



2009–2010 | *annual report*



Office of the
fairness
commissioner

Bureau du
commissaire à
l'équité





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The Office of the Fairness Commissioner is an arm's-length agency of the Ontario government, established under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006. Its mandate is to ensure that certain regulated professions have registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.



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contents

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL | 5

MESSAGE FROM THE FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER | 6

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | 7

BACKGROUND | 8

THE YEAR IN REVIEW | 10

Tools and Strategies for Assessing Registration Practices | 10

Fair Registration Practices Reports | 10

Audits | 10

Reviews of Registration Practices | 11

Compliance Strategy | 12

Research Initiatives | 12

Entry-to-Practice Requirements in Other Jurisdictions | 12

Applicants' Experiences in the Registration Process | 13

Recommendations for Action | 14

To Regulatory Bodies | 14

To Qualifications Assessment Agencies | 14

To the Government of Ontario | 15

To the Government of Canada | 15

To Applicants | 15

Developments Related to Fair Access to Ontario's Regulated Professions | 16

Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) and Ontario Labour Mobility Act (OLMA) | 16

College of Trades and Apprenticeship | 16

Stakeholder Relations | 16

REPORT BY MINISTRY | 18

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs | 18

College of Veterinarians of Ontario | 18

Ministry of the Attorney General | 19

Ontario Association of Architects | 19

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario | 19

Professional Engineers Ontario | 20

Certified General Accountants of Ontario | 20

Law Society of Upper Canada | 20

Society of Management Accountants of Ontario | 21

Ministry of Children and Youth Services | 22

College of Early Childhood Educators | 22

Ministry of Community and Social Services | 22

Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers | 22

Ministry of Education | 23

Ontario College of Teachers | 23

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care | 23

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario | 23

College of Chiropractors of Ontario | 24

College of Chiropractors of Ontario | 24

College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario | 24

Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario | 25

College of Dental Technologists of Ontario | 25

College of Denturists of Ontario | 25

College of Dietitians of Ontario | 26

College of Homeopaths of Ontario | 26

College of Kinesiologists of Ontario | 26

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario | 26

College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario | 27

College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario | 27

College of Midwives of Ontario		28
College of Naturopaths of Ontario		28
College of Nurses of Ontario		28
College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario		29
College of Opticians of Ontario		30
College of Optometrists of Ontario		31
Ontario College of Pharmacists		31
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario		31
College of Physiotherapists of Ontario		32
College of Psychologists of Ontario		33
College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario		33
College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario		33
College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario		33
Ministry of Natural Resources		34
Ontario Professional Foresters Association		34
Association of Ontario Land Surveyors		34
Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry		34
Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario		34
No Ministry Affiliation		35
Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists		35
STATISTICAL SNAPSHOT OF THE REGULATED PROFESSIONS		36
LOOKING AHEAD		43
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS		44
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF REGULATORY BODIES		48
APPENDIX 2: LIST OF REGULATORY BODIES BY MINISTRY		49
APPENDIX 3: ABBREVIATIONS IN THIS REPORT		50

| letter of transmittal

June 2010

The Honourable Eric Hoskins
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
400 University Avenue, 6th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2R9

Dear Minister,

In accordance with Section 15(1) of the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act (FARPA), 2006, I am pleased to present the 2009–10 Annual Report of the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) for your submission to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

Sincerely,



Hon. Jean Augustine, PC, CM
Fairness Commissioner



| message from the fairness commissioner

As I look back over the first three years of our work, I am proud and gratified by our accomplishments, and optimistic about the future. During this time, the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) has collected comprehensive information from the regulatory bodies, qualifications assessment agencies and, for the first time, applicants themselves. Nearly 3,800 current and former licensing applicants participated in an unprecedented survey, enabling the OFC to document their experiences.

I have released the survey results with recommendations in *Clearing the Path: Recommendations for Action in Ontario's Professional Licensing System*. These 17 specific recommendations aim to improve the way people get their licences in the regulated professions. In too many cases, the system is still needlessly complex, costly, and time-consuming. The recommendations will ensure that professionals do not face unexpected or unreasonable hurdles in getting certified in their fields.

We must always remember that we are talking about human lives.

I encourage you to read our third annual report, and to contact us with your comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JA' with a stylized flourish.

Hon. Jean Augustine, PC, CM
Fairness Commissioner

| I am optimistic about the future. (*Hon. Jean Augustine, PC, CM*) |



message from the executive director

During the past year the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) focused on three commitments:

- refining the tools that regulatory bodies use to meet their obligations under FARPA and the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)
- analyzing the results of audits and Fair Registration Practices (FRP) Reports
- conducting an unprecedented study of applicants' experiences in the registration process

Results of the audits and FRP Reports show that the regulatory bodies are making steady progress towards transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration practices. In fact, in this report we have highlighted improvements by most of the regulatory bodies covered under our mandate. This demonstrates the unwavering commitment of the regulators to achieve our mutual goal of fair access to the regulated professions in the province of Ontario.

The regulatory bodies have worked hard during the past year to make changes and improvements required by FARPA, the RHPA, and the Ontario Labour Mobility Act. For this we are grateful. We look forward to working with them as we strive for continuous improvement to ensure that people who are qualified have a fair opportunity to be licensed in their profession.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nuzhat Jafri'.

Nuzhat Jafri

Executive Director



| background

In June 2006, the Ontario government introduced the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006 (FARPA). Through this statute, for the first time in the history of the regulated professions in Ontario, an oversight process would ensure that registration practices would be “transparent, objective, impartial and fair” and that responses to individuals applying for registration in Ontario’s regulated professions would be timely. The act received the support of all parties in the legislature, and came into effect on March 1, 2007.

FARPA also amended the Health Professions Procedural Code (HPPC), set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA), 1991. The code requires that registration practices in the health professions also be “transparent, objective, impartial and fair.”

On March 21, 2007, Hon. Jean Augustine, PC, was appointed Ontario’s first Fairness Commissioner, and on April 2, 2007, the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) opened its doors. Now fully operational, the office takes action to ensure that Ontario’s regulated professions establish and maintain fair registration practices.

The OFC does not advocate for or intervene on behalf of individuals, or assess credentials. The office has no mandate to comment on the use of professional titles or designations earned elsewhere. Its mandate is to work with the regulated professions to make sure that everyone who applies to register with them receives fair treatment.

Mandate

The OFC's mandate is set out in the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006, and in amendments to the Health Professions Procedural Code (HPPC). Following are the OFC's specific responsibilities:

- Assess the registration practices of certain regulated professions in Ontario.
- Monitor third-party agencies that regulated professions rely on for assessment of applicants' qualifications.
- Set out guidelines for the content and form of the regulatory bodies' yearly reports to the OFC.
- Consult with the regulated professions about the scope, timing and cost of the audits required by the legislation.
- Specify the criteria and standards for these audits.
- Receive and review the Audit Reports.
- Assess systemic problems with registration practices by analyzing information in the regulatory bodies' reports to the OFC.
- Issue compliance orders, where necessary, to the non-health professions.
- Advise the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on matters related to FARPA.
- Provide advice and recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, including where the OFC has determined that a regulated health profession has failed to comply with the fair registration requirements set out in the HPPC.
- Advise other government ministries about issues related to the registration practices of the regulated professions that fall under their respective jurisdictions.
- Advise the regulated professions with respect to matters covered by the legislation.
- Advise qualifications assessment agencies, colleges and universities, community agencies, and other organizations with a stake in the registration practices of the regulated professions about matters related to FARPA and the HPPC.

As of March 31, 2010, FARPA and the RHPA as amended covered 40 regulatory bodies, but only 35 of those bodies were registering members in 2009. That is why references in this report to numbers of regulatory bodies vary. See Appendix 1 for a list of the 40 regulatory bodies under the OFC's purview as of March 31, 2010.

| SEE APPENDIX 3 FOR A LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS COMMONLY USED IN THIS REPORT. |



| the year in review

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR ASSESSING REGISTRATION PRACTICES

The OFC prepared a series of guides and other tools, described below, to help regulatory bodies meet the requirements of FARPA and the RHPA. These tools are designed to improve the quality of Fair Registration Practices Reports, Audit Reports, and reviews of registration practices.

Fair Registration Practices (FRP) Reports

The OFC enhanced the Fair Registration Practices Reporting website in order to help regulators improve the quality of their reports and to better reflect the *Guidelines for Fair Registration Practices Reports*.

The OFC held two information sessions for regulators in December 2009 to:

- brief regulators on how to provide more accurate and relevant information
- introduce the website's new functions
- gather feedback about the website

At the request of individual regulators, the OFC met with registrars to discuss ways to improve their FRP reporting. Thirty-four of 35 regulatory bodies filed their reports by the March 1, 2010 deadline.

Audits

The OFC issued 13 audit notices on April 1, 2009, for the second round of audits. These second-round audits began on September 1 and were completed on December 31, 2009. The OFC has reviewed all of these audits. This review included an examination of auditing procedures and, more specifically, the common testing procedures used by auditors.

On July 2, thirteen notices were sent for the third and final round of the current audit cycle. The third-round audits began on December 1, 2009, and were completed by March 31, 2010. Once the analysis of this final round of audits is completed, the OFC will share relevant information with the auditors and regulatory bodies.

In September 2009, the OFC created a compact disc containing templates that specify the form and content of Audit Reports. The templates were developed with these goals in mind:

- to ensure that reports are consistent and that they meet the requirements set out in the legislation and in the *Framework for Audits of Registration Practices: Guidance for Ontario's Regulatory Bodies*
- to make it easier for auditors to complete the Audit Reports and submit them to the OFC
- to make it easier for regulators to make their Audit Reports available to the public

The OFC provided orientation sessions, including training on the functional specifications, to auditors and regulatory bodies before the audits in the summer and fall of 2009.

Under FARPA, the regulated professions must make their Audit Reports available to the public.¹

The timing of future audits will depend on the direction recommended in the overall compliance strategy.

Promising audit practices are now posted on a new dedicated page on the OFC website at http://fairnesscommissioner.ca/en/about/current_projects/audits_promising.php.

Reviews of Registration Practices

The OFC developed and launched an online guide in July 2009 to help the regulatory bodies systematically examine their registration requirements and practices. The guide, *Conducting Entry-to-Practice Reviews: Guide for Regulators of Ontario Professions*, uses the term *Entry-to-Practice Reviews* for what is referred to in the legislation as *reviews of registration practices*. This has been done to clearly distinguish them from (and avoid confusion with) Fair Registration Practices Reports.

This guide builds on and replaces *A Starter Kit for Conducting Reviews of Registration Practices*. In developing the guide, the OFC benefited from the following:

- ideas in the starter kit and consultation with regulators that preceded the kit
- approaches regulators have taken in their voluntary reviews
- additional feedback from regulators in May 2009
- other reports and literature

¹ Not under RHPA

Although Entry-to-Practice Reviews, Audit Reports and FRP Reports each have their own purposes, the processes complement one another. For example:

- OFC's analysis of Audit Reports and FRP Reports can help to identify areas of focus for a later review.
- Data gathered for a review will help the regulator complete an FRP Report.

Compliance Strategy

The OFC began to develop a comprehensive compliance strategy in the fall of 2009 to assess the registration practices of the regulatory bodies and ensure that they meet the requirements set out in the legislation. This five-year strategy will establish the direction the OFC will take to assess compliance, promote continuous improvement, provide support to regulators and, if necessary, enforce compliance. The OFC plans to release this strategy in the fall of 2010.

Part of this strategy is the establishment of standards to enable the OFC to assess registration practices. The OFC developed a first draft of the standards based on research and interviews with experts in registration practices, standards development, regulatory compliance, qualifications assessment, and performance evaluation. In early March, the OFC shared its draft, entitled *OFC Draft Standards for the Assessment of Registration Practices*, with its key stakeholders, which include the regulatory bodies, qualifications assessment agencies, immigrant-serving organizations, and postsecondary institutions. As of March 31, the OFC was finalizing the organization of a one-day consultation with these key stakeholders to receive their feedback on the draft standards, and was expecting written comments.

RESEARCH INITIATIVES

In addition to developing tools to help regulatory bodies comply with their statutory obligations, the OFC undertook the following complementary initiatives.

Entry-to-Practice Requirements in Other Jurisdictions

The OFC has prepared a study of the entry-to-practice requirements for regulated professions in other Canadian jurisdictions. This research allows the OFC to understand how the requirements in Ontario compare with those outside the province.

The OFC looked at entry-to-practice requirements for teachers, nurses, engineers, lawyers, and physicians and surgeons in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec. These regulated professions were the five largest by number of members in Ontario in 2008, and these provinces are the five largest in Canada by population, outside of Ontario. This study reports requirements that relate to both internationally trained and domestically trained applicants.

The information in this study was gathered mainly from the regulatory bodies' websites and was supplemented by other provincial online resources and by direct inquiries to the regulatory bodies. The information was circulated to each regulatory body to verify the completeness and accuracy. Such comprehensive information on entry-to-practice requirements for these five professions is not available elsewhere. The results of the study are available on the OFC website.

Applicants' Experiences in the Registration Process

Over the last three years, the OFC has collected comprehensive information from and about the regulators. It has analyzed how qualifications assessment agencies perform their work. And now it has completed the final piece of the registration puzzle: understanding the experiences of applicants.

In December 2008, the OFC initiated a research study called *Getting Your Professional Licence in Ontario: the Experiences of International and Canadian Applicants*. The first study of applicants' experiences ever conducted in Ontario, the research involved a literature review, an online quantitative survey, and five focus groups. Nearly 3,800 respondents across 37 regulated professions participated in the research, which was conducted in the spring and summer of 2009. (See the full report at http://fairnesscommissioner.ca/en/about/current_projects/applicants_study.php)

Findings from this study included the following:

- Problems are not confined to one or two professions. There are commonalities across the registration system.
- Internationally educated people have a particularly hard time navigating Ontario's professional licensing system.
- Internationally trained individuals are much more likely to be unemployed, or to be working in a field unrelated to their professional training, than domestically trained individuals.
- Health care professionals trained in Canada are much more likely than their internationally trained counterparts to complete the licensing process in less than one year.
- Many applicants find the process for completing the licensing exams, language proficiency exams and required education to be difficult, lengthy and emotionally challenging.
- Applicants commonly complained about insufficient information about the criteria and requirements for becoming licensed, websites that are difficult to navigate, unclear timelines, and staff who are unsympathetic or unhelpful in dealing with questions and concerns.
- Preparation is a key factor in avoiding licensing difficulties.
- Despite public perceptions and research to the contrary, respondents to the research study survey did not identify language as a barrier.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The OFC's mandate is clear: to ensure transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration processes. The vision is to create systemic change.

Creating this change requires a solid understanding of the practices and experiences of three groups: professionals' regulatory bodies; qualifications assessment agencies (such as agencies that set exams); and applicants themselves.

The commissioner released the results of the OFC's research on these three groups in the report, *Clearing the Path: Recommendations for Action in Ontario's Professional Licensing System*. She made 17 specific recommendations to improve the way people get their licences in the regulated professions. The proposals will ensure that prospective nurses, teachers and other professionals do not face unexpected or unreasonable hurdles in getting certified in their field.

To Regulatory Bodies

Regulatory bodies have direct responsibility for licensing professionals in Ontario. Following are recommendations to improve the licensing process:

- Improve communication with applicants by:
 - clearly identifying *all* of the steps required to get a professional licence in Ontario
 - posting information on your websites about the amount of time registration normally takes and the cost of the process
 - giving applicants clear reasons if they are denied a licence
- Streamline registration processes by reviewing and eliminating unnecessary steps and speeding up decision-making so applicants have answers sooner.
- Review Canadian work experience requirements to ensure they are relevant and necessary. Recognize and value comparable work experience obtained outside Canada.
- Enable potential immigrants to complete most of the steps for registration before they arrive in Canada.
- Provide stricter oversight when outsourcing assessments of qualifications. Many regulatory bodies outsource assessments to organizations such as universities and national agencies. You must take your relationship with these qualifications assessment agencies very seriously, because they directly affect who gets into the professions and who doesn't. Hold qualifications assessment agencies accountable for transparent, objective, impartial and fair assessments. (See recommendations to Qualifications Assessment Agencies, below.)

Of all the licensing systems used by regulated professions in Ontario, the system to license doctors is the most complicated. Following are recommendations related specifically to the physician licensing system:

- Provide alternatives to mandatory postgraduate training or residency programs to allow qualified international medical graduates to get licensed more quickly.
- Initiate individualized assessment regimes for qualified international medical graduates.

To Qualifications Assessment Agencies

Third-party qualifications assessment agencies often have significant impact on decisions about granting licences. These agencies decide whether academic credentials are equivalent, determine whether occupation-specific credentials are acceptable, judge competency, assess skills and knowledge, and run exams.

More than three-quarters of Ontario regulators have outsourced assessments.

Following are recommendations to ensure that the work of these organizations dovetails with, rather than duplicates, the work of regulatory bodies:

- Without waiting for direction from regulatory bodies, remove overlaps so that candidates do not have to go through costly and lengthy duplicate verifications.
- Publish details about the documents you require, state clearly how you will assess candidates, help them get documents from overseas, and assess the credentials of immigrant candidates before they move to Canada.

To the Government of Ontario

As the overseer of all regulatory practices, the Government of Ontario has a key role to play in improving the licensing system. Following are recommendations for provincial ministries:

- Open the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) or other needs-based financial aid to internationally trained professionals who must upgrade their education or training.
- Decide within six months whether to approve or reject regulators' proposed changes to regulations or laws affecting licensing.²
- In the health care sector, convene the seven national and provincial organizations involved in the complex process for licensing doctors,³ in order to:
 - Ensure transparency in the decisions they make on licensing.
 - Eliminate duplication across the licensing system.
 - Identify alternative licensing streams to recognize existing qualifications.

To the Government of Canada

Although professional licensing is within provincial jurisdiction, the federal government is responsible for admitting skilled immigrants and therefore has an important role to play. Following are recommendations for the Government of Canada to ensure it is not creating unnecessary challenges for applicants to regulated professions:

- Ensure that professionals who apply to immigrate to Canada are informed that there is a provincial licensing process.⁴
- Before immigrant professionals arrive, give them realistic, clear and up-to-date information about licensing requirements in destination province(s).

To Applicants

Ultimately, individual applicants must take responsibility for their own futures. Following are recommendations for professionals seeking Ontario licences, to help them avoid disappointment and frustration:

- Know the cost and be prepared to support yourself and your family during the licensing process.
- Do your homework before moving to Ontario or immigrating to Canada. Ensure that you are sourcing credible information, and are not relying on friends or anecdotes.
- Complete as much of the licensing process as possible before leaving your home country.

| The commissioner made 17 specific recommendations to improve the way people get their licences. |

² Currently, these decisions have no time limits. In some instances, decisions have taken so long that the requests need to be repeatedly rewritten because the information is out of date. For example, the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario has been waiting for approval of its registration regulation since 2002.

³ The seven organizations are: Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, Medical Council of Canada, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, College of Family Physicians of Canada, Centre for the Evaluation of Health Professionals Educated Abroad, and Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine.

⁴ In Quebec, immigrant professionals must sign a "Declaration by a candidate in a profession governed by a professional order in Quebec" (*Ministère de l'Immigration et des communautés culturelles*). This signing proves that they know there are no guarantees of licensure or employment if they or their spouses plan to practise a regulated profession.

DEVELOPMENTS RELATED TO FAIR ACCESS TO ONTARIO'S REGULATED PROFESSIONS

Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) and Ontario Labour Mobility Act (OLMA)

The Agreement on Internal Trade, signed by Canadian First Ministers and aimed at reducing barriers to the movement of "persons, goods, services and investment" within Canada, came into effect in 1995. In January 2009, the First Ministers signed a revised AIT. One of the AIT's core concepts is that individuals who have an unrestricted licence to practise in a Canadian jurisdiction should be eligible for a licence in any other Canadian jurisdiction to which they apply, without undergoing another assessment.

The Ontario Labour Mobility Act (OLMA) is Ontario's legislation to implement the AIT. It received Royal Assent on December 15, 2009. The regulatory bodies have twelve months from that date to change their registration regulation to comply with OLMA. OFC staff continue to work with and provide advice to the regulatory bodies about OLMA and these changes.

The labour mobility chapter of the AIT allows each province or territory to approve exceptions and maintain additional certification requirements for workers in specific occupations. Ontario has approved exceptions for six professions. Five of these professions fall under the purview of the OFC: dental hygienists, lawyers, accountants, nurses and social workers.

College of Trades and Apprenticeship

The Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act received Royal Assent on October 28, 2009. The OFC submitted its position on the act to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, and attended legislative hearings about the bill in the fall. The act will amend FARPA to include the new college under the purview of the OFC. It is expected that the college will be operational in 2012.

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

The OFC has developed communication and outreach plans to ensure that stakeholders and the public understand its mandate and learn about its accomplishments.

In the past year, the commissioner and OFC staff continued to meet with key staff of the regulatory bodies. Many of those regulators have invited the commissioner, executive director and OFC staff to address their members, committees and councils.

Over the fall and winter, the commissioner and executive director met with seven of the ministers who have regulatory bodies under their purview. At each meeting the commissioner updated the minister on the progress being made and areas for improvement.

On March 30, 2010, in Toronto, the commissioner briefed the regulatory bodies about the findings of the OFC's study of applicants' experiences and released *Clearing the Path: Recommendations for Action in Ontario's Professional Licensing System*. This report outlines 17 specific recommendations to ensure that professionals do not face unexpected or unreasonable hurdles to certification in their field. (See pages 14–15 for the recommendations.)

The commissioner and staff have participated in many other meetings, conferences and workshops, including the following:

September 2009

- The commissioner briefed members of the provincial parliament on the activities and progress of OFC.
- The commissioner led a panel discussion entitled "Benefits and Challenges of Legislated Fair Access to Regulated Professions," at the 14th International Metropolis Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- The commissioner met with the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians to report on OFC activities and to outline areas of progress and continued challenges facing applicants to the regulated professions.

October 2009

- The commissioner moderated a session at the Conference Board of Canada's "Leader's Roundtable on Immigration" in Saskatoon.
- The commissioner co-presented an online webinar entitled, "Ensuring Fair Registration Practices," hosted by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR).

November 2009

- The commissioner and staff attended the annual general meeting of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). The commissioner gave the keynote address.
- The commissioner made a presentation on professional registration in recessionary times to the Canadian Association of Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) at their Fall Focus Workshop.

January 2010

- In Windsor, the commissioner met with the Local Immigration Partnership Advisory Committee and the International Health Professionals Steering Committee, to discuss their efforts to improve access to the medical field for internationally trained health professionals and to explain the work of the OFC.

March 2010

- The commissioner spoke at a workshop at the 12th National Metropolis Conference in Montreal, on the subject of the "Deteriorating Economic Outcomes of the Internationally Trained."



| report by ministry

Ontario's regulated professions fall under the jurisdiction of eight ministries (see Appendix 2). The Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists is an exception. Although it is a regulated profession, it does not fall under the purview of a provincial ministry.

Legislation requires the OFC to advise the ministers on issues related to the improvement of the professional registration practices of the regulatory bodies under their jurisdiction.⁵

The following information summarizes the registration-related issues that the OFC monitored during the 2009–10 fiscal year.

The OFC is pleased to report the many positive steps taken by so many regulatory bodies toward making their registration practices more transparent, objective, impartial and fair. Further, many have done good work making information about their practices easier for applicants to find and understand.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

College of Veterinarians of Ontario

In 2009, a legal audit was conducted of the registration practices of the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO). (CVO policy is to have a legal audit every five years of its council and executive and all statutory committees.) As a result of the audit, the CVO will:

- Provide ongoing orientation on conflict of interest issues for newly elected councillors and Registration Committee members, to help them develop awareness of potential conflicts and the resulting serious consequences if a conflict is not declared.

⁵ Section 15(4) of FARPA requires the OFC to structure its annual report so that the implications for each ministry are readily identifiable.

- Include a copy of decisions and reasons from previous cases with similar issues in the meeting packages for the Registration Committee, at least for matters not covered by an existing Registration Committee policy.
- Arrange a seminar for Registration Committee and Accreditation Committee members, on writing explanations of these committees' reasons and decisions. The seminar will be presented by a lawyer specializing in regulatory law.
- Review the college's compliance with FARPA, regarding the following:
 - training staff and committee members to help ensure that hearing procedures comply with FARPA
 - ensuring that third-party providers' procedures comply with FARPA
- Enhance information and services available on the CVO website (e.g., online licence renewal; history of member discipline), as database and website upgrades are completed over the next two to three years.

MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ontario Association of Architects

- **Work Experience:** For the Intern Architect Program, the 940 hours of current experience no longer has to be within specific architectural categories. Instead, the hours need only be in any of the categories, with no specific weighting. This will help applicants complete the requirements for current experience more easily.
- **Fees:** As of 2009, the Canadian Architectural Certification Board does not charge domestic applicants for certifying their education if they graduate from an accredited Canadian educational institute. Those fees are now incorporated into fees paid to the university.
- **Assessments:** The Experience Requirements Committee is using a revised evaluation process that the committee considers to be quantitative and more transparent.

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario

- **Rules for Inactive Files:** Regulation II sets rules for applicants who are certified public accountants (CPAs) from the United States or members of other recognized accounting bodies with which the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario (ICAO) has reciprocal recognition. The regulation was changed so that ICAO can close files of applicants who have been inactive for a long time. These applicants must wait two years before reapplying.
- **Greater Authority for the Registrar:** According to bylaw amendments in February 2009, the Registrar may use discretion on matters that range from recognizing practical experience obtained before registration to granting exemptions from certain requirements. Decisions made under this bylaw are considered by the Applications Committee, and its decision is final.

Professional Engineers Ontario

- **Conducting Hearings:** Although the Registration Committee has always had the authority to conduct pre-hearings, it only began holding pre-hearings in 2009. In some of those pre-hearings, the committee decided that a hearing cannot be conducted until the applicant writes the Professional Practice Examination and the Registrar assesses all of the applicant's registration requirements, including experience. (Previously, if an applicant did not satisfy PEO's academic requirements, then the applicant could request a hearing and trigger the issuing of a Notice of Proposal to Refuse to issue a licence.)
- **Proposed Amendment:** On July 31, 2009, PEO sent proposed changes to O.Reg. 941/90 to the Ministry of the Attorney General. In October, the OFC received a copy of the draft version of the regulation that PEO forwarded to the Legislative Counsel for review. OFC staff noted that PEO did not take into account OFC's recommendation regarding the Canadian experience requirement. (The OFC had previously encouraged PEO to consider alternative options to the 12-month Canadian experience requirement, such as relevant courses that would adequately familiarize the applicant with applicable Canadian codes, regulations and standards for the practice of professional engineering.) As of March 31, 2010, a decision is pending on the draft regulation.

Certified General Accountants of Ontario

- **Assessment of Qualifications (Transfer Credit System):** The process has been improved by implementing processing guidelines, implementing electronic systems, and reorganizing staff. As a result, after receiving all the required documentation, Certified General Accountants of Ontario (CGAO) processes approximately 90 per cent of transfer credit applications within five business days. Also, CGAO communicates more often with applicants during the process.
- **Immigration Status Requirement:** Individuals may now enrol in the CGAO's study program if they hold a valid study visa that does not prohibit attendance or study with a professional association or organization.
- **Resources for Students:** Students enrolled in CGAO for certification have access to two new web-based tools: one provides guidance on how to best use their time and maximize available resources; the other provides academic support for courses.

Law Society of Upper Canada

- **Articling:** The Task Force of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada recommended allowing candidates to apply for an exemption from the Articling Program if they have a common law degree and have practiced law in a common law jurisdiction, with 10 months or more of legal experience in a non-common-law jurisdiction. The Law Society adopted the recommendation. Exempted candidates must take the three-day course on professional conduct and practice in Ontario.

- **National Committee on Accreditation (NCA):** The Federation of Law Societies of Canada made changes to the NCA, including the following:
 - moving from the University of Ottawa to help ensure objectivity
 - hiring new management and staff
 - reducing (to four) the number of standard challenge exams that all applicants must write and pass
 - completely revamping NCA's website to explain more clearly the policies, processes and procedures of the NCA's requirements, evaluations and assessments
- **Paralegals:** Applications to the paralegal profession increased from 333 in 2008 to 551 in 2009. Of these 551 applicants in 2009, 415 became members of the profession in 2009 – a one-year registration rate of 75 per cent.

This profession does not register internationally educated individuals, and 100 per cent of its membership increase in 2009 is attributed to Ontario applicants who became members.

Society of Management Accountants of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** New web-based tools (e.g., micro-sites) improve communication with applicants.
- **Bridging Program:** The Certified Management Accountants (CMA) Accelerated Program, which is the bridging program of CMA Ontario, is now open to mature students.
- **Requirements for Certification:**
 - Wilfrid Laurier University has launched the CMA For MBA Program as another alternate path to the designation.
 - CMA Ontario now accepts Business Application Reports as an alternative to completing practical experience.
 - Applicants must complete their practical experience before certification. This enables CMA Ontario to identify and help individuals sooner if they have difficulty completing this requirement.
- **Exams:** The four exams required during the CMA Accelerated Program can be rewritten an unlimited number of times.
- **Appeals Process:**
 - Applications for reassessment of several CMA exams are sent to unsuccessful candidates only.
 - All appeals are filed via a single email address.
 - The appeals process has been revised: An Appeals Program Advisor has primary responsibility for appeals; weekly appeals meetings are held; and a tracking system highlights any overdue appeals.

- **Resources for Students:**
 - Distance learning options are available to students enrolled in the CMA programs. Also, online video is closed-captioned to help English as a Second Language (ESL) students, and a new ESL tool has been developed for international students enrolled in the CMA Accelerated Program.
 - New materials and a two-day preparation session about implementing International Financial Reporting Standards in Canada have been set up to support exams.
- **Training of Assessors:** Weekly training meetings are arranged with Program Advisors and the Manager, Certification Requirements, to review the processes for evaluating transcripts and practical experience.
- **Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs):** Individuals applying through the MRAs with the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (U.K.) and Certified Public Accountants (Australia) can now have the degree requirement waived if they have completed the required practical experience.

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

College of Early Childhood Educators

The College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) filed its first FRP Report on March 31, 2010. Although the CECE has been active for a short time, it has made the following changes to registration practices in 2009–10:

- **Timelines to Process Applications:** Upgrades to the registry system have reduced the processing time for applications from several months in the first half of 2009 to four-to-six weeks.
- **Fees:** Applicants must now pay the \$75 application fee. The registration fee remains unchanged as of March 31, 2010.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

In 2009, the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) entered into a specific Memorandum of Understanding with World Education Services (WES) regarding international applicants from jurisdictions for which the college lacks enough information to make assessments. The OCSWSSW now absorbs the fees charged by WES for assessing these applicants. The college has informed the affected applicants that they do not have to pay this fee.

The change in registration practices affects both professions.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Ontario College of Teachers

In 2009, the OFC provided advice to the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) regarding the development of their Regulation 271/09, Fair Registration Practices. The regulation was passed in August 2009. The regulation:

- creates guidelines and structures for many OCT registration activities already in place or underway
- ensures that applicants receive clear information about how to apply, what the fees are, what documents are required, how long the process usually takes, and how to appeal decisions

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE

On March 31, 2009, 22 health regulatory colleges were under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Four new colleges were being created that will also fall under this ministry's purview. One, the College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario, established an interim Registrar and a transitional council. The other three are the College of Homeopaths of Ontario, the College of Kinesiologists of Ontario, and the College of Naturopaths of Ontario.

OFC staff are monitoring the new colleges as they organize, to ensure that they plan and implement transparent, objective, impartial and fair registration practices.

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario

- **Mentored Practice:** If applicants have less than two years of professional practice, they must complete six months of mentored practice in Ontario. The college requested that this mentorship be an exception under the AIT, but the request was denied. This means that this requirement must be removed for individuals in other provinces and territories, but not for Ontario graduates or internationally trained individuals.
- **Information to Applicants:** The college updated its application package to provide more detail about its registration practices, including its internal review and appeal process.
- **Fees:** The college has submitted a revised fee bylaw to council, so that all applicants pay the same application fee, whether they graduated from an Ontario program or a program outside of the province.

| OFC staff are monitoring the new colleges as they organize, to ensure that they plan and implement fair registration practices. |

College of Chiropodists of Ontario

- **Exams:** The college is creating its own registration exam, to be completed by the end of 2010 and launched in 2011. The college will review and update the exam for reliability, currency and validity.
- **Scope of Practice:** The college met with the OFC in 2009 to explore changing its scope of practice away from chiropody to podiatry. However, such a scope change is not within the OFC's purview. This issue is under review by the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council.

College of Chiropractors of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** The college expanded the registration information on its website in a section titled "Prospective Members." In this section, applicants can find all information relating to registration requirements, exams and fees.
- **Assessment of Qualifications:** The college rewrote its legislation and ethics exam to more accurately reflect current legislation, regulation, standards of practice, policies and guidelines.
- **Agreements on the Recognition of Qualifications:** The college met with all chiropractic regulatory bodies across Canada to discuss the implications of the AIT. This meeting identified barriers to labour mobility, proposed ways to overcome these barriers, and created consistency and predictability across Canadian jurisdictions.

College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** In December, a separate application package was developed for registrants/licensees of other Canadian jurisdictions, due to the OLMA. Also, more information about the clinical competency evaluation was posted on the college website, including all the forms required for the client's oral health care. Candidates for the evaluation can download the application form. These changes ease the registration process.
- **Fees:** The fee for the clinical competency evaluation increased from \$350 to \$500. Graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs must successfully complete this evaluation. The fee increase reflected the increased cost of conducting the clinical evaluations due to the increase in the number of candidates.

| The Royal College of Dental Surgeons worked on a national process to streamline the assessment of internationally trained general dentists. |

- **Internal Review or Appeal Processes:** The Registration Committee amended its appeal procedures for the clinical competency evaluation. The committee now only conducts formal reviews of the evaluation results. Before the change, a panel of the committee conducted an informal assessment. With the increase in candidates for the evaluation and the high failure rate, informal reviews became impractical and delayed a candidate from appealing directly to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board if he or she was not satisfied with the informal decision.

Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario

The college worked on a national process to streamline the assessment of internationally trained general dentists. Starting in spring 2010, dentists trained outside Canada have two routes to get their licences. The first is to complete the existing two-year program, and the second is to prove competency through a series of examinations and assessments ending in a national examination.

The new path will take approximately one year but requires only a few weeks over the one-year period. The cost will be considerably less than the two-year program.

College of Dental Technologists of Ontario

The College of Dental Technologists of Ontario (CDTO) has proposed the following changes to its regulations:

- **Practical Training:** In December 2009, Council revised and approved proposed regulation amendments and forwarded them to the OFC. The OFC has reviewed them and given feedback. Proposed amendments include removing the requirement for 1950 hours of practical training. This change eliminates the need for Canadian experience, which is often difficult for internationally trained individuals to get, and helps streamline the CDTO's registration practices.
- **OLMA:** An amendment has been proposed that would permit qualified applicants from across Canada to more easily obtain their licence with the CDTO. This would help the CDTO meet the requirements of OLMA.

College of Denturists of Ontario

The college is updating its registration regulations to ensure conformity with the AIT and OLMA. The Registration Committee is currently considering these updates.

College of Dietitians of Ontario

- **Registration:** The college is changing its registration regulation to accommodate the AIT and OLMA. Registration practices have already been changed to comply. As a result, applicants who have been registered in other provinces, including Quebec, are no longer required to undergo further assessment, other than verification of registration and good standing with another provincial regulatory body.
- **Classes of Certificate:** The college is considering the addition of four new classes of certificate, which include a “provisional class” that would allow applicants to practise in areas of demonstrated competence while completing further training.
- **Assessing Education and Experience:** The college is looking into ways to better assess and acknowledge dietitians’ previous education and work experience.
- **Exams:** The college is considering providing temporary members with the opportunity to rewrite their registration examination a second time if necessary before revoking their temporary membership. This will allow them to maintain their employment while preparing to rewrite the registration examination.
- **Practical Training Requirement:** Applicants who have not completed an accredited internship, practicum or practical training sometimes choose to organize a practical training experience that may be deemed to be equivalent to an accredited internship. This is called an Individualized Practicum option. The college now provides an Individualized Practicum Guide, to educate both the applicant and potential supervisors and advisors about what is involved in this process and what the expectations are. The college has also developed two forms to help applicants plan the practicum and to guide the documentation of the practicum that they must submit to the college.

College of Homeopaths of Ontario

No report at this time.

College of Kinesiologists of Ontario

No report at this time.

College of Massage Therapists of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** In 2009, The college updated its documents to reflect fee changes and to make the requirements for registration clearer.
- **Training:** In 2009, a cultural diversity workshop was offered to staff.

College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario

- **Registration Practices:** As a result of both an internal review and an external audit of registration practices, the college's registration panels will meet by teleconference to reduce the time required to make registration decisions and communicate them to applicants. The review and audit each confirmed that the college is meeting or exceeding established timelines and customer service standards.
- **Assessments and Exams:** The college signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science, the national third-party organization that conducts the college's prior learning assessments and administers the national competency examination. The MOU states that assessments must comply with fair access legislation.

College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario

- **Tracking Status:** The college developed a system to track the status of registration applications and decisions. The system helps the college evaluate the effectiveness of its processes, address the timeliness of its decision-making, and assess adherence to existing timelines.
- **Language Proficiency:** The college completed a research project funded by Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to evaluate the college's language proficiency requirements for internationally trained applicants. The purpose was to ensure that the requirements correspond to the language level that is actually needed to practise in the profession. As a result of the project, the college increased the number of tests accepted to demonstrate language proficiency from one to three and it validated the scores applicants must get to meet the requirement. The three tests are Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and Michener English Language Assessment (MELA).
- **Exam:** The college's competency examination is administered by the national body, the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT). CAMRT added information to the Certification Examination Preparation Guide and developed an online practice exam.

| The College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario increased the number of tests accepted to demonstrate language proficiency. |

College of Midwives of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** The College of Midwives of Ontario (CMO) has taken measures to provide better registration information for applicants. The CMO reviewed its website with a communications consultant to ensure that the information is clear, accessible and comprehensive. The Becoming Registered pages have been updated and are now easier to navigate. All of the policies, guidelines, standards and statements in the Registrant's Binder have been added to the website. Regular email updates are available to applicants upon request.
Also, the CMO shortened the time (from 21 to 14 days) needed to respond to applicants about either of the following:
 - the completion of their applications
 - the completion of referrals of applications to the Registration Committee
- **Staff Training:** A Reasons and Decision-Writing workshop has been introduced for CMO staff involved in the registration decision-making process.
- **AIT:** In accordance with the AIT, if midwives in good standing from a province where midwifery is regulated apply to become midwives in Ontario, they will be issued an Ontario licence.
- **Registration Amendments:** Registration amendments proposed in 1999 and 2006, including the implementation of a registration examination, were still under review by the ministry as of March 31, 2010.

College of Naturopaths of Ontario

No report at this time.

College of Nurses of Ontario

- **Fair Access:** In summer 2009, the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) informed the OFC of new initiatives that would enhance fair access, such as reorganizing certain aspects of the registration process to speed up communication with applicants, and harmonizing the language requirements with other jurisdictions across Canada. The CNO had a followup meeting with the OFC in October 2009 and is preparing a draft of changes to its registration regulations.

| The College of Midwives of Ontario reviewed its website with a communications consultant to ensure that the information is clear, accessible and comprehensive. |

- **Information to Applicants:** Online information and communication to applicants were updated to reflect the OLMA.

Also, when applicants' programs are deemed not equivalent to a current Ontario nursing program, reasons given are now more detailed and specify which competencies are insufficient or lacking. This change has not affected the timeline for issuing Registration Committee decisions, but makes the practice more transparent.

- **Assessment of Qualifications:** New roles have been created to support the Entry-to-Practice team, which reviews program content after the program's level (diploma or degree) has been determined. These new roles include an assessor with a nursing academic background. The objective is to strengthen the assessment of programs and establish equivalency to Ontario programs based on competencies. CNO also revised the document that applicants must complete to demonstrate their competencies when their program is not considered equivalent to an Ontario program. The revisions make the document clearer and more user-friendly.
- **Language Requirement:** CNO is leading a national language benchmarking project for harmonizing requirements for language fluency across Canada. This project is ongoing.

College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** To improve transparency and information to applicants, the college posted its registration policies on its website.

Also, the college collaborated with HealthForceOntario (HFO) for the first time to hold information sessions for internationally educated occupational therapists. The sessions provide information about the registration process in Ontario and inform internationally trained individuals about the help HFO offers for access to the profession.

| The College of Nurses of Ontario is leading a national language benchmarking project for harmonizing requirements for language fluency across Canada. |

- **Exams:** In 2009, the college signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), the third party that sets and administers the college's competency examination. The MOU sets out the service relationship between the college and the CAOT, including CAOT's obligations surrounding fairness, transparency, objectivity and impartiality.
- **AIT:** As a result of the AIT, applicants who are registered in good standing in another Canadian jurisdiction will be registered in Ontario.

College of Opticians of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** The college is planning to develop and publish policies very soon that deal with issues such as timelines, response times, and alternatives to documentation. The policies will be posted on the college's website.

In addition, the college plans to revamp the registration content on the website. More information will be made accessible to users, including new forms and guides. The college will review the site for clarity and ease of use.

The Registration Committee continues to deal with applications (especially from internationally educated applicants) via electronic/email meetings. This has shortened timelines, since the applicants do not have to wait until the next committee meeting.

The college has noted that application processing time is now three weeks rather than six-to-eight weeks. The college intends to communicate the shorter timelines to its Ontario-based and MRA applicants.

- **Access to Records:** The college will soon develop a policy for informing applicants about their right to access their records. The policy will be posted on the website, and will be included in the written communication with applicants.
- **Internal Review or Appeal Processes:** Many improvements have been made in 2010. The 2010 Registration Committee has five members to handle all registration matters and act as decision-makers, and an independent Registration Appeals Panel has two optician members and one public member. The panel will meet only when there is a request for an internal review/appeal from a registration decision. All eight committee and panel members will receive detailed orientation and training at the beginning of the year.

The process for internal appeals/reviews will be formalized in a policy, and timelines will be determined. This new information, including the option to make formal submissions to the Registration Appeals Panel, will be communicated to all applicants at the beginning and other stages of the process. The information will also be posted on the website.

College of Optometrists of Ontario

- **Website Review:** The college reviewed, revised and reorganized its website, including registration information, application packages and frequently asked questions (FAQs), to ensure information is complete, easy to find and easy to understand.
- **Resource Binder:** The Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Resource Binder was reviewed and revised to include more information about the college's role and structure, as well as a plain language summary of key points in each piece of legislation applicable to the profession. The binder is now available on the website.

Ontario College of Pharmacists

- **Resources for Applicants:** The Structured Practical Training (SPT) manuals were updated and made available on the college's website. Specific forms required as part of the SPT program were also added to the website.
- **Third-Party Assessment:** The college began discussion with the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) to develop a formalized agreement to ensure that PEBC's assessment practices meet the college's obligations under the RHPA. The college has also submitted proposed regulation changes to government regarding some of the registration practices related to the college's relationship with PEBC. Once approved, the college will finish formalizing an agreement with PEBC.
- **Training:** A new advanced preceptor workshop was offered to help preceptors understand how to support and evaluate students/interns.

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

- **Registration Processes:**
 - The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) introduced two routes to CFPC certification without examination – one for family physicians with an established practice in Canada, and the other for graduates of family medicine training systems in international jurisdictions recognized by the CFPC. Late in 2009, the CPSO passed a new registration policy recognizing these two new routes. The CPSO posted information relating to this policy on its website in December. Applications under this policy will start arriving in 2010.

| The College of Optometrists of Ontario reviewed, revised and reorganized its website. |

- The CPSO began to use the credential-sharing services offered by the Physician Credentials Registry of Canada (PCRC). The CPSO began by accepting shared verifications from PCRC on behalf of the International Medical Graduate applicants who had previously completed the PCRC process. Applicants who were able to take advantage of this option saved the time and expense of having to reverify certain credentials.
- **Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs):**
 - The Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC), which consists of the CPSO and all the other provincial and territorial medical regulatory authorities in Canada, began work on a new national registration standards agreement: the FMRAC Agreement on National Standards. It will supersede the 2001 MRA and will ensure uniformity of registration standards and promote physician mobility.
 - The new RHPA amendments associated with OLMA state that physicians holding an out-of-province licence may apply to the CPSO for an equivalent class of certificate in Ontario without additional examinations, assessments, training or experience. These amendments were passed too late in the year to have any practical effect on CPSO registration in 2009. However, in 2010 new streams of applicants will enter based solely on out-of-province licences.
 - The CPSO entered into an MRA with the medical regulatory authority in Quebec, the *Collège des médecins du Québec* (CMQ). Under this agreement the CPSO and CMQ recognize one another's qualifications for independent practice. Physicians must still apply for a licence and complete credentialing requirements, but the agreement enables a more streamlined credentialing process. The CPSO–CMQ agreement marks the first such province-to-province MRA entered into by the CPSO.

College of Physiotherapists of Ontario

- **Information for Applicants:** The college continues to review the information given to new applicants. HealthForceOntario presentations have become a regular feature, occurring approximately every six months (or as requested).
- **Bridging Program:** The Ryerson Bridging Program for internationally educated physiotherapists was launched in January 2009.

| The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario entered into a Mutual Recognition Agreement with the medical regulatory authority in Quebec, enabling a more streamlined credentialing process. |

College of Psychologists of Ontario

- **Information to Applicants:** The college is improving its systems for tracking applicants' progress and for communicating with applicants. This will help ensure timely and more efficient communications. The college also now provides detailed, written reasons to applicants when it communicates registration decisions.
- **Registration Committee:** The committee now includes an internationally educated member.
- **AIT:** In response to the AIT, the college has started consultation on amendments to its registration regulations.

College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

No report at this time.

College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario

- **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA):** Internationally educated applicants have had difficulty entering the respiratory therapy profession through the PLA program. The College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario (CRTC) has begun a gap analysis project to better identify the learning needs of these applicants. The PLA process and accompanying bridging program have been put on hold until the project is complete. The CRTC will then redesign the PLA process and bridging program, to make them more fair, feasible, efficient and accessible.
- **Evaluation of Credentials:** In February 2009, the CRTC introduced a new policy that requires all applicants who obtained their education in respiratory therapy (or a related field) outside of Canada to have their academic qualifications verified by World Education Services (WES). WES will authenticate the documents and prepare a course-by-course evaluation report for the CRTC.
- **Information to Applicants:** The CRTC developed a new application form and guide, which provide a detailed explanation of the registration process. These are posted on the CRTC website.

College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario

No report at this time.

| The Ryerson Bridging Program for internationally educated physiotherapists was launched in January 2009. |

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Ontario Professional Foresters Association⁶

In December 2009, the Professional Foresters Act, 2000, was amended to allow for a bylaw to set out internal appeal procedures. The formal adoption of an internal appeal procedures bylaw is expected by September 2010. Once approved, the Ontario Professional Foresters Association will put information about the internal appeals process on its website to make it more accessible to applicants.

Association of Ontario Land Surveyors

- **Assessment:** Through a grant from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors (AOLS) is developing alternative ways to assess candidates who cannot provide acceptable documentation and course descriptions. The AOLS is proposing to use a prior learning assessment to evaluate such candidates and to form learning contracts with candidates who may require only certain parts of particular courses. The missing competencies may be obtained through means other than complete university courses, such as through home study and a test, or participation in certain portions of a modularized course. This project is still in progress.
- **AIT and OLMA:** The AOLS has aligned its practices with the AIT and OLMA. Applicants who are licensed in another Canadian jurisdiction only need to pass a four-hour written exam on local jurisprudence in order to get a licence to practice in Ontario.

MINISTRY OF NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT, MINES AND FORESTRY

Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario

- **Registration Process:** Applicants to the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario (APGO) can now complete the registration application and pay all application fees online. An automated notice of receipt of the application is emailed to the applicant immediately. These online services help simplify and streamline the APGO's registration process.

| Applicants to the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Ontario can now complete the registration application and pay all application fees online. |

⁶ In 2009, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines was renamed the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. This did not, however, change the status of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association, which still falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

- **Assessing Academic Equivalency:** The APGO relies on the academic equivalency assessments of World Education Services (WES). WES and the APGO have created a third-party agreement that states the criteria for contacting applicants, as well as timelines for evaluating credentials after all necessary documentation has been received.
- **Information to Applicants:** The website links, information and resources pertaining to the registration process were updated throughout 2009.

NO MINISTRY AFFILIATION

Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists

- **Information to Applicants:** The Institute of Engineering Technology of Ontario (IETO) is the section of the Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists (OACETT) that is responsible for certification. IETO has accepted a more detailed Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) program for implementation. Implementation will occur as soon as IETO finalizes an applicant self-assessment using the new standard, the National Technology Benchmarks (NTB). OACETT, along with its sister organizations across the country, is working on processes for using the NTB for evaluating applicants. PLAR and the use of the NTB for certification will be officially introduced together. However, since PLAR has been approved, if applicants cannot provide the necessary documents for reasons beyond their control, OACETT can offer them a PLAR review.
- **Fees:** In 2009, OACETT raised associate member dues to match certified member dues, over three years. In 2009 the associate member dues rose to \$174.74 (GST included), from \$158.85 in 2008. There were two primary reasons for this increase. First, most of the costs associated with file reviews and the corresponding customer service are on behalf of associate members. Second, associate members enjoy virtually the same benefits as certified members.
- **Board Composition:** The IETO board composition changed from 12 in the 2008–2009 term to 10 in the 2009–2010 term, due to a reduction in the number of non-elected members. Bylaw 18 allows the board to have a maximum of five of these special-interest appointees. The term of appointment is for two years beginning in June 2009.
- **Training:** OACETT has introduced cultural awareness training for the Admissions Committee (AC), and will extend the training to all the remaining AC members and to the IETO board members. Staff have already been trained.



statistical snapshot of the regulated professions

The numbers in this section of the report derive from the 2009 Fair Registration Practices Reports filed with the OFC by the 35 regulatory bodies that were registering members during the 2009 calendar year.

In 2009, Ontario's regulated professions had 748,958 members. This is an increase of 41,240 from last year's total of 707,718 members. More than half of the new members belong to the new College of Early Childhood Educators. See Figure 1 for a breakdown of members by profession and where they received their training.

Following are the 10 largest regulated professions by number of members, listed from largest to smallest (see Figure 2):

1. teachers
2. nurses
3. engineers
4. lawyers (including paralegals)
5. physicians and surgeons
6. chartered accountants
7. early childhood educators
8. general accountants
9. management accountants
10. engineering technicians and technologists

Together, these 10 groups accounted for 87 per cent of the 748,958 regulated professionals in the province, with teachers and nurses alone accounting for over 50 per cent of that number.

| In 2009, Ontario's regulated professions had 748,958 members. This is an increase of 41,240. More than half of the new members belong to the new College of Early Childhood Educators. |

Figure 1. Members in OFC-Monitored Professions, 2009, and Where They Received Their Training

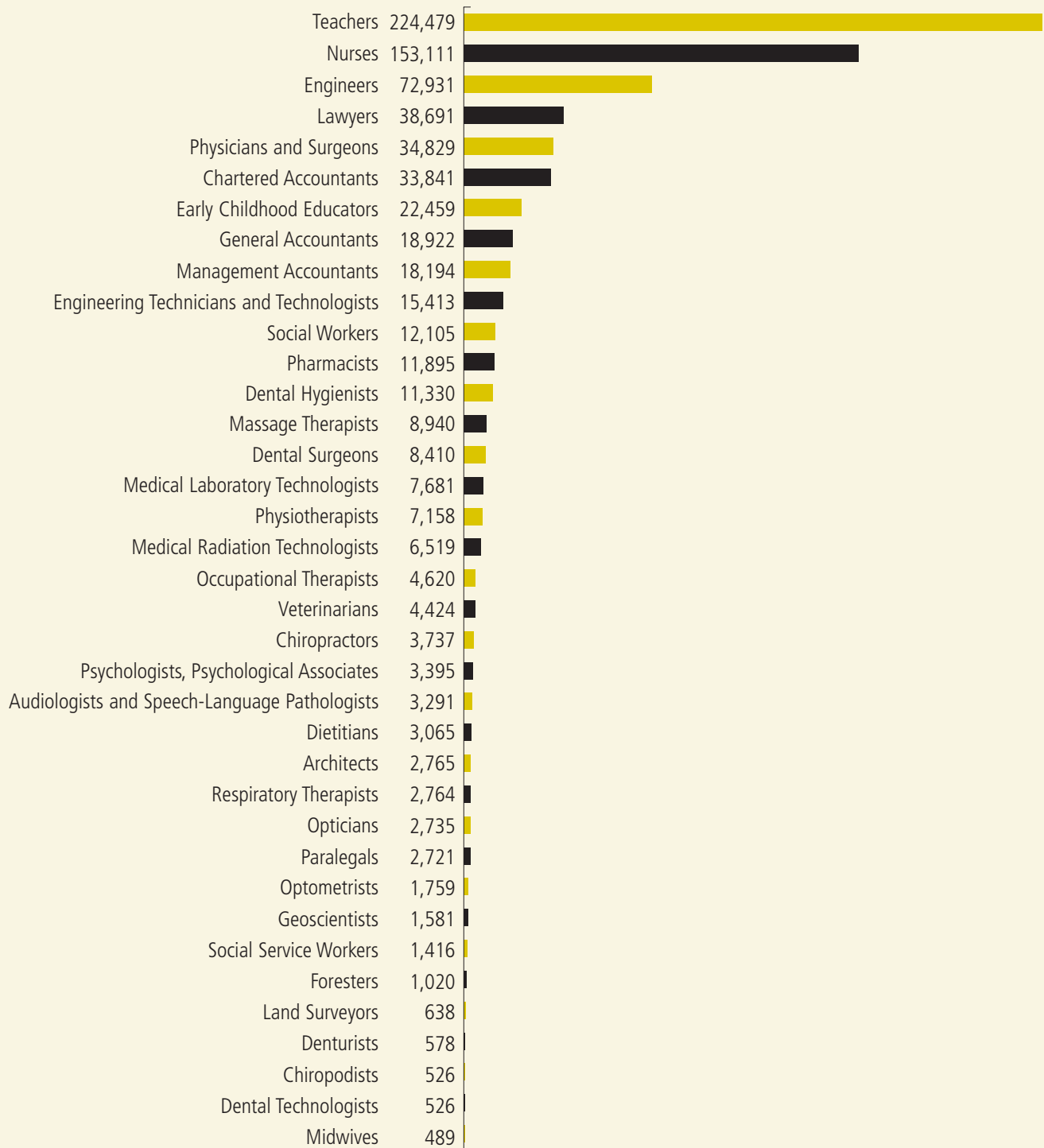
Profession	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	International	Unknown	TOTAL	Proportion of Internationally Trained Members (includes USA)
Architects	1,411	552	778	24	2,765	28%
Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists	1,610	504	1,151	26	3,291	35%
Chartered Accountants	29,143	3,085	1,613	N/A	33,841	5%
Chiropodists	411	0	115	0	526	22%
Chiropractors	2,677	3	1,057	0	3,737	28%
Dental Hygienists	10,179	367	784	0	11,330	7%
Dental Surgeons	5,072	1,146	2,192	0	8,410	26%
Dental Technologists	212	12	142	160	526	27%
Denturists	534	9	35	0	578	6%
Dietitians	2,130	733	202	0	3,065	7%
Early Childhood Educators	21,402	147	N/A	910	22,459	N/A
Engineering Technicians and Technologists	11,878	566	2,969	0	15,413	19%
Engineers	42,785	9,889	18,559	1,698	72,931	25%
Foresters	809	163	39	9	1,020	4%
General Accountants ¹	15,571	63	1,570	1,718	18,922	8%
Geoscientists	964	296	318	3	1,581	20%
Land Surveyors	N/A	N/A	N/A	638	638	N/A
Lawyers ²	36,834	1,318	539	N/A	38,691	1%
Management Accountants	11,724	1,475	1,584	3,411	18,194	9%
Massage Therapists	8,825	64	51	0	8,940	0.6%
Medical Laboratory Technologists	5,106	342	996	1,237	7,681	13%
Medical Radiation Technologists	5,664	394	461	0	6,519	7%
Midwives	381	3	85	20	489	17%
Nurses	132,625	4,315	15,514	657	153,111	10%
Occupational Therapists	3,700	450	470	0	4,620	10%
Opticians	2,404	238	40	53	2,735	1%
Optometrists	1,288	47	424	0	1,759	24%
Paralegals ²	2,721	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,721	N/A
Pharmacists	5,572	1,870	4,453	0	11,895	37%
Physicians and Surgeons	18,782	6,320	9,727	0	34,829	28%
Physiotherapists	5,001	813	1,344	0	7,158	19%
Psychologists, Psychological Associates	2,331	418	646	0	3,395	19%
Respiratory Therapists	2,494	200	70	0	2,764	3%
Social Service Workers ²	1,380	N/A	36	0	1,416	3%
Social Workers ²	10,804	N/A	1,226	75	12,105	10%
Teachers	177,538	13,221	33,720	0	224,479	15%
Veterinarians	3,374	357	693	N/A	4,424	16%
Total	585,336	49,380	103,603	10,639	748,958	

N/A = not available

¹ The Certified General Accountants of Ontario's data collection procedures only began to distinguish between Ontario and other Canadian provinces (as the location of applicants' training) on June 1, 2007.

² The Law Society of Upper Canada regulates paralegals as well as lawyers, and the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers regulates the two groups represented in its name. Because these two regulatory bodies have different registration practices for each of the groups under their authority, they each filed two separate Fair Practices Reports. For that reason, numbers for the two groups are reported separately in this table and in Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2. Membership in OFC-Monitored Professions, by Profession, 2009



Following are the 10 professions with the highest number of internationally trained members, listed from largest to smallest number of internationally trained members (see Figure 3):

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. teachers | 6. engineering technicians and technologists |
| 2. engineers | 7. dental surgeons |
| 3. nurses | 8. chartered accountants |
| 4. physicians and surgeons | 9. management accountants |
| 5. pharmacists | 10. general accountants |

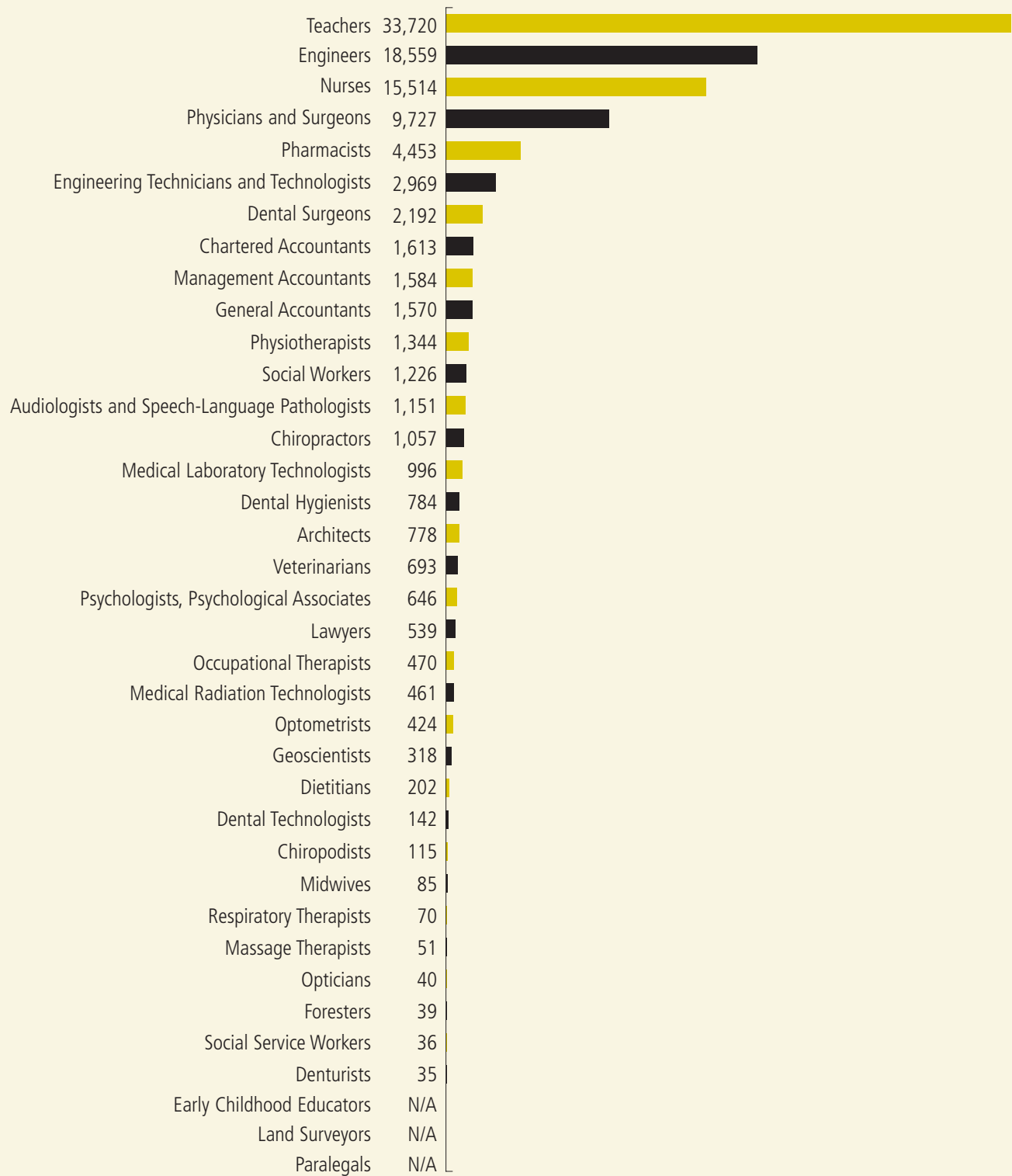
Not all professions keep track of where their members were trained⁷, but of those that do, the percentage of their membership that was internationally trained varied widely, from 0.6 per cent to 37 per cent (see Figure 1).

In 2009, the 10 professions with the highest proportion of internationally trained members were as follows:

- pharmacists (37%)
- audiologists and speech-language pathologists (35%)
- architects (28%)
- chiropractors (28%; tied with architects and physicians and surgeons)
- physicians and surgeons (28%; tied with architects and chiropractors)
- dental technologists (27%)
- dental surgeons (26%)
- engineers (25%)
- optometrists (24%)
- chiropodists (22%)

⁷ Only regulated professions that keep track of where their members were initially trained appear in the preceding list and in all text that refers to internationally trained members. The three professions that do not keep track of this information are the College of Early Childhood Educators, the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, and Paralegals.

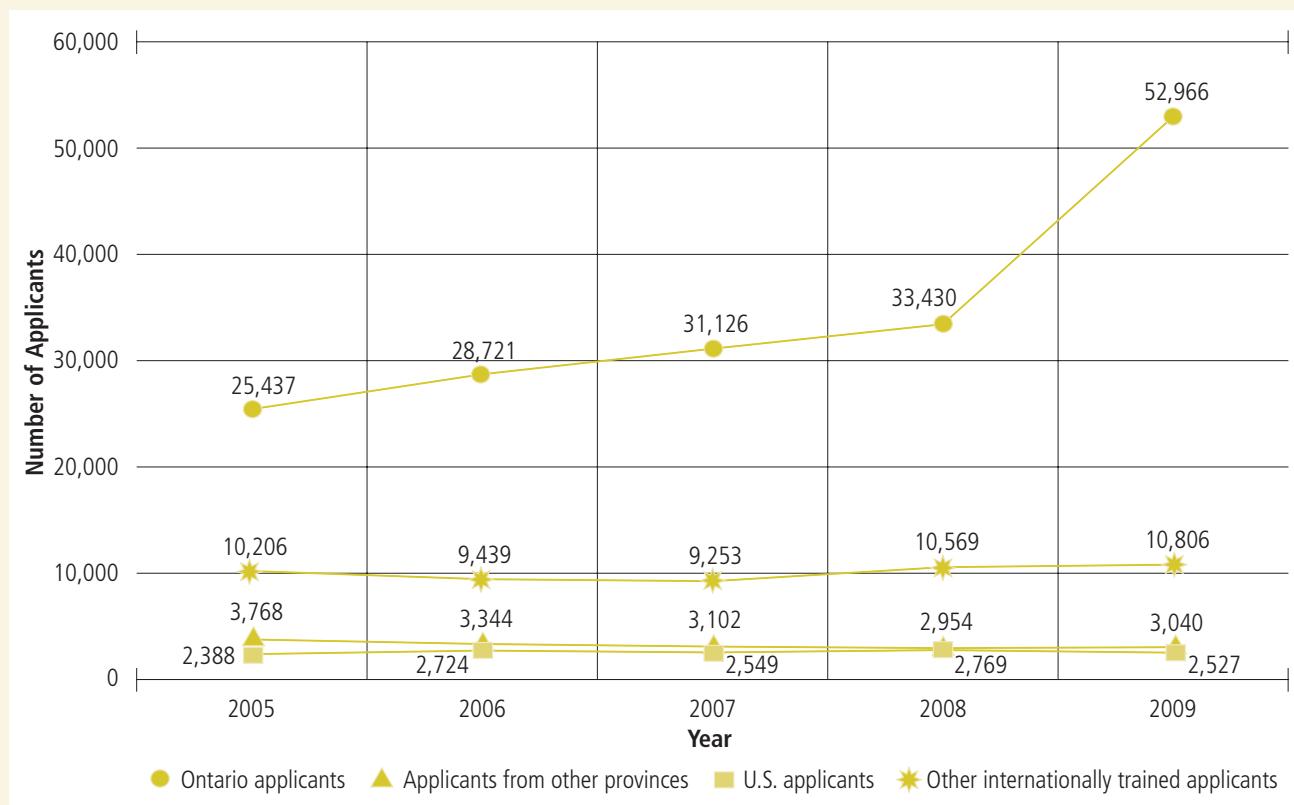
Figure 3. Internationally Trained Members in OFC-Monitored Professions, by Profession, 2009



Since 2007, the number of applications from internationally trained individuals, excluding those trained in the United States, has continued to rise slightly. The number of applicants from the United States has remained static. (See Figure 4.)

Note: 2009 was the first year that the new College of Early Childhood Educators accepted new membership applications. This accounts for the apparent sharp increase for the Ontario numbers in Figure 4.

Figure 4. New Applicants to OFC-Monitored Professions by Year, 2005–09¹



¹ The numbers in this figure do not include applicants whose training location is unknown.

Since 2007, the number of applications from internationally trained individuals, excluding those trained in the United States, has continued to rise slightly.

Again in 2009, India ranked first or second as the source country for seven out of the top 10 professions that have internationally trained applicants. (See Figure 5.) Overall, India and the United States were source countries for 33 of 35 regulatory bodies under the purview of the OFC.

Figure 5. The Top Five Source Countries for Internationally Trained Applicants in Ontario's 10 Largest Professions, 2009

Professions (in descending order of number of internationally trained applicants)	Country Where Training Was Received				
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Teachers	U.S.	Australia	India	Scotland	New Zealand
Nurses	Philippines	India	Nigeria	China	U.K.
General Accountants	India	China	U.S.	Pakistan	Philippines
Engineers	India	China	Iran	Pakistan	Bangladesh
Physicians and Surgeons	India	S Arabia	U.K.	Ireland	Pakistan
Management Accountants	Philippines	U.S.	India	China	Pakistan
Engineering Technicians and Technologists	India	Philippines	Pakistan	China	Russia
Pharmacists	Egypt	India	Philippines	Pakistan	U.K.
Social Workers	U.S.	India	U.K.	Pakistan	Philippines
Lawyers	U.S.	U.K.	Australia	India	Nigeria

Again in 2009, India ranked first or second as the source country for seven out of the top 10 professions that have internationally trained applicants.



looking ahead

The 2009–10 year marks the end of the OFC's startup and research phase, and the beginning of a concentration on continuous improvement. Regulators have provided a rich source of information about their registration practices over the last three years. This is the foundation for the OFC's coming activity.

During 2010–11, the OFC will focus on three major activities:

- **Monitoring implementation of its recommendations for action:** The OFC will monitor activities related to the commissioner's 17 recommendations in *Clearing the Path: Recommendations for Action in Ontario's Professional Licensing System*. (See the recommendations on pages 14–15.)
- **Developing the compliance strategy:** The OFC will complete the compliance strategy – an overall registration assessment regime that will incorporate information from FRP Reports, Audit Reports and Entry-to-Practice Reviews.
- **Reducing the reporting burden on regulators:** In their 2010 FRP Reports, regulatory bodies will only be required to provide 2010 data about their staff, applicants, and members; the language of their application materials; and the numbers of reviews/appeals and applications they processed. They may optionally provide information about changes they have made in their registration practices in 2010. They must also submit an Entry-to-Practice Review by March 1, 2011. This review will cover the following:
 - costs to applicants for all aspects of the registration process
 - the timeliness of the assessment and decision-making processes
 - when applicable, requirements for practical training and/or work experience

This shift in emphasis, from information gathering to continuous improvement, will enable the office to focus on what is most important – working hand-in-hand with regulators to make registration fairer for their applicants.

financial statements



Clarkson Rouble LLP
Chartered Accountants

Auditors' Report

To the Fairness Commissioner

We have audited the balance sheet of the **Office of the Fairness Commissioner** as at **March 31, 2010** and the statements of operations and operating surplus and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Office's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Office as at **March 31, 2010** and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Mississauga, Ontario
April 9, 2010

Clarkson Rouble LLP

Clarkson Rouble LLP
Chartered Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

balance sheet

As at March 31

	2010	2009
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$ 83,386	\$ 113,510
Accounts receivable	7,778	6,217
Prepaid expenses	33,938	15,858
	125,102	135,585
Capital assets (Note 3)	20,657	32,035
	\$ 145,759	\$ 167,620
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 28,971	\$ 56,573
Surplus		
Operating	116,788	111,047
	\$ 145,759	\$ 167,620

On behalf of the Office:



Commissioner

statement of operations and operating surplus

Year Ended March 31

	2010	2009
Revenues		
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration	\$ 1,689,900	\$ 1,739,900
Interest income	849	12,873
	1,690,749	1,752,773
Expenses		
Salaries, wages and benefits	1,084,310	994,155
Services	436,929	563,672
Office administration	108,080	126,409
Transportation and communications	41,932	53,076
Amortization	13,757	13,280
	1,685,008	1,750,592
Excess of revenues over expenses	5,741	2,181
Operating surplus, beginning of year	111,047	108,866
Operating surplus, end of year	\$ 116,788	\$ 111,047

statement of cash flows

Year Ended March 31

	2010	2009
Operating activities		
Excess of revenues over expenses for the year	\$ 5,741	\$ 2,181
Items not requiring an outlay of cash		
Amortization	13,757	13,280
	19,498	15,461
Net change in working capital items		
Operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	(1,561)	(5,753)
Prepaid expenses	(18,080)	(15,222)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(27,602)	411
Decrease from operating activities	(27,745)	(5,103)
Investing activity		
Purchase of capital assets	(2,379)	(12,404)
Decrease in cash	(30,124)	(17,507)
Cash, beginning of year	113,510	131,017
Cash, end of year	\$ 83,386	\$ 113,510
Represented by:		
Cash	\$ 83,386	\$ 113,510

notes to financial statements

March 31, 2010

1. Purpose of the Office

The Office of the Fairness Commissioner is responsible for assessing the registration practices of certain regulated professions. Its purpose is to make sure these practices are transparent, objective, impartial and fair for anyone applying to practice his or her profession in Ontario.

2. Significant accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Significant accounting policies followed in the preparation of these financial statements are:

a) Cash and short term investments

Cash and short term investments consist of cash on hand, current bank accounts, and short-term investments, with redemptions within 90 days of the year end.

b) Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost less accumulated amortization. Amortization is calculated on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets, as follows:

Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Computer equipment	3 years

c) Revenues

Funds provided by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration are recognized in the year in which they are received.

d) Management estimates

The presentation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities as at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the reported period. Actual amounts could differ from these estimates.

3. Capital assets

Capital assets consists of the following:

			2010	2009
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Furniture and fixtures	\$ 43,060	\$ 22,403	\$ 20,657	\$ 26,890
Computer equipment	15,433	15,433	–	5,145
	\$ 58,493	\$ 37,836	\$ 20,657	\$ 32,035

4. Financial instruments

The organization has evaluated the fair value of its financial instruments based on the current interest rate environment, market values and the actual prices of financial instruments with similar terms. The carrying value of financial instruments is considered to approximate fair value.

appendix 1: list of regulatory bodies

Ontario Association of **Architects**
College of **Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists** of Ontario
Institute of **Chartered Accountants** of Ontario
College of **Chiropodists** of Ontario
College of **Chiropractors** of Ontario
College of **Dental Hygienists** of Ontario
Royal College of **Dental Surgeons** of Ontario
College of **Dental Technologists** of Ontario
College of **Denturists** of Ontario
College of **Dietitians** of Ontario
College of **Early Childhood Educators**
Ontario Association of Certified **Engineering Technicians and Technologists**
Professional **Engineers** Ontario
Ontario Professional **Foresters** Association
Certified **General Accountants** of Ontario
Association of Professional **Geoscientists** of Ontario
College of **Homeopaths** of Ontario
College of **Kinesiologists** of Ontario
Association of Ontario **Land Surveyors**
Law Society of Upper Canada
Society of **Management Accountants** of Ontario

College of **Massage Therapists** of Ontario
College of **Medical Laboratory Technologists** of Ontario
College of **Medical Radiation Technologists** of Ontario
College of **Midwives** of Ontario
College of **Naturopaths** of Ontario
College of **Nurses** of Ontario
College of **Occupational Therapists** of Ontario
College of **Opticians** of Ontario
College of **Optometrists** of Ontario
Ontario College of **Pharmacists**
College of **Physicians and Surgeons** of Ontario
College of **Physiotherapists** of Ontario
College of **Psychologists** of Ontario
College of **Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists** of Ontario
College of **Respiratory Therapists** of Ontario
Ontario College of **Social Workers and Social Service Workers**
Ontario College of **Teachers**
College of **Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists** of Ontario
College of **Veterinarians** of Ontario

appendix 2: list of regulatory bodies by ministry

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

College of **Veterinarians** of Ontario

MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ontario Association of **Architects**

Institute of **Chartered Accountants** of Ontario

Professional **Engineers** Ontario

Certified **General Accountants** of Ontario

Law Society of Upper Canada

Society of **Management Accountants** of Ontario

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

College of **Early Childhood Educators**

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Ontario College of **Social Workers and Social Service Workers**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Ontario College of **Teachers**

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE

College of **Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists** of Ontario

College of **Chiropractors** of Ontario

College of **Chiropractors** of Ontario

College of **Dental Hygienists** of Ontario

Royal College of **Dental Surgeons** of Ontario

College of **Dental Technologists** of Ontario

College of **Denturists** of Ontario

College of **Dietitians** of Ontario

College of **Homeopaths** of Ontario

College of **Kinesiologists** of Ontario

College of **Massage Therapists** of Ontario

College of **Medical Laboratory Technologists** of Ontario

College of **Medical Radiation Technologists** of Ontario

College of **Midwives** of Ontario

College of **Naturopaths** of Ontario

College of **Nurses** of Ontario

College of **Occupational Therapists** of Ontario

College of **Opticians** of Ontario

College of **Optometrists** of Ontario

Ontario College of **Pharmacists**

College of **Physicians and Surgeons** of Ontario

College of **Physiotherapists** of Ontario

College of **Psychologists** of Ontario

College of **Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists** of Ontario

College of **Respiratory Therapists** of Ontario

College of **Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists** of Ontario

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Ontario Professional **Foresters** Association
Association of Ontario **Land Surveyors**

MINISTRY OF NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT, MINES AND FORESTRY

Association of Professional **Geoscientists** of Ontario

NO MINISTRY AFFILIATION

Ontario Association of Certified **Engineering Technicians and Technologists**

appendix 3: abbreviations in this report

Following is a list of some of the more frequently used acronyms and initialisms in this report. It does not include the regulatory bodies listed in Appendices 1 and 2.

AIT	Agreement on Internal Trade
FARPA	Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006
FRP Reports	Fair Registration Practices Reports
HPPC	Health Professions Procedural Code. This is in Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA), 1991.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRA	Mutual Recognition Agreement
OFC	Office of the Fairness Commissioner
OLMA	Ontario Labour Mobility Act, 2009
RHPA	Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991