



2006 - 2007

Year-End Operations Report

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INTRODUCTION

The past year has been a busy one for the Automotive Industry Training Association. Not only have we been moving forward with regard to program development and the pursuit of our 2006/07 performance goals (see next section), but we have also been working hard to create awareness of our presence and purpose within the Automotive Industry. AITA's activities, as outlined in this report, have been conducted in support of its Mission:

To support the British Columbia automotive industry with the training and credentialing that effectively matches the supply of appropriately skilled workers with industry needs.

The Automotive Industry Training Association's Board of Directors has been actively involved in the start up and developmental stage, and a professionally-led Governance Workshop was held last July to lay the groundwork for AITA's governance policies. The result of that workshop was the production of a manual that clearly defines governance policies, the roles of AITA's directors and management, and Standing Committees of the Board.

AITA has also been progressing quickly in setting up the operational structure and administrative procedures that will provide the foundation for AITA's move into Full Service operation. An additional staff position was filled in mid-July which facilitated AITA's ability to reach its performance goals, and it is with confidence that the Automotive Industry Training Association anticipates the shift to Full Service and its attendant challenges.

PERFORMANCE GOALS

Goal 1 - The number of employers/sponsors offering trainee/apprentice placements.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 TARGET	2006/2007 ACTUAL
n/a	1,691	1,717

Goal 2 - The number of programs meeting the specifications and standards of an up-to-date training program.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 TARGET	2006/2007 ACTUAL
0 out of 33	19 out of 33	18 out of 33

Goal 3 - The level of satisfaction as evaluated through an annual customer satisfaction index measure.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 ACTUAL	2006/2007 ACTUAL
n/a	83.5	85.5%

Goal 4 - The level of stakeholder awareness and understanding of the AITA, its mandate and services, as measured by an annual stake holder awareness index.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 ACTUAL	2006/2007 ACTUAL
n/a	74.5	77.5%

Goal 5 - The percentage of participants who completed the training programs assigned to AITA.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 TARGET	2006/2007 ACTUAL
n/a	Establish baseline	ACT - 45% AST - 53%

Goal 6 - The number of registered youth participants in programs attributed to AITA as measured by participants in the ACE-IT and SSA programs.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 TARGET	2006/2007 ACTUAL
68	TBD	479

Goal 7 - The number of registered trainees/apprentices in programs assigned to AITA.

BASELINE (March 2005)	2006/2007 TARGET	2006/2007 ACTUAL
2,576	TBD	3,291

Please note that no target was set for the above goals for the period 2005/2006.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Collision Repair & Refinishing Red Seal Trades

The project of aligning the Provincial curriculum with the National Occupational Analysis (NOA) saw finalization of the review of both programs in October, in time to be submitted to the ITA November board meeting. The new program profiles were accepted along with the revised program outlines. The examination banks for these trades were completed and submitted in the fourth quarter.

Automotive Service Technician (AST)

In 2005, a proposal to change the model for the AST program was made in order that the program would fill the needs of industry and technicians alike. The new program was designed to provide a more structured and supportive progression to full, Red Seal certification for technicians. The model, based on input from two large industry forums hosted by the Automotive Sector Council, would also better identify the capabilities of the technician to the consumer by issuing credentials recognizing their accomplishments. In the proposed model, there would be four sequential levels leading to the Red Seal exam. The technician would receive a level credential once the combination of identified relevant work experience and technical training was completed for that level. Because the credentials are sequential, each level is a minimum that needs to be satisfied in order to progress to the next level. After completing all four level credentials, the technician would receive a British Columbia Trades Qualification Certificate. Technicians would also be eligible to challenge the Red Seal exam at that time and, if successful, receive a Red Seal endorsement on their Trades Qualification Certificate.

The new model was presented to the ITA for approval in May 2006, and was subsequently approved.

A comparison (Gap Analysis) of the current Provincial curriculum with the National Occupational Analysis (NOA) was completed in the fourth quarter of 2007 and the identified required changes will be made to the program during the first quarter of 2008.

Parts and Warehousing Program

The revised Parts & Warehousing program outlines and profiles were completed in the fourth quarter and were approved by the AITA board at the April 2007 board meeting. This revision, which amalgamates three trades into two final trade designations (one of which is a Red Seal trade), is awaiting approval by the ITA Board of Directors at the May meeting.

Automotive Upholstery Program

An initial Industry forum was held in February with a small number of employers and tradespeople in this field. There was a strong demonstration of need for certification in this trade. A planning forum will be held in May 2007 to begin determining the broad job tasks that need to be recognized in a credential.

Automotive Glass Installer Program

This program was originally produced in 2000 and is in need of review in order to encompass some of the new chemicals and procedures that have been introduced since then. Subject matter expert meetings will be taking place in the first quarter of 2007/08 to identify the extent of new material additions that will be necessary.

Motorcycle Mechanic Program

Discussions with this trade in the past months have presented some challenges around a program structure that will allow for the existence of a program with small numbers of apprentices. A stakeholder forum is planned for May 2007. Site visits with individual employers have been conducted to identify the level of training necessary within the trade.

Automotive Service Advisor Program

Interest in creating a new program to provide training and credentialing for the position of Service Advisor has been increasing in the past several years. The AITA board feels that the need to recognize service advisor as a trade designation is important as a recruitment and retention strategy for the future. Two meetings with industry have been hosted by AITA concerning this new program to gauge industry support. A preliminary competency identification session is being held in May 2007. It is anticipated that a letter of intent will be submitted in late May or early June to the ITA to secure new program development funding.

TRAINING OPTIONS

Alternative Model of Automotive Apprenticeship Training (AMAAT)

The AMAAT format of evenings and weekend apprenticeship technical upgrade training for the Automotive Service Technician program was successfully transferred to BCIT for delivery starting in January 2007. Two intakes ran concurrently; one intake for second level and one for third level technicians. The program is anecdotally considered successful by BCIT and they are planning to offer it again as level three and level four intakes in January 2008. A full evaluation and review is anticipated upon completion of the April 2007 classes.

Online Delivery of Collision Repair Trade

Vancouver Community College (VCC) has developed an online delivery model for the theory portion of the Collision Repair Technician with funding from BC Campus and the ITA. AITA has facilitated several sessions for VCC to present the model to industry, and to a representative of MITO from New Zealand. Feedback from the industry in BC has been very positive and the project is now in the beta testing stage.

COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

General Activities

- Website

With the purchase of the appropriate software, AITA was able to take over the regular maintenance of its website, www.autoapprentice.com. The website has undergone some layout and link changes, however, it will see a major revision once the anticipated changes to the ITA website are made so that AITA's website will be able to offer seamless "portals" to it.

- Promotional Mailing

A promotional brochure containing information about AITA, its roles, responsibilities and processes was produced and distributed to industry using the ARA's mailing list of 5300 automotive related businesses in BC. was provided by the Automotive Retailers Association as part of their in-kind contribution. A 6-inch aluminum ruler with the AITA logo and website address was included with the brochure.

- Marketing Plan

Six companies who specialize in creating marketing plans were investigated and four were invited to make presentations. Upon due consideration of cost and content, The Hamilton Group was chosen from among these four companies to develop a comprehensive marketing plan for AITA. A consultant worked very closely with AITA's staff to develop a marketing plan that would take into consideration AITA's current marketing requirements as well as its long-term needs. The major work on the plan was completed by the end of April, and it is anticipated that it will be fully completed by the end of May.

- Updated Logo

One of the issues that work on the marketing project revealed was that AITA's logo bore a strong resemblance to other logos already in use in the automotive industry. The need for strong branding indicated that it would be necessary to change the current logo. A new logo created by a design expert in the field was presented to the Directors in April, however, the discussion that ensued as a result of this indicated that there was some interest in changing AITA's name. While the issue is currently under advisement, the need for prompt action is recognized and it is anticipated that this will be finalized by the end of May.

- CARS Council - Internationally Trained Workers Project

The ITW Project conducted by the Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council was looking at barriers to immigrants receiving recognition of credentials and training received in foreign countries. AITA's CEO was attended several meetings of the Steering Committee in Toronto over the course of the project. AITA was also invited to observe the focus group sessions in Vancouver. The final report on this project was received from CARS in March 2007. While the findings were interesting, it does not appear their will impact the current labour shortage of trained workers in the automotive industry. AITA will continue to monitor progress in this area.

Events Participation

During the course of the last year, AITA's CEO has been involved in various events and/or conferences around the Province, either as a observer, participant or presenter to promote AITA. Some of these events included:

- Workforce Connex Aboriginal Employment Regional Forum - attendee.
- Canadian Apprenticeship Forum - attendee.
- Reshaping Learning Through Innovation & Collaboration Symposium - attendee
- Automotive Retailers Association Annual Convention - Attended and made a presentation on AITA's roles and responsibilities.
- CARS Council - Internationally Trained Workers Project - Participated in Steering Committee Meetings and observed focus groups in Vancouver
- Career Educators Society (CES) Conference - CEO was part of a panel of ITO representatives discussing opportunities within trades for high school students.
- AITA presentations were made at meetings of the following divisions of the Automotive Retailers Association:
 - Glass Division
 - Collision Repair Division
 - Mechanical Repair Division
- Mobile Training Facility Unveiling Event - Attendee

SECONDARY SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT AND PROGRAMS

In addition to the events listed above, AITA has been active with secondary schools as well. Events include:

- Cloverdale Trade Up Career Fair - AITA sponsored a booth to promote a career in the automotive trades.
- BCAA/BCIT/Ford High School Challenge - AITA CEO was present as a judge during the contests.
- Skills Canada BC - AITA's CEO is currently President of Skills BC and was active during the Provincial Competition on April 26, 2006.
- Skills Canada BC - Minister's Luncheon - attendee

ACE-IT Programs

The CEO has visited several Secondary Schools interested in offering ACE-IT programming. Site visits were conducted in Salmon Arm (Salmon Arm Secondary), Coquitlam (Centennial and Terry Fox Secondary), Burnaby (Caribou Hill Secondary), and Abbotsford (Abbotsford Christian Secondary). Equipment requirements were reviewed as well as assurance received that the teachers will be Red Seal technicians. It is expected that these schools will apply (or already have applied) for ACE-IT program funding.

Dawson Creek Program

As a result of a BCIT announcement that it would be discontinuing its high school partnership program with the Dawson Creek School District in 2008, discussions between the School District and Northern Lights College were held to explore possibilities of a partnership program at the Dawson Creek facilities. AITA was consulted and the CEO visited both establishments and encouraged the dialogue. The outcome of these discussions was that a partnership agreement was reached wherein Northern Lights and the School District will offer a hybrid automotive service technician-based program that will allow students to gain their Level 1 technical credit as well as a high school credit applied math and applied physics. AITA will be closely observing the progress of this unique program.

FINANCIAL REPORT

	YTD Actual Mar. 31/07	YTD Budget Mar. 31/07	(Over) / Under Budget
ITO Operations			
Revenue			
ITA Funding for Operations	300,000	300,000	
Operating Expenses			
Salaries & Benefits	106,186	126,000	19,813 ¹
Consulting	21,700	70,000	48,300 ²
Professional Services (Audit and Legal)	8,279	2,000	(6,280) ³
Facilities	0	0	0 ⁴
Office Expenses	10,379	13,500	3,121 ⁵
Marketing/Communications	16,848	50,000	33,152 ⁶
Travel/Meeting	20,292	32,000	11,708 ⁷
Other	0	6,500	0 ⁸
Total Operating Expenses	183,684	300,000	109,814

Explanatory Notes

1. We originally planned for a possible part-time additional staff member. Among other things, space constraints have delayed this hiring. However, it is expected that before the current fiscal year is completed, AITA will have increased staff by an additional four individuals.
2. The under-budget amount is a result of having expected that more consultants would be utilized in program development. However, we found it more effective to have the work done in-house.
3. This item is over-budget as a result of some unexpected legal filings as well as the unanticipated high cost of outside audit. This is not expected to be repeated for the 2007/2008 fiscal year.
4. At the time the 2006/2007 budget was developed, facilities were not covered by ITA funding. However, as the regulations have changed, it should be noted that the 2007/2008 budget does show a budgeted amount. As AITA's staff will be increasing in numbers this year, monies will have to be spent on this budget item.
5. As discussed in item 4 above, offices expenses were lower than expected due to the unchanged office arrangements.

6. The surplus of \$33,152 for Marketing/Communications is partly a result of some of the projects not have been paid out by the end of the fiscal year. However, as outlined in the Service Plan, it expected that this amount, as well as the new budgeted amount will be spent in this vital area throughout the 2007/2008 fiscal year.
7. The surplus amount in the Travel/Meeting category was also tied to the unchanged staff numbers. The additional staff taken on in 2007/2008 will produce an increase in spending under this item.
8. The budgeted amount in the “other” category was unused as other categories covered all our expenses.