Regulatory focus on consumer protection

BAO | Bereavement Authority of Ontario

Annual Report
April 1, 2025 -
March 31, 2026

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Organizational Overview

The Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) is a government delegated authority and not-for-profit corporation administering provisions of the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA). Accountable to the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement and the government, the BAO is responsible for the protection of the public interest. The BAO regulates, ensures compliance with the law, provides resources and services to licensed:

- Funeral establishment operators, directors and preplanners;
- Cemetery, crematorium and alternative disposition operators*;
- Transfer service operators; and
- Bereavement sector sales representatives across Ontario.

The BAO is wholly funded by licensee fees (not tax dollars).

Mandate

The BAO is an independent, not-for-profit corporation that administers provisions of the FBCSA. The BAO's mandate is to serve and protect public interest and govern the bereavement sector in the province of Ontario.

Vision

A fair and safe bereavement marketplace where Ontarians have confidence in the dignified and respectful treatment of the deceased.

Mission

To effectively regulate Ontario's bereavement services by:

- Using risk-based regulatory tools to promote compliance and inspire confidence in the sector;
- Using evidence to inform decision making;
- Supporting the development of a strong and diverse sector; and
- Remaining responsive to the changing needs of consumers and the sector.

BAO Bereavement Authority of Ontario

Values

We are proactive, respectful, transparent, efficient, fair-minded and team oriented.

Objectives

The BAO's objectives are aligned with its Mission. The Strategic Objectives are itemized in our BAO Business Plan 2025/26 and are reported on in this Annual Report.

Organizational Chart

To see our organization chart, please visit this web page.

* Alternative disposition = Currently this relates to alkaline hydrolysis, a chemical process that uses a heated solution of water and potassium hydroxide or sodium hydroxide under pressure and agitation to reduce a body to components of liquid and bone.

Message from the Chair

Leith Coghlin, Chair, BAO Board of Directors

BAO exceeded its benchmarks and performance indicators in its ongoing drive to operational excellence

As I write my reflections on the 2025/26 year, I note the profound elevation experienced at the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) and among the regulated sectors the BAO regulates.

Performance Improvement

Across many metrics, the BAO exceeded its benchmarks. Processing and response times from financial compliance and licensing and consumer inquiries all exceeded performance indicators. This stated, the Board of Directors and BAO staff continue to be seized of the ongoing drive to operational excellence. Achieving operational improvements is multifaceted. Consumers remain at the core of the BAO's mandate. Accuracy and responsiveness to licensees are high priorities as well.

Regulatory Standard of Review

Senior management at the BAO has been laser-focused on improving sectoral understanding of its regulatory requirements and operational obligations pursuant to the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002.

The Board is pleased with the detailed and ongoing work occurring in the Registrar's office to ensure the sector has complete clarity on the BAO's standard of review. A release of a series of regulatory bulletins, that outlines the BAO's regulatory philosophy, evidence-based approach, and core compliance focus will be issued in the coming year.

Consumer Focus Improvements

In 2025, the Board undertook a governance operations review, that is to say an introspective examination of how the Board is prioritizing its work plan and oversight role relative to the BAO's operations and activities.

This review concluded that the BAO Board and its committees are high-functioning and productive. Most valuable, however, were the recommendations provided on better anchoring the consumer protection paradigm in the Board's overall analysis of BAO operations, performance indicators, and outcomes.

The Board began setting the conditions in 2025/26 for the rollout for greater consumer protection initiatives in 2026/27. These will underpin the BAO's evolution to align with best regulatory practices among Ontario's diverse series of regulators.

Message from the Chair…continued

Dynamic Financial Compliance

The build-out of a financial compliance team's capacities accelerated in 2025. Utilizing the new and multi-year developed Ontario Bereavement Information System (OBIS) that went operational in April 2024, the Financial Compliance Team has been busy.

Ontario counts over $3.2 billion in pre-planned funeral trust monies under oversight by the BAO and over $2 billion in cemetery care and maintenance plans. The Board would proffer significant praise to the BAO's financial compliance team for its diligence and proactive surveillance efforts in 2025.

Data and Evidence Driven

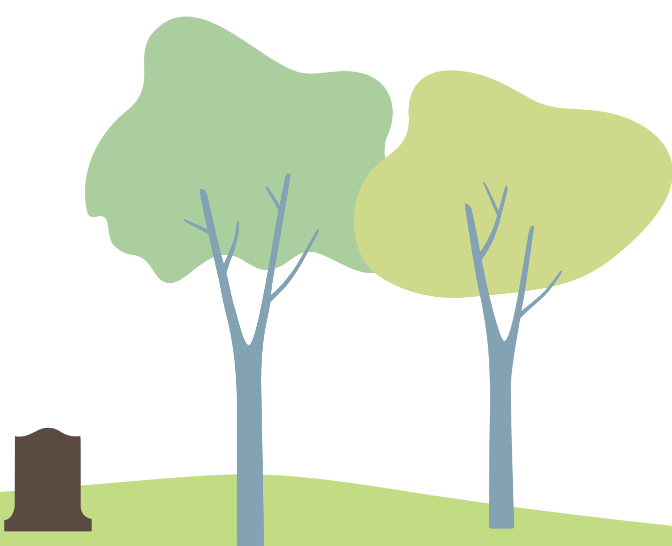
In conjunction with OBIS, the BAO licensing and inspections teams updated their trends analysis in 2025 to identify and weight risks better toward consumers and orient their work and review efforts accordingly.

Cost Pressures and Prudent Management

The Board is acutely aware of the various financial pressures licensees and consumers are experiencing as a result of many national and global challenges.

As a result, the BAO has been preoccupied with ensuring BAO operations and growth are both responsible and reasonable relative to meeting our statutory obligations.

The BAO is financially stable, is not levying major licensing fees' increases, and the corporate reserves are funded and stable. These are sharp and necessary improvements from the first six years of the BAO's existence.



More to do

Despite these improvements, both the Board and BAO senior management recognize more can be done.

The BAO heard sectoral advocacy in 2025 to provide faster and consistent direct access for licensees to obtain accurate and real-time assistance from regulatory subject-matter experts. As internal restructuring occurred throughout 2025, the BAO Board and senior management expect major operational improvements in this regard to be in place in 2026/27. I would encourage licensees and operators to stay tuned for further information in this regard.

To our sector, I would reassure, the Board hears you and is better equipping BAO leadership to be responsive to these needs.

Board Changes in 2025

The Board and I would be remiss if we did not salute and express profound gratitude for the service of three directors whose service to the BAO concluded in 2025.

Normand Allaire was appointed to the BAO Board as a government appointee in 2019 and re-appointed in 2022. During his time Norm made considerable contributions to the governance and administrative modernization processes undertaken by the Board. Some in the long list of inputs included driving the stand up of discipline and appeals committees and their frameworks, involvement in the review and refinement of the BAO's administrative agreement and by-laws, and long service leading the Compensation Fund.

For Norm's dedicated and humane service over six years, the Board of Directors chose at the 2025 Annual General Meeting to name a distinguished service award for a BAO staff member who displayed exceptional performance that produced positive results in the preceding year.

The Normand Allaire Distinguished Service Award, in its inaugural presentation in 2025, was presented to Ari Finkelstein, Senior Manager of Information Technology at the BAO. Ari's leadership delivering the custom Ontario Bereavement Information System (OBIS) was on time, below budget, and launched without any performance shortfalls was remarkable. As Chair, I would further underscore how in custom, large-scale IT-related solutions like OBIS, achieving timelines, delivering under budget, and without any launch or operational problems is exceptionally rare. We salute Ari for his achievement with his team.

Message from the Chair...continued

Director Andrew Roy, the Cemetery and Crematoria Advisory Representative and Advisory Committee Chair, completed a three-year tenure, including two as Board Vice Chair in October 2025. His engagement, contributions, and dedication reflected the highest credit. His sectoral insights and knowledge proved indispensable to the BAO's progress during a period of significant transformation and improvement.

Director Laura Tamblyn Watts, Consumer Advocate Director, completed two years with the BAO in November 2025. As the inaugural consumer advocate on the Board, Laura's deep experience in seniors and consumer advocacy helped inform the Board's drive toward greater consumer-focused review and decision making.

We thank Norm, Andy, and Laura for their service and wish them well in their future pursuits.

In late 2025, we were pleased to welcome two new directors. Government appointee Mike Crisp arrives at the BAO after a lengthy career in senior management in large corporate settings and dynamic sectors. He will be a valuable contributor to our committee work in the coming year.

Tatsiana Okun joins the BAO as our second Consumer Advocate director to the Board. Tatsiana has extensive professional working history in regulator and consumer protection roles. Her legal, investigative, and regulatory knowledge is extensive and her presence on the Board has further accelerated the BAO's consumer-informed expansion.

Saluting Staff Excellence and Welcoming New Leadership

The Board would also salute directly the outstanding and selfless performance in 2025 of BAO general counsel Jay Blair and Director of Corporate Services Aimee Moore.

During the transition period to our current CEO/Registrar Justin Brown, Jay Blair accepted and rose to the challenge of acting as Interim CEO/Registrar between July and December of 2025. His skill, care, and acumen were key pillars of stability and the effective continuity of operations at the BAO. For his leadership and performance the Board is both proud and grateful.

Director of Corporate Services Aimee Moore played a pivotal role in identifying and resolving major and fundamental operational improvements in 2025. Her efforts to implement and evolve internal BAO processes while supporting and leading staff were hallmarks of quiet confidence and consummate professionalism. The Board is indebted to Aimee for her capabilities, dedication, and extraordinary work ethic.

The Board and BAO staff were also thrilled to welcome two new senior managers in 2025.

Dr. Crystal Forrest joined the BAO in January 2025 and became Deputy Registrar and Chief Compliance Officer in November. Her knowledge and precision both in her leadership and change management approach have been embraced within the BAO and have been well received by consumers, licensees, and operators since her arrival.

Sharon Barnes-Simmonds became Chief Financial Officer in Q1 2025/26. Sharon's performance and adaptability have been deeply appreciated by the Board especially during the latter half of 2025. Her analysis and reporting have elevated the BAO's operations and significantly augmented the Board's capacities in financial forecasting and grounding strategic focus and risk management.

Of course, the end of 2025 brought the onboarding of our new CEO/Registrar Justin Brown. His quick integration and diligent efforts have made positive impressions with consumers, the government, and the BAO's regulated sectors and licensees. The Board is optimistic and enthusiastic to be working with him.

Message from the Chair…continued

Conclusion

As is my custom in annual reports, may I also express the Board's continued gratitude to the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement for its ongoing collaboration and support.

In particular, the BAO salutes Minister Todd McCarthy who served at Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement until March 2025. His consequential reforms across the entire consumer protection landscape in Ontario were the most transformative in the province in a generation and greatly impactful at the BAO and for the Board of Directors. We wish him well.

The BAO was delighted to welcome the Hon. Stephen Crawford as Minister in March 2025. Minister Crawford and his staff have been keenly interested in the BAO and its licensees and operators and his and his staff's attention, interest, and support are greatly appreciated.

Finally, may I express the Board's greatest appreciation and thanks to our licensees and operators and of course: every BAO staff member.

As a Board we are privileged to work in the interests of consumers amidst a bereavement sector in the province noteworthy for its broad and pervasive professionalism and compliance. The widespread priority of licensees and operators to be transparent and ethical are foundations of the professions. We thank you.

To our BAO staff: thank you for getting the great work done and ensuring the tremendous responsibilities are met. Your dedication and continued drive inspire us all.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you.

Sincerely,
Leith R.A. Coghlin
Chair
Bereavement Authority of Ontario

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Message from the CEO/Registrar

Justin A. Brown, CEO/Registrar

The BAO continues to strengthen its position as a modern regulator for Ontario consumers

We are proceeding steadily on our path toward regulatory excellence as mapped out by our Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) Board of Directors in the first quarter of the 2025/26 fiscal year.

The board established a clear foundation for regulatory improvement when it introduced the organization's Strategic Priorities. By aligning our regulatory actions and sector guidance on the new priorities, we are enroute to becoming a data-informed, modern regulator putting the needs of grieving families first.

During my first three months at the BAO, starting in December of 2025, I liaised with the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement, connected with death care professionals, our board, and staff members about work needed to better fulfill our consumer-protection mandate in alignment with the new priorities.

Strategic Priorities

The Strategic Priorities (SPs) concisely spell out the BAO's focus:

SP1 **Enhance** Consumer Protection and Engagement

SP2 **Enable** Sector Impact Through Operational Excellence

SP3 **Advance** an Evidence-Based Regulatory Approach

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Message from the CEO/Registrar…continued

Our role is to ensure the professional work done by the 9,748 licensed business operators and individual professionals in the bereavement sector is focused on ensuring grieving families are treated with dignity and professionalism in accordance with the law, the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002.

10 years

A decade ago, the BAO was delegated by the Government of Ontario as the administrative authority to administer that law in the public interest.

During our 10th year in operation, the BAO has been ensuring that we focus on what matters most for grieving families: professional service delivered in a caring and consistent manner.

Our sharper regulatory focus tells people we are here to inform and protect the public, while ensuring that licensed funeral establishments, cemeteries, crematoriums, and alkaline hydrolysis facilities deliver what is required of them by law.

The BAO is harnessing what we've learned over the last decade to protect the public interest, while applying the latest technology and analytics to evaluate and communicate our progress.

All of this work has resulted in significant and measurable improvements in how we administer and enforce the law.

Report on Performance Measures

Our Report on Performance Measures section of this annual report provides a snapshot of our tracked successes and challenges.

When you read it on page 11 to 13, it's clear that our team is delivering on improvements in accordance with our Strategic Priorities.

In the data for 2025/26, I've noted that our:

- Inspections team has increased inspections in the last year, to 445 inspections, exceeding targets;
- Financial Compliance team has decreased the time it takes licensed operators to receive BAO approval to borrow money from their cemetery Care and Maintenance Funds (down to 9.6 days from 13.5 days in 2024/25), which helps cemeteries expand capacity to meet increasing public demand;
- The Licensing team improving its average time to process new personal licences by 25% in the last five years, and improving cemetery licence on-time renewals from 72% to 82% since last year.
- BAO website continues to earn more pageviews – 394,454 last year vs. 370,100 in 2024-25 – which better informs the public of their rights and service options.

Modern regulator

Our data, as aggregated by our new case management system, provides insights regarding areas of focus for compliance activities.

We've delivered guidance materials for our licensees on improved documentation, digital records management, and improving clarity on their public price lists. We've encouraged consistent and transparent administrative processes to keep pace with the complexities of their businesses and changing consumer service preferences – such as fewer full funeral services, more direct cremations, and alkaline hydrolysis demand with eight licensed facilities now in operation provincially.

Addressing these items improves compliance with the law, supports grieving families, and contributes to public trust in the bereavement sector.

Message from the CEO/Registrar...continued

BAO improvements for you

The BAO continues to hold itself accountable to the public by sharing information, such as our Report on Performance Measures. We've also improved how we communicate to the public and to our licensees, ensuring that they have the information they need when they need it.

But more than that.

For greater transparency, we've made our operational data available to everyone throughout the year. Our BAO Public Dashboard provides information in real time on inquiries and complaint processing, licensing activities, and compliance and enforcement actions. This information is available 24/7 and can be filtered to provide monthly, quarterly and annual insights.

Guiding professionals

The BAO knows it's important that licensed professionals have the tools they need to provide the best services for your family in your time of need.

We provide our licensees with clear and frequent guidance materials to help them to navigate their increasingly complex work, and to meet both the traditional expectations and evolving needs of Ontario's growing and diverse population.

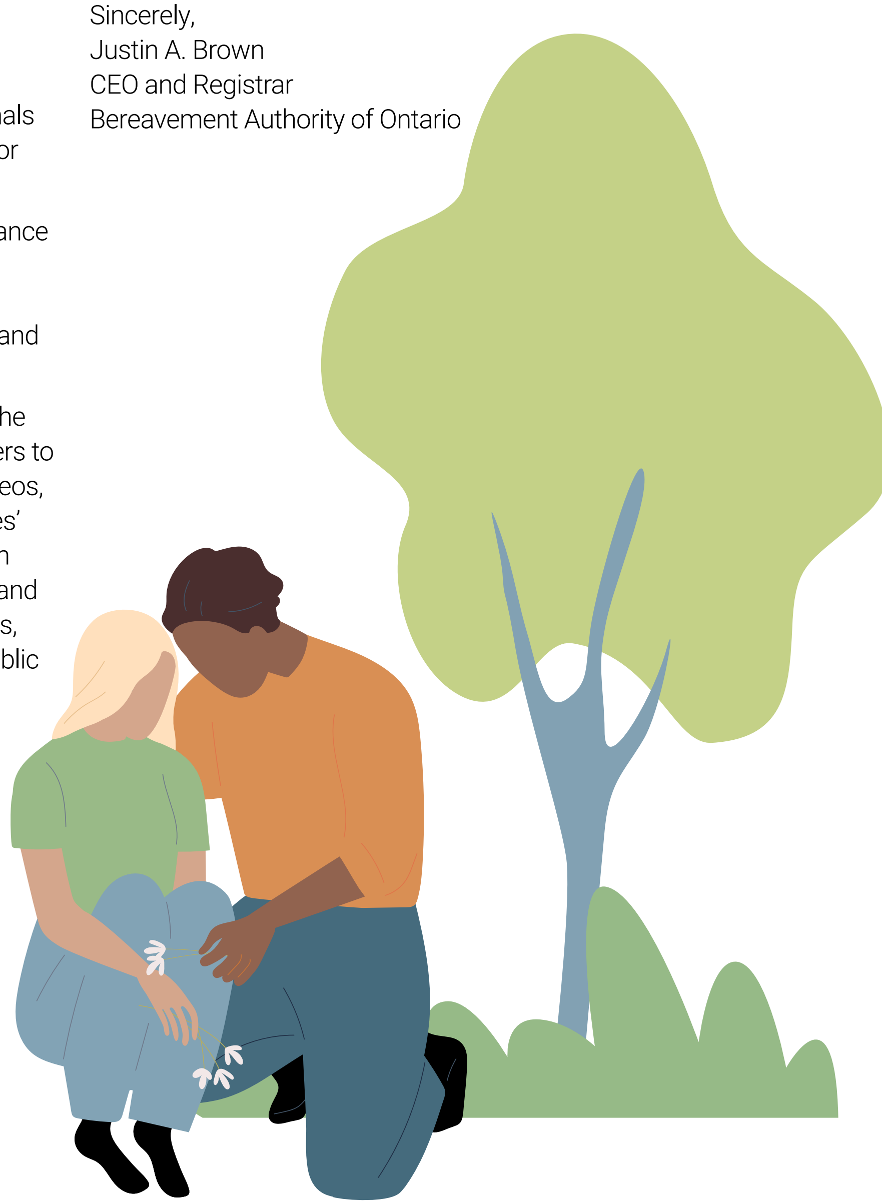
Through our ever-expanding and accessible website, the public and licensees can easily find fact sheets, answers to frequently asked questions, checklists, informative videos, Registrar's Bulletins, our consumer magazine, licensees' resource hub and newsletter, plus more. Licensees can find materials to help them to prepare for and understand the goals of our compliance and enforcement activities, which allows them to be proactive in protecting the public and bereavement consumers.

Thanks

As you can see, it's been a busy year at the BAO, with more progress to come. For that I thank:

- Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement, the Hon. Stephen Crawford, for his encouragement and leadership;
- Ministry staff for working with us in partnership;
- The BAO Board of Directors, for their steadfast leadership; and
- Our hard-working staff members, for their daily commitment to improving consumer protection for Ontarians.

Sincerely,
Justin A. Brown
CEO and Registrar
Bereavement Authority of Ontario



Report on Performance Measures

Reporting on our 2025/26 Business Plan

Building for the Future

Focused on **S**trategic **P**riorities

SP1	SP2	SP3
Enhance **Consumer Protection and Engagement**	Enable **Sector Impact Through Operational Excellence**	Advance **an Evidence-Based Regulatory Approach**

BAO Report on Performance Measures 2025/26

Achieving SP1-2-3

+ sign indicates overachievement of target / - sign indicates underachievement of target

	Department	Description	2025/26 Target	Actual	Variance
SP2	Licensing	Average time to process a new personal licence application (once all materials are submitted)	**10 business days**	**7.5**	**+25%**
		Notes: Processing time remains well under the target of 10 days.			
		Average time to process a new operator application (once all materials are submitted) includes inspection	**30 business days**	**18.9**	**+37%**
		Notes: This average time represents achievement and improvement on the target of 30 days.			
SP1 & SP3	Inspections	Number of inspections by types (Cemetery/ Funeral Establishment/Alkaline Hydrolysis/ Crematorium/Transfer Service; Proactive/ Reactive)	**439**	**445**	**+1.35%**
		Notes: This represents an overachievement of the target.			
		Percentage of inspections without significant deficiencies/non-compliance (i.e. without infractions rated 6 or higher)	**80%**	**68%**	**-12%**
		Notes: The BAO has expanded its inspection efforts to include licensees not inspected recently, which has increased identification of higher-risk deficiencies toward improved consumer protection.			
		Percentage of compliance achieved during follow up inspections	**75%**	**48%**	**-27%**
		Notes: This underachievement of the target is most likely a result of the BAO's focus on higher risk (more serious) follow-up inspections, which are more time consuming.			

SP1	SP2	SP3
Enhance	Enable	Advance
Consumer Protection and Engagement	Sector Impact Through Operational Excellence	an Evidence-Based Regulatory Approach

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Report on Performance Measures 2025/26...continued

+ sign = Overachievement of the target

- sign = Underachievement of the target

	Department	Description	2025/26 Target	Actual	Variance
SP1 & SP2	Inquiries and Complaints	Customer survey on complaints: service received; amount of time to reply; fairness; staff knowledge; respectful	**75%**	**71% Agree/ Strongly Agree**	**-4%**
		Sector survey on complaints: overall satisfaction with the complaints process; timeliness of service; fairness; knowledge and competency of staff; treated with dignity and respect (addressed to licensee)	**94%**	**3 complaints**	**sample size too small to state variance**
		Percentage of complaints processed within 30 business days (from date of receipt to date of response letter sent out)	**70%**	**89%**	**+19%**
		Notes: The BAO is successfully processing complaints at a rate exceeding the target.			
		Average time to acknowledge Inquiries	**1 business day**	**1.6**	**-60%**
		Notes: This increase in acknowledgment times is most likely due to management of outlier cases.			
		Average time to process complaints	**30 business days**	**12.8 days**	**+57%**
		Notes: The BAO is overachieving on its average time to process complaints.			
SP1 & SP2	Financial Compliance	Average turnaround time (once all materials are submitted) to approve a Care and Maintenance Fund/Account transfer application	**15 business days**	**4**	**+73%**
		Notes: This result represents an overachievement of a 15 day target.			
		Average turnaround time (once all materials are submitted) to approve an application to borrow capital in Care and Maintenance Fund/Account	**45 business days**	**9.6**	**+79%**
		Notes: The BAO is also overachieving on this 45 day target.			
SP1 & SP3	Inspections	Sector survey on inspections: inspector's professionalism; inspector's knowledge of the Act and regs; inspector explained deficiencies identified; the inspection was helpful to the licensee; other comments (after a completed inspection)	**95%**	**97% Agree/ Strongly Agree**	**+2%**
		Average time spent per inspection (from assignment to inspection letter sent to licensee)	**17 hours**	**12.1 hours**	**+29%**
		Notes: The BAO is well within it's target of 17 hours.			
		Number of licensees in each risk ranking category (monitoring change in risk levels) 1= Lowest Risk Score 8=Highest Risk Score	**Rank 1-13 Rank 2-120 Rank 3-230 Rank 4-198 Rank 5-102 Rank 6-21 Rank 7-6 Rank 8-0**	**Rank 1 - 38 Rank 2 - 10 Rank 3 - 11 Rank 4 - 118 Rank 5 - 113 Rank 6 - 89 Rank 7 - 50 Rank 8 - 5**	**(The variance column is not applicable to risk ranking)**
SP1	Communications	Total visits to BAO's website	**395,080 visits**	**394,054**	**-0.26%**
		Notes: The BAO fell just short of its target, but was well ahead of previous year's page views of 370,100.			

BAO Board of Directors 2025/26

Leith Coghlin
Chair

Managing Director
EnPointe Public Affairs

Colin Haskett
Vice-Chair

President
Haskett Funeral Homes

Howard Mammon
Secretary

Executive Director
Toronto Hebrew Memorial Parks

Lucy Becker
Director

Interim CEO & Registrar
Retirement Homes
Regulatory Authority

Tatsiana Okun
Director

Associate General Counsel, Litigation
Canadian Investment Regulatory
Organization

Keith Persaud
Director

CPA, CA, Former Financial Executive

Michael David Marco
Director

Vice-President
Finance & Technology
Fred Victor Centre

Glenda Brindle
Director

Broker
Royal LePage Team
Realty Brokerage

Michael Crisp
Director

Business Executive (Retired)
Realtor

Corporate Governance

Role of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) is responsible for the stewardship and governance of the organization in accordance with its statutory mandate under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), its by-laws, Board-approved policies, and the Administrative Agreement with the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement(MPBSDP). The Board is accountable to the Minister for the effective oversight of the BAO and for ensuring that the organization fulfills its public interest consumer protection mandate.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Board provides strategic direction, oversees organizational performance, and ensures that the BAO operates with integrity, transparency, and sound risk management practices. The Board establishes and monitors the organization’s strategic priorities, approves key policies and governance frameworks, and oversees financial stewardship and regulatory effectiveness. Day-to-day operations are delegated to the CEO/Registrar, while the Board retains responsibility for oversight through a committee-based governance model. The Board promotes informed decision-making, effective risk oversight, and accountability in support of sustainability and public confidence in the bereavement sector.

The Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) is governed by a 10-member board of directors, comprised of:

- Three (3) Skills-Based (SB) Directors, selected by the board based on their skills and governance experience. These individuals can have no direct interest in the bereavement sector;
- Three (3) Directors as appointed by the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement (A-MPBSDP);
- Three (3) Advisory Committee (AC) Directors, bereavement sector representatives selected by the board to be the chairs of the committees providing advice to the CEO/Registrar — Cemetery, Crematorium and Municipal AC / Faith-based AC / Funeral and Transfer Services AC;
- One (1) Consumer Representative (CR) Director as selected by the board.

Board remuneration

The Board met 25 times during the 2025-26 fiscal year. The Board Remuneration Policy sets out the following rates (for 3+ hour meetings) for Board members.

- Per diem rate for Chair is $744
- Per diem rate for Vice Chair is $583
- Per diem rate for Board members is $472

For fiscal year 2025-26 the total Board remuneration was $138,788

Corporate Governance…continued

Audit Risk and Finance Committee

Chair Michael Marco

The Audit, Risk and Finance Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities related to financial stewardship, audit integrity, enterprise risk management, and internal controls. The Committee reviews the BAO's financial statements, budgeting and forecasting processes, audit plans and results, and risk management framework, and provides assurance to the Board regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of financial and risk oversight practices.

Human Resources Committee

Chair Colin Haskett

The Human Resources Committee supports the Board in overseeing human resources strategy, organizational capacity, leadership development, succession planning, and executive performance oversight. The Committee provides guidance on people and culture matters, workforce planning, and compensation and benefit frameworks, ensuring that human capital practices align with the BAO's strategic priorities, values, and operational needs.

Compensation Fund Committee

Chair Normand A. Allaire

The Compensation Fund Committee's mandate is to manage the affairs of the Funeral Services Compensation Fund, to ensure compliance with the FBCSA and its regulations and to determine eligibility of claims. The Compensation Fund Committee is an independent committee that works in partnership with the BAO Board of Directors.

Governance and Nominations Committee

Chair Lucy Becker

The Governance and Nominations Committee assists the Board in maintaining effective governance practices, including Board composition, director recruitment and skills-based succession planning, performance evaluation, and ongoing governance development. The Committee oversees governance frameworks, Board and committee mandates, and nominations processes to ensure the Board remains well positioned to discharge its statutory and fiduciary responsibilities.

Discipline and Appeal Committees

Discipline Committee Chair Paul Famula
Appeal Committee Chair Marilyn Marshall

The Discipline and Appeal Committees hear and determine issues regarding licensee violations of the Code of Ethics, including determining penalties where appropriate. A panel of three committee members will be selected to hear and determine each matter.

Their work supports public trust in the bereavement sector and reinforces regulatory accountability.

Volunteer Advisory Committees

- **Cemetery, Crematorium and Municipal Advisory Committee**
  Interim Chair Colin Haskett
  Committee provides sector-specific advice and stakeholder perspectives related to cemetery, crematorium, and municipal operations within the bereavement sector. The Committee supports the CEO/Registrar by offering informed input on regulatory policies, emerging issues, and operational impacts, helping to ensure regulatory approaches are practical, informed, and responsive.

- **Faith-based Advisory Committee**
  Chair Howard Mammon
  This committee is comprised of faith representatives, who provide the CEO & Registrar with expert advice on issues of faith related to funeral, burial, cremation and hydrolysis services.

- **Funeral and Transfer Service Advisory Committee**
  Chair Colin Haskett
  The Funeral and Transfer Services Advisory Committee offers guidance and sector expertise related to funeral establishments, licensed professionals, and transfer service operations. The Committee provides input on regulatory impacts, policy development, and operational considerations, supporting informed decision-making by the CEO/Registrar and contributing to continuous improvement across the sector.

Service Standards

The BAO prides itself on delivering exceptional customer service and endeavours to meet or exceed these standards. Licensees and consumers can expect these turnaround times for services under normal circumstances.

Service Standards			
Service	**Target Turnaround Time**	**Actual-2024/25**	**Actual-2025/26**
Personal Licence Application*	10 Business Days	8.6	7.5
Business Licence Application	30 Business Days	18.5	18.9
Inquiry Acknowledgement	1 Business Day	1.0	1.6
Complaint Processing**	30 Business Days	35.1	12.8
C&M Fund/Account Transfer Request	15 Business Days	4.4	4.0
Inspection Results Delivered to Licensee	15 Business Days	14	12.1
App. to borrow C&M Capital	45 Business Days	6.3	9.6

*With our new OBIS system, all Personal Licence Applications (PLAs) are now being processed via the online Licensee Portal, which means that applicants are now entering their own information into the system. Once the Licensing and Education Officer (LEO) has a complete application, which includes the PRC and payment, the application is processed within 1 to 3 business days. The addition of one LEO has also helped to improve processing times. Any delay in processing an application is usually caused by a delay on the applicant's part to provide a police record check; luckily, most applicants promptly respond to the Sterling Backcheck invitation.

**Processing times for some complaints that were closed in the earlier part of 2024/25 fiscal year were longer than usual, as one of the two Inquiries & Complaints (I&C) Officers was still focused on testing of the new OBIS CRM system; this left one I&C Officer to handle the majority of the workload in February and March 2024, when those complaints came in.

Compliance - AODA

The BAO ensures that its policies, practices and procedures comply with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Our staff have been trained on AODA standards. The BAO provides documents in accessible formats upon request. We received one request this year. The BAO website was designed in compliance with AODA standards.

French Language Services

The BAO employs four bilingual individuals. These employees provide bilingual support to consumers, stakeholders and licensees via phone and written correspondence, upon request.

The BAO also provides bilingual Funeral Service education through Collège Boréal, which offers the program in French. BAO publications are offered in French and English.

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Report on Performance

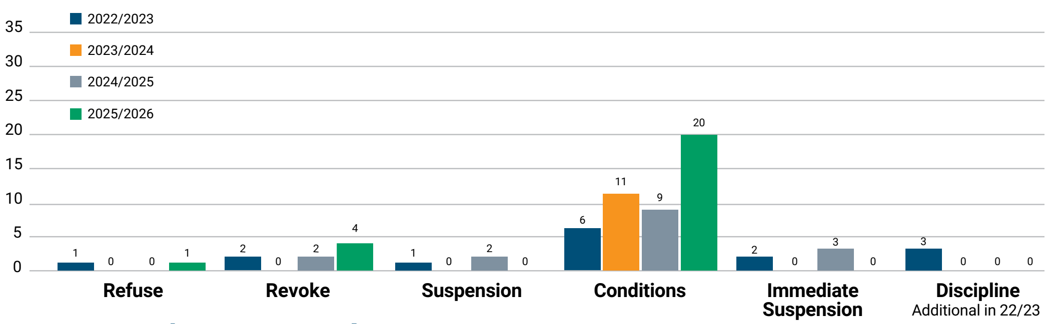
Registrar's Actions 2025/26

Registrar's actions include: Proposals to Suspend, Refuse or Revoke Licences; Suspension Orders (temporary or immediate); Applying Conditions to a Licence; or Disciplinary Action by the BAO Discipline and Appeal Committees.

Definitions

- **Refuse**: Notice of Proposal to Refuse to Renew a licence
- **Revoke**: Notice of Proposal to Revoke a licence
- **Suspension**: Notice of Proposal to Suspend a licence
- **Conditions**: Conditions imposed on the Licensee or consented to at the behest of the Registrar
- **Immediate Suspension**: Registrar's Immediate Suspension Order – typically issued in addition to a Notice of Proposal to Revoke licensure

Registrar's Actions



Some actions (e.g., 'Proposal to Revoke' and 'Immediate Suspension' orders) fall under more than one category and so are counted more than once. Please take this into consideration when comparing totals in the Operator chart.

Registrar's Actions by Licensee Type

Fiscal Year (April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026)

Operator	Total (20)
Funeral Establishment Operator	9
Transfer Service Operator	1
Cemetery Operator	7
Crematorium Operator	0
Alkaline Hydrolysis Operator	3
Personal	**Total (7)**
Funeral Director	2
Sales Representative	5

The Trend

The Registrar applies a principal based approach to regulation. Enforcement tools such as Orders for Information, Cease Orders, and Warning Letters continue to reduce the need to escalate enforcement to litigation, and result in licensee's compliance with the expectations under the FBCSA.

The Registrar and the BAO team continue to align their enforcement resources and maintain open communication between departments to ensure that regulatory matters are viewed from all areas of regulation (licensing, financial compliance and inspections) to create 360-degree views of compliance matters and to make informed and evidence-based enforcement decisions.

The Registrar continues to use Conditions of Licence as a key tool to bring licensees back into compliance with the FBCSA, to promote best practices and to preserve the workforce resources so the public may have accessible bereavement services in all areas of the province safely under the shelter of consumer protection legislation.

Report on Performance

Licensing

Under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), anyone in Ontario who provides or offers to provide bereavement-related supplies and services must be licensed with the BAO. The total number of active personal and operator licensees (cemetery, crematorium, alternative disposition operator, funeral establishment and transfer service operators; funeral directors, preplanners; and transfer service, cemetery and crematorium sales representatives) during this fiscal year is 9,748.

Establishment Licensing

The 2025/26 fiscal year saw sustained stability across licensed establishments. There continues to be a marginal decrease in the number of funeral establishments, as businesses consolidate their funeral operations. However, the number of transfer services continues to increase marginally, as licensees aim to grow their businesses in a more cost effective manner. (Transfer services are typically operated out of smaller facilities which are often leased, thereby keeping overhead expenses low.)

Establishment Licence Classes Defined

- Funeral Establishment Operator – Class 1: Can offer embalming services, full funeral services, removal of pacemakers or implants. Will make available an inexpensive transfer service.
- Funeral Establishment Operator - Class-2: Can temporarily place human remains so persons may attend and pay their respects, such as visitation or funeral. Cannot offer embalming services, transfer services, or removal of pacemakers or implants.
- Transfer Service Operator – Class 1: Can sell and provide the service of placing a dead human body in a casket, washing the body and setting the features and transporting a dead human body from one location to another.
- Transfer Service Operator – Class 2: Can sell and provide the service of placing a dead human body in a casket, removing personal effects and transporting a dead human body from one location to another.
- Transfer Service Operator – Class 2 (Restricted): Can sell and provide the same services as a Transfer Service Operator – Class 2 above, but the operator is restricted to serving only the members of its religious organization.
- Cemetery Operator: Person (corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, trustee/volunteer board – religious or other) licensed to sell and provide cemetery supplies and services.
- Crematorium Operator: Person (Corporation, Partnership, Sole Proprietor, Trustee/Volunteer Board – Religious or other) licensed to sell and provide crematorium supplies and services.
- Alternative Disposition (hydrolysis): Licensed to sell and provide hydrolysis services.

Operator Licensing Statistics						
Licence Classes	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26**
Funeral Establishment Operator - Class 1	575	572	559	557	552	550
Funeral Establishment Operator - Class 2	12	10	8	7	6	6
Transfer Service Operator - Class 1	51	67	65	68	73	81
Transfer Service Operator - Class 2	31	32	31	30	31	28
*Transfer Service Operator - Class 2 (Restricted)		21	23	28	30	32
Cemetery Operators	5,222	5,221	5,229	5238	5,246	5,260
· Active cemetery sites					3,015	3,021
· Inactive cemetery sites					2,231	2,239
Crematorium Operator	72	74	74	74	76	80
Alternative Disposition (Hydrolysis)	4	4	4	5	5	8
Totals	**5,967**	**6,001**	**5,994**	**6,007**	**6,019**	**6,045**

* New in 2021/22

Report on Performance

Personal Licensing

Personal Licence Classes	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Funeral Director-Class 1 (embalming)	2,531	2,524	2,465	2,471	2,469	2,479
Funeral Director-Class 2 (non-embalming)	33	38	39	43	48	54
Funeral Preplanner	362	380	380	412	423	445
Sales Representative (Cemetery/Crematorium)	547	548	522	595	617	632
Transfer Service Sales Representative (TSSR)	32	33	35	38	44	46
TSSR Restricted		25	34	43	49	62
Grand total	**3,505**	**3,548**	**3,475**	**3,602**	**3,650**	**3,718**

Personal Licence Classes Defined

- Funeral Director – Class 1: Can embalm and provide all related professional services associated with arranging and directing a funeral and memorial service on behalf of a licensed establishment.
- Funeral Director – Class 2: Can arrange and direct customized funeral rites and ceremonies on behalf of a licensed establishment. Cannot provide embalming services.
- Funeral Preplanner: Can enter into prepaid contracts funded by trust or insurance plans for funeral supplies and services on behalf of a licensed funeral establishment (FE).
- Transfer Service Sales Representative (TSSR): Can sell transfer services on behalf of a licensed transfer service operator.
- Cemetery Sales Representative: Can sell or offer to sell cemetery supplies and services on behalf of a licensed cemetery operator.
- Crematorium Sales Representative: Can sell or offer to sell crematorium supplies and services on behalf of a licensed crematorium operator.

New and renewed licences

Licence Category	Newly issued in 2024/25*	Renewed in 2024/25	Newly issued in 2025/26**	Renewed in 2025/26
Funeral Establishment and Transfer Service Operator licences	22	406	23	400
Cemetery, Crematorium and Alternative Disposition (Hydrolysis) Operator	9	1,951	30	1,878
Personal licences	276	3,412	298	3,533

* Includes applications for new and asset purchases of funeral establishments and transfer services.

** Includes applications for new and asset purchases of cemeteries, crematoriums and hydrolysis facilities.

Note that numbers in this table do not necessarily match those in the Personal Licensing table on this page because some licensees will have not renewed their licence, or it would have been canceled for various reasons (e.g., voluntary termination, revocation, death).

Report on Performance

Licensee Education

Since 1938, funeral professionals in Ontario have committed to lifelong learning through participation in mandatory professional development programs. The BAO believes that professional development and continuing education is a priority and an important component of any profession.

Exams

Entry-to-Practice examinations (Licensing and Jurisprudence) are administered by the BAO once every June at Humber Polytechnic and at Collège Boréal. Also, the BAO administers monthly exam sessions at its office for small groups, and will provide additional administrations upon request at the licensees' establishment or at another college's testing centre for applicants who live remotely.

Licensing Examinations

Year	Exams Taken	Pass %
2020/21	174	93%
2021/22	166	93%
2022/23	166	87%
2023/24	158	96%
2024/25	179	95%
2025/26	186	96%

Jurisprudence Examinations

Year	Exams Taken	Pass %
2020/21	186	89%
2021/22	171	91%
2022/23	183	81%
2023/24	175	89%
2024/25	205	84%
2025/26	202	93%

Continuing Education

Since Jan. 1, 2020, funeral licensees are required to complete a minimum of six hours of continuing education courses each year.

To qualify for a continuing education credit, the course(s) must be delivered through one of the following organizations: the Ontario Funeral Service Association; the Ontario Association of Cemetery and Funeral Professionals; Collège Boréal; Humber College; or others approved by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO).

No courses, seminars, conferences or events originating from outside of the province or from other associations or continuing education providers qualify for credit, unless they have received prior approval from the BAO.

Qualifying courses will be identified as either technical/professional skills or self care. A maximum of two hours of self care courses will qualify for continuing education credit (Category B). The remaining four hours must be related to technical/professional skills (Category A).

Report on Performance

Trust Funds

The Financial Compliance Team educates licensees on the use of income, investment, capital preservation, sale/resale of interment rights, understanding institutional statements, reporting requirements and the difference between individual trust, pooled trust, and insurance products.

Care and Maintenance Fund

A care and maintenance fund/account (C&M fund) is an irrevocable trust fund that ensures funds are available for the upkeep of a cemetery in perpetuity. Cemetery operators are required under the FBCSA to deposit appropriate contributions within 60 days of a sale. The C&M fund is held by an eligible trustee under the FBCSA. The use of capital (including realized capital gains) is strictly prohibited. However, the provincial government's changes to the FBCSA, effective Jan. 1, 2022, permit non-commercial cemetery operators to access the capital portion of a C&M fund to increase the capacity of a cemetery. This is subject to approval from the Registrar of the FBCSA, under the condition that the capital is paid back into the trust fund or account. Additional changes to the FBCSA, also effective Jan. 1, 2022, have increased minimum C&M fund contributions and the C&M fund's establishment deposit, which was increased from $100,000 to $165,000. The income generated from the investment of the capital is used for care and maintenance expenses of the cemetery.

Funeral Establishment & Transfer Service Operators Report of Prepaid Funds Submission Rate	
Year	**Submission Rate**
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2022	100.00%
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2023	98.76%
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024	97.08%*
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025	99.71%

Cemetery & Crematorium Operators Report of Prepaid Funds Submission Rate	
Year	**Submission Rate**
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2022	100.00%
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2023	98.65%
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024	97.30%*
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025	98.78%

Cemetery & Crematorium Operators Report of Care & Maintenance Funds Submission Rate	
Year	**Submission Rate**
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2022	97.90%
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2023	98.78%
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024	99.09%*
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025	98.76%

Report on Performance

Total Prepaid Funds (Trust - Pooled & Individual)		% Change
2021/2022	$1,263,745,682	+1.13%
2022/2023	$1,277,986,264	
2023/2024	$1,453,122,050	+13.70%
2024/2025	$1,491,023,705	+2.61%
2025/2026	$1,523,592,942	+2.18%

Total Prepaid Funds (Insurance)		% Change
2021/2022	$1,701,128,899	-3.42%
2022/2023	$1,642,950,006	
2023/2024	$1,688,323,097	+ 2.76%
2024/2025	$1,704,366,614	+0.95%
2025/2026	$1,696,225,232	-0.48%

Total Cemetery Care and Maintenance Funds		% Change
2021/2022	$1,670,010,768	+7.06%
2022/2023	$1,787,924,377	
2023/2024	$1,853,744,484	+ 3.68%
2024/2025	$1,906,712,383	+2.86%
2025/2026	$2,007,521,117	+5.29%

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Report on Performance

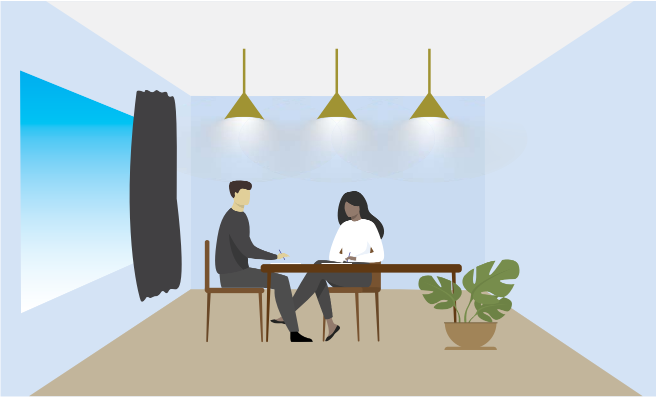
Care and Maintenance Fund… continued

Cemetery Care and Maintenance (C&M) Funds Total by Category 2025/26		
Category	**Total C&M Amount**	**# Licensees holding Funds/Accounts**
Corporation – Municipal – not for profit	$171,573,662.09	326
Corporation - Not for Profit	$677,269,923.08	119
Corporation - Private	$451,282,689.36	74
Corporation – Religious – not for profit	$574,894,939.56	851
Partnership	$89,687,775.26	1
Sole Proprietorship	$381,637.02	11
Trustee/Volunteer Board	$42,430,490.87	495
Grand Total	**$2,007,521,117.24**	**1,877**

* Previously the BAO counted the number of Funds/Accounts, now we instead count them by the number of Licensees who hold funds and accounts.

Prepaid Funds

Licensed operators who enter into prepaid contracts for licensed prepaid supplies or services (excluding the purchase of interment/scattering rights) must place funds in trust within 35 days, either in a pooled trust fund, individual trust account, or insurance. Licensed operators report annually to the BAO via a Report on Prepaid Funds form which captures total number of contracts, total value, total interest, contracts provided, cancelled, and new. Licensed operators are required to engage a public accountant (independent of the operator) to submit a review engagement or audit report (excluding pooled trust funds less than $100,000). Each report is reviewed by a BAO Financial Compliance Officer for compliance with the FBCSA.



Compensation Fund

Established in 1990, the Prepaid Funeral Service Compensation Fund ("the Compensation Fund") is designed to compensate consumers who have suffered a financial loss as a result of a licensed funeral professional or transfer service licensee mishandling prepaid funds.

The Compensation Fund fiscal year was Nov. 1, 2024 to Oct. 31, 2025. In that fiscal year, there were no claims made against the Compensation Fund.

Total market value of the fund at its fiscal year-end was $2,726,131, comprised of cash, fixed income and equity holdings.

The Compensation Fund had revenues of $313,705 from its primary income sources, including interest and dividend income, net gains on investments as well as contributions from new licensees.

Voluntary payments may also be made by funeral establishment and transfer service operators in relation to prepaid trust funds that have been left unclaimed and for which the recipient (beneficiary) would be at least 120 years old. Should a rightful Recipient to the unclaimed funds come forward after they are Paid into the Compensation Fund, the funds will be paid out to the rightful recipient. Claims that are denied payment by the Compensation Fund Committee may be appealed to the License Appeal Tribunal.

Report on Performance

Inquiries and Complaints

The BAO's compliance officers have been very effective in addressing consumer inquiries and complaints. The majority of inquiries are resolved through the clarification of legislation. Complaints require investigation and mediation between a licensee and a consumer. The most common complaints received by the BAO are:

- From which family member to take direction
- Contraventions of regulations
- Contract related issues
- Miscommunication between the licensees and consumers
- Interment rights issues
- Service standards and professionalism

For complaints, the BAO endeavours to conclude and close the matter within 30 business days. These efforts are undertaken to ensure Ontario Consumers are always treated in a compassionate and professional manner during a vulnerable time in their lives.

Inquiries and Complaints numbers

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Inquiries	2,944	2,304	2,021	1,954	2,787	4,324
Complaints	105	104	64	44	39	83
Total	**3,049**	**2,408**	**2,085**	**1,998**	**2,826**	**4,407**

*With our new OBIS system, these numbers now reflect the inquiries taken by all BAO staff members, not just the Inquiries & Complaints Officers. Cases may go through multiple departments after arriving at Intake. Of the total inquiries for the 2025/26 fiscal year: 1,524 were consumers; 2,787 were licensees; 13 were anonymous inquiries; 10 were conducted in the French language.

Complaints by Licence Class

Class	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Funeral Establishments	52	50	23	20	22	27
Cemeteries	50	50	31	23	12	53
Crematoriums	0	1	0	0	1	1
Transfer Services	1	3	9	1	4	2
Alkaline Hydrolysis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (Unlicensed)	2	0	1	0	0	0
Complaints against the BAO	Not tracked	Not tracked	1	0	0	0
Total	**105**	**104**	**64**	**44**	**39**	**83**

Complaints Process

The BAO's complaint process involves the following steps:

- Complaint received via phone, email, regular mail or online complaint form
- Complaint acknowledged and additional information/documentation requested from the complainant
- Applicable licensee contacted regarding complaint and clarification, documentation and response requested
- Complaint documentation thoroughly reviewed by BAO Management and Complaint Unit
- Licensee and complainant kept apprised of the process throughout the investigation
- Final written response provided to both the licensee and the complainant
- **Complaints against the BAO** can be made through this email PrivacyOfficer@TheBAO.ca. The complaint will be sent to the relevant manager. If it is not resolved at that stage, it will then escalate to the CEO & Registrar. There were no complaints against the BAO in 2025/26.

Report on Performance

Inspections

Risk-based

The Inspections, Compliance and Enforcement team employs a risk-based approach in identifying operators requiring inspections. Specific risks are identified, rather than relying exclusively on predetermined fixed time intervals for inspections.
Identified risks include:

- Failure to submit annual licence renewal and/or report on trust funds on time
- Failing to communicate or reply to the regulator
- Complaints
- Previous compliance history
- New or inexperienced management

Licence Classes	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Funeral Establishments	63	80	118	43	101	197
Transfer Services	9	17	29	22	28	53
Cemeteries	26	15	57	41	86	145
Crematoriums	3	6	10	50	26	6
Alternative Dispositions	0	0	6	1	0	3
Non-Licensees	8	4	5	3	0	33
Individual Inspections	0	0	0	0	9	8
Total inspections	**109**	**122**	**225**	**160**	**250**	**445**
Focused	79 = 73%	52 = 43%	107=48%	113=71%	153=61.20%	225=51%
Regular	30 = 27%	70 = 57%	118=52%	47=29%	97=38.80%	220=49%

- Focused – Specific issue driven, such as website pricelist review, follow-up inspection on identified deficiencies
- Regular – Full inspection

Deputy Registrar-Cemeteries Actions

Between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026, the Registrar reports:

- 79 inquiries for maps, cemetery site files, and boundary surveys
- 5 Cemetery Investigation Authorizations issued
- 7 Cemetery burials/grave disturbances and issues including Indigenous archaeological sites related to existing cemeteries
- 10 Cemeteries established following a burial site discovery

Complaints and Inspections surveys

The BAO tracks its complaints and inspection processes with consumers and licensees to identify future improvements.

Now with two years of surveys completed, the results may be compared on the next page, albeit with small and variable sample sizes of survey completions.

The surveys are in these categories:

1. **For consumers – The BAO complaints process survey** invited people, who have filed complaints with us about a licensee, to tell us about their experience in order to help us improve our processes in the public interest.
2. **For licensees – The BAO complaints process survey** invited licensee businesses and personal licensees, who had a complaint filed against them, to assist us in improving our processes for consumers (the public) and licensees.
3. **For licensees – The BAO inspection quality feedback survey** invited licensees, whose facilities had recently been inspected by the BAO, to complete the survey to help us improve our processes for consumers (the public) and licensees.

Results

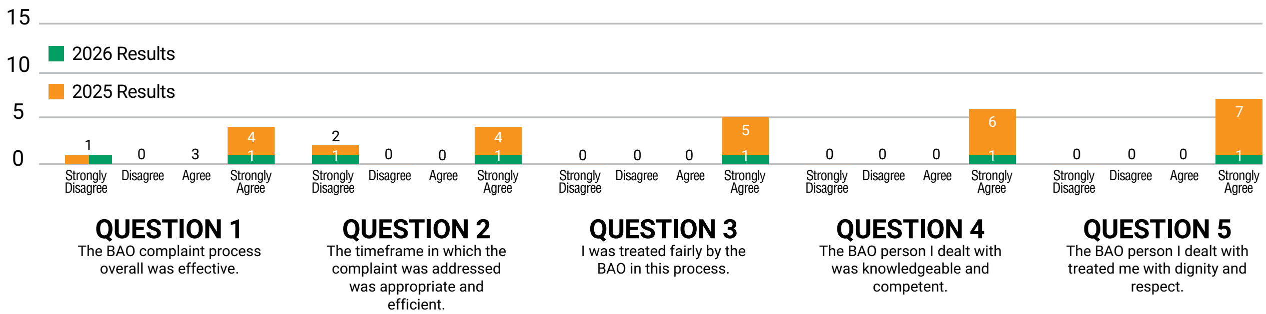
Here are the detailed results of each of the surveys completed at fiscal yearend:

1. Consumer Survey: BAO Complaints Process – March 31, 2026
2. Licensee Survey: BAO Complaints Process – March 31, 2026 – Sample size was too small to have useful results.
3. Licensee Survey BAO Inspection Quality Feedback - March 31, 2026

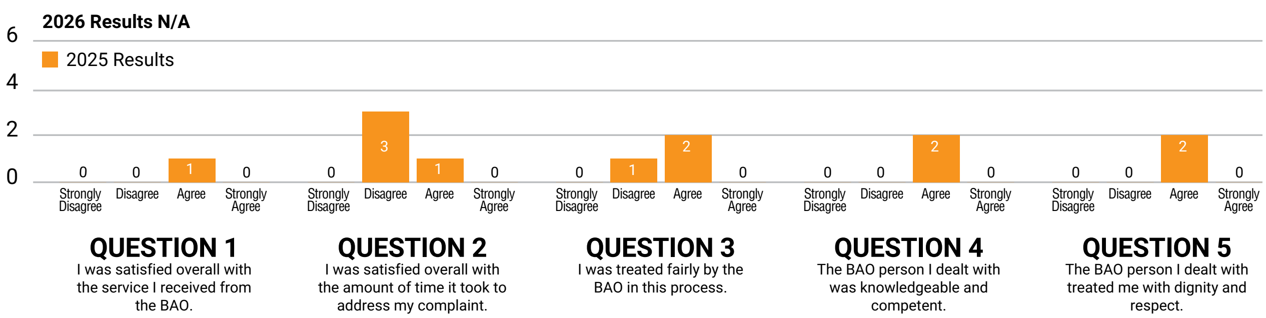
Comparing the results

Samples sizes of those who opted to complete our survey is small, which may impact statistical significance of results.

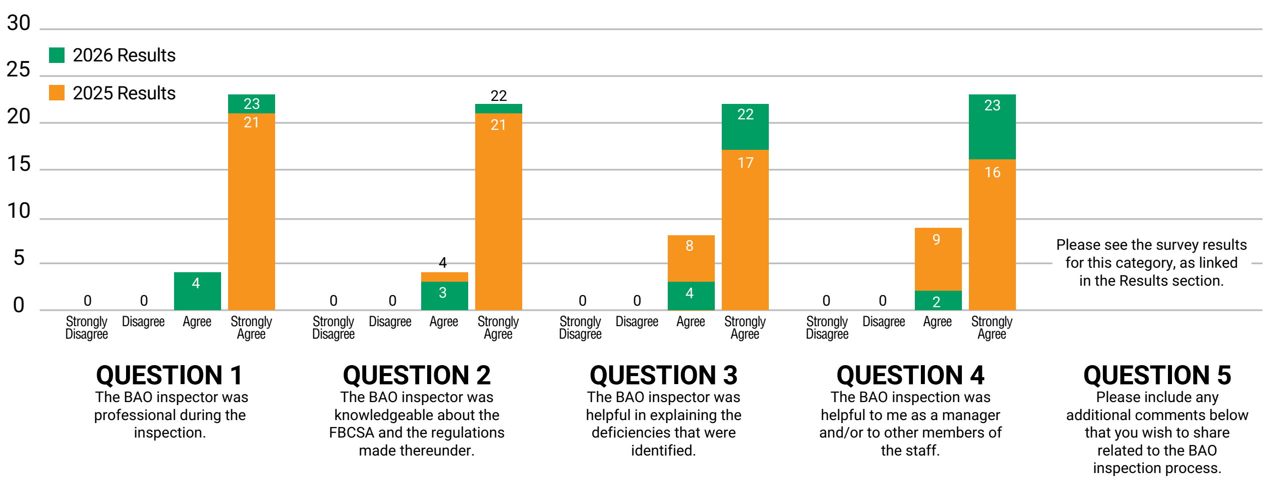
1. Consumer survey - BAO complaints process



2. Licensee survey - BAO complaints process



3. Licensee survey - BAO inspection quality feedback



FBCSA = Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002

Communications and Stakeholder Relations 2025/26

Web, Eblasts & Social Media	*2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
BAO Website total pageviews	726,194	345,274	379,855	370,100	394,054
BAO Consumer Information Guides (CIG) web pageviews	39,520	40,979	48,195	43,932	48,605
BAO eblast messages to licensees Registrar's Directives, Notices, Guidance and news	112	52	60	60	65
Facebook followers	1,801	1,969	2,314	2,761	2,901
LinkedIn followers	483	718	933	1,204	1,454

Our website has reached a record number of pageviews for the fiscal year ended on March 31, 2026, since the peaks of the two *pandemic restriction years. During the 2025/26 fiscal year, BAO work to increase our visibility while highlighting our consumer protection role to families resulted in a significant increase from the previous year. Promotion of the free Consumer Information Guide and of the BAO's consumer magazine, Beyond, were also instrumental in this result.

The BAO no longer tracks its X account, focusing instead on Facebook and LinkedIn, which are better suited to reaching families and adults interested in death care information.

Consumer Information Guide

	Printed guides shipped		Total
	English	French	
2020/21	105,266	1,827	107,093
2021/22	134,910	5498	140,408
2022/23	156,923	4,060	160,983
2023/24	149,985	3,200	153,185
2024/25	131,885	3,443	135,328
2025/26	120,300	5,100	125,400

Phone calls

2020/21 calls	2021/22 calls	2022/23 calls	2023/24 calls	2024/25 calls	2025/26 calls
18,384	27,868	21,403	23,525	27,524	25,737

The 25,737 total for 2025/26 is a return to our gradual increasing number of phone calls at the BAO. This follows last year's surge related to licensees inquiring about changes to accessing their accounts following the implementation of our new information technology system.

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Changes made to the FBCSA and regulations, BAO bylaws or policies in 2025/26

Government of Ontario legislative amendments under Bill 46

- **Legislative amendments under Bill 46, the Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, received Royal Assent on December 11, 2025. These changes:**
    - enable regulations to require bereavement service providers to get authorization from a person or entity before providing certain services regarding the final disposition of a deceased person's remains,
    - expand the compliance and enforcement tools available under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), including enabling regulations to provide for administrative penalties, and
    - provide regulation-making authority to improve the cemetery closing order application process under the FBCSA.
- **Many of these regulations require commencement orders and/or enabling regulations before they would come into force.**

Changes to BAO bylaws and polices

New policies and bylaws, or changes to them approved by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) Board of Directors in 2025/26 are posted on our public website.

New policies:

- AODA Policy
- Compliance Code of Conduct
- Procurement Policy
- Director Orientation and Onboarding Policy
- Access to Privacy Policy

The polices are found at the BAO's website in the About section at this URL address:
https://thebao.ca/governance/corporate-policies-by-laws/

There were no new bylaws approved by the BAO Board in the fiscal year ended on March 31, 2026.

Financial Statements

Report on Performance - Financial Review Fiscal Year (FY) 2026

The following financial review is based on the audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2026, audited by Grant Thornton LLP. The BAO uses its revenues to deliver consumer protection initiatives across Ontario while maintaining the financial sustainability required to fulfill its regulatory mandate.

As of March 31, 2026, the BAO reported Net Assets of $9,583,702, compared to $8,596,462 at March 31, 2025. During FY2026, the BAO generated an operating surplus of $987,240, compared to $1,979,882 in FY2025. The surplus was primarily attributable to higher licensing revenues resulting from the timing and volume of cemetery operator renewals. This increase was partially offset by higher operating expenditures associated with compensation adjustments, inflationary pressures, and strategic organizational initiatives.

Revenue

The BAO relies on two main revenue streams, funeral and cemetery licensing fees, which are set out in accordance with a fee structure under the Minister's Order made under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002. Overall revenues for FY2026 were $9,710,248, an increase of $123,952 from the prior fiscal year. The increase was primarily driven by higher cemetery operator licensing revenues resulting from increased renewal activity by yearend when compared to prior year.

Non-operating revenue of $148,854 was $16,263 higher than the prior year and was generated through the BAO's investment program. Consistent with its investment policy, excess cash balances were invested in short-term, low-risk term deposits held with major Canadian financial institutions, preserving capital while generating modest returns.

Expenses

The BAO's expenses in FY2026 were $8,723,008 (including amortization), an increase of $1,196,594 from the previous year. The increase in operating expenses was primarily attributable to a comprehensive compensation review completed during the year, which resulted in market-based salary adjustments to improve competitiveness and support talent retention. Additional consulting costs were also incurred to address leadership vacancies and emerging sector issues requiring specialized expertise and communications support.

Capital Expenditures

Capital expenditures, including intangible assets, totaled $255,568 in FY2026, compared to $83,705 in FY2025. The increase was primarily attributable to deposits paid for office furniture and related assets associated with the BAO's relocation to its new office premises effective June 1, 2026.

Liquidity

The BAO maintains a strong liquidity position. Based on cash flows generated from operations and current investment holdings, the organization has sufficient resources to meet its short-term obligations, support planned strategic initiatives, and maintain operational stability.

Long Range Forecast of Revenues and Expenses

Over several years prior to FY2024, operating expenditures grew at a faster pace than revenues, resulting in increased reliance on accumulated reserves to support operations. Recognizing the long-term risks associated with this trend, the BAO completed a Consumer Protection Fee Study in 2024, which led to adjustments in licensing fees. This represented the first fee increase above inflation in more than ten years and was necessary to ensure that revenues remained aligned with the organization's regulatory responsibilities and operating requirements.

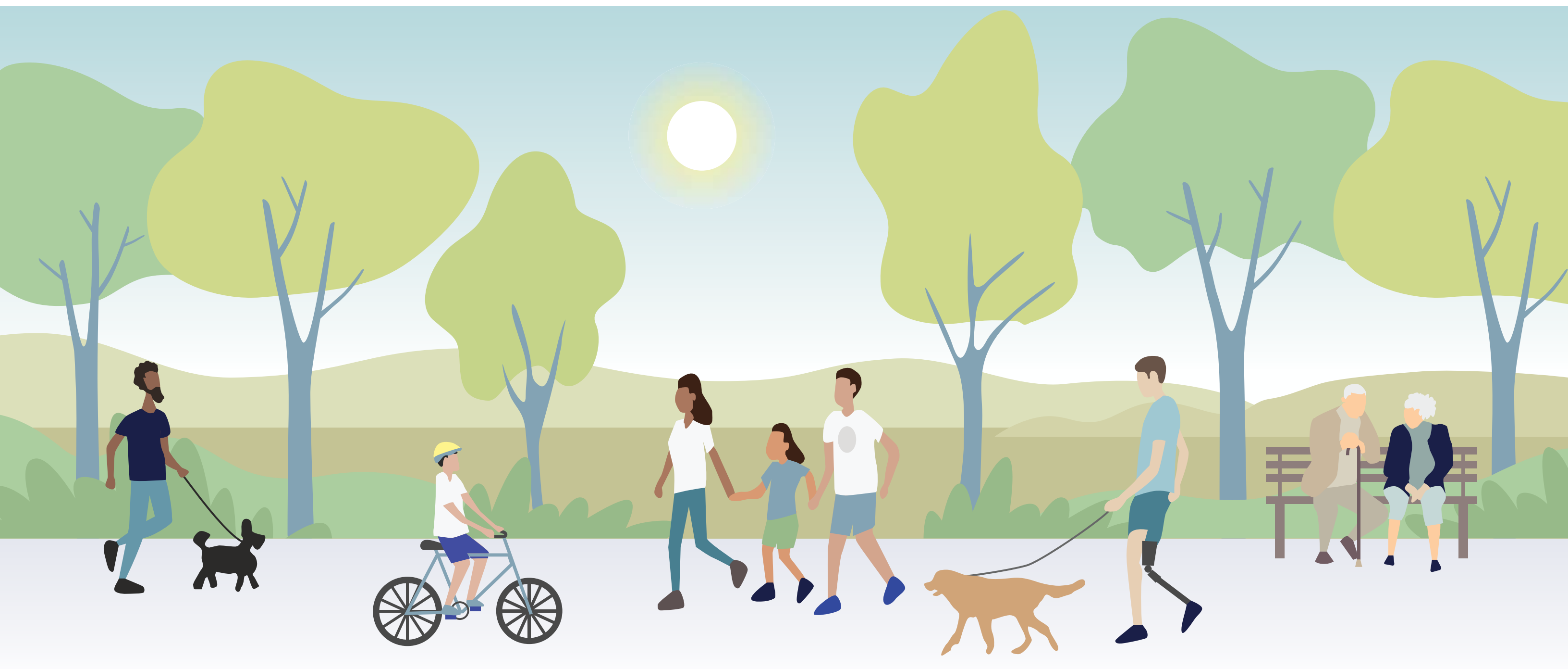
Looking ahead, the BAO intends to review licensing fees on a regular basis and, where appropriate, implement inflationary adjustments within Ministry-approved guidelines to support the organization's long-term financial sustainability. The next fee adjustment is being considered for FY2027/28 and is expected to reflect inflation.

The BAO remains committed to responsible stewardship of public resources, maintaining adequate reserves, and ensuring that revenues are aligned with the costs of delivering effective consumer protection and regulatory oversight across Ontario.

Sharon Barnes-Simmonds, CPA, CGA, FCCA, MBA
Chief Financial Officer

Bereavement Authority of Ontario

Please click on this link to read the Audited Financial Statements.



BAO | Bereavement Authority of Ontario

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