



# Saskatchewan Apprenticeship

February 2009

## Information Bulletin

### Apprenticeship Training Overview

Saskatchewan continues to experience high demand for skilled trades people.

- The number of apprentices registered with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) has risen to approximately 8,700 at December 31, 2008 from 5,436 at June 30, 2005. This represents a 60% increase over 2005.
- The Commission is currently registering an average of 234 new apprentices every month. In the 2007-08 fiscal year, an additional 2,853 new apprentices registered with SATCC. This is an increase of 18% over the previous year.
- From July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2008, 2,506 apprentices completed all requirements for trades certification, received their Certificates of Qualification and became journeypersons. Another 807 experienced tradespeople received journeyperson status through the trades certification process.
- In 2007-08, 3,800 apprentices attended technical training compared to 3,000 in 2005-06. In the 2008-09 training year, 4,700 apprenticeship technical training spaces will be available for Saskatchewan apprentices.

### Additional Funding for Technical Training in Saskatchewan

Apprenticeship growth in Saskatchewan means the cost to train and certify skilled tradespersons also increases. The Government of Saskatchewan has risen to the challenge and is supporting the province's economic growth by providing additional funding of \$3.5 million to meet this year's forecast demand for apprenticeship technical training seats. The SATCC will purchase an additional 900 technical training seats, bringing the number of training seats to 4,700. This translates into an additional 76 apprenticeship technical training classes in 2008-09.

### Five Year Rolling Training and Operations Plan

The SATCC has developed a five year rolling training and operations plan that has been shared with the Ministry of Advanced Education Employment and Labour (AEEL). The intent is for SATCC to hold regular meetings with AEEL to ensure the SATCC and the Ministry are well prepared to address increased training demand, and to ensure that we are properly prepared at budget time. The five year projected training requirements have also been shared with the training providers.

## **Strategic Planning Session**

On January 29, 2009, the SATCC conducted a strategic planning session to set the direction of the Commission for the next three to five years. Input from approximately 300 Trade Board members, Commission staff and Commission Board members were requested through a survey. The survey information augmented the discussions at a meeting of Commission Board members, staff and a number of industry leaders invited to participate.

## **Trade Board Meetings**

Annually, the SATCC meets collectively with all of their active industry trade boards to discuss the direction of apprenticeship, as well as to discuss relevant issues concerning industry, employers, apprentices and tradespersons. Thirty-eight meetings were held throughout October in Saskatoon, Davidson and Regina.

## **Construction Sector Council Mentoring Project**

The SATCC is exploring an opportunity to partner with the Construction Sector Council and the Saskatchewan Construction Association to design and implement a Journeyperson Mentoring Program.

## **Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship Program**

The Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship (SYA) Program raises awareness of apprenticeship among Saskatchewan high school students by helping young people discover career options in the skilled trades. SYA enhances student career development by exploring the world of opportunities skilled trades can offer Saskatchewan youth.

Interest in the SYA Program continues to grow since it was first offered province-wide in the 2006-07 school term. As of December 31, 2008, there were 186 schools and 3,478 students participating in the program.

Since the program's inception, 4,710 students in grades 10 – 12 have registered and a total of 967 students have received certificates. Of these, 92 have registered as Saskatchewan apprentices.

Building on the success of the program, the Commission is currently surveying program stakeholders to gather information that will lead to a stronger SYA Program that is even more attractive to Saskatchewan high school students.

## **Innovative Training Delivery**

A new online Carpenter upgrading course has been implemented by the SATCC and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) to help experienced Carpenters achieve journeyman status. The first intake was on September 1, 2008 and intakes will now occur continuously.

Eligible Carpenters who have been working in the trade but have not followed the apprenticeship training route can now upgrade their knowledge over the internet before challenging the interprovincial examination. Previously, Carpenter upgrading programs were available only in a classroom-based model.

Given the increased number of apprentices in Saskatchewan, industry has asked for online training delivery. With this option, tradespeople aren't required to leave their jobs or homes to attend a standard seven week upgrading program at an institution. This program will enable more people to review their essential and technical skills and then challenge for journeyman status.

Online Electrician upgrading is currently under development.

Partsperson technical training has been delivered online since 2004 and has proven to be very successful for clients. The program is highly innovative and continues to respond to changes in industry and the requirements of online learners. Features of the online training include instructor assistance and online

monitoring. Instructors also use multiple tools, including discussion boards and e-mail to help apprentices. The SIAST Partsperson Department has a computer lab with a welcoming environment for learners. The program has been highly successful and trainees are very satisfied.

## **Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives**

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission continues to explore ways to increase the participation of under-represented groups – aboriginal people, women in non-traditional trades, newcomers, visible minorities and people with disabilities - in apprenticeship training and trade certification.

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiatives (AAI) increases aboriginal access, participation and success in apprenticeship by delivering training and work experience close to First Nations communities where participants can continue to live at home and have more supports during their training. AAI supports long-term employment and economic development opportunities for the communities. It is an excellent opportunity for aboriginal workers and their communities.

Since the AAI program began seven years ago, the number of aboriginal workers who registered as apprentices has increased from 480 at June 30, 2002 to 1,282 at December 31, 2008. In the six year period since June 30, 2002 until December 31, 2008, 366 aboriginal

apprentices have received journey person certification.

Aboriginal apprentices now account for 14.7% of the total number of registered apprentices in Saskatchewan. The aboriginal representation in the general population is 14.9%.

The Commission is also exploring opportunities to support other under-represented groups – both women in non-traditional trades and newcomers to Canada.

### **Public Sector Apprenticeship**

The SATCC continues to explore initiatives to increase the participation of registered apprentices in the public sector. Stemming from a report released in January 2007, *Apprenticeship Employment in the Public Sector: An Opportunity That is Overdue*, the Commission encourages and supports all three levels of government and their agencies to bring new apprentices on stream in Saskatchewan and to register current employees in the apprenticeship program. It makes sense for all employers, both private and public sector, to plan for their future workforce. One of the best ways to do this in the skilled trades is to become involved with apprenticeship and trades certification.

### **Pending Changes to Regulation**

Changes include designation of the new Esthetician trades, de-designation of four existing trades, relaxation of the ratio and renaming two trades.

#### Designation of Trades

Esthetics (Skin Care Technician and Nail Technician) has been approved for designation. Currently, draft regulations have been prepared along with two Provincial Occupational Analyses and some preliminary examination materials. Sprinkler System Installer is still pending Compulsory Status.

#### De-Designation of Trades

SATCC has recently reviewed four trades for viability. The Commission Board has directed that these trades be de-designated. Once regulatory changes have been completed, an announcement will be made regarding these trades.

#### Skills Shortages, Ratios and Regulations

In these times of a continuing robust economy and excellent opportunities for the future, a number of challenges arise in the labour market. In apprenticeship training and certification, the SATCC is more often faced with issues related to companies and employers not having the capacity to take on new apprentices to address their labour market development needs. Skilled tradespeople appear to be in short supply in the current labour market and the shortage is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, mainly because of the hot provincial economy, the advanced average age of the skilled trades labour force and the

demographic profile of Saskatchewan's population.

It is in the interests of the Commission and the province in the current economy to respond to the needs of employers and job seekers to permit the training and certification of more skilled trades workers.

In response to the needs of Saskatchewan industry, a pilot initiative excluding final level apprentices from journeyman to apprentice ratio calculations was approved by the Commission Board and became effective through regulation in November 2007.

Feedback regarding the impact of this initiative has been positive. The Commission conducted a further review of journeyman to apprentice ratios, which involved a survey of industry as represented by Trade Board members. Based on the results of the survey completed in September 2008, recommendations were made by the Commission Board to relax the journeyman to apprentice ratios in almost half of Saskatchewan's designated trades (most of the remainder already had a journeyman-to-apprentice ratio which was more relaxed than 1:1). It is anticipated that the outcome will place Saskatchewan in a more competitive position in the labour market and reinforce Saskatchewan's reputation as a Canadian leader in innovation and sensible solutions.

### Renaming Two Trades

The names of two Saskatchewan trades will be changing in the near future. Power Lineperson will change to Powerline Technician. Industrial Instrument Mechanic will change to Industrial Instrument Technician to correspond to the Red Seal trade names.

### **Regina and Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centres**

The SATCC has now signed MOUs with both the Regina and Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centres. The Commission Board will be represented on the Governance Boards of both centres. The SATCC invests resources on the steering, programming and communications committees for both the Regina and Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centres. These centres offer programming for youth and young adults in Regina, Saskatoon and areas in close proximity, and helps them meet entry level employment requirements for immediate labour skills shortages, such as commercial construction, plumber's assistant, masonry/bricklayer and culinary arts.

The Regina Trades and Skills Centre held a media event on December 16, 2008 in partnership with Habitat for Humanity at a Habitat home building project in Regina. The purpose was to increase awareness of opportunities available through the Regina Trades and Skills Centre and to launch their website, [www.reginatradesandskills.ca/](http://www.reginatradesandskills.ca/).

## **Habitat for Humanity Regina**

The SATCC is working with Habitat for Humanity Regina Inc. to ensure any worker volunteering on a Habitat home, and who registers as an apprentice with the SATCC, will receive appropriate trade time credit.

## **Rural Apprenticeship Technical Training Delivery**

Providing a relevant, accessible and responsive apprenticeship training and certification system to meet the needs of employers, apprentices, journeypersons and tradespersons is one of the main goals of the SATCC. In order to achieve this in a robust economy, all options for the efficient and effective delivery of apprenticeship training are being explored. These options include expansion of online training programs, use of mobile training labs, and delivering apprenticeship technical training in regional colleges where demand warrants and it is sustainable and logistically possible. It builds on the successful Industrial Mechanic (Millwright) training delivered by Parkland Regional College at Esterhazy to train apprentices employed at Mosaic Potash, EMW Ltd. and Dynatec Ltd. The SATCC has now completed provincial meetings with representatives from SIAST, the regional colleges and Saskatchewan industry to assess training needs and identify feasible locations for training programs.

## **Skills Canada-Saskatchewan Partnership**

The SATCC provides financial and in-kind support to the Skills Canada-Saskatchewan program. The provincial and national competitions do much to promote great opportunities, respect and well-paying careers in the skilled trades. SATCC has a representative on the Board of Skills Canada-Saskatchewan. The Canada-Saskatchewan Skills Competition will be held in Regina from April 2-4, 2009. Visit <http://www.skillscanadasask.com/> for more information.

## **Foreign Credential Recognition**

Enhancements to Saskatchewan's Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP) and building linkages with selected countries are expected to increase the number of newcomers to Saskatchewan. The Commission will certify tradespersons through its normal trade time assessment processes as well as through the recognition of foreign credentials. Forecasts indicate that, by the mid-century mark, Saskatchewan's population growth will mainly result from immigration. The Commission will be well-positioned to ensure the successful transition of immigrant tradespersons to successful, competent Canadian journeypersons. Information sheets on the process to get licensed in a regulated occupation were developed with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour and have been posted to the Commission's website at [www.saskapprenticeship.ca](http://www.saskapprenticeship.ca) under "Working in Saskatchewan."

The focus for the SATCC has been on verifying work experience, detailed tasks and the types of experience acquired. Because of limited resources and the incredible amount of effort needed to collect information, it may be more expedient to have clients confirm their knowledge and skills through an examination and interview process.

### **Ongoing Development of National Examination Item Banks and Hosting Responsibilities**

Program Development Officers provide ongoing support to Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) and other provinces/territories to develop examination item banks. Upcoming workshops include Glazier and Cook.

Of the Red Seal examination item banks that Saskatchewan is responsible for, a number have been reviewed, edited or released:

- Mobile Crane Operator – bank released;
- Concrete Finisher – released;
- Agricultural Machinery Technician – awaiting final translation from peer review comments. The examination is currently with HRSDC;
- Hairstylist is in the renewal process. A National Occupational Analysis (NOA) workshop was held in September 2008 in Ottawa. Item development is pending; and,
- Concrete Finisher is now hosted by Manitoba. Roofer is hosted by Saskatchewan.

### **Apprenticeship Promotion**

The SATCC has taken an active role in promoting the skilled trades to employers, youth, women and people of aboriginal ancestry. Campaigns have included participation in the very successful province-wide Rawlco Radio “Seeds of Success” campaign, newspaper supplements, linkages from key websites, special newspaper features and blitzes to employers based on sector and/or location.

### **SATCC Board Chair Receives the Artisan Award for 2008**

At the 2008 Apprenticeship Awards, the outgoing Commission Board Chair, Paul McLellan, was presented with the prestigious Artisan Award for his outstanding contributions to the apprenticeship program in Saskatchewan.

Aside from sitting as SATCC Board Chair for the last eight years, Paul has an eclectic record of contributions to apprenticeship, his industry and the community. A few noteworthy items include:

- Attaining Journeyman Electrician;
- Owning and operating two electrical companies - Alliance Energy and Sun Electric;
- Serving on the Provincial Apprenticeship Board;
- Leading the apprenticeship renewal process and the birth of the SATCC;

- Serving on the Electrician Trade Advisory Board, the SIAST Board member representing apprenticeship, the Senate and the Board of the University of Regina (U of R);
- Serving as a Board member and Chair of the Regina Construction Association, the Saskatchewan Construction Association and the Canadian Construction Association – a prestigious position for a regional sub-contractor;
- Completing his Master of Business Administration at the U of R;
- Sponsoring a scholarship at the university and contributing to the SATCC Director's Scholarship; and,
- Serving on the Board of the Globe Theatre, the President of the Wascana Country Club and the Board of the U of R Alumni Association.

Paul will leave his position as Commission Board Chair effective January 28, 2009.