



**Canadian Council of Directors of
Apprenticeship (CCDA)**

**Summary Report: National
Stakeholder Meeting**

**Ottawa
April 14, 2016**

2016 CCDA National Stakeholder Meeting

The CCDA held its annual National Stakeholder Meeting in Ottawa on April 14, 2016. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with national apprenticeship stakeholders key CCDA priorities and initiatives such as the new Red Seal Occupational Standard, the Harmonization Initiative, foreign qualification recognition and increasing employer engagement. Participants included some 35 stakeholders representing labour and employers, mostly from the construction industry, as well as national organizations representing training providers. See Annex A for the list of participants and Annex B for the agenda.

The meeting format design blended information updates with more in-depth discussions. During the first facilitated exercise of the day, stakeholders shared their perspectives on the current operating environment for apprenticeship and the Red Seal Program. The combined Red Seal Occupational Standards (RSOS) and Harmonization item was more of an information update, as many stakeholders had been closely engaged during the development and implementation of these initiatives. Finally, the Employer Engagement item had the most time allocated for discussion, as it is a newer strategic priority and stakeholder input was needed to suggest ways to encourage more employer participation in apprenticeship.

This report provides a summary of the updates and discussion points which emerged during the meeting. Key highlights included:

- The insightful discussion on stakeholders' current operating environment showed that operating environments, challenges and opportunities may vary by region and industry, and tend to change over time.
- The new Red Seal Occupational Standard (RSOS) and its suite of products were well received. Participants welcomed the enhanced role for stakeholders in the RSOS development process and agreed that the new suite of products will be valuable for industry.
- Collaboration with stakeholders on the CCDA Harmonization Initiative has achieved impressive results over the last year. It will be important to maintain momentum as the CCDA is now focusing on the next set of trades.
- To increase employer engagement, stakeholders flagged that it will be important to reach out to employers who are not currently actively engaged in apprenticeship, with a focus on smaller employers. Stakeholders indicated their willingness to champion participation in apprenticeship training to employers, emphasizing that the message would be most effective coming from industry.
- The CCDA's strategic priorities are still relevant, with harmonization remaining the top priority.

Agenda Item 1 – Introduction

During the introduction, the CCDA Chair explained that a “focus and finish” approach would be guiding the CCDA’s efforts for the next year. The CCDA has an ambitious agenda, including harmonization which is a resource-intensive initiative. The CCDA expects to re-assess its strategic priorities in 2017.

The Chair noted that the significant progress accomplished to advance CCDA strategic priorities is due in large part to the high degree of collaboration with stakeholders. National stakeholders were encouraged to continue participating in CCDA initiatives and engaging with apprenticeship authorities at the provincial and territorial (P/T) level.

Agenda Item 2 – Apprenticeship Operating Environment: Stakeholders’ Perspectives

In order to set the context for the day, stakeholders were asked to discuss their overall operating environments and identify the top challenges and opportunities facing apprenticeship and the Red Seal, from their perspectives. This would contribute to a better understanding of the big picture as the CCDA continues to implement strategic priorities.

Participants identified several **challenges**. These included:

- There is a need to keep apprentices employed and to continue to replenish the workforce during economic downturns. As the trades workforce ages, it is necessary to transfer knowledge through apprenticeship to meet future workforce needs. This would avoid another “missing generation” of apprentices and reduce the need for temporary foreign workers when employment in the trades recovers.
- Employer engagement in apprenticeship remains low, although the construction industry tends to have higher participation. Some employers are not aware of the return on investment in apprenticeship, may lack direction on how to effectively train apprentices on-the-job, and may not be aware of the Red Seal.
- Some employers have challenges, or are unable, to provide work experience in the full scope of the trade and may not have up-to-date technology.
- Apprenticeship completion rates remain low, especially for voluntary trades.
- Better information is required to ensure apprentices are attracted to trades and sectors where they are a good fit and there are job opportunities. Career information must be appealing and appropriately packaged for youth.
- There is a need to continue to promote diversity and engage and retain groups, such as women, immigrants and indigenous peoples in apprenticeship.
- Labour mobility was identified as an ongoing challenge, including the willingness of apprentices to work in remote areas.

- Complexity of navigating the apprenticeship systems remains a source of frustration for those trying to enter into an apprenticeship and for apprentices that need to relocate for work.
- The proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement could have potential implications on apprenticeship in Canada.
- Pre-apprenticeship training does not ensure apprentices are job-site ready, especially with regard to safety and working in heavy industrial settings.

Opportunities identified by participants included:

- Create multiple career pathways for entry into the trades.
- Incentivise more employers, especially small-to medium sized enterprises, to get involved with apprenticeship. The apprenticeship opportunities in government-funded infrastructure projects could be encouraged.
- Continue work on harmonization, which is a top priority.
- Enhance on-the-job and pre-apprenticeship training through industry-institution partnerships and increased support to journeypersons in mentorship roles.
- Engage construction employers now to encourage them to hire apprentices before the expected increase in demand for trades employment.
- Promote the trades to youth earlier (i.e. grades 7, 8) with a better use of social media and pre-apprenticeship programming.
- Offer employment at the end of pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Re-confirm competency of journeypersons throughout their career.
- Encourage innovation such as alternative training delivery models (e.g. less in-class time for senior levels of an apprenticeship program), blended learning and leverage new technology like blended learning.

To wrap up the item, four themes were acknowledged: the importance of supporting journeypersons in their mentorship role, pre-apprenticeship programs effectively facilitating entry to the apprenticeship system, engaging under-represented populations and apprenticeship completion. CCDA representatives highlighted that discussions on stakeholders' views of challenges and opportunities was valuable, and could occur on a more regular basis as the range of issues identified by stakeholders tends to shift over time. For example, stakeholders tend not to emphasize completion rates or the average age of apprentices as major issues when the demand for trades employment is low.

Agenda Item 3 – Red Seal Standards and Harmonization

In the context of the Strengthening the Red Seal initiative, an information update was provided on significant progress achieved in both the Red Seal Occupational Standard (RSOS) and Harmonization.

The CCDA Harmonization Initiative is on track to meet the objectives and timelines established by the Forum of Labour Market Ministers. The CCDA presenters reported that:

- Consultations were complete and implementation underway in most jurisdictions for 9 Red Seal trades in Phase 1.
- Consultations were launched for all 8 Red Seal trades in Phase 2.
- Research and analysis of apprenticeship programs is underway for the next set of Red Seal trades in Phase 3.

The new RSOS will replace the National Occupational Analyses and Interprovincial Program Guides, while preserving and expanding on their content to better reflect industry needs and expectations. The new RSOS process produces a suite of 13 Red Seal products for jurisdictions to adapt to their own industry needs, and over time will be rolled out to all Red Seal trades. Key changes with the new RSOS development process include an increased industry involvement at every stage and alignment with harmonization. The official launch of the new RSOS and its suite of products will take place at the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum Conference in June 2016

In the brief discussion that followed, stakeholders commented that the RSOS could help sustain harmonization and its blended learning resources were valuable to industry. Stakeholders expressed their willingness to promote the RSOS and its suite of new products to employers and apprentices.

Agenda Item 4 – Foreign Qualification Recognition

An update was provided on the 2013 – 2016 Foreign Qualification Recognition (FQR) project. Its objective is to design and implement an optimal process and FQR standards framework that is timely, fair, transparent and consistent across jurisdictions for assessing the eligibility of internationally trained workers to become certified in all Red Seal trades.

Highlights from the presentation include:

- Connections are being made to other CCDA projects and initiatives.
- Types of changes and implementation timelines will vary across jurisdictions depending on their needs.
- Funding for the current project ends in September 2016, but recommendations for potential future work will be submitted to the CCDA.

In the following discussion, stakeholders expressed interest in products and data on FQR, and raised the importance of practical assessments for some trades. The presenters reported that the CCDA is working on a roll-out plan for FQR products, which would be selected individually for use by jurisdictions. It was noted there are opportunities to improve FQR data, as internationally-trained trade qualifiers are not tracked consistently across the jurisdictions. CCDA representatives acknowledged that

some stakeholders remain interested in practical assessment for particular trades, but the approach for the CCDA was to focus and finish work on existing strategic priorities.

Agenda Item 5 – Increasing Employer Engagement

Sarah Watts-Rynard, Executive Director from the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) set the context by presenting key findings from CAF research on employer engagement in apprenticeship.

CAF presented their concept of an Employer Engagement Continuum, which categorizes employers into three broad groups of engagement in apprenticeship training, including those who:

- view apprenticeship as integral to business performance strategies;
- are open to hiring apprentices but require more information and advice;
- are not engaged, view apprentice training as a cost, and may not have a strong culture of workplace learning.

It was proposed that efforts to increase engagement in apprenticeship should focus on employers who are open to the message. It was noted that engagement varied by trade and that many employers were not aware of apprenticeship or supports for employers.

Participants were asked to discuss three questions at small tables and report out in plenary. Key themes that emerged from the discussions are summarized below.

1. How can we collectively encourage employer participation in apprenticeship?

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of reaching out to employers who are “open to the message” of investing in apprenticeship training by providing better information resources and working through existing industry networks. Regional employer consortia could support small and medium sized enterprises (SME) to participate in apprenticeship by sharing the costs, ensuring on-the-job experience in the full scope of the trade. A consortia model could make apprenticeship more accessible to smaller businesses that face challenges when apprentices leave for technical training.

Industry champions could effectively promote the benefits of apprentices to non-participating employers. Outreach should provide specific information demonstrating that apprentices are productive and provide a return on training investment using business language. Clear information helping small employers understand and navigate the apprenticeship system, including employer visits from field staff, could be helpful. It was recognized that different employers may have different needs and an employer awareness campaign would need to be customized to fit the context. It was also suggested that promotion efforts should better leverage social media.

Some participants suggested governments should set an example in procurement by requiring bidders and their subcontractors to train apprentices. An employer

representative suggested that reducing the statutory holdback of 10% to 5% for employers who use apprentices could be effective as their cash flow would improve without additional contract costs for the buyer.

Other suggestions included: more entry-level trades training could help by producing better prepared work-ready apprentices, more employer participation at the CCDA National Stakeholder meeting, develop an “Apprenticeship Corner” on the Job Bank website, provide better incentives to employers who hire and train first and second year apprentices, address journeyperson-to-apprentice ratios, encourage succession planning and train apprentices to be on-the-job mentors.

2. How can apprenticeship best support employers to meet changing labour market requirements? What are the key messages to convey the benefits of hiring and training an apprentice?

Participants suggested better promotion to those employers with low awareness of apprenticeship. Key messages should be simple, easy-to-understand and clearly communicate the benefits of apprenticeship including that they provide a return on investment and are profitable.

Contractors who use apprentices have a lower blended wage rate and a more competitive cost advantage. Apprenticeship training allows employers to develop their own talent to meet their specific business needs. Apprenticeship is an effective way to pass trade knowledge to the next generation of workers.

Options for flexible technical training delivery could make participation in apprenticeship easier for smaller employers.

3. How could barriers to finding, hiring, and training apprentices be reduced for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)? Are there innovative approaches?

Stakeholders’ suggestions and observations included that:

- A regional consortia model could make it easier for employers from multiple sectors to participate in apprenticeship and strengthen partnerships between industry and training deliverers.
- An apprenticeship system which is easy to navigate would be helpful for SMEs, which generally have little capacity for human resources.
- Structured programs to teach journeypersons how to train apprentices on the job and support them in their roles as mentors could help smaller employers.
- Most employers who hire and train apprentices are small-to-medium sized, and may face challenges in retaining apprentices and certified journeypersons.
- Financial incentives could be helpful, such as tax credits for early year apprentices or other incentives tied to completion.

Agenda Item 6 – Stakeholders’ Roundtable

To conclude the day, participants were given an opportunity to provide a brief closing statement identifying a key take-away from the meeting. Key themes from participants’ remarks include:

Engagement

- Overall, stakeholders noted a good level of engagement, a positive environment, and appreciated the updates and discussion on key CCDA initiatives.
- The new small-table meeting format was well received and conducive to dialogue.
- Participants were pleased that the CCDA has become more transparent and open to engagement over the years, and appreciated the opportunity for dialogue.
- More employer representatives should be encouraged to participate, including employers who do not participate in apprenticeship but are open to the message.
- Apprentices should also attend and participate in the meeting.

Looking Forward

- The Red Seal must remain the standard of excellence for the skilled trades.
- There is a need to think broadly in encouraging underrepresented groups to participate in apprenticeship and consider their diverse needs.
- Regional consortia models could help reduce undue burden on small and medium sized enterprises when trying to hire and train apprentices.
- The dialogue with industry stakeholders to identify shifts in the operating environment and address challenges to apprenticeship in partnership should continue.
- The implementation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership may have implications for the trades.
- Strategic priorities remain relevant, with harmonization remaining the top priority.

Promoting the Red Seal and Apprenticeship

- Apprenticeship training must continue to be promoted as a valuable career option just like any other form of post-secondary education.
- Stakeholders felt as though they were leaving the meeting with new ideas to champion and promote apprenticeship to their organizations and colleagues in their jurisdictions by better articulating the benefits to employers of hiring an apprentice.
- The new RSOS is a great success story and stakeholders look forward to seeing the products and bringing the information back to their jurisdictions.
- There is a need to look at how to effectively communicate the value of CCDA key initiatives to employers and to celebrate achievements.

Agenda Item 7 – Closing Remarks

The CCDA Chair thanked participants for their level of dedication, participation, and contribution of innovative solutions to complex problems.

The CCDA will use feedback from this meeting to inform its activities and to communicate stakeholder views about apprenticeship and the Red Seal program to CCDA members.

Stakeholders provided very positive feedback on evaluation forms at the end of the meeting. Participants were pleased with the facilitated small-table meeting format with ample discussion time. Comments noted good dialogue and engaged participants.

Annex A: Participants

<u>Stakeholders</u>	<u>On behalf of the CCDA/IPA</u>
<p>Richard McKeagan, Mechanical Contractors Association of Canada Aneel Rangi, Canadian Construction Association Robert Watt, RJW-Gem Campbell Stonemasons Gerald Clark, Clark Builders Jack Mantyla, Canadian Home Builders' Association Carol MacLeod, National Electrical Trade Council Graham Trafford, Canadian Electrical Contractors Association Kelly Power, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Fraser Cocks, Canadian Hoisting and Rigging Safety Council Lionel Railton, International Union of Operating Engineers Jeff Norris, International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers Larry Slaney, United Association Grant Jacobs, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Canada Robert Blakely, Canada's Building Trades Unions Ken Eerkes, Christian Labour Association of Canada Rosemary Sparks, Buildforce Canada Michelle Branigan, Electricity Human Resources Canada Vince Accardi, Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council Sarah Watts-Rynard, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum Ken McKen, Canadian Welding Association Daniel Komesch, Polytechnics Canada Clare Morris, Colleges and Institutes Canada Chris Janzen, Council of Deans of Trades and Apprenticeship Canada Robert Larocque, Forest Products Association of Canada David Suess, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Michel Couillard, Conseil provincial des métiers de la construction – international (CPMC-I) Samuel Harvey, Association de la construction du Québec Martin Mihaluk, Corporation des maîtres électriciens du Québec Bruce James, Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB) Group Jonathan White, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Canada Gunnar Mardon, National Occupational Council of Canada</p>	<p>Jeff Ritter, Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission, CCDA Chair Royden Trainor, Ontario College of Trades, CCDA Stakeholder Relations Chair Marjorie Davison, Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA), CCDA Vice-Chair Carol MacCulloch, NSAA Board Chair Chris Bates, Director, Trades and Apprenticeship, ESDC Josée Landry, Manager, Trades and Apprenticeship, ESDC Ray Massey, Alberta, Chair, Interprovincial Alliance of Board Chairs</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Other Participants</u></p> <p>Lise D. Labelle, Facilitator Kathryn Andrews, Innovation and Advanced Education, Alberta Brian Frevel, Innovation and Advanced Education, Alberta Pat Blackwood, Chair, Board of Governors, Ontario College of Trades Judith Andrew, EI Commissioner for Employers, ESDC Philippe Massé, Director-General, Labour Market Integration Directorate, ESDC Jessica Gibbs, Manager, Trades and Apprenticeship, ESDC Micheline Racette, Manager, Trades and Apprenticeship, ESDC Dave Jelly, Senior Policy Analyst, Trades and Apprenticeship, ESDC</p>

Annex B: Agenda

Goals: To hold interactive discussions with apprenticeship stakeholders on key CCDA initiatives and strategic priorities.

Date: Thursday April 14, 2016

Location: Courtyard by Marriott Ottawa Downtown (Laurier Room)
350 Dalhousie Street, Ottawa

	Time	Item	Presenter(s)
1.	9:00 – 9:45 45 min	Introduction <u>Objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and opening remarks • Overview of the day • 2015-17 CCDA Strategic Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Harmonization</i> → <i>Employer Engagement</i> → <i>Standards and Assessments</i> → <i>Communications</i> 	Jeff Ritter Royden Trainor Philippe Massé Facilitator
2.	9:45 – 10:45 1h	Apprenticeship Operating Environment: Stakeholders' Perspectives <u>Objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small table brainstorming and plenary discussion to identify the top challenges, and opportunities facing apprenticeship and the Red Seal 	Facilitator
	10:45 – 11:00	Break (15 min)	
3.	11:00 – 11:45 45 min	Red Seal Standards and Harmonization <u>Objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and discuss the new Red Seal Occupational Standard and its associated products and processes • Provide an update and discuss next steps for harmonization 	Jeff Ritter Josée Landry
4.	11:45 – 12:00 15 min	Foreign Qualification Recognition (FQR) <u>Objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an update on the CCDA's FQR project 	Brian Frevel and Kathryn Andrews
	12:00 – 1:00	Lunch (60 min)	

	Time	Item	Presenter(s)
5.	1:00 – 2:40 1h 40min	<p>Increasing Employer Engagement</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context Setting • Potential Brainstorming Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>How can we collectively encourage employer participation in apprenticeship?</i> → <i>How can apprenticeship best support employers to meet changing labour market requirements? What are the key messages to convey the benefits of hiring and training an apprentice?</i> → <i>How could barriers to finding, hiring, and training apprentices be reduced for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)? Are there innovative approaches?</i> 	<p>Jeff Ritter Sarah Watts- Rynard Facilitator</p>
	2:40 – 2:55	Break (15 min)	
6.	2:55 – 3:45 50 min	<p>Stakeholders' Roundtable</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders' closing comments • Plenary discussion with each participant provided 1 minute to identify key take-aways 	<p>Facilitator</p>
7.	3:45 – 4:00 15 min	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations • Next Steps • Evaluation 	<p>Jeff Ritter Royden Trainor Facilitator</p>