

Maintain a fair, safe and informed marketplace for motor vehicle sales in Ontario



2020-22 STRATEGIC PLAN

CONSUMER PROTECTION AND EDUCATION | REGISTRANT PROFESSIONALISM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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ABOUT OMVIC

The Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council, OMVIC, is responsible for administering and enforcing the *Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2002* (MVDA) on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS). OMVIC's delegated authority for day-to-day administration comes from the *Safety & Consumer Statutes Administration Act* through an Administrative Agreement with MGCS.

With the purpose of protecting the public interest, OMVIC's mandate is to maintain a fair, safe and informed motor vehicle sales marketplace by administering and enforcing the MVDA, its regulations and other applicable consumer protection statutes. This involves fostering an honest, competitive and open marketplace that is free of deceptive or unfair practices.

OMVIC works to prevent issues by educating and informing consumers before they enter purchase agreements, by conducting a risk-based inspection program and by providing educational resources to registrants to increase professionalism and accountability. When concerns regarding vehicle purchases occur, OMVIC is there to provide information and dispute conciliation services, and to investigate and take appropriate administrative or enforcement action.

OMVIC's Mandate

Maintain a fair, safe and informed marketplace for motor vehicle sales in Ontario.

2020–22 STRATEGIC PLAN

Welcome to OMVIC's 2020–22 Strategic Plan

OMVIC's Strategic Plan outlines a focused course of action to carry out its mandate to maintain a fair, safe and informed vehicle sales marketplace in Ontario. The Plan's goals and priorities provide a strategic framework to develop yearly operational plans. This will be achieved through monitoring and evaluating a Balanced Scorecard.

OMVIC's Strategic Plan is the result of extensive review, reflection and consultation internally and externally with stakeholders.

OMVIC is committed to this Plan and is confident that, if executed diligently, OMVIC will fulfill its mandate.

OMVIC is pleased to have the enthusiastic support of its Board of Directors on the road to continuing success.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The Board, management and staff are proud of OMVIC's accomplishments and the reputation it has earned as a fair and diligent regulator.

When OMVIC was launched in 1997 there was opposition to the delegated authority model, particularly from consumer associations that worried a self-management body would not be able to fulfill the Ontario government's intentions. However, time and experience have demonstrated that OMVIC is the committed and respected regulator originally envisaged by the Ontario government.

OMVIC has established high standards in the marketplace and continues to raise the bar. In 1996, the year prior to OMVIC's inception, the MVDA Registrar undertook 56 administrative actions and, as a result of complaint conciliation, \$69,000 was returned to consumers. In 2019, 1,267 Registrar actions were undertaken and complaint handlers negotiated the return of \$1,769,754 to consumers. These are only two of many indicators demonstrating how OMVIC has worked hard to instill fairness, consumer protection and overall confidence in the marketplace.

Success has been underpinned by consumer education campaigns, building awareness of OMVIC as the regulator and trusted authority on the vehicle purchase process. Awareness campaigns have been designed to enable consumers to avoid and resolve disputes by entering into vehicle purchase agreements better informed. Awareness initiatives are ongoing and OMVIC will continue to prepare consumers to have positive purchase experiences, while educating them on their rights.

Simultaneously, OMVIC has worked to raise industry professionalism by providing registrants with educational opportunities and resources designed to promote compliance and a better understanding of the MVDA and its regulations. OMVIC has also expanded investigations and prosecutions in a broader effort to hold the industry accountable and to maintain confidence in a fair, safe and informed marketplace for vehicle sales.

Still, new challenges await because the vehicle sales marketplace is always changing. OMVIC has reflected deeply on how to maintain a fair, safe and informed marketplace and protect the public interest with shifting consumer needs and expectations, and with registrants adapting to disruption.

New methods of marketing, distribution and payment can create unforeseen challenges associated with buying and selling a vehicle. OMVIC's job as regulator is to keep abreast of changes, anticipate issues, embrace innovation and adapt, while always taking fair and appropriate enforcement or administrative action. OMVIC is a high-functioning and nimble organization that can take on changing industry dynamics while at the same time confidently executing day-to-day compliance and enforcement activities.

OMVIC's 2020–22 Strategic Plan starts from a strong base of success and outlines the goals, priorities and desired outcomes that will add value for all stakeholders and take OMVIC into the future.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Progressive Organization

As OMVIC determines its direction and future priorities, it is critical to consider the ever-evolving marketplace it regulates. While some of the trends and macro concerns are beyond OMVIC's control, it must pay close attention to potential positive and negative impacts so it can adapt and choose the most appropriate response—whether that be pre-emptive or reactive. OMVIC has identified some of the most significant influences and challenges and remains vigilant to the unexpected.

- Strategic initiatives or recommendations from the MGCS
- Consumer needs, habits and expectations
- Marketplace changes and evolution, such as changing dealership structures, which include national and publicly traded groups, with fewer independently owned stores
- Need for regulatory changes to respond to market participant and marketplace changes: consumer requirements, emerging technologies and business models
- New technologies for operations and delivering services
- Privacy, security and cyber-security challenges
- Fragmented media and marketing changes; the online environment, social media and peer-to-peer influence

OMVIC's Values and Principles

To carry out its mandate, OMVIC strives to be a diligent and respected regulator. This requires adherence to a series of values and principles that guide decision-making and day-to-day activities.

- Protecting consumers and acting in the public interest
- Acting respectfully and with integrity
- Taking fair, measured and appropriate action
- Monitoring industry trends, developments and issues

- Meaningfully engaging with consumers, registrants and stakeholders
- Ensuring value at every consumer, registrant and stakeholder point of contact
- Seeking the highest standards and performing best in class
- Continuing to adopt the practices of a “modern regulator” with the intention of applying best practices, including
 - dedication to the principles of consumer protection, transparency and operational independence;
 - employing risk-based compliance/enforcement activities;
 - enhancing registrant professionalism;
 - improving digital processes and automation;
 - engaging stakeholders;
 - employing data analytics and effective performance measures; and
 - fostering a culture of innovation
- Identifying major sources of risk to consumers and executing compliance strategies to address them
- Keeping abreast of consumer needs and expectations, as well as factors that impact vehicle sales
- Exploring and using technologies to increase, improve and/or expedite services and registrant engagement
- Communicating clearly to inform and educate
- Maintaining a work environment that fosters learning and adapting, job satisfaction, enjoyment and pride in accomplishment

OMVIC SERVICES

CONSUMER	REGISTRANTS
Providing complaint and inquiry services to consumers to make informed vehicle purchase decisions or to address post-purchase issues	Providing complaint and inquiry services to registrants to answer compliance questions or address consumer (or dealer-to-dealer) complaints and identify issues of non-compliance
Providing complaint conciliation services to consumers to settle disputes and facilitate satisfactory outcomes	Providing complaint conciliation services to registrants involved in a consumer dispute to facilitate satisfactory outcomes
Creating a fair, safe and informed marketplace for consumers by conducting inspections of dealers and business standards activities to monitor/ensure compliance and educate registrants	<p>Conducting a risk-based inspection program to help ensure compliance, increase registrant accountability and provide educational opportunities to registrants</p> <p>Providing advertising assistance to registrants to ensure compliance with the MVDA and Code of Ethics</p>
Building consumer awareness of OMVIC as the regulator of the vehicle purchase/sales process	Providing registrants with resources and tools to help educate customers on the protections provided when trading with an OMVIC-Registered Dealer and the dangers posed by curbsiders
Educating and preparing consumers to avoid issues and/or resolve disputes by entering into purchase agreements better informed	<p>Providing educational resources and services to registrants to promote an understanding of, and compliance with, the MVDA, <i>Consumer Protection Act</i> and associated regulations</p> <p>Supporting Georgian College's delivery of the OMVIC Certification Course and monitoring the outcomes. This course is mandatory for new dealers and salespersons in Ontario</p>
Protecting the public interest by ensuring those who seek or maintain registration meet the requirements set out in the MVDA to conduct business with honesty, integrity and in accordance with the law	Providing registration services to registrants in accordance with the MVDA
Protecting consumer rights and the public interest by investigating/prosecuting industry misconduct and illegal sales (curbsiding)	Maintaining a fair marketplace and creating a level playing field for registrants by investigating/prosecuting industry misconduct and illegal sales (curbsiding)
Assisting consumers with claims to the Motor Vehicle Dealer Compensation Fund	Engaging with registrants involved with a Motor Vehicle Dealer Compensation Fund claim

GOALS, STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES

For its 2020–22 Strategic Plan, OMVIC has set out to ensure its strategic direction and priorities support the organization’s mandate. The Plan identifies four broad goals:

1. Increase consumer protection and awareness
2. Increase registrant professionalism and accountability
3. Be a trusted and respected partner by engaging stakeholders
4. Increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness

Strategic priorities have been established for each goal. Each priority also sets a clear direction for operational leadership to align resources with operational activities.

GOAL 1: INCREASE CONSUMER PROTECTION AND AWARENESS

As the regulator, OMVIC exists to protect consumers. Consumers must have confidence in the vehicle purchasing process—that it is regulated, fair and safe and that they have rights to protect them if they encounter problems. OMVIC can prevent concerns through continued consumer awareness and protection activities.

Consumer Priorities

- Provide consumers with information, tools and education to better prepare them to enter a vehicle purchase agreement, avoid problems and resolve disputes at point-of-sale
- Assist consumers in settling disputes through a complaint handling/conciliation service
- Analyze complaint data to identify and address problematic trends
- Build awareness that consumer rights and protections exist for motor vehicle purchases
- Build awareness of OMVIC as the regulator and trusted authority on motor vehicle purchases
- Mitigate consumer harm by prioritizing compliance/enforcement activities to issues with the most consumer risk
- Provide consumers with prompt response and ensure value at every point of contact

Expected Outcomes

- Consumer complaints are addressed fairly, professionally and efficiently
- OMVIC receives information allowing it to take appropriate administrative/compliance/enforcement action
- Improved consumer awareness of their rights when purchasing a motor vehicle
- Better awareness of OMVIC as the regulator and trusted authority on information and consumer protection for vehicle purchases
- Consumer concerns are prevented

GOAL 2: INCREASE REGISTRANT PROFESSIONALISM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A fair, safe and informed marketplace can only occur when consumers have confidence in the motor vehicle purchasing process. This means being able to transact in an open and honest environment without deceptive, anticompetitive or unfair practices, where effective deterrents are in place to address non-compliant activity. A fair, safe and informed vehicle sales marketplace can be maintained by increasing overall professionalism and accountability throughout the industry. OMVIC can pre-empt some issues by promoting registrant professionalism and accountability through educational and compliance/enforcement initiatives.

Registrant Priorities

- Ensure a fair marketplace
- Ensure value at every point of contact
- Provide effective and assistive compliance audits
- Apply the appropriate level of enforcement or administrative action
- Prosecute those who sell vehicles illegally (curbsiders)
- Provide educational opportunities for registrants to promote understanding of the MVDA and improve professionalism

GOALS, STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES

Expected Outcomes

- Improved compliance and higher levels of registrant professionalism and accountability
- Reduced recidivism
- Reduced illegal vehicle sales (curbsiding)
- A fairer playing field for all registrants

GOAL 3: BE A TRUSTED AND RESPECTED PARTNER BY ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

OMVIC recognizes that in addition to consumers and registrants, other stakeholders influence the vehicle sales marketplace and OMVIC's success. These stakeholders include government, trade associations, industry participants, training institutions and consumer protection groups.

OMVIC acknowledges that some stakeholders have multiple points of contact with OMVIC at various levels, from managers/specialists to CEO strategic contact. OMVIC will provide the appropriate level and frequency of contact necessary to carry out its mandate and maintain its reputation as a trusted regulator.

Stakeholder Priorities

- Position OMVIC as a trusted and respected partner with governments, other regulators and stakeholders
- Regularly engage stakeholders based on their ability to promote diverse opinions and advance OMVIC's mandate
- Promote OMVIC's regulator mandate and role as a modern regulator
- Respond appropriately to inquiries
- Undertake strategic collaboration, where appropriate, that furthers OMVIC's mandate
- Explore technology to further engage registrants

Expected Outcomes

- OMVIC viewed as responsive, anticipating industry and consumer challenges
- OMVIC viewed as a regulator that listens and engages with all stakeholders

- Stakeholders acknowledge and value OMVIC's track record, effectiveness, efficiency and expertise in regulating the vehicle sales marketplace
- Successful initiatives and projects with a broad group of stakeholders that, where appropriate, advance OMVIC's mandate

GOAL 4: INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

MGCS, consumers and registrants expect the highest level of accountability from OMVIC—and OMVIC expects this of itself. OMVIC consistently strives to be a high-functioning organization deploying its talent and resources with insight, discipline and transparency.

People Priorities

OMVIC acknowledges the importance of a dedicated, talented and committed staff and Board. OMVIC will continue to foster a positive work culture and environment by aligning people with the needs of the organization as it seeks to carry out its mandate.

- Communicate with registrants and respond to inquiries promptly, clearly and efficiently
- Increase electronic service delivery
- Align people, departments and operational planning and activities with the Strategic Plan
- Align human resources strategies, policies and processes with the Strategic Plan
- Build organizational strength through effective training, succession planning, work coverage and business continuity planning
- Align the Board and committee structures with the Strategic Plan and with modern regulator best practices
- Measure individual, departmental and management progress in terms of the Strategic Plan and corresponding operational plans

GOALS, STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES

Expected Outcomes

- Higher service satisfaction levels from registrants
- Increased efficiency through continued shift to digital services/communications
- Staff that understand and embrace OMVIC's consumer protection mandate
- Safe, inclusive, open and trustworthy culture
- High-functioning professional staff
- High-functioning and skilled Board
- Institutional knowledge retention
- Business continuity
- A regulator staffed and resourced to effectively deliver its mandate

Internal Systems Priorities

OMVIC will seek to deliver quality services efficiently and effectively by adopting relevant, reliable and cost-effective technologies. OMVIC will seek external expertise when necessary and is prepared to invest strategically in technology and systems to be a high-functioning organization while ensuring value from existing resources.

- Maximize and integrate existing technologies
- Optimize services and processes and their delivery using technology and digital solutions
- Consult externally for complex technological needs and a roadmap
- Align new technology investments with the Strategic Plan
- Build strong internal communication, information and knowledge sharing
- Retain and increase institutional knowledge for business continuity and context
- Focus on privacy and cyber security

Expected Outcomes

- Implement a Strategic Technology roadmap
- Staff supported by external expertise
- A regulator digitally equipped to effectively deliver its mandate

Financial Priorities

MGCS, consumers and registrants expect the highest level of financial stewardship and accountability from OMVIC. OMVIC will continue to deliver fiscal prudence with a disciplined and transparent use of resources and appropriate oversight.

- Ensure fiscal prudence
- Provide transparent financial reporting
- Align resource, financial and capital deployment with the Strategic Plan

Expected Outcomes

- Continued financial viability and accountability
- A regulator financially capable of effectively delivering its mandate



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