

## A Guide to Standards and Practices in the Construction Industry

### Implementing Realistic Schedules

From the contractors' perspective, we are likely in the best times we could ever imagine for construction in BC. Having this much work is something that we shouldn't complain about.

The industry is running at full out capacity and looking to a future of much the same, and the heightened demand on industry resources, especially skilled workers, is impacting how business is done. Schedules that were reasonable five years ago are no longer achievable. It is important that those that procure construction services understand the change in scheduling requirements in order to create more realistic project timelines..

On behalf of the industry, BCCA is doing what we can to help improve the time lines on projects by assisting the contractors with finding the skilled workers they need. In partnership with our regional associations, other industry agencies and government, we are using a substantial amount of our energy in assisting the contractors with finding the skilled workforce they need to do the work. We have had tremendous success with some innovative thinking and creative strategies that are new to our industry. Our successes are even inspiring other sectors to consider similar models.

To find skilled workers, we have looked to the existing landed immigrant community and off shore for skilled workers who are willing to come to BC. So far we have exceeded our expectations with what we call our STEP programs:

- ISTEP (Immigrant Skilled Trades Employment Program)
  - Immigrants who have experience in construction or who want to start a career in the construction industry will be matched up with employers who have jobs.
  - Job Coaches who are qualified trades people capable of assessing skills and job potential, and who understand the labour needs of industry, will match suitable immigrants and employers.
  - To date 136 skilled workers have been placed including crane operators, electricians and carpenters.
- EU – STEP (European Skilled Trades Employment Project)
  - An initiative undertaken to link European skilled trades to BC employers.
  - Attained by holding information sessions in Europe and with in-house recruitment capability at BCCA that has associations with the European job market.
  - To date 90 skilled workers have been placed; largely carpenters and masons.

Looking to the future we have developed or are developing programs that are working with the aboriginal communities, women, youth and the mentorship of our industry retirees:

- ASTEP (Aboriginal Skilled Trades Employment Program)
  - As in the ISTEP program this model insures that a job coach, who understands the labour needs of the industry, assists the employees with skill assessment and works with the employee and employer to ensure success.
  - Inaugural programs in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island have brought nearly 1000 aboriginal workers into the workforce.
- STEP for Women
  - Recently initiated, this program is intended to draw on the mentorship of the women already working in the construction industry to encourage women to pursue and retain construction careers.
- Retiree Mentors
  - We believe there is a need and desire to benefit from the skills and mentorship of the significant baby boomer workforce that will soon be retiring.

As you can see, we are contemplating and implementing innovative ways to find skilled workers for the workforce needs of today and looking to the future construction workforce for BC. In the mean time, it is important that everyone involved in the construction process is realistic about the capacity of the industry today.

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