

Apprenticeship Support Strong

The British Columbia Construction Association recently conducted a survey among its members to evaluate the current level of apprenticeship training within the construction industry. In previous surveys it was identified that BCCA members trained over 75% of all the apprentices registered in the construction trades, so it made sense to approach them for information in this critical area. As part of the survey, BCCA gathered member feedback on recruiting skilled workers from across Canada, the US and overseas. Other key issues addressed were the barriers to accepting apprentices and the difficulty finding apprentices in specific trades.

The survey was conducted electronically, by fax, and finally by phone. Approximately 500 contractors were contacted, both general and trade, from all regions of the province. 26.3% of the contractors were union, 73.7% were non-union.

A number of interesting facts were quickly established. First, it is clear that BCCA member companies continue to exhibit leadership in the training of apprentices across the province. Of the members surveyed a full 82.7% are currently training apprentices in the construction trades. In addition, among those who are not currently training 58.4% have trained in the past.

Pretty much every construction trade was represented within the membership surveyed, with the highest number of apprentices falling in line with the Industry Training Authority statistics on the numbers of trainees registered. Carpentry, electrical, roofing, sheet metal and the mechanical trades had the highest showing of apprentices.

One of the most interesting statistic that emerged out of the survey was that a full

90.5% of the contractors said they would be interested in hiring more apprentices if they could find them. By far the most frequent response to our query about barriers to taking on more apprentices was quite simply “we can’t find them”. This is good news for the Industry Training Authority and the Construction Industry Training Organization as they continue to increase seats and attract more people into the trades. Other concerns included, poor work ethic among new recruits and an ever lessening number of journeypersons to do the training.

Skill shortages continue to be a big issue. Of those surveyed, 88.7% felt they were experiencing difficulties in finding enough workers both skilled and unskilled. Of those, the highest shortages were occurring within the skilled trades at 84.5%, with at least 50% or higher also experiencing difficulties finding general labourers, supervisors and management.


Future retirements were also of concern to the member contractors, who felt that an average of 8% of their workforce would retire in the next 1 to 5 years alone.

Given this obvious concern around shortages, we questioned the contractors on their recruiting strategies. Perhaps unsurprisingly, most companies still relied primarily on local recruitment to replace workers, followed by provincial recruiting, then across Canada with only 15.9% actually recruiting overseas. We also questioned the contractors on the number of women working on their sites and whether they would be interested in hiring more. While there were not high numbers of women, if any working on the sites, by far the majority of contractors were open to hiring more women.

Inside this Issue:

- Apprenticeship Support Strong
- CAF Hosts BC Forum

WE'RE ON
THE WEB!
www.bccassn.com



ONLINE DOCUMENT SERVICES

Call your local Construction Association today and find out what you're missing!

The information gleaned from this survey will be invaluable to BCCA in setting its policies and human resource strategies in the year to come. With our Skilled Trades Employment Projects well underway within the immigrant and aboriginal communities as well as with women, knowing who is training and who is looking for more apprentices in what trades is essential information. We have also received excellent advice and direction with regards to broadening our EU-STEP program, which recruits skilled workers overseas.

Additionally, with the detailed information we now have at

our disposal regarding training and skills shortages within the construction trades, the BCCA will be able to assist more effectively with the various Government and Industry agencies and committees focused on labour market information and industry training.

The BCCA would like to take this opportunity to thank all of its members for their cooperation with this project. Further information on the survey can be obtained through Abigail Fulton at the BCCA office ph. 250-475-1077.

CAF Hosts BC Forum

On Tuesday December 4th, 2007 the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum-Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage (CAF-FCA) and its partners the BC Construction Association (BCCA) and the Construction Industry Training Organization (CITO) are hosting a Forum specifically for BC employers. Join the Forum to:

- ⇒ Learn about the key findings from a groundbreaking CAF-FCA study which found that apprenticeship training is a profitable investment. Employers from across the country were surveyed and the data collected was based on employers' own experiences;
- ⇒ Hear BC employers speak about how hiring apprentices enhances their business performance;
- ⇒ Discuss training as a competitive advantage with other employers;
- ⇒ Ensure your voice is heard. Tell us what you think and help us meet your needs with research and information that addresses the realities of your business;
- ⇒ The main findings of the discussion will be summarized and you can obtain a free copy.

End Results:

- ⇒ Determine concrete steps that can be taken to encourage other employers to hire apprentices.
- ⇒ Take a leadership role in the promotion of apprenticeship by employers in BC.

Join us from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm at the Hilton Vancouver Metrotown in Burnaby, BC. You could win free registration to the CAF-FCA 2008 apprenticeship conference in Victoria, BC. Day parking is available at the hotel for \$6 per day. Complimentary parking passes will be available at the front desk.

Reserve your seat now; spaces are limited and registration is free. Lunch and coffee breaks are provided. To RSVP or for more information please contact Project Manager Emily Arrowsmith at: Emily_Arrowsmith@caf-fca.org or at 613-235-4004 ext. 201.



BC CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

210-174 Wilson St., Victoria, BC V9A 7N6

Phone: 250-475-1077

Fax: 250-475-1078

Email: bcca@bccassn.com

The mission of the BCCA is to provide leadership and excellence in the representation of and service to British Columbia's construction industry