

Announcement

June 19, 2020

2019-2020 Annual Report Card reports on accomplishments, quantifies benefits of efficiency and regulatory burden reduction initiatives

Today, the AUC has issued its first [annual report card](#), a detailed examination of its results designed and formatted for stakeholders to assess in a simple and straightforward way whether the AUC has met its objectives.

For the first time, the AUC has quantified the benefits of its initiatives it has taken and is taking to reduce regulatory burden and improve efficiency. The goal is to, where possible, identify or estimate the monetary benefits resulting from our actions.

The report card is one of three parts of the AUC's annual planning and assessment framework, complemented by the [AUC Strategic Plan 2019-2022](#) and the [2020-2021 Operational Plan](#). It replaces our annual review.

The report card and the AUC's overall planning framework reflect the outcome of multiple consultations with stakeholders in industry and elsewhere. The AUC has strived to produce a strategic plan, operational plan and a report card that identifies goals and accomplishments in a clear, concise and focus-driven manner. They are centred on the priorities identified by stakeholders.

The AUC's strategic and operational plans coalesce around four themes of efficiency and limiting regulatory burden, competition and markets, infrastructure, and people. The report card charts the progress of our latest efficiency initiatives, which in aggregate are designed to deliver enduring change to our regulatory approach over a number of reporting cycles.

This approach to reporting not only demonstrates the AUC's transparency and accountability, but also marks the first time the AUC has quantified the benefits of our initiatives to streamline, increase efficiency and reduce regulatory burden. It carries the advantage of allowing the AUC to outline and measure our efforts to meet the Alberta government's required reporting on the progress of red tape reduction across the government sphere.

Some examples of the work underway in 2019-2020 include:

- **Regulatory Burden Reduction Roundtables:** On October 4, 2019 the AUC held a roundtable with stakeholders to gather feedback on regulatory burden. We also invited parties to provide us with written submissions. In total we received 16 written submissions and approximately 50 participants attended the roundtable. We asked for comments in three areas: defining regulatory burden, suggested areas for improvement and next steps. We grouped the suggestions into three main areas and took action

immediately to address some of the concerns. It was clear that the major priority for AUC stakeholders was for the AUC to address its timeliness in determining major rate cases.

- **Independent, expert review of AUC rates proceedings approach:** To reflect the stakeholder priority on streamlining the process for major rates cases, the AUC created an independent three-member committee of outside experts with deep regulatory experience to review stakeholder submissions made to the AUC, to the Alberta government and to invite stakeholder submissions on its own. The committee is expected to deliver a report in July on how changes can be implemented.
- **Project Green Light:** Project Green Light is a grassroots program to enabling staff to drive and pace innovation and change at the AUC. The process established to green light projects clears the way for all personnel to develop and implement ideas and approaches to increase efficiency by challenging the existing ways we do our work. It is an AUC-wide effort to empower staff to deliver on outcomes and seek new ways of executing to ensure decisions are made rapidly. The first of the initiatives was a streamlined process to resolve boundary disputes between a distribution company and rural electrification associations. It reduced historical processing times by 75 per cent.
- **Trusted-traveller approach to low-risk applications:** The AUC implemented a pilot approach to certain low-risk applications, replacing the lengthy formal application process with a simple one-page checklist. This has cut processing time dramatically.

Future annual report cards will also include an AUC Industry Impact Assessment, which will include a broader assessment of the AUC's regulatory impact. The first such assessment was scheduled for this year, however it was delayed due to the impact and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present the Alberta government and health authorities with unpredictable challenges. Within the regulatory framework, the AUC is taking a pragmatic approach to relieve regulatory burdens that may hinder the collective response to the pandemic.

First and foremost is the AUC's support for Albertans as the Alberta government works with retailers to provide billing relief during the crisis. AUC staff have also taken a pragmatic view of enforcement and reporting, including the potential forbearance of certain regulatory requirements in the context of approaches market participants have taken in emergency conditions.

The AUC acknowledges and thanks the many stakeholders whose ongoing counsel and cooperation greatly support the work of the AUC and allowed us to accomplish the results reflected in the 2019-2020 AUC Annual Report Card.

Mark Kolesar
Chair