p>5 new regulatory bodies (kinesiologists, traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncturists, psychotherapists and</p>
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					<p>mental health practitioners, naturopaths, homeopaths)</p> <p>The Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators</p> <p>Ontario's Expert Roundtable on Immigration</p>
Regulators perceive OFC as an effective facilitator of continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regulators use tools and avail themselves of workshops and/or briefings</li> </ul>	Surveys, evaluation questionnaires, independent usability testing of online tools	Ongoing, post-event	Annually	<p>interest and active participation by regulators in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OFC's consultative committee</li> <li>- Working group providing input on OFC's assessment process</li> </ul>
OFC, government and stakeholders see improvements in registration practices that are attributable to the work of the OFC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Positive media</li> <li>▪ Evaluation of correspondence, feedback</li> </ul>	Clippings, correspondence, discussions and communications meetings	Ongoing	Annually	- tracking ongoing
<b>Ultimate outcome</b>					
All applicants receive fair access to the professions					

# OPERATING EXPENDITURES AND FINANCIAL RESOURCE/CAPITAL ASSET REQUIREMENTS

## OFC Expenditures 2012-2013

Table 1: OFC Expenditures 2012-13 (estimates)

	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Recovery of Expenses	0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Expense</b>	
Bank S/C & Interest & Penalties	600.00
Commissioner's Fee	110,000.00
Courier & Delivery	2,000.00
Office Eqpt & Computers & Rental	5,000.00
Office Rent & Maintenance	98,000.00
Office Supplies & Postage	15,000.00
Payroll Expenses	1,115,000.00
Printing	30,000.00
Professional Fees	
Accounting	5,600.00
Consulting	
Communications <sup>6</sup>	110,000.00
Consulting - Other <sup>7</sup>	100,000.00
<b>Total Consulting</b>	<u>210,000.00</u>
Professional Fees - Other	10,500.00
<b>Total Professional Fees</b>	<u>226,100.00</u>
Recruitment	1,100.00
Supplies-stationery	
Marketing/Conference/Training	8,000.00

<sup>6</sup> Communications costs were for the editing, design and posting of summaries of 37 assessment reports, the OFC's annual report (including printing and distribution), the Fair Way to Go report (five-years of fair access report) and ongoing maintenance, additions and revisions to content on the website.

<sup>7</sup> Consulting services are for the development and implementation of the compendium of registration practices, an online database requiring expert IT services. The service provider was selected through a competitive procurement process.

Subscription & Membership	7,000.00
Supplies-stationary - Other	5,000.00
<b>Total Supplies-stationary</b>	<u>20,000.00</u>
Telephone/Fax/Internet/Cellular	5,500.00
Translation	10,000.00
Travel	
Travel/Rental/Meals/Accom	25,000.00
	0.00
<b>Total Travel</b>	<u>25,000.00</u>
Capital	5,000.00
Capital depreciation	20,000.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>1,688,300.00</u>
	-
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	1,688,300.00
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Other Income</b>	
Interest Income	2,200.00
Transfer- Min of Citizenship	1,689,900.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<u>1,692,100.00</u>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<u>1,692,100.00</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><u>3,800.00</u></u>

<b>NOTES TO OFC EXPENDITURES 2012/13</b>	
<p><b>Staff Strength</b> (as of November 30, 2012)</p>	<p>1 Commissioner (part-time) 1 Executive Director 2 Policy Advisers 4 Program Advisers 1 Education and Outreach Officer 1 Communications Officer 1 Executive Assistant to Commissioner 1 Operations Manager 1 Admin Assistant/Receptionist</p> <p>One of the Program Advisor positions is a one-year contract Four staff members are bilingual All staff are full-time except where otherwise noted</p>

## OFC Planned Expenditures 2013-2016

### Funding Requirements

The OFC is funded through transfer payments from MCI. This funding arrangement is expected to continue.

Since the Office opened in 2007 salaries and wages increased by two percent each year to cover the cost of living. OFC was advised that salary and wage increases will not be offered to the broader public sector and OFC's financial forecast should reflect that restraint. Therefore cost-of-living increases will not be provided to OFC staff until further notice.

Additional financial pressures are expected in fiscal 2013-2014 resulting from three maternity leaves and the need to back-fill these temporary vacancies. Accordingly the 2013-2014 increase in salaries & wages includes top-up for maternity benefits for each employee on leave.

**Table 2: OFC Planned Expenditures 2013-2016**

	OFC Planned Expenditures		
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Salaries & Wages	\$1,168,000*  *Amount increased to cover three maternity leaves and includes salary top-ups, benefits and salaries to back-fill the positions.	\$1,110,000	\$1,110,000
Benefits	\$120,000	\$120,000	120,000
ODOE	\$381,900	\$439,900	439,900
Capital Asset Expenditures	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,689,900</b>	<b>\$1,689,900</b>	<b>\$1,689,900</b>

# RISK IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT

The following is a summary of risks identified in the environmental scan presented earlier in this document and from completing a risk analysis of OFC's value chain.

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
<p><b>Education &amp; Outreach</b></p>	<p>Successful E&amp;O means maintaining awareness of OFC among key stakeholders, educating them about its mandate in order to manage expectations and preserve goodwill. Success depends on the time, quality and number of engagements with key stakeholders. This is managed by OFC's Education and Outreach Officer.</p> <p>Poor E&amp;O poses risks to visibility of OFC, awareness of mandate.</p> <p>May result in unrealistic expectations among stakeholders and erosion of goodwill.</p>	<p>Timing is crucial to taking advantage of conferences and other planned events, connecting with MPPs and reaching key audiences.</p> <p>Poor E&amp;O would delay achievement of performance outcomes that depend on stakeholders understanding and appreciating our approach, perceiving OFC as effective and seeing improvements.</p>	<p>Associated costs (travel) represent 1% of total budget.</p>	<p>Likelihood - Low</p> <p>Dedicated staff member, plus executive assistant to the Commissioner manage events scheduling</p> <p>Impact - Moderate</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>Related performance outcome:</p> <p>Stakeholder perception of OFC</p>				
<b>Advising &amp; Influencing</b>	<p>Making recommendations about regulation changes enables OFC to impact laws governing access to regulated professions.</p> <p>Success hinges on the skills and knowledge of staff. A high level of knowledge about professions is required, as well as the ability to critically analyze legislation, develop recommendations, communicate with and influence senior representatives of regulated professions.</p> <p>Failing to make recommendations or issuing poor recommendations</p>	<p>Recommendations about regulations have to be made during a specific window of time otherwise the opportunity is missed. Missed opportunities to ensure fairness jeopardize OFC's ultimate objective to ensure that all applicants receive fair access to regulated professions.</p> <p>OFC's ability to advise the College of Trades is crucial if it is to achieve its aim to have the continuous improvement strategy understood and internalized by</p>	n/a	<p>Likelihood - High</p> <p>Likelihood of missing opportunities to comment on regulation changes or of making poor recommendations is high given that OFC currently lacks sufficient staff to handle the workload anticipated from the Ontario College of Trades.</p> <p>In addition, while MOHLTC systematically involves OFC in reviewing health regulation changes, no such process is in place for non-health regulatory bodies.</p> <p>Impact - High</p>	<p>Streamline assessment process to absorb pressure from the Ontario College of Trades.</p> <p>The OFC is in discussion with the College of Trades and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to scope out the work that may be required to ensure the College's compliance with the fair access legislation. OFC will identify the most efficient ways to ensure that the College is meeting its obligations and mitigate risks to carry out OFC's core mandate.</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>would be missed opportunities to ensure fairness</p> <p>Advising the Ontario College of Trades as it establishes operations will have an increasing impact on resources. This college is poised to become the largest regulatory body in Canada.</p> <p>Related performance outcome:</p> <p>All applicants receive fair access to regulated professions</p>	regulators.			Request MCI support in establishing a system with Ministries that have responsibility for non-health regulatory bodies to systematically involve OFC in reviewing regulation changes.
	The compendium of promising registration practices is an opportunity to accelerate improvement in registration practices and improve relations with key stakeholders.	If this project is cancelled, or if OFC is unable to maintain stakeholders' interest in using the compendium it would negatively impact OFC's ability to achieve one of its medium-term	Estimated 2012-2013 budget for this project (\$140K) represents 8% of OFC's total annual budget	Likelihood - Low Cancellation is unlikely given that a contract to complete the technical infrastructure has been signed  Ineffective solution is unlikely because stakeholders are actively engaged in its development	The compendium project has been scaled down to mitigate previously identified risks.

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>Success depends upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* development of an appropriate technical solution, and</li> <li>* marketing the compendium to regulators to ensure interest and use</li> <li>* acquisition and management of content</li> </ul> <p>If the project is cancelled, if the technology solution is inappropriate or if OFC is unable to adequately support the compendium post-implementation OFC's effectiveness in driving change will be delayed.</p>	<p>outcomes: Regulators perceive OFC as an effective facilitator of continuous improvement.</p>		<p>Impact – Moderate</p> <p>Cancellation of the project would have a moderate impact on OFC's ability to effectively facilitate continuous improvement. Other avenues to exist to drive improvement.</p>	
<b>Policy &amp; Research</b>	<p>The development of policy tools required by FARPA and RHPA is the purview of P&amp;R. These tools support the Commissioner in fulfilling her mandate. Research on emerging issues and the effectiveness of the</p>	<p>Analysis of emerging issues and development of policy tools that are not done in a timely manner impact the organization's ability to respond effectively and ensure that relevant</p>	<p>The only related budget item is conference attendance to keep abreast of emerging issues and enhance the organization's</p>	<p>Likelihood – Low</p> <p>Likelihood of poor or untimely P&amp;R is low. There are staff dedicated to this function</p>	<p>OFC always consults with stakeholders to ensure policy tools are accepted and reflect their input.</p> <p>OFC subscribes to various relevant publications and</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>legislation are part of this function.</p> <p>Success hinges on staff knowledge, experience and access to current industry information and research.</p> <p>Poor P&amp;R would negatively impact the organization's ability to assess registration practices and drive continuous improvement. It would also risk OFC's aspiration of being regarded as a centre of expertise.</p>	<p>intelligence is incorporated into advice to regulators and stakeholders.</p>	<p>knowledge and resources.</p> <p>Marketing/Conference/Training represents 0.5% of budget</p>	<p>Impact – High</p> <p>Impact of poor or untimely P&amp;R would be high, affecting policy tools, public perception and stakeholder relations.</p>	<p>associations to keep abreast of emerging issues</p>
<b>Monitoring &amp; Assessing</b>	<p>M&amp;A is responsible for the assessment of registration practices, making recommendations and monitoring of progress against action plans. This is one of the Commissioner's main duties.</p>	<p>Untimely M&amp;A would result in missed opportunities to improve registration practices, would erode the organization's reputation and delay achievement of several</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>Likelihood - Low</p> <p>Likelihood of poor M&amp;A is low. There are staff members dedicated to M&amp;A and all assessments are vetted by the Executive Director for quality control.</p>	<p>Ensure staff are skilled and trained to meet assessment standards.</p> <p>Schedule assessments to allow enough time for quality assurance.</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>Success hinges on the skills and knowledge of staff. A high level of knowledge about professions is required, as well as the ability to critically analyze legislation, develop recommendations, communicate with and influence senior representatives of regulated professions.</p> <p>Poor M&amp;A would impede the improvement of registration practices. OFC's ability to effectively facilitate continuous improvement would be jeopardized along with its credibility with stakeholders.</p>	<p>performance outcomes.</p>		<p>Impact – High</p> <p>These functions are directly related to the Commissioner's mandate.</p>	
<b>Compliance &amp; Enforcement</b>	<p>C&amp;E entails ensuring FRP, audits and ETP reports are submitted, recommendations are</p>	<p>Late or missing reports would disrupt the assessment cycle</p>	<p>Costs associated with acquiring expert advice</p>	<p>Likelihood – Low</p> <p>Likelihood of poor C&amp;E is low.</p>	<p>OFC will ensure that trained and qualified staff are in place to ensure</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>followed, action plans are developed and implemented. It is also the function responsible for issuing notices and orders.</p> <p>Success hinges on the skills and knowledge of staff. A high level of knowledge about legislation is required, along with superior organizational, communications, negotiation and analytical skills.</p> <p>Poor quality C&amp;E would jeopardize the quality of information received by the OFC as the basis for its assessments, erode its credibility with regulators and other stakeholders, and negatively impact it's ability to improve registration practices.</p>	<p>and erode the body of knowledge relied upon by staff in decision making.</p> <p>Missed opportunities to improve practices would erode OFC's credibility with regulators and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Several performance outcomes would be jeopardized.</p>	<p>regarding audits, ETPs and FRP guidelines (\$60-65K), modifying FRP website (\$30-50K), holding consultations. Estimated total (\$120K) represents 7% of total budget</p>	<p>There are staff members and defined processes dedicated to these functions.</p> <p>Impact – High</p> <p>These functions are directly related to the Commissioner's mandate.</p>	<p>processes are followed and standards met.</p>
<b>External Services</b>	<p>Poor quality services from external suppliers (bookkeeping, web design and hosting,</p>	<p>External services impact the workload of OFC staff, but would not directly</p>	<p>Problematic external services would be</p>	<p>Likelihood – Low</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>editing, translation, publication design/layout, printing, legal services, IT and telecom) would result in OFC spending more time and money to rectify problems.</p>	<p>affect the timing of achieving organizational goals</p>	<p>replaced with another vendor. No impact on budget is anticipated</p>	<p>Impact - Low</p>	
<p><b>Human Resources</b></p>	<p>As identified in the environmental scan, discrepancies in compensation between OFC and OPS staff frustrate recruitment and retention of OFC staff.</p> <p>Two of four Program Advisors are new and within the horizon of this plan additional new staff may be retained. Learning and development of new staff is crucial given the number of activities that depend on the knowledge and skill of staff members.</p> <p>Losing key staff due to</p>	<p>Achievement of short-term and medium-term outcomes as indicated in OFC's logic model is dependent upon human resources.</p>	<p>No budget increases are forthcoming.</p>	<p>Likelihood – Low</p> <p>Impact – Moderate</p> <p>Losing key staff or the inability of new staff to effectively fulfill their duties could forestall assessments, key projects, communications and other mission critical activities.</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	inequities in compensation of OFC vs. OPS employees is possible.				
<b>Admin Support</b>	<p>In-person and telephone reception, mailings, document tracking, executive assistance to the Commissioner.</p> <p>Admin support impact how the office is perceived. None of OFC's outputs would be jeopardized by ineffective admin support, but the workload of other staff would be increased.</p>	The timely achievement of organizational goals is not directly impacted by admin support.	n/a	<p>Likelihood – Low</p> <p>Impact - Low</p>	n/a
<b>Communications and Outreach</b>	All outputs for an external audience e.g. website, newsletters, media requests, annual reports, speeches, research reports, strategy documents and the compendium require communications expertise.	Communications and Outreach have raised awareness of the OFC's mandate among key stakeholders. Ensuring that stakeholders understand and appreciate OFC's mandate and key strategy are part of	No additional initiatives are planned at this time.	<p>Likelihood – Low</p> <p>Impact - Low</p>	n/a

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	<p>Education and outreach initiatives are key components of stakeholder relations.</p> <p>As per the environmental scan C&amp;O is the mechanism used to counter misperceptions of OFC's mandate.</p>	OFC's short-term and medium-term outcomes.			
<b>Operations</b>	Facilities, equipment, office supplies management, tracking of staff absences. Not directly linked to the achievement of organizational goals.	Not directly linked to the achievement of organizational goals	Not directly linked to the achievement of organizational goals	Likelihood – Low  Impact - Low	n/a
<b>Strategy</b>	OFC's continuous improvement strategy was launched in the spring of 2011. The organization's logic model sets out short-term and medium-term outcomes that it is working to achieve.	A shift in strategy is not anticipated at this time	A shift in strategy is not anticipated at this time	Likelihood – Low  Impact - Low	n/a

Activity	Quality	Timing	Budget	Likelihood/Impact	Mitigation
	A shift in strategy is not anticipated at this time.				
<b>Budget</b>	As identified in the environmental scan, OFC's flat-lined budget will create pressures that will negatively impact its ability to effectively meet costs associated with new regulatory bodies, policy development, the compendium of promising registration practices and mitigate HR management risks	Negative effects of the flat-lined budget are expected in 2013 and will continue throughout the current planning horizon.	Same	Likelihood – High  Impact – High	OFC will realign workload to absorb additional pressures, re-prioritize future projects in order to meet its commitments.

## RISK TRACKING AND REPORTING

OFC's annual business planning process serve as the process for tracking and reporting on the status of identified risks.

# COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2013-2014

This communications plan is for the upcoming fiscal year. The plan is updated yearly and is provided in the annual business plan.

Communications activities and expenditures are aligned with the OFC's core mandate of ensuring fair access to the regulated professions in Ontario. The majority of the communications budget is allocated to the office's main website.

## **The strategic role of communications and stakeholder outreach**

There is an expectation among government and stakeholders of tangible improvement. While those improvements have not been quantified, ongoing stories of under-employed qualified individuals will continue to put pressure on government and ultimately, on OFC, to show that qualified individuals are being registered in their professions.

Communications and stakeholder outreach are vital in fulfilling the mandate and achieving the vision of the Fairness Commissioner by:

- Helping regulatory bodies and third-party assessment agencies understand and embrace transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration practices;
- Ensuring that all government stakeholders understand the OFC's mandate, approach and vision; and
- Managing expectations among qualified applicants and agencies established to serve immigrants.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this communications and stakeholder outreach plan are to:

- 1) Increase stakeholder awareness and understanding of the OFC, its mandate, its strategy to drive improvement of registration practices, its assessment role and the progress it has made in achieving its vision;

- 2) Build on existing relationships with regulatory bodies and associated third parties so that they embrace their responsibilities to ensure transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration practices; and
- 3) Ensure that all target audiences and stakeholders understand that the OFC is involved in systemic change that is necessarily longer term.

### **Positioning statement**

As an independent arm's-length agency of government, the Ontario Fairness Commissioner works collaboratively with regulatory bodies to ensure that registration practices are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

The Fairness Commissioner is a leader in working for positive, systemic change to address an issue vital to the future of our economy and to many thousands of qualified individuals who have come to Canada to practice their profession and pursue their dream.

The Commissioner is doing groundbreaking work to help regulatory bodies embrace change and proactively ensure that no barriers exist to registration for qualified individuals regardless of where they are trained.

As a result of our work, qualified individuals will know Ontario as a place where their training and qualifications are the sole criteria for practising their profession. They will have the opportunity to work to their full potential, achieve their personal goals and to make an immediate, meaningful and lasting contribution to building our province and our country.

Our work is based on the expressed desire of the people of Ontario, is supported by government and political parties of every stripe, and reflects the principles and core values of this province.

### **The role of the Fairness Commissioner**

In addition to her other duties, the Fairness Commissioner plays a pivotal role in communications and stakeholder outreach. She will continue to be the OFC's public face and

the primary spokesperson. OFC staff members have identified the public stature of and respect for Fairness Commissioner Jean Augustine as one of OFC's core strengths.

### **Central themes**

We emphasize the following themes in communications and stakeholder outreach:

- **Our mandate and vision**

In the past, OFC staff members have identified lack of understanding of the OFC's role and mandate as a significant issue. Repeating key messages about the OFC mandate and vision should be included in communications and stakeholder outreach to relevant audiences.

- **Continuous Improvement**

The OFC is implementing a continuous improvement strategy that includes a way to assess regulatory bodies' registration practices.

The OFC began to implement the strategy in March 2011.

When it shifted its emphasis from research to continuous improvement, the OFC reduced the frequency and content of reports it required regulators to provide:

- FRP reports focused on numerical data and changes since the previous year.
- No audits are required in 2013.
- No entry-to-practice reviews are required in 2013

- **Links with Broader Issues**

The Commissioner and staff meet with opinion leaders in Ontario to link the issue of fair access with broader social and economic concerns, such as:

- The global competition for talent
- The economic need for highly educated immigrant professionals, given demographic changes.

- **Long-term nature of the OFC's work**

It is important to emphasize the long-term nature of this work in all communications and stakeholder outreach.

- (1) In the medium term, we want to engage regulators to make practical improvement and to see the OFC as an effective facilitator of continuous improvement.
- (2) In the longer term, we want to see systemic change in which regulatory bodies and qualifications assessment agencies embrace transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration practices.

### **Key messages**

The following key messages were developed based on the three themes, vision, mandate and positioning statement detailed above.

### **Main Messages**

- The Office of the Fairness Commissioner makes sure that people get fair treatment when they apply to get licensed in their professions.
- Faster, fairer access to the professions is good for individuals so that more highly-skilled people work can at their full potential, and it's good for the economy.
- The OFC assesses the registration practices of regulatory bodies and publicizes whether or not the regulators are making improvements.

### **Supporting Message**

- The OFC expects regulatory bodies to continually improve their registration practices.

### **Target audiences/stakeholders**

#### **a Regulatory sector**

- Leaders of regulatory bodies with significant potential impact

- (1) College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- (2) Law Society of Upper Canada
- (3) Professional Engineers Ontario
- (4) Ontario College of Teachers
- (5) Ontario College of Nurses
- Regulatory bodies (remaining 35, plus new College of Trades)
- Professional Associations
  - (1) Ontario Medical Association
  - (2) Ontario Bar Association
  - (3) Ontario Society of Professional Engineers
  - (4) Ontario Teachers' Federation (and other federations)
  - (5) Ontario Nurses Association
- Other professional associations and unions
- Qualification Assessment Agencies

**b Government**

- Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
- Minister of Health and Long-term Care
- Seven other ministries to which regulated professions report
- Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities
- Premier's Office
- MPPs
- Ontario civil service
- Ontario MPs
- Federal counterparts to Ontario Ministries

**c Immigrant Serving Groups**

- TRIEC and Maytree Foundation
- OCASI
- CASSA
- Other key groups on db

**d Media**

- Queen's Park Press Gallery
- Provincial and regional mainstream media
- Ethnic/third-language media
- Professional and trade publications
- Online media

**e Other**

- Relevant organizations and individuals on OFC database
- Selected post-secondary institutions offering foundation education and bridging programs

**Approach**

In identifying and implementing tactics, there are two key factors that must be taken into account:

- Numerous and diverse target audiences/stakeholders; and
- Limited time and resources.

**Make the OFC website central in communications and stakeholder outreach initiatives**

The website is the most effective way to reach a large number of target audiences with limited resources.

Among the enhancements and interactivity the OFC could consider are:

- i. More video and development of PowerPoint summaries (with accompanying streaming video and/or audio about current content), as appropriate.
- ii. Improvements to the online newsroom to present more video, photographs, and updated content.

- iii. Online survey capabilities that will allow OFC to monitor various audiences and stakeholders in real time to identify and deal with emerging issues;
- iv. Detailed reports and other materials that can be referenced in the Annual Report and other publications, reducing complexity, cost and internal resources required to produce print materials.
- v. Micro-site, aimed particularly at regulators, containing best practices in registration and in auditing.

#### **Make better use of customized letters and email**

Letter and emails signed by the Fairness Commissioner, the Executive Director or other OFC staff should be considered as a core communications tool for all target audiences.

#### **Enhance the newsletter**

The e-newsletter is included as part of the overall correspondence mix.

#### **Focus communications and stakeholder outreach on key stakeholder groups**

The number of stakeholders is large and unwieldy making it virtually impossible to communicate effectively with leadership of each stakeholder group.

As such, we will identify key stakeholders and focus communications and outreach activities on those stakeholders.

Email newsletters, traditional correspondence and other tools can be used to keep other stakeholders informed.

#### **Use face-to-face meetings and speaking engagements to communicate with key stakeholders**

Face-to-face meetings, individually, in small groups or with larger audiences in speaking engagements have proven their effectiveness to date. These should be

continued and expanded to make maximum use of the stature of the Fairness Commissioner in government, the media and stakeholder groups.

### **Update background and information materials**

The OFC has created an annual report (2011-12) in the form of a marketing device, developed handouts for specific purposes/audiences, written guides for regulatory bodies and developed a variety of other information materials. These should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and made consistent with the website.

As necessary, a media kit with background materials should be developed for use in media relations activities outlined below.

### **Tactics**

Based on the approach outlined above, we have identified the following tactics and described them under the following headings:

- a) Government Relations
- b) Media Relations
- c) Stakeholder Outreach

Specific tactical communications plans will be developed in each area as outlined below.

#### **a) Government relations**

While the OFC is an arm's length agency of the provincial government, its work has direct and significant implications for provincial government. Its work has the potential to become controversial as qualified individuals continue to be under-employed. As such, a detailed and comprehensive approach to government relations is required.

#### **Approach:**

The OFC will continue its “no-surprises” approach under which the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Minister of Health and Long-term Care and other Ministers responsible for regulatory bodies are kept informed of OFC activities and any emerging issues.

These include:

- Face-to-face meetings between the Fairness Commissioner and the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Minister of Health and Long-term Care, and other ministers who have responsibility for a regulated profession; meetings at the staff level should also continue.
- Yearly MPP briefing sessions.
- Meetings with government and opposition MPPs as these can be arranged;
- Appearances before legislative committees on proposed changes to legislation or regulations that would have an impact on OFC activities; and
- Tabling of the annual report in the legislature and filing of quarterly reports to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Other governments and levels of government also have varying degrees of interest in OFC activities including;

- **The federal government, through HRSDC and CIC.**  
Communications with the federal government on this issue can be done by communicating directly with appropriate officials, as well as by providing relevant Ontario ministers with information and background as required.
- **Other provincial governments that are in the process of establishing agencies similar to OFC.**  
We continue to meet with and offer advice to various provincial agencies. Provincial counterparts can be kept informed of our activities through correspondence, email newsletters, notification of updates to the OFC website and copies of the OFC annual report.

- **Large municipalities such as Toronto that have large numbers of under-employed qualified individuals and view the situation as a social and economic challenge.**

Face-to-face meetings with municipal leaders will be considered.

- **Smaller municipalities desperate to attract professionals, particularly medical professionals, to their communities.**

Speaking engagements at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario annual conference will be considered and scheduled according to timing and priorities.

#### **b) Media relations**

Media relations is an integral part of any proactive communications and stakeholder outreach campaign. To date, we have had little success in generating coverage through news releases.

We will continue to generate media coverage for OFC events and contact media including:

- Trade and professional publications;
- Ethnic media;
- Mainstream media; and
- Local and regional media outlets.

We will take the following tactical approach to these media segments:

- **Mainstream media**

We will continue to nurture relationships with selected reporters from major media outlets as well as Canadian Press who specialize in social and other issues who would be interested in OFC's activities.

Media interest in editorial board meetings will be explored as will appearances on public affairs shows such as The Agenda, hosted by Steve Paikin on TVO. Cable television call-in shows will also be explored.

- **Ethnic media**

Ethnic media will be included in distribution of all news releases issues by OFC. In addition, we will build relationships with ethnic media with the largest audiences/circulations and arrange interviews with commissioner.

- **Trade publications**

Trade publications will be used to reach both regulatory bodies and members of professional associations affiliated with the regulatory bodies.

We will make the Fairness Commissioner or Executive Director available for interviews and develop relationships with those who write about and follow registration practice issues.

- **Bloggers and online communities**

Bloggers and online communities are growing in importance in Ontario and Canada.

### **c) Stakeholder Outreach**

Many of the following tactics incorporate and build upon initiatives already in place at OFC.

- **Regulatory bodies**

The OFC is meeting with all regulatory bodies between June 2013 and May 2014 to discuss assessments of registration practices and continuous improvement.

- **Qualification Assessment Agencies**

Qualification Assessment Agencies are used by 27 of the 40 regulatory bodies to provide initial or full assessments of the qualifications of individuals.

OFC research has determined that these agencies play a significant role in determining whether or not a qualified individual is even considered by regulatory bodies.

As such, these agencies should be the focus of stakeholder outreach including individual and group face-to-face meetings to ensure that they understand OFC's mandate and the responsibilities of the regulatory bodies that retain them.

Regulatory bodies should be kept informed of OFC contact with Qualification Assessment Agencies.

- **Contact with professional associations**

Professional associations play a key role establishing the public environment on the topic of fair registration and access to the professions. They are also influential with their own regulatory bodies. Annual general meetings of professional associations should be scheduled for both the Fairness Commissioner and the Executive Director.

- **Contact with immigrant serving groups**

Meetings and speaking engagements between immigrant serving groups and the Fairness Commissioner will play a key role in outreach for these groups.