



NOVA SCOTIA
APPRENTICESHIP
AGENCY

Nova Scotia
Apprenticeship Agency

Report to the Community

Fourth Quarter
2014–2015

Introduction

This fourth-quarter report of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is made available to our interested stakeholders to fulfill our commitment to keep industry informed of the direction and achievements of the agency. The report highlights the work of the board at both strategic and specific trade levels and demonstrates significant engagement with industry through a number of activities, including provincial and Atlantic Trade Advisory Committees, Red Seal program development, youth programming, and information events. It provides information about the status of the apprenticeship training harmonization initiatives, the results of the annual industry meeting and the aboriginal conference, and new START program activity. Let us know if you have any feedback or questions by e-mailing: apprenticeshiptraining@novascotia.ca.



Trade Activity Report

The Trade Activity report provides an update of activity in each trade during the quarter. The activity may include Trade Advisory Committees (TACs), trade training development, Atlantic harmonization, and national harmonization.

Trade	Activity	Status
Automotive Insurance Appraiser	Request for trade designation	<p>The application to designate this trade was presented to the board in October 2014, and further information was supplied by the applicant.</p> <p>At the March 11, 2015, board meeting, the board approved establishment of a Trade Advisory Committee in fall 2015 at the earliest to review the application, conduct further research, and make a recommendation to the board.</p>
Automotive Service Technician (AST)	Trade regulation review	<p>At the February 11, 2015, board meeting, the board approved the establishment of an AST TAC to work with the Truck and Transport Mechanic TAC to determine and incorporate crossover work into the AST draft regulation. It is expected that the TAC will be established in May – June 2015.</p>
Blaster	Certification renewal course	<p>The agency partnered with NSCC Online Learning and a Blaster industry subject matter expert to develop and deliver the Blaster Certification Renewal Course for 2015. This course is mandatory for Blasters whose certifications are due to expire soon (certifications expire every five years). Two in-class sessions were delivered in March at NSCC campuses in Port Hawkesbury and Dartmouth. On March 13, an online version of the course opened for registration through NSCC Online Learning. The online course will be open to applicants until at least December 31, 2015.</p>

Trade	Activity	Status
Bricklayer	Atlantic trade harmonization	The ATAC met in St. John's, NL, in December 2014 to develop and validate curriculum standards and exam specifications and recommend total trade hours, and in March 2015 to develop and validate common exam banks. Harmonized curriculum and exams will be implemented in September 2015.
Carpenter	Request to specialize the trade as compulsory certified and to consult regarding trade specializations	At a meeting on January 29, 2015, the Carpenter TAC discussed potential pathways for specializations in the Red Seal Carpenter and reviewed sequencing of technical training. The TAC plans to conduct an industry consultation in 2015.
	National trade harmonization	National webinars were held March 12 and April 1 to reconcile curriculum sequencing in the trade.
Cook	Atlantic trade harmonization	The Cook ATAC met in St. John's, NL, in January 2015 to develop and validate curriculum standards and exam specifications and recommend total trade hours. The next scheduled meeting is May 20–22, 2015, in NL. Harmonized curriculum and exams will be implemented in September 2015.
	Apprenticeship technical training	NSAA and NSCC are currently creating an innovative and flexible offering for Cook Apprenticeship. Consultation with industry is scheduled in spring 2015, with implementation anticipated in fall 2015.
Metal Fabricator (Fitter)	Atlantic trade harmonization	The board recruited members for a Metal Fabricator ATAC to meet in Halifax in April – May 2015. The board appointed three representatives to the ATAC at the March 11, 2015, board meeting.
	National trade harmonization	A national webinar was held March 11 to reconcile curriculum sequencing in the trade. A proposed curriculum structure will be recommended in April.

Trade	Activity	Status
Motor Vehicle Body Repairer (MVBR)	NSCC program review	The MVBR TAC has met four times and will make a recommendation at the April 2015 board meeting. The TAC will continue its work according to the terms of reference.
Truck and Transport Mechanic (TTM)	Trade regulation review	The TTM TAC met on February 10, 2015. It was determined that there is significant crossover work with the Automotive Service Technician (AST) trade. At the February 11, 2015, board meeting, the TAC requested that an AST TAC be established to work with TTM on crossover work. The board agreed, and the TAC is expected to be established in May – June 2015.
Welder	Trade regulation review	The board approved the Welder Trade regulations by a board order at the February 11, 2015, meeting. Stakeholders have been notified, and the regulation is posted on the NSAA website.
	Atlantic trade harmonization	The board recruited members for a Welder ATAC to meet in Halifax in April–May 2015. The board appointed three representatives to the ATAC at the March 11, 2015, board meeting.
	National trade harmonization	A national webinar was held March 10, 2015, to reconcile curriculum sequencing in the trade. A proposed curriculum structure will be recommended in April.

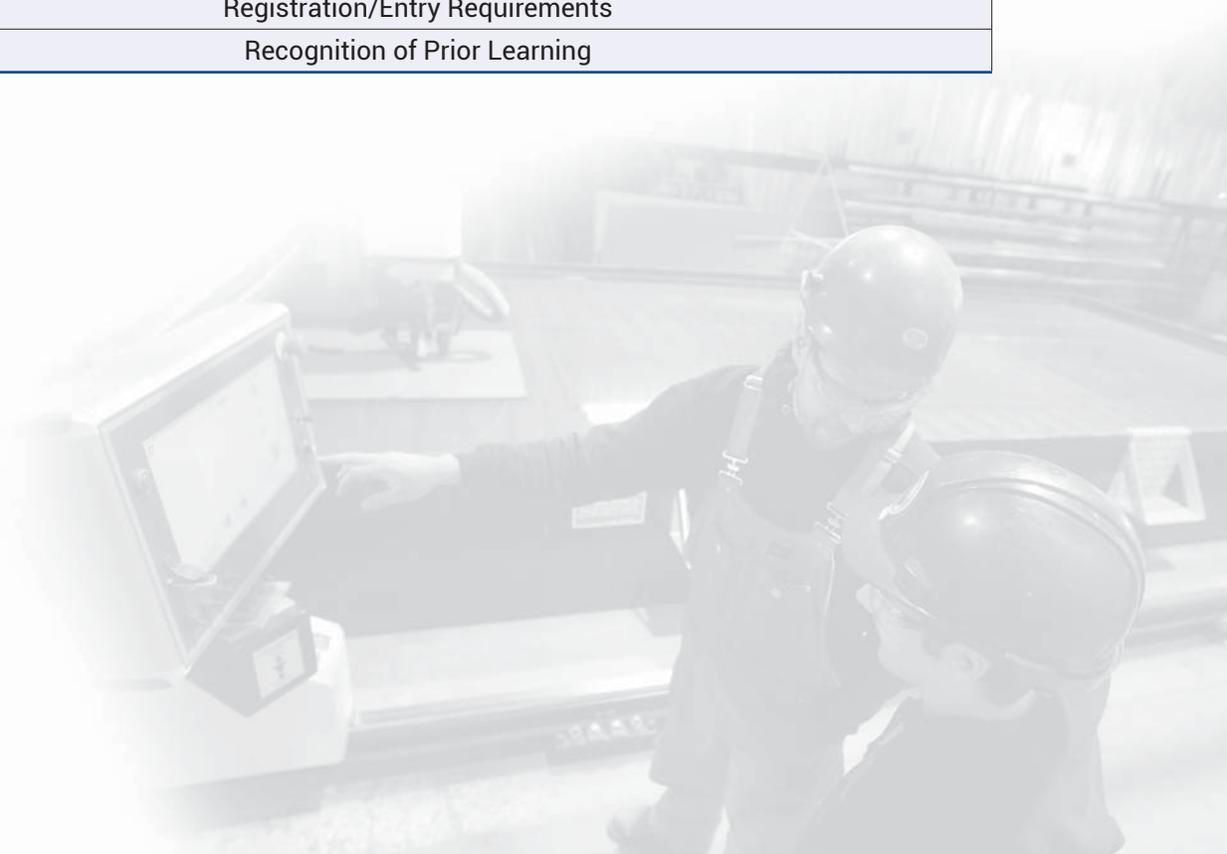
Atlantic System Harmonization

In addition to harmonizing the apprenticeship training for 10 specific trades, the Atlantic provinces have made significant progress in implementing common processes and standards for apprentices who are mobile in the region, as indicated in the table below.

Common Processes for:
Administration of Exams
Low Registration Trades
Fees
Compulsory Certification
Marketing/Promotion Strategy
Employer and Apprentice Incentives
Training Provider Compensation
Completion Rates
Communication Plan

Common Standards for:
Trade Name
Hours
Atlantic Curriculum Standards
Exam Data Banks
Electronic Log Books
Atlantic Trade Advisory Committees
Curriculum Sequencing
IT System (common system)
Select next 6 trades (criteria)

Common elements of both Processes and Standards:
Completion Requirements
Registration/Entry Requirements
Recognition of Prior Learning



Enforcement Activities

The agency employs Enforcement Officers who are responsible for enforcing the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act and associated regulations. The Enforcement Officers are special constables and can issue summary offense tickets for violations of the act and regulations.

Heat Pumps

The agency has partnered with Nova Scotia Power on a campaign to increase awareness among homeowners of the need to have properly certified Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanics install and repair residential heat pumps. The "Ask for the Card" campaign was launched at the Home Show in March. Every attendee received an Ask for the Card button and an information card. Large banners were also created for the event. The next action of the campaign will involve a mail-out notification to NSP customers in their regular billing to make them aware of the credentials required for installation of these systems.



Vehicle Inspections

The inspection of vehicles with a registered gross weight of more than 4500 kg requires a valid Certificate of Qualification in the Truck and Transport Mechanic trade. The inspection of trailers with registered gross weight of over 4500 kg and equipped with air brakes requires a valid Certificate of Qualification in either the Truck and Transport Mechanic or Transport Trailer Technician trades. In collaboration with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, a review of all individuals performing these inspections was conducted to determine if they possessed the appropriate trade qualification. NSAA Training Officers will work with those individuals who do not currently hold the appropriate qualification to ensure that they achieve their certification.

Collaboration with Occupational Health and Safety

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and the Occupational Health and Safety Division have developed a clear path forward to increase the agency's capacity to monitor the apprenticeship system for compliance and to improve our visibility in Nova Scotia workplaces. Inspectors will be participating in joint inspections and joint inspection blitzes, and sharing best practices. Occupational Health and Safety Inspectors will be designated by the Minister to have the authority to ask for proof of certification or apprentice registration for all persons who are working in the compulsory trades and to issue Summary Offense Tickets under the Apprenticeship legislation.

Operational Highlights

Aboriginal Apprenticeship Advisory Committee

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Advisory Committee was established in 2006. Its mandate is to provide a forum for networking and discussion to identify and address barriers and gaps in trades training and employment opportunities, in order to support the successful participation of aboriginal people, both on and off reserve, in apprenticeship training and certification in trades occupations.

The AAAC is a well-represented organization with membership from the following organizations:

- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Kwilmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn (KMK)
- Mi'kmaq Employment and Training Secretariat
- Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK)
- Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre
- Native Council of Nova Scotia
- Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia
- Unamaki Benefits Office
- Union of Nova Scotia Indians
- Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (ex-officio)
- Service Canada (ex-officio)
- Nova Scotia Community College (ex-officio)

To advance the mandate of the AAAC, the Committee has developed its annual work plan. Key activities include:

- encouraging a dedicated Mi'kmaq seat on the agency board
- encouraging the creation of an Aboriginal Training Consultant position with the NSAA
- hosting a meeting of all aboriginal organizations that are Joint Registration Agreement holders with the NSAA
- working with the Strategic Partnerships Initiative to advance the development of an apprenticeship strategy
- leveraging partnerships and funds for activities
- identifying and engaging aboriginal employer champions
- hosting a stakeholders' conference (see below)

Advancing Aboriginal Apprenticeship Conference

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (AAAC) held its stakeholder conference, Advancing Aboriginal Apprenticeship, in Dartmouth on March 5–6, 2015. The conference brought together staff from the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA) and aboriginal organizations from around the province to network, learn about each other's roles, and develop working relationships in order to improve and increase participation by Aboriginal People in the apprenticeship system. Ninety people attended the two-day event. Most of the attendees were from aboriginal organizations, and some were from government and training providers/institutions.

Sessions at the event included:

- Learning about the AAAC
- Learning about the NSAA
- Joint Registration Agreements and Incentive Programs
- Aboriginal and NSAA Youth Initiatives
- Learning How to Navigate the Apprenticeship System

The event evaluation indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the event overall (90 per cent very good to excellent).

Annual Industry Meeting

The NSAA held its first Annual Industry Meeting in Dartmouth on February 25, 2015. This event is an opportunity for the board to dialogue with industry stakeholders, report on the progress of the agency, solicit information and input for agency planning and accountability, and validate plans and directions to meet the objectives of the agency.

Industry partners helped prioritize the actions of the multi-year Strategic Plan, contributed to discussions on key issues facing apprenticeship, and provided feedback on trade-level topics such as national trade harmonization (Carpenter, Heavy Duty Equipment Technician, Ironworker (3 trades), Metal Fabricator, Welder). They also participated in discussions regarding proposed Truck and Transport Mechanic trade regulations and proposed trade specialization of the Carpenter trade.



Stakeholders have previously assisted the board with the development of a draft five-year strategic plan. At this meeting, stakeholders prioritized the actions they would like to see the agency take in implementing the new plan. The top five action priorities include:

1. Changing the Outcome: Apprenticeship Success
Ensure that training and certification pathways are relevant, integrated, effective, and available
Help potential apprentices make more informed career choices
2. Changing the Culture: Inclusive, Connected, Industry-led
Promote apprenticeship and the skilled trades
3. Making Certification an Economic Driver
Promote awareness of the importance of certification
4. Strengthening Delivery: Connecting Training and Workplaces
Develop and promote a comprehensive apprenticeship system
5. Changing the Outcome: Employer Success
Develop innovative approaches to suit the capacity and needs of employers

Stakeholders also provided their ideas on the following three key issues:

- *Promoting the value of the apprenticeship system:* support youth to fully research their trade of choice; use real apprentices to promote trades to students; share success stories; utilize social media; build better understanding of the system; promote the Red Seal; promote direct entry with employers
- *Increasing diversity in apprenticeship:* improve communication between business owners and diverse groups; share successful approaches; promote incentives for participation; create apprenticeship ambassadors and champions from diverse groups to give voice to the value of a career in the skilled trades, training quality, and the system and supports
- *Assessing apprenticeship readiness:* help students consider their interests and abilities in the context of the skilled trades; ensure that all parties know their roles and expectations in the system; include candidate assessment as part of the pre-apprenticeship application process

The information provided by stakeholders will assist the agency in developing its Business and Operational plans.

Procurement

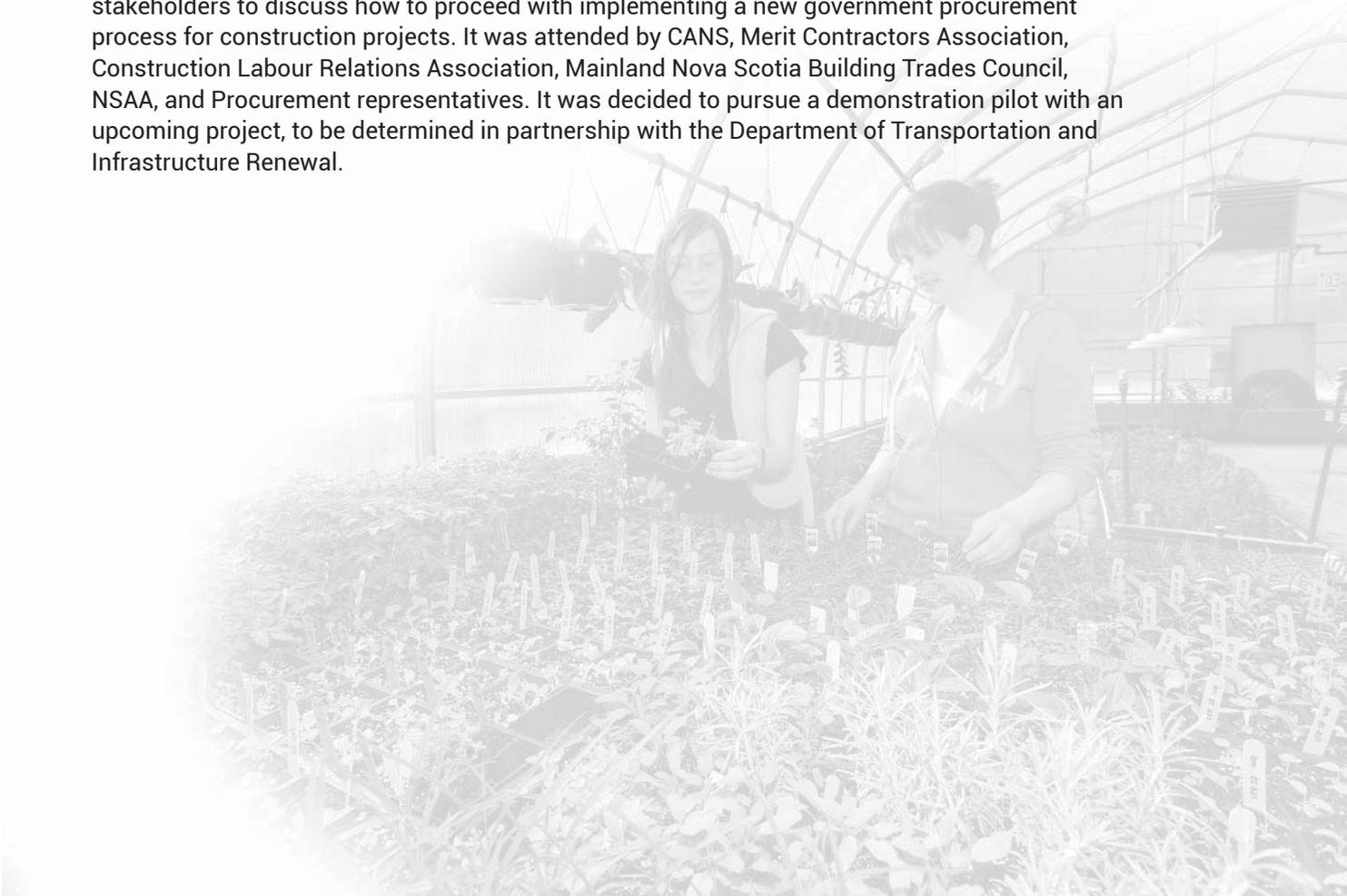
Government has revised its procurement policy. The agency successfully requested that new language supporting the hiring of apprentices be incorporated into the policy. The new language is found in the "Document Drafting Protocol" within the Sustainable Procurement section. This policy requires employees to consider sustainability criteria in all procurement decisions, including a consideration for apprentices as follows:

Consideration for Apprentices

Supporting the province's priority to increase employment opportunities for apprentices and youth in our province, Covered Entities are encouraged to consider ways they can support the use of apprentices when procuring work within the designated trades.

To view a list of the trades designated in Nova Scotia, visit the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency website at nsapprenticeship.ca/about/trades.

In addition, the Construction Association of Nova Scotia (CANS) hosted a meeting of industry stakeholders to discuss how to proceed with implementing a new government procurement process for construction projects. It was attended by CANS, Merit Contractors Association, Construction Labour Relations Association, Mainland Nova Scotia Building Trades Council, NSAA, and Procurement representatives. It was decided to pursue a demonstration pilot with an upcoming project, to be determined in partnership with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.



START Apprenticeship for Employers

The Apprenticeship START program provides eligible employers the following incentives:

- Once an agreement has been signed with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, an initial amount of \$2,500 is issued.
- Following the apprentice's successful completion of each of the next three levels of training and practical hours (or four levels, in some trades), \$5,000 will be issued.
- Following the apprentice's successful completion of the certification exam, the final \$2,500 will be issued.

Employers who are registering new apprentices from these under-represented groups—women working in non-traditional trades, persons with disabilities, aboriginal persons, African Nova Scotians, and immigrants—and employers in rural areas and small population centres (determined by company's location) are eligible to apply.

The following START agreements were initiated in the quarter:

County	Number of new START agreements
Cape Breton	13
Richmond	3
Inverness	1
Antigonish	10
Pictou	10
Colchester	9
Cumberland	3
Halifax	18
Hants	5
Lunenburg	13
Kings	16
Digby	5
Yarmouth	4
Nova Scotia	110

For more information, visit nsapprenticeship.ca/employers-industry/start-program.

Website

The agency's website (nsapprenticeship.ca) has been live since July 2014. The site is updated on an ongoing basis to ensure that it is a source of current Nova Scotia apprenticeship and certification information for industry, apprentices, stakeholders, and staff.

Recently, we added a web page to outline the new process under which regulations for non-compulsory trades are updated and approved (nsapprenticeship.ca/agency/legislation-compliance/board-order-regs). We also added a page that describes, in detail, the Apprentice Registration Process for Alberta clients (nsapprenticeship.ca/apprentice-registration). Along with instructions on how to apply and a list of required support documentation, the web page also contains an electronically fillable Apprenticeship Application and Agreement, with all associated forms. (A link to this apprentice registration information is available under "What's New" on the NSAA homepage.)

The agency is currently working on converting these Apprenticeship Agreement forms to web forms, which will enable clients to pay the registration/Photo ID fee online. Other apprenticeship and certification forms are also being converted to web forms: seven were launched in February/March, with the intention to release the rest in spring 2015. For web forms that involve fees, the payments can now be made online.



Youth Initiatives

Youth Outreach

The Youth Outreach Coordinator has been attending professional development meetings for guidance staff in the public school system. A presentation was developed and a USB containing documents and videos were handed out to guidance staff for use as an apprenticeship and trades resource. This reached approximately 50 guidance staff during this quarter. A presentation was also delivered to the Boys and Girls Club of Truro, which has the potential for a larger partnership. This contact provided inroads to some of the local junior high schools, which have since requested presentations for their students, a direct result of the efforts of the staff at that club. In-class presentations to students were delivered to two schools (approximately 45 students). The Youth Outreach Coordinator has been engaging with community partners on a variety of activities and ramping up for the April to June quarter, when students and schools are typically most busy accessing WorkIt Grants and engaging in the programs hosted in the community such as Skills Canada–Nova Scotia competitions, Techsploration events, and the summer programs Building Futures for Youth and Automotive Test Drive.

Summer Employment Program

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency provides funding to partner organizations to provide summer employment opportunities to students interested in pursuing a career in the skilled trades.

The Construction Association of Nova Scotia has interviewed 171 candidates for the Building Futures for Youth summer program. Students from all eight school boards applied for the chance to be one of the 95 students accepted into the program. Family information sessions have been scheduled and dates have been set for the mandatory safety training made available by the Nova Scotia Community College as part of the program. The NSAA Youth Outreach Coordinator has been booked for classroom visits to deliver an in-depth presentation on apprenticeship and to speak to parents and students at the evening family information sessions in each region.

The Automotive Sector Council has interviewed 28 students for the Test Drive program and selected 20 candidates—15 from the Halifax Regional School Board and 5 from Chignecto Central Regional School Board. Family information sessions and industry training, made available by NSCC as part of the program, have been organized. The NSAA Youth Outreach Coordinator is scheduled to deliver information sessions to parents at a family information session and to give an in-depth classroom presentation for both groups.

Skills Canada–Nova Scotia Skills Competitions

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is a presenting partner of Skills Canada–Nova Scotia. Our funding supports the staffing and many activities of the organization. Skills Canada–Nova Scotia is hosting the Nova Scotia Provincial Skills Competitions at NSCC Kingstec, NSCC Waterfront Campus, and Memorial Composite High School in North Sydney. The finalists at these competitions will form Team Nova Scotia, which will be heading to Saskatchewan in May to compete at the Nationals. The NSAA will be presenting medals as well as having a presence in the career showcase at all three events.

Techsploration

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is a founding partner of Techsploration as well as a primary funder. Techsploration is currently running “Techsploration Goes to School” events for all grade 9 girls across the province. These events take place in the local schools with presentations by students and role models from various careers. This career exploration day gives girls the opportunity to speak one-on-one with role models as well as to hear presentations from their peers on different careers that are being explored, including in the skilled trades. The NSAA Youth Outreach Coordinator will be attending several events to provide direct information on Apprenticeship.

Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council Trades Exhibition Hall continues to experience enormous popularity within the schools and is hosting at least one group of students every week. These Construction immersion events allow students to get hands-on with common tasks in 12–14 different trades and to have conversations with real tradespeople on site.

Apprenticeship Fast Facts

	4th Quarter	Total
Active employers*	1736	1736
New apprentices	233	1352
New youth apprentices	13	101
Total apprentices**	5909	5909
Apprentices in technical training	934	2904
Trade qualifiers	93	246
Certificates of Qualification (C of Q) issued	184 (179)	947 (866)
Certificates of Qualifications renewed	575	2706
Apprentice exam pass rate (C of Q)	90%	89%
Trade Qualifier exam pass rate (C of Q)	68%	64%
Certificate of Qualification exams written	591	2823

*Active employers is a snapshot of the number of new employers who hire apprentices. Existing employers who take on additional apprentices are not reflected in this number.

**The total number of apprentices fluctuates due to labour mobility, change in career paths, job loss, and other reasons.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Date	Activity
April 7, 2015	Release of 2015–2016 Training Schedule
April 13–17, 2015	Automotive Service Technician Workshop to update the National Occupational Analysis
April 20–24, 2015	Sheet Metal Worker Workshop to develop new exam items for the exam bank
April 22, 2015	TAC—Carpenter
April 23, 2015	TAC—Motor Vehicle Body Repairer
April 30, 2015	Halifax Chamber of Commerce Spring Dinner, World Trade and Convention Centre; Nicholas Wyman to speak on Apprenticeship
May 1, 2015	Baker Industry Review due (Red Seal)
May 11–13, 2015	ATAC—Metal Fabricator
May 13, 2015	Board Meeting
May 20–22, 2015	ATAC—Cook
May 2015	Inspection Blitz
May–June 2015	TAC—Automotive Service Technician
May 30, 2015	Apprenticeship Celebration Event, Digby Pines
June 2015	ATAC—Carpenter
June 10, 2015	Board Meeting

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