



# Saskatchewan Apprenticeship

October 2008

## Saskatchewan Activities - 2008-09

### Apprenticeship Training Overview

Saskatchewan is experiencing unprecedented demand for skilled trades people.

- The number of apprentices registered with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) has risen to over 8,130 at June 30, 2008 from 5,436 at June 30, 2005. This represents a 50% increase over 2005.
- The Commission is registering an average of 237 new apprentices every month. In the 2007-2008 fiscal year, an additional 2,853 new apprentices registered with SATCC. This is an increase of 18% over the previous year.
- In the 3 year period from July 1 2005 – June 30, 2008, 2,506 apprentices completed all requirements for trades certification, received their Certificates of Qualification and became Journeypersons in their trades. 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 2005-2006. In the 2008-09 training year, 4,700 apprenticeship technical training spaces will be available for Saskatchewan apprentices.
- In just the last three years, we have seen a 50% increase in the number of registered apprentices. A dramatic increase in the number of certified journeypersons is likely to occur in the next few years as the current registered apprentices complete their training programs.

### Additional Funding for Technical Training in Saskatchewan

The growth of apprentices in Saskatchewan means that the cost to train and certify skilled tradespersons has also increased. The Government of Saskatchewan has risen to the challenge and is supporting the province's economic boom 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.

## **Trade Board Meetings**

Annually, the SATCC meets collectively with all of their active industry trade boards to discuss the direction, as well as to discuss relevant issues concerning industry, employers, apprentices and tradepeople. This year, 38 meetings will be held throughout October in Saskatoon, Davidson and Regina.

## **Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship**

Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship (SYA) 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 June 30, 2008, there were 145 schools and 3,022 students participating in the program.

Since the program's inception, 4,017 students in grades 10 – 12 have registered and a total of 824 students have received certificates. Of these, 45 have registered as Saskatchewan apprentices. Building on the evident success of the Program, the Commission will analyze the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship Program over the next year to make it even stronger and more attractive to Saskatchewan high school students.

## **Innovative Training Delivery**

A new internet course is being piloted by the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology to help experienced Carpenters achieve Journeyman status. SATCC is now accepting applications for courses that started September 1, 2008 and run continuously thereafter.

Eligible Carpenters who have been working in the trade but have not followed the apprenticeship training route, which combines on-the-job training with technical instruction, 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 shortage of skilled trades workers in Saskatchewan's thriving economy, industry has asked for online training delivery. With this new option, tradespeople won't have to leave their jobs or homes to attend the standard seven week upgrading program at an institution. This pilot program will enable more people to review their essential and technical skills and then challenge for journeyman status. With this added flexibility and enhanced accessibility, the SATCC will be able to certify more skilled tradespersons.

Similar Electrical and Plumber upgrading is currently under development.

Partsperson technical training has been delivered online since 2004 and has proven to be quite successful with clients. The program is highly innovative and continues to respond to the 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, such as 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.

### **Apprenticeship Awards**

The SATCC will be hosting its eighth annual Outstanding New Journeyman Awards on Friday, October 24, 2008. Awards will be presented to approximately 60 new journeymen. Awards will also be given to the most outstanding female in a non-traditional trade, person of Aboriginal ancestry, trade board and technical training team. Industry plays an active role by presenting approximately 10-15 industry-sponsored scholarships.

### **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 trades 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 projects support long-term employment and economic development opportunities for the communities. It is good news and 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 1,242 at June 30, 2008. In the six year period since June 30, 2002, 333 aboriginal apprentices have received journeyman certification.

Aboriginal participation in apprenticeship and certification is on the rise.

Aboriginal apprentices now account for 15.3% of the total number of registered apprentices in Saskatchewan. This figure exceeds the 14.9% percent Aboriginal representation in the general population.

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**

A key new initiative of the Commission seeks 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 will encourage and support 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.

## **Designation of New 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.

## **Skills Shortages, Ratios and Regulations**

In these times of a very 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 faced more and more 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 strong 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 as regulation in November 2007. Feedback has been received regarding the impact of the initiative and the Commission has begun a further review of journeyman to apprentice ratios which involves a survey of industry as represented by trade board members. Based on the results of the survey, scheduled to be completed in early September, recommendations will be made to the Commission Board for decisions on journeyman to apprentice ratios. 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 leader in

Canada in innovation and sensible solutions.

### **Regina and Saskatoon Trades and Skills 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 the cities of Regina and Saskatoon and areas 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.

### **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. Building 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 will work with 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 the great opportunities, respect and good paying careers in the skilled trades offer. SATCC has a representative on the board of Skills Canada-Saskatchewan.

### **Foreign Credential Recognition**

Enhancements to Saskatchewan's Immigrant Nominee Program and building linkages with selected countries are expected to increase the number of newcomers to Saskatchewan. The Commission will be preparing to certify tradespersons through its normal trade time assessment processes as well as through the recognition of foreign credentials. Forecasts predict 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.

The focus of the SATCC has been on the verification of work experience and the detailed duties and types of experience acquired. Due to limited resources and the incredible amount of resources needed to collect information, it will be more expedient to have clients confirm their knowledge and skills through an examination and interview process.

### **Redevelopment of National Examination Item Banks**

Program Development Officers provide ongoing support to Human Resources and Social Development Canada, other provinces and territories to develop examination item banks. Upcoming workshops include Steamfitter-Pipefitter, Plumber and Construction Electrician.

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

- Mobile Crane Operator - translation is pending;
- Concrete Finisher - translation is pending; and
- Agricultural Machinery Technician – currently awaiting item finalization.

### **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 participating in the province-wide Rawlco Radio “Seeds of Success” campaign, newspaper supplements and special features and blitzes to employers based on sector and/or location.

### **Apprenticeship Website**

The Commission launched a new look to its website in the spring of 2008. It is anticipated that the organization of the site will make it easy for apprentices, journeypersons, employers, youth, parents and teachers to quickly find the skilled trades information they need.

Visit the site at

[www.saskapprenticeship.ca](http://www.saskapprenticeship.ca) .