



Saskatchewan
Post-Secondary Education
and Skills Training

Planning for the Needs of Saskatchewan Learners, Employers and Communities

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Introduction

The Saskatchewan post-secondary system plays an important role in the economic and social development of the province. Globalization, technological change and the shift to the knowledge-based economy necessitates a better understanding of, and a more rapid response to, the changing nature of knowledge and skills in the labour market. A responsive post-secondary system also has other important objectives, notably preparing people for participation in a democratic society and the pursuit of knowledge as an end in and of itself.

The Sector Strategic Plan recognizes the importance of various education and labour market partners working together to provide an appropriate balance of programs and services that meet the needs of learners, employers and communities, through the department, educational institutions, private vocational schools, community-based organizations, and Aboriginal institutions. It embraces a system-wide approach to education, skills training and employment services that will ensure a sustainable, high quality sector. The sector plan recognizes that planning for the needs of Saskatchewan learners, employers and communities, through the development of a strategy, will effectively link the post-secondary sector to the changing requirements of the Saskatchewan labour market.

This paper outlines a proposed **Education and Labour Market Planning and Information (ELMPI) Strategy** that includes objectives, actions, key deliverables and a supporting education and labour market planning and information model for a responsive post-secondary sector within Saskatchewan. Planning and information is an iterative process and integral component for achieving a responsive post-secondary system. Labour market planning is the identification, assessment and prioritization of education, training and employment needs of learners, employers and communities and the determination of an array of programs, services and strategies to address their needs. Labour market information is the supporting body of knowledge needed to make career or labour market decisions and informs labour market planning.

The purpose of the strategy is to achieve the following:

- ▶ □ Identify and address labour market planning and information needs across the post-secondary sector;
- ▶ □ Provide a framework for the department to engage its education and labour market partners in more coordinated and inclusive labour market planning processes at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels;
- ▶ □ Clarify roles and responsibilities for labour market planning within the department, the sector, and with other education and labour market partners;

- ▶ ☐ Clarify roles and responsibilities amongst the education and labour market partners related to labour market information, for the coordinated collection, aggregation, analysis, development and dissemination at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels;
- ▶ ☐ Inform credit transfer planning between SIAST and the universities for program areas such as nursing, engineering and business;
- ▶ ☐ Inform elements of program and enrollment planning at the post-secondary institutions;
- ▶ ☐ Serve as the joint Labour Market Information Strategy required under the Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Development Agreement; and
- ▶ ☐ Support provincial involvement in a multi-lateral approach for development of a national integrated, coherent labour market information system and implementation of a comprehensive three-year Action Plan under the Forum of Labour Market Ministers.

Rationale

The following reinforces the need for the development of a strategy:

- ▶ ☐ The *Final Report of the 1999 SIAST Committee of Review, Building on Strength* calls for SIAST to develop extensive linkages with employers in order to respond to emerging skill requirements and priority skills needed within the Saskatchewan labour market. The *Final Report of the 1999 Regional College Committee of Review, Futures Close to Home*, also identifies the need to strengthen the regional colleges' linkages to labour market planning processes at the industry and provincial levels.
- ▶ ☐ Career and labour market information is a critical support to the delivery of the department's career and employment services.
- ▶ ☐ Enrollment levels for the trades and various professional programs are critical to meeting the needs of a number of key service sectors, most notably health and education. Broader human resource planning, of which labour market planning and labour market information are components, is very important.
- ▶ ☐ The post-secondary training institutions want clarification of the linkages between their business plans and the needs assessments, and related roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, linking the regional planning processes with sectoral and provincial planning is considered necessary for achieving an effective education and labour market planning system.
- ▶ ☐ The post-secondary education, training and employment services sector provides a critical link between the economic and social development of the province. The department has been involved in the development of the provincial economic

development strategy, *Partnership for Prosperity*. Linkages among the various planning processes throughout the province will enable the post-secondary sector to more effectively target key growth sectors within the Saskatchewan economy that generate new wealth and jobs.

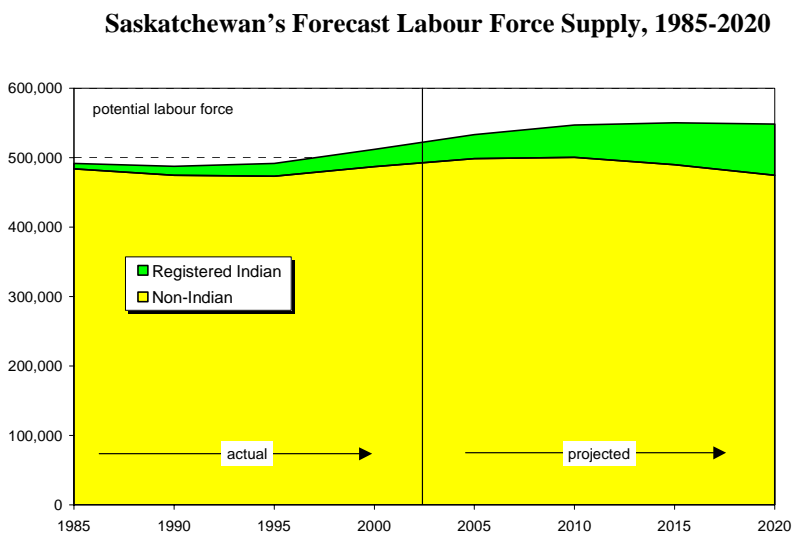
- ▶ □ The department is a partner under the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Forum of Labour Market Ministers, which has endorsed a three-year Labour Market Information Action Plan. The plan commits F/P/T partners to work together to create a more coherent, relevant, individualized, accessible and coordinated approach to the development and delivery of LMI at the local, provincial and national level.
- ▶ □ The Conference Board of Canada's, *Employment Skills 2000+* identifies critical skills needed to enter, stay in and progress in the world of work that include communication, problem solving, adaptability, teamwork and science, technology and mathematics skills. Continuous learning is also an important factor in personal management skills that determines one's potential for growth.
- ▶ □ The Expert Panel on Skills, appointed by the Prime Minister's Advisory Council on Science and Technology, views skills as a vital element of the new economic model that encompasses not just technical and scientific competence, but a broad and evolving set of essential, learning, management and leadership skills. Their report, *Stepping Up: Skills and Opportunities in the Knowledge Economy*, makes several recommendations that have implications for labour market planning and information such as improving the diagnostic capacity of labour market monitoring systems to better capture the new skill dynamics. It also calls for efforts to manage and support research on emerging labour market issues and statistics, and to more effectively utilize human resources to improve Canada's competitive advantage in the knowledge-based, global economy.

Environmental Scan

An environmental scan was undertaken to identify impacts on labour market planning and information within the Saskatchewan post-secondary sector, including trends in the Saskatchewan labour market; research on best practices among provincial jurisdictions; and an assessment of existing labour market planning and information processes within the sector.

Trends in the Saskatchewan Labour Market

The Saskatchewan economy is influenced by rapidly changing technology, freer trade, and increased globalization and competition. The critical skills that individuals and firms require to succeed in the global economy are also shifting due to these changes in technology and market conditions. These critical skills are acquired through technical training and post-secondary education.



The department commissioned Doug Elliott with Sask Trends Monitor to undertake the *Saskatchewan Labour Market Trends Report (January 2000)*, which examines demographic and labour force patterns and the impacts of those trends on the future supply of workers in Saskatchewan. The report forecasts a

declining provincial labour supply over the next ten to fifteen years, largely due to the aging of the population. Occupational shortages are expected to increasingly occur as the overall labour market tightens. At the same time, the Aboriginal population will become an increasingly significant portion of the population and can play an important role in addressing a potential shortage of workers. The growing Aboriginal population will require higher levels of post-secondary education and training to increase their participation in the labour force. A recent update to the report indicates similar overall trends, albeit somewhat lower.

The need for higher levels of skills in the Saskatchewan labour market has been steadily increasing, and this trend is expected to continue. Over the past decade, 95% of net job growth in the province was attributable to workers with some post-secondary education or higher. Generally, the higher the level of education, the higher the employment rate and the lower the unemployment rate. The Saskatchewan Employment Demand Forecast 2000 further indicates that over the medium term almost 60% of all job opportunities will require management skills or at least some post-secondary education. Traditionally lower

skilled jobs will still be in demand, but will require more advanced skills, including basic literacy, numeracy and computer competencies. These changing skill sets in the labour market are also creating demand for retraining by those already in the labour force.

Overall, it is becoming increasingly important for the post-secondary sector to be able to anticipate potential occupational and skill shortages and meet the growing demand for skilled and knowledge workers in order to contribute to the continued prosperity of the province.

Research on Best Practices

The department contacted various provincial jurisdictions across Canada, including British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, to identify best practices for labour market planning and information systems. Significant resources are devoted to labour market information and the development of career resources, but fewer resources are provided for labour market planning. There is a range of formal and informal labour market planning processes that support the inclusion of labour market considerations into the program planning and decision-making processes.

The labour market planning processes that are in place are generally supported by provincial governments to assist the post-secondary system to respond to the needs of the labour market. British Columbia, Alberta and New Brunswick have fairly formal labour market planning processes in place. In British Columbia, for example, all new degree and non-degree program proposals are run through a “labour market lens” as one of the criteria for the program approval process. New Brunswick has various labour market information processes in place, which feeds into the program planning of the community colleges and is available to employers and others to inform them about the existing and potential labour force.

Both formal and informal partnerships involve key public and private (for-profit and not-for-profit) stakeholders. Alberta and New Brunswick involve partners in a more formal government-led labour market planning process. Alberta, for example, established an interdepartmental committee, led by their Department of Human Resources and Employment, to develop a cross-government initiative to address workforce supply and demand issues. Their recently released provincial labour force strategy, *Prepared for Growth: Building Alberta’s Labour Supply*, is intended to address an increasing demand for skilled workers. New Brunswick, through its Department of Training and Employment, has the Work-Ready Workforce Initiative in place, which brings various partners together in local areas to share information and develop initiatives to help ensure the workforce of the area is “ready to work”. It also collaborated with the regional HRDC office and provincial department of Family and Community Services on a joint Environmental Scan to further discussion on joint and complementary labour market planning among the three partners.

The Labour Market Information Working Group under the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM), conducted an environmental scan to support the development of an

integrated federal/provincial/territorial strategic vision for labour market information and a three-year Action Plan. The environmental scan indicated that the strategic value of information, particularly labour market information, is increasing dramatically. Relevant LMI is critically important to the smooth functioning of the labour market, ensuring that information is available for informed decisions about opportunities in the economy. Education, training and information are key to the knowledge-based economies of the future, therefore, policy and program planners need quality LMI to support the development of appropriate education and training programs.

FLMM's environmental scan also determined that when LMI is produced, disseminated and used appropriately, it can be the most effective tool available for ensuring the efficient functioning of the labour market. LMI products need to be relevant to clients and the packaging and presentation of information is a key influence on its usefulness. For policy and program planners, there is a clear need to produce and disseminate more local level LMI.

Current Situation

Labour market information is used by government agencies, education and training providers, industry and other stakeholders to analyze labour market and economic conditions to assist in planning and policy decisions. Labour market planning is conducted by many of the post-secondary training institutions to understand the changing dynamics of, and continually try to balance present and future demands of, the labour market and the needs of learners. This can require up to a five-to ten-year time horizon for enrollment and program planning by the institutions because of the length of time to develop and implement education and training programs.

To better understand the linkages between post-secondary education, skills training and employment programs and services and the labour market, the department undertook a thorough review of the various labour market planning and information processes within the post-secondary sector. Consultation with the post-secondary sector was in the form of questionnaires, in-person and conference call meetings, and an extensive review and assessment of the post-secondary sector's documentation including: regional and provincial training needs assessments; business, work and program plans; annual reports; and industry or sector specific studies.

The following provides a summary of key findings of the review and assessment of the post-secondary sector's labour market planning and information processes in Saskatchewan.

Labour Market Planning

Extensive labour market planning is undertaken throughout the province at a regional, sectoral and provincial level to ensure responsiveness to learners, employers and communities. Formalized planning partnerships, at the regional level for example, have been established and continue to evolve to support the needs assessment and planning process of the regional colleges, regional Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment

Services, and other key organizations in the community. These formalized partnerships are working towards strengthening their relationship to conduct needs assessments, determine priorities, coordinate labour market planning and provide joint training where possible. Northlands College, for example, actively participates in the Northern Labour Market Committee, which is a highly successful, formalized planning partnership with many years of experience in coordinating labour market planning and information activities for the north.

At a sectoral level, the department's Sector Partnership Program (SPP) is the primary vehicle for sectoral labour market planning in the post-secondary sector. Its formalized partnerships are industry-driven and include post-secondary institutions such as SIAST, the regional colleges and Aboriginal institutions.

Labour market planning at a provincial level is limited to training institutions, such as SIAST, Aboriginal institutions and Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission, that have a provincial mandate for the delivery of programs and services. SIAST draws information from various regional and sectoral planning activities to substantiate its own need assessment and planning process.

The recent establishment of the Saskatchewan Labour Market Network (SLMN) is one vehicle that is attempting to bridge the gap in terms of identifying and addressing needs from a provincial or overall post-secondary sector perspective, but it is in the early developmental stages.

All labour market planning levels recognize the importance of employer involvement; however, the extent of employer involvement varies. In regional planning partnerships for example, employers have generally been involved through consultation for needs identification, although partnerships are being expanded to more actively engage them in the planning activities. The Sector Partnerships Program has extensive employer involvement, largely because it is industry driven. Employer involvement in Trade Advisory Boards for the Apprenticeship Commission is extensive, but linkages to labour market planning activities elsewhere in the sector are limited. SIAST has extensive employer involvement in its Program Advisory Committees and annual consultations, although employers are not part of a formalized planning partnership.

The importance of including Aboriginal organizations in planning partnerships at all levels is also recognized, but again, there are varying degrees of success. Attempts to engage First Nation and Metis organizations have proven difficult for some partnerships and participation is often "hit and miss", because Aboriginal organizations lack the resources to fully participate in all of them. For example, DTI relies heavily on existing labour market planning and information processes to inform its program and service plans, although active involvement in the regional needs assessment and planning partnerships is limited. METSI is not directly involved in any of the eight regional college needs assessment and planning processes. The Aboriginal institutions generally have strong linkages within their respective systems and communities. For example, SIIT mainly relies on its relationship with tribal councils and local offices to identify and address post-secondary education, skills training and employment needs.

The universities have linkages with employers and industry through co-operative education programs, discussion with industry associations and faculty representation on industry boards. Changes to university programs have been made as a result of dialogue with industry, such as the U of R's Bachelor of Arts in Police Studies and the actuarial and economics programs. The universities, through their Extension and Continuing Education programs, are attempting to be more directly responsive to meeting the needs of the labour market.

Labour market planning partnerships, at any level, have different views on the effectiveness of their respective need assessments and labour market planning processes. Nearly all consider their processes to be at least somewhat effective. The SPP, for example, recognizes that sector partnerships that are established around an existing industry association has a greater likelihood of success in implementing report findings than less formalized partnerships. There is general agreement that a more coordinated approach is required for longer-term labour market planning.

Labour Market Information

There is a variety of labour market information that is gathered through various processes in the post-secondary sector such as the Sector Partnerships Program (SPP), regional and urban needs assessments, SaskJobs and HRDC's National Labour Market Information System. This information is generally gathered through primary research such as surveys, focus groups, interviews, and administrative databases.

The SPP partnerships undertake primary research to identify and assess occupational and labour market demand, skill shortages and education, and training and employment requirements and availability. Sector study reports are developed and may be accompanied by databases that inventory sector-specific education and training programs. Reports are shared with the sector partnership participants, industry, key government departments, and stakeholders.

The regional and urban training needs assessments collect information on training and occupational needs of employers, industry, individuals and communities. The needs assessment reports are distributed to partners and key stakeholders. SIAST's annual graduate employment statistics report provides valuable information on labour market outcomes of recent SIAST graduates. The universities also periodically conduct graduate follow up studies that examine employment outcomes. They have expressed an interest in participating in regular graduate follow up studies to better understand the future development and success of their students.

The CES Offices undertake sector-specific research such as the tourism and oil and gas industries, and conduct research on the training and employment needs of specific client groups. Career and labour market information is also generated through the Career and Employment Information Services system and SaskJobs.

HRDC regularly posts regional information on their Saskatchewan web site for the colleges, SIAST and the department's CES Offices, on the number of E.I. clients, SARs,

and potential employers. HRDC's LMI analysts monitor changes in the Saskatchewan economy and labour market that is configured to HRDC's eleven regions. HRDC's regional labour market and economic reviews, occupational analyses and outlooks are extensively drawn upon for regional labour market planning.

There is a variety of other information that is used to support the regional needs assessment processes that is mainly produced by PSEST, other provincial and federal departments, SLFDB, newspapers, and industry and business associations. Department generated information includes the Overview of the Saskatchewan Economy and Labour Market, the Saskatchewan Labour Market Trends Report, occupational analysis such as the Nursing Labour Market Analysis Report and other information accessible from the SaskNetWork, LMI Extranet and departmental web site. The department and HRDC jointly produce LMI products, such as the Saskatchewan Employment Demand Forecast and Saskatchewan Job Futures.

Labour market information is also used by individuals and employers in making education, career and employment decisions. SaskNetWork and Sask Job Futures are examples of Internet based self-help tools designed to support individuals and employers as well as the delivery of career and employment services. The post-secondary institutions also use career and labour market information to support career counselling and career fairs.

Summary of Key Issues

The following provides a summary of key issues identified through the environmental scan including: labour market planning and information processes; skill shortages; quality LMI; and awareness, availability and understanding of LMI.

1. Labour Market Planning and Information Processes

There are several issues related to labour market planning and information processes, including partnerships, inclusiveness and involvement of stakeholders, and roles and responsibilities.

- In some cases, the regional labour market planning processes have had limited involvement of key post-secondary sector partners, including the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission, the Aboriginal organizations in particular Dumont Technical Institute and METSI, and the regional Human Resource Canada Centres. METSI is currently considering the development of its own regional process, although they have expressed interest in becoming involved in existing regional planning processes.
- Employers are actively involved in the regional planning partnerships in some cases; however, the extent of involvement is generally limited to needs identification through consultations.
- There are no established processes for working with the education and labour market partners to review and assess the capacity and array of programs and services of the post-secondary system, and its overall effectiveness in meeting current and future demand of learners, employers and communities.
- There is a need for a provincial planning process to forecast occupational and skill requirements, identify emerging training demands, and create potential solutions to meet pressures.
- The existing Saskatchewan Labour Market Network (SLMN) is in its early stages of development and is progressing in the definition of its mandate, purpose and direction. SLMN can be an opportunity for a more inclusive and coordinated approach to labour market planning and information that accommodates flexibility and individuality, sharing of best practices and LMI, and collectively addresses emerging issues.
- The long term needs of the Saskatchewan labour market should inform the universities' respective array and capacity of programs and services. Students are being more strategic in their selection of programs that have obvious labour market potential. The professional programs (i.e. require registration with an association or regulatory body) in particular, need to relate student, graduate and labour market trends to enrollment planning.

- There is no apparent functional responsibility for provincial labour market planning in the department. There is also a need for clarity of roles and responsibilities for regional labour market planning and overall support to the post-secondary sector.

2. Skill Shortages

Skill shortages refer to a broad spectrum of technical, learning, essential, management and leadership skills and knowledge generally acquired through post-secondary education or skills training. The key issues related to skill shortages include criteria and processes for the identification, prioritization and assessment of needs, and articulation of the effectiveness of the post-secondary sector in meeting the needs of learners, employers and communities.

- There are no established criteria or processes to prioritize and assess labour market demand and training needs of learners, employers and communities. For example, there is difficulty in differentiating between training needs and other factors such as wages, working conditions, hours of work, employer attitudes or recruitment efforts related to occupational demand.
- Clearer linkages are required between the needs assessments and the business plans, to demonstrate the responsiveness of program and service array and the overall effectiveness of the post-secondary sector in meeting the needs of learners, employers and communities.
- There is no systematic process for monitoring and diagnosing existing and emerging skill dynamics in a Knowledge-Based Economy.

3. Quality LMI

There are several key issues that speak to the quality of labour market information, including accuracy, relevance, analysis, and local and regional information and support.

- Information on the needs of employers, industry, learners and communities is collected through the needs assessments, SaskJobs and sector partnerships, but not systematically aggregated and analyzed to “turn information into knowledge”. These processes are, or can be, a valuable source of local and regional information, which is oft cited as an LMI need. There is also potential to generate sectoral and provincial trend analysis and impacts, and development of LMI for end users.
- An assurance of sound research methodologies and common data elements is required for the collection of LMI to ensure accurate, reliable and consistent data.
- The need for regional LMI support has been identified by the department’s CES Offices. LMI is a functional responsibility of the Regional Services Branch;

however there is limited expertise and resources to analyze and produce information.

- Support for the development of LMI for end users has been lacking since the completion of the LMI Strategic Initiatives.
- Some institutions have identified the need for a central agency to provide information on general shortages and future trends, with central support for interpretation or clarification of information.

4. Awareness, Understanding and Availability of LMI

There are key issues regarding a lack of awareness and understanding of existing LMI, as well as the dissemination of LMI.

- There is a vast amount of web-based labour market information that can be overwhelming, time consuming and confusing. The understanding and use of LMI is also determined by how it is presented. For example, Sask Job Futures was considered by some as difficult to understand and use. In addition, LMI needs to be available in a variety of formats to be more understandable and useful.
- Available information is often outdated. This may be because of the infrequency of availability of data such as Census data, or lack of resources to more frequently update the information.
- There is a lack of awareness of available LMI — often times people did not realize that needed information already exists, or outdated or older versions of LMI were being used. For example, outdated hard copies of Sask Job Futures were being used rather than the newer web-based product; and information available on Sask Job Futures such as occupational wages, salaries and working conditions was identified as a need, as was information available through the department of Economic and Co-operative Development on major projects and business closures.
- The LMI Extranet is considered a useful vehicle for disseminating detailed LMI, despite it not being adequately maintained and supported.
- The need for staff training on the availability and use of LMI was often cited by the post-secondary training institutions, in particular the Aboriginal institutions, and by the department's CES Office staff.
- The Aboriginal institutions expressed interest in working more closely with the regional colleges and department's CES Offices for sharing career-related information and planning tools to support counsellors.
- The universities also expressed interest in participating in the existing Saskatchewan Labour Market Network (SLMN) for awareness and sharing of labour market and research information.

5. Coordination and Integration of Labour Market Planning and Labour Market Information

There is a need to bring focus, coordination and integration among the various labour market planning and labour market information processes within the Saskatchewan post-secondary sector.

- There is a disconnect at times among, and within, the different labour market planning levels in the post-secondary sector. For example, the regional colleges indicate there is no established process for having their identified needs prioritized by SIAST and the universities. There is a need to facilitate networking among the various planning processes in support of appropriate decision making.
- The varying submission dates for planning documents provided to the department further compound the disconnect among the planning processes. For example, the needs assessment reports are submitted in March-August, business plans are submitted in May and the detailed program plans are submitted in October of each year. However, proposal submissions for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) are submitted in January-February and require information contained in the needs assessments. The SIAST needs assessment document is submitted at the same time as the regional colleges, making it difficult to incorporate regionally identified needs.
- There is a need to analyze and synthesize labour market information and identify the impacts on the post-secondary sector, and then better connect the information to the various labour market planning processes.
- The majority of the post-secondary sector has identified a need for a “clearinghouse” for labour market information, and a central point-of-contact to respond to labour market information inquiries.
- There are benefits to a coordinated approach to labour market research, within and among, the various labour market planning processes that can result in reduced duplication of effort and maximum use of shared resources. This requires supporting expertise and human resources to coordinate and manage research initiatives.

Proposed Education and Labour Market Planning and Information Strategy

The Sector Strategic Plan contributes to the development and maintenance of a workforce that is responsive to the Saskatchewan economy. It recognizes the post-secondary sector needs to provide an appropriate range of programs and services that balances the needs of individuals and communities with the needs of employers and industry, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the province.

Labour market planning is an integral component for achieving a responsive post-secondary system. **Labour Market Planning** is the identification, assessment and prioritization of education, training and employment needs of employers, industry, learners and communities and the determination of an array of programs, services and strategies to address their needs. The post-secondary institutions, the department and other stakeholders engage in labour market planning activities to inform the development and delivery of education, training and employment programs and services. Labour market planning also informs the development of the department's budget plans and the Sector Strategic Plan. Labour market planning requires an analysis of the current and future trends that affect the supply and demand of the labour market to inform the planning process for the development and delivery of programs and services.

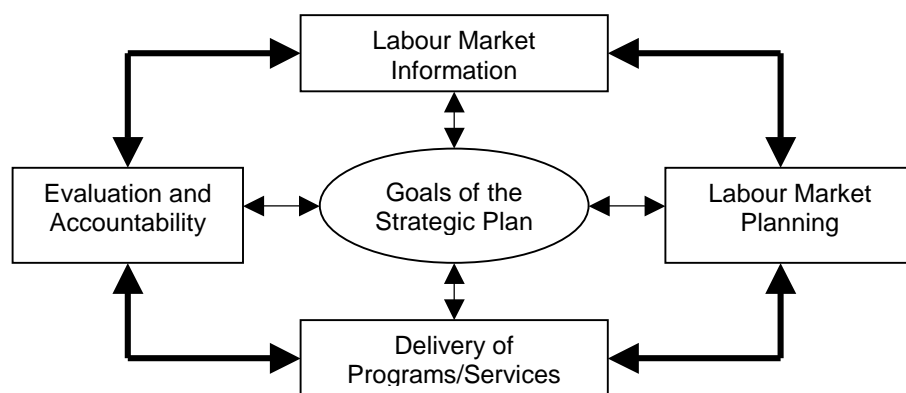
Labour Market Information is the body of knowledge that describes employment, unemployment and the factors that relate to labour demand and supply. The Forum of Labour Market Ministers LMI Working Group has chosen the simplest and broadest definition of LMI as *“information needed to make a labour market decision. This includes career, occupational, learning and labour market information used by those looking for work, those currently employed, employers, those who provide services, and people in general to make careful decisions about the labour market and about the transitions which affect their lives.”* (Federal/ Provincial/Territorial Strategic Vision for LMI, 2000). This definition is intended to broadly capture information not normally associated with the labour market, but which impacts on labour market decisions.

LMI is the basis for informed decision making, and is essential to ensuring a responsive and sustainable post-secondary sector and labour market. In addition to supporting labour market planning, LMI is used for human resource planning, career development planning, and education and training course planning by a wide range of users, including:

- ▶ **□ Students, Job Seekers/Changers and Parents** who need information to make better education, training and career decisions and to assess labour markets to seek work;
- ▶ **□ Employers** who need information on wage rates, economic conditions, training programs and availability of workers;
- ▶ **□ Educators, Training and Career Professionals** who need information about future job opportunities and skill requirements;

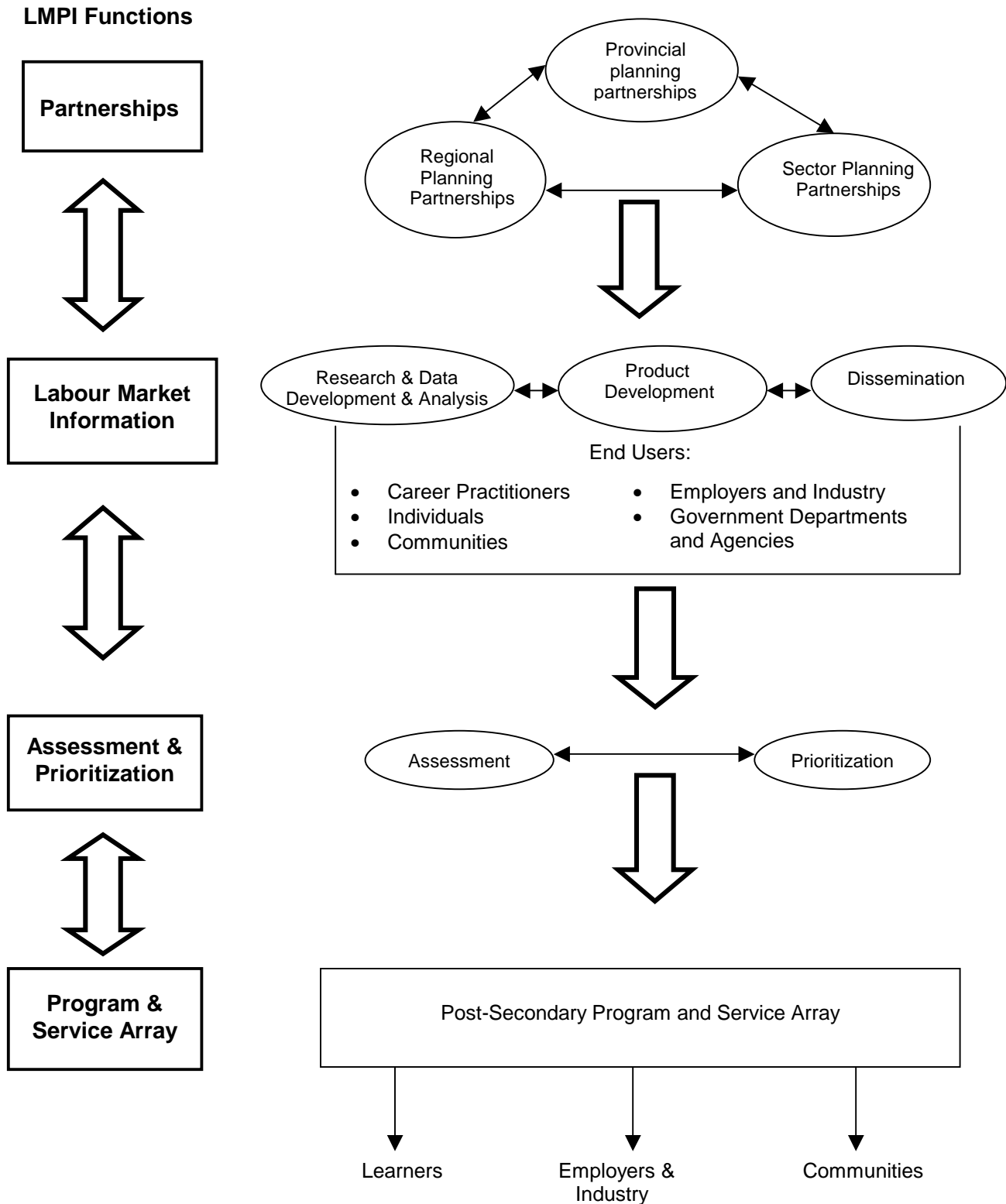
- ▶ □ **Economic and Community Developers** who need information on wages and salary comparisons and information on labour availability; and
- ▶ □ **Government Departments and Agencies** who rely on labour market information for planning, policy making, and analysis of labour market and economic conditions.

The labour market planning cycle is part of the overall Accountability Framework and resultant Sector Strategic Plan for the post-secondary sector. LMI supports the planning, development and implementation of the array of programs, services and delivery strategies to meet the education and training needs of the province. The department is committed to the continuous improvement and ongoing management of an accountable post-secondary sector through an evaluation and accountability process. A variety of performance indicators, such as student and industry demand, program capacity and success rates and graduate outcomes, can be used to assist in determining the effectiveness of the current array of programs and services in addressing occupational and skill shortages, the needs of learners, and agreed-upon goals and objectives. This information feeds into the various labour market and government planning processes, and may lead to changes in direction, policies and/or the operations of programs and services to enhance the overall performance and responsiveness of the sector.



An Education and Labour Market Planning and Information Model is proposed to engage the post-secondary sector in coordinated and integrated labour market planning and information processes at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels. The model describes how labour market planning and information should work within the Saskatchewan post-secondary sector. It is comprised of four primary functions that include: Planning Partnerships, Labour Market Information, Assessment and Prioritization, and Program and Service Planning. The diagram on the following page provides an overview of the model.

Education and Labour Market Planning and Information Model



1. Planning Partnerships

Partnerships provide the basis for the post-secondary institutions and the department to actively engage stakeholders in regional, sectoral and provincial labour market planning and information activities. Effective planning partnerships require broad representation of stakeholders, involvement throughout the labour market planning process, coordination and collaboration, linkages with other planning processes, and efficient and effective use of collective resources. Planning partnerships will enable the sector to:

- Engage in coordinated and inclusive labour market planning, including increased involvement of employers, industry and communities in labour market planning;
- Facilitate linkages amongst, and across, the various labour market planning processes at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels; and
- Coordinate labour market information activities.

2. Labour Market Information

Information on the labour market, economy and post-secondary sector is required to support the various planning processes within the post-secondary sector, including strategic planning, labour market planning and budgetary planning. An understanding of demographic, educational, labour market and economic trends and related education, training and employment needs, informs the planning and development of responsive programs and services. LMI is also required to facilitate and support career decisions, delivery of career and employment services, investment decisions and labour mobility. Overall, LMI contributes to enhanced performance of the labour market by facilitating a better match between workers' skills and those in demand by employers.

Quality LMI is based on relevancy, accuracy, awareness and accessibility. LMI needs vary depending on the user, which requires an understanding of clients' needs to ensure LMI is useful and relevant. Agreed-upon standards and guidelines improve LMI's overall reliability and accuracy. LMI should also be made available in a variety of formats to increase its awareness and accessibility to users.

Labour market information will enable the sector to:

- Identify current and future trends to better understand the dynamics of the labour market to inform policy and support labour market, budgetary and strategic planning and the delivery of career and employment services;
- Contribute to the review and assessment of the capacity of, and anticipated demand on, the post-secondary education and training system;
- Contribute to a regular environmental scan, including socio-demographic and labour market trends; and
- Make informed decisions by learners, employers, industry and communities.

Labour market information is collected, aggregated, analyzed, developed and disseminated at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels. Current and future trends that impact on the labour market and the post-secondary sector will guide the collection, aggregation and analysis of LMI through an ongoing, multi-year research approach to address the following information requirements:

- Demographic information that includes specific client groups;
- Educational levels;
- Industry and employer activity;
- Employment, occupations and skills;
- Education, training and employment needs;
- Student demand; and
- Capacity of programs and services.

Labour market information is then developed and disseminated to best meet the various needs of users. Labour market partners work together to determine users' needs and develop, modify and refine LMI to meet their needs.

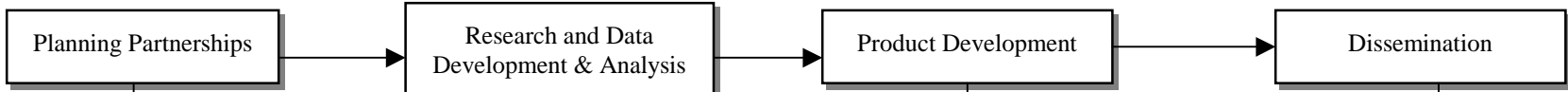
Support for the delivery of labour market information for use by career practitioners and planners is required to facilitate an awareness and understanding of available LMI. This can be achieved through training sessions, workshops and presentations.

The Internet remains the primary tool for dissemination of LMI because of its growing use and accessibility, relatively low cost method, and access to a broad range and large number of users. Use of the Internet, however, must be balanced with LMI being made available in a variety of formats to ensure its accessibility to everyone.

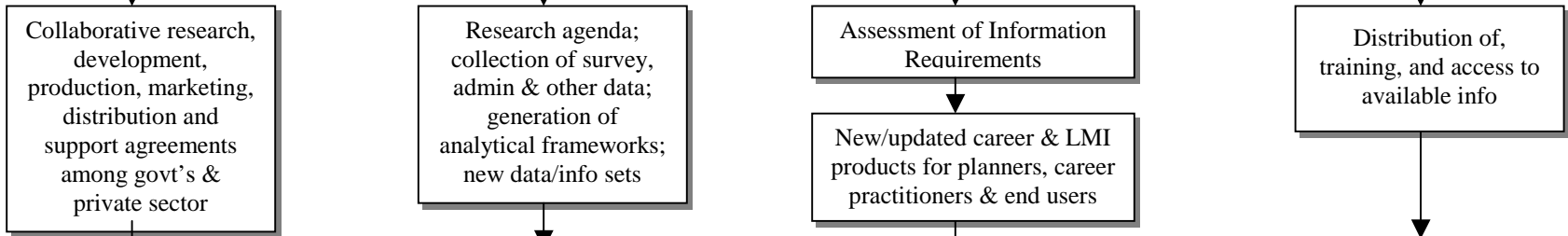
The following diagram provides a logic flow for the related activities, outputs, outcomes and results of research, development and delivery of labour market information.

Logic Flow for Research, Development and Delivery of Labour Market Information

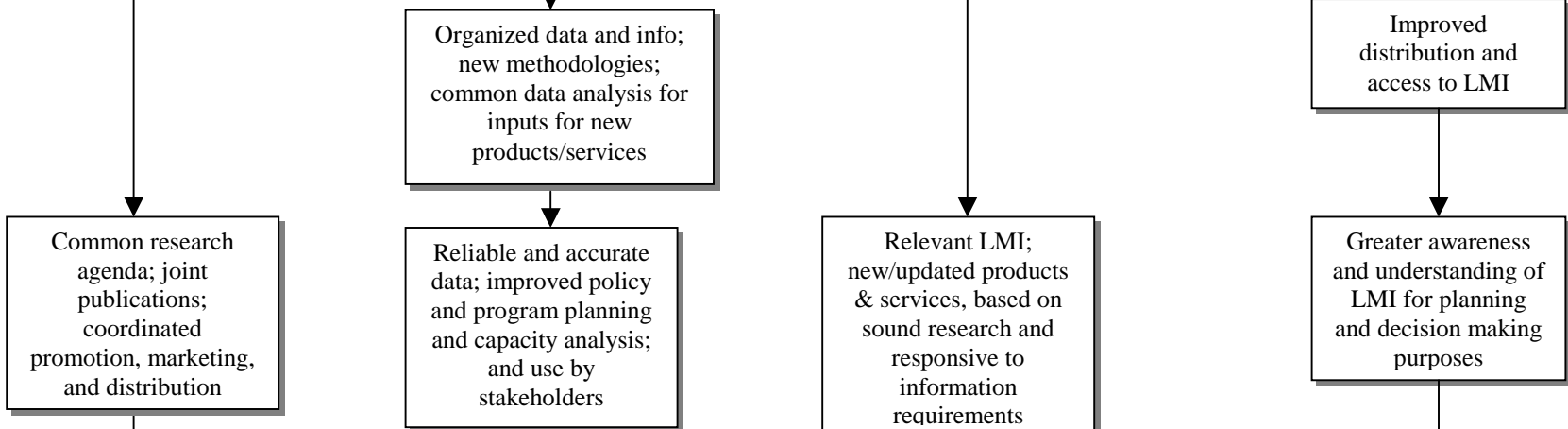
ACTIVITIES



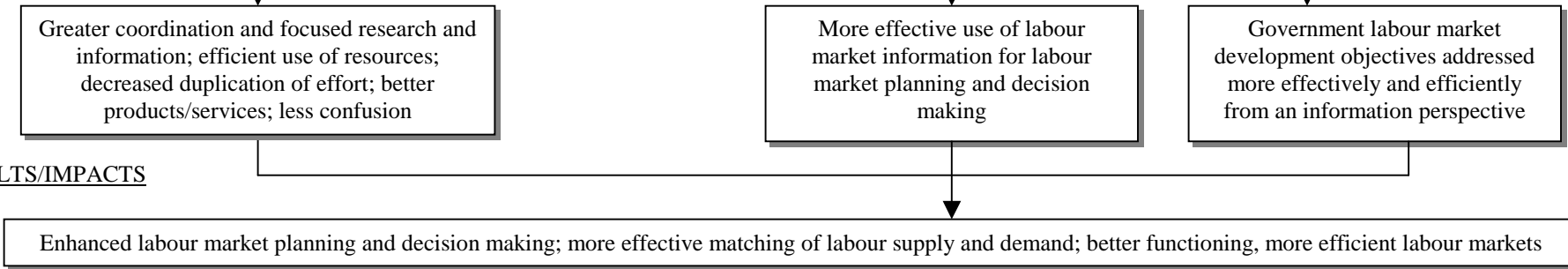
OUTPUTS



OUTCOMES



RESULTS/IMPACTS



3. Assessment and Prioritization

An assessment and prioritization of identified employment and occupational demand, student demand, and education, training and employment needs are required to inform the planning and delivery of programs and services. Identified needs are prioritized based on established criteria and processes.

Through partnerships, the post-secondary sector will be able to assess and prioritize the education, training and employment needs of stakeholders through a coordinated, integrated and ongoing approach. Planning partners, both individually and collectively, assess and prioritize identified needs based on their immediacy, urgency, endurance and related impacts on the economy and labour market. “Real” and “perceived” training needs should be differentiated, as other factors such as reasonable/desirable wages and working conditions can influence decisions. Further analysis of prioritized needs is required to determine an appropriate response, including: review and assessment of the capacity of, and anticipated demand on, the post-secondary, education and training system; outcomes of existing relevant programs and services; associated costs of providing new programs or services such as equipment costs and availability of facilities and instructors; delivery options; and student interest.

4. Program and Service Planning

The post-secondary sector meets the needs of learners, employers and communities through an appropriate range of programs, services, delivery methods and strategies that respond to their needs. Planning partners determine specific actions to be taken, individually or collectively, to address prioritized needs. A regular review of the array of training programs and services in view of the identified needs may also result in changes or adjustments to existing programs/services/delivery methods, addition or deletion of programs/services/delivery methods, or strategies that attempt to resolve occupational and skill shortages and demand over the short-, medium- or long-term.

Program and service planning will enable the post-secondary sector to provide a relevant array of programs and services and appropriate strategies that respond to the type of and most critical of identified education, training and employment needs of learners, employers and communities.

The following table provides a summary of the Education and Labour Market Planning and Information Model that includes the four primary functions, purpose, approach and resultant benefits/outcomes.

Education and Labour Market Planning and Information Model

(Sector Plan Objective 3.1, Action #1)

Functions	Purpose	Approach	Benefits/Outcomes
<p>1. Planning Partnerships</p>	<p>To engage in coordinated and inclusive labour market planning, including increased involvement of employers/business in labour market planning. <i>(Supports Sector Plan Objective 3.2, Action #1)</i></p> <p>To facilitate linkages amongst the various labour market planning processes.</p> <p>To coordinate labour market and post-secondary sector information activities.</p>	<p>Effective planning partnerships that are based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad representation of stakeholders • Coordination and collaboration • Linkages with other planning processes • Efficient use of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased employer, community and Aboriginal involvement • Increased coordination among education and training providers • Increased education and training partnerships • Information sharing
<p>2. Labour Market Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and Data Development and Analysis • Product Development • Dissemination 	<p>To identify current and future trends to better understand the dynamics of the labour market to support labour market planning, the delivery of career and employment services and informed decision making by individuals. <i>(Supports Sector Plan Objective 3.1, Action #2)</i></p> <p>To contribute to the review and assessment of the capacity of, and anticipated demand on, the post-secondary, education and training system.</p> <p>To contribute to a regular environmental scan, including socio-demographic and labour market trends. <i>(Supports Sector Plan Objective 1.2, Action #5)</i></p>	<p>The collection, aggregation, and analysis of information to determine current and future trends that impact on the labour market and the post-secondary sector through an ongoing, multi-year research approach to address the following information requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic information that includes specific client groups (e.g. EI, SARs, youth, Aboriginal) • Educational levels • Industry and employer activity • Employment, occupation and skills • Student demand • Capacity of programs and services • Education, training and employment needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More informed labour market and strategic planning • Needs accurately identified — ‘real’ vs. ‘perceived’ needs • Existing and emerging skill dynamics & shortages identified • Client-specific barriers to education and employment identified • Reliable and accurate data/information • Coordinated and focused research • Decreased duplication of effort • Contributes to the appropriate allocation of resources • Contributes to the appropriate program and service array

Functions	Purpose	Approach	Benefits/Outcomes
<p>3. Assessment and Prioritization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Prioritization • Review of Capacity and Demand 	<p>To assess and prioritize education, training and employment needs of stakeholders through a coordinated, integrated and ongoing approach.</p> <p>To review and assess the capacity of, and anticipated demand on, the post-secondary, education and training system. <i>(Supports Sector Plan Objective 2.1, Action #2)</i></p>	<p>Planning partners, individually and collectively, assess and prioritize needs based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The availability, capacity, demand, learner supports and outcomes of programs/services • Type and sustainability of needs (including impacts of unmet needs) and associated demand • Analysis of required response (e.g. cost of equipment, availability of facilities and instructors, student interest) <p>Regular review of training program and service array in view of the needs of learners, employers and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated approach to needs assessment • Needs more comprehensively and accurately assessed and prioritized • Decreased duplication of effort • Maximize resources for needs assessment • Annual Needs Assessment Reports • Ongoing and incremental needs differentiated • Critical skill shortages determined • Skills identified for immigrant recruitment (e.g. Provincial Nominee Program)
<p>4. Program/Service Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program and Service Array 	<p>To provide a relevant array of programs and services and appropriate strategies that respond to the type and most critical of identified education, training and employment needs of learners, employers and communities. <i>(Supports Sector Strategic Plan Objective 3.1, Action #4)</i></p>	<p>Planning partners determine specific actions to be taken, individually and/or collectively, to address prioritized needs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes or adjustments to existing programs, services & delivery methods • Addition or deletion of programs, services or delivery methods • Strategies to resolve occupational and skill shortages and demand over the short-, medium- or long-term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient and effective use of resources • Fewer mismatches in the labour market • Increased graduate employment outcomes • Increased graduate training-related employment outcomes • Strategies to address new and emerging skill shortages • Appropriate delivery methods to meet needs of learners, communities and employers • Multi-year business and annual operational plans • Improved responsiveness of the sector to develop and maintain a skilled workforce

A strategy is proposed to address the key issues identified in the environmental scan and position the post-secondary sector to respond to the demands being placed upon it. The strategy has been developed to implement the model for labour market planning and information. It supports the Sector Strategic Plan, specifically, *Objective 3.1 Contribute to the development and maintenance of a workforce responsive to the economy*, which calls for the development of a labour market information and planning strategy, timely labour market information and analysis, and a review of the program array in view of the needs of the economy. The strategy also supports *Objective 2.1 Support capacity to respond to existing and anticipated demand appropriate to the needs of individuals and the economy*, and *Objective 3.2 Increase employer and industry participation in planning and investment in education and training*.

The following objectives and actions of the strategy articulate an effective education and labour market planning and information system within the Saskatchewan post-secondary sector, and are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Sector Strategic Plan.

Objectives and Actions

1. Increased integration and coherency of the labour market planning and information system for the post-secondary sector.

Actions

- Increase involvement of employers, industry, communities and the post-secondary sector in labour market planning and information partnerships.
- Improve the coordination and integration of labour market planning and information in the post-secondary sector.

2. Improved quality of labour market information for more informed decision making in the post-secondary sector.

Actions

- Improve the quality, consistency and comprehensiveness of labour market and post-secondary sector data and research at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
- Improve the analysis and synthesis of information at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
- Improve the availability and accessibility of career and labour market information.

3. Increased responsiveness of the post-secondary sector to better meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.

Actions

- Improve the capability of the post-secondary sector to anticipate skill shortages in the Saskatchewan labour market.
- Develop mechanisms to better prioritize the post-secondary education, skills training, and employment program and service needs.
- Ensure the relevancy of the array of post-secondary education, skills training and employment programs, services and delivery methods.

The Education and Labour Market Planning and Information Strategy supports the Sector Strategic Plan’s vision statement, goals and specific objectives. Implementation of the strategy will enable the sector to:

- ▶ ☐ More accurately and reliably identify, assess and prioritize education, training and employment needs;
- ▶ ☐ Better anticipate skill shortages and develop and employ strategies to mitigate them or potentially prevent them from occurring;
- ▶ ☐ Develop a relevant and responsive array of programs, services and delivery methods;
- ▶ ☐ Improve career and labour market information for informed decision making;
- ▶ ☐ Facilitate and support program and enrollment planning for the post-secondary institutions;
- ▶ ☐ Maximize the use of collective resources and decrease duplication of effort; and
- ▶ ☐ More effectively target key growth sectors within the Saskatchewan economy that generate new wealth and jobs.

The following table outlines the key deliverables required to achieve the objectives and actions of the proposed strategy.

Objective 1 — Increased integration and coherency of the labour market planning and information system for the post-secondary sector.	
Actions	Key Deliverables
Increase involvement of employers, industry, communities and the post-secondary sector in labour market planning and information partnerships.	Increase representation and involvement of stakeholders in labour market planning at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
Improve the coordination and integration of labour market planning and information in the post-secondary sector.	Build upon the existing Saskatchewan Labour Market Network (SLMN) to provide a coordinated provincial approach to assess, prioritize and address education, training and employment needs; and review and make recommendations to the department on the submission dates for the various planning documents.
	Establish an interdepartmental forum on labour market research and policy development to coordinate and improve upon labour market research and information across government.
	Coordinate provincial Aboriginal specific issues, pressures and emerging trends that impact on the post-secondary sector through the First Nations and Métis Common Labour Market Planning Partnerships.
	Develop an approach to inform elements of program and enrollment planning at the post-secondary institutions.

Actions	Key Deliverables
	Develop an approach to inform credit transfer planning between SIAST and the universities.
	Develop an approach to inform program and enrollment planning for the Health Sciences to contribute to the development of a province-wide health human resources strategy.
	The department takes a leadership role to coordinate and integrate the labour market planning and information processes by serving as a cornerstone for LMI, coordinating research, synthesizing information and supporting the planning processes.
Objective 2 — Improved quality of labour market information for more informed decision making in the post-secondary sector.	
Actions	Key Deliverables
Improve the quality, consistency and comprehensiveness of labour market and post-secondary sector data and research at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.	Develop and implement agreed-upon guidelines, practices, common data elements, sound research methodologies and supporting tools at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
	Develop and implement a multi-year research agenda that supports the post-secondary sector at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
Improve the analysis and synthesis of information at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.	Analyze and synthesize the information generated through the regional, sectoral and provincial labour market planning and information processes that impact on the post-secondary sector.
Improve the availability and accessibility of career and labour market information.	Develop career and information products for end users and planners in a variety of formats.
	Support and maintain the SaskNetWork for the delivery of career and information products for end users, and the LMI Extranet for the delivery of LMI for planners.
	Develop and deliver LMI training sessions, workshops and presentations to support the delivery of career and employment services and labour market planning.
Objective 3 — Increased responsiveness of the post-secondary sector to better meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.	
Actions	Key Deliverables
Improve the capability of the post-secondary sector to anticipate skill shortages in the Saskatchewan labour market.	Monitor sectors that represent the SK economy and labour market to identify trends such as globalization, changing technologies, skill requirements and occupational demand.
Develop mechanisms to better prioritize the post-secondary education, skills training and employment program and service needs.	Develop and implement agreed-upon criteria, processes and tools for the identification, assessment and prioritization of education, training and employment needs at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.

Actions	Key Deliverables
Ensure the relevancy of the array of post-secondary education, skills training and employment programs, services and delivery methods.	Clearer linkages between identified needs and the array of programs, services and delivery methods at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
	Regular review of array of training programs, services and delivery methods at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels.
	Develop options for the post-secondary sector to collaborate on graduate follow up surveys.

Proposed Roles and Responsibilities for the Post-Secondary Sector

Implementation of the strategy requires clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the department, the post-secondary sector, and others with a stake in labour market planning and information at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels. The following describes a proposed labour market planning and information system that incorporates new and existing processes and activities, and articulates the responsibilities of sector partners.

Regional Labour Market Planning and Information

Labour market planning processes require the identification, assessment and prioritization of current as well as future labour market trends, occupational and skill demands, and education, training, career and employment needs. Given reasonably accurate information about these factors, an appropriate array of programs, services, delivery methods and initiatives are provided to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities.

A variety of labour market planning partnerships use an array of processes to provide the means to identify and address the education, training, career and employment service needs in rural and northern Saskatchewan. In the larger centres, a similar array of arrangements operate. The partnerships are inclusive, engaging a broad representation of stakeholders which helps ensure labour market needs are comprehensively identified. The various partnerships are responsible for facilitating linkages within their own organizations and key stakeholders. This approach broadens the network of stakeholders and fosters a better understanding of needs and the various options for addressing them, and increases opportunities for training partnerships.

Included among the stakeholders that participate in the partnerships are government departments, such as Economic and Cooperative Development, Social Services and Education, that have a regional presence or a vested interest in clearly articulating the needs of learners, employers, industry and communities in order to meet their own planning needs. The post-secondary sector is represented not only by the department's CES Offices, but also by SIAST, regional colleges, the two Aboriginal post-secondary training institutions, DTI and SIIT, the Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Commission and those community-based organizations that work with the sector to

enhance delivery. School divisions and the HRCC offices are also actively engaged in planning processes at the regional and local levels. Universities, SIFC, private vocational schools, individual learners and other stakeholders in the system can be engaged through consultations.

In rural and northern areas, regional colleges are responsible for the co-ordination and development of education and training needs assessments. Labour market and learner demand and education and training needs are identified, assessed and prioritized, based on accepted guidelines, practices and sound methodologies to ensure accurate, consistent and reliable information. Use of common data elements in the collection of LMI also enables aggregation for analysis and synthesis of trends and product development. The education and training needs assessments inform and guide development of annual business plans for the regional colleges, which clearly articulate the prioritized demand and training needs and how they are/are not being addressed. They also inform the development of the annual business plans for SIAST, DTI and ATCC as well as point the direction for ongoing institutional course curriculum and delivery renewal. Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training provides dedicated financial support to the colleges to manage the education and training needs assessment process.

The annual needs assessments help to identify training implications of labour market needs analysis, and are one element of the broader regional, sectoral and provincial planning processes. The department's CES Offices have a coordinating and support function that facilitates labour market planning through the wide variety of forums that exist at the local and regional level. Information gathered through the various forums and activities that the regional offices are involved in or have initiated, is consolidated by the regional offices and used to identify, assess and prioritize labour market demands as well as career and employment services needed to address them. This system permits variation in mechanisms used to generate information that is relevant to local labour market conditions and changes. It also serves to meet the needs and specific interests of the participating organizations and agencies and allows each to use information garnered as and when it is required.

The department analyzes and synthesizes information generated through the various regional processes to determine regional, sectoral and provincial trends that impact on the post-secondary sector. The department additionally supports regional labour market planning by providing labour market information, best practices on research methodologies, and tools to enable better collection and analysis of information. It also supports the delivery of career and employment services through training sessions, workshops, and presentations on available career and labour market information. The following are key sources of regional data and information products:

- ***Regional education and training needs assessments*** are annual documents that provide occupational and skill demand, demographics on specific client groups, education and training needs, labour force and economic activity, for the eight regional college regions. Information collected is further analyzed to determine regional, sectoral and provincial trends in economic, labour market demand and occupational and skill requirements.

- **Planning forum reports and/or studies** are a requirement of all planning activities undertaken by the department's CES Offices through the Regional Planning Partnerships funds. These reports and studies are one element of each of the regional office's planning, programming and service implementation.
- **Regional profiles** for the regional colleges and the department's regions that provide detailed information on demographics, industry, occupations, client specific groups, educational, labour force activity, and community-specific data. These profiles are developed to support regional labour market planning.
- **HRDC Saskatchewan website** (www.sk.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/lmi) provides regional labour market information on occupational profiles, shortage and surplus occupations, potential employers by occupation, industry overviews and profiles, labour market reviews, and community facts.

Sector Labour Market Planning and Information

Sectoral labour market planning enables the post-secondary sector to identify and address emerging occupational and skill requirements. Identification of key growth areas in the Saskatchewan economy and labour market provide further opportunity to target resources to ensure a supply pool of qualified workers and graduates. There are a number of processes that engage the post-secondary sector in sectoral labour market planning that involve SIAST, ATCC, industry-led sector planning partnerships, ongoing sectoral research, enrollment planning by the universities for their professional programs, human resource planning led by other departments, and multi-party training partnerships.

SIAST has a provincial mandate; however, a sectoral approach to planning the development and delivery of technical education and skills training allows SIAST to strategically address the longer term needs of industry emerging at a provincial level. Involvement in industry-led sector planning partnerships and ongoing sectoral research enables identification of occupational and skill demand and training needs. Sector-specific technical training needs are also derived through other processes, such as the regional education and training needs assessments, SIAST's Program Advisory Committees, and human resource planning led by other provincial departments with sectoral responsibilities.

The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (ATCC) has a provincial mandate to ensure that apprenticeship training meets industry's labour market needs by matching the skills needed for current and future jobs, increasing access to youth and underrepresented groups, and providing flexible and innovative training. Sector-specific demand for apprenticeship training is also determined through other processes such as the regional education and training needs assessments, SIAST, the Aboriginal institutions, and the sector planning partnerships. In addition, the forty-six designated Trade Boards, that have equal employer and employee representation from various industries/sectors, are tasked with environmental scanning of the labour market and knowledge of new or changing technologies within the trades to inform scheduling of training, curriculum development, and human resource development and planning.

SIAST and ATCC identify, assess and prioritize labour market and learner demand and training needs based on accepted guidelines, practices and sound methodologies to ensure accurate, consistent and reliable information. Their training needs assessments inform and guide development of annual business plans, which clearly articulate the prioritized demand and training needs and how they are/are not being addressed.

The department and SIAST are responsible for monitoring sectors that represent the Saskatchewan economy and labour market to identify trends such as globalization, changing technologies, skill requirements and occupational demand. They work with the post-secondary sector, and line departments and crown corporations with sectoral responsibilities, to undertake surveying of sectors on a rotational basis every three to five years. Research is based on sound methodologies and common data elements to ensure accurate, consistent and reliable information. Sectors that have a broad representation throughout the province such as agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and business services, have a regional perspective to support regional labour market planning and the delivery of career and employment services. Pressures on the labour market such as occupational 'hot spots' can also be identified and further examined.

This sectoral research informs industry-led sector planning partnerships, which engage in sectoral human resource development and planning within the Saskatchewan post-secondary sector. These partnerships are involved in the ongoing and systematic research as well as the validation of research findings, if possible. They collectively and individually address identified needs through human resource development and planning initiatives such as education, training and employment plans, recruitment and retention strategies and Aboriginal employment development opportunities.

The industry-led sector planning partnerships are funded by the department through the Sector Partnership Program. They are inclusive and have broad representation of key stakeholders from industry, labour, Aboriginal organizations, post-secondary institutions such as SIAST, the universities, ATCC and the regional colleges, and provincial departments with sectoral responsibilities. Employers and industries lead or participate in the partnerships, or are engaged through consultations. Linkages are also encouraged with the Provincial Representative Workforce Council and with related national sector councils.

The universities engage in an enrollment planning process for their professional programs that takes into consideration the supply and demand for qualified graduates. The universities are responsible for working with the professional and industry associations to monitor student, graduate and labour market trends for professional occupations to manage the array and capacity of university programs and services.

Other provincial departments with sectoral responsibilities are involved in human resource development and planning. PSEST works with these departments to identify, assess and address occupational and skill shortages through the Sector Partnership Program, joint workplans and other established processes such as the Saskatchewan Health Human Resources Council, the Board of Teacher Education and Certification, and the Interdepartmental Forum on Labour Market Research and Policy Development.

Economic and labour market issues for sectors that have a regional focus, such as mining and forestry, can be addressed through vehicles such as the Multi-Party Training Partnerships. Existing partnerships are based on agreements among government, industry and Aboriginal organizations that focus on co-operative training and economic initiatives, and are subcommittees of the Northern Labour Market Committee.

The department analyzes and synthesizes information generated through the various sectoral processes to determine sectoral and provincial trends that impact on the post-secondary sector. The department additionally supports sectoral labour market planning by providing labour market information, best practices on research methodologies, and tools to enable better collection and analysis of information. It uses research findings and any industry-specific training databases to develop sectoral and provincial career and labour market information to support labour market planning, the delivery of career and employment services, and decision making by individuals.

The following are key sources of sectoral data and information products:

- ***Sector Studies*** identify and examine current and future labour market demand, occupational and skill requirements, and human resource issues.
- ***Industry-Specific Training Information*** is a by-product of the industry-led sector research. This information is linked or incorporated with the What to Study Guide and SaskNetWork, where applicable.
- ***Sector Profiles*** are a by-product of available sector research. Research findings are synthesized and developed into profiles and housed on SaskNetWork.

Provincial Labour Market Planning and Information

There are multiple processes for examining provincial trends in the labour market and post-secondary sector and for engaging in provincial labour market planning that supports the various budgetary and strategic planning processes.

One of these processes is a provincial planning partnership that provides a coordinated, integrated and coherent provincial approach for the post-secondary sector to assess, prioritize and address identified education, training and employment needs. The partnership has cross-sectional representation of the following: post-secondary institutions including the regional colleges, SIAST, DTL, SIIT, the Private Vocational School Association and ATCC; METSI; the department including representation from the CES Offices; HRDC; and key line departments such as Education, Health, Social Services, Economic & Co-operative Development, and Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. The universities participate in this partnership for sharing of labour market and research information to support the planning of extension, continuing education and professional programs. The department has lead responsibility for the partnership, along with a rotational co-chair(s) from the membership.

The various partners within the provincial planning partnership are responsible for facilitating linkages within their own organizations and labour market planning and information processes. The partnership also ensure linkages with other partnerships such as the regional and sector planning partnerships, Provincial Representative Workforce Council, the Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board and the Interdepartmental Forum on Labour Market Research and Policy Development. The department is responsible for ensuring linkages with appropriate line departments that have sectoral responsibilities.

The provincial planning partnership provides a mechanism for reviewing the capacity of the post-secondary system, in relation to anticipated demand, to ensure a relevant array of training and employment programs and services. Strategies and action plans are then developed to address specific skill shortages, issues, pressures and emerging trends that impact on the post-secondary system. Sector Planning Partnerships are informed of industry-specific human resource issues and the Provincial Representative Workforce Council is informed of Aboriginal-specific issues, for further follow up. Identified needs that are unable to be met through the public post-secondary system are examined as opportunities for the private training system, or alternatively, for immigration through the Provincial Nominee Program and the Foreign Temporary Workers Program.

The partnership serves as a forum for the sharing and development of labour market information and best practices; the development of agreed-upon standards, guidelines and methodologies for consistent, accurate and reliable information; and the development of criteria and processes for the assessment and prioritization of education, training and employment needs. Sectoral research undertaken by the department is guided through the partnership, including an agreed-upon approach for defining and surveying of sectors.

The provincial planning partnership contributes to the articulation of a departmental research agenda as a means for further examining identified issues and pressures. It also is the venue for coordination and collaboration of research to inform labour market planning within the post-secondary sector to maximize available resources and decrease duplication of effort. There can be opportunities for shared research projects, such as high school leaver, graduate follow-up and employer surveys. In addition, the participation of the universities in this forum can facilitate access to academic research.

DTI and SIIT are Aboriginal post-secondary institutions and organizations that have a provincial mandate for the delivery of education, training and/or employment programs and services. METSI receives funding from the federal government for service delivery and training sponsorship through its twelve regional delivery sites. These entities identify, assess and prioritize labour market and learner demand and education, training and employment needs, based on accepted guidelines, practices and sound methodologies to ensure accurate, consistent and reliable information. Use of common data elements in the collection of labour market information also enables aggregation and analysis for synthesis of needs and product development. These organizations ensure linkages among the regional, sector and provincial planning partnerships and their own organizations, key stakeholders and labour market planning and information processes.

The First Nations Common Labour Market Planning Partnership and the Métis Common Labour Market Planning Partnership are the primary vehicles for coordinating provincial Aboriginal specific issues, pressures and emerging trends that impact on the post-secondary sector. The First Nations Common Labour Market Planning Forum has representation from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, HRDC and the department. The Métis Common Labour Market Planning Forum has representation from the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, HRDC and the department.

These tripartite partnerships provide the forum to discuss and mutually agree upon priorities for actions related to the labour market and post-secondary education and training needs of First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan. These forums encourage the sharing of information and best practices, and the development of collaborative approaches for program and service delivery that are operationalized at the local, regional and provincial levels.

The partnerships ensure linkages with other provincial partnerships such as the provincial planning partnership, the Provincial Representative Workforce Council, the Forum of Labour Market Ministers Aboriginal Working Group and the Interdepartmental Forum for Labour Market Research and Policy Development, to foster a better understanding of needs and the various options for addressing them.

The universities collectively review their program array and quality to determine their respective areas of specialization and sustainability, based on the capacity and student and labour market demand for their programs. This process is aided by the universities, SIAST and the department engaging in a review of provincial capacity and anticipated demand for credit transfer program areas, and addressing these needs through a complementary array of programs and services. The universities' extension and continuing education areas provide programs that are responsive to labour market demand.

An Interdepartmental Forum on Labour Market Research and Policy Development is the mechanism for the department to facilitate linkages between the provincial planning partnership and other line departments. It serves as the vehicle for the department to coordinate and improve upon labour market research and information across government and to achieve cost efficiencies. The forum coordinates and develops research to identify and examine key labour market issues that impact on government policy and that are addressed through joint workplans with other departments, as well as the coordination and development of labour market data and information.

A greater awareness and understanding of LMI is achieved through training, workshops and presentations. The department disseminates information to planners and analysts through the LMI Extranet, and to end users such as career practitioners, learners and job seekers and changers, and employers through the SaskNetWork.

The department coordinates, collaborates and partners with HRDC Saskatchewan Region in the research and data development, product development and dissemination of career

and labour market information to support the delivery of career and employment services and information for end users, reduce duplication of effort and achieve cost efficiencies.

The department facilitates linkages with federal/provincial/territorial partnerships such as the Forum of Labour Market Ministers Labour Market Information Working Group and the Canadian Occupational Projection System Partnership, and other line departments to identify opportunities for shared labour market data and information, and research.

The following are key sources of provincial data and information products:

- ***Sask Job Futures*** profiles significant occupations in the Saskatchewan labour market, describing the nature of work, educational requirements, wages and working conditions, and future employment prospects.
- ***What to Study Guide*** provides an overview of available programs and entry requirements for Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions.
- ***Graduate Follow Up Studies*** provide individuals, counsellors, employers and planners with post-secondary graduate outcomes for employment and education and training.
- ***SaskNetWork website*** (www.sasknetwork.gov.sk.ca) is a self-help tool for career, employment and labour market information in Saskatchewan. It provides information to support individuals looking for work, employers seeking workers, career planning and labour market information, workplace issues, self-employment, financial assistance and education and training information.
- ***SaskJobs*** is a departmental Internet-based tool, housed on SaskNetWork, that collects information on job vacancies including skill requirements, that is linked to the National Job Bank. SaskJobs also posts resumes, and provides an electronic capability to match employers and individuals. Information collected through SaskJobs is analyzed to determine regional and provincial trends in occupational and skill requirements.
- ***One Client Service Model (OCSM)*** is a departmental system that has several components to collect client-specific information regarding their participation in programs and services available through the department, regional colleges and ATCC. The Career Employment and Information System (CEIS) is a counseling tool used by the department's Career and Employment Consultants to document education and employment information and to assist individuals in the development of career action plans. The Student Information System (SIS) is the used by the regional colleges. Common screens have been developed within OCSM and are being used by the department, ATCC and the regional colleges to collect "tomb stone" and demographic information on clients. Information collected through OSCM is analyzed to determine regional and provincial demographic and education information on client groups.

- ***National Labour Market Information System (NLMIS)*** is an Intranet system that collects information to support HRDC's National Common Products including: occupational profiles, shortage and surplus occupations, potential employers by occupation, industry overviews and profiles, labour market reviews, and community facts. This information is configured to HRDC Sask Region's eleven regions and housed on their internal website.
- ***Saskatchewan Employment Demand Forecast*** provides labour market planners and analysts within the post-secondary sector, and across government, with a five-year outlook on industry and occupational employment.
- ***Overview of the Saskatchewan Economy and Labour Market*** provides labour market planners and analysts and career practitioners with a synopsis of economic, demographic, educational and skills, and labour market trends in the province.
- ***Capacity and Demand Study*** provides quantification and assessment of labour market and learner demand and the capacity of the array of programs and services within the post-secondary sector.
- ***LMI Extranet*** is a secured website for dissemination of detailed labour market information to policy and program analysts and planners within the post-secondary sector and across government.

Departmental Role

The department plays a critical role in the coordination and integration of the various labour market planning processes at the regional, sectoral and provincial levels. It provides the capacity and support to anticipate and respond to trends and issues that affect the post-secondary sector and influence the performance of the province's labour market. This involves working with the sector to establish criteria and a process for the prioritization of education, training and employment service needs.

The department is the cornerstone for coordination, interpretation and analysis, development, dissemination and support of career and labour market information for the post-secondary sector. It is responsible for ensuring quality LMI by working with the various planning partnerships to use accepted standards, guidelines and methodologies to improve the reliability and accuracy of information. The department acts as a central 'LMI clearinghouse' for the department and sector, and assures relevant LMI through an understanding of the needs of the various users of LMI and packaging the information accordingly.