

Action Plan: Manitoba Institute of Agrologists (MIA)

In response to the Fairness Commissioner's recommendation in the 2016-17 Registration Review, MIA proposed the following action:

Progress Opportunities	Action Plan	Anticipated Completion Date	Status as of February 2018	Update
1. Co-operating and collaborating with stakeholders and partners to develop increased options for efficient registration of IEAs that recognize the individualised nature of applicants' gap training needs.	1.1 Gain first hand perspectives from past participants in the Internationally Educated Agrologists bridging Program (IEAP) about the academic, work experience and general program structure. Initiate a structured and professionally managed focus group with former participants to gain insights into the program. (for details please see notes for PO 1 and 2 below)	January 2017	Complete	<p>A focus group was conducted with nine past IEAP participants in January 2017 and a report was written and submitted to OMFC. (also see 2.1 below)</p> <p>MIA has been in discussion with the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, regarding the need for options to help IEAs address gaps. As a result, IEAs can now complete needed courses within the faculty without having to enrol in a full program of study.</p>
	1.2 Analyze results.	March 2017	Complete	
	1.3 Review current MIA assessment process for alignment with potential new gap training model.	Spring 2018	Ongoing	
2. Co-operating and collaborating with stakeholders and partners to engage employers with the goal of further informing licensure and employment pathways including options for gap reduction.	2.1 Share results of managed focus group (PO1, above) with employers and other stakeholders.	Summer 2017	Complete	<p>Results of focus groups have been shared with some companies. Resources (mainly time) are an issue; most employers prefer someone else (like MIA, UofM) develop the competency readiness program/service identified as important by focus group participants.</p> <p>MIA does not currently have sufficient resources to develop a program of this size. However, they have been working one-on-one with IEAs and with immigrant employment services. They have also starting exploring models (such as study groups) used in other professions for IEA professional development.</p>
	2.2 Work with potential collaborators (including IEAs) on new insights and identify potential re-envisioned gap training/bridging to registration and employment framework.	Fall 2017	Ongoing	
	2.3 Develop potential delivery model(s) for gap training.	Winter 2017		

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	2.4 Introduce/beta test revised model.	Spring 2018		
3. Working with Agrologists Canada to develop resources to support improved understanding by IEAs of the agrology industry, potentially leading to the development of a self-assessment tool.	3.1 Using the required process for proposing action, initiate information to the Agrologists-agronomes Canada board of Directors concerning the concept, value and potential of the national body providing general and comprehensive information to Internationally Educated Agrologists (IEAs) about the agrology profession in Canada and the pathways for professional recognition. MIA's recommendation will be aimed at ways and means of Agrologists Canada providing useful information to potential IEAs.	April 2017	Complete	MIA has been in discussion with Agrologists Agronomes Canada and, as a result, their staff has contacted IRCC concerning options and possibilities for linkages that would provide enhanced information to IEAs pre-arrival. Since the registration review, they have enhanced their website by including information on the sectors in which agrology professionals commonly work (agriculture, environment, life sciences and food) and the kind of work that is done in the various areas that make up each sector. MIA uses this information to support the work it does with IEAs and will ensure there are links to it from their updated website.
4. Better distinguishing between IEAs who might be able to work in the industry without a Canadian license vs. those who could potentially qualify for registration with MIA for the purpose of supporting improved employment counselling.	4.1 Communicate with Manitoba Start/Manitoba Immigration about the potential need for information and communication strategies and alternatives (including use of infographics and additional documentation) that explains and differentiates between participants in the Agrology sector and those requiring registration/licensure based on interpretation of relevant National Occupation Codes (NOC).	January 2017	June 2017	MIA staff met with approximately 20 Manitoba Start front-line career coaches to discuss experiences and opportunities. MIA follow-up included provision of additional detailed information describing practice areas (areas for potential employment) and identifying potential employers. MIA staff also meet with people on an individual basis. They discuss career aspirations and where there is need for licensing. They support the development of personalised development plans and provide guidance as needed.
	4.2 Assist Manitoba Start/Manitoba	Fall 2017	Ongoing	

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	Immigration to interpret relevant NOC code(s) relative to registration/non-registration requirements in Agrolgy.			
5. Updating information and website navigation to improve clarity and increase understanding of processes and requirements.	5.1 Review and correct inactive links to external resources. 5.2 Continue providing updated information on MIA website and IEA portal, specific forms are under review and will be updated as completed.	(Completed) October 2017 June 2017	Ongoing	MIA is in the process of developing a new website, to be launched shortly. The site will include updated documents such as the Steps to Registration document, the Document Checklist, and the audio-visual presentation on the registration process developed with support from the OMFC.

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Progress Opportunity (PO) 1 and PO2 are linked. The current process MIA uses is aimed at assessing all applicants based on the entry to practice standard for regulatory compliance and to meet mobility requirements associated with the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). The current process includes assessment and transferability of “technical” capability and a significant focus on enabling competencies. The current situation is that employers who hire IEAs have largely accepted the MIA’s structured gap training assessment and registration approach and it continues to be done on an individualized basis. However, issues such as the order in which the steps are completed for an IEA to progress, for example, have not been recently explored.

PO1. The main objective of this action is beginning a process of assessing current versus future needs and requirements by initiating a gap analysis. The focus group approach is aimed at producing the following information about the bridging program (IEAP):

- What participants thought was most valuable about the academic requirement of the program as a whole. For example, whether the academic requirement met their information needs; whether it was sufficiently wide-ranging; whether the scope was too broad or too narrow; and whether the composition of classes contributed to their success.
- What participants thought was most valuable about the work experience aspect of the IEAP, and how this could be improved in order to better meet their needs;
- Do participants feel that their participation in the IEAP provided what they needed to seek their certification, and to work effectively in the field in Canada?
- What were the most helpful parts of the IEAP program; what were the least helpful? Are there identifiable gaps?

PO2. The main objective of this action is to develop a plan that will inform employers and others about the status of the IEA gap assessment and bridging processes and gauge interest in working collaboratively on IEA gap management. Many employers in Manitoba have been and continue to offer significant opportunities for IEAs to demonstrate their competencies in a progressive manner leading away from less routine work and toward increasing complex work that includes decision making and problem-solving.

PO3. Agrolgists Agronomes Canada is a national body whose funding members are provincial Agrolgy regulators. Agrolgists Canada supports regulators by working collaboratively on priorities agreed to by the organization. Since not all provincial regulators or regions are equally affected by immigration, Agrolgists Canada has not become fully aware of or agreed on the need for a

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common information strategy for potential IEAs. MIA's approach to PO3 will initially be to inform members about IEA issues including from the perspective of potential mobility impacts.

PO4. There are three significant factors related to this action item: the desires and aspirations of an IEA relative to the investments they have made so far in their education and career, relevant codes in the National Occupational Classification system that are specific to an IEA, and information about regulated professional work and non-regulated work related to Agrolgy in Canada.