

March 27, 2008

Stelmach issues Cabinet team mandates outlining priorities

Contracts help Albertans measure government performance

Edmonton... In keeping with his commitment to run an open and accountable government, Premier Ed Stelmach issued mandate letters to each Cabinet team member outlining priorities and tasks to be accomplished over the next one to four years.

“The mandates are contracts that keep us on track and accountable to Albertans,” said Stelmach. “Our goals are clearly stated for all to see, and we will publicly report on progress.”

The letters direct ministers to work together on initiatives to achieve government’s five priorities:

- ensure Alberta’s energy resources are developed in an environmentally sustainable way;
- increase access to quality health care and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health care service delivery;
- promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe;
- enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled work force to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta’s economy; and
- provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population.

In addition to working collaboratively on these priorities, each minister is expected to work on their own ministry business plan and accomplish specific tasks outlined in the mandate letters. The letters can be viewed at www.alberta.ca.

Specific mandate directives include creating a strategic plan for developing the oil sands region, increasing the number of immigrants and temporary foreign workers in Alberta to 50,000 by end of 2009, adding 300 police officers over the next three years and phasing out health care premiums in four years or less.

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Attachment: Overview of Cabinet priorities by ministry.

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Overview of Cabinet priorities by ministry (alphabetical)

Aboriginal Relations

Work with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to promote strong and vibrant communities and lead the following initiative:

- conclude the new long-term governance and funding arrangement with and for the Métis Settlements that is focused on effective governance, enhanced accountability and sustainability.

In addition, lead the following initiative:

- formalize relationships between the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Treaty Grand Chiefs (Treaty 6, 7 and 8) through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Advanced Education and Technology

Take the lead to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiatives:

- encourage technology commercialization and increase the Canadian venture capital invested in Alberta, in part by establishing the Alberta Enterprise Fund;
- increase post-secondary spaces available to high demand areas like health and trades over the next two years;
- reduce the interest rate on student loans from prime plus 2.5 percentage points to prime; and
- develop and implement a framework that defines roles and mandates for publicly funded organizations that support world-class research and innovation in Alberta.

Work with the Minister of Health and Wellness to increase access to quality health care and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health care service delivery; ensure Alberta has the health care professionals we need to meet future demand; and lead the following initiatives:

- increase the number of physician graduates from 227 to 295 by 2012;
- increase the number of registered nurse graduates from 1,375 to 2,000 by 2012; and
- increase the number of licensed practical nurse graduates from 559 to 1000 by 2012.

Agriculture and Rural Development

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiative:

- strengthen and diversify the agriculture sector by increasing the market value of differentiated and value-added agricultural products and expanding into new markets and products.

Children and Youth Services

Work with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiative:

- expand support for Aboriginals and immigrants, and improve access to existing programs for Albertans affected by family violence.

In addition, lead the following initiatives to ensure Alberta families have access to quality, affordable child care:

- support the creation of 14,000 new child care spaces by 2011, including in-school and out-of-school care, family day homes and day cares; and
- provide low and middle income families with a subsidy to cover the costs for out-of-school child care.

Culture and Community Spirit

Work with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiative:

- promote and support culture in Alberta by working with partners to implement *The Spirit of Alberta: Alberta's Cultural Policy* and establishing a Premier's Council on Arts and Culture.

Education

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiative:

- increase student participation and completion rates in health, math, science and career and technology studies courses to grow the technology and science sectors.

Also work with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiative:

- increase broad-based supports and early intervention initiatives for at-risk children to improve their learning outcomes.

Employment and Immigration

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiatives:

- increase the total off-reserve labour force of Alberta's First Nations, Métis and Inuit to 74,000 by 2010;
- increase the number of international immigrants and temporary foreign workers to 50,000 by the end of 2009;
- double the number of workers entering the Provincial Nominee Program to 3,000; and
- help newcomers to Alberta to integrate and settle into the community by increasing the support services provided to them.

Energy

Take the lead to ensure Alberta's energy resources are developed in an environmentally sustainable way, and lead the following initiatives:

- develop a comprehensive energy strategy;
- implement carbon capture and storage research and demonstration projects; and
- support research on new oil sands extraction processes that use less energy, less water, reduce tailings ponds and improve land reclamation.

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiative:

- implement strategies to increase upgrading and refining capacity in Alberta, including the implementation of bitumen royalty in-kind.

In addition, lead the following initiatives:

- ensure Albertans receive appropriate benefits from their ownership of non-renewable resources by implementing the *New Royalty Framework* for Alberta.
- develop and implement policy to ensure sufficient and reliable electric transmission facilities are available in a timely manner to support continued economic growth in the province.

Environment

Work with the Minister of Energy to ensure Alberta's energy resources are developed in an environmentally sustainable way, and lead the following initiatives:

- inform Albertans on our environmental stewardship to ensure a clear provincial, national and international understanding of Alberta's leadership, commitment and action on the environment; and
- implement the climate change strategy, including conservation, energy efficiency and adaptation initiatives.

In addition, lead the following initiatives:

- address the impacts of development on land, air, water and biodiversity, at a regional level, through a cumulative effects management system that is integrated with Alberta's Land-use Framework; and
- manage Alberta's water resources to ensure the province has the quality and quantity of water needed now and into the future to support population and economic growth.

Finance and Enterprise

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiatives:

- introduce a 10-per-cent tax credit to stimulate private sector scientific research and experimental development in Alberta; and
- develop and implement policies, initiatives and tools to help Alberta businesses to improve their productivity and global competitiveness.

In addition, lead the following initiatives:

- strengthen the Government of Alberta's long-term fiscal position, and implement a renewed

- investment and savings policy;
- phase out health care premiums in four years or less;
- increase support for Alberta families through increases to the caregiver, infirm dependant and the disability supplement non-refundable tax credit amounts and the Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit; and
- reduce the regulatory burden on business by reducing overlap, simplifying compliance requirements and revising or eliminating regulations.

Health and Wellness

Take the lead to increase access to quality health care and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health care service delivery, and

- ensure Alberta has the health care professionals we need to meet future demand;
- strengthen the governance and accountability framework with all health providers; and
- improve the health care delivery model to ensure the roles, responsibilities and structures in the system support the most efficient delivery of services.

Work with the Minister of Justice to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiative:

- increase the number of treatment beds for drug addictions and mental health services.

Housing and Urban Affairs

Work with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiatives:

- develop 11,000 affordable housing units by 2012; and
- develop the 10-Year Plan to address homelessness.

In addition, lead the following initiatives:

- help Albertans stay in their homes through the rent supplement program and the Homelessness and Eviction Prevention Fund;
- make additional public land available for affordable housing purposes.

Infrastructure

Work with the President of the Treasury Board to provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population, and lead the following initiative:

- increase the efficiency of health and education infrastructure design and construction.

International and Intergovernmental Relations

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiative:

- coordinate international missions to market Alberta as an immigration destination.

In addition, lead the following initiative:

- ensure Alberta's interests are advanced nationally and internationally by strengthening ties with our western partners and developing an international strategy.

Justice and Attorney General

Take the lead to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiative:

- enhance the capacity of the prosecution service to effectively prosecute serious and violent crime, in part, by adding prosecution and support staff.

Municipal Affairs

Work with the President of the Treasury Board to provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population, and lead the following initiative:

- implement the *Capital Region Integrated Growth Management Plan*.

In addition, lead the following initiative:

- ensure provincial funds provided to municipalities are used to meet agreed upon objectives through the development of an accountability framework.

Seniors and Community Supports

Work with the Minister of Health and Wellness to increase access to quality health care and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health care service delivery, and lead the following initiative:

- improve quality, supply and client choice in the continuing care system.

In addition, lead the following initiative:

- support persons with disabilities' independence and self-reliance by providing increased employability incentives, including an increase in the amount that can be earned by Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) recipients from \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Service Alberta

Work with the President of the Treasury Board to provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population, and lead the following initiative:

- establish a single enterprise approach to information technology development and operations for the Government of Alberta.

In addition, lead the following initiative:

- improve service delivery, whether in person, by phone or through the internet, to Albertans by creating innovative approaches, while maintaining information security and integrity.

Solicitor General and Public Security

Work with the Minister of Justice to promote strong and vibrant communities and reduce crime so Albertans feel safe, and lead the following initiatives:

- add 300 additional police officers over the next three years;
- establish a Safer Communities and Neighborhoods Investigative unit to target organized crime; and
- coordinate policing services to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery.

Sustainable Resource Development

Work with the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology to enhance value-added activity, increase innovation, and build a skilled workforce to improve the long-run sustainability of Alberta's economy, and lead the following initiative:

- strengthen the competitiveness of the forestry sector by working with industry to identify options to improve the long-term viability of the sector.

In addition, lead the following initiative:

- address competing use of land through planning and decision-making directed by the completion and implementation of the Land-use Framework.

Tourism, Parks and Recreation

Work with the President of the Treasury Board to provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population, and lead the following initiative:

- ensure Alberta's parks and recreation areas remain protected yet accessible to Alberta's growing population by developing a plan for Alberta's parks and recreation areas.

Transportation

Work with the President of the Treasury Board to provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population, and lead the following initiative:

- double the provincial investment in highway repaving and bridge repair over the next three years.

Treasury Board

Take the lead to provide the roads, schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing economy and population, and

- implement the 20-year Capital Plan.

Work with the Minister of Energy to ensure Alberta's energy resources are developed in an environmentally sustainable way, and lead the following initiative:

- create a strategic plan for developing the oil sands region.

Work with the Minister of Finance and Enterprise to strengthen the Government of Alberta's long-term fiscal position, and lead the following initiatives:

- improve expenditure management;
- enhance the capital planning process; and
- modernize and strengthen the business planning and budget development process.

Take the lead on the following initiative:

- Corporate Human Resources - ensure the Government of Alberta has the skilled workforce needed to provide important public services in the future by implementing attraction and retention strategies.

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