

**Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification  
Board  
Annual Activity Report  
2011-12**

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**Chairperson's Message**

September 9, 2012

Honourable Joan Burke  
Department of Advanced Education and Skills  
West Block, Confederation Building  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6

Dear Minister:

I am pleased to submit the 2011-12 Annual Activity Report of the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board. This report covers the period April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012.

The Board developed a three year activity plan for 2011-14 and identified two issues that would be the focus for that three year period:

- apprenticeship experience; and
- assessment and evaluation methods.

Details on the successful achievement of the associated objectives for 2011-12 are presented in this report. My signature below is on behalf of the Board and indicative of the Board's accountability for the actual results reported herein.

Respectfully submitted,



**PAULA FLOOD**  
Chairperson

## Overview

The Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board (the Board) was established under Section 5 of the *Apprenticeship and Certification Act*. As of March 31, 2012 members of the Board, were as follows

### Board Chairperson

- Ms. Paula Flood

### Employer Representatives

- Ms. Rhonda Neary
- Mr. Mike Lee
- Vacancy

### Employee Representatives

- Mr. Gus Doyle
- Ms. Ann Geehan
- Mr. Gerald Shea

### Representatives at Large

- Mr. Gordon Dunphy
- Vacancy
- Vacancy

### Alternates

- Vacancy - Employer Representative
- Mr. Richard Kelly, Employee Representative
- Mr. James Loder, Representative at Large

### Director of Apprenticeship

- Mr. Cliff Mercer

The Board held four meetings during 2011-12. The Board Chair represented the province on the Inter-provincial Alliance of Apprenticeship Board Chairpersons (four days per year), the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (four days per year) and the Atlantic Canada Association of Apprenticeship Directors and Board Chairs (four days per year).

The Board members serve without remuneration as per section 6 of the *Apprenticeship and Certification Act*. Travel and incidental expenses incurred by the Board were minimal and were covered by the Department of Advanced Education and Skills in accordance with government policy.

## **Mandate**

The mandate of the Board is established under sections 8 and 9 of the *Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Act* and includes:

- determining whether an occupation is appropriate for certification and, if so, designating that occupation;
- determining the form and contents of both a plan of training and a memorandum of understanding for apprenticeship, in designated occupations;
- registering all apprentices and trade qualifiers, and monitoring their progress leading to journey person certification;
- determining and approving the objectives of every course of instruction included in a plan of training;
- accrediting institutions for the purpose of delivering training in a designated occupation;
- approving plans specific to certain employers as private plans;
- providing for periodic and final examinations of apprentices and trade qualifiers;
- appointing examining committees to conduct practical examinations for the periodic and final examinations of apprentices and trade qualifiers and defining the duties of those committees;
- assessing, evaluating and determining the requirements to complete a period of apprenticeship and may grant credits for:
  - occupational experience, and
  - occupational training in a recognized training institution;
- revoking a certificate where evidence supports a finding of fraud by the applicant regarding the issuing of same certificate;
- approving assignments of memorandums of understanding for apprenticeship;
- making the final determination regarding all disputes arising out of a memorandum of understanding for apprenticeship or a plan of apprenticeship training;
- terminating, cancelling or suspending memorandums of understanding for apprenticeship upon agreement of the parties or for proper and sufficient cause in the Board's opinion;
- amending, varying, or revoking and substituting, a plan of apprenticeship training;

- ordering, with the approval of the minister, that persons cannot work in apprenticeship trades unless they:
  - hold a certificate of qualification issued or recognized by the Board,
  - are a trade qualifier under an arrangement acceptable to the Board, or
  - are apprentices working under a memorandum of understanding for apprenticeship in accordance with its terms under a plan of apprenticeship approved by the Board;
- issuing certificates or diplomas to apprentices and trade qualifiers who complete their training and pass the necessary journeyman examinations;
- appointing advisory committees which shall be equally representative of employers and employees in respect of apprenticeship in occupations, and prescribing the duties of those committees; and
- setting fees with the approval of the minister.

### **Vision and Mission**

During the 2011-14 planning period, the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board is committed to supporting the vision and mission of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills as follows:

#### **Vision**

Growth through employment, strength in diversity, dignity by inclusion.

#### **Mission**

By 2017, the Department of Advanced Education and Skills will have improved the quality and the delivery of supports and services.

The Board ensures that all individuals involved in apprenticeship meet the highest standards of their profession. Ensuring that an appropriate supply of individuals is available to fill positions in the skilled trades is absolutely essential to the provincial economy.

The Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board monitors the courses of study and training to ensure apprentices and journeymen participate in a high quality apprenticeship system.

## **Highlights/Accomplishments**

The following provides details on some of the work approved by the Board during the 2011-12 year:

- a pilot for a straight 2:1 ratio of apprentices to journeypersons in all trade occupations
- an “out-of-province” registration policy, resulting in apprentices being able to register and continue their programs while working primarily in Alberta
- a new suite of related courses using industry advisory committees
- a Distance Learning Pilot Project with the Electrical Construction program
- an online, block exam for eight occupations
- revised plans of training for the following trades:
  - Cabinet Maker
  - Electrical-Industrial (to follow Interprovincial Program Guides)
  - Instrumentation and Control Technician
  - Machinist
  - Motor Vehicle Body Repairer (Metal and Paint)
  - Powerline Technician (Construction)
  - Powerline Technician (Operating)
  - Residential Electrician
- two new plans of training for the following trades:
  - Landscape Horticulturist
  - Process Operator
- three-year initial accreditation for the following programs:
  - Entry Level Construction/Industrial Electrical Program – College of the North Atlantic - Bay St. George, Burin, and Carbonear
  - Entry Level Powerline Technician Program – DieTrac Technical Institute
  - Entry Level Plumber – United Association (UA) Training Centre [Plumbers and Steamfitter Pipefitter Union training school]
- five-year re-accreditations for 26 programs at the following institutions:
  - Academy Canada, St. John’s and Corner Brook Campuses
  - Carpenters Millwright College
  - College of the North Atlantic – Baie Verte, Bay St. George, Bonavista, Burin, Carbonear, Happy Valley – Goose Bay, Placentia, Port aux Basques, Seal Cove Campuses
- a modified logbook for the Youth Apprenticeship Pilot

### Quick Facts – 2011-12

Number of active apprentices	<b>5,381</b>
Number of newly registered apprentices in 2011-12	<b>1,381</b>
Number of apprentices that received journeyperson certification	<b>488</b>
Number of trade qualifiers that received journeyperson certification	<b>180</b>
Number of apprenticeship incentive grant letters issued	<b>1,114</b>
Number of apprenticeship completion grant letters issued	<b>491</b>
Number of apprentices that received in-school training	<b>2,717</b>
Number of apprentices that received credit through the recognition of prior learning (Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition - PLAR)	<b>75</b>
Number of journeypersons that received enhanced training to keep skills current and respond to industry standards e.g. heavy form work	<b>240</b>



## **Outcomes of Objectives**

The Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board identified two issues in its 2011-14 activity plan to guide its work for the three year period:

### **Issue One: Apprenticeship Experience**

Over the next three years, the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board will be working with industry, labour partners and educators to ensure that all apprentices throughout Newfoundland and Labrador are trained to the highest provincial and national standards. This is in accordance to the strategic direction of the Provincial Government for an enhanced post-secondary education system benefiting those seeking higher education.

With respect to apprenticeship experience, the following objective was the focus for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012, the first year in the current activity planning period.

#### **Objective:**

By March 31, 2012 the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board will have collaborated with industry, labour partners and educators to improve the apprenticeship experience in Newfoundland and Labrador

**Measure:** Collaborated with industry, labour partners and educators.

#### **Indicator:**

Consulted with partners throughout the year to provide recommendations to the Board regarding program changes.

#### **Results:**

The Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division, held a Provincial Apprenticeship Forum in St. John's in March 2012 with approximately 200 people participating. The purpose of this forum was to engage stakeholders in a discussion of strategies to shape the apprenticeship system into the future.

Discussion topics included Designated Apprenticeship Training and Compulsory Certification, Apprenticeship Process, and the report entitled, Apprentices 2012: Opportunities and Challenges. Board Chair and members participated and engaged stakeholders in issues facing apprenticeship.

During 2011-12, the PACB engaged the Commercial Driver industry group by providing presentations regarding the apprenticeship and certification process. This industry is experiencing issues with recruiting and retaining qualified drivers for short and long-haul runs and is contemplating adopting an apprenticeship model for its drivers.

### **Looking Forward (2012-13)**

#### **Year 2 Objective:**

By March 31, 2013 the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board will have collaborated with industry, labour partners and educators to improve the apprenticeship experience in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Measure:** Collaborated with industry, labour partners and educators.

#### **Indicator:**

Consulted with partners throughout the year to improve the apprenticeship experience.

## **Issue Two: Assessment/Evaluation Methods**

The Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board is dedicated to providing assessment and evaluation methods to support highly qualified skilled trades journeyperson certification. This is in accordance with the strategic direction of the Provincial Government for an enhanced post-secondary education system benefiting those seeking higher education. An increase in the number of individuals, with significant years of practical experience in the trades wishing to become certified, warrants a formalized process. Labour mobility, especially as applied to individuals coming into the province both nationally and internationally, has increased the need for formalized assessments.

With respect to assessment/evaluation methods, the following objective was the focus for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012, the first year in the current activity planning period.

### **Objective:**

By March 31, 2012 the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board will have reviewed and recommended enhancements to assessment and evaluation policies.

**Measure:** Reviewed and recommended enhanced policies.

### **Indicator:**

Submitted recommendations to the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills.

### **Results:**

During 2011-12, assessment and evaluation policies were developed, reviewed and approved for implementation.

This year the Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division developed and updated its Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy. The PACB recognizes that learning acquired from other forms of formal training and from work and life experiences, may be equivalent to components of apprenticeship training programs offered within the province.

This policy is designed to increase access to, and participation in, the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process, while promoting consistency in PLAR across colleges and programs. All individuals, resident and

non-resident, seeking certification in a designated occupation will have the opportunity to have their prior formal and informal learning assessed. Recognizing prior learning may shorten the time required for an individual to complete an apprenticeship program.

PACB have also approved the development of block exams for eight prioritized trades. The purpose of using block exams as a formal method of assessment on completion of block training is to:

- Provide opportunity for NL apprentices to write exams that mirror the Interprovincial (IP) exam.
- Test apprentices' knowledge intermittently to ensure they are retaining learning.
- Ensure apprentices are maintaining the standard on their path to becoming certified.
- Increase success rates on the IP exam.
- Eventually, use as a PLAR tool to test knowledge and give credit for learning.

### **Looking Forward (2012-13)**

#### **Year 2 Objective:**

By March 31, 2013 the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board will have reviewed and recommended enhancements to assessment and evaluation policies.

**Measure:** Reviewed and recommended enhanced policies.

#### **Indicator:**

Recommended enhancements made to policies.

## **Opportunities and Challenges Ahead**

Opportunities in the skilled trades will continue to provide unprecedented demand for workers, with demographics continuing to challenge employer and institutional partners. Some of the identified themes coming from the Apprenticeship forum that the PACB will consider in the upcoming year include:

- Reviewing the Apprenticeship System with a view to enhancement
- Considering voluntary versus compulsory certification in Trades
- Increasing awareness of many aspects of the apprenticeship process
- Reviewing processes involving wage subsidies, incentives and supports
- Improving access to information and processes involving apprenticeship

The Board will also continue its curriculum reviews and accreditation mechanisms.