

A VISION FOR A NEW APPRENTICESHIP ACT AND REGULATIONS

DRAFT

I. Vision

A new apprenticeship and trade certification act will create and empower an industry-led commission to meet the training and certification needs of the designated trades in Saskatchewan. The act is intended to be an instrument which enables the apprenticeship system to operate responsively, creatively, transparently and cost-effectively. The act will establish the authority and parameters for the operation of a flexible, responsive apprenticeship system. Trade-related and administrative requirements will be addressed in regulations and policy.

Regulations will be developed in association with a new act. New regulations will be written to reflect the new direction of the act, while retaining the relevant provisions of the existing regulations.

Strategic policy direction will be set by the provincial government in consultation with the commission and Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, and will be consistent with the act and regulations. The commission will be responsible for the development of operational and administrative policy and procedures. Administrative and operational policy and procedures will be reviewed on a continuous basis.

The commission will be implemented in 1999 with the proclamation of the new act.

II. Mandate

The mandate of the commission is to:

- contribute to the development of strategic policy direction for the apprenticeship and trade certification system;
- strengthen the apprenticeship training culture in Saskatchewan by involving representatives of the employer and employee constituencies directly in the management of the apprenticeship and trade certification system;
- work with industry and training deliverers to accurately identify and respond to the skills training needs of employers and workers in the apprenticeship occupations;
- develop operational and administrative policy and procedures for the apprenticeship and trade certification system;
- manage the delivery of apprenticeship and trade certification in Saskatchewan
- establish new apprenticeship trades and rescind the designation of defunct trades;
- improve access to, and participation in, apprenticeship by equity group members and youth;

- maintain a strong role in Red Seal initiatives to advance interprovincial standards and mobility of employers and employees;
- promote and support innovation in training delivery to make training more responsive to learner and employer needs;
- increase the awareness of Saskatchewan residents and employers about the career and skills development opportunities available through the apprenticeship and trade certification system;
- earn, retain and direct revenues to support the operation of the apprenticeship and trade certification system.

III. *Governance*

(1) Industry Sectors and Stakeholders

An industry sector is defined as a cluster of related apprenticeship occupations. The industry sectors, which represent employers and employees within the apprenticeship system, will be established in the regulations. Five sectors are presently identified: agriculture, construction, mining/manufacturing, mechanical repair and tourism/service. In order to accommodate new sectors which might emerge in apprenticeship, the regulations will provide for the recognition of a new sector. Criteria for designating new sectors will be developed in policy.

Recognized apprenticeship stakeholders will be identified in the regulations. They are equity groups, training deliverers and the provincial government.

(2) Board of Directors

The commission will be managed by a board of directors comprised of not less than 13 persons. Appointments to the board will be made by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council. The act will provide for employer and employee board representation on the basis of industry sectors and for other board representation on the basis of recognized stakeholder groups. Nominees to the board will be advanced to the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council by industry sectors and recognized stakeholder groups according to a process set out in regulations.

The majority of the members of the board of directors will be representatives of the apprenticeship employer employee constituencies. There will be equitable representation from employers and employees. Board members will serve for a period of time and be eligible for re-appointment according to provisions set out in regulations. Board vacancies will be filled on an interim basis by the commission, in consultation with the industry sector or stakeholder group.

Regulations will set out a process for selecting industry sector representatives and a

formula for determining the number of representatives from each sector. A list of existing organizations and groups, including existing Trade Advisory Boards, will be developed for each apprenticeship industry sector. Representatives of these groups and organizations will be responsible for selecting an employer and employee nomination to the board of directors. The existing Provincial Apprenticeship Board and Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Unit will provide administrative support to the industry sector groups for the selection process.

For sectors in which there are few or no existing organizations or groups, the members of the existing Trade Advisory Boards will be responsible for selecting the sector nominees. The number of board members from each industry sector will reflect the sector size to the extent practical and will be established in regulations by a formula which is capable of adjusting the number of representatives as the sector size changes relative to other sectors.

The number of representatives from stakeholder groups and the process by which representatives are selected for nomination will be set out in regulations. The Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training will select the government nominee(s). SIAST will select one nominee from the training deliverer stakeholder group. A further nominee from the training deliverer stakeholder group (if numbers permit) will be selected by other apprenticeship training delivery organizations. Equity groups will be invited to form a standing advisory committee to the new commission and asked to select one or more nominees to the board of directors.

(3) Trade Advisory Boards and Other Committees

The act will enable the commission to create and make appointments to trade advisory boards, standing committees and ad hoc committees. The regulations will set out the criteria for the composition of, and appointment to, trade advisory boards, standing and ad hoc committees. For example, the regulations may specify the size of boards and committees, provide for balanced employer/employee representation, provide for equity representation, etc. The regulations may give authority to a trade advisory board for certain matters pertaining exclusively to a trade (for example, curriculum and entrance requirements for a trade).

IV. *Accountability*

The new commission will have an accountability framework consistent with that of the other components of the post-secondary education and training system. It will be responsible to the minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training, and will be authorized under an act and regulations approved by the government. The act will require that the commission implement accountability measures to government and to the apprenticeship industry.

The commission will be accountable to government for an annual provincial grant and for its performance in managing the apprenticeship and trade certification system. The accountability to government will be achieved through a number of measures, as set out in the act and regulations. The commission will:

- develop an annual business plan for approval by the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training;
- submit an annual report to the Minister;
- develop and submit to the Minister a multi-year strategic plan.

The commission will be accountable to the apprenticeship industry for its performance in managing the apprenticeship and trade certification system. Accountability to industry and the stakeholders will be principally through the management board of the commission and the trade advisory boards. The management board members will be accountable through the selection process and industry sector committees. Annual plans and reports will be available to industry sectors and stakeholder groups.

V. *Commission Duties and Responsibilities*

The duties and responsibilities of the commission will be set out in the act. In general terms, the responsibilities will address the governance, management and administration of the apprenticeship and trade certification program in Saskatchewan. More specific and prescriptive direction will be set out in regulations and policy. It will be the duty of the commission as set out in the act to administer the apprenticeship and trade certification program, including:

- advise government on the strategic direction for apprenticeship and trade certification;
- ensure compliance with act, regulations and policy;
- set and maintain industry standards in apprenticeship curriculum and examinations;
- develop strategic, training and other plans and reports as may be required for the proper functioning of the apprenticeship and trade certification system;
- generate revenue and implement effective financial operating and accountability systems for apprenticeship revenues and expenditures;
- allocate resources for the effective management and delivery of the apprenticeship and trade certification program, including;

- provide support to the trade advisory boards, standing and ad hoc committees;
- provide appropriate client workplace services;
- support the maintenance of an apprenticeship technical training capability in Saskatchewan;
- manage the certification of skills in the designated trades;
- selection and appointment representatives to all apprenticeship boards and committees;
- maintain liaison and appropriate linkages with industry sectors, industry organizations, stakeholders groups, training deliverers, and related government agencies;
- participate in interprovincial apprenticeship training and certification initiatives.

VI. *Staff*

The act will provide for the commission to employ a chief executive officer. An officer of the commission will be designated as the director of policy and be responsible for the development of policy, planning and research. An officer of the commission will be designated as the director of apprenticeship and be responsible for the administrative operations of the apprenticeship and trade certification program. The commission will determine the operational structure which best enables it to achieve its mandate.

The existing staff of the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Unit, and the budget allocations which support them will be transferred to the new commission. The act will ensure that rights of the existing staff will be protected in the transfer and their collective bargaining agreement will remain in effect.

VII. **Budget**

The act will provide for the commission to receive an annual operating grant from the provincial government for management and operations of the apprenticeship and trade certification system. The act will also provide for the commission to receive an annual training grant to support the apprenticeship training program.

The fiscal year of the commission will be set out in regulations. The commission will have the authority to earn, retain and direct revenue. The commission will be assigned all existing fee revenue from apprenticeship operations and be given the authority to set fees in regulation or policy. The act will authorize the commission to retain surplus funds from year to year. The commission will receive support from Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training for such services as human resources, communications, justice and other services as may be set out the regulations.

VIII. *Relationship With Trainers*

The act will authorize the commission to develop protocols with public and private training deliverers for the delivery of apprenticeship training. The protocols will be set out in regulations, and will include such factors as cost, response times, quality assurance and capability to deliver practical training.

The protocol with SIAST will provide it with the first opportunity for new apprenticeship training delivery and for programs which it presently delivers. The protocols with other training deliverers will provide for the continuation of existing contractual arrangements for programs which they are presently delivering, subject to the criteria being met.

IX. *Role of the Department*

The Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training will continue to play an important role in the new apprenticeship and trade certification system. The department will provide advice, as part of the Saskatchewan Training Strategy, for strategic policy direction for apprenticeship and trades certification. It will provide leadership and evaluation and will monitor such areas as:

- equitable representation;
- staff transfer and rights;
- provision of shared services;
- funding framework;
- training protocols;
- accountability and evaluation measures.

The department role will be carried out through its representation on the commission board and through its regular planning, development and liaison functions with partners, including the new commission.