

# Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy



## **Labour Market Framework**

In October 2008, the Government of Yukon released the Labour Market Framework. In order for Yukon to take a more strategic approach in addressing labour market needs in the territory, the framework outlined five strategies that needed to be developed:

- Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy;
- Immigration Strategy;
- Labour Market Information Strategy; and
- Recruitment Strategy and Employee Retention Strategy.

Four strategy documents have been produced (the Recruitment Strategy and Employee Retention Strategy were combined into one). This is the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy.

Summary documents of each of the four strategies, as well as an overview, are also available.

*Ce document est également disponible en français.*

2010

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## Message from the Minister

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Yukon's Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy.

The Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy (CSTTS) is a territory-wide initiative that represents the culmination of more than a year of collaboration with key labour market stakeholders. Stakeholders will continue to have opportunities to be involved in implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the strategy and its initiatives.

On behalf of the Premier and the Government of Yukon, I thank the members of the CSTTS Working Group for their commitment, energy and expertise throughout the development of this important document and the supporting Action Plan.

The Government of Yukon is committed to meeting the skills and trades training needs of Yukoners, so that they can engage meaningfully in the labour force and enjoy the best quality of life. Our efforts to support Yukoners in achieving their education and career aspirations are an important part of the work we do because taking a comprehensive approach to skills and trades training will have long term, systemic impacts on our economy.

The skills shortages we are facing are predicted to increase with anticipated economic growth, declining birth rates and an aging population. This is why we need to pay particular attention to articulating and meeting Yukon's skills and trades training needs.

With the strategic plan outlined in the document before you, we will be able to anticipate and respond to labour market demands. A healthy labour market will support a stronger and more diverse economy that serves all Yukoners.

The Department of Education encourages your comments and questions on the CSTTS, both now and during the implementation process.



Patrick Rouble  
Minister of Education

## Message from the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Working Group

Education is one of the pillars of a healthy society that contributes to individual prosperity and national growth. It plays a central role in combating poverty and social exclusion while building capacity. With this premise we developed the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy (CSTTS) – a strategy we wanted to be flexible and inclusive of Yukoners from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

During the development of the strategy, we were aware of the challenges represented by the shortage of skilled labour, the cyclical nature of the economy and the changing labour market. Addressing the obstacles Yukoners might face on their path toward training and adult education was also a significant concern for the working group. But, beyond the recognition of the existing challenges, the process also raised awareness of our collective strength.

Yukon is a vast and rich territory with a vibrant and dynamic social fabric. There is within Yukon extensive knowledge and experience of training needs and solutions. The working group itself, which included stakeholders from a variety of sectors with different interests, is a reflection of the dedication: enthusiasm and creativity of Yukon people to tackle and resolve difficult labour market issues. Creative members brought their vast skills and knowledge, and worked in partnership to deliver a strategy and action plan with the goals of ensuring training opportunities for all and facilitating learning and employment transitions.

The development of the CSTTS is now completed. We encourage you to be an active participant in its implementation and to join us now in creating the opportunities for all Yukoners to realise their full potential.

For more information, please contact the Advanced Education Branch of the Department of Education at 667-5131.



*Education Minister Patrick Rouble with members of the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy Working Group.*

## CSTTS Working Group

The Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy Working Group formed in early 2009 after an open invitation was announced to participate on the working group at the 2008 Labour Market Symposium. The working group consisted of representatives from business, non-government organisations, educational providers, federal and territorial governments, and Council of Yukon First Nations staff.

For various reasons some representatives were not able to maintain their participation in the working group throughout the development of the strategy and action plan, but their contribution to the development of the strategy and action plan was essential.

### ***Signatories to the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy Accord***

Organisation
<i>Association franco-yukonnaise</i>
Association of Yukon Communities
Canada School Public Service
Canadian Federation of Independent Business
Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor)
Challenge
Creative Hair Design
Employment Central
Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon
Service Canada
Skills Canada
Training Policy Committee
Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon
Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce
Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition
Yukon College
Yukon Federation of Labour
Yukon government
Yukon Learn
Yukon Literacy Coalition
Yukon Mine Training Association
Yukon Tourism Education Council
Yukon Women in Trades

## Executive Summary

The Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy (CSTTS) is a Yukon government-sponsored initiative that was developed by a broad group of labour market stakeholders to serve the vision of the Labour Market Framework. The vision of the Labour Market Framework is to build an inclusive and adaptable labour market that meets the demands of a strong and diversified economy and provides opportunity for a better quality of life for Yukoners. The CSTTS looks to the future, and as such, will function as a long-term, proactive planning tool for the next ten years.

The document begins by articulating the CSTTS's relationship to the Labour Market Framework and why Yukon needs a training strategy. The discussion explains why a strategic approach to essential skills and trades training will ensure that Yukon has a productive skilled workforce sustaining Yukon's economy.

To orient the reader to the CSTTS, the terms used in the strategy are defined and the consultation processes by which the strategy was developed described. A central component of the development of the strategy was the involvement of the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Working Group which included labour market stakeholders with in-depth knowledge of training issues and solutions.

Next, an overview of the Yukon Labour Market is presented. This section includes a description of the effect the skilled worker shortage has on Yukon productivity and competitiveness. The discussion of challenges and opportunities for Yukon in terms of 1) training program availability and access and, 2) learning/employment transitions, make up a substantial part of the strategy. Availability and access to training programs for all Yukoners, including people living in the communities are important elements that were considered during the development of the strategy. In addition, challenges related to learning transitions and employment transitions, especially for those who face the most difficulties in these transitions such as youth, women in trades, older workers, people with disabilities and aboriginal people, were considered in planning for training in Yukon.

The two goals of the CSTTS are presented in the Strategic Goals and Objectives: A Guide to Action section. The CSTTS goals and objectives support the Labour Market Framework vision and aim to tackle the challenges described above. In brief, the goals and objectives are:

**Goal 1. Ensure training opportunities are available for all Yukon people to adapt effectively and efficiently to changing skills, knowledge, and abilities.**

### Objectives, Goal 1

- 1.1. Develop an integrated results-based training system.
- 1.2. Improve essential skills and trades training programs.
- 1.3. Improve both the provision and delivery methods of training programs in the communities.
- 1.4. Support employers and self-employed individuals to access training programs.
- 1.5. Foster employer investment in workplace learning.

**Goal 2. Facilitate and improve learning and employment transitions.****Objectives, Goal 2**

- 2.1. Increase awareness of post-secondary education options and student financial assistance.
- 2.2. Build awareness of employment and training opportunities.
- 2.3. Improve and promote access to trades training for high-school students.
- 2.4. Use integrated teaching approaches that meet diverse cultural and learning needs.
- 2.5. Establish an effective funding model that ensures continuity of funding programs.

The outcomes expected by the implementation of the CSTTS are the following:

- Increased availability and diversity of training programs
- Increased effectiveness in meeting employer labour force needs
- Increased employment for under-represented groups
- Increased skilled and educated Yukoners

The CSTTS would not be complete without a discussion of performance measurement for the implementation of the strategic direction. Monitoring, evaluation and the governing assumptions are outlined in the latter part of the document. Because implementing the strategy is a complex endeavour involving many stakeholders and projects, accountability is essential to effective performance measurement. While the CSTTS will provide direction for training programs and services over the next decade, it will be supported and implemented through a shorter-term Action Plan. Monitoring will include regular reviews of the strategy Action Plan in order to ensure the objectives continue to be aligned with the needs of the Yukon labour market.

Yukon's training approach must be flexible and adaptable for workers and employers to effectively meet labour market demands. The approach must ensure the integration of groups that are traditionally under-represented in Yukon's labour force. The way forward is through the development of training programs and services that enable Yukon to build an inclusive and adaptable labour market that meets the demands of a strong and diversified economy and provides opportunity for a better quality of life for Yukoners.

## Introduction

### **Why a strategy now?**

*In October 2008, the Government of Yukon released the Labour Market Framework, a discussion paper that plotted a route to develop strategies to ensure an inclusive and adaptable labour market for the territory. The Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy (CSTTS) is one of five strategies that has been developed to help meet the Labour Market Framework vision: “an inclusive and adaptable labour market that meets the demands of a strong, diversified economy and provides Yukoners with a better quality of life.” The other Labour Market Framework strategies focus on immigration, recruitment, employee retention and labour market information.*

There are many benefits to taking a strategic approach to training in Yukon. This strategy looks into the future and will function as a long-term, proactive planning tool for the next ten years. Having a plan to move forward is essential in coordinating and focusing effective and efficient programs and services in the face of change. In addition to its planning and implementation functions, this strategy will guide the monitoring and evaluation of new training initiatives.



Yukon government

### **Why comprehensive skills and trades training?**

Skills enhancement plays an important role in improving productivity of the labour force, maintaining the competitiveness of the Yukon economy in the face of globalisation and ensuring efficient adoption of innovative and technological advancements.

In order to meet the productivity challenges to come, many people will need to enhance their knowledge and skills. On average, people lose literacy skills as they age,<sup>1</sup> while, at the same time, the participation rate in formal job-related training, including employer-sponsored training, declines with age.<sup>2</sup> A skilled workforce is imperative in maintaining labour productivity. For the individual worker, skills upgrading improves self-confidence, makes daily work easier, increases productivity and may lead to a better and higher-paid position or a new occupation.

Recognising that addressing productivity challenges is a long-term venture, the working group identified the concept of lifelong learning as playing a key role in effecting change. Lifelong learning encompasses all learning endeavours that aim to improve knowledge and competencies for individuals over one’s lifespan.<sup>3</sup> Lifelong learning can be achieved by improving access, quality and equity to learning opportunities; ensuring foundation skills for all; recognising all forms of learning; mobilising resources and ensuring collaboration among partners to deliver educational opportunities. It was with this lens that the working group developed this strategy.

The working group also recognised the challenges faced by under-represented groups. Despite an increasing demand for workers, aboriginal people, youth, older workers, people with disabilities and women (in trades) are still under-represented in the workforce. For example, the unemployment rate for Yukon aboriginal people is much higher than for non-aboriginal

people.<sup>4</sup> Mature workers tend to experience an unemployment rate lower than average, but have a harder time integrating back into the workforce if they do become unemployed.<sup>5</sup> In Yukon, despite striking needs for workers in the transportation, trades and construction sector, the number of women working in that field remains low.<sup>6</sup> Complex factors, most of them structural and cultural, explain the chronic under-representation of these groups in the workforce and the economic and social inequities faced by these groups. The consequences of not participating in the labour market, including economic poverty and social exclusion, are challenges for individuals, their families and society. One way to redress inequities is by providing aboriginal people, youth, older workers, people with disabilities and women (in trades) with the training opportunities and the tools required for successful integration into the labour market.

The outcomes expected by the implementation of the CSTTS are the following:

- increased availability and diversity of training programs;
- increased effectiveness in meeting employer labour force needs;
- increased employment for under-represented groups; and
- increased skilled and educated Yukoners.

## Comprehensive skills and trades training defined

Training is a specific approach to learning and refers to the process of acquiring knowledge, practical skills and competency to improve one's performance of specific tasks or roles in the labour market. Skill refers to the ability or aptitude to do something competently. Specific skills can be grouped to form a set of skills required to develop the ability or aptitude required in a particular occupation. Comprehensive skills designate the abilities that enable individuals to effectively meet the demands and challenges of employment in particular occupations (Table 1).

**Table 1. Comprehensive Skills**

Comprehensive Skills	
Communication/literacy skills	Read, write, apply mathematical operations (numeracy), speak and listen. Communication skills are required for negotiating, developing and presenting information.
Thinking skills	Reason with numbers and other concepts.
Decision-making and problem-solving skills	Assess and analyse situations, identify problems, make decisions, develop plans of action, evaluate.
Organisational skills	Locate, gather, use and organise resources (time, money, material, human resources) and information.
Technology skills	Manage information using appropriate technology and information systems.
Personal management skills	Demonstrate work ethic, positive attitudes and behaviours, be responsible, adaptable, respectful and honest; manage stressful situations and work safely.
Teamwork skills	Work cooperatively with others, demonstrate leadership, engage in a project, manage and resolve conflicts.
Planning and managing career skills	Obtain, maintain, advance and change career goals as required, be aware of new career trends, learn continuously (life-long learning).

The trades commonly refer to occupations that include complex activities and require manual or mechanical skills and specialised knowledge of an occupation. Trade skills can best be learned through an apprenticeship program, which incorporates a period of long-term on-the job training substantially carried out within a work setting and often with related compulsory classroom instruction. Trade certification and apprentice training is usually regulated by statutory law. Apprentice registration is normally recognised through formal agreements between the employers and the apprentices, registered by the regulatory authority.

In Yukon, there are 48 occupations designated under the *Apprentice Training Act* for which apprenticeship training and certification are available. These occupations fall into four categories: 1) construction and maintenance; 2) transportation; 3) manufacturing; and 4) service. Trade certification and apprentice registration are voluntary in Yukon.

## Development of the strategy

### ***A strategy developed by stakeholders for stakeholders***

*Adult education and training are not solely the responsibility of the Yukon government, but the concern of the whole community. It is by developing a coordinated approach with all stakeholders that stakeholders will be able to more effectively respond to adult learner and labour market needs. The contributions of stakeholders, both internal and external to the Yukon government, to the CSTTS Working Group were essential in the development of the strategy.*

The CSTTS Working Group was formed in January 2009 following the Labour Market Framework Symposium.

The working group was comprised of representatives from business and industry sectors, non-government organisations, educational providers, federal and territorial governments, and Council of Yukon First Nations staff.

Decisions made during the process were consensus-based. Stakeholders aimed to reach agreement on outcomes that resolved or advanced the issues discussed.

The most significant challenge was that the process was time-consuming. The main outcomes of the process include:

- a high degree of consensus around the table;
- a high degree of information-sharing amongst stakeholders;
- misunderstandings were clarified;
- development of joint appreciation of issues amongst stakeholders;
- stakeholders building partnerships;
- increased level of creative ideas/solutions/new initiatives;
- joint formulation of labour market information requirements.



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The final strategy has been agreed to by working group participants who have signed the Labour Market Framework Accord.

### ***The research***

The CSTTS was developed based on extensive research into international and Canadian approaches addressing education and training challenges and solutions. During the development of the strategy, the working group was able to refer to best practices implemented in other jurisdictions, research studies on various subjects and background documents developed by the Yukon government. Additional information on specific topics requested by stakeholders was provided by the Advanced Education Branch and, occasionally, by other stakeholders.

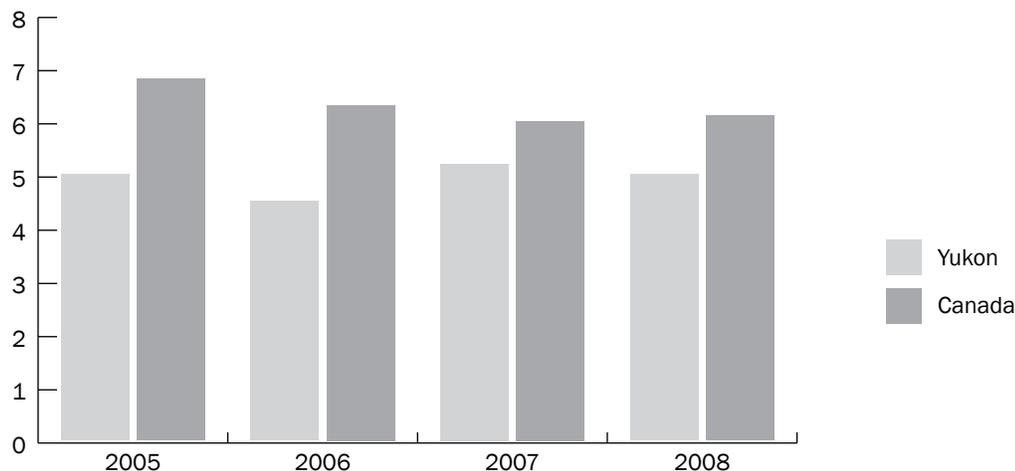
## The outlook

The labour market is subject to change over time. Cyclical and structural factors influence the expansion and contraction of sectors and occupational fields in demand. Cyclical factors, such as the economic recession of 2009, can affect supply and demand on a short-term basis.<sup>7</sup> Structural factors such as technological advances, globalisation of competition and demographic structure of the workforce, have long-term impacts on the labour market. This explains why, even with a rise in Canada's unemployment rate during the recession of 2009, skills shortages remain a challenge.

Decreases in labour supply and an aging workforce will increase the demand for skilled workers. In Canada, like many countries that are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the age of the working population is increasing.<sup>8</sup> According to Statistics Canada, the median age of the working population in 1999 was 38.4 years and reached 40.5 years in July 2009.<sup>9</sup> In 2011, the baby boomers will begin to leave the workforce leading to a decrease in numbers of people of working age. In July 2009, the working-age population accounted for 69.5 per cent, but Statistics Canada estimates that the proportion will decrease to about 62 per cent at the beginning of the 2030s.<sup>10</sup>

In 2008, 321 businesses in Yukon reported 1,161 vacant positions. The accommodation and food and service sector had the highest need for new employees (355) followed by retail trade (175), construction (169) and mining, oil and gas extraction (89).<sup>11</sup> With an unemployment rate lower than the Canadian average (Figure 1), work opportunities are attracting more and more Canadians and immigrants to Yukon.

**Figure 1. Unemployment Rate, Yukon and Canada, 2005–08**



For example, five years prior to the 2006 Census, 14.1 per cent of the Yukon labour force was living in other jurisdictions.<sup>12</sup> The number of immigrants in Yukon is also growing year after year. In 1999, 76 people were new permanent residents compared to 111 in 2008. The same tendency is observed for temporary residents (111 in 1999 compared to 235 in 2008).<sup>13</sup>

The Yukon economy has performed well in the last few years and the future looks promising. Yukon Real GDP for 2008 was \$1.5 billion meaning a GDP growth of 4.5 per cent. Yukon's real GDP growth rate for that year was the second highest in Canada after Nunavut.<sup>14</sup> The

primary development potential of Yukon lies in the oil, natural gas, mineral resources and tourism sectors. Expansion in these areas will encourage development of additional infrastructure and create business opportunities in Yukon.<sup>15</sup> As a consequence, employment opportunities might expand in natural resources, trades, professional and financial services, cultural industries, the knowledge sector and tourism.<sup>16</sup> However, labour shortages may affect Yukon economic performance, competitiveness and overall economic growth if Yukon labour market stakeholders are not proactive in preparing for this demand.<sup>17</sup> The CSTTS will be used by Yukon labour market stakeholders to strategically address the labour market demand for skilled workers and ensure Yukoners will be able to take advantage of future opportunities.

### **Challenges and opportunities**

During the meetings of the CSTTS Working Group, stakeholders had the opportunity to identify specific issues related to skills and trades training. These discussions identified two main types of challenges: 1) training program availability and access; and 2) learning/employment transitions. All Yukoners, including groups under-represented in the workforce, may face difficulties in access to training programs and making the transition to education and employment.

#### **Training program availability and access**

##### *1. Access for all*

###### *The challenge*

Access to essential skills and trades training programs is a challenge for many people, including under-represented groups. In some cases, eligibility criteria restrict the admission of some groups

from accessing training. For example, new labour force entrants (especially youth and people with little or no labour force involvement) are often deprived of access to training offered by Employment Insurance. Indeed, admission to these training programs is often based on the individual's contribution to the program.<sup>18</sup> Employed workers, including older workers and self-employed individuals also have limited access to training programs.<sup>19</sup> Workplace training for employers and workers is a means to enhance comprehensive skills, but the number of Canadian workers participating in job-related training remains low.<sup>20</sup> Reasons for this low level of participation from the employers' perspective are the lack of perceived benefits of training versus the costs of investing in training initiatives and the lack of infrastructure. From the employees' point of view, the fear of stigmatisation for attending essential skills training is seen as a barrier to participation.<sup>21</sup>

###### *The opportunity*

The opportunity to improve access to training for all lies in ensuring that everybody will be able to enhance their skills and adapt to labour market changes. A flexible and skilled workforce will be more apt to adjust to the demographic shift and technological advancements.

##### *2. Training in the communities*

###### *The challenge*

A disparity exists between rural and urban availability of training programs. Yukoners living in the communities, largely aboriginal people, face many barriers in entering and completing training programs and post-secondary education which primarily take place in urban areas.<sup>22</sup>

*The opportunity to improve access to training for all lies in ensuring that everybody will be able to enhance their skills and adapt to labour market changes.*

Some Yukoners who need to leave their home community for training are confronted by the loss of family/community support, family responsibilities and additional costs.<sup>23</sup> Youth leaving Yukon for university education in metropolitan areas might also feel alienated by a foreign environment.

*The opportunity*

Improving comprehensive skills and trades programming in the communities will ensure that individuals will continue to be supported by their network of relatives while being present for their families. A better offering of training programs in rural Yukon will also decrease the economic burden on individuals who otherwise will need to be relocated elsewhere to be trained. Alternative approaches to training that take into consideration the size of communities and community-based training costs, will need to be developed. Distance learning such as internet-based courses, broadcasting courses and mobile labs or shops can improve training opportunities in communities.

**Learning/employment transitions**

The second challenge is to ensure effective transitions. Stakeholders pointed out two types of transitions which are related: learning transitions and employment transitions. Learning transitions may take various forms. Some examples of learning transitions are: a young adult returning to high school after dropping out; a youth heading for post-secondary education after graduating from high school; a man attending a training program while working; a mother upgrading skills after a long period of unemployment.

Like learning transitions, employment transitions differ according to an individual's circumstances. Employment transitions include but are not limited to: a youth with post-secondary education but without professional experience looking for a first job; an employee searching for a better position; an older worker seeking employment after being laid off.

The discussion below focuses on those who face the most difficulties in making learning/employment transitions: the under-represented groups in the workforce, but all Yukoners may face challenges in these areas.

*The challenge*

Transition to employment, especially for under-represented groups, including youth, aboriginal people, older workers, people with disabilities and women (in trades), tends to be more difficult than for other groups. This section reviews the challenges faced by each one of these groups.

Youth

Today, many youth are not following a straight path from high school to a post-secondary program to a job. Many prefer to take time off from studies at some point or switch programs.<sup>24</sup> The Yukon unemployment rate in 2009 for youth aged 15–24 was higher than for those 55 years old and over. The unemployment rate for Canadian high school drop-outs is also much higher than the rate for all youth the same age.<sup>25</sup> There is also a large gap between male and female post-secondary attainment. For example, 33 per cent of women aged 25–34 had a university degree, compared to 25 per cent of men.<sup>26</sup> Challenges related to learning and employment transitions are even more significant for aboriginal youth. Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-aboriginal youth to leave the educational system with a lower level of attainment.<sup>27</sup>

#### Aboriginal people

Yukon aboriginal labour force engagement is not at the same level as non-aboriginal labour force engagement. Aboriginal literacy levels are much lower than non-aboriginal.<sup>28</sup> However, the aboriginal people of Yukon have the highest literacy score of the three territories.<sup>29</sup> Literacy, as well as other social factors, has an impact on how well aboriginal people acquire and retain employment. In Yukon, the employment rate for aboriginal people is lower than for non-aboriginal. In addition, the participation rate among non-aboriginal people in Yukon is approximately 1.5 times higher than the aboriginal population.<sup>30</sup>

#### Older workers

The employment situation of older workers might be less critical as they tend to experience lower unemployment rates than average.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, once older workers become unemployed, it is more difficult for them to integrate back into the workforce.<sup>32</sup> It is also important to consider that health issues, sickness and disabilities increase with age.<sup>33</sup>

#### People with disabilities

In 2006, Yukon had the highest disability rate of the territories at 13.5 per cent, slightly lower than the Canadian average of 14.3 per cent.<sup>34</sup> The Canadian unemployment rate for people with disability is higher than for the non-disabled population. There is also a larger proportion of people with disabilities who are not in the labour force compared to the population without a disability.<sup>35</sup> The most common workplace accommodation required by workers with a disability is modified hours or days or reduced work hours.<sup>36</sup>

#### Women in trades

Another group experiencing difficult employment transitions is women in entering trades. In February 2009, female workers in Yukon represented 50 per cent of the labour force aged 25 and over<sup>37</sup> but represented only 6 per cent of the workforce in the transportation, trades and construction,<sup>38</sup> sector, which continues to experience labour shortages. Many Yukon employers (73 per cent) believe that women in the trades are facing negative attitudes in a male-dominated workplace. Indeed, some believe that women are not physically or mentally prepared for trades work.<sup>39</sup> Retention of women in trades is also a challenge. A study by Dainty, Neale and Bagilhole (2000) reported that women were more likely than men to leave the industry within the first ten years, due to slow career progression and disillusionment with the workplace culture.<sup>40</sup>

#### *The opportunity*

The opportunity lies in the socio-economic integration of under-represented groups and supporting them through transitions, especially in a period of skilled labour shortages.

#### Youth

For youth, the opportunity generally lies in supporting their transitions from educational institutions into the workforce. There are existing opportunities for youth with little or no professional experience, such as the GradCorps. This program offers internships for Yukon post-secondary graduates. The Student Training and Employment Program (STEP) provides summer employment for post-secondary students. Training youth who drop out of school will help to increase the skilled pool of workers. Putting in place further supports for post-secondary education or employment should also prevent social assistance dependency. For example, various Yukon First Nation governments host career fairs during the school year, encouraging aboriginal youth to explore career opportunities in different sectors, including

public services and trades. Promoting trades to youth, particularly aboriginal youth, can have a significant impact on workforce engagement for those individuals not interested in obtaining a college diploma or a degree.

#### Aboriginal people

Aboriginal people represent a large (25 per cent) and growing part of Yukon's population. Between 1996 and 2006, the First Nation population in Yukon increased by 18 per cent. In contrast, Yukon's non-First Nation population decreased 8 per cent during the same time period.<sup>41</sup> According to the medium-growth population projections to 2018 released by Yukon Bureau of Statistics, aboriginal people aged 20–29 could make up 29% of all Yukoners in their 20s.<sup>42</sup> Given this data, aboriginal people not yet represented in the workforce would be a valuable addition to Yukon's labour force. There are existing opportunities for aboriginal people such as the First Nation Training Corps (FNTC). This employment training program provides training and employment experience in a range of occupations at various levels in the Yukon government. Supporting post-secondary education and employment for aboriginal people by improving the delivery methods of training programs and using integrated teaching approaches is another way to enhance adult education and employment outcomes for this group.

#### Older workers

Retaining and re-hiring older workers is another way to address labour force shortages. According to the General Social Survey (GSS), 60 per cent of Canadian respondents indicated they would have preferred to continue working than retire.<sup>43</sup> Older workers possess valuable knowledge that could be transferred to young employees and facilitate youth's commitment to the labour market.

#### People with disabilities

Given that disability rates increase with age, ensuring workplace accessibility for people with disabilities may help mature workers remain in the labour pool. People with disabilities bring a range of skills, knowledge and abilities to the workplace, like any other employee. The Training and Work Experience Program is an example of an initiative promoting training and work experience placements in a variety of job categories within the Yukon government. Facilitating learning and employment transitions for people with disabilities will contribute to the creation of a more diverse, skilled workforce.

#### Women in trades

More women working in the trades could address skills shortages in the trades sector. According to the Yukon Employer and Industry Survey, 70 per cent of employers interviewed felt that women could bring unique skills and abilities to their industry, such as strong teamwork, communication and multi-tasking skills, fine attention to detail and respect for equipment.<sup>44</sup> Trades training is also a way for women to access high wages in skilled positions.

The availability of training opportunities for all and the complexity of learning/employment transitions are important challenges the strategy intends to address proactively.

The next section introduces the goals and the strategic objectives of the CSTTS.

## Strategic goals and objectives: a guide to action

Based on the challenges and opportunities described above, the CSTTS Working Group developed the following goals and objectives. These goals and elements will guide the implementation of the CSTTS.



**Goal 1: Ensure training opportunities are available for all Yukon people to adapt effectively and efficiently to changing skills, knowledge and abilities.**

**Rationale:** The labour market constantly evolves depending on factors such as business cycles, technological advances, globalisation of competition and demographic changes in the workforce. A qualified workforce is essential to businesses, industries and other employers in order to be nationally and internationally competitive

in the face of globalisation. Yukoners of working age, including under-represented groups of the workforce and those living in remote areas, should possess the skills, knowledge and abilities sought by employers to fully participate in the labour market and succeed in the economy.

### Objectives

The following objectives were developed to support Goal 1 of the CSTTS:

#### 1.1 Develop an integrated results-based training system

**Rationale:** An integrated results-based system is a powerful management tool that will enable the Yukon government to monitor progress and demonstrate the impact of the CSTT Strategy and Action Plan. The development of such a system will ensure efficient monitoring and evaluation of the training services and programs implemented. The system will also address the accountability concerns of Yukoners, provide information to public managers on progress toward achieving stated goals, objectives and targets, and provide support for any adjustments to programs and services. Improve essential skills and trades training programs.

#### 1.2 Improve essential skills and trades training programs

**Rationale:** Skills enhancement plays an important role in improving productivity and capacity of the labour force and maintaining competitiveness of the Yukon economy nationally and internationally. Increasing essential skills levels and trades qualifications for all Yukoners, including those who are under-represented in the workforce, will increase Yukon's standard of living.

#### 1.3 Improve both the provision and delivery methods of training programs in the communities

**Rationale:** Providing Yukoners living in the communities with additional methods of training, such as distance learning and mobile labs, will enable them to pursue adult education in a supportive environment.

#### 1.4 Support employers and self-employed individuals to access training programs

**Rationale:** Access to training is an important building block for a healthy economy. Supporting employers and self-employed individuals to access training will enrich the skill base and increase the diversification of the labour force.

### 1.5 Foster employer investment in workplace learning

**Rationale:** Developing the skills and knowledge of workers is critical, given technological advancements and the frequent changes to skills requirements induced by economic shifts. Informing employers of the benefits of investing in workplace learning and promoting implementation of training programs for workers will support the development of a skilled workforce.



### Goal 2: Facilitate and improve learning and employment transitions

**Rationale:** Education and employment transitions throughout life are becoming increasingly common and can take many forms: transitioning to post-secondary education, returning to school or upgrading skills in order to change careers or secure a new position. Adequate labour market information and support are essential to decide which program or training is suitable. By implementing appropriate tools and processes and supporting learning and employment transitions for Yukoners including under-represented groups in the workforce, workplace productivity should increase.

### Objectives

The following objectives were developed to support Goal 2 of the CSTTS:

#### 2.1 Increase awareness of post-secondary education options and student financial assistance

**Rationale:** Individuals need to make informed decisions about their post-secondary education as it can influence their employment outcomes. Increased awareness of student financial assistance can reduce financial barriers and encourage those with limited income to pursue post-secondary education.

#### 2.2 Build awareness of employment and training opportunities

**Rationale:** Yukoners will benefit from improved information on available training programs and employment services. Better access to information will increase use of services and programs and should improve employment outcomes.

#### 2.3 Improve and promote access to trades training for high school students

**Rationale:** Skilled employees in trades sectors are highly sought by employers. Trades as an option for post-secondary education needs to be promoted earlier in the Yukon education system to help reduce projected long-term labour shortages in the trades.

#### 2.4 Use integrated teaching approaches that meet diverse cultural and learning needs

**Rationale:** People learn differently. Classical approaches do not always meet the needs of all types of learners. The use of role-modeling, mentoring, coaching or on-the-job training will help improve successful learning outcomes for more Yukoners.

#### 2.5 Establish an effective funding model that ensures continuity of funding programs

**Rationale:** The diversity and complexity of funding programs can be a barrier in pursuing and completing post-secondary education. Reviewing the Student Financial Assistance programs and services would simplify the system and assess opportunities to increase the post-secondary participation and completion rate.

## Performance measurement

*This section describes considerations for the implementation of the strategy. The implementation of the CSTTS is a complex venture involving a variety of stakeholders undertaking multiple projects.*

Performance of each goal, namely 1) ensuring training opportunities are available for all Yukoners; and 2) facilitating and improving learning and employment transitions, will be evaluated by measuring the achievement of identified outcomes.

The outcomes expected by the implementation of the strategy are the following:

- increased availability and diversity of training programs;
- increased effectiveness in meeting employers' skilled-labour-force needs;
- increased employment for under-represented groups; and
- increased numbers of skilled and educated Yukoners.

Expected outcomes have also been identified for each objective.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The CSTTS will be implemented over a ten-year period and will be guided by a comprehensive action plan. The CSTTS Action Plan describes the actions under each strategic objective, the activities, monitoring methods and evaluation parameters. The action plan also provides a context for the new initiatives, explaining how they will respond to current and emerging labour market challenges, and provides a brief overview of current training programs and services.



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The strategy's action plan will be reviewed each year to ensure that implementation continues to support Yukon's economy in the most effective and efficient way

possible. Some initiatives under the action plan will be put into effect immediately and will have a short-term focus, whereas other initiatives will have a long-term focus on systemic change.

As for the evaluation, a methodical assessment of the implementation and results of the action plan will be done after a longer period of implementation (i.e., between three and ten years). This evaluation will examine to what extent goals and objectives have been fulfilled as well as the efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the CSTTS Action Plan over the long term.

In order to assist with the monitoring and evaluation of the CSTTS implementation, the CSTTS Working Group will be succeeded by the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Stakeholder Committee (CSTTSC). This new committee will include (but not be limited to) members from the CSTTS Working Group as well as new stakeholders. It will be important that the committee has representatives from all levels of governments, including First Nation governments, local businesses, industry associations, educational institutions, training providers and non-profit organisations.

A logic model has been developed in cooperation with the CSTTS Working Group that outlines expected results of the CSTTS implementation. The logic model will be an important tool to help the implementation Committee to measure performance. The logic model can be found in the action plan, and will also be updated based on any annual changes to the action plan.

Monitoring and evaluation will focus on measuring the outcomes from actions taken as identified in the CSTTS Action Plan. Outcomes will be reviewed by the CSTTSC in order to determine what has worked, what lessons have been learned and what improvements can be made to programs and services.

Performance indicators and targets have been identified in order to monitor and evaluate progress of the implementation of the CSTTS. Some of the indicators identified will require collection of data through development of new databases and surveys. This implies that some target baselines will not be available for the first year of implementation, but will be developed in the following years. Performance measures and related indicators/targets are interconnected and have to be considered as a whole when evaluating implementation.

## Assumptions

Specific assumptions have been made which guide the development of the CSTTS. Assumptions are critical factors not controlled by the strategy, but which influence its implementation and chances for success.



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A key assumption is that globalisation, increased competitiveness and cyclic economic fluctuations may impact Yukon's labour market and that Yukon needs to be proactive in order to maintain its economic growth.

Assuming there will continue to be long-term shortages of skilled workers and that development of large-scale industrial projects will require a skilled workforce, the CSTTS approach is proactive in that it seeks to ensure a highly-skilled and educated Yukon labour force now and into the future.

## Conclusion

We need to address globalisation of the labour market at a local level. Yukon, like other Canadian jurisdictions, has to deal with a skilled labour shortage, a demographic shift and increased competitiveness. Securing a skilled Yukon workforce is necessary to ensure our economic growth.



Developing essential skills and trades training opportunities that ensure all Yukoners can contribute effectively to their communities is essential. Furthermore, ongoing work with under-represented groups, such as persons with disabilities, youth, women in trades, aboriginal people, and older workers is critical to ensure social and economic success for the territory.

Adult education and training solely cannot be counted on to meet all labour market challenges. Immigration, recruitment and retention, provision and dissemination of adequate labour market information must be coordinated through other existing Yukon Labour Market Framework Strategies.

Planning must be flexible to take into consideration a variety of possible economic futures. The path to a healthy social and economic future is to ensure that skills and trades training are responsive to labour market needs and offer Yukoners a better quality of life.

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## Endnotes

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If you would like more information about how the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Strategy can benefit you or how you can participate in the Comprehensive Skills and Trades Training Stakeholder Committee, please call 867-667-5131 (toll-free 1-800-661-0408, ext. 5131) or go to [www.labourmarketframeworkyukon.com](http://www.labourmarketframeworkyukon.com). These documents are also available:

- additional copies of this strategy;
- a copy of the summary and action plan; and
- a complete list of the organisations involved in the creation of the strategy and action plan.

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