

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Transforming the Way We Work



Canadian
Transportation
Agency

Office
des transports
du Canada

Canada 

Message from the Chair

Pursuing our tradition of excellence through innovation

We can look back with pride at the Agency's strong record of service. As Canada's longest-serving administrative regulatory body – founded in 1904 as the Board of Railway Commissioners – we have provided efficient dispute resolution and essential economic regulation to help ensure the national transportation system is competitive and accessible, and fulfills the needs of Canadians and the Canadian economy.

However, as the transportation sector evolves within the context of an increasingly complex and interconnected world, we also acknowledge that deep transformations have affected our operating environment in recent years. Rail shipping volumes have increased. More people are travelling by air. And Canadians demand greater access to clear and open information. The Agency is expected to adjust swiftly to new priorities, manage resources prudently, streamline administrative requirements and processes for industry, and be fair and transparent in all its dealings.

The fact that the Agency has been given significant new responsibilities over the last years – the implementation of air services price advertising regulations, arbitration services for rail level of service, advice to the Minister of Transport on minimum grain shipment volumes – is a mark of trust in our ability to deliver service effectively. As we adapt to an environment of continual and accelerated change in which we may be called upon to assume additional or different roles, preserving the Agency's tradition of excellent service requires us to envision and embrace creative new approaches to our work.

The 2014-2017 Strategic Plan is our roadmap to continue the Agency's evolution as an agile, highly responsive and modern professional organization. It is a bold plan that will see us break new ground by adopting innovative technologies to support our work, renewing our business processes to ensure we can provide streamlined, seamless interactions for clients and respond nimbly to shifting priorities.

Our plan focuses on 3 strategic priorities:

Service excellence. Our commitment to enhanced dialogue and engagement, as well as investments in information management tools and techniques will ensure we provide effective and timely services for industry and consumers.

Regulatory effectiveness. Our plan supports industry and consumers by ensuring that regulations are up to date and relevant, their administration is effective and compliance is enforced.

High performing organization. Our employees will be equipped to perform at their peak with updated technical resources, streamlined and integrated procedures and strong professional development support.

Each priority is supported by detailed action plans that set out specific deliverables and timeframes. We will report progress on these strategic priorities regularly through our Annual Report, as well as through a dashboard of Strategic Plan deliverables.

Our results-oriented 2014-2017 Strategic Plan will mobilize every area of our organization. Through the consolidated efforts of our professional and dedicated workforce, we will continue the transformation of the Agency over the next 3 years, aligning our financial, human and technological resources towards a single purpose: achieving excellence in all that we do.

Geoff Hare

Chair and Chief Executive Officer

Our operating environment

Clearly, our [mission and mandate](#) remain as relevant today as they were 110 years ago, when the Agency's precursor organization was founded. However, we now operate in a vastly different environment. The evolution of the transportation industry is being shaped by a number of influences, including increased expectations from the users of transportation services, a more globally-focused and technologically-advanced Canadian economy and transportation sector, and a population that is more urban and mobile. Government is also transforming in order to better serve Canada and Canadians now and into the future. Departments are expected to engage citizens and partners for the public good and to work collaboratively to enhance service delivery and value for money, while making smart use of new technologies.

The 2014-2017 Strategic Plan is informed by and seeks to address this significant and sustained transformation.

Rapid evolution in the transportation industry

The tragedy of the derailment in Lac-Mégantic, pressure on the grain shipping system, and the increased public focus on air travellers' rights, among other issues, have generated sustained media coverage, and brought to public attention the importance of transportation issues to the Canadian society and its economy.

Beyond these front-page issues lies the fact of a rapidly expanding industry with specific stakeholder needs. Shippers and carriers expect efficient and fair dispute resolution mechanisms as well as streamlined regulations that promote a level playing field across the industry. Travellers want clear information about their rights and protection as consumers. And travellers with disabilities expect barriers to access be removed, and to be provided with appropriate accommodation.

The Agency is determined to keep pace with change and respond to the evolving needs and expectations of consumers, industry and governments in an expert and timely manner.

Emphasis on fiscal responsibility and renewal in the Public Service

Continued government emphasis on fiscal responsibility comes with the expectation that organizations will work within their existing resources to provide efficient and high quality service.

While the Agency has taken proactive measures in past years to achieve necessary operational flexibility, we have also had to assume new responsibilities at the same time.

Chief among these was the successful implementation of regulations for all-inclusive air services price advertising, which we now apply and monitor for compliance. The Agency also provides support for rail level of service arbitrations when shippers and carriers cannot agree on terms of service through commercial negotiations. These arbitration decisions are also subject to compliance and enforcement, including penalties.

Further, following the passing of the *Fair Rail for Grain Farmers Act* in May 2014, the Agency has been called upon to provide additional services. The Agency prepared new *Operational Terms Regulations* for rail level of service arbitrations, and amended the *Railway Interswitching Regulations* to extend regulated rates to 160 kilometres from the previous limit of 30 kilometres. The Agency must now be ready to give advice to the Minister on whether minimum grain shipment volumes should be required for each crop year, and to administer the expanded interswitching limits in the Prairie Provinces.

An important focus of the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan is ensuring we continue to deliver effectively on these and other responsibilities by making optimal use of limited resources.

The Strategic Plan is also inspired by Blueprint 2020, the Government of Canada's initiative to renew the Public Service. The Blueprint envisions a world-class Public Service that embraces innovation, transformation and continuous renewal to improve services to Canadians and advance Canada's social and economic interests.

Agency employees contributed valuable ideas to increase our efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, engage clients and stakeholders, harness new technology and support a high-performing workforce.

Those ideas informed the Strategic Plan and contributed to the Government of Canada's [Destination 2020](#) report, released in May 2014, which identified actions government-wide to modernize and reinvigorate the Public Service. As a result, our Strategic Plan is fully aligned with the vision and principles outlined in Destination 2020.

Client expectations

The Agency is proud of the high marks it consistently receives from clients for its services and for the courtesy and professionalism of its staff. About three quarters of clients we surveyed reported satisfaction with the service they received from the Agency in each of the last 3 years.

Clients and stakeholders also tell us how they feel we could improve.

They expect faster service, more outreach, and clearer communications about our actions and decisions. They worry that the Agency is losing expertise when they see the retirement of experienced Agency staff they have relied on for years.

Our clients also expect us to speak their language and use common tools. Information about our processes and services should be easy to find and written in plain, everyday English and French. And this information should be readily accessed from the devices Canadians increasingly depend on in their personal and professional lives, such as smart phones and tablets.

Pragmatic, concrete, client-focused

As each section will outline in greater detail, the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan offers an ambitious response to client feedback and prepares the Agency to meet the challenges it will face over the next 3 years and beyond by setting clear, realistic targets and action plans aimed at transforming how the Agency delivers its services.

The next 3 years will see us focus on excellence, and work towards ensuring the Agency is well positioned as a leader in using technology to provide effective, efficient, and timely services that are responsive to our clients' needs.

Priority 1.

Service excellence

**Outcome: The Agency is recognized for
service innovation and excellence**

While service excellence is already entrenched in the Agency's **mission, values** and corporate culture, we plan to achieve a superior level of service delivery and responsiveness in all of our interactions with clients by harnessing technology and employee talent.

Canadians are familiar with online transactions and increasingly expect to be able to interact with government in the same way they do their banking or shopping. In the next 3 years, we intend to provide clients with simplified front-line services and modern online self-service options – such as online forms and an interactive client space on the web – that will give clients more immediate access to our services and allow them to obtain the feedback they need from the Agency. Our interactions will be more client-centric, consistent, predictable, and timely for industry and consumers.

These online services will be supported behind the scene by the implementation of a new shared case management system. This centrally-procured solution will allow us to integrate our business processes on a single platform and offer clients increased electronic access to the Agency and its services. Public, business-critical information, such as authorities, licences and notices, will be automatically published online and will be easier to find.

To streamline the user experience further, we will also continue to review the rules and processes that underpin our client interactions and make them faster, simpler and more predictable. These reengineered rules and processes will be explained in detail and in plain language through a mobile-friendly platform, where users will also find support tools – such as "how-to" videos – describing, for example, our dispute resolution processes and services.

Creating and maintaining user-friendly tools and services implies knowing what users need. To ensure we have up-to-date feedback on what industry and consumers expect, we will promote dialogue through the use of online consultation tools, web 2.0 technology, and continue collecting input through our regular client satisfaction surveys. In response to this feedback, we will communicate our progress regularly and work to improve our service standards and performance by shortening our timelines where possible.

3 years from now, the Agency will provide streamlined and user-friendly client service and enhanced stakeholder outreach via innovative online tools, all backed by efficient, fully integrated administrative processes.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Strategy 1: Transform service delivery for consumers and industry to increase efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness

Strategic actions	Deliverables
Enhance the effectiveness and user-friendliness of business processes and front-line services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New Shared Case Management System with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an interactive client interface on the web • paperless processes for clients and staff ✓ New rules of procedure for adjudicated disputes with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • user-friendly online form submission and file upload • electronic hearings of cases • interactive annotated version of the rules ✓ Support for new Rules of Procedure for Rail Level of Service Arbitration ✓ Simplified records of decision for air authorities and licences
Address performance gaps and client satisfaction feedback in an effective and open manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Automated e-communications that provide regular case updates and clearly explain our service standards and performance ✓ Updated performance reporting and service standards that are easier to understand and more meaningful to clients ✓ New ways of collecting timely feedback and reporting on actions taken in response

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Strategy 2: Strengthen consumer and industry engagement and understanding of Agency services

Strategic actions	Deliverables
Ensure consumers have access to information through next-generation technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ New and updated plain language resources about dispute resolution services✓ User-friendly and mobile-ready:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• new website• more social media channels✓ Enhanced outreach to air consumers to increase awareness of their rights and our services through current and new media
Enhance dialogue, engagement and the exchange of business-critical information through coordinated, Agency-wide industry outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Expanded and more coordinated outreach and information exchange with industry✓ Expanded web and face-to-face consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities✓ Increased use of Web 2.0 to engage stakeholders✓ Enhanced online access to business-critical information, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• legacy documents• authorities and licences• coasting trade applications and notices

Priority 2.

Regulatory effectiveness

Outcome: The regulatory regime meets the needs of Canadians and enhances the competitiveness and accessibility of the national transportation system

As part of the cross-government effort to reduce red tape, we want to ensure that regulations are relevant and streamlined, and that we identify and eliminate any undue administrative burden for industry.

In the next 3 years, we will propose several amendments designed to renew regulations and make them more effective, and we will also implement new rules, such as the regulations on rail operational terms. These updated and new regulations will in turn affect our internal business processes, which we will update to maximize gains in efficiency. Voluntary codes of practice will also be reviewed to increase their efficacy and ensure they truly reflect current best practices in accessibility.

The statutory review of the *Canada Transportation Act* – the Agency’s enabling legislation – begins in 2014-2015, the first year of our Strategic Plan. The Agency sees the review as a unique opportunity to put forward proposals to modernize the legal framework which enables all our activities. We will provide our full support to the review process by proposing amendments aimed at increasing our efficiency, promoting competition and providing the Agency with means of more effectively addressing systemic issues in the national transportation system.

Achieving regulatory effectiveness requires verifying and ensuring that rules are being followed. Thanks to its collaborative approach, the Agency has achieved high compliance rates. For example, the Agency's collaborative efforts have resulted in VIA Rail’s Renaissance cars being made accessible to persons with disabilities and becoming fully compliant with a landmark Supreme Court decision. We intend to build on this success, as well as to provide more self-assessment tools and resources to support voluntary compliance.

We will bolster our strategic monitoring of compliance, targeting areas based on the degree of potential risk that non-compliance may entail for the national transportation system. And where building awareness proves insufficient, we will use all the administrative means at our disposal to ensure Agency regulations and decisions are followed.

3 **years from now**, the Agency will have proposed significant amendments to regulations and adapted its processes to apply the revised regulations efficiently. Regulatory compliance will be monitored more efficiently based on risk, and non-compliant parties will continue to be held accountable.

REGULATORY EFFECTIVENESS

Strategy 1: Ensure the effective administration of legislation and that regulatory requirements are relevant and streamlined

Strategic actions	Deliverables
Renew regulations and codes of practice to reduce administrative burden and to ensure the use of the most effective regulatory instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ For the <i>Air Transportation Regulations</i>, Parts I, II, III, IV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposed amendments submitted • updated Agency processes based on amendments ✓ For Part VII of <i>Air Transportation Regulations</i> and <i>Personnel Training Regulations</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amendments published • external outreach to increase understanding ✓ Updated accessibility codes of practice for air, communications, ferry and rail ✓ Amend <i>Railway Third Party Liability Insurance Coverage Regulations</i> and procedures for rail certificates of fitness ✓ Implementation of new <i>Rail Operational Terms Regulations</i> ✓ Updated railway costing manuals and methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of <i>Railway Costing Regulations</i>
Contribute to legislative and policy reviews affecting the Agency's mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recommendations submitted to the <i>Canada Transportation Act</i> Review on how to strengthen the Act ✓ Delivery of new rail-related mandates

REGULATORY EFFECTIVENESS

Strategy 2: Maximize industry compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, as well as Agency decisions

Strategic actions	Deliverables
Use a risk-based framework to monitor compliance with legislation, regulations and codes of practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Updated risk-based approach to monitoring industry compliance ✓ Quicker turn-around times for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigations • issuing notices of violation ✓ Pilot an improved approach to conducting targeted investigations by leveraging new sources of intelligence
Promote compliance through targeted education and outreach activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-assessment tool for air carriers on compliance with guidelines and regulations ✓ New compliance-related resource tools on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noise and vibration • rail insurance and certificates of fitness • <i>Personnel Training Regulations</i> • Part VII of the <i>Air Transportation Regulations</i> ✓ Increased industry compliance through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reports published on compliance with accessibility codes of practice • proactive letters, webinars and other tools • outreach on interline baggage rules for air travel • dialogue with stakeholders
Hold non-compliant companies accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Public release of timely, user-friendly information about inspections and enforcement actions ✓ Implementation of administrative monetary penalties related to rail level of service arbitrations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new framework • new web resources

Priority 3.

High-performing organization

Outcome: The Agency has engaged, skilled and knowledgeable employees who are supported by effective and efficient systems and practices

The Agency's ability to operate as a high-performing organization and deliver on the ambitious objectives of this Strategic Plan depends largely on the skills and dedication of its employees. The Agency's most valuable resource is its highly-trained, expert workforce, so it is essential that our employees be fully engaged in this shared vision and be given the tools they need to contribute to our success.

Engaging our staff and enabling them to perform at their highest level will continue to be a top priority. The Agency values employees' insights into its processes. As it works to improve and streamline them, it will actively solicit comments and feedback from staff through new online channels, such as intranet surveys and a wiki. We also intend to bolster our culture of continuous learning and skills acquisition as a means of maintaining employee engagement and supporting career development. As well, tangible improvements to our information management and technology infrastructure will provide staff with access to next-generation tools and technologies to help them do their jobs even better.

Employees need to share a common vision if we are to maximize our performance; moreover, staff generally feel more engaged when they can witness real progress happening in their workplace and in their work. To make this happen, we will reinforce our project management practices, and implement service standards for the internal services that support our work so that as a team, we can track our successes and identify opportunities for improvement.

The Agency has begun to adapt its structure and internal practices in response to the government-wide drive towards sharing common services in information technology, human resources, as well as financial and administrative services. Fully transitioning to these shared services will allow us to focus our attention and resources on what we do best: delivering on our core businesses of resolving disputes and regulating the industry.

3 years from now, the Agency will make full use of shared government services and systems. It will have more robust, rigorous governance and reporting mechanisms. And its staff will have more opportunity to share thoughts and ideas, acquire new skills and take on new challenges.

HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION

Strategy 1: Transform internal services and processes seamlessly to enhance effectiveness and to align with government priorities

Strategic actions	Deliverables
Transition to government-wide business practices while maintaining service continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Streamlined, cost-effective common business processes in place for finance and human resources<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch of PeopleSoft and Phoenix Pay systems✓ Streamlined internal administrative processes✓ Phased transfer of Agency website content to single Government of Canada website, Canada.ca
Reinforce rigorous governance and oversight to enhance project management and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Improved results-based financial monitoring and performance reporting✓ Enhanced project management through:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• an Agency-wide common project management approach• new shared project management tools✓ Internal dashboard of results against our Strategic Plan and performance indicators✓ New service standards for internal services✓ New accountability and governance framework for internal services

HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION

Strategy 2: Enable employees to perform at their highest level

Strategic actions	Deliverables
Support employee excellence through performance management, continuous learning and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New staffing and recruitment strategy ✓ Initiatives to support a continuous learning, client-centric culture ✓ Successful transition to new Performance Management Program, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of government-wide core competencies • training for managers and employees • feedback built into executive reviews ✓ Strategy to ensure reliable backups are in place for all mission-critical tasks
Optimize information technology infrastructure, systems and tools to enable employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New, more efficient service delivery models for information technology services ✓ Access to wireless technologies provided for Agency staff and visitors ✓ Use of next-generation technologies, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to social media sites for enhanced professional networking and intelligence gathering • online access to work-related email accounts • new cloud-based software for collaboration and project management ✓ Increased use of web-based videoconferencing for mediation and business meetings
Increase employee engagement by regularly soliciting and responding to input and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New networking strategy based on employee feedback about improving knowledge sharing across the Agency ✓ Intranet tools that make it easier to work with others and to share information ✓ Increased opportunities for employee feedback ✓ Action plan responding to results of 2014 Public Service Employee Survey

Measuring our performance

Our service standards

Since 2008, the Agency has reported annually on its performance against [a series of client-centric service standards](#). The indicators measure the timeliness of our communications, as well as of our dispute resolution, regulatory determinations, licensing and other services. Each year, we publish our performance results against these standards in our [Annual Report](#).

Please note that all of our [service standards](#) are calculated in business days.

Dispute resolution

Services	Standard	Target	2014-2015 results
Air travel complaints facilitated	65 days	80%	TBD.
Rail and accessibility disputes facilitated	20 days	80%	TBD.
Disputes mediated	20 days when no extension is requested	100%	TBD.
Complex disputes resolved	65 days after pleadings are closed	80%	TBD.
All other disputes resolved (except coasting trade)	85 days	On average	TBD.
Disputed coasting trade applications resolved	65 days	80%	TBD.
Undisputed coasting trade applications processed	Prior to start date of vessel performing services	95%	TBD.

Regulation

Services	Standard	Target	2014-2015 results
Air licences issued	10 days after receiving a complete application	90%	TBD.
Charter permits and amendments issued after receipt of application	20 days	92%	TBD.
International code-sharing and wet lease authorities issued	30 days	100%	TBD.
Rail determinations issued	85 days	95%	TBD.

Communications

Services	Standard	Target	2014-2015 results
Client inquiries answered	5 days	85%	TBD.
1-888 telephone calls answered (8 a.m. - 8 p.m. E.T., Monday to Friday)	18 seconds	85%	TBD.
Information about our programs and services available on our website	24 hours per day / 7 days per week	95%	TBD.
Time to publish formal decisions on our website	1 day	100%	TBD.

Collecting feedback from stakeholders

We also commission regular independent [client satisfaction surveys](#) and in-depth interviews with a cross-section of stakeholders, to better understand their needs and to identify any gaps in meeting them.

In our evolution toward a more client-centric business model, this Strategic Plan includes actions to allow for faster, more frequent and more direct client feedback online. Client satisfaction feedback will be easier than ever to collect, respond to and act upon, in an effective and open manner.

Reporting on our progress

An online dashboard presenting the key deliverables of the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan has been added to the Agency website and will be updated regularly to reflect our progress in realizing the objectives of the Plan.