



NEWS RELEASE from the New Brunswick Building & Construction Trades Council

From the Ground Up: Building NB's Construction Future Together

Sept. 25th, 2014 – Fredericton, NB: Over 65 construction industry stakeholders gathered on September 17th and 18th just outside Fredericton for the 1st conference held by the New Brunswick Building & Construction Trades Council called “From the Ground Up: Building NB’s Construction Future Together”.

Earlier this year, the NB Building & Construction Trades Council looked to its members for direction regarding the future of the organization and its membership.

The response was a Strategic Planning session held in February which led to the development of 4 Priorities and a 3 year Work plan. The number one priority defined by session participants was “Succession Planning” for the Council as an organization and in regard to workforce regeneration among its membership.

“The reality of an aging workforce among our membership is an opportunity to regenerate however the current lack of major NB construction projects is an inhibiting factor,” said Gary Ritchie, President of the NB Building & Construction Trades Council. “It is time, for the NB construction industry to get creative with some out-of-the-box New Brunswick built solutions regarding workforce development.”

Which is why the NB Building Trades Council called together labour unions, contractors, major construction owners and NB construction associations for a conference to consider how New Brunswick can successfully ensure ongoing access to highly skilled construction trade professionals for employers in NB for many years to come.



The 2 day conference included work forecasts from major owners of construction such as NB Power, Irving Oil, TransCanada Pipeline and the Sisson Partnership which confirmed the need to ensure access

to a mobile skilled trade's workforce in NB. An Innovation Panel also exposed delegates to collaborative industry best practices such as the 'tripartite approach' the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers has facilitated with its construction partners and customers.

"It makes sense for labour, contractors and owners to work together to discuss workforce and industry issues in a collaborative forum and so 10 years ago, our organization initiated an Eastern Canadian Boilermakers Tripartite Conference. This year we hosted over 170 construction stakeholders." said Kent Oliver, Eastern Canadian International Representative.

During the NBBCTC conference breakout sessions, conference delegates agreed that the construction industry in New Brunswick is a community who can make a difference and that there are ways to improve. Delegates cited productivity, apprentice development, project & maintenance scheduling/planning, supervision and labour mobility as areas of focus over the next 12 months. A post conference report will be available by mid-October.

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About the NBBCTC: Originally formed on May 25, 1971, the New Brunswick Building and Construction Trades Council is a non-profit umbrella organization representing 17 building trade unions across 13 construction trades around the province with more than 7,500 active members. More commonly known as the New Brunswick Building Trades, the Council is a forum for unions in the NB construction industry to develop a common front on issues affecting the sector, such as Industry Legislation, Occupational Health and Safety Leadership, Trades Pre-employment & Apprenticeship Training Standards, Labour Representation on numerous Industry/Government Boards and Commissions, Jurisdictional Assignment Mediation and an Industry Best Practices Exchange. Overall the Council works with both employer organizations and government to improve the working situation of our union members as well as all construction workers in the province of NB.

Our website: www.nbbctc.com

By the Numbers

As time passes and our current skilled tradespeople in Canada age, the numbers show we have not done

enough to backfill the positions that will be vacated by retirees in just the next few years. In the near future the sector will be faced with a difficult choice: refuse work due to workforce shortages, rehire retirees at dramatically increased rates (including higher insurance and worker's compensation costs), or get proactive about hiring and training the next generation.

*“Lower construction activity and limited population growth across the 2014–2023 scenario creates a modest decline in the labour force of almost 500. Over the same period, replacement demand adds requirements estimated at just over 6,000, with demand spread across all 33 trades and occupations tracked by BuildForce. New entrants are estimated to be just over 3,400. **This leaves the construction industry to recruit an additional 2,100 workers from other industries and regions.**”*

New Brunswick Construction Looking Forward 2014-2023