

Leading Through Change





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Message from the Chair

As the pandemic crisis continued throughout the 2020-2021 year, the Apprenticeship Board and Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) staff repositioned quickly and found its way to operate successfully in a COVID existent environment. Our focus remains on ensuring the continued responsiveness of the apprenticeship and trades qualifications system to the needs of industry, apprentices and equity seeking groups. The Board welcomed two new members: Charmaine Roma who is an employer representative in the Service Sector and Ann Sylliboy, who is a member-at-large representing the Indigenous community.

NSAA finished the year having made healthy progress against the strategic pillars in its new multi-year plan: Attract Skilled Trades Talent; Support the Journey to Certification; Foster a Culture of Workplace Learning; and Advance the Value of Certification. Board members actively contributed to advancing the quality of the system and shaping it for future success.

As a number of Trade Advisory Committees continued to meet to complete their mandates this year, the Board established new Trade Advisory Committees to review industry requests. These are underway and include applications to designate the following trades: Architectural Sheet Metal Worker; Black Beauty Culture Hair Innovator; Barber; and Non-Destructive Tester. They also include completing a program review of the Heavy Equipment Operator trade and an application to specify the Insulator (Heat and Frost) trade as compulsory certified. The Board also appointed Nova Scotia members to four Atlantic Trade Advisory Committees to develop harmonized programs in the Auto Body and Collision Technician; Powerline Technician; Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic; and Machinist trades.

In addition, the Board conducted program reviews in four pre-apprenticeship programs: Motorcycle and Power Products Repair; Automotive Service and Repair; Industrial Instrumentation; and Metal Fabrication/Welding. The Board also created a new trade regulation for Hairstylists; conducted a consultation in the Transport Trailer Technician trade, conducted sector sessions to validate labour market outlooks, and hosted its annual industry meeting with a focus on raising awareness of mental health in apprenticeship and available supports.

Most of this work was carried out using virtual platforms which speaks to the adaptability and dedication of our industry partners to maintain the quality of apprenticeship programs. The Board is sincerely grateful for the contribution of the many industry professionals, youth serving organizations, equity partners and training providers whose support helps to extend and maximize the capacity of the NSAA to meet its challenging mandate. Without these partnerships, our success in establishing and operating apprenticeship as a credible post-secondary option for our youth while also maintaining relevance to the labour market is significantly reduced. I am proud to share the highlights of these partnerships in this report.

We have grown through this COVID period and developed many innovations. Together, with the NSAA staff and our partners, the Board is looking ahead in the new year, hopefully post-COVID, where we will be able to integrate the lessons learned to further advance and deliver an industry-led, accessible, and inclusive apprenticeship and trades qualifications system in Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,
Brad Smith, Board Chair



Message from the CEO

Early in 2020-2021, Nova Scotia found itself responding to a public health crisis which defined our lives throughout the year. I am so very proud of the team at the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency for adjusting to this new world and continuing service to our apprentices, employers, industry and equity partners, and training providers. The Apprenticeship Board and its many Trade Advisory Committees were gracious in entering the “Zoom” environment alongside of us to maintain momentum and advance strategic decisions about the system and individual trades programs that also led to continued action.

While participation in the system mirrored the impacts of COVID-19 on the Nova Scotia economy, resulting in a decline in newly-registered apprentices, an increase in apprentices discontinuing their program and an overall decline in the number of active apprentices, NSAA continued to see growth in the participation of women and apprentices from underrepresented groups. Apprenticeship registrations began to rebound between public health lockdown periods so that the overall loss was alleviated, and the total number was down only 2.7% from the previous year.

A key highlight of this year was the proactive response of our many partners who strategized with us to deliver programming in new and innovative ways. From virtual tours and hybrid events to try-a-trade school kits and digitized resources, together we were able to provide programs and services to youth, career seekers, apprentices, journeypersons and employers. NSAA is especially grateful to the Nova Scotia Community College and our other training partners who evolved in-person technical training to a remote learning platform enabling apprentices to

continue in their programs without disruption. This was nothing short of a miracle!

Achieving equity, diversity and inclusion continues to be of utmost importance to the future health and well-being of the apprenticeship and trades qualifications system. We are only as good as the service we provide to each and every apprentice, employer and partner. Pursuing an agenda of equity enables NSAA to perform better for everyone. To this end, NSAA began the process of renewing our Diversity and Inclusion Framework: *Building More Equitable Pathways* and this work is being guided by an external advisory team with expertise in areas of gender equity, accessibility, and anti-racism. The new framework will be launched in the fall of 2021.

In closing, I would like to offer a special thanks to Board Chair, Brad Smith and all Apprenticeship Board Members and the former Department of Labour and Advanced Education (currently the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration) for your ongoing commitment and guidance in helping to make the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications system in 2020-2021 relevant, accessible, equitable and inclusive.

All the best,
Marjorie Davison, CEO



Business Continuity

During COVID-19



NSAA Mandate

The Agency is responsible to steward and operate a relevant, accessible, and responsive industry-led trades training and certification system and improve access to and participation in the system by Indigenous Persons, African Nova Scotians, Persons with Disabilities, Immigrants, Women, and members of other under-represented groups.

This mandate was no different in a year marked by a public health crisis, and the demands on the NSAA no less. NSAA's primary occupation became focused on keeping the system running and enabling apprentices to continue in their programs uninterrupted.

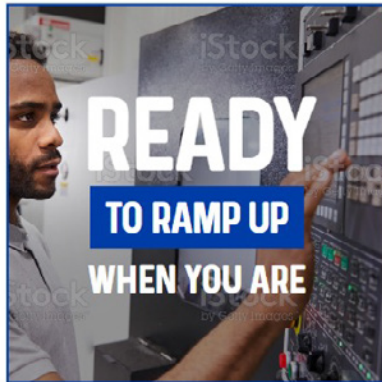
Impact on Participation

The participation of employers and apprentices, though immediately impacted by public health restrictions in the first wave and then subsequently through the second wave, recovered by the end of the fiscal year showing only a slight decline from the previous year. Overall, there were 63 fewer active employers training apprentices by the end of the year. The number of active apprentices decreased by 2.7%. Last year, newly registered apprentices represented 20.4% of all apprentices whereas this year that percentage dropped to 14.5%. Despite this, the percentage of women apprentices edged up to 7.8% and the percentage of underrepresented apprentices to 15.8% of all apprentices.



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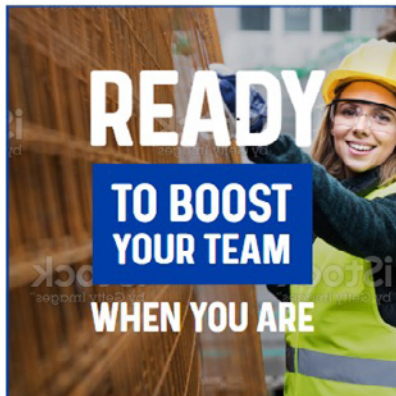
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Responding to COVID-19

NSAA assured our apprentices, employers, and partners throughout the year that we remained open for business. We worked immediately with our training providers to develop training options for our apprentices enrolled in technical training during the first wave of the pandemic and subsequently to transition technical training to remote delivery for the new training schedule which began in late summer 2020. We executed a new awareness raising campaign aimed at employers to encourage them to continue hiring apprentices. We also expanded the eligibility criteria for our START Apprenticeship Program that provides hiring, progression, and completion financial incentives to include more employers. NSAA began issuing apprenticeship trust awards on a monthly basis to apprentices rather than bi-annually to assist more immediately with financial needs and provided a technology grant to apprentices accessing technical training to improve their success with remote learning. NSAA and our youth delivery partners were unable to continue with most in-person student presentations or events and set our collective minds towards the development of innovative approaches and resources to continue to provide outreach to youth. Engagement with our industry groups, subject matter experts, and equity-seeking organizations continued virtually and, as a result, strategic development work continued in the areas of trade development, employer engagement and, increasing diversity and inclusion in the apprenticeship system.

15.8%

Number of underrepresented apprentices in relation to all apprentices in Nova Scotia.

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, NSAA hosted 172 meetings with industry on topics ranging from trade advice, program development, and program review. These meetings included the participation of 628 employers and employees from industry with a total of 1,883 hours of their time.



Attracting Skilled Trades Talent

NSAA is working to ensure Nova Scotia's youth, parents and educators are aware of and knowledgeable about careers in the skilled trades and apprenticeship pathways. We want youth to have access to relevant information and opportunities to experience the skilled trades and for Nova Scotians to make informed decisions using relevant, timely, and accurate labour market information.

Becoming Inclusive

NSAA's framework: *Building More Equitable Pathways* guides our diversity and inclusion work. This year, we successfully designated an Enforcement Officer and an Industry Training Consultant position to

be filled by an Indigenous Person or African Nova Scotian in our continued effort to achieve diversity in our staff. We also filled a vacant member-at-large seat on the Apprenticeship Board with a member of Eskasoni First Nation. We worked across both our staff and Board members to participate in a learning journey of cultural humility and respect. Our colleagues in the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Advisory Committee and the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs continued to support NSAA in connecting with community groups and supporting new entrants into apprenticeship. NSAA's delivery partners also continued to provide skilled trades exploration, essential skills, and experiences to individuals from equity seeking groups.

Chad Carrington

When Chad Carrington began university, he never imagined he would end up as an operations supervisor in the construction industry. As a young boy growing up in Truro, he assumed he would find his career path through university. In fact, when Chad started picking up construction jobs, he realized how much he liked the work and that he was gaining valuable skills in the process. His employer recognized that, too, and encouraged Chad to take on more projects that would challenge his critical thinking skills and hone his developing carpentry skills.

Chad achieved his certification as a Carpenter bearing the Red Seal endorsement in Hay River, NWT, and returned to Nova Scotia. He is happy to have the opportunity to come home and raise his family in his home province. His experience and Red Seal credentials opened managerial possibilities for him, and he has embraced the new challenge.



Chad reflects on the path taken.



I really enjoy going to work everyday, and knowing that, through my experiences on the job at various levels, my education and the knowledge that I have learned from my peers, I have acquired a skill set that will let me accomplish any task that is put in front of me.

- Chad Carrington, Carpenter

EQUITY

Delivery Partners

Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission

Black Business Initiative

East Preston Empowerment Academy

Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

Joint Registration Agreement Holders

Mi'kmaw Economic Benefits Office

Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs



YOUTH

Delivery Partners

Reaching Youth

In the wake of COVID-19, the NSAA Youth Outreach Coordinator developed and provided apprenticeship video presentations as well as live virtual presentations to high schools across the province and to seven equity-seeking community organizations for out-of-school youth. Our youth delivery partners devised innovative ways of maintaining and furthering interactive engagement with high school students. For example, Skills Canada Nova Scotia developed the Try-A-Trade Take-Out program in six skill areas, including machining, carpentry, and culinary and provided it to 43 schools with over 2,100 students participating. The Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council created a one-of-a-kind Trades Exhibition Hall construction kit where students construct a model-sized retail store under the guidance of a teacher and learn about construction and management occupations through the included educational videos.

- Automotive Sector Council
- Construction Association of Nova Scotia
- Education and Early Childhood Development
- Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
- Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council
 - Trades Exhibition Hall
 - Mobile Construction Experience
- Regional Centres for Education
- Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial
- Skills Canada Nova Scotia
- Techsploration
- Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia

Ellen MacDougall

Ellen MacDougall is a grade 9 student from the Strait Regional Centre for Education who participated in Techsploration, a not-for-profit corporation with the goal to increase the number of women working in the science, skilled trades, technology, and engineering occupations. NSAA is a key funder of Techsploration. As part of the Techsploration program, Ellen was provided with information, exposure, and support, introducing her to careers in the skilled trades. Ellen and her classmates were paired with mentor Rhonda Frigault, a certified Plumber and an instructor at NSCC in the pipe trades programs. Ellen enjoyed this experience and enrolled in the pipe trades course at NSCC after graduating from high school. Ellen obtained employment and is now employed as a registered Plumber apprentice at VEP Mechanical in Dartmouth.



Ellen is a wonderful example of a young women who gained exposure through mentorship to a career in the skilled trades through Techsploration.

Supporting Pre-apprentices

Pre-apprentices account for a large number of newly registered apprentices each year. NSAA staff provided virtual apprenticeship presentations to students throughout the year at all college campuses where trade programs are delivered. In addition, subsequent to previous amendments to the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act*, the process of registering pre-apprenticeship students in NSCC trade programs in the NSAA database was completed for the first time this year. NSAA issued 1,500 pre-apprentice identification cards to these students. Through this process, NSAA will be able to actively prepare students for their apprenticeship options, facilitate work placements in compulsory certified trades and create a seamless entry into apprenticeship.



Supporting the Journey to Certification



Gerry Brymer

Gerry Brymer, Senior Trainer with Toromont CAT was presented* with the Darryl Cruickshank Memorial Award - a national award given to an individual from industry for outstanding achievement in the development and promotion of apprenticeship training in Canada. The award is presented by the Canadian Council of the Directors of Apprenticeship, the body responsible for the Red Seal Program. Gerry joined the company (previously called NS Tractors and Equipment) over 40 years ago as an Apprentice Technician and is being recognized for his long-term involvement in mentoring and training apprentices, and for his generous volunteer work in promoting apprenticeship and careers in the skilled trades.

"It is an honour to work with Gerry, to have been instructed by Gerry and to have had him as a mentor. I can think of no one more deserving of this award," said Joey MacDougall, Shop Supervisor, Toromont CAT.

Congratulations Gerry and thank you for being a positive role model for the countless number of youth and apprentices who have been exposed to your enthusiasm for learning, caring attitude, and skillful teaching.

Gerry was presented the award by Marjorie Davison, CEO, NSAA and member of the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship.

**Gerry awarded virtually in the Fall of 2020.*



NSAA aims for apprentices and trades practitioners to experience a successful journey to certification and have access to the learning resources they need to be successful through their careers. We strive to achieve innovations in service delivery and trade programs and respond effectively to changes in trades practices and technologies.

Labour Market Information

This year, NSAA contracted the development of the report *Nova Scotia Skilled Trades: Apprenticeship in the Time of COVID* with Prism Economics. The purpose of the report was to understand the impacts of COVID on participation now and into the future.



This annual decline and potential permanent loss of many existing apprentices already in the system pose a significant risk to availability of certified tradespeople in future years. Despite the employment decline in 2020, older age demographics continue to drive retirements and hiring requirements. It is estimated that the province will require approximately 11,179 new certified tradespeople to meet sector demand requirements over the next ten years, accounting for both growth recovery and retirements.

Preliminary data was shared with sector groups at the NSAA Annual Industry Meeting in October 2020 and finalized data was then shared again in February through a series of virtual meetings. The data is helping to shape priorities regarding program development, review, promotion, and delivery.

HealthyMindsNS

NSAA launched the HealthyMindsNS for apprentices during Mental Health Week in October 2020. This is a partnership with the former Higher Education branch of Labour and Advanced Education and involves making available a suite of e-mental health resources to post-secondary students and apprentices in Nova Scotia. Resources available include a confidential online support chat, therapy assistance online, crisis text line, and a confidential helpline.



As a tradesman that struggled at a young age with social anxiety, I have found a passion for working with apprentices, junior tradespeople and agencies such as yours that can help these tradespeople be successful at such a critical time of their career. On my behalf and more importantly their behalf, I would like to thank you and your team for the work you perform.

Refreshed Website

NSAA launched its new website this year featuring a cleaner look and improved navigation for our users. The new site has dedicated pages to equity seeking groups to facilitate connections with apprenticeship and employers. The new site also has an accordion

style trades list that provides access to available information and resources by trade that falls under the authority of the Agency. All application forms including for apprentice registration, training enrolment, and trade qualification are available through the website for ease of access and use.

Virtual Learning Strategist

NSAA entered its second year of the Virtual Learning Strategist pilot program in partnership with New Brunswick and four other jurisdictions. To date, 65 apprentices have accessed virtual support services available through the pilot, and an additional 35 apprentices can be accommodated in the pilot before March 31, 2023. One apprentice was quoted stating,



I passed the exam (88%). Please continue to help people like me. It's been really great to make good study habits, and I think that was the calmest I've ever been going into an exam!

New Apprenticeship Pathways

New apprenticeship pathways are in development for Farm Technician, Elevating Device Mechanic, Transport Trailer Technician, Communications Technician, Crane Operator, Institutional Cook and Glazier. Traditional on-line delivery through open entry (asynchronous) in 13 trades is being evolved into a cohort delivery approach to support fuller peer

support and structure during learning. In the fall of 2021, five trades will be available through this new pathway. A second cohort in the Hairstylist trade apprenticeship pilot was initiated following required changes to the by-laws of the Cosmetology Act. The pathway is blended with on-line and in-class training and builds on the success of the first cohort group.

Trade Harmonization

NSAA continues to be an active participant in the harmonization of apprenticeship training in Red Seal trades, both at the Atlantic and national levels. New harmonized training programs, including development of curriculum and exams, were initiated in collaboration with employers, tradespersons, and instructors in the Atlantic region for the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic, Auto Body and Collision Technician, and Powerline Technician trades. As well, development work is ongoing in the Insulator (Heat & Frost) and Sheet Metal Worker trades. Level 1 harmonized programs for Boilermaker, Heavy Duty Equipment Technician, and Truck and Transport Mechanic were implemented in the September 2020/2021 training year.

At the national level, Nova Scotia industry representatives and instructors participated in workshops to develop and validate occupational standards and examination banks for 15 Red Seal trades (Agricultural Equipment Technician, Bricklayer, Cabinetmaker, Carpenter, Construction Electrician, Glazier, Hairstylist, Industrial Electrician, Instrumentation and Control Technician, Mobile Crane Operator, Motorcycle Technician, Parts Technician, Recreation Vehicle Service Technician, Roofer, and Truck and Transport Mechanic).

Trade Development Chart 2020-2021

Significant progress was made across a number of trades in 2020-2021.

The following chart provides details on the type of work that was undertaken by trade.

TRADE	DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY
Agricultural Equipment Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS National Workshop (virtual)
Architectural Sheet Metal Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Trade Designation • Curriculum Development
Auto Body and Collision Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Trade Advisory Committee • Atlantic Curriculum Workshop
Automotive Insurance Appraiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Trade Designation
Automotive Refinishing Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Automotive Service Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Barber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Trade Designation
Black Beauty Hair Culture Innovator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Trade Designation • Occupational and Curriculum Standard Development • Consultation
Blaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Re-certification Renewal Training/Safety Courses (in-person)
Boatbuilder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review • Industry Survey
Boilermaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Exam Jurisdictional Review (L1, 2, & 3) (Host Province) (in-person) • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Bricklayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group Youth Project (Partnership with EECD) • RSOS Provincial Validation and Weighting (virtual) • Red Seal Editing Bank Workshop (virtual)
Cabinetmaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS Provincial Validation/Weighting (virtual)
Carpenter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS National Workshop (virtual) • RSOS Provincial Validation/Weighting (virtual) • Examination Rotation/Implementation

TRADE	DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY
Construction Electrician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS Provincial Validation/Weighting (in-person) • Examination Rotation/Implementation (4)
Communications Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logbook
Cook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Trade Designation of Institutional Cook • Apprentice Survey for exiting apprentices
Elevating Device Mechanic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSOS Development – Class B • Provincial Certification Examination – Class B • Draft Curriculum Standard – Class A and B • Draft Logbook – Class A and B
Farm Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Program Development • NSOS Development • Logbook
Gasfitter A/B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Glazier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RS Exam Bank Workshop (remote & virtual) • RS Editing Workshop • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Hairstylist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Apprenticeship Pilot • RS Provincial Peer Review (in-person) • Mentorship Manual • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Heavy Duty Equipment Technician/ Truck & Transport Mechanic/ Transport Trailer Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – TTT Apprenticeship Pathway • TTT Consultation – Survey • TTM – Red Seal Provincial Peer Review (in-person) • HDET – Examination Rotation/Implementation (3) • TTM – Examination Rotation/Implementation (1) • TTT – Examination Rotation/Implementation (4)
Heavy Equipment Operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Apprenticeship/Pre-apprenticeship Program • Program Review
Industrial Electrician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS Provincial Validation/Weighting (virtual) • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review (June 2020) • Examination Rotation/Implementation (2)
Instrumentation and Control Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review – Industry Meeting • RS Exam Bank Workshop • Examination Rotation/Implementation (2)

TRADE	DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY
Insulator (Heat & Frost)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Trade Advisory Committee • Atlantic Exam Development (remote) • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Ironworker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Rotation/Implementation (2)
Landscape Horticulturist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Lather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS Provincial Validation and Weighting • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Machinist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Apprentice/Pre-Apprenticeship Program • Program Review • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Mine Electrician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Suspended • Draft Certification Examination • Draft Curriculum Standard
Mobile Crane Operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS National Workshop (virtual) • RSOS Provincial Validation/Weighting (virtual) • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Motorcycle Mechanic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RS Exam Bank Workshop (virtual)
Non-Destructive Tester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Trade Designation
Painter and Decorator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Logbook
Parts Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RS Exam Bank Workshop (virtual)
Plumber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Review • G7 Certification Process Review • Examination Rotation/Implementation (6)
Powerline Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Trade Advisory Committee • Atlantic Curriculum Workshop (virtual) • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Power Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Consultations
Recreational Vehicle Service Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSOS National Workshop
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Trade Advisory Committee (Host Province) • Atlantic Curriculum Workshop (remote) • Atlantic Examination Development (remote) • Examination Rotation/Implementation

TRADE	DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY
Roofer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCDA Harmonization Industry Webinar (virtual) • RS Exam Bank Workshop (virtual)
Sheet Metal Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic Trade Advisory Committee (Host Province) • Atlantic Examination Development (remote) • Examination Rotation/Implementation (2)
Sprinkler Fitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G7 Certification Process Review • Examination Rotation/Implementation (4)
Tool & Die Maker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Tower Crane Operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Rotation/Implementation
Transport Trailer Technician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Advisory Committee – Apprenticeship Pathway • Consultation – Survey Development • RSOS Workshop (virtual) • Examination Rotation/Implementation (5)
Welder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Practical Examination • RS Exam Bank (virtual) • Examination Rotation/Implementation (3)

RS – Red Seal

RSOS – Red Seal Occupational Standard

NSOS – Nova Scotia Occupational Standard

CCDA – Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship, responsible for the Red Seal Program

G7 – A license that enables certified Steamfitter/Pipefitters and Plumbers to install new, uncharged propane or natural gas piping systems of any size.



Fostering a Culture of Workplace Learning

NSAA values employers who train apprentices and works to help them understand and value their role as the primary trainer in the apprenticeship system. The Agency undertakes actions to contribute to respectful workplaces that value and encourage the learning of all apprentices and journeypersons and strives to be a model of affirming workplace learning culture.

Annual Industry Meeting

The Apprenticeship Board hosts an annual meeting in keeping with the Agency's Operating Charter. The meeting is open to all partners in the apprenticeship journey and invitations are sent to active employers, employer and industry

associations, union organizations, equity groups, and education and training institutions. The event is an opportunity to have meaningful discussions from diverse perspectives to improve the apprenticeship and trades training system in Nova Scotia. At this year's meeting, the Board sought to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the apprenticeship system and raise awareness of mental health and available supports. Results of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan were shared and input was gathered on actions to undertake under the new 2020-2025 plan. The following exceptional contributions were recognized:

- Apprenticeship Award of Excellence – Robyn Croft, AST at DND Shearwater.
- Platinum Milestone Awards: Steele Collision Center, Dartmouth; Linair Electric Ltd, Truro.

Apprenticeship Award of Excellence

Robyn Croft

Robyn Croft is the recipient of the Apprenticeship Award of Excellence. Robyn is a certified Automotive Service Technician, working at the Transport Electrical Mechanical Engineering division at the Department of National Defense (DND), Shearwater. In her quest to provide for her family and while on maternity leave, Robyn was led to Women Unlimited, who exposed her to many trades and technology programs. Robyn chose NSCC's Automotive Service and Repair program, where she excelled in the program and graduated with honours. After graduating, she worked for a

dealership before accepting a position with DND. There she makes a good salary with benefits and is exposed to a variety of vehicles. Robyn obtained her Certificate of Qualification bearing the Red Seal in May 2019. Working with apprentices is a favourite part of her job, as she also continues to learn from the apprentices. Robyn is also a role model for Techsploration and works tirelessly to encourage others to consider the skilled trades as a quality career option. Robyn was nominated by Doreen Parsons, CEO of Women Unlimited.



Platinum Milestone Award Winners

Steele Collision Center & Linair Electric Limited

The Platinum Milestone Award recognizes employers who have been supportive of the apprenticeship system and successfully completed over 20 apprentices since 2007.



Women in Trades

Women in the trades bring a professionalism to the work and environment that needs to be maintained and encouraged and it changes the dynamic of the shop.”

– Employer

NSAA established a Women in Trades office to provide more direct support to women apprentices already in the system, attract new entrants through pilot projects and develop resources to support respectful and inclusive work environments. Through the Women in Skilled Trades pilot, 20 employers from the Motive Power, Industrial/ Manufacturing and Service sectors were supported with wage subsidies to provide apprenticeship opportunities to 22 women; all of whom were registered as new apprentices in the apprenticeship system. In addition, 20 placements were initially allocated to Nova Scotia in the Atlantic Women in Construction Trades Pilot and then extended to an additional ten placements for the upcoming year. Employers in these pilots participated in a workplace assessment and associated diversity and inclusion awareness training. Participants receive appropriate PPE and funding to offset the cost of tools and employment-related supports.



The Women in Trades office is developing gender inclusion training resources, including a video and educational module for journeypersons on mentoring women apprentices. In March, a virtual celebration event was held to recognize the achievements of women working in the skilled trades and to thank them for their contributions in building a skilled trades workforce in Nova Scotia. Guest speaker Angela Graham, Manager, School of Trades and Transportation, NSCC mesmerized the audience with the story of her journey. The event theme coincided with the International Women's Day theme, "Choose to Challenge."



I am excited to see what our future will hold; we have a great network of tradeswomen and partners here in NS. Keep moving forward!!

– Angela Graham, Manager, School of Trades and Transportation, NSCC



International Women's Day virtual event, held March, 2021



New Orientation Programs

A new on-line, 5-part apprentice orientation program launched last year as mandatory for newly-registered apprentices is experiencing success with over 300 apprentices completing the program. A complementary on-line, 3-part employer orientation program was launched later this year and is also mandatory for employers who are new to the apprenticeship system. These programs clarify responsibilities and provide helpful information to set apprentices up for success in their apprenticeship program. Both programs contain a module on diversity and respect to support inclusive work environments for all apprentices.

Addressing Microaggressions

In response to a growing awareness of disrespectful workplace behaviours towards apprentices, and in particular towards women and individuals from underrepresented groups, the Chief

Diversity Officer developed an education session to create an understanding of microaggressions and their accumulative harmful impact. The session was delivered on demand throughout the last quarter of the year, including to the NSAA staff, Apprenticeship Board, Nova Scotian Construction Sector Council Board, Mainland Building Trades Board, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council Board, and the Construction Safety Association Board and staff.



A microaggression is a statement, action or incident that is subtle, indirect, and often unintentional discrimination; it can be thinly veiled sexism, racism, homophobia and classism.



Advancing the Value of Certification

NSAA works to instill pride and confidence in the skills of our certified trades workforce and encourage public investment decisions to incorporate the use of apprentices and certified tradespeople. We seek to grow the value of compliance by industry with an enforcement approach that is active, visible, and education-based. We believe that public valuing of trades certification leads to fair, safe, and equitable workplaces.

Geordie Walsh, *IBEW Instructor*

Geordie Walsh is an apprenticeship instructor with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 625. In addition to obtaining a Certificate of Qualification in the Construction Electrician trade, he is also a certified Automotive Service Technician. Geordie possesses a Post-Secondary Instructor Certification from Memorial University and began instructing all the different levels of apprenticeship technical training in the Construction and Industrial Electrical trade at the College of the North Atlantic in Newfoundland and Labrador over six years ago. Geordie joined the IBEW 625 in 2018 where he has been instructing Level 2 apprenticeship technical training in the Construction/Industrial Electrical trade and running Interprovincial Red Seal refresher training for both Construction and Industrial Electrical programs, as well as Fall Arrest, Mobile Elevated Platform and Confined Space training.

Geordie's passion and commitment to the advancement of apprentices is seen in how quickly and effectively he, with his colleagues at IBEW 625, were able to pivot from level 2 in-class to online technical training due to COVID 19. When the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) informed Blair Mikkelsen, IBEW 625 Training Coordinator of the decision to cease in-class training in mid-March 2020, Blair and Geordie worked swiftly to determine options to allow training to continue remotely. Geordie did not want the apprentices who had already attended 3-weeks of a 10-week course to have to repeat the level. Geordie quickly researched options for online delivery and determined MS Teams to be the best solution. Geordie applied himself to learn MS Teams and contact the apprentices in his class. MS Teams allowed him and the apprentices to see each other, present videos and use the white board function, especially for calculations. The class was running online within 3 days of the initial discussion with NSAA thanks to Geordie Walsh. Although no one had used MS Team before, the apprentices adjusted well and completed Level 2 to advance to Level 3. Geordie continues to use MS Teams for many of the various types of training which he instructs.



NSAA would like to thank Geordie Walsh, as well as Blair Mikkelsen and IBEW 625 for their contribution to the advancement of apprentices in the Construction Electrician trade and for adapting so quickly during COVID-19 to ensure the apprentices were able to smoothly transition to the online format and advance to the next level.

Trade Certification

Helping get apprentices and trade practitioners to certification is a key objective of the Agency. One of our biggest challenges this year in a COVID context was being able to provide exam sittings at our usual capacity due to public health restrictions. In addition, planned sittings had to be cancelled at different points throughout the year as restrictions came into play. As a result, the total number of individuals achieving trade certification was significantly lower than previous years. The Agency accommodated special sittings at a higher rate than normal to provide access in urgent situations.

Leveraging Public Procurement

A bright light this year emerged in the announcement of significant infrastructure investment in Cape Breton and subsequent announcements for Mainland Nova Scotia, totalling over three billion dollars. The planned investment presented a unique opportunity to bring government departments together to discuss the desired social benefits of this spending, namely, to transform procurement and participation in the workforce – more local and more diverse. With this as the mutual aim, targets for Cape Breton projects were set and funding support provided by former Department of LAE to industry and equity groups alike to engage in proactive measures to support meeting the targets.



Procurement Targets

25% of all trade/craft hours to be worked by apprentices

10% of all of these hours to be worked by apprentices who are underrepresented in the trades' workforce

All trades workers on the projects must be apprentices or certified journeypersons

10% of the entire workforce to be composed of individuals from underrepresented groups

A monitoring and compliance framework for the projects has been developed in partnership with the construction sector, and initial presentations made to construction managers. Additional meetings will be held to discuss site visits and expectations during the construction. A compliance and enforcement plan has also been developed to support contractors to follow the requirements of the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act.

Relocation of Enforcement Resources

In an effort to distribute enforcement resources more evenly across the province, NSAA has realigned the territories under the responsibility of each officer. An enforcement officer is now located in Antigonish and serves Cape Breton and Northern Nova Scotia. The Supervisor, Compliance and Enforcement is located in the Central Region and another enforcement officer is located in Bridgewater and serves the Valley and South Shore Regions.

Workforce Investments

In partnership with former LAE Workplace Initiatives, skills gap training in specialized areas were funded to prepare the existing workforce for construction specific to the health care sector planned for Cape Breton. NSAA provided funding to Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees to deliver trade refresher programs to address the requirement to be certified in order to work on Cape Breton infrastructure projects:

CARPENTER - 3 PROGRAMS

INSULATOR (HEAT AND FROST) - 2 PROGRAMS

IRONWORKER - 1 PROGRAM

BRICKLAYER - IN DEVELOPMENT

In addition, and in response to labour market need, NSAA worked with NSCC to deliver its core Sheet Metal pre-apprenticeship program in Sydney through the Marconi Campus. Nine seats were designated for underrepresented groups. All seats were filled, and students are completing their work placements.

Apprenticeship in the Forestry Sector

The Forestry Sector Apprenticeship Initiative was established in the wake of the closure of Northern Pulp and to advance the ecological shift envisioned for the forestry sector as laid out in the Lahey report: An Independent Review of Forest Practices in Nova Scotia. NSAA has undertaken a three-year program to support apprenticeship opportunities for those affected by the closure, working in the sector, or interested in entering the sector. In partnership with NSCC, NSAA developed a forestry sector asset map to identify existing training, education, research, and innovation programs to support investment decisions by the provincial transition team and trust established at the time of the closure. A need for a mechanized forestry operator trade was identified and work continues with the sector to further define the trade and potential avenues for training. The initiative has received 125 applications. Of those, 89 have received counselling on the support available to them and 32 referred to NSCC for career counselling. Twenty-five individuals have applied for trade qualification and refresher programs have been made available. Currently, 14 individuals have become certified with several of these being the first Heavy Equipment Operators certified in the province. There are currently 19 new apprentices and 12 existing apprentices who have been supported to continue their programs. The initiative developed a sawmill engagement plan and meetings with employers are underway.

Measuring

Success

Key Indicators

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the apprenticeship system in 2020-2021. Apprentices were being laid off, new apprentices were not being hired, technical training was delivered virtually, inspections were limited, and public health restrictions impacted our ability to invigilate examinations.

System Influence

The system will successfully influence the full continuum of trades training and regulation, including grades P-12, bridging programs, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, post-journey training, and regulation.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	STATUS
Percentage of pre-apprentice graduates who register as apprentices in the compulsory trades	Ready in 2021-2022 year	The Agency began registering pre-apprentices in 2021.
Employer satisfaction with apprenticeship training	2018: 72.2%	The Satisfaction Survey is scheduled for Fall 2021.
Apprentice satisfaction with apprenticeship training	2018: 69.1%	The Satisfaction Survey is scheduled for Fall 2021.

Employer Engagement

More employers will provide strategic direction to the system, hire more apprentices, and engage more purposefully in their training.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	STATUS
Net number of new employers in the apprenticeship system	-63	Decrease
Compliance rate	93%	Stable

Inclusiveness

The system will successfully attract and retain more individuals from diverse groups.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	STATUS
Percentage of apprentices who represent diverse populations	15.8%	Increase
Percentage of women in the apprenticeship system	7.8%	Increase
Percentage of certifications issued to diverse persons	9.4%	Increase
Percentage of certifications issued to women	6%	Increase

Labour Market Responsiveness

The system will optimize and grow the resources it needs to meet labour market needs.

MEASURE	2020-2021 RESULT	TARGET	STATUS
Progress on labour market demand - Motive Power Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 647 (26%)	Certifications required 2026: 2469	Monitor
Progress on labour market demand - Construction Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 1,177 (22%)	Certifications required 2026: 5283	Monitor
Progress on labour market demand - Service Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 90 (4%)	Certifications required 2026: 2405	At-risk
Progress on labour market demand - Industrial/Manufacturing Sector	Certifications issued since 2018: 237 (20%)	Certifications required 2026: 1544	Monitor
Percentage of total programs reviewed	28.5%	N/A	Stable
Percentage of apprentices who applied and enrolled in technical training	99%	N/A	

Successful Completion

The system will support apprentices to complete their training in a timely manner, gaining the depth and breadth of the skills employers need.

MEASURE	2019-2020 RESULT	STATUS
Average time to complete	3.9 years	Stable
Number of certifications issued	397	Decrease
Current number of active apprentices in the system	7,058	Decrease
Percentage of individuals who successfully pass certification examinations	68%	Decrease

