



# CHARTING NEW TERRITORY

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Serving member agents since 1994



Association of Alberta  
**REGISTRY AGENTS**

[www.aara.ca](http://www.aara.ca)

**AT THE ASSOCIATION OF  
ALBERTA REGISTRY AGENTS,  
WE'RE CHARTING NEW  
TERRITORY.**

**OUR MEMBERS ARE  
ENTREPRENEURS COMMITTED TO**

Embracing new technologies

Exploring new products

Propelling customer service to  
new levels

Adapting to the needs of Albertans



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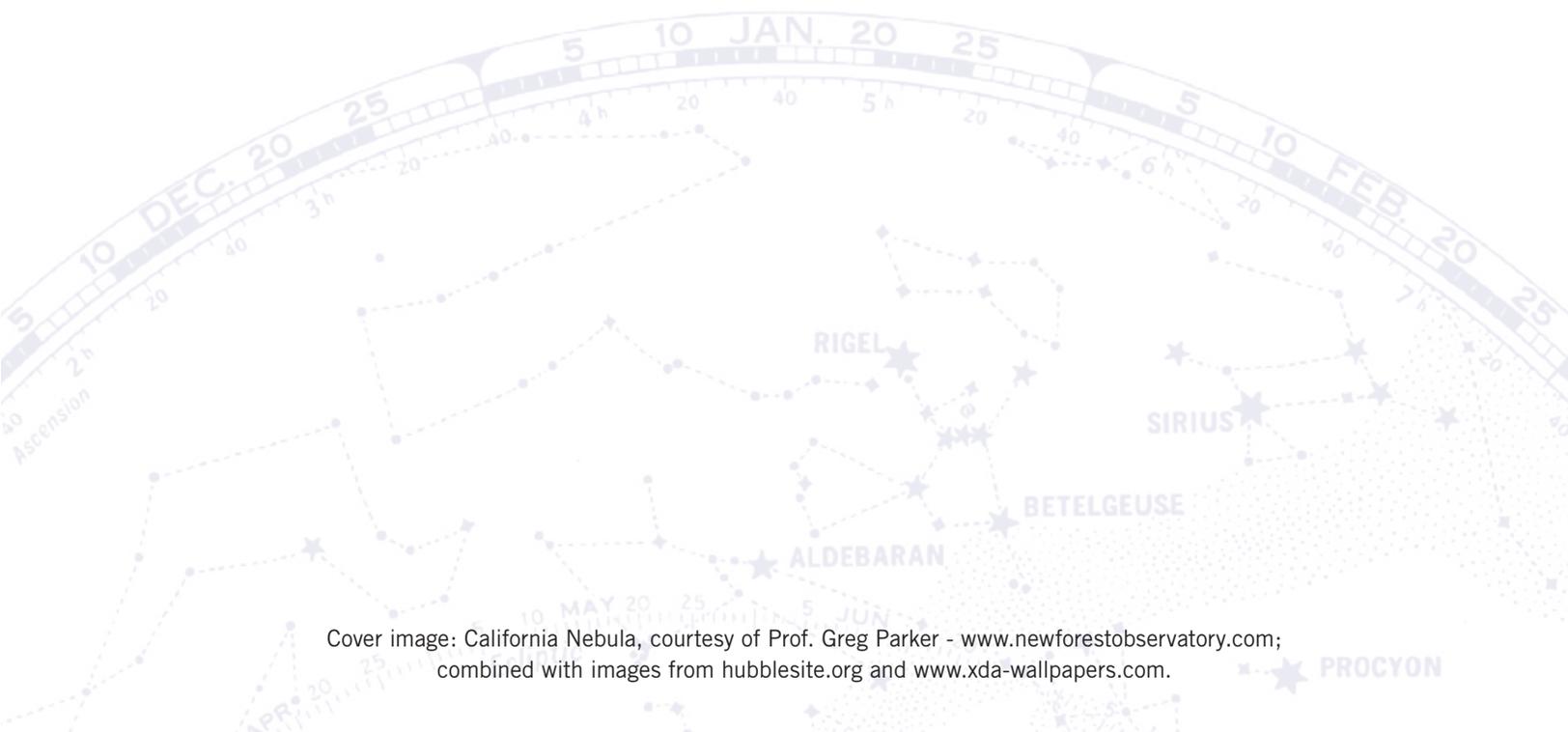
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Michael Kuzek, 2012 President  
Board of Directors, AARA

## Steering Committee members include:

Assistant Deputy Minister  
Janet Skinner, AMA Vice  
President and Chief Operating  
Office Kurt Paterson, and  
AARA Board President  
Michael Kuzek.  
Pamela Wilson, CEO of AARA,  
and Deirdre Gareau, Regional  
Manager AMA South support  
the committee.

With all the changes within our Association and the Ministry, 2011 will no doubt go down in history as a year of transformation for us. Faced with this much change, we know that results will take time, but we feel the ground work has been established.

With a stable foundation to support us, it's time to think about the future. That's why my fellow board members and I have focused on developing the Registry Agent Network Strategic Plan, which outlines clear strategies for addressing the issues facing our industry.

The plan is not yet complete, so I can't share the contents here, but I can tell you that in the coming year we will continue the good work we are doing with AMA and Service Alberta at the Steering Committee level. The committee meets most months with the goal of creating open discussion and consensus building among the three stakeholders. Although we don't always agree, these meetings increase our understanding of one another's positions, which in turn helps us develop workable solutions.

Over the past year I have been struck again and again by the sheer diversity of the Registry Agent Network. It's a diversity I never truly appreciated until I had the opportunity to work alongside small rural and large urban registries at the same time. This past year has shown me that despite any differences, we're welded together by the common goal of providing the best service to Albertans. Whatever our differences I am pleased that the vast majority of registry agents are members of our association. We will continue to do our best to represent their common interests.

In fact, in order to enhance our effectiveness at representing member interests, we invested in getting our own house in order. Our Bylaw Committee reviewed existing bylaws and recommended changes, changes I believe will better position our association for the future. Although the proposed changes will result in a reduction in the number of Directors, they allow for better representation through all segments of our membership, and more closely represent our volunteer base.

Wishing to support our volunteers, we also developed Terms of Reference for each of our committees to clarify mandates and function. Some of their activities over the past year include:

- The Joint Policy Review Committee has been very active working with Service Alberta and AMA to enhance existing policies and develop new ones. The committee work strengthens our relationship with our business partners.
- The Audit & Finance Committee has taken a more active role in reviewing the Association's financial statements on a monthly basis. Their review provides more timely recommendations and a better understanding of our business.
- The RCLP Advisory Committee has been busy pursuing new business opportunities for both the Registry Agent Network and for Registry Connect Limited Partnership.

I look forward to sharing more information on the activities of the board and committees at our Annual General Meeting in June.

Until then, I would like to thank all our executive, board, committee members, and Association staff for all their hard work this past year. I look forward to working with you to tackle the challenges faced by our industry in the coming year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Kuzek".

Michael Kuzek  
2012 President  
Board of Directors, AARA

# REGISTRY FAST FORM

Our world is increasingly shifting online. Today it's commonplace to take courses, connect with colleagues and loved ones or make purchases with a click of a mouse.

In June 2011 the Association took steps to keep pace with this shift. Registry Connect Limited Partnership entered into an agreement with SCL Ltd. to purchase Registry Fast Form, software designed to provide AARA members with an online service delivery option.

## WHAT IS REGISTRY FAST FORM?

Registry Fast Form is software that streamlines registry services by letting customers submit service request forms over the internet. Upon receiving one of the internet service requests, registry agents simply confirm the accuracy of the information and then use the software to copy the information into the appropriate government database.

## WHO BENEFITS?

If successful, Registry Fast Form will benefit everyone! Consumers will gain the convenience of submitting applications from home or the office. Registry agents will experience cost savings and improved efficiency. The association will gain a new revenue source and the Government of Alberta will see improved accuracy.

## INITIAL REACTIONS

Preliminary testing of Registry Fast Form is already underway, with more than seven registries piloting a modified delivery method. Once the product is fully launched, we envision the majority of transactions being conducted through the internet from the customer's home or office. However, for the sake of establishing initial awareness and conducting testing, the testing sites have simply encouraged customers to complete Vital Statistics requests through work stations at the registry.

Through this in-house delivery system, the testing registries have seen up to 100 percent of their marriage licence, marriage certificate and birth certificate requests conducted at the work stations. Feedback from customers has been positive, with virtually no negative feedback on the experience. Testing registries have been equally positive; they are reporting the dramatic time savings and improved accuracy we had hoped for.

Throughout the testing phase, total transaction numbers have been modest, but we've seen very high volumes of customers signing up and exploring the tool, which seems to indicate a high degree of interest in the finished product.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The annual nature of much of the business performed by the registries will slow the process of creating awareness. That means our next step will be to focus on generating more awareness. We'll also make it a priority to ensure customers understand and feel comfortable with the system so that we can convert more of the curious site testers into actual users.

## Registry Fast Form by the numbers:

A registry receiving a conservative **10 service requests per day** could see **\$20,000 to \$25,000** of business per month for a fee of **less than \$40**

# ALBERTA VIRTUAL VAULT UPDATE



facebook.com/virtualvault



@ABVirtualVault



We entered 2011 with high hopes for Alberta Virtual Vault (AVV). Midway through the year we contracted Gord Strasdin to promote AVV and tasked him with conducting outreach to potential resellers. We also made a number of adjustments to our marketing strategy, including:

- Re-designed the AVV website to make it more appealing and user-friendly.
- Launched the Free Starter Vault, which allowed consumers to test the product before buying.
- Implemented new pricing that reduced the barriers to trying the full Vault.
- Initiated a social media marketing campaign using Google ads, Facebook, Twitter, and Wordpress blog posts.
- Implemented online sales of Virtual Vaults.
- Created tools allowing Registry Agents to promote AVV on their websites and profit from those efforts.

Some of these strategies were effective. For example, 57 percent of Alberta Virtual Vault website traffic now comes from the banners our members have uploaded to their website. At this time however, sales have continued to be low and we have also been unable to secure commitments from the potential resellers that were approached. Some of these potential resellers are large organizations with complex processes for obtaining permissions for new products. In these cases, the approval processes will not run their course by year end.

In March 2012 the members of the Board of Directors for the AARA decided that further investment into any new developments for Alberta Virtual Vault would be suspended. As of April 1, 2012 Alberta Virtual Vault is now in “maintenance mode”. This simply means that we will not be making any further enhancements or additions of new products unless we have a customer and a revenue stream that would support it.

While in maintenance mode, Alberta Virtual Vault remains available for purchase, both at the registry agent’s counter and online. Free vaults are still being created. Vaults are still being purchased.

The market data that led to Alberta Virtual Vault was clear that it would take one-and-a-half to two years to gain traction with Alberta consumers. The new improved version of Alberta Virtual Vault is still in its first half year.

We will continue to promote Alberta Virtual Vault using Facebook, Twitter, and Wordpress blog posts and to follow up on leads that were generated in 2011. We also continue to rely on members to promote the product by displaying the Alberta Virtual Vault banner on registry websites and we ask that you all do your part to share this product by word of mouth, by “liking us” on Facebook, and by “following” us on Twitter.

Thank you to everyone for the combined effort and desire to see Alberta Virtual Vault succeed!

While in maintenance mode, Alberta Virtual Vault remains available for purchase, both at the registry agent’s counter and online. Free vaults are still being created. Vaults are still being purchased.

# SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Each year registries around the province contribute thousands of dollars to local charities. Registry agents' support of their communities spans from local sports teams and 4-H clubs to women's shelters, humane societies and arts groups. At the Association level we are a long time partner with War Amps and their key tag program and for the past year we have helped the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta raise funds by selling their Learner's Permit Prep Kits in our registries.

We're proud of all these activities, but this year, we wanted to highlight the good work our members have done with two specific charities.

## ALBERTA FOOD BANKS

In 2011, Alberta registries raised a whopping \$73,682 for food banks in their communities! These outstanding results are possible because registry staff care enough about those in need to ask a very simple question: "Would you like to make a donation to the Food Bank?"

The Food Bank states that for every \$1.00 cash donated, \$4.00 of quality emergency food can be distributed to those in need. If we apply that multiplier, it means that more than \$294,728 worth of food was distributed to those in need due to the efforts of the Registry Agent Network and the generosity of their clients.

## HOMELESS CONNECT

Homeless Connect Edmonton is a community initiative that provides free essential services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. In the space of a single day, at a single location, participants can take advantage of:

- Mental health assessments
- Foot care
- Immunizations
- Dental care
- Laundry
- Employment services
- Library services
- Haircuts
- Pre-natal support
- Tax preparation
- Housing information

The AARA's Homeless Initiative Committee works with agencies in Calgary to bring information to the homeless and working poor on how to obtain identification. Over the past year, the AARA had a booth at the Homeless Connect events in November 2011 and April 2012 at City Hall in Calgary. We found participants very appreciative of the advice we were able to provide them regarding birth certificates, Alberta health care cards & ID cards, as these documents are often a critical first step to accessing other support services. Our volunteers reported they found the events both eye-opening and rewarding.



Homeless Connect Edmonton at the Shaw Conference Centre (photo by Mack Male).

Please join us in thanking the following individuals for giving up their time to help make these events successful:

**Shawna Blair**  
Registry Unlimited

**Shari Deines**  
Mojo's Licence & Registry Services Inc.

**Pauline Depatie**  
The Licensing Company (Calgary) Inc.

**Sean Dumas**  
New Urban Registry

**Joan Harrison**  
Sentinel Registry

**Beckie Harvey**  
Southland Registrations

**Najla Hussein**  
Alberta Service Bureau

**Hazel Koschel**  
Registry Plus

**Deb Kyle**  
Edmonton Motors Registry

**Samara Lain-McCarthy**  
New Urban Registry

**Chadd Lauzon**  
New Urban Registry

**Shelly Miller**  
New Urban Registry

**Dave McNeill**  
Accu-Search Inc.

**Marcy Minty**  
Registry Unlimited

**Josh Patterson**  
Southland Registrations

**Cassandra Satz**  
New Urban Registry

**Gayle See**  
New Urban Registry

**Stephanie Siry**  
The Licensing Company (Calgary) Inc.

**Pamela Wilson**  
Association of Alberta Registry Agents

**Roxanne Sinclair**  
Alberta Service Bureau

**Robyn Young**  
Southland Registrations Ltd.

And of course, we're proud to recognize the hundreds of other registry agents who give back to their communities every day!

## Access the following courses at [www.aaratraining.com](http://www.aaratraining.com):

- Supervisor Training
- Customer Service
- SPIN 2
- MOVES Supervisor
- Alberta Virtual Vault Training
- CORES Levels 1, 2, 3
- APPRES Registry Agents
- APPRES ROL (Registries On Line)
- Basic Certificate Lesson 1: The Role of the Registry Agent
- Basic Certificate Lesson 2: Privacy Legislation
- Basic Certificate Lesson 3: MOVES Client Services
- Basic Certificate Lesson 4: MOVES Operator Overview
- Basic Certificate Lesson 5: MOVES Operator Services
- Basic Certificate Lesson 6: MOVES Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)
- Basic Certificate Lesson 7: MOVES Vehicle Registration
- Basic Certificate Lesson 8: MOVES Commercial Vehicle Registration
- Basic Certificate Lesson 9: Vital Statistics Services
- Basic Certificate Lesson 10: APPRES and PPR
- Basic Certificate Lesson 11: CORES Search Services
- Basic Certificate Lesson 12: SPIN 2 Search Services
- Quick Start
- Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan Training

STAR represents the online “university” that AARA has created at [www.aaratraining.com](http://www.aaratraining.com). Focussing on providing value to registry agents and their staff, STAR offers 21 course modules that students can work through at their own pace.

For those instances where a student has to earn a certificate to be able to complete a specific transaction type, AARA has worked with Service Alberta, who now provides proctoring at 20 locations throughout the province. With this added convenience, students should not have to travel long distances or incur any significant costs to support their efforts to write the certification exams. Service Alberta posts a list of examination centres as well as the form to apply to write these exams on RAnet. For anyone not currently on staff at a registry office, additional information on the examination process can be obtained by contacting the Training and Accreditation Unit at 1-866-301-6207 or [registries.training@gov.ab.ca](mailto:registries.training@gov.ab.ca).

Students in STAR come from a variety of employers. Some are staff at registry agents, some from ROL account holders and some from the general public who are interested in careers in registry agencies. In 2011 more than 80 companies sent students through the courses. The most popular course is the Quick Start module that provides basic information to a new registry clerk to get that person productive at the counter as quickly as possible. The course reviews transactions that can be handled without additional certification. The Basic Courses (modules 1 – 12) are also popular. By far, the course that had the largest enrolment was the one that supports Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan transactions. In 2011, STAR had 774 paid enrolments from students furthering their registry knowledge. In addition 945 took advantage of the free training available.

In 2012 we will enter a maintenance mode for the courses we currently offer. As students work through each module they have the opportunity to comment on the course content. Taking all these comments into consideration as well as any changes necessitated by policy and regulation, each course will be reviewed and updated as necessary. We are always looking for ways to enhance the student's learning experience and encourage students to forward comments to the AARA office to the attention of Cindy Wallace at [cindy.wallace@aara.ca](mailto:cindy.wallace@aara.ca). We thank the many volunteers who have served as subject matter experts, BaseCorp Learning Systems who supports the online environment and course development and Associations Plus who handles inquiries from students having technical challenges.

**Please join us in congratulating last year's winners of the STAR awards, which are presented to the registries who demonstrated their commitment to top of the line service by enrolling the most employees in the most classes in the STAR program:**

- P176 - Alberta Service Bureau Inc.
- P232 - Crowfoot Plates Registry Inc.
- P237 - Registry Unlimited
- P158 - West-End Registries
- P333 - The Licence Centre Ltd.
- P132 - Registries By Drayden
- P461 - Vital Registry Services Ltd
- P325 - Artesian Realty & Insurance Ltd.
- P368 - Valleyview Registry



This year's winners will be announced at our annual conference in June.

## EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

<b>President</b> Michael Kuzek	STONY PLAIN REGISTRIES INC.
<b>Past President</b> Terry Alston	CROWFOOT PLATES REGISTRY INC.
<b>Vice President, Finance</b> Robyn Young	SOUTHLAND REGISTRATIONS LTD.
<b>President Elect</b> Dave McNeill	ACCU-SEARCH INC.

## DIRECTORS

### Calgary

Kim L'Hirondelle	RICHMOND ROAD REGISTRY LTD.
Kevin Hamilton	AIRDRIE REGISTRY

### Central

Matt Toonders	SYLVAN LAKE REGISTRIES
Rob Sims	ROCKY MOTOR VEHICLES

### Edmonton

Sabrina Dhalla	OTTEWELL REGISTRY
Barry Verbin	ARGYLL REGISTRY

### North

Ken Landry	FAIRVIEW REGISTRIES
Debbie Obridgewitch (resigned Dec. 31, 2011)	A-1 LICENCE & REGISTRY

### South

Lori Boychuk	WESTERN LICENCE & TRANSPORTATION SERVICES LTD.
Craig Couillard (appointment)	TARADALE REGISTRIES

### East

Dave McNeill (appointment)	ACCU-SEARCH INC.
Scott Mather (appointment)	TIMBERLEA LICENSING AND REGISTRY

## STAFF

### Chief Executive Officer

Pamela Wilson

### Executive Director - Commercial Operations

Owen Voaklander (resigned June 2011)

### Manager – Finance and Administration

Diane Kivitt (appointed July 2011)



[facebook.com/abRegistryAgents](https://www.facebook.com/abRegistryAgents)



@the\_aara

[www.aara.ca](http://www.aara.ca)

# 2011

## IN NUMBERS

**AROUND THE  
PROVINCE  
AND AROUND  
THE CLOCK,  
ALBERTANS ARE  
USING REGISTRY  
SERVICES.**

### 237,727

Land Title searches  
conducted

### 462,681

Corporate Registry  
searches completed

### 6,814,052

Motor Vehicles  
Searches provided

### 31,256

RISE Transactions  
completed

### 158,290

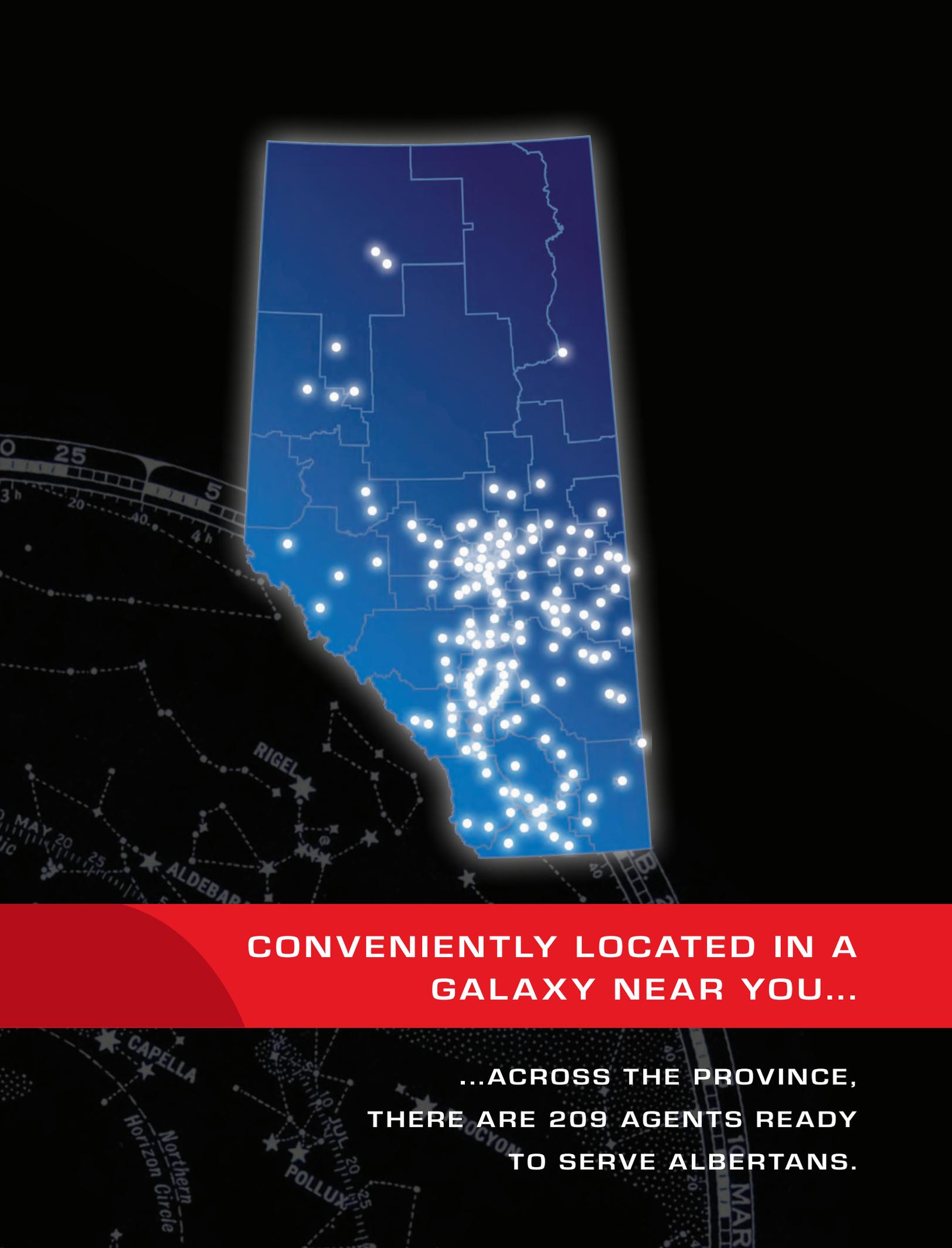
Fines payments were  
conducted online



# THE VALUE OF THE REGISTRY AGENT NETWORK

Is the Registry Agent Network the right fit for your business opportunity? We offer:

- Geographical reach into more than 150 communities across the province
- Physical storefronts that comply with the Government of Alberta security requirements
- Well-trained frontline staff that make customer service a top priority
- Rigorously screened staff, including police information checks on every individual, even registry shareholders
- Expertise in identity verification including scrutinizing the authenticity of documents provided to support identity
- A business that is accustomed to meticulous record keeping and inventory control
- A military-grade data centre offering a secure online delivery channel for goods and services
- An industry keen to expand their goods and services offering through partnerships with government and the private sector
- A group of entrepreneurs who genuinely care about the wellbeing of the communities in which they live and do business
- A privatized business model that has been the envy of other North American jurisdictions since 1994



**CONVENIENTLY LOCATED IN A  
GALAXY NEAR YOU...**

**...ACROSS THE PROVINCE,  
THERE ARE 209 AGENTS READY  
TO SERVE ALBERTANS.**



# Association of Alberta Registry Agents

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