

Building a stronger Alberta

June 28, 2007

Government annual report confirms Alberta among the best places to live, work and play

Measuring Up 2006-2007 shows improved performance on most government targets

Edmonton... Albertans continue to have the highest disposable income, the lowest tax load and the highest productivity in Canada, according to the Alberta government's annual report on achievements.

Those are just a few of the findings in *Measuring Up 2006-2007*, which highlight government's performance for the past year on 14 goals and 65 performance measures related to programs and services as well as government-owned and supported infrastructure.

"Government continues to improve the way it does business," said President of Treasury Board Lloyd Snelgrove. "Government, over the last year, improved or maintained its performance on 40 of the 65 performance measures in the three-year business plan. Albertans' quality of life remains high and government is continuously working to make it better."

Highlights of *Measuring Up 2006-2007* include:

- Albertans had an average personal disposable income of \$32,109, the highest in Canada and 25 per cent higher than the Canadian average of \$25,624.
- Albertans paid the lowest provincial and municipal taxes, overall, in Canada.
- Alberta had a real GDP three-year compounded average annual growth rate of 5.6 per cent, nearly twice the Canadian average of 3 per cent.
- Investment in manufacturing and service industries continued an upward trend, increasing from \$14.8 billion to \$16.9 billion, exceeding the government's target by 17 per cent.
- Over 23, 000 new apprentices were registered, bringing the total number to a record 60,000-up 47 per cent in two years and 141 per cent in ten years.
- 97 per cent of post-secondary graduates were employed two years after graduation.
- 97 per cent of the time Alberta had good air quality and the number of fair days increased.
- 88 per cent of Albertans ages 18-64 rated their health as good, very good or excellent.
- 628 new units were funded by the Alberta government, through the affordable housing initiatives delivered by the province, to address the affordable housing shortage in high growth, high-need communities.

Many of the targets not achieved this year are stretch targets that are meant to be achieved over a number of years. Of the targets not met, six measures reported improved over the previous year. Government is continuously improving the way it works and is taking steps to ensure future targets are met.

Alberta is at the forefront of public performance reporting in North America and is the only province to have the auditor general verify the reliability of the measures reported. A complete copy of the report is available at www.treasuryboard.gov.ab.ca.

Media inquiries may be directed to:

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Backgrounder

June 28, 2007

Measuring Up 2006-2007 highlights

In 2006-2007, government achieved 38 of the 65 targets and improved and maintained performance on 40 of the 65 targets in the 2006-09 Government of Alberta Three-Year Business Plan.

Highlights include

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Economic

- Albertans had an average personal disposable income of \$32,109, the highest in Canada, nearly \$6,000 more than second-place Ontario, and 25 per cent higher than the Canadian average of \$25,624.
- Albertans enjoyed the lowest provincial and municipal tax load in the country. When calculating Alberta's tax load health care premiums, fees and licenses are included.
- Alberta's had the highest labour productivity and labour force participation in the country, well above the national average.
- Alberta had a real GDP three-year compounded annual growth rate of 5.6 per cent, nearly twice the Canadian average of 3.0 per cent and exceeding the target of 2.5 per cent.
- Investment in manufacturing and service industries continued an upward trend, increasing from \$14.8 billion to \$16.9 billion, exceeding the government's target by 17 per cent.
- Annual capital expenditure in Alberta on exploration and development of conventional oil and gas resources and oil sands increased from \$24.7 billion to \$35.4 billion in 2005.
- Alberta's value-added exports reached \$29.3 billion, exceeding government's target of \$27.7 billion and growing from the previous year of \$27.8 billion.
- Alberta experienced record employment growth of 4.8 per cent.

Education

- 79 per cent of adult Albertans were satisfied that most adult Albertans can access the education or training they want.
- 90 per cent of Albertans 25-34 completed high school.
- 77 per cent of Aboriginal Albertans (aged 25-34 living off-reserve) completed high school.
- More than 23,000 new apprentices were registered, bringing the total number trained to a record 60,000 - up 47 per cent in two years and 141 percent in 10 years.
- 97 per cent of certificate, diploma and university graduates were employed two years after graduation.

- 97 per cent of journeypersons were employed two years after graduating from an apprenticeship program.
- 94 per cent of employers were satisfied with post-secondary graduates.

Children and youth

- 93.8 per cent of Alberta children up to age five were receiving positive interaction from their parents.
- Government provided support to 95 communities to take local action on family violence and bullying through the Community Incentive Fund program.
- Government supported children and youth experiencing bullying by establishing a provincial 24-hour/7-day-a-week bullying helpline and providing resources for youth.

- **Research**

- Government provided 27.5 per cent of the sponsored research revenue at Alberta universities in 2005-06. Sponsored research revenue at Alberta universities has increased by 45 per cent over the last five years.
- Investments to support innovation totaled over \$727 million in 2005-06, amounting to 2.67 per cent of total government expenditures.

Health

- Life expectancy at birth for Alberta males and females is 77.9 years and 82.9 years, respectively.
- 88 per cent of Albertans 18-64 rated their health as good, very good or excellent.
- 19 primary care networks are in operation across Alberta involving over 900 physicians and providing services to more than one million Albertans.
- 91 per cent of Alberta Child Health Benefit parents agreed they were able to obtain health services they would not otherwise have been able to get for their children.

- **Environment**

- 97 per cent of the time Alberta had good air quality and the number of fair air quality days increased. Air quality is influenced by vehicle emissions, weather patterns, wildfires and intensity of industrial development.

- **Infrastructure**

- Government completed 87 per cent of construction on the North-South Trade Corridor and secured funding for twinning Highway 63 from Grassland to Marianna Lake.
- More than half of Alberta communities have high-speed Internet access through SuperNet. Government continues to invest in the SuperNet maximizing use in the health care and education sectors.
- 628 new units were funded by the Alberta government, through the affordable housing initiatives delivered by the province, to address pressures in high growth, high-need communities.
- 95 per cent of health facilities were reported in good or fair physical condition
- 97 per cent of schools were reported in good or fair physical condition;
- 90 per cent of post-secondary institutions were reported in good or fair condition;
- 97 per cent of water management infrastructure in the province was in good physical condition.

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• **Safe Communities**

- 88 per cent Albertans felt human rights were very well or fairly well protected in Alberta.
- 37 of the 38 recommendations contained in the MLA Report of the Alberta Victims of Crime Consultation were accepted by government.
- Violent crime in Alberta decreased from 1,101 per 100,000 in 2004, to 1,096 per 100,000 in 2005; and property crime rates decreased from 5,063 per 100,000 in 2004, to 4,874 per 100,000 in 2005.

• **Seniors**

- Under the Rural Affordable Supportive Living Program, government provided \$42 million to support the development of more than 550 affordable supportive living units throughout Alberta.

• **Tourism and Culture**

- 87.6 per cent of adult Albertans attended or participated in arts and cultural activities
- 81.3 per cent of adult Albertans participated in sports and recreational activities.
- Total tourism revenue grew to an estimated \$5.3 billion in 2006, an increase from \$5.1 billion in 2005.
- Government provided nearly \$600,000 to support six community organizations to enhance community volunteerism regionally and locally

- 30 -

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