



OMFC REGISTRATION REVIEW

**Manitoba Institute of Agrologists
Final Registration Review Report (2012)**

OFFICE OF THE MANITOBA FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER

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Introduction

This Final Registration Review Report presents the results of the Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's (OMFC) registration review with the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists (MIA) as of October 2012.

Registration reviews are conducted as part of the Fairness Commissioner's mandate to review the registration practices of regulatory bodies subject to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act* (Act).

The purpose of a registration review is to enable the Fairness Commissioner to determine a regulator's compliance to the Act and to make recommendations to improve compliance. Two senses of compliance are at work in the legislation. First and foremost, it refers to the fairness of assessment and registration practice, with particular attention drawn to the need for the fair consideration of internationally educated applicants. Secondly, it refers to the co-operation of the regulator with the Fairness Commissioner.

The Act stipulates that a registration review for any given regulator is to be undertaken at times specified by the Fairness Commissioner. It also stipulates that the content of a registration review is to include an analysis of the relevance and necessity of registration requirements, the timeliness of decision making, the reasonableness of fees and the registration of internationally educated individuals. This may involve the review of any third parties employed in the assessment and registration process.

The OMFC's review process culminates in a Final Registration Review Report, complete with an Action Plan from the regulator. This report is a public document submitted to the Province's Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism and posted on the OMFC's website.

The OMFC undertook a registration review with the MIA between July and October of 2012 (see appendices A & B). Several meetings were involved, documentation was gathered and reviewed, field work was conducted and the MIA provided an Action Plan in response to the Fairness Commissioner's recommendations. The MIA's Action Plan, as well as the OMFC'S review findings and the Fairness Commissioner's recommendations follow throughout this report.

Registration Review Process

The OMFC's multi-step review process has several key phases: agreeing to a review schedule, documenting and understanding, evaluating and drafting the findings and recommendations, achieving an action plan to move things forward. The process is designed to support meaningful reviews that concretely identify fairness issues and lead to progressive change.

The Fairness Standard and Criteria Document

For the purposes of the 2012 registration review cycle, regulatory practice is evaluated against a single, broad fairness standard: ***Dedicated and fair practices are applied for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.*** In the Fairness Standard and Criteria Document, this fairness standard is defined by 14 elements, each further differentiated into one or more criteria.

For each criterion in the 'Fairness Standard and Criteria Document', green, yellow, and red check marks --    -- designate whether evidence is found indicating compliance, needs improvement, or non-compliance. Practices identified as needing improvement or non-compliant --  or  -- are followed by an analysis that explains the finding.

Recommendations, Action Plan & Compliance Statement

The Fairness Commissioner makes recommendations based on a consideration of the issues of non-compliance and areas that show opportunity for improvement. These are identified and explained in the 'Fairness Standard and Criteria Document' completed for the regulator.

The action plan, in turn, is drafted by regulators to respond to Fairness Commissioner's recommendations. For each of the Fairness Commissioner's recommendations, regulators reply with a plan to address the concern as well as a timeline for the execution of the plan. Regulators are given opportunity to remark upon any recommendation made by the Fairness Commissioner.

Finally, the Fairness Commissioner's Compliance Statement provides comment on the suitability of the regulator's Action Plan and the overall compliance of the regulator's registration practice.

OMFC Support

Addressing problematic practice can pose considerable challenges for regulators. No remedy may be readily at hand; third-parties may be involved; resources and expertise may be wanting. In these circumstances, the OMFC is committed to working with regulators to support and assist the development of innovative solutions and better practice.

The Profession of Agrology in Manitoba

According to *The Agrologists Act* (C.C.S.M. c. A50), the practice of agrology refers to activity related to the “production, improvement, use, or processing or marketing of agricultural products, crops or livestock.” The profession of agrology is remarkably broad, with practitioners of diverse expertise in a wide range of careers: from highly technical research and development work to marketing and public extension roles.

The practice of agrology in Manitoba is distinguished both with respect to the province’s geography and type of agricultural crops and livestock. It is also distinguished in terms of the character of Canadian professional agrology practice.

Over the past several years, Manitoba has seen a dramatic rise in the number of Agrologists trained abroad. In response to the need to better recognize and integrate internationally educated Agrologists (IEAs), the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists, the University of Manitoba and the Government of Manitoba, worked to establish the Internationally Educated Agrologists Program (IEAP). This one year program provides gap training and a work placement opportunity and has proven highly successful.

The licensing regime in Manitoba allows Agrologists-in-Training to practice commensurate with their training, ability and experience. This supports timely entry into practice for internationally educated Agrologists.

Overview of Manitoba Institute of Agrologists' Assessment and Registration Process

The Manitoba Institute of Agrologists (MIA or Institute) is a self-regulatory body operating under the authority of *The Agrologists Act* (C.C.S.M. c. A50). The Institute regulates the practice of agrology in Manitoba and registers practitioners.

All persons practicing agrology in Manitoba and using the Professional Agrologist, Technical Agrologist or Agrologist-in-Training designation must be registered with the Association. Exemptions from registration are permitted under *The Agrologists Act* in a variety of specified circumstances and for a variety of specified persons.

Designations, Qualifications and Registration Process

Professional Agrologist (P.Ag.)

To qualify for registration, a Professional Agrologist must meet one of the following academic standards:

- a. 120 credit hour agricultural sciences degree(s) or 40 full time courses that include 60 agrology credit hours or 20 full time courses from a recognized Canadian university; or
- b. An equivalent related 120 credit hours or 40 full time courses, sciences degree(s) approved by the Admission and Registration Committee that includes 60 agrology credit hours or 20 full time courses from a recognized university outside of Canada; or
- c. Graduate degree(s) in agricultural sciences or equivalent related discipline approved by the MIA's Admission and Registration Committee with 60 agrology credit hours or 20 full time courses from a recognized university.

Technical Agrologist (Tech.Ag.)

To qualify for registration, a Technical Agrologist must meet one of the following academic standards:

- a. a diploma from an agriculture program or an equivalent diploma program as approved by the Admissions and Registration Committee; or
- d. a diploma from an agriculture program recognized by the Canadian Association of Diploma Agriculture Programs; or
- e. equivalent to two-year diploma or applied degree as approved by the MIA's Admission and Registration Committee that includes a minimum of 60 credit hours or 20 full time courses with 45 credit hours or 15 full time courses related to the practice of agrology.

Agrologist-in-Training

All applicants applying for either the Tech. Ag. or P.Ag. designations must first be registered as an Agrologist-in-Training (AIT). The steps to becoming an AIT involve submitting an application form along with fees, a letter of reference and education status verification. Applicants who have

completed part or all of their agrology education outside of Canada must obtain a course-by-course credential evaluation. World Education Services (WES) Canada is MIA's preferred third-party provider of this information.

Applicants apply for a Comprehensive Course-by-Course credential evaluation to WES, which then sends the results directly to MIA. Credential evaluations performed by other services may be accepted by the MIA; these are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Completed applications are evaluated by the MIA staff and Registrar and registration admission decisions are made by the MIA Admission and Registration Committee. The Committee meets quarterly.

Internationally Educated Agrologists

All internationally educated Agrologists (IEA) are required to undergo gap training. Depending on the gap training plan, this may occur prior to receiving AIT designation or after, as a condition of AIT designation.

Gap Training Alternatives:

1. Internationally Educated Agrologist Program (IEAP)

The IEAP is offered by the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at the University of Manitoba. It includes 8 months of regular and special university courses, and 4 months of work experience. Upon referral from MIA, individuals apply for the program. Applicants are eligible to apply to IEAP if they:

- have a degree in agriculture from another country
- are permanent residents or Canadian citizens
- have been assessed at an English Language Benchmark of 8 or higher
- have a valid driver's license, and
- have been accepted as eligible for registration as Agrologists In Training by the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists.

Upon completion of the IEAP, applicants are granted Agrologist-in-Training status by the MIA.

2. Other

For IEAs with suitable employment in an Agrologist capacity in Manitoba, gap training will involve coursework in Canadian agrology practice and possibly course work in their area of agrology practice in a Canadian context. The MIA determines specific gap training requirements on a case-by-case basis. Applicants with this type of gap training plan are designated Agrologist-in-Training upon application.

Full Status Requirements

To progress to full status as a P.Ag or Tech. Ag., an Agrologist In Training must complete the MIA's Agrologist-in-Training Program. This involves:

- a. Successfully completing the MIA Professionalism and Ethics Seminar.
- b. Participating in either three activities sponsored by MIA or one activity sponsored by MIA plus MIA's Annual General Meeting.

- c. Recording a minimum of 20 credit hours under the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) online.
- d. Undergoing a Certification and Mentorship Process*.
- e. Paying the fees associated with the Agrologist-in-Training status.

*Mentorship is provided by a qualified P.Ag., selected by the applicant. The mentorship process connects Agrologists-in-Training to established professionals to foster an understanding of professional practice. MIA support to secure a mentor is available.

Appeals

The MIA allows appeals of its academic assessment decisions. Appeals are heard by a tribunal composed of members of its Provincial Council whom are independent of the original decision makers. No fees are charged for appeals. Appeal information is presented in the MIA's registration material and accompanies assessment result letters.

Time and Cost

The time and cost to be registered varies depending on the circumstances of the applicant. Total direct costs, including the IEAP (mandatory for most IEAs), may exceed \$6,000.00. There may be additional associated costs involved in meeting documentation requirements for application and the IEAP program. Those IEAs in the 'Other' gap training path will be responsible for coursework costs, but this will be significantly less than the IEAP program.

Specific direct costs can be seen below:

- WES Credential Assessment: \$200.00-240.00
- Application Fee: \$100.00
- P. Ag. annual registration fee: \$325.00
- Tech. Ag. annual registration fee: \$325.00
- Agrologist-in-Training annual registration fee: \$265.00
- IEAP: Up to \$5,000.00, depending on individual courses taken

A realistic time range will also vary, but for well-organized and qualified applicants the time required to be registered as an Agrologist-in-Training via the one-year IEAP gap training route will be at least 18 months. Those applicants that have secured suitable employment can be registered as an Agrologist-in-Training within 6 months. Completing the requirements of the Agrologist-in-Training Program can be accomplished in as little as 3-4 months. There is no time limit to complete the Agrologist-in-Training requirements and with the right to practice the Agrologist-In-Training designation confers, applicants may take an extended period to achieve the right to full professional designation.

Registration Review Findings

Summary of Findings

The Manitoba Institute of Agrologists (MIA or Institute) is committed to the fair assessment and recognition of Internationally Educated Agrologists (IEAs). The Institute has undergone significant changes in the last few years in the evolution of its regulatory practice. *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act* and the increase in internationally educated applicants have motivated numerous improvements in policies and procedures, including reforms to the Institute's governance model. The Agreement on Internal Trade has spurred Agrology regulators across the country to establish a national body, Agrologists Canada, to work to better define and harmonize standards.

A variety of dedicated assessment strategies and supports are in place for the assessment of Internationally Educated Agrologists. One of the prominent findings of this report is the Institute's progressive emphasis on training, professional development and integration support. Although considerable steps have been taken advancing policy and practice in recent years, the Institute still lacks the ability to assess qualifications acquired through work experience. In part this also speaks to a need to develop its practice standards in a manner that could support the recognition of work experience. A variety of information issues are flagged as needing attention; some minor, some more significant. With the introduction of its dedicated Internationally Educated Agrologist web portal, the Institute is well positioned to provide a comprehensive, well-structured information package.

Key findings from the Institute's registration review are listed below. These findings cover the range of fairness issues as defined by the Fairness Standard and Criteria document and roughly follow the order of this document (see pp. 10-26).

- MIA's website has a dedicated landing portal for Internationally Educated Agrologists (IEAs) that presents the registration and assessment process in user-friendly, straightforward steps. Information about qualification requirements, however, is not fully complete and details provided about the mandatory gap training requirement for IEAs are few and somewhat confusing. The explanation for gap training provided in the Admissions and Registration Manual is well crafted and would benefit the IEA Portal. Information from the Manual about the Agrologist-in-Training Program requirements would also help complete the IEA Portal information.
- A realistic picture of the full cost and likely time range of the registration process is not provided. A visual, graphic overview of the time and cost of the different paths to registration would support planning and preparation.
- MIA staff regularly meet with applicants, providing one-on-one advice about the assessment process as well as the IEA gap training requirement and the University of Manitoba's Internationally Educated Agrologists Program (IEAP). MIA has recently introduced a dedicated staff member to deal with IEAs and IEAP candidates.
- Reforms to MIA's governance model now allow for more timely application assessments of 4-8 weeks. Policies have been introduced to ensure better documentation and consistency of academic assessments.
- MIA has developed a variety of standards documents:

- The “Academic Qualification Standards” are used to assess academic qualifications.
- The MIA’s “Code of Ethics and Practice” is used to support various AIT Program assessments. This document is usefully pragmatic and concrete.
- The MIA’s list of qualifying subject matters that govern its Professional Development Program.

MIA recognizes the need to develop a more comprehensive practices standards document. The Admission and Registration Committee is working on articulating specific practice standards. Standards articulation is also a current priority of Agrologists Canada.

- MIA’s Admission and Registration Committee (ARC) members have several years of agrology practice. MIA reports ARC will be developing a list of sector experts and the expectation is that there will be minimum requirements for those selected to this pool.
- Qualifications acquired through work experience are not assessed or recognized by MIA. All IEAs, regardless of academic qualification or work history must undergo gap training.
- English or French language proficiency is not a registration requirement. English language proficiency is identified in the MIA’s registration information as an important element of successful practice. Helpful information about language assessment and upgrading is provided, including a link to the University of Winnipeg’s Language and Communication for Internationally Educated Agrologists Course. The University of Manitoba’s IEAP requires Canadian Benchmark Level 8s in speaking, writing, reading and listening.
- MIA uses World Education Services (WES) for IEA credential assessments. As a member of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada, WES is committed to its comprehensive ‘Quality Assurance Framework’ which lays out a variety of practice standards directed at ensuring fair and objective assessments. MIA may accept equivalent credential assessments by other alliance agencies in the circumstance where applicants have acquired them before approaching MIA.
- Alternative documentation is considered by WES and by MIA’s Admission and Registration Committee.
- Gap training opportunities are available to IEAs either through completing the University of Manitoba’s IEAP or, for those with appropriate employment, online course work in Canadian agrology practice. Little information is provided about coursework opportunities for MIA’s ‘Other’ gap training option.
- Currently, demand exceeds the IEAP’s annual 15 seat capacity. It is unclear what opportunities are available for IEAs who cannot enrol in the IEAP and who are without suitable employment for MIA’s other gap training option.
- The MIA has taken several measures to ensure the integrity of its Agrologist-in-Training requirements. The MIA’s Agrologist-in-Training Certification and Mentorship Process Manual outlines and explains the program and assessment process and responsibilities for mentors. MIA is giving consideration to improved training for mentors.
- MIA’s Professionalism and Ethics Seminar supports orientation into Manitoba agrology practice with training rather than a high stakes exam screen. Like its Certification and Mentorship Process, MIA’s assessment strategy focuses on training, support and integration.

- Appeal information is clearly presented on MIA’s website and appeal information accompanies academic assessment result letters.
- No appeal opportunity is available for MIA’s registration decisions concerning gap training assessments.
- MIA is a not-for-profit organization. Fees are reasonable and based on cost recovery. MIA recently moved to designate IEAP candidates Agrologists-in-Training only after they graduated the program to reduce the upfront costs for these applicants.
- The assessment and registration process is structured to support timeliness and efficient application: application can be initiated abroad; communication throughout the registration process is systematic and active; Agrologist-in-Training registration allows applicant the ability to work professionally as they pursue full designation.

Commendable Practices

A number of MIA’s assessment and registration practices deserve to be recognized as exemplary, fair practices. Most of these will have already been described above or in other areas of this report, but the most significant bear repeating.

- **With MIA’s introduction of a dedicated staff member to provide support to IEAs and those enrolled in the IEAP, the increasing number of IEAs seen by the MIA will continue to receive strong advice and assistance.**
- **The University of Manitoba’s Internationally Educated Agrologist Program (IEAP) is a major achievement in qualification recognition in Manitoba. Applicants from diverse agrology backgrounds now have a highly successful path into professional agrology practice. The program was a multi-stakeholder effort involving the university, the Province and MIA.**
- **The University of Winnipeg’s ‘Language and Communication for Internationally Educated Agrologists’ program is a valuable resource for second language IEAs and another example of MIA’s effort to partner with various stakeholders to improve the system.**
- **MIA’s assessment and registration process is timely and cost effective. Several measures have been put in place to ensure systematic communication, expedient assessments and reasonable costs.**
- **Jim Weir, MIA’s Executive Director, has played an active leadership role in the implementation of all of these aforementioned commendable practices, as well as many other positive changes identified throughout this report.**

Fairness Standard & Criteria Document – MIA Review Findings

Standard: Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.					
Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
<p>1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.</p>	<p>1. Qualification requirements and the criteria used to assess qualifications.</p>	<p style="color: yellow; font-size: 2em;">v</p>			<p>For the most part, reasonable information is provided on the MIA's website concerning qualification requirements and the criteria used to assess qualifications. We identify three issues which we number below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Although they can be found on the MIA's website, it would be helpful if information about the MIA's academic requirements were introduced on the IEA Portal. 2) Information outlining the MIA's Agrologist-in-Training Program, including specifics about the requirements involved would also be a benefit for the IEA Portal. 3) More complete information about the MIA's gap training requirement of IEAs is needed. This is not as critical for the IEAP, as detailed information is accessible on the U of M's website. However, information about the 'Other' gap training possibility needs to be developed. This should include information about the reason for the requirement (the MIA's Admissions and Registration Manual provides a good explanation), a good description of what is involved (e.g. suitable employment, online course-work, etc.), realistic time and cost information and the policies and criteria applied that determine the nature and extent of the gap training required. The latter may be the biggest challenge, as this will first require the formal articulation of the MIA's gap training assessment policies and criteria.
					<p>We note the IEA Portal is a work in progress; only recently introduced, this is a first phase to be evolved shortly in a second phase implementation. We also note the MIA has recently introduced a staff position dedicated to dealing with IEAs in the IEAP. The personal, one-on-one support provided to these and other IEAs by MIA staff mitigate many of the issues surrounding the quality of the MIA's online registration material identified in this report.</p>

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	2. Documentation requirements.		✓		<p>MIA documentation requirements are relatively few and straightforward. IEAs must arrange for a comprehensive, course-by-course credential evaluation by WES to be directly submitted to MIA. Alternative credential evaluations, subject to MIA approval may be accepted for applicants who may already have had a credential evaluation from a Canadian credential assessment agency. With the exception of fees, no mention is made of the nature of WES's documentation requirements or the extensive timelines involved (3-6 months upon completed application); rather a link is provided to the WES website.</p> <p>To support applicant planning and preparation, consideration should be given to identifying the general character of the documentation required by WES, drawing attention to some of the more difficult-to-acquire documents and the timelines involved in securing a credential assessment. We note that what is said on the IEAP website about WES, information supplied to the IEAP by MIA, is a good example of what we are suggesting.</p>
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	3. Fees and fee payment options.	✓			
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	4. A realistic sense and range of the full costs involved in the process, including common associated costs.		✓		<p>MIA's various fees are clearly identified as well as the cost range of the IEAP. No associated costs for the IEAP are identified. Gap training courses and training are mentioned as simply varying in cost. As mentioned above, time and cost range information about the 'other' gap training option could be helpful for IEAs.</p>
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	5. Financial support opportunities.	✓			

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	6. Timelines and key dates.	✓			
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	7. A realistic sense and time range of how long the entire process often takes.		✓		No realistic time range information is provided that give applicants a big-picture perspective of the process. The information would benefit from a chart that shows approximate times needed for the progression from application to AIT Status to the ARC's review of applications for full status.
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	8. Step-by-step, easy-to-navigate path of the registration process.		✓		The MIA's dedicated IEA Portal provides step-by-step, easy-to-navigate registration information. As yet, however, it is not ideally integrated into MIA's website. MIA's 'Registration' tab and linked pages do not link or direct IEAs to the portal. This could be a cause for confusion.
1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.	9. Information provided about opportunities for general and occupation-specific upgrading.		✓		Reasonable information is provided about the U of M's IEAP. Information provided on MIA's 'Other' Gap training option is light on detail and should be developed.

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
2. Standards of practice are identified and periodically reviewed.			v		<p>MIA recognizes a need to further develop its standards of practice. MIA's Admission and Registration Committee (ARC) is reviewing the possibility of better defining its specific practice standards. This is also a priority for the recently formed national agrology body, Agrologists Canada.</p> <p>The standards documents at hand are MIA's "Academic Qualification Standards" defined in the Admissions and Registration Manual, MIA's Code of Ethics and Practice and the list of qualifying subject matter areas that govern the MIAs Professional Development program.</p> <p>Well defined practice standards could support the development of formal assessment criteria for the gap training assessment and a more practice-grounded academic standard. It would also lay the groundwork for an assessment strategy that recognizes qualifications acquired through work experience.</p>

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
3. Required qualifications are relevant and necessary for competent professional practice.			v		<p>Academic training; reference letter; gap training for IEAs; the Agrologist-in-Training Program requirements (mentorship, professional development, ethics and professional practice seminar, MIA activities participation) -- all of MIA's substantive requirements are relevant in some one sense or another. To what extent relevance is at hand depends on the details involved for the particular requirement in question. Any requirement may fail to be reasonable if it is applied without a consideration of the circumstance of the applicant.</p> <p>In this respect, we have identified two potential concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, IEAs are required upon application to provide a letter of reference from a registered Canadian professional. Requiring IEAs provide a letter of reference from a licensed Canadian professional may be of limited relevance given that recent immigrants may not be in position to do so in a meaningful way. The OMFC understands that the MIA has recently moved to broaden its reference letter requirement; no longer calling for letters from a registered Canadian Agrologist and now allowing reference from any professionally registered Canadian. This will make meeting the requirement more manageable for IEAs, but still, it may make sense either to simply waive the requirement or postpone it until after IEAs have had the opportunity to work for some time as an Agrologist-in-Training. Postponing the requirement might well work to better support the need of MIA to effectively promote and ensure professionalism. • MIA's gap training requirement is mandatory for all IEAs regardless of circumstance. Although we understand that this has not shown itself as an issue for the MIA, if an applicant can demonstrate evidence of a high degree of Canadian work experience or Canadian-like work experience, they should not be subject to unnecessary or redundant training.

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
4. Documentation requirements are reasonable. Alternative documentation opportunities are available and explained to applicants	1. Difficult-to-provide documents – e.g. originals, syllabus – are warranted.	✓			
4. Documentation requirements are reasonable. Alternative documentation opportunities are available and explained to applicants	2. Alternative documentation opportunities are available and clearly explained.	✓			
4. Documentation requirements are reasonable. Alternative documentation opportunities are available and explained to applicants	3. Criminal records policy is warranted and clearly explained.				Not applicable. There is no criminal records requirement to register as an Agrologist.
5. Any third party assessments in the registration process are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	1. Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about the role of third party assessments in the registration process.	✓			
5. Any third party assessments in the registration process are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	2. Measures are in place to ensure third party assessment policy and practice is fair.	✓			

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
5. Any third party assessments in the registration process are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	3. Third party assessment decisions are subject to appeal.	✓			

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
6. Assessment of qualifications is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	1. Valid and reliable methods of assessment are employed for internationally educated applicants.		v		<p>With respect to an applicant’s application for AIT designation, there is an initial review and assessment by a registered P.Ag. followed by a second step review by the Executive Director and then finally a review by at least three members of the Academic Review Committee.</p> <p>Multiple assessors support reliable and valid assessments. MIA has little in the way of documented assessment policies and criteria for the application of its academic standard or to assess an individual’s gap training needs.</p> <p>With respect to academic qualification, minimum academic requirements with subject matter and credit hour criteria are presented in the Admissions and Registration Manual for both the Professional Agrologist (4 yr degree) and Technical Agrologist (2 year diploma) designation. MIA’s academic standard has evolved on the basis of agriculture training found in Canadian universities and is not a product of any occupational analysis of the competencies demanded in the field. Particularly for applicants with unusual credential qualifications in agrology related science degrees and graduate degrees, the degree of agrology expertise recognized will hinge on MIA’s interpretation as to what qualifies as agrology related coursework. A more developed, practice grounded academic standard with well defined principles, policies and criteria would support stronger assessments.</p> <p>With respect to gap training assessment, IEAs either agree to complete the U of M’s IEAP or agree to a plan that provides training in the geographic and professional practice of agrology in a Canadian/Manitoba context and possibly their area of agrology competence in a Canadian/Manitoba context. The development of practice standards and policies and criteria for the assessment of gap training would also support stronger assessment and allow greater transparency for applicants.</p>

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
6. Assessment of qualifications is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	2. Assessment methods and tools are subject to psychometric scrutiny and cultural review.	✓			
6. Assessment of qualifications is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	3. Multiple assessment methods are available. Applicants have the opportunity to demonstrate competence.		✓		<p>Academic training is assessed and is the principal qualification for AIT status. All applicants, Canadian and International, are considered to have gaps between their formal education and the competencies and experience required to achieve full status as a professional. As an AIT, the MIA's mentorship and certification program represents a type of work experience and professional training requirement. For IEAs to meet qualification, gap training opportunities are available via the IEAP program or an approved course of studies.</p> <p>Beyond the IEAP program and academic coursework, there is no opportunity for IEAs to demonstrate either academic qualification or qualifications relevant to any of the elements of the Agrologist-in-Training requirements.</p> <p>MIA reports that a greater, broader capacity to assess qualifications, such as a competency assessment, would require significant work, including the development of a competency profile and workable tools to assess competence.</p>

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
6. Assessment of qualifications is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	4. Knowledge and skills acquired through work experience are assessed, including international work experience.			✓	<p>Currently, qualifications acquired through professional work experience (Canadian or International) are not assessed. MIA reports giving consideration to the assessment of work experience, but within its resources it is not familiar with a method that would be workable. Lack of practice standards within a profession with a broad scope of practice and competencies makes this a considerable challenge.</p> <p>The sole reliance on academic credentials to determine professional qualification, however, fundamentally limits the possibility of meaningful and fair assessment. Academic training is an essential element of professional qualification, but it is only one piece of the puzzle. People often acquire substantial knowledge and skills on the job. Assessing mid-career professionals without an eye to what qualifications are evident there risks an inaccurate, one dimensional result.</p>
6. Assessment of qualifications is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	5. International educational credentials are subject to a reasonable, valid equivalency assessment: reasonable measure has been taken to acquire an informed understanding of the content of international educational programs and their equivalence to Canadian programs.		✓		See comments under Element #6, Criteria #1 above.
6. Assessment of qualifications is transparent, objective, impartial and fair.	6. The regulator has objective standards and criteria to assess knowledge and competencies acquired through work experience.		✓		Knowledge and skills acquired through work experience are not assessed. The MIA recognizes the need to develop specific practice standards.

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
7. Staffs responsible for assessment, appeals and working with internationally educated applicants received appropriate training and possess relevant expertise	1. Training for the assessment of academic qualifications.	✓			
7. Staffs responsible for assessment, appeals and working with internationally educated applicants received appropriate training and possess relevant expertise	2. Training for the assessment of work experience				Not applicable. Work experience is not assessed.
7. Staffs responsible for assessment, appeals and working with internationally educated applicants received appropriate training and possess relevant expertise	3. Appeal training		✓		<p>No appeal training has been provided to MIA council members responsible to hear appeals. MIA's Executive Director has had some training in administrative law.</p> <p>Currently in the case of an appeal, MIA reports that it would employ the services of a lawyer to ensure fair procedure. We note that to date; only two decisions, both well more than a decade ago, have been formally appealed.</p> <p>Although employing the services of a lawyer is not an unreasonable plan in MIA's circumstance, appeal training, along with the development of complete appeal policies and procedures would better ensure consistent practice.</p>

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
7. Staffs responsible for assessment, appeals and working with internationally educated applicants received appropriate training and possess relevant expertise	4. Cross-cultural training.	✓			
8. English and French language proficiency requirements for registration and professional practice are reasonable.	1. French or English language proficiency levels are identified and based on the language demands of the profession.				Not applicable. There is no English or French language proficiency requirement to register with the MIA.
8. English and French language proficiency requirements for registration and professional practice are reasonable.	2. Level of language proficiency identified at key points in the registration process – e.g., entry to practice vs. application or entry to gap training.				See comment above.
8. English and French language proficiency requirements for registration and professional practice are reasonable.	3. The identification of the nature and type of communicative demands for professional practice and the assessment process				See comment above.
8. English and French language proficiency requirements for registration and professional practice are reasonable.	4. The appropriate use of language proficiency tests, expiration dating and test-scores.				Not applicable.

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
8. English and French language proficiency requirements for registration and professional practice are reasonable.	5. A variety of English language test are recognized				Not applicable.
9. Assessment and registration process is relationally fair.	1. Written reasons accompany assessment results.		✓		<p>With respect to MIA's assessment of academic qualification, the sample letter provided failed to provide sufficiently detailed reasons explaining why the applicant's academic credentials did not meet the standard.</p> <p>With respect to MIA's assessment of the gap training needs of IEAs, applicants are only informed in writing of the particular coursework required. No written reasons for the particular gap training plans identified for their application are provided.</p> <p>MIA reports more detailed information about these assessments is available upon request.</p>
9. Assessment and registration process is relationally fair.	2. Detailed feedback is provided about qualification gaps.		✓		<p>With respect to the assessment of academic qualifications, MIA provides detailed feedback upon request. With respect to gap training assessments, applicants not planning to enroll in the IEAP discuss a gap training plan with MIA staff. It is not clear what feedback applicants are provided about their qualification gaps relative to their need for gap training.</p>
9. Assessment and registration process is relationally fair.	3. Applicants have the opportunity to discuss assessment and registration decisions of concern.	✓			

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
9. Assessment and registration process is relationally fair.	4. Applicants without appropriate qualifications receive advice and information about alternative careers.	✓			
10. Registration process allows for different levels of recognition.	1. Opportunity for restricted or conditional license and supervised practice.	✓			Agrologist-in-Training (AIT) is a form of conditional or restricted license. Consideration of a conditional register is a work priority for MIA'S ARC in 2012-13.
10. Registration process allows for different levels of recognition.	2. Re-assessment only required in areas where competence has not been demonstrated.	✓			
10. Registration process allows for different levels of recognition.	3. Time-frames for re-assessment are consistent with currency of practice standards.				Not applicable. There is no currency of practice requirement for registration.
11. A fair appeal or review process is available.	1. All assessment and registration decisions that deny or condition registration are subject to appeal		✓		MIA's initial assessment of the academic qualifications is subject to appeal. Gap training assessments, reference letter assessments and mentorship assessments (MIA's other assessments) are not subject to appeal. MIA reports reference letters have not been a barrier, mentorship assessments are rarely unfavorable or an issue and gap training assessments have not been challenged. All assessment and registration decisions that deny or condition registration should be subject to appeal.

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
11. A fair appeal or review process is available.	2. Appeal or review committee members are independent from those responsible for the original decision	✓			
11. A fair appeal or review process is available.	3. Timely hearings and appeal decisions		✓		Other than the stipulation that Council Appeal members are independent of the original decision makers, MIA has not put in place any appeal policies and procedures. Applicants are advised of their right to appeal MIA's assessment of their academic qualification and the steps to initiate appeal. No further information is provided. MIA has had only a couple of formal appeals in its history and has had no appeals for well more than a decade. If an appeal were requested, MIA reports that it would engage a lawyer to ensure reasonable appeal procedures were followed.
11. A fair appeal or review process is available.	4. Detailed, written reasons are provided to appellants for unfavorable decisions.		✓		See comments above. No policies or procedures are in place for the provision of written reasons for unfavorable appeal decisions.
11. A fair appeal or review process is available.	5. Applicants are advised of their right to appeal.		✓		MIA's registration material makes clear an applicant's right to have MIA's initial assessment of the academic qualifications reviewed. This information is also presented in MIA's assessment result letters. No information is provided concerning the possibility to appeal other MIA assessment decision; e.g., the gap training requirement. Appeal information makes clear the steps involved to initiate an appeal. No information is provided about the timelines about the appeal hearing or the timelines to receive an appeal decision.

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
11. A fair appeal or review process is available.	6. Appeal information accompanies any assessment and registration decision subject to appeal.	✓			
12. Legal exceptions notwithstanding, applicants have full and timely access to their assessment results and records associated with registration.	1. There is a process under which requests for records are considered. Fees for access to records are reasonable and do not exceed cost recovery.	✓			
12. Legal exceptions notwithstanding, applicants have full and timely access to their assessment results and records associated with registration.	2. Applicants are informed of their access to records and the process for requesting records.		✓		MIA has an informal, no-fee process. Applicants have access to records upon request. No information is provided in the registration material about access to records.
13. Fees involved in the assessment and registration process are reasonable.	1. Fees do not exceed cost recovery.	✓			
14. Assessment and registration process is timely.	1. Reasonable measure is taken to ensure the prompt processing of applications and assessments.	✓			

Standard: *Dedicated and fair practices are in place for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure effectiveness.*

Elements	Criteria	Assessment			Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's Findings
		Compliant	Improvement Needs	Non-compliant	
14. Assessment and registration process is timely.	2. Communication with applicants is timely and systematic.	✓			
14. Assessment and registration process is timely.	3. Assessment and registration process is structured efficiently and minimizes unnecessary delays.	✓			

Fairness Commissioner's Recommendations

As a result of the OMFC's registration review of the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists (Institute) and to ensure compliance to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*, the Fairness Commissioner recommends:

1. With regard to the assessment and registration information:
 - a. *That* MIA make clear its gap training requirement for IEAs, including transparent assessment policies and criteria and the provision of written assessments;
 - b. *That* MIA provide more detailed, complete information about the "Other" gap training option, including information about the type, cost and availability of upgrading courses available;
 - c. *That* MIA provide complete information about the requirements for the Agrologist-in-Training Program in its Internationally Educated Agrologists Portal;
 - d. *That* MIA introduce general information about WES documentation requirements and the timelines for a WES credential assessment;
 - e. *That* MIA introduce information about associated costs and a realistic estimate of the full cost and time range for the entire registration process, including time and cost information for the non-IEAP, "Other" gap training route to registration and its Agrologist-in-Training Program;
 - f. *That* MIA's Internationally Educated Agrologists Portal be updated both to include information about all of the MIA's registration requirements – academic qualification, gap training requirement, and the Agrologist-in-Training Program -- and to be better integrated with the rest of the website;
 - g. *That* MIA provide information about applicant access to records and the procedure whereby records are accessed;
2. *That* MIA work to further articulate and document practice standards to better support its assessment of academic qualification, gap training assessments and the possibility of work experience assessment;
3. *That* MIA develop and implement a strategy to assess qualifications acquired through work experience;
4. *That* MIA review its reference letter requirement and mandatory gap training requirement to ensure their appropriate relevance and application;
5. *That* MIA work to establish formal policies and procedures to better ensure


the transparency, reliability and validity of its academic assessments and gap training assessments;

6. *That* MIA provide detailed written reasons for the assessment of academic qualifications and gap training requirements;
7. With respect to MIA's appeal process:
 - a. *That* the restriction of appealable decisions to academic assessments be removed, allowing appeal of any assessment and registration decisions that denies or conditions registration;
 - b. *That* complete appeal policies and procedures be established, including the timelines involved, the provision of written reasons, training for appeal committee members and a dedicated pre-appeal process;
 - c. *That* complete appeal information be provided in the registration information and with any assessment decision subject to appeal;
8. *That* MIA articulate, and provide information about, the possible paths to AIT licensure for IEAs for whom the Internationally Educated Agrologist Program is not a viable option.

MIA's Action Plan

In response to the Fairness Commissioner's Recommendations, the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists proposed the following action plan as of October 2012. The plan is reprinted in its entirety under the 'MIA's Action Plan' column in the table below.

The MIA's Action Plan will form the basis of its relationship with the OMFC moving forward. The plan is monitored by the OMFC and will be tracked in the 'Completion Date' box of the Action Plan template as they come to fruition. The report will be available on the OMFC's website (manitobafairnesscommissioner.ca), allowing any interested party to see the progress to date.


OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>1. With regard to the assessment and registration information:</p> <p>a. <i>That</i> MIA make clear its gap training requirement for IEAs, including transparent assessment policies and criteria and the provision of written assessments;</p>	<p>MIA agrees to the recommendations and has a two-stage plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide additional information on Gap Training. At minimum this will involve providing more detail in plain language on the web portal and in other written communication with Internationally Educated Agrologists (IEAs) regarding MIA's assessments. 2. Review existing assessment tools and develop and implement a Gap Training Needs Assessment Tool. 				

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>b. <i>That</i> MIA provide more detailed, complete information about the “Other” gap training option, including information about the type, cost and availability of upgrading courses available;</p> <p>c. <i>That</i> MIA provide complete information about the requirements for the Agrologist-in-Training Program in its Internationally Educated Agrologists Portal;</p>	<p>MIA agrees to the recommendations and will provide detailed information including potential courses and MIA processes. Although “other” Gap Training can be highly individual and circumstance dependent, MIA does have more information that it can and will make available.</p> <p>Information about the Agrologist-in-Training requirements is available within the IEA portal. MIA will review the information and ensure that language and terminology is consistent throughout.</p>		<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>		

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>d. <i>That</i> MIA introduce general information about WES documentation requirements and the timelines for a WES credential assessment;</p> <p>e. <i>That</i> MIA introduce information about associated costs and a realistic estimate of the full cost and time range for the entire registration process, including time and cost information for the non-IEAP, "Other" gap training route to registration and its Agrologist-in-Training Program;</p>	<p>MIA agrees to directly provide more detailed information (that is currently available within the WES website and within the IEAP website) in the IEA web portal. The information will include timelines.</p> <p>MIA agrees to the recommendation and will develop a planned approach to providing detailed information on potential costs and time range. MIA will include new content in planning a second phase enhancement of the IEA portal.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>		

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
f. That MIA's Internationally Educated Agrologists Portal be updated both to include information about all of MIA's registration requirements – academic qualification, gap training requirement, and the Agrologist-in-Training Program -- and to be better integrated with the rest of the website;	MIA agrees to the recommendation and will review its website to determine the most effective means to make sure that IEAs are directed to the IEA portal. Integration with the rest of the MIA website may involve updating and/or re-programming the existing site and implementation may depend on availability of resources for this project.		✓		
g. That MIA provide information about applicant access to records and the procedure whereby records are accessed;	MIA agrees to provide applicants with access to their records. MIA will include new general information on the process on its website and in written communication.	✓			

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p> <p>Since formally initiating "plain language" into its communication strategy, MIA experienced measureable improvement in its interaction with IEAs. MIA will need to identify new resources to sustain and extend this strategy throughout the information related recommendations and action plans in this report.</p>					
<p>2. <i>That</i> MIA work to further articulate and document practice standards to better support its assessment of academic qualification, gap training assessments and the possibility of work experience assessment;</p>	<p>MIA will collaborate with partners in Agriologists Canada to develop a workable competency based framework for the profession.</p>			<p>✓</p>	
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p>					
<p>3. <i>That</i> MIA develop and implement a strategy to assess qualifications acquired through work experience;</p>	<p>The MIA Admission and Registration Committee (ARC) is interested in collaborating with the OMFC and possibly others to further understand the potential for experience-based qualification assessment for IEAs. The ARC supports development of a competency-based assessment framework that includes a work experience component.</p>			<p>✓</p>	

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p> <p>Neither MIA nor any other Canadian agrology jurisdiction has a workable, fair, and transparent strategy to assess qualifications acquired through experience. Given the importance of experience in development of a competency based framework, MIA has already raised the issue of competency- based assessment standards to Agrologists Canada and will continue to advance further discussion at the regional and national level.</p>					
<p>4. <i>That</i> MIA review its reference letter requirement and mandatory gap training requirement to ensure their appropriate relevance and application;</p>	<p>The ARC agrees to review the reference letter requirement with a view to provide even more flexibility regarding both use and timing.</p> <p>With respect to mandatory gap training requirements, MIA will provide more and better information to clarify the relationship between “gap training” and Agrologist-in-Training requirements. Additionally, the ARC will extend the current assessment format with revised procedures to ensure decisions on Gap Training are appropriate and well understood.</p>				
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p>					

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>5. <i>That</i> MIA work to establish formal policies and procedures to better ensure the transparency, reliability and validity of its academic assessments and gap training assessments;</p>	<p>Related to transparency: Existing information from MIA's Admission and Registration manual will be added to the IEA web portal.</p> <p>Related to reliability and validity of assessments: The ARC has a process in place to regularly review assessment policies and procedures to ensure methods are reliable and decisions are sound. In addition to its commitment to action on recommendations 2 and 3, the ARC will commit to improve documentation of policies and procedures.</p>	✓		✓	
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p> <p>MIA intends to follow-up with the OMFC to clarify aspects of the recommendation so that MIA's planned actions meet expectations.</p>					
<p>6. <i>That</i> MIA provide detailed written reasons for the assessment of academic qualifications and gap training requirements;</p>	<p>MIA agrees to the recommendation and will provide more complete and detailed reasons for assessment results. The ARC further agrees to provide more details in writing, including comparative information, to applicants whose registration applications are not accepted, or whose application is assessed with conditions.</p>	✓			
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p>					

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>7. With respect to MIA's appeal process:</p> <p>a. <i>That</i> the restriction of appealable decisions to academic assessments be removed, allowing appeal of any assessment and registration decisions that denies or conditions registration;</p> <p>b. <i>That</i> complete appeal policies and procedures be established, including the timelines involved, the provision of written reasons, training for appeal committee members and a dedicated pre-appeal process;</p>	<p>MIA does not limit or restrict appealable decisions to academic decisions. However, MIA accepts that this existing wording may lead to an unintended perception among some applicants.</p> <p>MIA agrees with the recommendation and will provide clear information regarding appeals, including policies and procedures.</p>		<p>✓</p>		

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
c. <i>That</i> complete appeal information be provided in the registration information and with any assessment decision subject to appeal;	MIA accepts the recommendation and will include new information in the IEA web portal and in written decision communications.		✓		
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p> <p>MIA's practice is to encourage exchange of information and dialogue with applicants and to resolve concerns on application requirements and assessment. As has already been observed elsewhere in this report, MIA has resources dedicated to providing strong "customer service" to IEAs. However, the potential and right to a formal appeal process is understood even though appeals are rare and reconsiderations are preferred to potentially contentious and lengthy appeal process.</p>					
8. <i>That</i> MIA articulate, and provide information about, the possible paths to AIT licensure for IEAs for whom the Internationally Educated Agrologist Program is not a viable option.	MIA will continue its practice of supporting IEAs with individualized information about alternatives to the IEAP and will develop and publish other general information concerning options that could satisfy MIA licensure options.		✓		

OMFC's Recommendation	Planned Action(s)	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Regulator's Comments:</p> <p>Even though other options to meet licensure requirements exist, MIA's experience with IEAs is that most prefer the IEAP pathway because of the perceived career-related benefits. This is because successful completion of the IEAP addresses MIA's requirements, and enhances prospects for building a professional career. IEAs preferences are often well established prior to seeking information about the licensure process and requirements of MIA. The efficacy of the IEAP for IEAs and employers and growing interest in the program elsewhere in Canada predictably makes other options of significantly less interest.</p>					

Fairness Commissioner's Statement of Compliance

The Manitoba Institute of Agrologists' Action Plan is a progressive response to the recommendations that resulted from the OMFC's registration review. These actions are a solid example of the Institute's genuine commitment to fair practice in the recognition of internationally educated Agrologists.

Over the past several years, the Institute has undergone a remarkable evolution in its practices. Their collaborative work with the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Manitoba, the Government of Manitoba and industry has resulted in a true Manitoba success story. Due to their efforts, Agrologists from around the world have the opportunity to be recognized and integrated into a critical sector of our economy. As a result, Manitoba benefits from the diversity of skills and expertise internationally trained practitioners bring to the profession.

Under its current leadership, the Institute continues to be willing to examine, learn and evolve its practice. I am energized by the Institute's far-sighted perspective on the integration of internationally educated professionals and look forward to our continued work together.

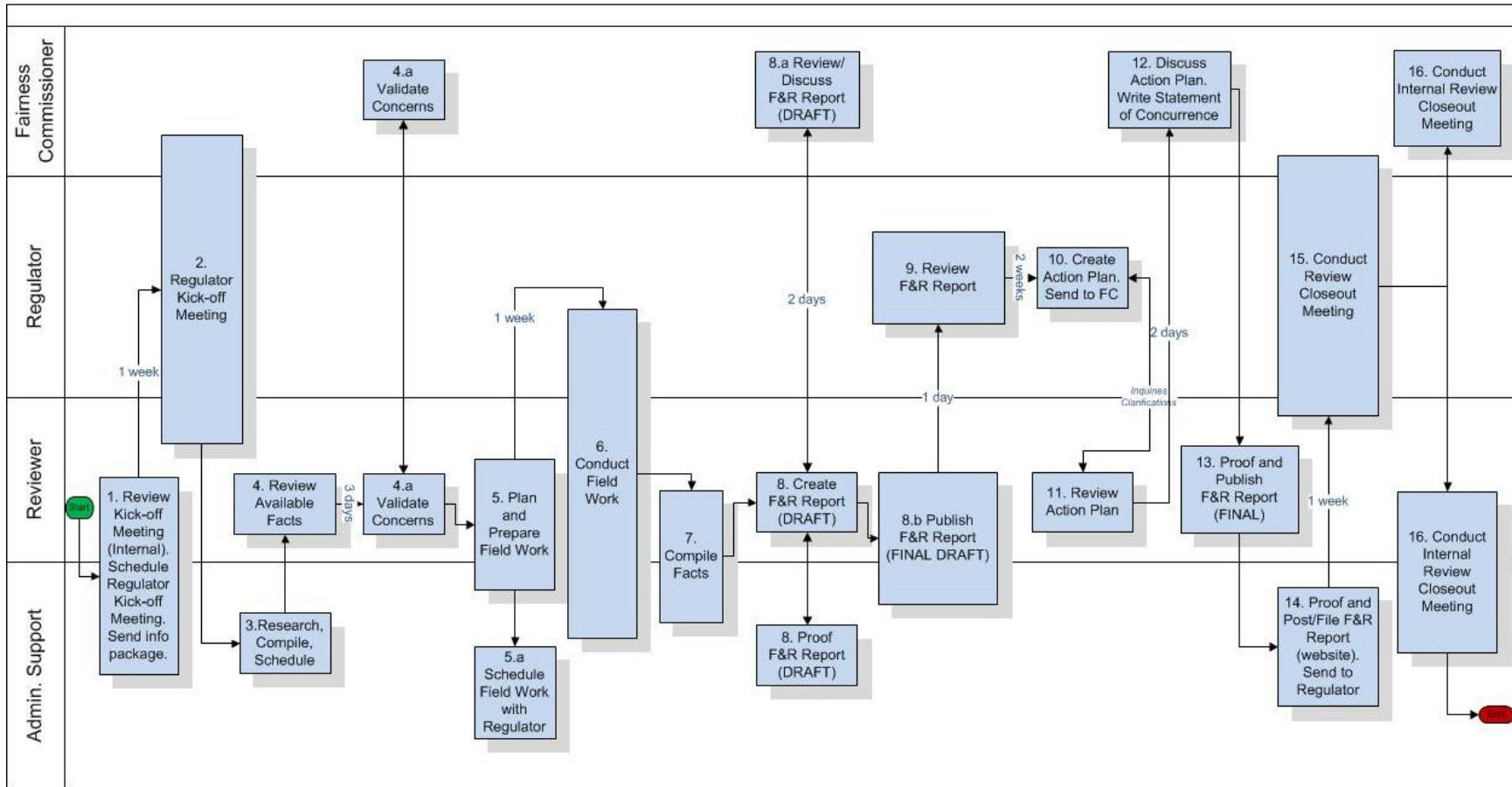


Ximena Munoz

Manitoba Fairness Commissioner

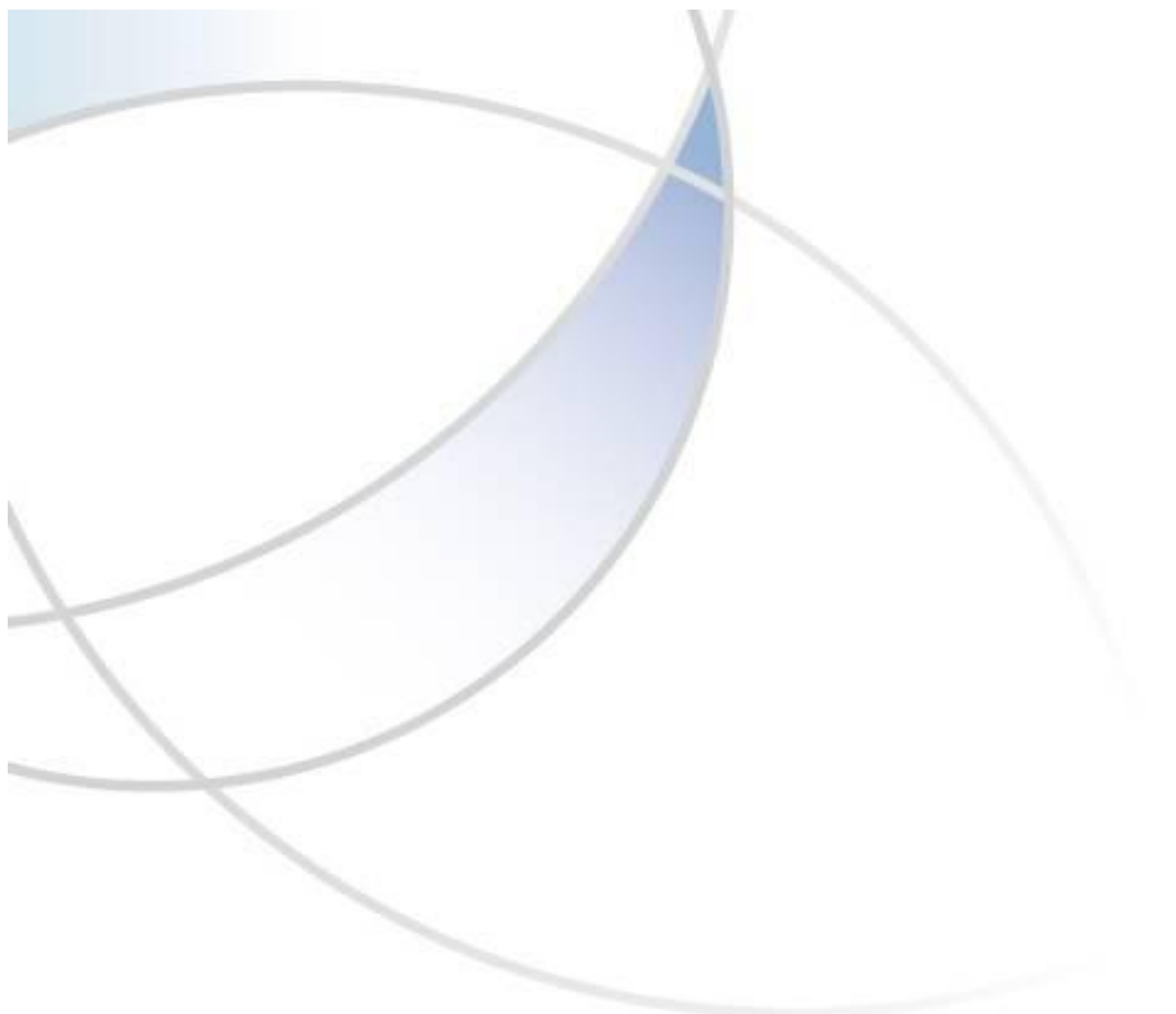
Appendix A

OFFICE OF THE MANITOBA FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER Registration Review Process



Appendix B

MIA's Registration Review		
Activity	Description	Date
Block Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings between OMFC, MIA and other regulators in the block of reviews for this review period; Registration review process presented; Review schedule set; Nature of required documentation explained and requested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 11, 2012
Kick-Off Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of MIA's registration review; Key decisions makers from regulator in attendance; Collect requested documentation; Fieldwork planned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 31, 2012
Fieldwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information otherwise unavailable through public information and policy documents; Clarify information and acquire a more in-depth understanding of policy and practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 12, 2012
Findings and Recommendations Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIA receives a report with the review findings, the Fairness Commissioner's recommendations and a request for an Action Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September 21, 2012
Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIA's Action Plan submitted to OMFC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 3, 2012
Final Registration Review Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report submitted to MIA and uploaded to OMFC's website; Report contains the review findings, the Fairness Commissioner's recommendations, MIA's Action Plan, and the Fairness Commissioner's Compliance Statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 15, 2012
Registration Review Closeout Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss review results & Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 23, 2012



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