

Alberta Showcase – AAMVA Region IV Opening Session

Recent Implementations

Veterans Licence Plate Program Expansion

Alberta implemented new legislation and policy to recognize currently serving members to qualify for veterans licence plates. Previously, only honorably discharged members were eligible.

Transgender Legislation and Policy Update

Alberta implemented enhanced legislation that allows transgendered persons who qualify to update the 'sex' on their driver's licence or identification cards to their assumed 'sex'. Previously, this was permitted only after sex re-assignment surgery.

New 7 character licence plates

Alberta introduced a 7th character to extend the life configuration of the current series of licence plates for passenger class vehicle registration. The new format is '**AAA-NNNN**'.

Driver Exam Translator Policy

Concerns surfaced about the lack of controls surrounding the use of approved translators. This shortfall was affecting the credibility of the driver's license testing process. Modifications to policy, procedures and reporting were necessary to improve the quality and integrity of testing. A key policy change became effective April 18, 2011, for the provision of 'Translated Knowledge Tests' and includes the following elements;

- Overall focus will be towards professional translators who are associated with related organizations in this business and authorized registry agent staff
- All translators including registry agent staff will require a unique Translator Identification Number (TIN) issued by Alberta Transportation.
- The Driver Knowledge Testing System (DKTS) will require entry of the TIN to generate the knowledge test for translation. An '*expired*' TIN means the Translator cannot proceed with service and must be referred to AT.

All translated tests will be monitored closely by AT and the Special Investigations Unit. AT can suspend or permanently revoke the TIN.

- Conducting translated tests without the approved and valid TIN or using someone else's TIN will be considered a serious breach of policy.

SIU

This past fiscal year, SIU peace officers laid 177 criminal and 12 regulatory charges against 73 individuals. Included in these numbers are FR-related statistics of 44 persons charged with 134 criminal and two regulatory offences.

Identifications Cards for the Homeless

Alberta has worked collaboratively with social service agencies to develop a support program to assist homeless individuals in obtaining the required documentation to prove their identity, thereby enabling them to obtain a government-issued Identification Card. This approach assists in removing the barriers to obtaining identification for the homeless, without compromising the integrity of the Identification Card program. The web link is

<http://www.alberta.ca/acn/201010/292688746F659-9450-CB05-6054BBDF40A0D574.html>

Case Management Tool

Driver Fitness and Monitoring (DFM) Section of Alberta Transportation has developed a Case Management Tool to streamline the process for reviewing and managing medical files. The tool consists of a repository for paperless files in which all medicals and related documentation will be scanned and sent to the Reviewing Officers electronically to manage medical files of clients in Alberta. Phase I of this project was successfully implemented in March 2010. This will allow for DFM to make further changes to the procedures within the Section to work more efficiently and enable automation of medical documentation submission and evaluation of the medical data.

On The Radar

24 Hour Disqualification

Effective June 1, 2011 a change to the *Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation* of the Alberta *Traffic Safety Act* will come into force that will effectively allow the sharing of the 24 Hour Disqualification between law enforcement and Alberta Transportation. As a result, the department will begin recording 24 Hour Disqualifications on an individual's driving record on the Motor Vehicle System, MOVES.

This change will allow Alberta Transportation to use the information when assessing chronic, high risk drivers. In addition, law enforcement officers with access to motor vehicle system to use the information, in concert with other information on a driving record, to assess a particular driving event and to determine action to take at the roadside.

Promoting Motor Cycle Safety

Two new posters have been created to promote motorcycle safety in Alberta. Motorcycle safety is emphasized each July. The posters remind motorcyclists of their vulnerability and the need to protect themselves by riding defensively.

In particular, the posters urge motorcyclists not to speed or pass improperly. Nearly two-thirds of all collisions involving motorcycles result in death or injury. In fatal collisions, almost two thirds of the motorcyclists were travelling at unsafe speeds. Compared to drivers involved in total casualty collisions, motorcycle drivers were more likely to run off the road or pass improperly.

Commercial Driver Abstract

Making the commercial driver's abstract available to approved users is a core strategy of Alberta Transportation's Traffic Action Safety Plan for keeping Alberta's highways safe for all road users. The Commercial Driver's Abstract (CDA) is designed to assist carriers in the hiring and monitor driver performance by reducing the time and effort required to compile the information themselves from different sources. Good drivers will also be able to use the CDA to support their effects when applying for new employment.

CDA compiles existing driver's abstract data from Service Alberta and Commercial driver related National Safety Code data from Alberta Transportation. CDA will be available to the public in the fall 2011.

The CDA contains Alberta and Out Of Province events such as:

- Moving convictions (such as speeding, following to close, failing to obey traffic control devices, unsafe passing, etc.)
- Suspensions and prohibitions
- Non-moving commercial convictions (cargo securement, over weight/dimension, driver's hours of service log books, and mechanical violations, and
- Results of inspections conducted under the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA)

Distracted Driving Legislation

Bill 16, *the Traffic Safety (Distracted Driving) Amendment Act*, received Royal Assent in December of 2010. This legislation goes beyond hand-held cell phones and other electronic devices to include restrictions on activities like reading, writing and personal grooming. This will give law enforcement much more flexibility to deal with a wider range of distractions. This is a positive step in encouraging drivers to focus on the task of driving.

In the coming weeks, Alberta will be finalizing the regulatory changes to support the new law and will be launching a public education and awareness campaign to help Albertans understand the details of the legislation. We anticipate that our public education and awareness campaign will be in effect by the middle of 2011, with enforcement of this new law to follow later this year. More information regarding Alberta's new distracted driving legislation is available at <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/distracteddriving.htm>.

Traffic Safety Plan

The next phase in our traffic safety efforts is about to begin. A new national strategy will be launched in May at the

annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators in Victoria, B.C. The Road Safety Strategy 2015 will take a holistic approach, incorporate best practices and work to achieve downward trends rather than percentage-based targets.

The unveiling of the strategy coincides with the National Year of Road Safety in 2011, an initiative to increase awareness of and promote road safety. After the Canadian strategy is launched, Alberta will announce its Traffic Safety Plan 2011-2015. This plan builds upon our efforts to reduce the number of injuries and deaths resulting from traffic-related collisions on Alberta's roads. Collaboration will continue to be central to this work.

Canada's first road safety plan was introduced in 1996. Since that time, traffic fatalities across the country have decreased by 25 per cent, resulting in the lowest death toll on record in more than 60 years. In Alberta, we've also seen a marked reduction since the introduction of our province's Traffic Safety Plan in 2007. For the second consecutive year, traffic fatalities and injuries have declined in Alberta despite increases in population, drivers and vehicles. Traffic fatalities decreased 14 per cent from 2008 to 2009, and traffic injuries dropped 13 per cent.

These statistics are a strong testament to the success of - and need to continue - this important work.

Electronic Data Capture – Driver Examinations

The EDCODE project would replace paper and pencil test sheets used by driver examiners with a tablet or laptop computer that would record not only the road test score on each element but also test duration and global positioning system (GPS) data. All of this real-time data would be sent electronically for use by Driver Program Administrators to review individual tests and examiners' overall performance. It is anticipated that the RFP for this project will be available this spring 2011. The Ministry web site for tenders and contracts is <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/697.htm>

Systems Modernization

Given the fiscal climate over the past two years and the government's aggressive target of being back in the black by 2012, all major initiatives were placed on hold. As we look forward over the next 3 – 5 years, the question of 'what really is the right path forward' to address our legacy systems renewal plan remains paramount.

Our intent over the next year is to review the research, learnings and best practices of jurisdictions who have implemented strategies over the past 3 or so years. This will obviously include a validation and update where required, of the business vision.

Canadian Driver Licence Agreement

The CDLA as most will know, is synonymous to the DLA in the US. Alberta's intent is to become an early joiner to the CDLA. Efforts continue to address and plan for compliance on mandatory elements with longer term strategies being defined for core elements over the next 2, 5 and 10 years.

Low Speed Vehicles

Alberta's pilot project in Jasper and Banff allowing LSV use will continue through the year. The Jasper pilot is expanding this year to include a crossing of a provincial highway. We're expecting to produce a final report in 2011/12 fiscal year.

Personal Mobility Devices

Segway - Alberta is preparing a report on the future of its pilot and the acceptance of Segways in Alberta. This report is expected to be released in the spring of 2011.

Mystery Shopper Program

These investigations are being expanded into all three of Alberta's provincial vehicle inspection programs; Commercial, Out of Province and Salvage. Alberta is using a "progressive discipline model" in administering discipline when incidents of non-compliance are identified including compelling technicians to undergo and successfully complete competency testing at a recognized trade school before having their inspection privileges re-instated.

Challenges / Issues – The Road Ahead

As with most other jurisdictions, our challenges are likely common. Finding innovative ways to manage in an environment where we must operate with less and at times even do more. In our case, business volumes are up as are consumer expectations.

Innovation becomes paramount.