

WINTER 2011

What's Happening in Industry Training

FROM THE CEO



Jaw dropping statistic cracks stereotype

Say the phrase “post-secondary education”, and many people routinely think “university degree”.

Could it be that a journeyperson’s Certificate of Qualification seldom comes to mind because of lingering stereotypes about skilled trades? Or is it that apprenticeship isn’t generally recognized for what it actually is — a critical form of post secondary education?

What cracks the stereotype with the force of a machinist’s hammer is a jaw dropping statistic in the provincial government’s recently-released *Skills for Growth: British Columbia’s Labour Market Strategy to 2020*.

Over the coming decade, B.C. will have more than a million job openings, with nearly eight out of 10 requiring some form of post-secondary education. The jaw-dropper is that nearly two-thirds of them need trades

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WOMEN’S INITIATIVES



Satisfaction at finishing a door-and-window assembly in TRU’s Women Exploring Trades program is shown by participants Sandra Char (left) and Anna Chelsea. (Photo courtesy of TRU)

Helping women overcome roadblocks

On the way to productive trades careers, some women struggle with serious roadblocks. Helping overcome them is ITA’s Women in Trades Training (WITT) program.

“For women who are marginalized, entering trades training can be a real problem, but it’s amazing what they accomplish with support,” said Jessi Zielke, ITA Senior Lead for Labour Supply Initiatives.

That’s where WITT comes in, helping unemployed and underemployed women in partnerships with post-secondary institutions, unions and

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SIP revives apprenticeship development

With implementation this winter of the Standards Improvement Project (SIP), renewed clarity is coming to the work of developing apprenticeship programs in B.C. — standardizing and simplifying the process.

SIP was a two-year collaborative effort involving ITA which approves and funds programs, Industry Training Organizations (ITOs) that ensure programs meet specific industry needs, and training providers.

“The major outcome is a comprehensive program development process supported by guidelines and templates that can be used for all industries,” explained Ruth McGillivray, ITA Lead for Quality Assurance in Program Standards.

Producing those tools involved mapping and improving ITA’s

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THE RIGHT SKILLS ► A PROVEN ADVANTAGE

Access for apprentices, employers

Less paperwork and faster service are on tap for B.C.'s employer-sponsors and apprentices this spring, when they're brought into ITA's online Direct Access information system.

Employers will be able to:

- View and verify active apprentice files and check transcripts against training requirements without waiting for hard copy or email correspondence.

- Enter apprentices' work-based training hours in real time without mailing forms and, in the case of final hours, trigger automatic recommendation letters.

Apprentices will be able to:

- Register their apprenticeships after being hired and given sponsor numbers, with registration cards sent immediately.
- Determine program prerequisites as they register, instead of searching for this information separately on ITA's website.

Apprentices and sponsors will receive personal invitations to activate their Direct Access accounts, explained Direct Access Project Manager Robert Holley.

"This latest expansion is a major step toward our goals of open access to information and self-management of apprenticeships," he said. ▼

For more on this Direct Access development, [CLICK HERE](#)

SIP revival from /1

internal processes, which benefits program developers, industry, training providers, apprentices and sponsors, she added.

Use of the new SIP process and tools is required for all program development or revision started after February 1. Decisions about applying SIP to programs already in development or revision are made on a case-by-case basis.

"ITOs had input to and approval of draft guidelines throughout the two-year project, so we've already seen informal, gradual implementation of SIP. Many ITOs have begun using the new tools proactively," Ruth said.

"Anyone unfamiliar with SIP should be pleasantly surprised by how much it improves the program development and approval process. It's a logical, common-sense approach — not so prescriptive that it's impossible to work with, but detailed enough to provide clear, useful guidance," she said.

"We now have a detailed project map of how to revise and develop programs, instead of reinventing the process every time." ▼

Software upgrade improves exam scheduling and notification

ITA's exam scheduling is now faster, more reliable and accurate after a December upgrade of software used by the Customer Service Exam Department.

The improvement means better performance in a complex area, the scheduling of an average of

1,200 exams each month at more than 100 locations across the province.

The upgrade made scheduling more efficient by automating many time-consuming record-keeping and notification tasks, including letters to individual clients notifying them of specific exam details. In addition, ITA staff have easier viewing access to upcoming exam sessions.

All this enables them to meet evolving service goals, and it moves the system one step closer to eventually allowing trade workers to schedule their own exams in the future. ▼

New ITA lead for standards

Diane Evans joined ITA in December as Lead, Program Standards.

The new manager has more than 12 years' adult education experience in college and workplace settings and more than 10 years' experience in manufacturing, logistics and purchasing.

"Diane has a proven track record of motivating adult learners in the workforce while maintaining ongoing relationships with employers and teams, as well as international training experience," said Johann Steinmann, ITA Senior Lead, Programs. ▼

Study probes learning disabilities

Outside her ITA job (story above), Ruth McGillivray is working on a master's degree on the experiences of people with learning disabilities who have taken online trades training. Ruth is looking for volunteers at least 18 years old with learning

disabilities who have taken online apprenticeship courses. All that's involved is an informal interview of up to two hours.

Get more information with no obligation by emailing Ruth.Imcgillivray@Royal-Roads.ca.

Mapping a new route for trades challengers

Traditionally, there has been only one road to a certificate of trade qualification for workers trained outside the Canadian apprenticeship system. Referred to as “challengers,” they must first prove time worked in the trade and then pass a written exam.

Alternative approaches

Now an enhanced model is in the works with an alternative approach including:

- Self-assessment by challengers.
- Documentation review of items like employer references and training certificates.
- Technical interviews by qualified assessors certified in the challengers’ trade.
- Written and practical assessments.

The model is the product of a two-year-old national partnership where ITA has played a central role.

Other players include the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA), the national Red Seal organization and two B.C. industry training

organizations — tourism and hospitality’s go2 and the Transportation Career Development Association (transCDA). These organizations helped ensure that pilots for two trades meet specific trade competency standards.

In B.C.’s cook trade, the enhanced model is now used for challengers with success rates comparable to the traditional challenge model. Other provinces are piloting this.

This winter and spring, the enhanced model is being piloted with challengers in the heavy duty equipment technician and marine mechanical technician trades.

“Expanded use of the enhanced model in B.C. will depend on ITA and stakeholders devising a ‘road map’ that defines a process for the 140 Red Seal and other trades in this province. This work must dovetail with national needs,” said Sandy Steward, ITA Executive Lead for Strategic Initiatives.

Two important goals

“In all this, we’re balancing two equally important goals in addition to reliably judging individual competency — assuring employers that the challengers can work to trade standards, and giving challengers the opportunity to effectively demonstrate that they can perform to the standard that industry requires in the workplace.” ▼

For more details [CLICK HERE](#)

YOUTH INITIATIVES



At Youth Day, Salmon Arm apprentice Brandon Udy meets ITA CEO Kevin Evans (whose moustache was grown for Movember, a prostate cancer fundraiser).

Putting youth in trades

Encouraging more young British Columbians to go into trades — that was the focus of ITA’s sixth annual Youth Day, attended by more than 160 educators, industry representatives and government officials from all parts of the province.

The backdrop for the late fall conference in Vancouver was a BC Stats projection of 134,000 skilled job vacancies by 2019. [CLICK HERE](#)

“B.C.’s growing population and aging workforce mean we’ll be challenged to take full advantage of the economic opportunities the next 10 years will present,” said ITA CEO Kevin Evans.

“Fortunately, we’re seeing increased interest by secondary school students in skilled trades careers that will help ease the pressure. Youth Day built on that.”

Conference participants reviewed ITA programs offering young people non-traditional learning and alternative graduation pathways.

Last year, 3,360 students took those programs; and one, Brandon Udy, made a Youth Day presentation. He knew he wanted to be an automotive collision repair technician before graduating from Salmon Arm Secondary School where ITA programs launched his apprenticeship career.

First came Level 1 collision repair technical training through an on-line Vancouver Community College course taken through ACE IT. Then through SSA in grade 12, Brandon worked part-time as an apprentice at a local body shop. Now graduated, he apprentices full time with the same employer.” For details on these and other ITA youth programs, [CLICK HERE](#)

“There are still many kids from my graduating class who don’t have a clue what they’re going to do,” said Brandon.

But he has “a clear path” because of “programs that gave me a head start in my career goals, leading to a good job I know I’ll enjoy.” ▼

New OPSNs

Keep up-to-date on changes in training program standards and delivery to training providers.

Changes are online Official Program Standards Notifications posted by ITA. [CLICK HERE](#)

They should be read against available related program profiles. [CLICK HERE](#)

Helping women overcome roadblocks *from /1*

employers. ITA's funding for this comes from the Labour Market Agreement between the B.C. and Canadian governments.

A good example is the Women Exploring Trades program at Kamloops-based Thompson Rivers University (TRU).

The four-month-old program prepares participants to enter apprenticeship training — giving them hands-on exposure to a half-dozen Red Seal trades, helping upgrade essential skills and offering necessary support with issues like counselling, child care, accommodation, safety clothing and tools.

“We work hard on a holistic approach and a safe, gender-neutral environment fully integrated in the university culture,” explained TRU Dean of Trades and Technology Lindsay Langill.



Jackie Camille works in the Women Exploring Trades program. (Photo courtesy of TRU)

It pays off. The first graduating class in December had an 81 per cent success rate, significantly more than similar programs.

Aged 22 to 53 years, the 13 graduates were all Aboriginal women, and “this was a big step for them,” said TRU Trades and Technology Continuing Studies Coordinator Heather Hamilton.

“With a little more guidance and support with issues than we usually see in trade programs, their confidence and performance improved day by day,” said Heather.

Most of the graduates are now completing secondary-school equivalency, taking pre-apprenticeship training and starting apprenticeships.

“Back in their communities, these women are already role models, and the word is spreading,” said Heather. “Succeeding in a highly-technical trade is definitely doable.” ▼

Find out more

- TRU's program [CLICK HERE](#)
- ITA's WITT program [CLICK HERE](#)
- WITT's Facebook page [CLICK HERE](#)

Help with essential skills

ITA's new Essential Services Suite went online in December.

It's a free tool that lets users measure their skills against requirements for more than 50 Red Seal and other trades in B.C. It delivers individual assessments, personalized learning plans to address any essential skills shortcomings, and links to other online aids.

The suite can be used with an instructor or employer, or by anyone accessing and using it independently. ▼

To see for yourself, [CLICK HERE](#)

Jaw-dropping statistic *from /1*

or college certificates. University degrees account for just 35 per cent of the total.

That projection provides cause for pause — not only to re-examine stereotypes about the value of trades or college certificates, but also to ensure that taxpayer-supported post-secondary investments reflect the right balance between university and other post-secondary pathways.

Skills for Growth is must reading for anyone focused on how we can work collaboratively to prevent future skills shortages from putting a chokehold on B.C.'s economic growth. You can find out more about it in this newsletter. [CLICK HERE](#)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Evans".

Kevin Evans, *Chief Executive Officer*

Local presentations by CEO

ITA CEO Kevin Evans will be conducting 2011 presentations across the province. Current bookings are with two northern B.C. Chambers of Commerce:

- Prince George on April 20
- Fort St. John on September 27

Details on timing and location are available from each chamber.

For information on scheduling a local presentation for your organization, email ITA Communications Lead Karen Zukas at kzukas@itabc.ca

Training for a labour market with 140,000 jobs

'You can't do today's job with yesterday's methods and still be in business tomorrow. Competition for talent will accelerate as employers struggle to find skilled workers.'



Russ Robertson of transCDA

This begins a series of features on Industry Training Organizations (ITOs). Responsible for specific sectors, they are established by industry and accountable to and co-funded by ITA.

Formed in 2008, the province's newest ITO is the Transportation Career Development Association of BC (transCDA). It serves the road, rail, marine and aerospace sectors — 26 ITA programs, four of them Red Seal trades, in a labour market with 140,000 skilled jobs.

"We focus 360 degrees of our activity on serving industry and ITA. This is our core function," explained transCDA CEO Russ Robertson. "We are the sectors' conduit to establish and recommend occupational standards."

The ITO works at applying greater efficiency to that process. One example is a recent realignment of three related training programs into a common standard for heavy duty equipment technicians, commercial transport vehicle mechanics and diesel engine mechanics.

The realignment will result in a 20 per cent cost saving for ITA, said Russ, and higher seat utilization for training providers.

Innovation is central to transCDA, which sees training programs on a continuum from existing apprenticeships to other competency-based models. "Fortunately, ITA accepts the full range of that continuum," said Russ.

transCDA has also broadened its scope of business. Rail, recreational marine and aerospace were added after the ITO's formation, and it is looking now at other sectors such as

supply chain and municipalities whose infrastructure functions focus on transportation.

Besides adding other transportation sectors, transCDA's strategic plan sees:

- Expanding services beyond training and certification.
- New working relationships with other agencies in addition to the current ITA partnership.
- Adding to the occupations under the transCDA umbrella.
- Developing new training program and delivery models.

Here's how Russ explained all that: "You can't do today's job with yesterday's methods and still be in business tomorrow. Innovation and competition for talent will accelerate as employers struggle to find skilled workers to fill critical jobs." ▼

For more on transCDA, [CLICK HERE](#) or follow twitter.com/transcda

RTO recognized by Climate Smart

The Resource Training Organization (RTO) has been recognized by Langley Township, the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce and Metro Vancouver for reducing environmental impacts by completing requirements the Climate Smart Business Program.

Based in Langley, RTO is the Industry Training Organization working with ITA on training for British Columbia's mining and smelting, oil and gas, pulp and paper, shipbuilding and repair, solid wood and utilities sectors.

RTO is measuring and committed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in a growing network of organizations taking action on climate change. ▼

Angling guide training leads North America

B.C. has a new tidal angling guide training program (TAG) that leads to voluntary certification.

Announced at the end of 2010, the program for saltwater fishing guides is a North American first. It culminates a three-year joint effort of the Sport Fishing Institute of BC (SFI) and go2 which manages certification and assessment for the province's tourism industry.

They worked three years to develop best practices, occupational performance standards and a comprehensive curriculum tested in a pilot training for 40 participants. Development partners were ITA, federal and provincial agencies, First Nations and industry stakeholders.

"This program is the first of its kind in North America," said Arlene Keis, CEO of go2.

It confirms that B.C. "has the highest standard of fishing guide certification, safety and customer service on the continent," said SFI President Robert Alcock. Saltwater anglers and tourists seeking the services of charter-boat operators or fishing guides will be able to hire certified professionals. ▼

For more on the TAG program, [CLICK HERE](#)

Skills strategy invests in people to drive growth

In late November 2010, the Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development (RESD) launched *Skills for Growth: British Columbia's Labour Market Strategy to 2020*.

The strategy is about investing in the people of British Columbia to drive individual and provincial prosperity. It is a plan that answers the call for a higher level strategic vision and framework for British Columbia's labour market.

"To maximize our economic potential, B.C. not only needs

a highly skilled workforce, but also one with the right skills to match market demands," stated RESD Minister Ida Chong. "*Skills for Growth* outlines our strategic approach to ensuring we have enough workers, with the right skills, in every region of the province."

The strategy targets three priority areas for the next decade:

- Increase the skill level and labour market success of British Columbians.
- Attract workers and entrepreneurs from outside the province

who meet British Columbia's regional economic needs.

- Improve working productivity. "Skills empower British Columbians with more options, helping them rise higher in their chosen profession, provide more for their families and enjoy more success in their lives," said the minister.

Designed to build on and coordinate efforts by many players, the strategy was developed with input from employers, post-secondary institutions, labour, industry associations and other stakeholders. [CLICK HERE](#)



Ida Chong, named Minister of Regional Economic and Skills Development in November, continues as the Minister of Science and Universities.

YOUR INPUT

We value your feedback on the newsletter, your insights into industry training in B.C. and ideas for stories that we, or you, might write. Thank you.

—ITA eNews Editor
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Info for you

Exam rule changes — ITA now provides trade code books to all candidates writing exams, and they will not be permitted to bring outside code books into exam sessions.

This procedure will be extended to include calculators in fall 2011, and ITA will publish information on the type of calculator to be provided. For now, candidates may bring non-programmable calculators of their choice that cannot store or transmit data. For details, [CLICK HERE](#)

News service — Training News Digest is a summary meant to keep ITA stakeholders up-to-date on training developments

in B.C. and across Canada. Starting in February, monthly emails will deliver one-paragraph summaries and links to recent information from various sources. Check ITA's website to sign up for the summary or suggest items for inclusion.

Hot off the press — Several new ITA fact sheets and backgrounders on a variety of training subjects are at [CLICK HERE](#)

Red Seal guides — Technical training outcomes based upon core sub-tasks for key grades are available at [CLICK HERE](#)

The series of interprovincial guides was developed to help program development staff design apprenticeship curriculum and training plans. ▼

Government briefs

Shortages region by region

What trade occupations will be in demand through 2019? The answer can be found in *British Columbia Trade Occupations Outlook: 2009–2019*, which offers detailed projections of labour market needs for the province as a whole. [CLICK HERE](#)

Financial support

The B.C. Ministry of Social Development would like to remind apprentices that changes to apprentice financial supports under its Skills Development Program took effect in January 2011. For details of the previously-announced changes and key features of the continuing program, [CLICK HERE](#)