

# YUKON TRAINING STRATEGY

*December 1998*



## **PART I: INTRODUCTION**

In order to develop an economy that works for all Yukon people, the Yukon Government intends to take strong, positive action to focus on training, job creation and responsible development. Yukon's economic health depends on a diverse economy that provides opportunities for people from a variety of backgrounds with a range of skills. Promoting job creation for Yukon people requires a recognition of the diverse kinds of work that Yukon people want, regardless of gender, culture, ability or age.

The Yukon Government will work cooperatively with First Nations, communities, labour, the private sector, women's organizations, youth, non-profit organizations and the federal government to help Yukon people take advantage of emerging employment and economic opportunities. It believes in inclusive approaches to training and employment that foster equity, fairness and diversity and help those most disadvantaged, while meeting the needs of a changing economy. It is equally important to work closely with Yukon College and its community campuses to ensure that training is delivered locally.

The Yukon Training Strategy has its origins in the Yukon 2000 process. It was initiated in 1986 and was revised by 1992. Today's events and conditions suggest that the YTS needs to be revised and updated once again. Recent key events affecting Yukon's training and unemployment environment include the following:

### **1. Changing Job Market**

In the Yukon, as elsewhere, the job market is changing. These changes result from profound influences, such as new technology, globalization, new federal government financial priorities, increasing competitive pressures and the changing nature of work. As the primacy of mining in the Yukon economy has been challenged, other sectors of the economy, such as tourism, have grown in importance.

Fiscal limitations rule out the reliance on large-scale capital projects to stimulate economic growth and job creation. Flexible and innovative responses are needed from both the public and private sectors. Yukon Government is pursuing economic activity in new areas, such as trade and export development, investment promotion and infrastructure improvement. At the same time, it is building on current strengths, such as tourism, by promoting wilderness tourism and First Nations tourism.

### **2. Land Claims and Self-Government**

Eight Yukon First Nations have now completed final and self-government agreements. Chapter 22 of the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) states the Yukon Government's obligations regarding the employment of First Nations people in the following terms:

*"Where public service employment exists, the government shall assist in facilitating training and professional development of Yukon First Nations people so that they will have access to such employment opportunities, with particular emphasis on increasing the number of Yukon First Nations people in technical,*

*managerial and professional positions in the public service.”*

These legal obligations under the UFA make it imperative that the new training strategy support the government’s goal of a more representative public service.

Land claims and self government will generate new economic opportunities for Yukon people, especially in the communities. The training strategy will also support the effective implementation of land claims and self-government. This link is strengthened by the participation of the Yukon Government on the Training Policy Committee, which is responsible for the training trust established for First Nations people under the UFA.

The establishment of the Development Assessment Process (DAP) will make further training necessary for people who will work with that process, particularly employees of the Yukon Government and First Nations.

The transfer of responsibility for oil and gas to the Yukon presents new economic opportunities for Yukon people. The training strategy will be an important part of ensuring that Yukon people will be able to take advantage of new job opportunities in this field and other resource areas over which the Yukon gains jurisdiction.

### **3. Federal Changes**

The *Employment Insurance Act* dictates a new way of providing support to unemployed people. The federal government has ended the practice of providing funding to provincial and territorial training institutions and will instead provide support directly to the client. This reduction in direct purchase of training provides a challenge to Yukon Government and its partners, such as Yukon College, to ensure that sufficient resources are directed to training Yukon people.

In 1996, the federal government also undertook to offer provinces and territories an expanded role in the design and delivery of employment benefits and support measures under Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act*. The Yukon Government has agreed to co-manage these programs with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). This will allow Yukon to have direct input into making these programs responsive to community needs and the varying needs of Yukon’s diverse workforce.

For those seeking a job for the first time, or for those looking at the possibility of doing something different, all of these changes mean opportunity, an opportunity to acquire, update or transfer skills which can open the door to employment. To benefit from or respond to the changing job market, Yukon people have to be trained to ensure that their skills are in line with the opportunities of the job market, both now and in the future.

## ***VISION FOR THE TRAINING STRATEGY***

Ensure all Yukon people have the opportunity to participate fully in training and development which enhance their lifeskills and employability. The Yukon Training Strategy will be inclusive and foster equity, fairness and diversity in order to help Yukon people take advantage of and benefit from economic and social development in the Yukon as it occurs.

## ***PRINCIPLES OF THE TRAINING STRATEGY***

### **1. Respect**

The Yukon Government is committed to a training strategy that ***respects the needs of all Yukon people***. This principle is a part of the Yukon Government's commitment to having a government that is open and accessible to everyone, regardless of culture, gender, ability, financial means or location.

### **2. Preparedness**

The YTS will provide ***avenues of opportunity*** for Yukon people to access training and development initiatives that will help to prepare them to take advantage of and contribute to economic and social development in the Yukon as it occurs.

### **3. Collaboration**

***Building partnerships*** with all sectors of Yukon society will strengthen and expand the resources available for training and development initiatives. This principle will build on the government's commitment to continue to expand its relationships with Yukon College, private sector industry, labour and non-profit organizations, and to expand on the government to government relationship it has with First Nation Governments and municipal governments.

### **4. Sustainable Development**

The Yukon is rich in resources and the planning for the use of them for the ***long-term benefit*** of Yukon people is therefore of fundamental importance. The training strategy will help in ensuring that development in the Yukon is sustainable.

## PART II: MOVING FROM VISION TO ACTION

To realize its vision for training in the Yukon, the Yukon Government will initiate four core strategies. These are:

- Adapt to the changing workplace
- Establish training trust funds
- Focus on our youth
- Establish a representative workforce in government

### CORE STRATEGY #1. Adapt to the Changing Workplace

The economic health of the Yukon is dependent on a diverse economy that provides opportunities for Yukon people from a wide variety of backgrounds with a broad range of skills. Promoting job creation for Yukon people is not a simple commitment to a number. It is recognition of the diverse kinds of work that Yukon people want. It is also recognition of the modern trend of people changing careers more often.

In order to enable Yukon people to adapt to the changing workplace, the Yukon Government is proposing to undertake the following:

#### A. Apprenticeship Reform

Apprenticeship was a key element of the previous Yukon Training Strategy. Objectives such as facilitating entry into apprenticeship, trade designation and Apprenticeship Incentive Marketing were the focus. Apprenticeship has grown significantly in the Yukon over the past few years. In 1997, there were 272 apprentices, with an increasing number of women and First Nations people taking part. As of November 1998, that number was still high at 245. But, with women comprising only 9% of students enrolled in trades programs at Yukon College, there is room for improvement.

Apprenticeship is changing constantly. Advanced Education works continuously with industry, including employers and employees, and other jurisdictions to make it better. Several specific changes will be undertaken, particularly in response to community needs. These include:

- Work with industry, including employers and employees, to examine the market needs for apprenticeship over the next 3-5 years, and examine what incentives might be enhanced or developed to encourage private sector employers to take on additional apprentices.
- Establish Competency Based Apprenticeship Training (CBAT), beginning with the carpentry and electrical trades. Modularized training will help the Yukon Government respond to a pressing need in the communities where individuals have only partially completed an apprenticeship but would like to take advantage

of economic opportunities, such as government capital projects. Modularized training will not diminish the concept of apprenticeship; rather, it will complement the apprenticeship system.

- Work with labour and industry to link efforts on apprenticeship training to a process of moving toward the Yukon Hire Policy goal of hiring Yukon certified tradespeople and apprentices on government construction projects.
- Develop an equity strategy for apprenticeship training. Advanced Education will work with the Women's Directorate and key women's organizations on a study to determine the current situation of women in apprenticeship and the trades in the Yukon. The study will:
  - ◊ quantify and qualify the current situation of women working, studying and no longer involved in the trades in the Yukon:
  - ◊ identify the barriers to women in existing trades and examine the options for women in non-traditional apprenticeship programs; and
  - ◊ make recommendations on how to encourage women to participate in apprenticeship.
- Work with First Nations to address how to increase the participation of aboriginal people in the apprenticeship program.
- Work with labour, business, First Nations, the Association for Community Youth Initiatives and others to enhance efforts to promote apprenticeship as a career option for students in the public school system.
- Create special training trust funds to ensure that apprenticeship and training needs can be met in the future.

#### B. Enhance Access To And Support Opportunities for all Learners

Employment programs help unemployed people – especially those who face difficulties securing work because of poverty, lack of education, social problems, disabilities, gender or age – to find and keep jobs. These are people who traditionally have the most difficulty in adjusting to the changing workplace. The Yukon Government will therefore:

- Continue to fund Yukon Learn at historical levels for its literacy programs.
- Work with Yukon Learn, other literacy partners, First Nations, labour and business to revise and upgrade the Yukon Literacy Strategy.
- In accordance with the Yukon Hire Policy, work with the Training Policy Committee, labour, industry and communities to ensure that strong links exist between government capital plans and skills and training requirements. Examples of these links already exist, such as the Old Crow school, the College Access Road upgrade initiative in Whitehorse and the Shakwak project along the Alaska Highway.
- With key partners such as the federal government, assist low income earners to access training and, where possible, integrate income support programs with labour force policy to build workforce skills.

- Work with HRDC through the co-management regime to support social assistance recipients and EI eligible clients in developing their skills and finding secure, long-term jobs.
- Work with the Council of Aging and related organizations to examine ways to enhance access by seniors to employability related training.
- In collaboration with the appropriate partners, examine the means to enhance access to training by the disabled. As well, work with Yukon College, HRDC and NGOs to support the disabled in developing their skills and finding sustainable jobs.
- Work with women's organizations and other partners to foster a climate in the labour market that encourages women to pursue self-employment, particularly mature women and women re-entering the workforce after several years of absence.
- Pursue the transfer of responsibility for English as a Second Language (ESL) from the federal government to the Yukon Government in order to ensure that immigrants receive the language skills training necessary for them to take advantage of job opportunities.

## **CORE STRATEGY #2. Training Trust Funds**

Training, skills development and upgrading are essential for a modern work force. The Yukon Government believes everyone should be able to acquire the skills needed to participate in the workforce. Barriers that may limit opportunities, particularly in the communities, must be reduced.

Training trust funds are an important means of addressing these issues. Training trust funds are, in part, community-based and community-driven. They are designed to put decisions about training in the hands of those best equipped to understand those needs – the communities themselves. Training trust funds also represent a true commitment to partnership between government and the private sector. They can be industry-specific, to help the private sector meet the training needs of specific industries that are important to the Yukon economy, now and in the future.

Examples of training trust funds include the Mine Training Trust Fund, established between the Government and the Yukon Chamber of Mines, and the training trust fund established with the Yukon Agricultural Association. Training Trust Funds may also be established with communities themselves, as they may wish to take a broad approach to local training needs. Examples of this type of training trust funds are those established with Watson Lake and Carmacks.

Building on previous experience, the Yukon Government will:

- Continue to support training trust funding in the fiscal years 1999-2000 and 2000-01. The funds may be used to enhance existing funds, such as the Watson Lake Training Trust Fund, or to create new ones in support of emerging training needs. As in the past, training trust funds may be used to lever additional training resources from other sources.

- Continue to work with communities, First Nations, women's groups, labour and the private sector to develop additional training trust funds on a sectoral basis, including such possibilities as:
  - a forestry
  - b mining
  - c agriculture
  - d service industry
  - e manufacturing and high tech
  - f arts and culture
  - g environmental
- Establish sector focused training trust funds as a component of each of the Industry/Government multi-year development plans. Over the next three years, multi-year development plans will be created for the following economic sectors: Cultural Industries, Sport and Recreation, Agriculture and Forestry as well as the Manufacturing and High Technology industries.
- Work with non-government organizations to establish training trust funds to address the specific training needs of Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Work with communities to establish training trust funds to address the specific training needs of individual Yukon communities.
- Implement an accountability and evaluation framework for training trust funds to ensure their effectiveness.

### **CORE STRATEGY #3. Focus on Our Youth**

Canada's future prosperity depends on the ability of its young people to participate in and contribute to the economy. The employment problems facing youth are complex. Young people 15 to 24 years of age have fewer employment prospects than any other age group in the labour force.

The Yukon Government has collaborated with Canada and the provinces on a National Youth Employment Strategy but it has also initiated steps itself that are designed to address the youth unemployment problem. It has, for example, opened a Youth Entrepreneurship Centre with community partners and established a Youth Investment Fund. To encourage employment opportunities for Yukon youth aged 24 and younger, it changed the Business Incentive Program to provide a 15% rebate to employers for wages and benefits.

Initiatives such as these, and other parts of the Yukon Hire Policy will complement the Yukon Training Strategy. The recent agreement with HRDC on co-management of employment benefits and support measures in the Yukon will also allow Yukon Government to address better the specific needs of youth and other people in need.



Finally, the Yukon Government recently released its Youth Strategy, entitled “Young Voices: the Key to Our Future.” The Yukon Government recognizes that it must develop, in partnership with youth and the many organizations that work with youth, a comprehensive strategy to improve overall services to youth.

Through the Yukon Training Strategy and the Youth Strategy, Yukon Government will help young people develop their talents and skills while also helping them to balance work, fun, leisure and community activities. We have also made a commitment to involve young people in decision-making by encouraging youth participation on Yukon boards and committees.

The Yukon Training Strategy will focus on youth in four principal ways. They are:

A. *Creating opportunities for youth to develop knowledge and skills for work*

Many young people do not have the level of education and/or skills they need to find and retain meaningful employment. Youth need opportunities to develop basic skills and specialized technical skills. Entrepreneurial skills are also becoming more important as the nature of work changes. To address these concerns, the Yukon Government will:

- Develop better labour market information and planning at the territorial level and devise means of getting that information into the hands of youth.
- In partnership with Yukon College, municipalities, youth organizations and the Youth Entrepreneurship Centre, provide improved access to career and employment services to support people in making career plans and obtaining training or employment.
- Work with Yukon College to improve distance education capability in order to allow youth to acquire training in their home communities.
- Work with the Training Policy Committee and aboriginal training agencies to identify better and meet the training and employment needs of aboriginal youth.
- Work with women’s organizations to identify the unique and specific needs of young women.
- Develop a Skills Yukon initiative to promote trades to young people.

B. *Increasing work opportunities for young people*

- Identify and establish increased funding for the Student Training and Employment Program.
- Explore such options as a youth mentoring program in order to provide recent university and college graduates an opportunity to gain work experience and stay in the Yukon.
- Work with the not-for-profit sector to examine the feasibility of community service placements for youth.

- Work with the HRDC and other partners such as Yukon College and the communities to explore options for assisting youth traditionally unattached to the workforce to gain work experience in their home communities.

### C. Helping young people respond to the changing nature of work

- Adopt a multi-disciplinary process with regard to career development opportunities, including para-professional training, and the areas of health and wellness, social services, literacy enhancement, academic upgrading, and vocational planning.
- Work with Yukon College to ensure the provision of accessible and effective career planning, guidance counseling and labour market information for young people.
- Support research into the changing nature of work.
- Work with labour, the private sector, Yukon College and the Association for Community Youth Initiatives to identify and establish strategies to address the issues young Yukon people face in entering the labour market.
- Maintain the Yukon WorkFutures initiative.

### D. Removing cultural and social barriers that can prevent young people from working

- Work with business, the Training Policy Committee, the federal government and other partners, to develop a mentoring program designed to put aboriginal youth in entry-level positions in the private sector.
- Develop an initiative to assist young people dependent on social assistance to gain the skills and experience they need to be successful in the labour force. The initiative will focus on essential skills such as reading, numeracy, oral communication, thinking skills, computer skills and continuous employability.
- Work with the Training Policy Committee and aboriginal youth to devise a strategy for training aboriginal youth, designed to allow them to take advantage of employment opportunities arising through the implementation of land claims and self-government.

## **4. Establish a Representative Workforce in Government**

Training for public service employees will enhance the Yukon Government's commitment to service, integrity, building trust in public government and ensuring that public government is accountable. A representative workforce is important to all Yukon people.

A number of specific initiatives that will enhance the skills of Yukon's public service workforce and support the representative workforce have been identified for implementation. They are:

### *Yukon Government Leadership Forum*

The Public Service Commission (PSC) will continue to build on its leadership program which provides a pool of talent for more senior positions. This program provides

participants with exposure to leading edge concepts in public administration. An acknowledgement of the low numbers of target group members in the senior ranks of government will require a marketing of this program in such a way as to encourage women, First Nations persons and persons with disabilities at the appropriate level to gain access to the program.

#### *Land Claims Training*

Yukon Government will provide learning opportunities to each of its employees on the details and significance of land claims and self government. This is of importance in developing a greater awareness and understanding of the government to government relations between Yukon and First Nations. Training will also be extended to related initiatives, such as the Development Assessment Process.

#### *Temporary Assignment Protocol*

Working with First Nations, PSC will develop a protocol that will form the basis for all temporary assignments between First Nation Governments and Yukon Government. The encouragement of exchanges and assignments between Yukon and First Nations is seen as a crucial step in enhancing the working relationship between employees of our respective governments as implementation proceeds.

Yukon Government will also consider temporary assignment arrangements with the federal government, municipalities, the private sector and non-government organizations, although the priority will remain with the First Nations' governments.

#### *Supporting the Community*

The Yukon Government remains committed to supporting training needs of NGOs where practicable. NGOs will have opportunities to purchase seats in training programs sponsored by the PSC for government employees. Alternatively, NGOs may have access where seats have not been filled.

## **PART III: OUTCOMES**

Although the Yukon Training Strategy has a vision statement to guide the future of training in the Yukon, there are also objectives it can strive toward, which can ultimately serve as a measuring stick for evaluating the strategy. These objectives include:

- Increased diversity in the Yukon workforce.
- A more representative Yukon Government public service.
- An increased number of social assistance recipients re-entering the labour force.
- An increase in youth employment.
- More collaboration amongst government, First Nations, labour and business/industry, women's organizations and other key partners in the labour market.
- Addressing Yukon community needs more effectively.