

# Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Agreement 2009/2010 Performance Measures Annual Report

## Introduction

The Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Agreement (LMA) was signed on February 22, 2008. The agreement provides Saskatchewan with approximately \$90 million over a six year time period (more than \$15 million annually) to create new labour market programs and supports for those who do not currently qualify for assistance under the *Employment Insurance Act*.

The LMA provides support to individuals who are often excluded from the labour force, such as immigrants, persons with disabilities, older workers and Aboriginal people entering or re-entering the labour force. Residents who are unemployed and workers who lack basic education or skills also have support to get the training they need to find and keep good jobs. In 2009-10, the province provided a continuation of programs and services introduced in 2008-09 under the LMA. Program areas include: foundational skills, skills training, and workforce development/learner supports to respond to labour market needs.

In 2009-10, Saskatchewan also received an additional \$4.552M in federal economic stimulus funding through the Strategic Training and Transition Fund (STTF). This initiative provides time-limited one time funding to provinces and territories who have signed a Labour Market Agreement to support the needs of workers affected by the economic downturn. The STTF is available to all employed and unemployed Canadians, both Employment Insurance (EI) and non-EI eligible, with a particular focus on low-skilled and those in communities or sectors affected by the downturn.

Funding through the LMA and the STTF in 2009-2010 assisted approximately 5,484 non EI-eligible Saskatchewan individuals. The total LMA funding expended within the 2009-2010 fiscal year was \$15,240,591 and an additional \$4.552M under the STTF for a total of \$19,792,591.

The Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI) (formerly Advanced Education, Employment and Labour) is responsible for administering the LMA on behalf of Saskatchewan. LMA programs and services are delivered by the Ministry of AEEI and third party service providers. It is effective partnerships with a range of entities, including post-secondary institutions, businesses and community-based organizations that have assisted the Ministry in achieving the desired outcomes for the LMA.

The LMA Annual Report presents the programs and activities the Ministry of AEEI funded under the LMA, including the stimulus funding under the STTF and the results for the fiscal year April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. The report focuses on the commitments made in the 2009-10 LMA Annual Plan. The Annual Plan can be accessed at <http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/canada-sk-labour-market-agreement-annual-plan-2009-10>.

## **Program Demand**

Saskatchewan's economy has been relatively stable through 2009-10 and the demand for skilled labour and training remained fairly strong due to the state of the economy. However, the province has not been immune to the effects of the global economic downturn and there are individuals, regions and industry sectors that have been impacted by changes in the economy. Accordingly, training and employment support opportunities for non-EI eligible clients through LMA funding have been critical to help individuals enter or re-enter the labour force.

In addition, Saskatchewan has utilized LMA funding to focus on providing job readiness and basic skills training for groups who have not had strong ties to the labour force in the past (older workers, First Nations and Métis, people with disabilities and those without basic training or literacy skills). The Canadian Council on Learning indicates that over 70 per cent of newly created jobs will require higher educational attainment levels and some form of post-secondary education. The basic skills training and employment support programs under the LMA provide the foundation for individuals who plan to continue on to higher levels of post-secondary education.

## **Eligible Clients**

The Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Agreement has provided Saskatchewan with additional funds to address the employment programs and services requirements for non-Employment Insurance clients who have little to no work experience. It is important that those individuals who are not currently engaged in the labour market have the skills, training, and supports they require to become and remain employed.

Programs have been targeted to the following priority client groups:

1. unemployed individuals who are not Employment Insurance clients, including, but not limited to:
  - social assistance recipients;
  - immigrants;
  - persons with disabilities;
  - older workers;

- youth;
  - First Nations and Métis peoples;
  - new entrants or re-entrants to the labour market;
  - unemployed individuals previously self-employed; and
2. employed individuals who are low skilled, in particular, employed individuals who do not have a high school diploma or a recognized certification or who have low levels of literacy and essential skills.

## **Programs and Activities**

During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the province delivered an array of programs and activities under three key priority areas identified in the Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Agreement Annual Plan for 2009-10. The three priorities include: Develop Individual's Foundational Skills; Increase Access to Skills Training and Respond to Labour Market Needs. In addition, funding was allocated to administrative and information technology costs associated with delivering the programs, data collection and follow up surveys.

The programs and activities funding under the LMA are consistent with AEEL's Plan for 2009-10 and support the provincial government's goal of economic growth. These programs and activities concentrate on preparing people for employment with a continuum of programs and services that provide a range of opportunities that include upgrading existing skills, skills training and employability skills. The priority areas that the province has chosen to focus its programs and services are based on best practices in labour market development and client needs for specific employment and skills training. The array of programs and activities are designed to help improve training and employment outcomes for Saskatchewan people and enhance the services that Saskatchewan people need, when and where they need them.

The additional federal economic stimulus funding is serving Saskatchewan's labour market interests by allowing the province to respond strategically to the economic downturn and the impacts it has had on Saskatchewan, and assist in developing a skilled workforce to ensure Saskatchewan remains on track for economic growth. A key element has been the provision of additional training seats and work experience to help individuals develop the skills needed for today's labour market. As well, the initiatives have supported increasing education levels and labour market participation of First Nations and Métis people.

The LMA programs and services represent a continuum of opportunities focused on employment and successful program completion. The continuum moves from basic skills development to higher level skills and training, with an array of

program supports available to ensure program success. Throughout the continuum of programs and services there is a focus on direct linkages to employment.

The following table lists the LMA programs and activities and the corresponding funding expenditures for each area during the 2009-10 fiscal year:

<b>Programs and Activities</b>	<b>LMA</b>	<b>STTF</b>	<b>Total</b>
Develop Individual's Foundational Skills	\$3,069,032	\$2,287,000	\$5,356,032
Increase Access to Skills Training	\$2,322,770	\$1,865,000	\$4,187,770
Respond to Labour Market Needs	\$7,167,162	\$400,000	\$7,567,162
Information Technology / Administration	\$2,681,628	\$0	\$2,681,628
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,240,592</b>	<b>\$4,552,000</b>	<b>\$19,792,592</b>

#### **Develop Individual's Foundational Skills**

☑ **862 clients served**

☑ **\$5,356,032 (\$3,069,032 LMA / \$2,287,000 STTF)**

The objective of foundational skills is to develop the basic education and workplace skills of low-skilled learners, job seekers and marginalized existing workers to gain and maintain meaningful sustainable long-term employment. Foundational skills development will allow individuals to make an attachment to the labour market or pursue further post-secondary education or skills training.

#### **Adult Basic Education On-Reserve**

The Ministry continued to fund the delivery of Adult Basic Education (ABE) on-reserve through Saskatchewan regional colleges and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT). In 2008-09, the completion rate was 73 per cent for the regional colleges while the completion rate was 42 per cent at SIIT. The completion rate in 2008-09 for all institutions was 63 per cent. (ABE Follow-up Survey results).

ABE programs are delivered throughout the Province, primarily through the regional colleges, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (SIAST), Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT). Funding is allocated annually to these institutions to deliver open-access, tuition-free classes for ABE courses. ABE program funding is used to provide secondary-level credit programs in Adult 10, Employability/Life Skills, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL), General

Educational Development Preparation (GED), counseling services, work-based skills and literacy programs to adults throughout Saskatchewan. ABE is defined under four levels: Levels 1 and 2 (non-credit courses [employability/life skills, ESL, work-based skills and literacy]); Level Three (Adult 10 academic credit); and Level Four (secondary-level completion [Adult 12 and GED]).

Completion of high school and post-secondary education by the province's First Nations and Métis population continues to lag behind that of the province's non-Aboriginal population. As well, First Nations and Métis employment continues to trail the non-First Nations and Métis employment rate – although the gap has narrowed in recent years. Lower First Nations and Métis employment rates are linked to lower educational attainment. On-reserve ABE is one strategy to assist in narrowing the gap.

### ***Workplace Essential Skills Saskatchewan***

The Workplace Essential Skills Saskatchewan (WESS) pilot initiative provides funding for industry and post-secondary partners to assist low-skilled job seekers and low-skilled existing employees in developing essential skills. Workplace essentials skills are a critical part of workforce training and are the skills needed for work, learning and life. The Ministry contracted with 12 organizations to deliver 14 projects throughout the province in 2009-10.

### ***Enhanced Learner and Employer Support Services***

Funding was provided for six Job/Life Coaches and Program Coordinators at Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT). These funds, available through the STTF portion of the Labour Market Agreement, enabled the Ministry to support DTI and SIIT in delivering Enhanced Learner and Employer Support Services.

## **Increase Access to Skills Training**

☑ **778 clients served**

☑ **\$4,187,770 (\$2,322,770 LMA / \$1,865,000 STTF)**

The objective of this program area is to provide individuals with increased access to the technical skills training needed to successfully participate in the labour market by increasing the training capacity in Saskatchewan. It is expected that learners will develop technical skills required immediately in the labour market, allowing them to gain and maintain meaningful employment.

### ***Expansion of Skills Training Opportunities***

Increased training opportunities were provided through the Saskatchewan Institute of Science and Technology (SIASST) with a focus on industrial mechanics and carpentry programs and through the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) to respond to provincial labour market needs.

### ***Regina and Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centres***

The Trades and Skills Centres provide training to assist young adults in transitioning to employment or further post-secondary education. In 2009-10, individuals completed training in programs such as commercial construction, electronics assembly, culinary arts, plumber assistant, mason tender, and steel stud and drywall.

Projects delivered through the Trades and Skills Centres have also helped to address labour shortages in Regina and Saskatoon by working with industry to identify areas of significant skill shortage and providing short skills courses that enable learners to seek immediate entry-level employment.

### ***Early Childhood Educator Level I***

Funding was provided for Early Childhood Educator Level I training in response to the need for additional trained staff resulting from the creation of over 1,600 new childcare spaces in the province.

### ***Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission***

Meeting the demand for skilled trades' people continues to be a priority for Saskatchewan. Additional funding from the LMA for the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) has assisted in creating increased apprenticeship technical training opportunities, with the majority of the new training delivered by the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (SIAST).

## **Respond to Labour Market Needs**

☑ **3,844 clients served**

☑ **\$7,567,162 (\$7,167,162 LMA / \$400,000 STTF)**

The objective of programs and services under Labour Market Needs is to improve the labour market participation of marginalized individuals through enhanced employment assistance, skills development, and supported employment opportunities. Clients are engaged in strength-based, solution focused services that result in transition to employment and maximum self-sufficiency.

Services focus on employment assistance to individuals experiencing barriers to finding or maintaining employment. A flexible array of programs, services, and supports, including appropriate and customized assessments, counselling services, referrals to service providers, income support, skills development and supported employment interventions that will enhance an individual's employability are available. Participants are expected to have improved

occupational and employability skills that will enhance their attachment to the labour market.

### ***Workforce Development***

The LMA provided funding to support workforce development programs and services delivered through community-based organizations and institutions. These programs and services provide:

- basic employability skills, life skills, workplace literacy and other skills needed to attain employment;
- individualized employment supports for persons with disabilities or other barriers to sustain employment;
- parent initiatives to access community and other resources to secure employment; and,
- access to programs to assist individuals who have been in the penal system to gain and maintain employment.

### ***Learner Supports***

The Ministry provided funding for learner supports that enabled the regional colleges and Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) to improve supports to adult learners, such as counseling, career planning, transition to employment and on-the-job coaching services.

### ***Immigrant Bridging***

Immigration is an important component to sustaining economic growth. Newcomers contribute to community renewal by bringing their energy and ideas to their new home communities, help to address labour force shortages and stimulate economic investment. Efforts to attract immigrants and assist their settlement in Saskatchewan have resulted in increasing numbers of immigrants residing in the province. Immigration has played a large role in increasing Saskatchewan's population.

The Ministry introduced a new strengths-based settlement and integration model that will ensure that mainstream service providers are prepared to address the needs of immigrants who choose to make Saskatchewan their home. Regional Newcomer Gateways opened their doors in Regina and Saskatoon, the first of a total of 11 Gateways to be established. Gateways will be a first stop for new immigrants who need information to help facilitate their settlement or require a referral for services.

Immigrant Bridging focuses on language training, assessments and referral services, and information and orientation to bridge individuals into employment.



### ***Accelerated Employment Opportunities***

The Ministry, through its Career and Employment Services offices, administers programs to assist individuals to get the skills they need to move to independence through employment.

Key services include:

- Self services – access to computers to prepare resumes, look for jobs on-line or search for information about training and education;
- Assisted services – assessing for employment service needs, stability and transition planning, career and employment planning and counselling, service referrals to agencies and employability assessment and testing;
- Job Search/Career Planning Workshops; and,
- Programs and services delivered through community-based organizations and institutions that provide individuals with basic employability skills, life skills, workplace literacy and other essentials needed to attain employment; and,

### ***Active Income Supports***

LMA clients participating in eligible programs or training and in need of income support have access to the Provincial Training Allowance in order to meet daily living needs.

### ***Transitions to Employment***

Transitions to Employment will assist youth with severe cognitive and physical disabilities to gain employability skills essential to the workplace, and to make a transition to employment in their communities. There are several programs in the province which provide programs for young people with severe disabilities which assist them in making a transition from K-12 schooling to adult programs or to employment in their home communities. LMA funding has allowed an expansion of these programs to other regional colleges in the province who have identified similar needs.

### ***Rapid Response Teams***

Rapid Response Teams, comprised of representatives from Service Canada, Career and Employment Services, Labour Standards and Immigration, were established to offer information and expertise on program and services available to individuals impacted by the economic downturn.

## **Program Administration and Information Technology**

### **☑ \$2,681,628 LMA**

Administration costs are contributable to the LMA in order to ensure the appropriate management support to the Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market



Agreement. This includes the financial data collection and reporting requirements of the agreement through an information technology data base.

## **Client Outcomes Research**

The LMA requires that data be collected at various times during the delivery of a program. This includes 3- and 12-months client follow up surveys post-program completion. The data will help inform future programming and the success of new programming.

In July, 2009, the Ministry contracted Insightrix Research Inc. to conduct a survey of former Labour Market Agreement (LMA) program and service recipients. Surveys were conducted with individuals both 3- and 12-months post-program – either through program completion or as early leavers.

### **Selected Results:**

#### ***Program Completion***

- Overall, nearly three quarters of survey respondents had completed their program (73.5%), with the remainder, 26.5% being early leavers. This differs slightly from the client population as a whole where approximately 60% of clients had completed their program and approximately 40% were early leavers.

#### ***Satisfaction***

- Respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction with their program. An overwhelming 95% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied (68%) or somewhat satisfied (27.1%) with their program. This metric compares favorably with immediate post-program satisfaction at approximately 94%.
- In addition, a notable 92.2% of completers indicated that they were either very likely (70.7%) or somewhat likely (21.5%) to recommend the program to others.

#### ***Employment Outcomes***

- At the time of the survey, 41.5% of respondents indicated that they were employed. Among those not employed (58.5%), a small majority (56.8%) were currently looking for work (this equates to 33% of participants, overall). Of the remaining respondents who indicated they were not employed, 43.2% (25%, overall) were enrolled in further education.
- Program completers were much more likely to report being employed 3- and 12- months post-program (47%), compared to early leavers (26.2%).
- As well, non-aboriginal respondents were twice as likely to report being employed (55.5%), compared to aboriginal respondents (29%).

- Nearly 90% of program completers felt prepared to find a job after completing their program, with nearly half indicating they felt very prepared (48.2%) and an additional four in ten (40.2%) indicating they felt somewhat prepared.

### **Earnings Outcomes**

- The overwhelming majority of respondents (93.3%) earn less than \$20.01 per hour in their current job, with the majority earning between \$11 and \$13.99 per hour. On average, employed respondents are earning \$13.52/hour. In addition, nearly half of respondents (45.2%) report they are being paid more per hour than prior to taking their program.

## **Performance Indicators**

**April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010**

***Note – clients identified here are ONLY those who began and/or ended an intervention during the time period cited.***

### ***(i) Client Indicators<sup>1</sup>***

<b>Total number of eligible clients who started their intervention during the reporting period by:</b>					
<b>Employment Status</b>		<b>Educational Attainment</b>		<b>Designated Group Status<sup>2</sup></b>	
Employed	<b>775</b>	Less than high school	<b>2287</b>	Aboriginal peoples	<b>3286</b>
Unemployed	<b>2080</b>	High school	<b>771</b>	Immigrants	<b>893</b>
Self-employed	<b>5</b>	Post-secondary	<b>667</b>	Older workers	<b>497</b>
None of the above <sup>3</sup>	<b>1794</b>			Persons with disabilities	<b>387</b>
				Women	<b>3044</b>
				Youth	<b>2697</b>

<sup>1</sup> The client counts in columns (A) and (B) may not equal due to missing data in columns (A) and (B).

<sup>2</sup> Respondents could choose more than one category.

<sup>3</sup> Not in the labour force refers to those clients who, prior to the intervention, were unwilling or unable to work - that is, they were neither employed nor unemployed (e.g. attending an educational institution). This category also includes discouraged workers and those who want to work but are not currently looking for work because they believe no suitable work is available.

***(ii) Service Delivery Indicators***

	Total number of eligible clients who started their intervention during the reporting period	Proportion of eligible clients who left their intervention during the reporting month and who were satisfied with the service received
Employment services, for unemployed and employed clients	3502	90%
Skills development and upgrading, for unemployed clients	1451	72%
Work experience, for unemployed clients	0	0 <sup>4</sup>
Combination of skills development and work experience, for unemployed clients	338	89%
Workplace-based skills development, for employed clients	193	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5484</b>	

***(iii) Client Outcome and Impact Indicators***

	Proportion of eligible clients who completed their intervention during the reporting month (vs. left for other reasons)
Employment services, for unemployed and employed clients	52%
Skills development and upgrading, for unemployed clients	31% <sup>5</sup>
Work experience, for unemployed clients	0 <sup>6</sup>
Combination of skills development and work experience, for unemployed clients	78%
Workplace-based skills development, for employed clients	42% <sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> There were no eligible clients, in this category, during this time period.

<sup>5</sup> Completion status is missing for approximately 53% of the clients in this program group.

<sup>6</sup> There was no data available for clients in this group, during this time period.

<sup>7</sup> Completion status data for this client group, during this time period, was incomplete.