

2014 Alternative Dispute Resolution Summary

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is available to all Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) stakeholders as an option for resolving energy related disputes. By introducing different perspectives, ideas, and values, ADR allows Landowners and other stakeholders to have a fair and equal voice, and an opportunity to influence the AER's decision-making process. Our team of ADR specialists are trained mediators who help parties to work through complex problems in an informal setting. Finding local solutions to local issues saves Albertans, industry, and the AER time and money by reducing the need for public hearings, and building positive relationships in affected communities.

With the AER's launch and expanded mandate in 2013, 2014 was a year of growth and learning for the ADR team as we worked with stakeholders to resolve disputes related to our newly expanded responsibilities which now include remediation and reclamation of public land use, and water and environmental concerns. Last year also saw an increase in participation from aboriginal communities wishing to balance energy development with unique community needs and traditional ways of life. Despite our increased caseload, the effective ADR program continues to maintain a high success rate where parties find full or partial resolution to issues. As a result, feedback from participants is consistently positive.

The range of dispute resolution opportunities at the AER now includes ADR by hearing commissioner, which is a separate but complementary process. Hearing commissioners offer an expanded range of ADR options including settlement conferences, evaluative mediation, mediation-arbitration, and binding dispute resolution. The ADR team works closely with the hearing commissioner to provide a seamless service to Albertans and industry.

As part of the AER's Alberta Stakeholder Engagement Branch, the ADR team works with Community Engagement and Aboriginal Engagement staff to provide service to Albertans who wish to access the many AER processes available to them. Upon request, an ADR specialist will visit your company, municipality, community, or synergy meeting to discuss ADR.

The ADR team adopts new techniques to improve the program year after year. In 2015, the ADR team is assessing the possibility of using technology to conduct ADR remotely, and developing a new satisfaction survey process to make it easier for stakeholders to provide feedback on the ADR program. In addition, closer relationships are being formed with aboriginal people/communities to ensure that ADR processes meet their needs.

2014 ADR participant feedback:

“Excellent format and discussion with good results. Thanks!”

“Thank you for the opportunity to address concerns and provide a reasonable solution to the dispute.”

I had the opportunity to state my concerns and to be heard – **96% said yes.**

The facilitator/mediator was effective – **98% said yes**

Applications



Applications received

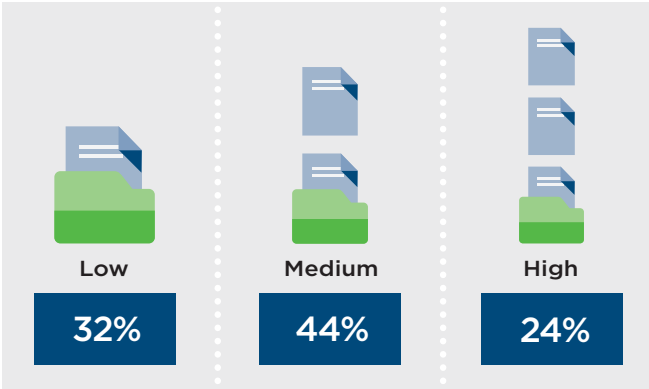


Statement of Concerns received



ADR Summary 2014

ADR File Complexity

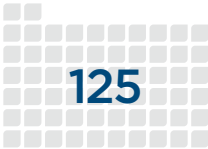


ADR Cases



AER ADR cases initiated in 2014

This is a **25%** increase over the last 5 years



AER ADR cases completed in 2014

90%
Files reached full or partial resolution

Aboriginal ADR Cases



In 2014 there were **6** ADR files involving Aboriginal people/communities