

## Labour Force Statistics ♦ May 2003

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **B.C. seasonally-adjusted employment decreased by 7,800 in May following a 7,400 decrease in April.** The number of unemployed in May increased by 11,500, pushing up the unemployment rate to 8.6 per cent in May from 8.1 per cent in April.
- **Seasonally-adjusted employment increased in the B.C. goods-producing sectors by 3,900 in May. This increase was shared by all goods industries except agriculture.** Service sector employment decreased by 11,700 in May. This decrease was primarily experienced in finance and related services, retail and wholesale trade, and health and social services while some sectors (e.g. transport and warehousing; professional, scientific and technical) experienced small increases.
- **Seasonally-adjusted employment decreased in May for both men (down 2,000) and women (down 5,800) in B.C.** For both men and women, all of the decrease was experienced in part-time employment. Overall, full-time employment rose by 13,300 and part-time employment declined by 21,100.
- **Canadian seasonally-adjusted employment decreased by 13,100 in May.** Employment decreased substantially in Quebec (down 9,300), Newfoundland (down 8,600) and B.C. (down 7,800), and increased by 12,500 in Alberta. There was little change in employment in the other provinces.

<b>Selected Statistics (SA)*</b>	<b>May 2003</b>	<b>Apr. 2003</b>	<b>May 2002</b>
B.C. Unemployment Rate	8.6%	8.1%	9.5%
Canada Unemployment Rate	7.8%	7.5%	7.7%
B.C. Employment - Change from prev. mo.	-0.4%	-0.4%	-
B.C. Labour Force - Change from prev. mo.	0.2%	0.1%	-
B.C. Labour Force Participation Rate	65.3%	65.2%	64.7%

\* Unless otherwise indicated, all labour force statistics are seasonally adjusted.

*Labour Force Statistics is a joint compilation and review by BC STATS of the Ministry of Management Services and the Accountability Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education, reflecting the results of the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. For more information, call BC STATS (250) 387-0327 or the Accountability Branch (250) 952-6111.*

## B.C. Occupational Employment Projections 2001 to 2011

### Introduction:

This article provides an overview of the B.C. occupational employment projections (i.e. the COPS BC Unique Scenario) for the period 2001 to 2011. The COPS BC Unique Scenario was prepared jointly by the Accountability Branch, Ministry of Advanced Education, and the Strategic Services Unit, BC/Yukon Region, Human Resources Development Canada. The B.C. occupational projections provide information of future occupational demand trends to the year 2011 and are used by government planners and analysts, post-secondary institutions, and business groups. They also provide information used in career and labour market information products for students, parents and job seekers.

### Highlights:

According to the COPS BC Unique Scenario, February 2003, B.C. is projected to experience a total of 695,867 employment openings between 2001 and 2011. That total consists of 296,536 employment openings attributable to economic and employment growth (an annual average employment growth rate of 1.4%) and 399,331 employment openings attributable to attrition (i.e. retirements and deaths). B.C.'s annual average employment growth per the COPS BC Unique Scenario for the years 2003 to 2007 is 1.9%, which is consistent with the B.C. Ministry of Finance's most recent five-year employment forecast that was released on February 18, 2003 as part of the BC Budget 2003.

### Industry Employment

The COPS BC Unique Scenario, February 2003, projects that overall employment will experience annual average growth of 1.4% between 2001 and 2011. As reflected in Figure 1, the largest annual average employment growth between 2001 and 2011 is projected to occur in a number of service industries, including *Busi-*

*ness Services* (2.3% per year); *Accommodation, Food and Recreation Services* (2.1% per year); *Retail Trade* (1.9% per year); *Wholesale Trade* (1.9% per year); *Personal and Household Services* (1.9% per year); and *Health Services* (1.5% per year). In the goods-producing industries, only the *Construction* industry is projected to experience annual average growth above 1.4% between 2001 and 2011. Annual average employment growth is projected to be modest or virtually flat in *Primary Goods* (0.5% per year), *Education* (0.2% per year) and *Public Administration* (0.1% per year).

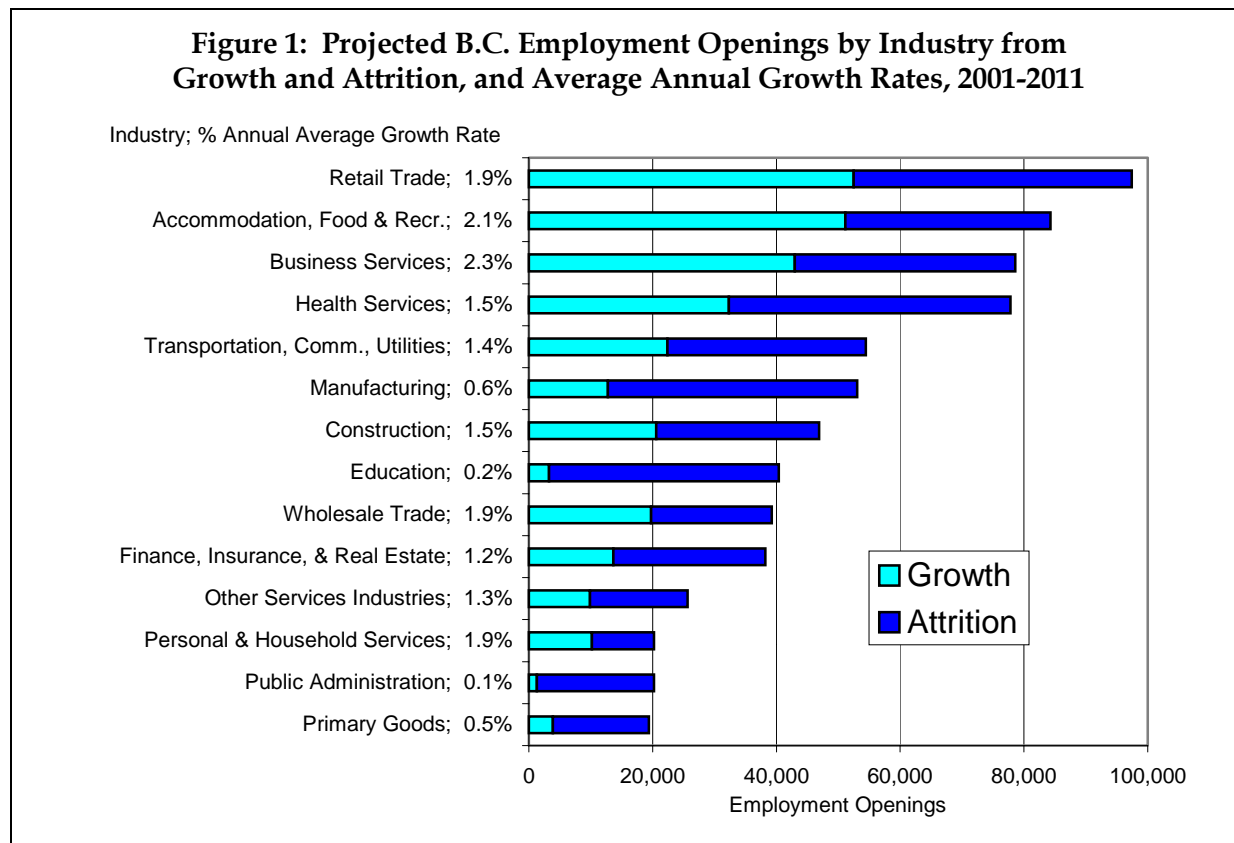
While the *Education* sector overall is projected to see modest annual average growth of only 0.2%, employment in the primary/secondary sub-sector is projected to actually decline, as the number of K-12 aged children in B.C. continues to decline through 2011 and beyond. Meanwhile, the post-secondary and adult education and training sub-sectors are projected to experience employment growth, due to the projected growth in the prime post-secondary aged population (18-29 years of age) together with increased participation in adult training to meet changing skill needs.

Projected net employment growth is only one aspect of the overall employment picture; the size of an industry (in terms of employment level) is also important. Larger industries with average annual employment growth rates can generate more employment openings than small industries with above average annual employment growth rates. Also, attrition (i.e. due to retirements and deaths) is expected to generate significant numbers of employment openings, including in some industries that are projected to experience very little or no employment growth.

Figure 1 also shows the projected total number of employment openings by industry between 2001 and 2011, separately identifying the projected openings due to growth and the projected openings due to attrition. For example, *Retail Trade* is a very large industry in

terms of employment level, and is expected to generate almost 100,000 employment openings in B.C. between 2001 and 2011. Of those openings, approximately 50,000 are projected to be due to growth and approximately 50,000 are projected to be due to attrition. As reflected in Figure 1, the majority of employment openings in most industries between 2001 and

2011 will be due to attrition, as large numbers of baby-boomers reach retirement age. Industries such as *Education, Public Administration* and *Primary Goods* are projected to generate relatively few employment openings due to growth, but are projected to generate significant numbers of employment openings due to attrition.

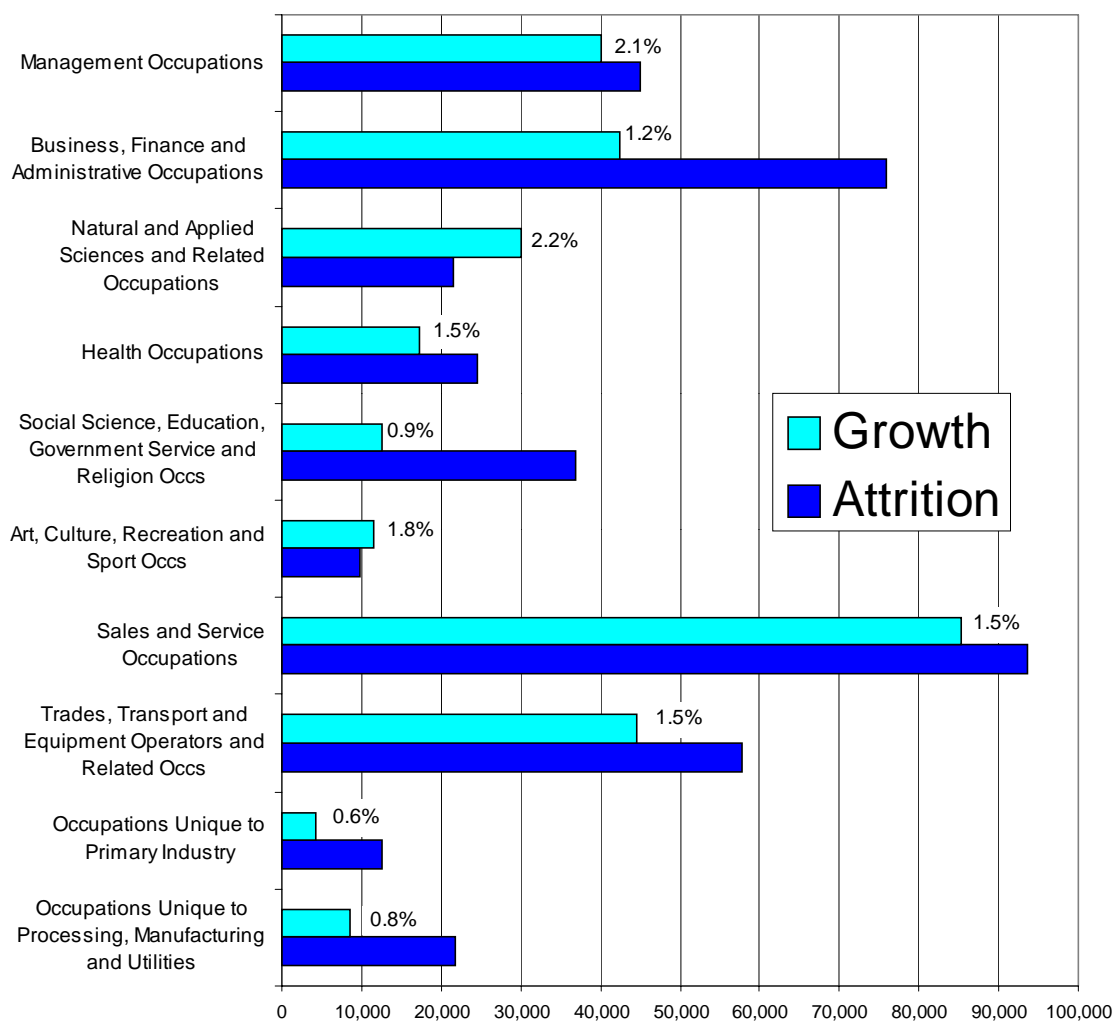


**Occupational Employment**

Figure 2 shows projected B.C. employment openings between 2001 and 2011 for broad occupational groups, separately identifying openings due to growth and openings due to attrition. It also shows the average annual employment growth rate for broad occupational groups. It is clear from Figure 2 that there is significant variation in the projected growth rates and projected number of employment openings between broad occupational groups. The large *Business, Finance and Administrative* occupational group (which includes *Accountants, Secretaries, Office*

*Clerks, etc*) is projected to experience below average employment growth (1.2% per year), but is projected to generate over 40,000 employment openings due to growth and approximately 75,000 employment openings due to attrition. The *Natural and Applied Sciences* group (which includes *Professional Engineers, Computer Systems Analysts, Electronic Technologists, etc.*) is the only broad occupational group where the projected number of employment openings due to growth (30,000) is larger than the projected number of openings due to attrition (approx. 22,000).

**Figure 2: Projected B.C. Employment Openings by Broad Occupational Group from Growth and Attrition, and Average Annual Growth Rates, 2001-2011**



**Employment Openings by Education/ Training Levels**

Figure 3 displays the distribution and level of projected employment openings in B.C. (due to both growth and attrition) between 2001 and 2011, on the basis of four categories of education/training required. Each of the 510 detailed occupations is assigned to at least one of the education/training categories, and in some cases an occupation is shared between two categories (e.g. where an occupation can be reached via two education/training routes). For example, the *Computer Programmers* occupation has been shared equally between the “University” and “Other Post-Secondary or

Industry Training” categories, reflecting that this occupation hires employees from both of these education/training categories. This categorization of employment openings by occupation into education/training required has a number of challenges owing to how the National Occupational Classification system is structured in terms of its assigned skill levels to detailed occupations for those in the “University” versus the “Other Post-Secondary or Industry Training” categories. For example, within a particular occupation whose assigned skill level falls under “Other Post-Secondary or Industry Training”, some employers may prefer workers with a university degree. The

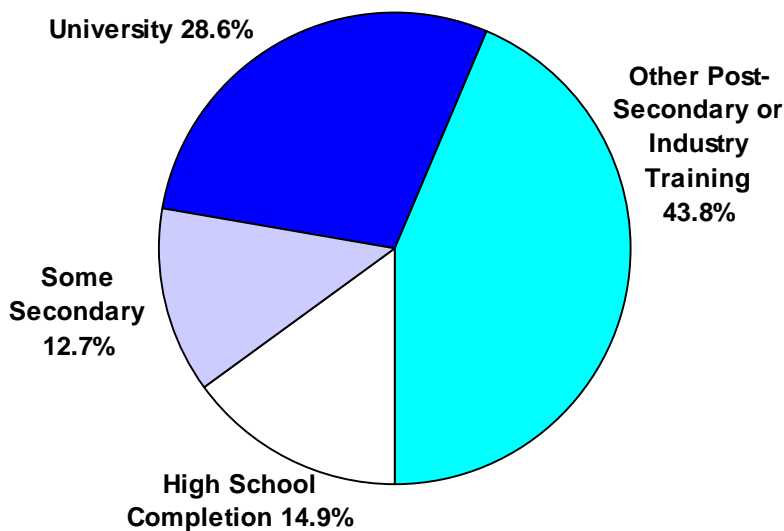
main point of Figure 3 is to highlight that 72.4% of expected employment openings will require more than just high school completion.

Figure 3 shows that 72.4% of projected employment openings between 2001 and 2011 will be in occupations requiring "University" or "Other Post-Secondary or Industry Training". In part, this reflects the existing large size of these two categories in terms of employment levels. In 2001, 66% of B.C. occupational employment required "University" or "Other Post-Secondary or Industry Training". The large proportion of projected employment openings requiring "University" or "Other Post-Secondary or Industry Training" also reflects larger than average annual growth rates for these occupations, and the relatively large number of projected openings due to attrition over the period.

It is recognized that the categorization of occupations on the basis of the most typical

education/training route provides only an approximation of the overall number of openings by education/training requirement. This categorization could understate the proportion of employees in relatively low-skill occupations actually possessing "University" or "Other Post-Secondary or Industry Training". At the same time it could be argued that the occupations assigned to these two education/training categories may contain significant numbers of employees who have completed high school and acquired additional skills through informal processes as opposed to through obtaining a formal post-secondary credential. For example, some Java computer programmers are self-taught, some reporters at major dailies did not complete their journalism diploma or degree program, and some framing carpenters acquired their skills informally on the job over a period of years without having obtained a formal trade certificate.

**Figure 3: Distribution and Level of B.C. Projected Employment Openings, 2001-2011, by Education/Training Required**



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