



CANADIAN PENSION & BENEFITS INSTITUTE



# SOUTHERN ALBERTA REGION

## Retirement Plans 101

Thursday, March 16, 2023

8:00 am - 11:45 am

Marriott Downtown, Calgary AB

**8:00 – 8:30 am Registration & Breakfast**

**8:30 – 10:00 am Presentations**

**Retirement Plan Landscape in Canada, Sonya Uppal**

**General Retirement Concepts and Terminology, Luis Ramirez**

**Overview of Defined Benefit Pension Plans, Scott Thompson**

**Overview of Capital Accumulation Plans, Alice Nicholls**

**Investments, Sonya Uppal and Luis Ramirez**

**10:00 – 10:15 am Break**

**10:15 - 11:30 am Presentations**

**Regulation of Retirement Plans in Canada, Kristin Smith**

**Introduction to Retirement Plan Governance, Kristin Smith**

**Retirement Plan Administration & Annual Compliance Activities, Joanna Walewski**

**Retirement Plan Communication, a case study, Riccardo Silvestro**

**11:30-11:45 am Panel Discussion Q+A**

*Sonya Uppal, Luis Ramirez, Scott Thompson, Alice Nicholls, Kristin Smith, Joanna Walewski, and Riccardo Silvestro*

### Presenters

**Sonya Uppal** is located in Calgary and provides Group Retirement expertise to market sources and plan sponsors in the Southern Alberta Region.

Joining Manulife in 2019, Sonya brings over 18 years of experience in the financial services industry. Prior to joining Manulife, she worked at two large investment management firms servicing advisors in IROC, MFDA and Insurance channels.

Sonya received a Bachelor of Management degree (B Mgt) from the University of Lethbridge and is a Certified Investment Manager (CIM designation holder).

**Luis Ramirez** is a Principal in the Investment Consulting team for Mercer Canada. He is responsible for providing pension and investment advice to clients and business development in the Canadian Prairie marketplace. Luis is based in Calgary, Alberta.

#### **Areas of Specialization**

Luis has over 29 years of experience in financial services working with both large and small companies in Canada and the United States. He has worked with some of Canada's largest companies on defined contribution, retirement, investment and savings plans and consults to numerous pension and investment committees and boards on a regular basis.

Luis helps clients with investment selection and monitoring, DC record keeper selection, asset allocation, as well as Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and, fiduciary / governance best practices and policies, Investment Policy Statements, and comprehensive fee analysis.

#### **Background**

Prior to joining Mercer in 2015, Luis was in a similar role with Aon, and has held previous roles including Regional Director for Sun Life Financials Western Canadian Group Retirement operations and 14 years with Fidelity Investments Group Pensions.

Luis holds a Bachelor of Arts in Labour Management Relations from the University of Toronto, Pension Plan Administration Certificate (PPAC) and is a Past Chair and current Finance Chair of the Canadian Pension and Benefits Institute's (CPBI) Southern Alberta Region.

**Scott Thompson** is a principal and senior pension consultant in Mercer's Wealth business in Calgary. Scott joined Mercer in 2007 and has more than 15 years of actuarial consulting experience. He is also the western Canadian growth leader for Mercer's Wealth business.

Scott is currently the relationship manager and lead actuary for several prominent companies based in Western Canada, primarily in the private sector. He has experience working with plans registered in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Federal, including several multi-jurisdictional plans. He is responsible for all aspects of registered and non-registered retirement plan management, including governance, risk strategy, mergers & acquisitions, design, amendments, union negotiations, wind-up, funding, accounting, executive disclosure, member education and pension administration services. He has also gained international experience working in Mercer's São Paulo and Tokyo offices.

Scott graduated from the University of Calgary with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in both actuarial science and economics. He is a Fellow of the Society of Actuaries and the Canadian Institute of Actuaries. Prior to joining Mercer, Scott competed on the Canadian national bobsled team.

**Alice Nicholls** has over 23 years of experience in the financial sector, working at both a major consulting firm and insurance companies, including Sun Life Financial for the last 10 years. Alice holds a BBA degree from Northwood University, Midland Michigan, where she double majored in Management and Marketing, and a minor in International Business. In her current role as a Client Relationship Executive, Group Retirement and Savings, Alice is responsible for collaborating with plan sponsors, and their advisors/consultants, to ensure overall satisfaction with Sun Life Financial. Alice is actively involved with the Canadian Pension and Benefits Institute – Southern Alberta Region, where she is a council member and Co-Chairs the marketing committee. As well she volunteers on a number of committees organizing conferences and professional development events and promoting CPBI Southern Alberta in the pension and benefits industry.

**Kristin Smith** is a Principal and the Senior Legal Consultant for Western Canada situated in Mercer Canada's Calgary office.

She is pension and employee benefits lawyer who has practiced almost exclusively in the areas of pension law, employment law, employee benefits law and executive compensation since 2001. She assists clients on a wide array of matters including legislative and regulatory compliance, governance, employment policies, contractual interpretation and drafting, terminations, incentive plans and fiduciary obligations. Kristin regularly consults with clients on the topics of governance and fiduciary responsibilities in the administration of retirement savings programs.

Kristin is a member of the Legal Consultative Committee which consults to the Deputy Superintendent of Pensions in Alberta on public policy and legislative matters. She is the Past Chair of the Canadian Pensions and Benefits Institute - Southern Alberta Regional Council and the current Chair of its Regional Governance Committee.

Upon completing her law degree in 2000, Kristin had the privilege of clerking at the Federal Court of Canada - Trial Division in Ottawa. Since the conclusion of her clerkship in 2001, Kristin practiced law in Calgary with two leading national law firms, a boutique law firm specializing in human resources matters prior to joining Mercer Canada in 2013.

**Joanna Walewski** has more than 25 years of human resources experience, including 18 years of managing pension and benefit plans for several large plan sponsors with international operations in the energy industry. Joanna's expertise includes managing defined benefit and defined contribution pension, savings and various types of benefit plans in Canada and the US, defined contribution pension plans in the UK, as well as HR operations and HR systems. In her current role as a Senior Specialist, Benefits & Pension with AltaGas Ltd., Joanna oversees Canadian health, disability and retirement and savings benefit programs.

Joanna has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Alberta and a Master of Business Administration degree from Royal Roads University. She holds Certified Benefits Practitioner (CBP), Certified Compensation Practitioner (CCP), and Global Remuneration Practitioner (GRP) designations, as well as the Canadian Securities Course. Joanna is currently the Chair of the Canadian Pensions and Benefits Institute – Southern Alberta Regional Council.

**Riccardo Silvestro** Riccardo has extensive and progressive experience in the field of Human Resources, specializing in Total Rewards Management. His work experience includes industries such as; Mining and Commercial Explosives, Midstream and E&P Oil and Gas sectors, and Chemical Manufacturing. Through his career, Riccardo has extensive experience in leading HR strategies, executing on acquisition and divestiture activities, centralizing human resources functions, and building and leading highly effective teams. Riccardo is a former instructor of the Faculty of Continuing Education at Mount Royal University where he taught for 8 years. Currently, Riccardo is the Manager of Total Rewards and HR Systems at Gibson Energy. In addition, Riccardo is a part time instructor at the University of Calgary Continuing Education teaching courses under the HR Management Certificate Program. He holds a Certified Compensation Professional (CCP) designation, is a Certified Payroll Manager (CPM), and is affiliated with numerous compensation and benefit industry associations.

Advocating for his profession, Riccardo led the Calgary Total Rewards Network (CTRN) as President and Chair where he was responsible for setting the organizations strategic direction and fulfilling the organizations mission and vision. Riccardo is committed to providing Human Resources professionals of all backgrounds with opportunities to grow and develop their networks and careers by connecting individuals through highly interactive events and educational opportunities.

Riccardo is a highly active member in the Human Resources community and passionate champion for advancing the Human Resources profession through advocacy and education.