



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Human Resource Centre of Canada

### Thunder Bay

~ An Analysis of the Thunder Bay Area Labour Market ~ July - September 2004 ~

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**Note:** In preparing this bulletin, HRSDC has taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since the bulletin was published. Readers are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this bulletin does not necessarily reflect official policies of HRSDC.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

Thunder Bay continues to establish itself as the region's retail centre as more major stores and plazas are under construction or in the planning stages. In the public sector, the new hospital is also sparking interest in development in the lands around the hospital site. Thunder Bay residents are engaged in public debate regarding the public school board's plans for major school closures as a result of the drop in enrolment. At the same time, some of Thunder Bay's long-established employers are showing signs of distress as the third quarter of 2004 ends. Bowater is shutting down its groundwood mill indefinitely and Cascades Inc. is weighing its options with respect to its unprofitable Thunder Bay mill. Bombardier is unsure of how long it will be able to delay significant layoffs without new contracts. Communities along the north shore of Lake Superior are contending with the ongoing labour dispute involving social and mental health workers. Manitowadge celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as local mines prepare to close in 2006.

#### In the Labour Force Survey:

- **Thunder Bay's unemployment rate continues to climb**  
Third-quarter rate surpasses five-year high set in second quarter
- **Growth slows in Northwest**  
Unemployment down slightly as labour force contracts

#### Employment by Industry:

- **Services sector falls 5% year over year in Thunder Bay**  
Sector accounts for 60% of year-over-year losses
- **Goods-producing sector continues to grow in Northwest**  
Strong gains in Manufacturing

#### Decline in claimload continues in third quarter of 2004

Still higher year-over-year.

#### Third quarter sees small drop in newspaper vacancies for Thunder Bay HRCC

Drives region's overall loss.



## LABOUR MARKET NEWS

*Highlights on industry activities that have an impact on the local labour market, this information is derived from several sources including local newspapers, newsletters and various publications. Please refer to "Notes to Readers" for additional information.*

### Agriculture

Thunder Bay farmers have been hard hit by this summer's cool, damp weather. Because of the lack of sun and warm temperatures, many crops are one or two weeks behind. Farmers with corn crops are hoping for a late frost in order to have a chance at a decent harvest. Summer temperatures were approximately 1°C below normal.

### Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas

The David Bell Mine in Marathon reached an agreement with its union to reduce its workforce by 15% through early retirement and voluntary severance packages. The mine will be testing a new 'cell structure' system with a seven-day work week. Because of this new system and the voluntary workforce reduction, the announced layoff of 25 workers will not take place until at least the completion of the three-month test period. In September the mine began negotiations on what will possibly be the last contract for the workers remaining at the mine. Pensions and benefits are expected to be the major bargaining issues. The mine is scheduled to close in 2008.

The Lac Des Iles mine, north of Thunder Bay, is expanding its operation. An underground corridor off its open pit palladium mine will allow access to higher-grade deposits. Once the expansion is completed, the mine will add 80 new jobs to its workforce of 300 people. The mine continues to produce a profit even though the price of palladium has fallen drastically over the past three years. In 2001, an ounce of palladium sold for \$1,000; now its price is about \$210 an ounce. The mine also produces small amounts of gold and platinum.

The Golden Giant mine in Hemlo suffered two closures over the summer following a pair of accidents at the mine. In June, the mine's shaft was damaged when an ore skip lost control. About 200 workers were laid off while repairs were made to the shaft at an estimated cost of \$2-million. The repair work was completed a month ahead of schedule and the miners returned to work. Then, in August, the mine's above-ground mill operation

was shut down for several days following an accident that sent two workers to hospital. The men were burned by a flash of electricity from a high-voltage switch. Both incidents are under investigation by the Ministry of Labour. The mine is scheduled to operate until 2006.

Exploration in the Smoke Lake area in the Hemlo gold belt is being mapped and surveyed for possible gold sites. High-grade gold is known to exist on the property.

A proposed private members bill, the First Nations Resource Revenue Sharing Act, would enact a procedure by which resource companies that intend to extract natural resources from First Nations traditional lands in Northern Ontario negotiate a comprehensive revenue-sharing agreement with the First Nations and the Government of Ontario. However, the Ontario Mining Association and a number of Northwestern Ontario forest companies have expressed concerns that the bill will create additional costs to businesses in the Northwest or discourage new exploration in the area. Both industry groups feel that they already have arrangements with the area First Nations to ensure that they benefit from any activity on their lands. Nishnawbi-Aski Nation has expressed support for the bill as a means of ensuring that First Nations communities will benefit from resources on their lands.

### Utilities

The Ministry of the Environment has announced that the proposed SynFuel project will undergo a full environmental assessment. The project, which would see a petroleum coke power plant built in Thunder Bay, had completed its own environmental assessment and submitted the results to the Ministry in February. The plant will be using a process, *gasification*, which is new to Ontario. The procedure changes petroleum coke into gas and then burns the gas for energy. According to company officials, the burning of synthetic gas creates less pollution than the coal burning facilities located in the Northwest. However, this is disputed by the Ontario Clean Air Alliance, an environmental group that is concerned with the fact that the plant will be replacing



one source of 'dirty' power in Northern Ontario with another.

Ontario and Manitoba have completed a feasibility study on a hydroelectric mega-project that would see power generated in Manitoba delivered to homes in Ontario. The Conawapa Dam would be constructed on the Nelson River and would be the second biggest dam in Manitoba once completed. The power generated by the dam would be moved through Northern Ontario leading to temporary employment opportunities for the area with power line construction. It is possible that electricity from the dam could replace the power generated by the coal-burning plants in Northwestern Ontario that are scheduled to be closed.

The Pic Mobert First Nation is taking advantage of the deregulation of Ontario's power market. The Band is putting forward a proposal for two power generation sites on their land, and is in the process of finalizing a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Natural Resources to develop an existing dam and construct a new facility on White River. Pic Mobert leaders see this as an opportunity to own the development rights rather than be a small part of another group's project. While only two jobs will result from the completed projects, the band will be able to sell electricity from the sites onto the provincial grid which will generate money for the community.

There has been renewed interest in wind power in the area. Marathon Pulp Inc. has erected two towers to collect data to determine the feasibility of wind power to run the mill. The study is a joint project between the town of Marathon and the mill and will measure prevailing wind power 24 hours a day. The project has an estimated cost of \$20,000. The township of Shuniah is also taking part in a study that could lead to a wind farm on township land. Ventus Energy will conduct a twelve-month study into wind currents near Mount Baldy. If the study has positive results, the township could see construction on the 100-megawatt \$150-million wind farm begin as early as 2005. The wind farm could potentially create 300 direct and indirect jobs. Power from the farm would be sold into the hydro grid to help provide power to Northwestern Ontario.

### Construction

Striking Thunder Bay bricklayers are hoping for a resolution to the month-long labour dispute. The strike by 150 local workers has not yet had a major impact on

the summer construction season. However, a number of projects will remain unfinished if the dispute is not settled by the end of summer. This type of exterior work can only be done during warm weather. Wages are not an issue for the union; rather the union is concerned with job security, particularly in Northwestern Ontario where some contractors would like to bring in their own workers instead of using local bricklayers.

A number of developers have shown an interest in lands around the new Regional Hospital. Flying J is looking to build a travel plaza/truck stop at the corner of the Thunder Bay Expressway and Oliver Road. City council gave approval to the plan but a number of nearby residents oppose the development and plan to take their complaint to the Municipal Board. Panda Bay Estates has expressed interest in building a hotel on Golf Links Road next to the hospital. The plan would include a drug store, restaurant, laboratory and doctors' offices. This project is opposed by other land owners who believe that the city should be applying its Official Plan before allowing development. The Thunder Bay Country Club may be sold to a Toronto-based development company, on the condition that the land is re-zoned. The hospital itself is located on 60-acres of land. However, the hospital has no intention of selling off that land. The hospital project was designed so that the hospital could expand if needed.

### Manufacturing

Bowater has announced that it is shutting down its groundwood mill indefinitely. This shut down will result in the loss of 50 full-time jobs. The company states that ongoing operational changes together with customer requirements for paper products were the reason for the shutdown. Because there are a number of different union locals involved with the groundwood mill workers, it is not clear what the status of the laid off employees will be. It is possible that some of them may have bumping rights within their union.

Thunder Bay's Bombardier plant has been advised that its parent company will not be bidding on a stainless steel contract for the plant. A proposal for a stainless steel project required 10 years experience, which the Thunder Bay plant does not have. The plant has laid off 400 workers since December. While the company rearranged production to keep the number of summer layoffs down to 25, it is expected that there will be more layoffs in the new year unless new contracts are found. Bombardier recently closed its Kingston manufacturing



plant, however, it states that it is committed to keeping the Thunder Bay plant open and active. Currently, there is enough work to keep the plant open until December, and there are bids in place for more contracts.

The Industrial Wood and Allied Workers have voted to join with the United Steelworkers of America to form the largest private-sector labour union in Canada. The union will now have 250,000 members. Union officials say the merger was proposed to improve bargaining power and give the union greater leverage on political issues. It is expected that the merger will not result in noticeable changes to local structures.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has given Buchanan Northern Hardwoods permission to process conifer saw logs because of a shortage of hardwood. The shortage is blamed on wet weather in the spring and summer that hampered construction of bush roads. The ruling will allow the mill to avoid the lay off of 95 workers. The ruling could also assist Bowater by providing wood chips for its pulp and paper production. However, this ruling has upset the union representing locked-out workers from Northern Sawmills, which is also operated by Buchanan. The union says the softwood that Northern Hardwoods is now processing should have gone to Northern Sawmills and that the MNR's ruling is prolonging the labour dispute. The 250 workers were locked out in April. In September, workers rejected a new proposal presented through a provincial mediator and talks broke off. A number of workers then set up an information picket outside Northern Hardwoods prompting the company to seek an injunction to remove them.

Buchanan Group may set up a wood waste disposal site in Shuniah Township. It would primarily be used by Great West Timber. Unusable wood waste would be deposited on the 262-hectare location. An environmental study has been done by Wardrope Engineering to address concerns about leachates from the waste wood. The Ministries of Natural Resources and Environment are now reviewing the proposal. Necessary zoning changes have received pre-approval by Shuniah council.

Cascades Inc. officials are looking at ways to improve profitability at its Thunder Bay paper mill. The fine paper plant is one of the company's unprofitable operations and the company is weighing its options. Cascades could decide to close or sell the mill, however, a decision is not imminent. The union representing the 400 workers at the plant recently signed a new collective

agreement designed to ease the mill's financial situation. Local mills have had difficulties recently with a shortage of wood, the rising Canadian dollar and the ongoing softwood lumber dispute.

### **Trade**

A new, larger Shoppers Drug Mart is scheduled to open in the fall in Thunder Bay. The new store, which will be twice as large as a regular Shoppers store, is under construction in the area of Arthur Street & Mountdale Avenue. The new store has the potential to create between 30 and 45 jobs. Construction is expected to be completed in November.

Workers at Westfort Foods Inc. have voted in favour of a new three-year contract. The deal will give the 175 members of the United Foods and Commercial Workers Union wage increases and other benefits, including shoe allowances and funding toward eye glasses and contact lenses.

Construction continues on the expansion of the Thunder Bay Centre. A number of major retailers are scheduled to open in the fall and spring, joining Canadian Tire and Home Depot. Marks Work Wearhouse and Pier 1 Imports are expected to be open in the fall. Other retailers, such as Old Navy and The Shoe Company, will have construction completed by spring. There is also talk of two restaurants coming to the mall. Thunder Bay has been attracting 'big box' stores as it becomes a regional retail centre.

TIM-BR MART, a western franchise lumber store, opened in Greenstone in the former Errington Lumber facility. The owner believes the Greenstone area has the customer base to meet the company's sales targets. The new store will employ nine staff year round and hire extra people during the summer months.

### **Transportation and Warehousing**

WestJet Airlines has announced that it will be reducing and ultimately cancelling its Thunder Bay-Hamilton flights over the next few months. With the addition of flights from Thunder Bay directly to Toronto, the demand for the Hamilton flights has fallen off. The airline also announced an additional flight to Toronto, bringing its total number of weekly flights into the city to 18.



Greenstone has vowed to enforce a local bylaw that would see heavy truck operators fined if they drive through Longlac's downtown streets rather than use the established bypass. Truckers who don't take the bypass on Picnic Point Road could be fined up to \$1,000. In Geraldton, where there is no bypass, big trucks go through the downtown area resulting in major damage to the roads.

Truckers Voice, a group that represents commercial truckers across Canada, has sent a bill to the provincial government for \$1-million to protest poor condition of highways in Northern Ontario. The group says that truckers face repair bills because of the poor condition of the roads. They argue that taxes are collected to pay for repair work on highways but that there is little evidence of any work on northern highways.

A Thunder Bay resident plans to put together a feasibility study into the market and cost of passenger rail service between Sudbury and Winnipeg. The double-decker, self-propelled train would use the CP mainline. Thunder Bay has been without passenger rail service for more than 10 years since Via Rail changed its route to use CN Rail's northern line. The train would be privately owned and maintained. While local communities have shown support for the idea, CP Rail does not believe that there will be sufficient capital or passengers to make the venture successful.

Officials with the Port of Thunder Bay do not expect a proposed trade route between Churchill, Manitoba and Murmansk, Russia to have an impact on local operations. There has been a great deal of animosity through the years because the Port of Churchill is heavily subsidized while other Canadian ports are not. Thunder Bay lost a great deal of its grain traffic to Churchill. However, it is unlikely that grain will be shipped through this new northern route. It is believed that Russian vessels would be well-equipped for Churchill's icy waters.

### **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services**

Two Thunder Bay labs have received accreditation from the Standards Council of Canada. Molecular World and Lakehead University's Paleo-DNA lab will now be allowed to do forensics, parentage and other DNA testing on behalf of police and other law enforcement agencies. It is expected that the case load for the labs will increase due to backlogs across the country. It is likely that at least one of the labs will hire more staff.

The Northwestern Ontario Technology Centre has introduced an *Inventors Club* to provide assistance to inventors in fully developing an idea. Inventors will be able to get direction in product development and information to assist in cutting costs.

PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise has always had assistance for women looking to start up a new business. Now, with the *Accelerator* program, they are able to offer assistance in keeping the business running. The program provides customized support including counselling, workshops, marketing and strategy. There will also be the opportunity to meet with professionals, such as lawyers and accountants. Funding for the program comes mainly from FedNor and the Canadian Women's Foundation, however, it is hoped that it will become self-sufficient over time.

### **Business, Building and Other Support Services**

The RMH Call Centre, situated at the old Eaton's building, has closed. The company saw its business fall off due to the "Do Not Call" legislation in the U.S. The closure came after the company lost a contract with AT&T. The 190 employees were given a severance package. The equipment set up in the Eaton's building is state-of-the-art and will be left behind leaving hope that another call centre may decide to set up in Thunder Bay.

### **Educational Services**

The Lakehead District School Board announced the closure of 16 elementary schools and 3 high schools over the next three years. The closures were recommended in the C.N. Watson report. The Board says the school closures reflect the impact of declining enrolments and low birthrates in the city. According to officials the closures will provide a better learning environment for teachers and students. The Board plans to use money saved from school closures to install science and technology centres and enhanced computer centres in all elementary schools. According to the Board, smaller high schools have difficulty operating a variety of programs and a new state-of-the-art central facility would provide a variety of programs and new technology. Two of the high schools slated for closure, Fort William Collegiate and Port Arthur Collegiate, are designated provincial heritage buildings. In addition to closing the noted schools, the Board proposed that three new schools be built by 2007. Because of the closure of four rural schools, parents have formed a group



(Communities United for Rural Schools) to lobby the Board and the provincial government to stop the rural closures. Parents are concerned about the amount of time their children will have to spend on buses if their local schools are closed. There is also the belief that the rural schools provide a sense of community that will be lost once the schools are closed. Following the announcement of the closures the Ministry of Education announced increased funding for rural schools in the province. However, the Board was undecided as to whether the funding would result in a change to their decision to close the rural schools. Concerned parents would like the Board to wait until the Ministry has released its new funding formula and until there are impact studies done on each school. The final decision is expected to be made by the Board on November 30<sup>th</sup>. The Lakehead Board released enrolment figures for the 2004-05 school year that show that the number of students in the public board has dropped by 250 students. At the same time, the Lakehead District Catholic School Board is reporting an increase in enrolment of 106 students.

The provincial government has announced funding for special education programs and services. School boards must meet and follow measures designed to ensure viability of educational programs. The new funding will allow the Lakehead Public School Board and the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board to retain its support staff for the upcoming school year. The Boards had been forced to lay off several staff members while it waited to hear about its funding.

Northwestern Worldwide Training is using a simulator to train its truck driving students. The simulator, which costs \$180,000, is one of only two in Canada and the only one in Ontario. It allows new students to have the experience of driving a truck without actually being in traffic. It recreates driving situations and tracks responses.

The Nipigon-Red Rock High School has recently set up a new type of co-op placement for its students. Because of the limited experiences available locally, students are able to get work experience on-line through the 'e-co-op' program. The students complete their work assignment and forward it to the employer electronically. The types of work offered through this program have included translation; graphic, web and fashion design; as well as research.

A new high school for francophone students opened in September in Thunder Bay. The new school has 120 students in grades 7-12. It has the potential to accommodate as many as 400 students. The school also houses staff from the Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique des Aurores Boréales. The design of the school was a collaboration between students, faculty and the community. The state of the art school facilities will also be available to community organizations when school is not in session.

The extension of Marathon's French high school, Ecole Secondaire Cité-Supérieure, is expected to be completed in January 2005. The \$2-million project is a two-storey addition to the existing Marathon High School

The Northern Ontario Medical School has been given a new name. During a ceremonial sod-turning to launch construction of the new medical school, it was announced that the school would now be known as the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The medical school is constructing a stand-alone three-storey building next to L.U.'s Advanced Technology & Academic Centre (ATAC), where the School of Medicine currently occupies the sixth floor. Roger Strasser, the founding Dean, says that the new medical school has attracted attention from doctors interested in relocating to Thunder Bay. It is also believed that graduates of the medical school will be more likely to stay in the area following graduation.

Terrace Bay's former nursing home, Birchwood Terrace, is scheduled to be demolished later this fall. The municipality is looking to purchase the land and resell it to the local school boards. A new school will be built on the property and will house 125 English and French students who are currently attending schools on the other side of town. The planned construction will also include a community library. The demolition of the nursing home is expected to cost at least \$300,000 because of the presence of asbestos.

Both Lakehead University and Confederation College have announced that they expect their enrolment rates to reach levels similar to last year. Almost half of the students attending Lakehead are from Northwestern Ontario.

Confederation College has introduced a program designed to help adult learners obtain their high school equivalency. The program includes a review of the province's secondary school curriculum but also allows



students to customize upgrades according to their specific needs. Successful participants receive a certificate from the college that is recognized as a standard of achievement by industry, employers and schools.

### Health Care and Social Assistance

Social and mental health workers with North of Superior Programs went on strike on June 26<sup>th</sup> after failing to reach an agreement on a new contract. North Superior provides services in communities around the North Shore including Marathon, Manitouwadge, Terrace Bay, Schreiber, Nipigon and Greenstone. The 36 workers are represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. The last contract offer contained no wage increase, however, there was a signing bonus of \$800. NOSP officials state that they have not received funding from the province to allow for wage increases. The union disputes this position, pointing to additional funding that NOSP has since received. Recently \$589,000 in funding was announced for mental health agencies in the Thunder Bay District. While the majority of the money will go to the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre and the Thunder Bay branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association, some of the money will go to NOSP. Physicians in Marathon have spoken out to contradict statements by NOSP management that hospitals and physicians can provide the services that mental health clients need during the labour dispute. The physicians say they can respond in crisis situations only and that ongoing treatment and counselling are not available.

Northwestern Ontario will be facing a nursing shortage within 10 years according to a report done by local researcher, Eve Gillingham. She found that while there were 60 nursing graduates applying for one job in 1995, there is only one nurse applying for each job now. The report also stated that two-thirds of the nursing workforce is over the age of 40, almost half is more than 45, and 30% are older than 50. It is estimated that 40-60% of the nursing workforce will retire in the next 15 years.

Thunder Bay's Regional Health Sciences Centre will create 35 new full-time nurse positions. However, these positions will not result in any new nurses being hired. The hospital plans to adjust its scheduling methods. Part-time nurses will be offered full-time positions. These changes will bring the hospital's percentage of full-time

nurses to 70% - in the same range as other Ontario hospitals. At present, the hospital has 56% of its nursing staff working full-time. The Ontario Nurses Association believes that the plan may negatively impact nurses who wish to work part-time. The hospital believes that the new system will mean that full-time nurses will work less overtime and be less likely to suffer from burnout.

The Northwestern Ontario District Health Council has completed a study on alternate care in Thunder Bay. Their study has called for additional funding from the province to provide 100 long-term care beds and home care services for 200 clients per year. The report states that the Regional Health Sciences Centre will continue to have overcrowding in its emergency room and be unable to provide service to the region unless these beds are provided for alternate care patients who occupy beds needed for acute care patients. Currently, there are 60 temporary long-term care beds located in the former McKellar Hospital building. The report recommends that these beds become permanent and that an additional 40 beds be placed with St. Joseph's Care Group.

The Ministry of Health is committing \$5.7-million to expand the Northern Ontario Remote Telecommunication Health Network (NORTH Network) telemedicine service to northern communities. The service links remote communities with specialists and hospitals in Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Southern Ontario and supports consultations in 70 medical specialties, including psychiatry, dermatology, cardiology, neurology, paediatrics and geriatrics. The average cost of a telemedicine consultation is around \$11 compared to the cost of sending a patient out of town to see a specialist. It is estimated that the program has saved the Northern Health Travel Grant more than \$1.25-million between April 2001 and March 2003. The service also reduces patient wait times for services from five weeks to two weeks.

Despite intense recruitment efforts, Thunder Bay has not been successful in bringing new family doctors into the area. This is a problem being experienced across the province as the number of new doctors in Ontario continues to fall. Many medical students are choosing to go into a specialty rather than family practice. Thunder Bay is estimated to be short 25 family doctors. Between 30,000 and 40,000 city residents are without a family doctor.

Haven House, the Salvation Army's youth shelter, will be able to stay open thanks to a new funding formula



from the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration (DSAB). The shelter opened in December of 2002 with an initial grant from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. However, the Salvation Army has since been responsible for running the facility with funds from DSAB. The shelter provides beds for youths 16-21 years old. It is the only shelter in the city to provide facilities exclusive to youths.

The provincial government announced a 3% increase in funding for organizations in Northwestern Ontario that provide shelters for women and children. While Thunder Bay's Faye Peterson House in Thunder Bay will apply its first increase in nine years towards meeting its rising costs, smaller shelters say the funding will not be enough to offer much assistance with their increase in expenses.

George Jeffrey Children's Treatment Centre will be looking at building a new facility following the announcement of \$5.3-million in funding from the provincial government. The centre treats over 800 special-needs children from Dryden to Sault Ste. Marie. Services include physical and occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and family counselling and support. The new building will be located on the former Westmount hospital site.

The union representing workers at Thunder Bay's homes for the aged have called on the city to increase its efforts to get provincial funding to rebuild or retrofit two seniors' homes in the city. Grandview Lodge and Dawson Court, will be "D-listed" in two years, meaning they will not meet provincial standards. The province expects all "D-listed" homes to be retrofitted or torn down and rebuilt. However, the city has decided not to rebuild the two homes. No decision has been made as to how the beds in the two homes will be replaced.

Workers with Dilico Child and Family Services in Thunder Bay and the surrounding area are close to joining the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union. Once it is officially determined that a majority of workers in each of the centres is in favour of joining the union, certificates will be awarded and bargaining committees will be set up. Some of the issues being discussed are improvements to wages and benefits and working conditions.

## Information, Culture and Recreation

TBayTel is moving to expand its services to include cable television service. In order to be eligible for a broadcast licence from the CRTC, TBayTel needs to establish a municipal service board. Traditional telephone and cable television providers are now competing to provide the same services and TBayTel is concerned that it will be left behind if it is not also in a position to compete.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has put forward proposals that would see the fall bear hunt extended by two weeks and give resident hunters a second seal which would allow them to kill a second bear. However, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters does not think the changes will address the problems that it says were caused by the cancellation of the spring bear hunt five years ago. While OFAH acknowledges that the extension of the fall bear hunt may provide some measure of assistance to tourist outfitters who were negatively impacted by the spring bear hunt cancellation, it believes that the increase in nuisance bear sightings is the direct result of the cancellation of the spring bear hunt. They point out that Manitoba, which still has a spring bear hunt, has not seen an increase in nuisance bears. Ontario, however, has seen a 500% increase in calls about nuisance bears in the past five years.

A proposal for a motocross park in Shuniah Township will be presented to the municipal council. The track would have motocross, stock car and drag races. The developer feels there is a need for the park following the closure of the Nip-Rock track this year. However, a number of residents have presented a petition opposing the plan because of their concern over the noise.

Superior Wireless will be upgrading its cellular network from analogue to digital across Northwestern Ontario. The upgrade, which will cost \$5-million, will allow Superior Wireless to introduce new features, including text messaging, caller ID and wireless e-mail internet access. The service should be available from Sioux Lookout to Marathon by the fall of 2004.

Unionized Parks Canada workers have gone on strike, with picket lines going up at National Parks across the country. However, workers at Pukaskwa Park are still on the job as the union sets up rotating strikes. The main issue is wages, as workers make as much as 20% less than their counterparts in the private sector. The union would also like to eliminate 'pay zones' that allow different pay rates in different geographic areas. Park





officials say they will be able to keep the Park open if workers walk off the job, although there may be a reduction in some services. Workers connected to public safety, such as wardens and fire protection staff, will remain on the job despite any job action. Pukaskwa Park has 40 people on staff during the summer months. Summer students will not be involved in strike activity.

It's too early for officials with Thunder Bay's Charity Casino to say whether the no smoking by-law has had an impact on its revenues. There is no evidence that there has been a drop in revenue. The number of patrons coming into the casino have actually increased. However, it is speculated that the numbers are the result of double counting – smokers are counted twice or more after leaving the casino to have a cigarette. The casino is considering building an outdoor patio to accommodate smoking patrons.

Officials with the Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters are upset over the increase in price for snowmobile trail permits. The organization believes high rates will deter snowmobile tourists from coming to the province. Fees in Minnesota and Manitoba are significantly less than in Ontario. However, the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs says the increase in fees is needed to assist with the costs of maintaining the 46,000-kilometre trail system.

The North of Superior Travel Association reports that the number of visitors to the area over the past tourist season was down 10%. The Marathon Tourist Centre reported a 40% drop in the number of registered visitors this July. It appears that the drop in area tourism is the result of a decrease in American visitors. High gas prices and cool, rainy weather have been cited as possible causes for the reduction in tourist traffic. In September, the city of Thunder Bay welcomed the cruise ship *M.V. Columbus*, which made its first visit in two years. The ship is scheduled to make two more stops in the city this year.

The Athletic Club opened in Thunder Bay at the old Canadian Tire store on Arthur Street. It appears that a record number of memberships were sold prior to opening of the club. At the same time, the owners of Canadian Health and Fitness announced their closure due to a drop in membership.

The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce announced that it will host the Central Canada Outdoor Show in February. The show will feature 100 exhibitors from

Winnipeg to Sault Ste. Marie and the northern states, all promoting outdoor tourism. Sports opportunities in the area, such as fishing, hunting, kayaking, ice climbing, golf and tennis, will be highlighted.

### Accommodation and Food Services

Thunder Bay's new non-smoking by-law went into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>. There have been expected complaints from smokers and some business owners, who feel that their operations will be negatively affected by the smoking ban. However, some business owners state that they are seeing new customers now that the air is clear in their establishments. The city has four full-time and two part-time by-law officers to enforce the by-law and educate the public about the ban.

Manitouwadge has a new no-smoking by-law in effect as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. The by-law bans smoking in all public and work places. Many bar owners are concerned that their business will drop off now that the by-law is in effect. Other North Shore towns, such as Marathon and White River, have passed non-smoking by-laws that exempt bars.

The parent company of Robins Donuts and 2-4-1 Pizza has applied for bankruptcy protection. The financial restructuring of the company is expected to take two to three months. However, it is not expected to impact on the operation of any of the outlets located in Thunder Bay. There are currently 8 corporate and 11 independent Robins Donuts in the city. There are two 2-4-1 Pizza stores.

The North Superior Tourism Association has presented a marketing option to its members. For a fee, the members can advertise on the NOSTA website, including a link to their own website, and have listings in the 2005 Regional Vacation Guide, Ontario tourism guides, and promotions in the U.S. NOSTA is attempting to give their members, which include tourist operators, hotels and attractions, a unified message. The Northwest has seen its tourist numbers fall significantly in 2002 & 2003. The Association was hoping for a 10-15% increase in tourist numbers in 2004. Half of the tourists that come to the region are from the U.S., particularly Wisconsin and Minnesota. The other half come from Southern Ontario.



## Public Administration

Thunder Bay will be hosting the 2006 Economic Developers Association of Canada Conference. The theme for the conference will be "Centre of Excellence" and will focus on best economic practices for communities dealing with economic diversification following the decline in traditional resource-based industries. It is estimated that 800 people will visit the city during the conference.

The Thunder Bay office of the Registrar General hired over 300 people to help process the backlog of requests for birth, death and other certificates. Waiting times for a certificate were as long as five to seven months. According to officials, the waiting time is now 9-11 weeks. The backlog was expected to be clear by March 2005. However, half of the temporary staff in Thunder Bay were informed that their contracts would not be extended past the end of July. At the same time, the Toronto office of the Registrar General will be adding 125 jobs. The number of requests for birth certificates increased by 37% between 2002 and 2003. It is believed that increased security since September 11, 2001 has also added to the back log.

The Thunder Bay Police Association and the Police Services Board have reached an agreement on a new wage structure that will apply to uniformed officers and civilian employees. Under the new agreement, a constable starting out on the force will earn \$34,000 a year. The three-year deal will see 3.5% increases each year of the contract, which is retroactive to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004.

The town of Manitowadge celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary over the August long weekend. The town

originally attracted people who enjoyed isolation and outdoors activities. The town is currently facing challenges as the local mines are preparing to close and young residents are looking to leave for better opportunities. A Vancouver-based realtor has been marketing the area as a retirement community. The celebration will be featured in an episode of *Wings Over Canada* which will air in the fall of 2004. The show airs on CBC Country Canada and is syndicated throughout the U.S.

Public Service Alliance Canada (PSAC) members are in a legal strike position with the federal government. A number of locals have begun rotating strike actions resulting in picketing at Canada Revenue Agency, Pukaskwa Park, the Canadian Grain Commission and local grain elevators.

The City of Thunder Bay's Business Retention & Expansion survey showed that quality of life is the number one advantage to doing business in Thunder Bay. Over 100 businesses were surveyed about doing business in the city. Other advantages included cost of leasing space, water and sewer capacity and telecommunications. Disadvantages include cost of transportation, utility costs, construction costs and access to supplies and markets.

The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce has announced that it will be creating a business plan for a Regional Protective and Emergency Training Complex to be built in Thunder Bay. This would mean that the city would no longer need to send its police, fire and emergency crews to southern Ontario for training. The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund provided funding for the business plan. Capital costs for the training centre will be spread among the three levels of government.



## LABOUR FORCE TRENDS

### Thunder Bay's unemployment rate continues to climb

There were no significant changes in the conditions underlying the Thunder Bay labour market in the third quarter of 2004. However, very small changes in the rates of employment and labour force participation forced the unemployment rate higher for the fourth consecutive quarter. During a time period when seasonal job growth would traditionally be expected, employment declined. This caused Thunder Bay's employment rate to fall to 60.4% from 61.1% in the previous quarter. At the same time, the rate of labour force participation edged down from 66.9% in the second quarter to 66.4%. The combination of a small employment decline and an even smaller labour force contraction resulted in a higher unemployment rate of 9.0%, surpassing the five-year high of 8.7% recorded in the second quarter.

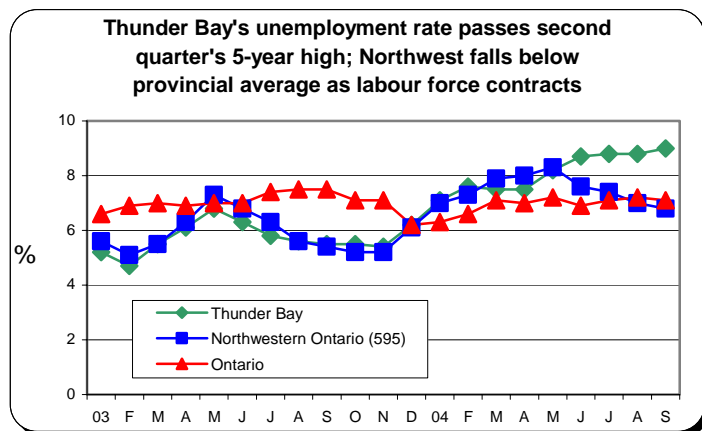
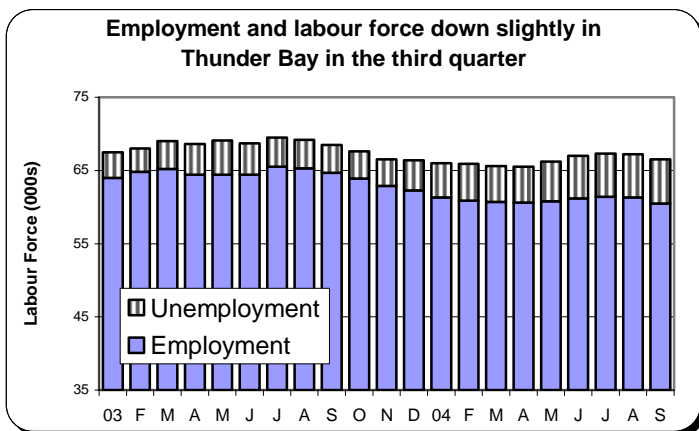
These conditions are weaker than those recorded in Thunder Bay one year ago. The labour force contracted (-2,000), which caused the participation rate to fall from 68.2% in the third quarter of 2003 to 66.4%. The employment decline was even larger (-4,200). This decrease caused the employment rate to fall four full percentage points, from 64.4% one year ago to 60.4%. Moreover, unemployment increased because Thunder Bay's employment decline was more than double its labour force withdrawals year-over-year. As a result, the unemployment rate hit 9.0%, up from 5.5% in the third quarter of 2003, when it was one of the lowest rates among Canada's 26 largest metropolitan centres.

### Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area Labour Force Trends

	July to September 2004	April to June 2004	July to September 2003	Quarter/Quarter Change		Year/Year Change	
				Absolute	%	Absolute	%
<b>Population 15 +</b>	<b>100,100</b>	100,200	100,500	-100	-0.1	-400	-0.4
<b>Labour Force</b>	<b>66,500</b>	67,000	68,500	-500	-0.7	-2,000	-2.9
<b>Employed</b>	<b>60,500</b>	61,200	64,700	-700	-1.1	-4,200	-6.5
<b>Full-time</b>	<b>48,100</b>	48,200	50,800	-100	-0.2	-2,700	-5.3
<b>Part-time</b>	<b>12,500</b>	13,000	13,900	-500	-3.8	-1,400	-10.1
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>6,000</b>	5,800	3,800	200	3.4	2,200	57.9
<b>Not in Labour Force</b>	<b>33,500</b>	33,200	32,000	300	0.9	1,500	4.7
<b>Participation Rate</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	66.9%	68.2%	-0.5		-1.8	
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	8.7%	5.5%	0.3		3.5	
<b>Employment Rate</b>	<b>60.4%</b>	61.1%	64.4%	-0.7		-4.0	

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.



### Growth slows in Northwest

Conditions in the Northwestern Ontario labour market were generally calm in the third quarter of 2004. However, very small changes allowed the Region to post its healthiest rates of labour force participation, employment and unemployment this year. The beginning of the quarter saw both employment and the labour force continuing the upward trend that started in the spring. However, declines at the end of the quarter negated most of that expansion. In fact, the labour force recorded a small contraction that pushed the participation rate down from 68.5% in the second quarter to 68.2%. While total employment was almost unchanged, there were shifts in the composition of that employment. The number of people working full-time in the Northwest increased 5% (+4,400). This increase was offset by an 18% decline in part-time work (-4,200). The net minimal gain translated into a higher employment rate, at 63.6%, up from 63.3% in the second quarter. Moreover, since the labour force contracted while

employment edged up, unemployment decreased. Consequently, Northwestern Ontario's unemployment rate fell from 7.6% in the previous quarter to 6.8%.

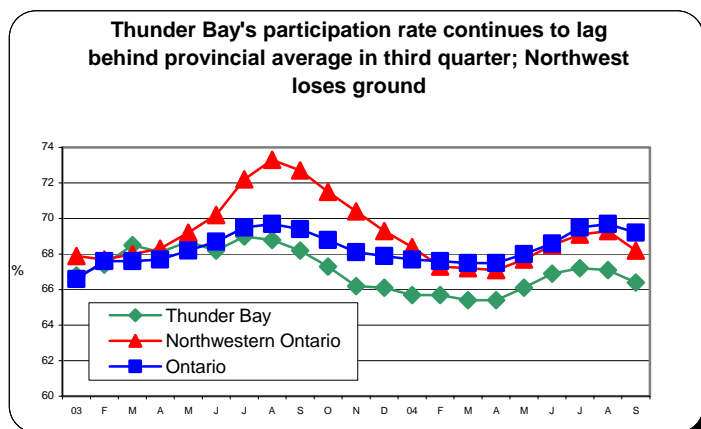
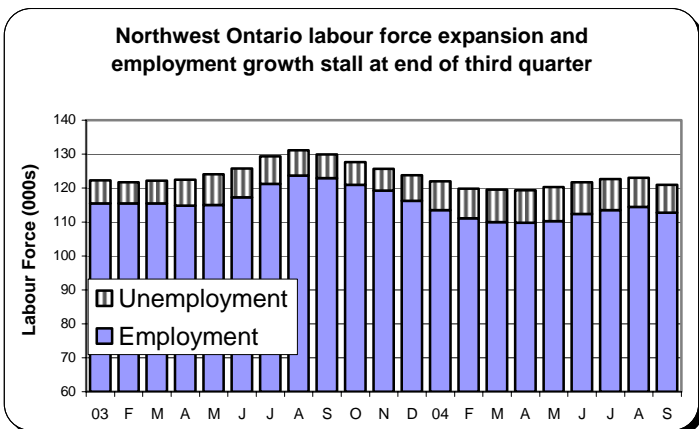
These conditions were significantly weaker than those posted in the third quarter of 2003, when Northwestern Ontario enjoyed the strongest results among Ontario's 11 Economic Regions. Employment in the Region decreased more than 8% (-10,200) over the past year. As a result, the Region's employment rate fell from 68.7% in the third quarter of 2003 to 63.6%. While employment was declining, there were also large withdrawals from the labour force (-9,000). This contraction caused the participation rate to fall from 72.7% one year ago to 68.2%. Since there were more jobs lost than individuals leaving the labour force year-over-year, unemployment increased. Therefore, Northwestern Ontario's unemployment rate climbed from 5.4% in the third quarter of 2003 to 6.8%.

### Northwestern Ontario Labour Force Trends

	July to September 2004	April to June 2004	July to September 2003	Quarter/Quarter Change		Year/Year Change	
				Absolute	%	Absolute	%
<b>Population 15 +</b>	<b>177,300</b>	177,600	178,800	-300	-0.2	-1,500	-0.8
<b>Labour Force</b>	<b>120,900</b>	121,700	129,900	-800	-0.7	-9,000	-6.9
<b>Employed</b>	<b>112,700</b>	112,400	122,900	300	0.3	-10,200	-8.3
<b>Full-time</b>	<b>93,700</b>	89,300	98,000	4,400	4.9	-4,300	-4.4
<b>Part-time</b>	<b>19,000</b>	23,200	24,900	-4,200	-18.1	-5,900	-23.7
<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>8,200</b>	9,300	7,000	-1,100	-11.8	1,200	17.1
<b>Not in Labour Force</b>	<b>56,400</b>	56,000	48,800	400	0.7	7,600	15.6
<b>Participation Rate</b>	<b>68.2%</b>	68.5%	72.7%	-0.3		-4.5	
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	7.6%	5.4%	-0.8		1.4	
<b>Employment Rate</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	63.3%	68.7%	0.3		-5.1	

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.



*EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY*

**Services sector falls 5% year over year in Thunder Bay**

The modest employment loss recorded in Thunder Bay during the third quarter of 2004 occurred in the goods-producing sector.

Almost 60% of Thunder Bay's employment decline year-over-year was recorded in the services-producing sector. Twenty-five hundred jobs were lost from the sector, a decline of 5% from the third quarter of 2003.

The largest year-over-year losses were seen in **Educational Services** (-1,900) and in **Health Care and Social Assistance** (-1,800).

The number of people working in Thunder Bay's goods-producing sector was more than 12% lower than in the third quarter of 2003 (-1,700).

**Thunder Bay Area Employment by Industry**

Industry	July to September 2004	April to June 2004	July to Quarter/Quarter		Year/Year		
			September 2003	Change Absolute	Change % Absolute	Change %	
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,500</b>	<b>61,200</b>	<b>64,700</b>	<b>-700</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>-4,200</b>	<b>-6.5</b>
<b>Goods-Producing Sector</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,600</b>	<b>13,700</b>	<b>-600</b>	<b>-4.8</b>	<b>-1,700</b>	<b>-12.4</b>
Agriculture	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas	...	...	1,500	...	...	...	...
Utilities	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Construction	<b>4,000</b>	4,000	4,900	0	0.0	<b>-900</b>	<b>-18.4</b>
Manufacturing	<b>5,500</b>	6,000	6,300	<b>-500</b>	<b>-8.3</b>	<b>-800</b>	<b>-12.7</b>
<b>Services-Producing Sector</b>	<b>48,600</b>	<b>48,500</b>	<b>51,100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>-2,500</b>	<b>-4.9</b>
Trade	<b>10,300</b>	10,200	10,600	100	1.0	<b>-300</b>	<b>-2.8</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	<b>3,800</b>	3,600	3,400	200	5.6	400	11.8
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	<b>2,500</b>	2,500	3,000	0	0.0	<b>-500</b>	<b>-16.7</b>
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	<b>3,000</b>	2,900	2,800	100	3.4	200	7.1
Business, Building and Other Support Services	<b>2,100</b>	2,700	2,800	<b>-600</b>	<b>-22.2</b>	<b>-700</b>	<b>-25.0</b>
Educational Services	<b>3,000</b>	3,800	4,900	<b>-800</b>	<b>-21.1</b>	<b>-1,900</b>	<b>-38.8</b>
Health Care and Social Assistance	<b>7,900</b>	7,900	9,700	0	0.0	<b>-1,800</b>	<b>-18.6</b>
Information, Culture and Recreation	<b>2,800</b>	2,400	3,000	400	16.7	<b>-200</b>	<b>-6.7</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	<b>6,200</b>	5,300	4,500	900	17.0	1,700	37.8
Other Services	<b>2,200</b>	2,500	2,400	<b>-300</b>	<b>-12.0</b>	<b>-200</b>	<b>-8.3</b>
Public Administration	<b>4,900</b>	4,900	4,000	0	0.0	900	22.5

Note: "..." indicates that data are too small to be expressed and are not appropriate for release. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey



### Goods-producing sector continues to grow in Northwest

Northwestern Ontario's goods-producing sector continued to expand in the third quarter. Since the end of the first quarter, the Region has experienced a 30% increase in goods-sector employment (+7,400). Almost half of these jobs were created in the **Manufacturing** industry (+3,300), with a big boost coming in the third quarter (+2,100). However, this growth has been mostly offset by losses on the services-producing side of the labour market. In the third quarter, employment in the sector fell more than 2% (-2,100).

Similarly, the services sector has recorded most of the Region's year-over-year job loss. Employment in the sector fell 10% since the third quarter of 2003 with the loss of 8,800 jobs. Losses have been scattered across most of the industries within the sector, led by **Health Care and Social Assistance** (-3,900) and **Other Services** (-2,600). Despite the third-quarter gains, employment in the goods-producing sector was also lower year-over-year (-1,400). Even with its recent gains, the **Manufacturing** industry recorded a net loss of 3,200 jobs since the third quarter of 2003.

**Northwestern Ontario Area Employment by Industry**

Industry	July to	April	July to	Quarter/Quarter		Year/Year Change	
	September	to June	September	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
	2004	2004	2003				
<b>Total</b>	<b>112,700</b>	<b>112,400</b>	<b>122,900</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>-10,200</b>	<b>-8.3</b>
<b>Goods-Producing Sector</b>	<b>31,700</b>	<b>29,300</b>	<b>33,100</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>-1,400</b>	<b>-4.2</b>
Agriculture	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas	5,400	5,200	5,600	200	3.8	-200	-3.6
Utilities	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Construction	9,200	9,300	8,100	-100	-1.1	1,100	13.6
Manufacturing	15,200	13,100	18,400	2,100	16.0	-3,200	-17.4
<b>Services-Producing Sector</b>	<b>81,000</b>	<b>83,100</b>	<b>89,800</b>	<b>-2,100</b>	<b>-2.5</b>	<b>-8,800</b>	<b>-9.8</b>
Trade	16,100	15,000	17,500	1,100	7.3	-1,400	-8.0
Transportation and Warehousing	6,400	7,700	6,200	-1,300	-16.9	200	3.2
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	5,100	4,600	5,600	500	10.9	-500	-8.9
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4,300	4,400	3,900	-100	-2.3	400	10.3
Business, Building and Other Support Services	2,900	3,500	3,900	-600	-17.1	-1,000	-25.6
Educational Services	6,800	8,200	8,000	-1,400	-17.1	-1,200	-15.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	13,300	13,500	17,200	-200	-1.5	-3,900	-22.7
Information, Culture and Recreation	4,700	4,600	5,900	100	2.2	-1,200	-20.3
Accommodation and Food Services	10,100	10,400	9,500	-300	-2.9	600	6.3
Other Services	2,600	3,600	5,200	-1,000	-27.8	-2,600	-50.0
Public Administration	8,500	7,800	6,900	700	9.0	1,600	23.2

Note: "..." indicates that data are too small to be expressed and are not appropriate for release. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey



## LABOUR SUPPLY AND DEMAND

### EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE CLAIMLOAD

#### Decline in claimload continues in third quarter of 2004

For the second consecutive quarter, the Thunder Bay HRCC Area saw its claimload decrease in the third quarter of 2004. Despite a small increase at the start of the period, the claimload fell steadily over the course of the quarter to end at a lower level than the previous quarter.

In the third quarter of 2004, the city of Thunder Bay had 3,165 claimants – a decrease of 17.4% from the second quarter of 2004. Male claimants fell by nearly 36% during this period, while female claimants dropped by almost 48%. Marathon was the only area to register an increase in the third quarter. This was due to an 81% increase in female claimants over the period. Male claimants fell by 31%.

Across the region the number of male claimants generally exceeds the number of female claimants.

During the summer months, female claimants traditionally increase. However, Marathon is the only area where the number of female claimants actually surpasses the number of male claimants during that period.

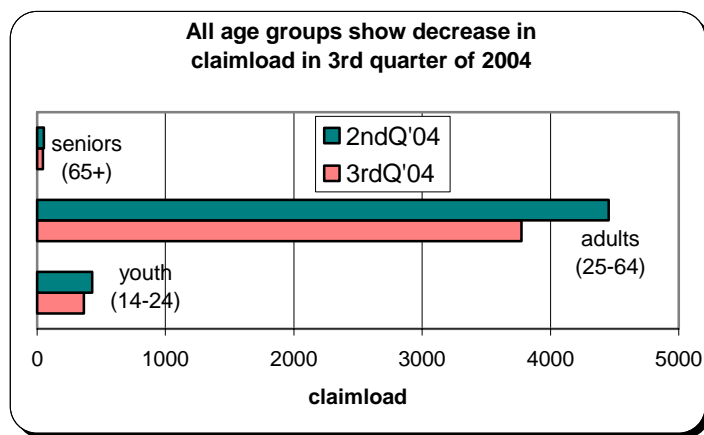
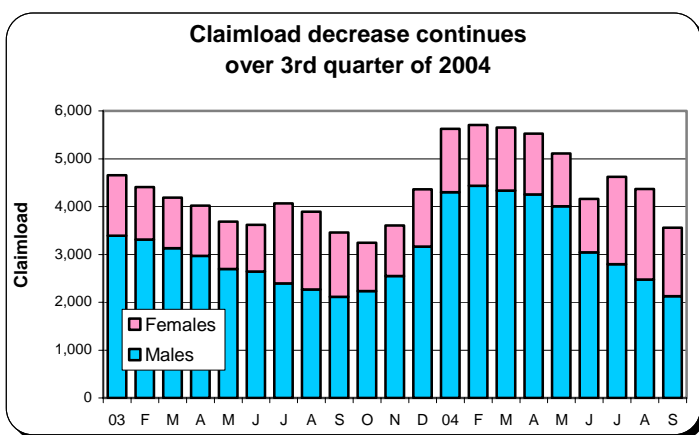
Among the major age groups, only the youngest group, the 14-19 bracket, showed a minor increase in claims this quarter. All other age groups registered decreases. However, all groups had an increase in claimload compared to the same period in 2003.

Despite the decrease in claimload, the Thunder Bay HRCC Area still registered a higher claimload in the third quarter of 2004 compared to the same period last year. Marathon was the only area that showed any decrease, with a minor drop in male claimants year-over-year.

#### Regular Employment Insurance Claimants - Thunder Bay Area

	July - September '04			April - June '04			July - September '03		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Thunder Bay</b>	3,165	1,922	1,244	3,830	2,988	843	2,914	1,779	1,135
<b>Geraldton Area</b>	365	208	157	375	274	101	326	189	136
<b>Marathon Area</b>	173	72	101	160	104	56	161	76	85
<b>Surrounding Area</b>	479	264	216	602	417	185	404	214	190
<b>Thunder Bay HRCC Area</b>	4,182	2,465	1,717	4,967	3,782	1,185	3,805	2,258	1,547

Source: HRCC administrative data C-356



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Third quarter sees small drop in newspaper vacancies for Thunder Bay HRCC

**Caution:** Complete HRSDC job vacancy statistics are not available at the time of this document's publication due to a transition to a new order taking system. Consequently, only vacancies published in the local newspapers have been included in this month's analysis of employment opportunities. For this reason, the data should be used with extreme caution. If this data is included in a time series of employment opportunity statistics, HRSDC vacancy activity must be removed from the historical data in order to ensure a consistent data set is being used.

In the third quarter of 2004, the Thunder Bay HRCC Area saw a slight decrease in newspaper vacancies. This was primarily due to a drop in full-time vacancies in the city of Thunder Bay. Totals for the area were higher year-over-year.

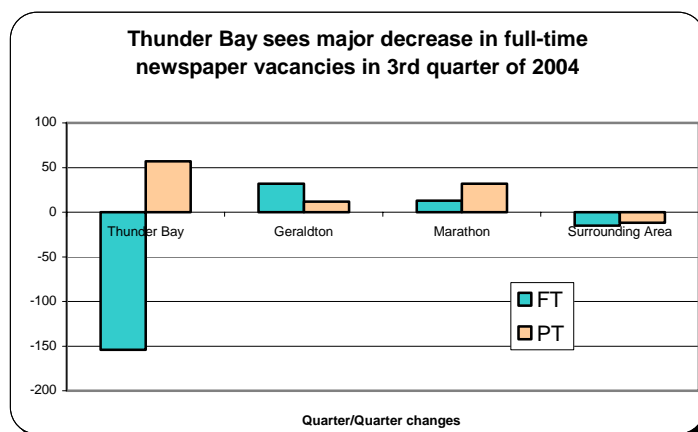
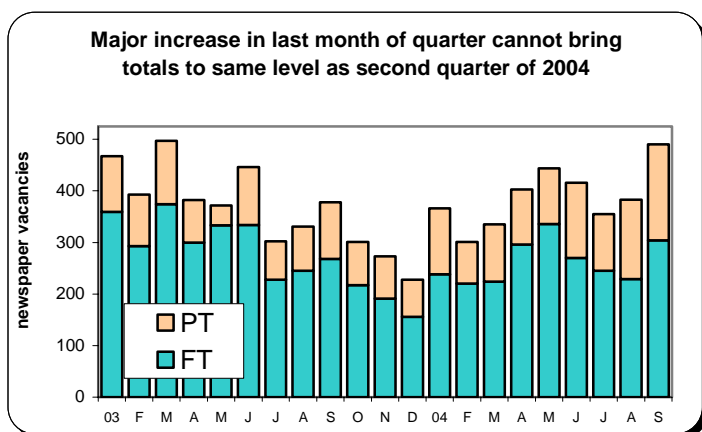
From July to September, the city of Thunder Bay saw its full-time vacancies drop by 154 positions. An increase of 57 part-time positions partially offset this decrease. The Surrounding Area, which includes Terrace Bay, Schreiber, Armstrong and Nipigon, had a 25% decrease in full-time positions and a 33% drop in part-time vacancies in the quarter. All other areas had increases in both full- and part-time vacancies.

With the exception of the Surrounding Area all areas had significant increases year-over-year. While the city of Thunder Bay had a 2% drop in full-time positions, an 84% increase in part-time vacancies easily offset this loss.

Employment Opportunities (newspapers only) - Thunder Bay Area

	July - September '04			April - June '04			July - September '03		
	Total	F/T	P/T	Total	F/T	P/T	Total	F/T	P/T
Thunder Bay	980	626	354	1,077	780	297	829	637	192
Geraldton Area	103	72	31	59	40	19	59	42	17
Marathon Area	76	35	41	31	22	9	38	23	15
Surrounding Area	69	45	24	96	60	36	85	39	46
<b>Thunder Bay HRCC Area</b>	<b>1,223</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>1,263</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>270</b>

Source: newspaper want ads





**Notes to Readers:**

1. For the purpose of this publication, the **Thunder Bay HRCC Area** includes the area ranging from English River in the west up to Marathon and Manitowadge in the east. It includes all of the Northern Communities up to Webequie. **Northwestern Ontario** (Economic Region 595) is comprised of three Census Divisions: the Districts of Thunder Bay, Rainy River and Kenora.
2. The information contained in the Labour Market News section is gathered using a variety of internal and external sources. The primary sources of information include the *Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal*, the *Thunder Bay Post*, tbsource.com, the *Marathon Mercury*, the *Manitowadge Echo*, the *Nipigon Red Rock Gazette*, the *Times-Star* (Greenstone) and the *Terrace-Bay Schreiber News*.
3. **Definitions – Labour Force Survey data**  
**Population 15+** (the working age population) consists of all persons 15 years of age and over residing in Canada with the exception of residents of the Territories, persons living on Indian Reserves, inmates of institutions and full-time members of the Canadian Armed forces. The **Labour Force** consists of people employed or unemployed and searching for work. Those who are neither employed nor unemployed and are not willing or able to supply labour services are considered **Not in the Labour Force**. The **Participation Rate** is the percentage of the working age population (15+) who are seeking work or are employed. The **Unemployment Rate** is the number of people who are unemployed and looking for work as a percentage of the number of people in the Labour Force. The **Employment Rate** is the number of people employed as a percentage of the working age population.
4. **Definitions - HRSDC Corporate Data**  
**Employment Insurance claim load:** The number of individuals with an active claim for regular Employment Insurance benefits. Data on Employment Insurance claimants is not an accurate measure of the absolute level of unemployment. The data does not include unemployed individuals who: 1/ have not met the program's eligibility requirements or 2/ have exhausted their benefit entitlement.  
**Employment Opportunities:** Advertised employment opportunities are comprised of vacancies notified to the HRCC offices in our area and newspaper want ads. This data is not a count of all labour market activity; in practical terms, such a count is not feasible. This data is useful to track short and long-term changes in the demand for individual occupations. The total number of opportunities is equal to full-time plus part-time and casual.
5. This review uses data from **Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS)**. In any survey there is a chance of variation due to sampling size. **Three-month moving averages** are used for selected labour force characteristics in an attempt to improve the reliability of this data. For further information on the Labour Force Survey, visit Statistics Canada's website at:  
<http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/labour/index.htm>
6. For more information on Industrial and Occupational categories used in this review, visit **Statistics Canada's website** at:  
<http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/index.htm>

