

Business Accomplishments 2021-2022

Consumer Protection

Goal: To administer and enforce the legislation by which the Ontario travelling public can be confident in their travel purchases from registered professionals, including working collaboratively with stakeholders for regulatory enhancement.

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2021/2022	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
FY 2021/2022	Conduct consultations with stakeholders regarding the proposed restructuring of TICO's funding model.	Complete stakeholder consultations and subject to the travel industry recovery from the pandemic, have an appropriate new funding model in place by 2022/2023 to administer and enforce the Act and Regulation. Following stakeholder consultations concerning TICO's funding framework and fee model, a detailed report was provided to the Minister/Ministry on the significant stakeholder concerns over the timing of proposed changes and perceived inequities of the proposal. In concluding this consultation, a formalized request was made to defer further work on the proposed funding framework and fee model. The report was subsequently followed by a formal request for additional financing for next fiscal year via a third transfer payment agreement – approval which was received in December 2021.
	Promote and advance legislative and regulatory reform.	Provide recommendations to the Ministry to update and modernize the legislation taking into consideration changes to business models and stakeholder feedback. Review of temporary amendments to the Regulation in relation to financial filings and ability for registrants to issue future travel credits resulted in extensions. The financial filing exemption was extended by two years to November 30, 2024, and the exemption under section 46 which authorizes registrants to elect to only provide vouchers in certain circumstances was extended for one year to March 31, 2023.
	Mitigate risk and enhance consumer protection.	Reduce the number of high-risk registrants and identify and achieve compliance of unregistered sellers of travel services in Ontario. The existing registrant risk assessment framework has been replaced with limited scope inspections that focus on previously identified high-risk registrants' trust accounting and liquidity. TICO will resume its regular inspection process in line with public health guidelines.
	Foster collaboration and engagement with consumer and industry stakeholders to address the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on the industry and businesses.	Insights from productive and meaningful engagement via the Consumer and Industry Advisory Committee proactively addressing issues, where appropriate as a Regulator, to support the economic viability of the travel industry and consumer protection mandate. The Consumer & Industry Advisory Committee was established in 2021-2022 and has provided valuable consumer and industry insights. Since this time, significant activity around consumer and registrant outreach programs through various updates to social media and via Registrar Bulletins and other advisories have been completed (e.g., Pandemic Disclosure Guidelines). TICO also met with various industry associations to provide status updates and advance notice of key announcements. Every effort has been made to ensure consumers & registrants were aware of current pandemic updates affecting travel protocols and other registrant obligations.
	Improve consumer protection by enhancing TICO's compliance model.	Based on the outcomes identified during the compliance model review, complete a plan for enhancements for operationalization. During the first quarter of the fiscal year two compliance departments were consolidated. Review of operational procedures are underway and expected to be completed in 2022/23.

Awareness and Education

Goal: Consumers and registrants are aware of TICO and understand the benefits of purchasing travel services through a registered travel agency / website or travel wholesaler.

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2021/2022	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
FY 2021/2022	Continue to build and enhance consumer awareness in Ontario.	<p>Maintain overall awareness and understanding by continuing to engage consumers by executing a modest digital media strategy.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to engage consumers through online educational presentations, and social media to build awareness and confidence by leveraging technology (i.e., webinars).</p> <p>Conduct a consumer survey to gauge overall consumer engagement and value.</p> <p>Produce and distribute various editorial and media releases to secure coverage in consumer publications to enhance education and awareness.</p>
	Renew communications and an education strategy to inform consumers about Ontario Regulation 26/05 changes proclaimed in response to COVID-19 global pandemic.	Implementation of a communications and education strategy completed to promote education and awareness of consumers regarding enhancements to Ontario Regulation 26/05.
	Enhance TICO's online Education Standards Program with updated curriculum and testing to include regulatory changes including continuing education opportunities.	Updated online Education Standards Program completed and ready for roll-out including a selection of continuing education opportunities.
	Engage registrants and provide education and familiarization around recent regulatory changes.	Various engagement opportunities extended to registrants online to familiarize themselves with the new regulatory changes and the impacts, if any, to their business.
		<p>As border restrictions and public health measures eased, TICO reinforced its travel-forward messaging that focused on the importance of booking with a TICO-registered travel agency or website.</p> <p>On social media, TICO shared content that informed travellers about: the consumer protection offered when booking with a TICO-registered business, what consumers need to be mindful of as they re-enter the travel marketplace, the importance of travel insurance and how to verify if an agency is TICO-registered.</p> <p>TICO also launched two updated mass market videos speaking to not missing any important details when travelling in the 'new normal.' The videos ran as pre-roll advertisements on YouTube and were seen 274,603 times.</p> <p>With the travel environment changing, TICO was featured in 42 media articles and broadcasts including top tier outlets such as CBC, CTV, CP24 and Globe & Mail and Toronto Star.</p> <p>Overall, in fiscal 2021/2022, our consumer protection messaging was seen over 11 million times by Ontarians.</p> <p>TICO conducted a digital consumer awareness survey which found 14.4% of respondents were aware that TICO is Ontario's travel regulator, a decrease from the prior of 21%.</p> <p>The same survey conducted in late March found that 13% of respondents had knowledge of TICO's role compared to 14% in the prior year.</p> <p>TICO's Consumer Awareness Campaign included an emphasis on sharing information about how TICO helps to protect travellers. TICO continued to respond promptly to individuals who engaged TICO on social media requesting support with complaints or issues related to TICO-registered companies.</p> <p>An updated and enhanced Education Standards Program including an online flip book study manual, chapter quizzes, sample exams and exam bank of questions was launched during 2021/2022.</p> <p>A total of 37 webinars were held for registrants which included a mix of webinars related to requirements on verification statements and general compliance requirements.</p>

Organizational Effectiveness

Goal: TICO embraces a spirit of continuous improvement and innovation in the systems and processes in executing its mandate and in the ongoing investment and professional development of its people.

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE		PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2021/2022	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
FY 2021/2022	Implement the new adopted funding model framework.	Operationalize and execute TICO's new funding structure including all policies, processes, and system enhancements for the new funding model in place by 2022/2023.	The proposed funding framework and fee model analysis has been deferred to FY2022/23.
	Sustain and enhance security protocols and protection across TICO system infrastructure.	Continued innovative enhancements to harden and solidify TICO's system infrastructure against cybersecurity risks and data breaches and continuous education initiatives with TICO management, staff, and Board of Directors to further test and increase understanding of risk response scenarios to avoid potential data breaches.	Security project completed to strengthen the authentication, access control and system monitoring. Regular phishing campaigns conducted with employees with the goal of increasing staff awareness and familiarization with various phishing tactics and to reduce the risk of unauthorized access due to human error. Conducted tabletop simulation to increase cybersecurity awareness and readiness in the event of an attack. An Information Technology General Controls Audit was completed by a third-party consultant to ensure the resilience of TICO's system infrastructure.
	Enhance data management capabilities to enhance business intelligence and operational effectiveness.	Implementation of project milestones associated with core operating system enhancements and integration reflecting sound data management.	TICO implemented continuous vulnerability assessments on all devices, servers, and networks. An enhanced virus scanning tool was deployed with advanced threat protection. Continuous patching of all the systems and enhanced monitoring of data access and management.
	Continue to update and modernize crisis management protocol and communications.	Crisis management protocols and communications are updated to capture emerging vulnerabilities and trends identified to ensure TICO's responses are effective in times of crisis.	Conducted an internal cybersecurity incident simulation which resulted in observations to be included to TICO's crisis communications plan.
	Enhance TICO's overall performance and value proposition to stakeholders.	An action plan and strategy to optimize TICO's overall value proposition and effectiveness to stakeholders is complete and ready for implementation.	Initiatives to enhance TICO's value proposition to stakeholders has resulted in an increase in TICO's overall value to stakeholders. The consumer pulse survey completed resulted in an increase in value of TICO and its services from 73% in 2021 to 75% in 2022. The registrant pulse survey completed resulted in an increase in value of TICO and its services from 54% in 2021 to 63% in 2022.
	Workforce optimization and drive employee engagement.	Strategy and action plan completed and implementation underway to ensure TICO's future employee engagement and lower performing attributes improve.	Employee Engagement pulse survey conducted resulted in a decrease in score from 87% to 85%. For the lower scoring attribute there was a decreased score from 83% to 82%.

Additional Business Accomplishments 2021-2022

- Successfully administered TICO's Education Standards Program.
- Increased IT security monitoring of the network environment.
- Continued to seek operational efficiencies through enhanced IT tools and processes.
- Met the terms of the current Administrative Agreement with the Ministry by maintaining operations and systems to protect consumers in Ontario.
- In collaboration with the Ministry continued to work towards finalizing an updated and enhanced Administrative Agreement with the Ontario government (executed April 28, 2022).
- Granted approval by Google to receive funding from their not-for-profit Google Ad Grants program up to \$10,000 USD per month.
- Provided quarterly, detailed financial reporting and analysis required under the government's transfer payment agreements.
- Completed a review of all operational policies and updated TICO website with required disclosures.
- Continued to maintain and enhance TICO's website with up to date and timely information for the benefit of all stakeholders, including changes to Ontario Regulation 26/05.
- Made further enhancements to TICO's Verification Statement to assist registrants with new financial filing requirements.
- Developed Pandemic Disclosure Guidelines and a corresponding webinar to assist registrants when selling travel in unprecedented circumstances.
- Produced and conducted new orientation webinars to assist and inform new registrants about their obligations under the Regulation.
- Enhanced the online travel agency/website search feature on TICO's website to provide more comprehensive and efficient display of information.
- TICO Talk quarterly e-newsletter produced and made available on TICO's website and e-blasted to all registrants.
- TICO conducted speaking engagements to Tourism and Hospitality students at various Ontario Community Colleges.
- Continued to provide advisories and registrar bulletins to all stakeholders containing timely and relative information.
- Distributed and made available on TICO's website, TICO's Annual Report and Business Plan in June of 2021.
- Introduced a comprehensive and integrated online human resources platform.
- Produced and conducted a Safe Return to Work orientation session to ensure the safe return of all employees to TICO's office environment.
- TICO's Joint Health and Safety Committee composed of employee and management representatives continued its work to maintain and enhance the health and safety conditions in the workplace.
- Established a new virtual reception service to provide professional customer service support to stakeholders in a hybrid work environment.

Balanced Scorecard

TICO's 2021 Business Plan included the following Balanced Scorecard. TICO deployed this balanced scorecard throughout its fiscal year to monitor and gauge ongoing efforts and achievement of its strategic objectives. This Balanced Scorecard is shared with stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability consistent with the Business Plan.

CONSUMER PROTECTION			
OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	FISCAL YEAR 2021/22 TARGET	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Mitigate Risk and Enhance Consumer Protection.	Overall pass rate of financial filing bench reviews based on established financial criteria per the Regulation.	Achieve initial financial filing bench review pass rate of a minimum of 90% .	A pass rate of 97% has been achieved.
	Percentage of compliance achieved for the number of identified unregistered sellers of travel operating in contravention of the Act and Regulation.	Achieve a compliance rate of 97% from 95% of all unregistered sellers of travel identified and processed in 2021/2022.	A 94% compliance rate has been achieved with unregistered sellers whereby they were brought into compliance.
Enhance Engagement with Consumers.	Actively interact with consumers and improve social media engagement rate (defined as likes, comments, and shares)	Seek opportunities to increase consumer engagement rate on social media by achieving an increase of 2.8% to 5% on Facebook and 15.4% to 18% on Instagram.	<p>TICO continued to follow consumer sentiment when planning social media posts.</p> <p>As travel restrictions eased, we provided travel-forward messaging to help consumers feel confident when booking with a TICO-registered travel agency or website. The information in our posts linked back to the TICO website to learn more.</p> <p>TICO's Q4 results show strong engagement rates of 3.5% on Facebook and 26.3% on Instagram, our highest levels from the past fiscal year. Our full-year engagement averages are 3.2% on Facebook and 20.3% on Instagram.</p>

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	FISCAL YEAR 2021/22 TARGET	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Improve Consumer Awareness and Education.	Improve metrics to accurately gauge Ontarian's awareness of the existence of TICO and the consumer protection available when purchasing travel services from Ontario registered travel agencies and websites.	Exceed consumer awareness achieved from 21% to 24% that the travel industry in the province is regulated and TICO is Ontario's Travel Regulator.	TICO conducted a consumer awareness survey in late March. The survey found 14.35% of respondents were aware that TICO is Ontario's travel regulator. This represents fully unaided awareness and is a decrease from November 2021 (19.1%). There were significant announcements around border restrictions that took place in February and March, with commentary from many industry groups and businesses. With the level of activity in this space, there is likelihood that there was confusion about the role of different organizations within the travel industry.
		Exceed consumer awareness achieved from 14% to 17% that consumer protection is available when purchasing travel services from an Ontario registered travel agency or website.	The same survey conducted in late March found that 13.1% of respondents had knowledge of TICO's role and consumer protection. This is an increase from November 2021 (12.3%).
Determine and Measure Overall Consumer and Value.	Develop and implement a survey tool that provides a comprehensive measure of consumer's value of TICO's services and the consumer protection available in the province.	Improve the overall value baseline score of 73% of consumer's value of TICO and its services as a basis for future enhancement strategies.	The consumer pulse survey completed resulted in an increase in value of TICO and its services from 73% in 2021 to 75% in 2022.
Enhance TICO's Education Standards Program.	Update and provide new study tools to assist individuals meet the legislated Educational Standard to sell travel services in Ontario.	Achieve an X% baseline satisfaction rate of TICO's Education Standards Program and educational resources in 2021/2022.	Overall satisfaction rate of TICO's Education Standards Program is 71%.
Enhance Education Opportunities for Registrants.	Develop educational webinars and online continuing education resources to engage and revitalize the knowledge of registrants and their travel counsellors.	Achieve an X% baseline satisfaction rate of TICO's educational initiatives with registrants in 2021/2022.	Overall satisfaction rate of TICO's education initiatives with registrants and their travel counsellors is 91%.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	FISCAL YEAR 2021/22 TARGET	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Enhance TICO Value Proposition to Registrants	Develop and implement a survey tool that provides a comprehensive measure of registrant value of TICO and its services.	Improve the overall value baseline score of 54% for registrant value of TICO and its services as a basis for future enhancement strategies.	The registrant pulse survey completed resulted in an increase in value of TICO and its services from 54% in 2021 to 63% in 2022.
Enhance Employee Engagement	Conduct an employee engagement survey including review of outcomes and address opportunities to increase the lower performing attributes identified.	Improve the overall employee engagement score on the lowest score attributes by 10% .	The overall score decreased from 87% to 85%. For the lower scoring attribute there was a decreased score from 83% to 82%.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	FISCAL YEAR 2021/22 TARGET	ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Deliver Budget Operating Expenses	Operating expenses, excluding extraordinary items.	Achieve operating expenses within a range of +/- 5% of annual budget.	Operating expenses, we were favorable to Budget for the year by \$85,199 which represents a 1.9% positive variance.