



Aboriginal Human Resource
Development Council of Canada

PERFORMANCE REPORT

2006 – 2007





Aboriginal people are attaining higher levels of education in all areas of the economy

The 2006-07 year has been highly successful for the council with notable successes achieved in its events management, media outreach and its trades agenda. The council continues to play an important niche role in Canada's productivity agenda, accelerating Aboriginal entry to Canadian labour markets.

The Highlights ● ● ●

- Operated with an annual budget of \$3.8 million — delivered results in 18 key program and project areas with many new innovations in Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement.
- Maintained a complement of six staff (senior management, financial, communications and administration) work with a dedicated team of partners, project and contract staff.
- Delivered value to key client and stakeholder groups through our products, programs and projects.¹
 - 60 per cent of the 80 Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders
 - 720 companies
 - 49 education institutions
 - 14 labour organizations
 - 68 non-government organizations
- 37 federal/provincial government agencies.
- Increased our reach through new media outreach and events management reinforcing the council's national reputation for service excellence and human resource innovation.
- Provided direct training and employment opportunities to 840 people in a range of occupations.
- Advanced important advocacy in areas of public policy.
- Played a significant role in the national agenda to address skills shortages in the trades.
- Positioned the council for future innovative public-private partnerships and the delivery of products and services that offer connections and solutions to client groups.

Building the Council's Financial House ● ● ●

Throughout 2006-07 the council continued to prospect for new partnerships and resources that will enable it to continue its work over the medium term. In March the council's 2004-2007 infrastructure agreement came to a successful close, with full utilization of its funds from this reporting period. A new infrastructure agreement of 750K/annum was secured with Human Resources and Social Development Canada's (HRSDC's) Sector Council Division until March 2010.

In 2006 the council advanced six project concepts to HRSDC with an ask of \$3.9 million over three years. A notional budget of \$3.1 was approved in February, which represented 79 per cent of the original ask. At the time this report was written (June 2007), project funds estimated at \$1.0 million additional operating dollars/annum, were at various stages of approval. Parallel proposals advanced to other federal and provincial agencies are also likely to yield additional funding of about 600K/annum for the next two years. Project funding from these various government agencies will provide additional platforms for incremental leverage opportunities with other public and private organizations.

From another financial perspective, the council's work with the business and government sectors has been very encouraging. The organization has raised an estimated 890K through program subscriptions, sponsorships, event registrations and product sales. Expressed as a percentage of its total annual operating budget, revenue generation accounted for about 23 per cent of the council's operating budget for fiscal 06/07. The figure reported here may be different from the revenue figures reported in the financial statements due to timing and accrual practices.

In 2006 the council also advanced a proposal to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) for a new entity that was approved with charitable status. This action will give the council future access to foundations, endowments and other new sources of funding. The new status will enable the council to deliver outreach to networks of employers and non-profit foundations. There is also opportunity for social cause marketing initiatives that will bring added profile to Aboriginal people and their efforts to gain full and inclusive entry to Canada's labour markets.

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¹ High engagement means they "bought one of the council's products or services, attended one of its events, sat on one of the council's committees, supported the council with funding or sponsorship, or worked with the council as a partner on a project or activity.

Senior management led the organization through a year of growth effectively deploying the resources available to the organization. New systems and practices were introduced at the administrative level to ensure compliance and accountability.

Strategic Framework ●●●●

In 2006/07 the council achieved its outcomes through distinct project and activity streams that included the delivery of major events, communications and media outreach, pre-employment programming, career development and trades development projects – all supported by management and administrative work which enhanced the organizational health of the council.

The council's activities contribute to one or several of its outcomes as described in its strategic plan (the Results-based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF)). Broadly, all of the council's work plan activities are part of this productivity agenda, creating a skilled workforce and productive, inclusive workplaces.



Governance Matters ●●●●

The council is dedicated to the principles of good governance, sound management and effective administration. AHRDCC maintains a representatives Board of Directors and Council Champions network, which is comprised of representatives from the Aboriginal community, industry, labour, post-secondary education and government.

AHRDCC held two board meetings (June/December) and an annual general meeting in June 2006. The board reviewed, ratified and approved all AHRDCC strategy, performance reports and audited financial statements. At the June meeting members discussed the matter of the council's board and champions representation and they provided direction on the design and activities of the council's charitable arm. They also tabled a paper on "A Board Strategy to Re-brand the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada". At the December meeting board members provided direction on the design of the Champions meeting, gave approval to a new financial reserve policy, and gave further direction to the branding issue. Board members were active giving presentations and representing the council on numerous committees, conferences and meetings.

Executive members continued to meet between board meetings providing regular direction to the president and chief executive officer. Members attended government strategy sessions and provided insights on policy matters which were valuable to government. The executive introduced council senior management to new strategic tools that have significantly helped shape the council's performance.



The trades offers many opportunities for Aboriginal people

18 Projects and Program Areas

- National Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Conference: Unlocking Aboriginal Potential in the Workforce
- Workforce Connex
- Eighth Annual Champions Event
- Communications and Media Outreach
- Racism Free Strategy
- Sector Councils
- Guiding Circles
- Inclusion Network
- Essential Skills
- Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project
- Job Horizons
- National Trades Engagement Project
- Navigating Skilled Trades
- BC Trades Project
- Nova Scotia Trades Project
- Infrastructure (management and governance matters)
- Foundation
- Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion



Designing new solutions at
Workforce Connex

“ Made excellent contacts for our project and (most useful ideas I learned) were to work with industry”.

– Randy Bottle, Redcrow College

“ A lot of good ideas that I can use to support and promote Aboriginal recruiting and retention”.

– Donna Knebus, City of Edmonton



Kelly Lendsay working with the media

Successful Events ● ● ●

The council achieved much success with the various events that it ran during the course of the year. Through its venues the council brought new learning to event participants and provided opportunities for viewpoints and expertise to be exchanged. These events helped build the council's reputation as a leader in Aboriginal recruitment and retention.

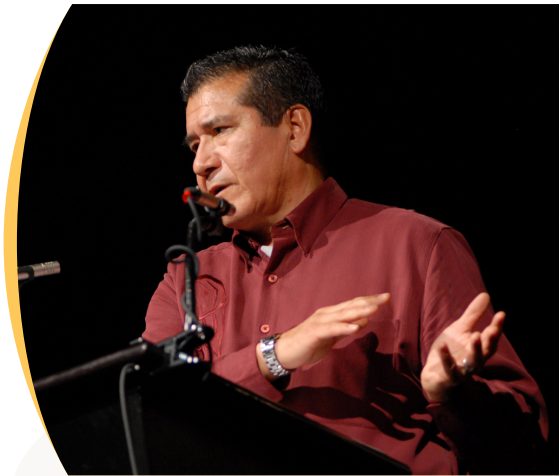
- The council held its first ever national Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement conference, *Unlocking Aboriginal Potential in the Workplace*. The sell out conference brought together over 300 delegates from government, the private sector, the Aboriginal community and training institutions from every corner of Canada. In total 55 speakers and two pre-conference workshops were hosted. Revenues of approximately \$238,000 were generated on registration sales and sponsorships for this break-even event.
- Over 600 delegates attended six *Workforce Connex* forums held in six locations across the country. Funds of 340K were leveraged from HRSDC to organize, plan and deliver the forum series. An additional \$132,000 was raised by the council from sponsorships and registrations. Service Canada representatives have stated that the *Workforce Connex* initiative has had more impact with AHRDA holders than any other single activity yet undertaken by the council.
- This year the Champions Event (eighth annual) was hosted in Ottawa, December 12-13, 2006 as a premiere national 'Think Tank' on *Influencing Aboriginal Labour Market Strategies: Increasing Returns and Productivity*. An estimated 186 leaders joined the council at the dinner and open reception. The Champions meeting continues to provide an opportunity for Canadian diversity leaders, partners and friends of the council to meet and affirm their alignments to the causes that the organization represents. The Champions event raised \$51,000 in sponsorship from government and private sector.

Communications and Media Outreach ● ● ●

In addition to extending the council's reach through major events, the organization's message was also promoted through focused communications and media activities. Stakeholder outreach was also achieved through advocacy initiatives and public presentations. Specific outreach activities to employers are also included in this section. Collectively, these outreach activities have helped develop and engage networks of stakeholders that are working toward the same or similar goals to that of the council.

- Media relations initiatives were introduced in 2006/07 with the hiring of a communications and marketing manager who worked closely with staff and partners to streamline communications messaging. In total, during the reporting period, 55 known media stories were filed as a result of the council's media relations initiatives.
- In June 2006 the board initiated a new direction for the council that has culminated in the launch of a new name, tagline and visual identity. The new name, Aboriginal Human Resource Council, will help position the council as a credible entrepreneurial organization that also serves the public good. As part of its communications outreach, two satellite websites were built to support the national trades and apprenticeship project and the *Workforce Connex* series.
- The council's newsletter, *The National Report on Aboriginal Inclusion*, achieved a new standard of professionalism with two new issues published in 06/07.
- The president and chief executive officer sent quarterly communiqués to the AHRDA network to keep them apprised of current newsworthy information and the council's activities. Speaking engagements at regional AHRDA gatherings also continued to provide opportunities for the council to promote its messaging.

- The council continued to play a strong advocacy role by delivering presentations and submitting position papers to government bodies such as the Prime Minister’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Grants and Contributions and the Standing Senate Committee on Economic Development. Advocacy and representation were also achieved at meetings such as the Mines Ministers Meeting in the Yukon, the Champions meeting and other venues such as the Generating Opportunity and Wealth Conference hosted by Saskatchewan Premier Lorne Calvert.
- The council was awarded a 47K contract from HRSDC Labour to contribute to Canada’s racism free workplace strategy. The council completed a brochure on racism and Aboriginal inclusion, which was distributed at the national conference. A segment of the conference program profiled a keynote and panel discussion on racism. The contract will continue into 2007-2008 when the brochure, and additional information on racism, which will be developed by the council, is distributed to 300 federally regulated companies in Canada.



Joe Norton delivers a keynote address at the *Navigating Skilled Trades* symposium

Working with Sector Councils ●●●

- This year the council collaborated with other sector councils, the college network and the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. A short summary of key activities is presented here. References to other collaborations with these organizations are also made in other sections of this report.
 - attended and ran a trade booth at the Quebec First Nations Socio-economic Summit in Mashteuiatsh, Quebec. The council supplied bilingual literature from the council and from its partners, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF), Mining Industry Human Resource Council, the Construction Sector Council and Natural Resources Canada. Approximately 200 people visited the booth.
 - delivered a keynote address in Vancouver at a session hosted by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges for the inaugural meeting of the College Deans of Trades and Apprenticeships programs.
 - co-hosted an event with The Alliance of Sector Councils that brought together 60 participants (sector councils, other demand side organizations, AHRDAs and other supply organizations) to discuss issues relating to Aboriginal employment and workplace skills shortages.
 - continued its partnership in the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) project, to increase Aboriginal employment in the environmental sector. The BEAHR program is evolving with many developments and partnerships which are helping to embed environmental training and career awareness in institutions and programs which are accessible to aboriginal people.
 - continued partnership with the Construction Sector Council on the Aboriginal Ironworker Aboriginal Awareness Project with the completion of innovative career information materials which are now promoted through the Aboriginal Construction Careers website (www.aboriginalconstructioncareers.ca).
 - close working relationship developed with the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MIHR) in a variety of ways. Collaboration on a proposed *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* specialization in mining. The President/CEO of the Aboriginal Council now sits on the MIHR Board of Directors.

“ We need to move these ideas and opportunities forward to ensure that the stakeholders (government, Aboriginal communities, business and other organizations) clearly see the opportunities. We need more business leaders to come forward. The time to act is now because the economy is strong. We need to build on the passion that currently exists.”

– Kirk Dudtschak, Regional President, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, NW Ontario, RBC Financial Group.

Guiding Circles Expands ●●●

The council focused on the launch and expansion of its successful Guiding Circles program.

- The *Guiding Circles* program provides the career development community with an innovative Aboriginal approach to career pathing that is holistic, flexible, and client centred. Book and workshop sales this year exceeded 06/07 projections for the program. *Guiding Circles* I and II combined, sold nearly 8000 books and delivered 27 training sessions to over 400 practitioners resulting in gross sales of 192K this year. Marketing efforts resulted in three major clients including growth in the Australian market. *Guiding Circles* was approved government support of 432K to continue development and marketing efforts.



The council accelerated its trades agenda in 2006/07

“The cultural learning’s I’ve already experienced by being involved in the development of the Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion program series modules has been invaluable. Effective use of these resource tools by employers will advance the employment and inclusion of Aboriginal job-seekers across Canada. It’s a very positive step forward.”

– Danny Strilchuk, Manager, Diversity & Employment Equity Compliance, Spectra Energy

The Inclusion Network Continues to Offer Value ●●●

- The *Inclusion Network* earned approximately \$65,120 from 44 different client companies and organizations that used the job board services. The council netted 50 per cent of these revenues. While the sales volume is still low, the *Inclusion Network* continues to offer value to customers as a national system for Aboriginal job seekers. This year the *Inclusion Network* attracted new companies/clients. These larger ‘blue chip’ companies engage in repeat transactions and represent good leads for the council’s other products and services. The council will continue to work with its partner Brainhunter into 2008 continuing to monitor and assess a go-forward plan for the network.

Trades Development Projects ●●●

The council continues to pursue its national Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship agenda. The thrust of this agenda is to increase regional and community-based partnerships within a national sectoral framework. These partnerships are building skills development and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, and offer proven pathways to apprenticeship registration and employment in trades fields. At a strategic level the council is playing a critical role in the national agenda to address skills shortages in the trades. The council has a growing roster of trades related projects and activities including its national engagement project, the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project, Job Horizons and some new projects.

- A 21 month project commenced in March 2007 will test and ‘proof’ a new trades essential skills curriculum for Alberta. The goal is to accelerate the pool of Aboriginal apprentices who can pass the Alberta trades entrance exam. The council advanced a project proposal and was approved \$1.5 million in federal and provincial and other funds to bring together AHRDAs, colleges and other learning facilities in a partnership for this project.
- The council’s \$2.6 million National Trades Engagement Project, began October 2005, continues to be implemented in response to the evident need for strategies to identify and overcome barriers preventing Aboriginal people from participating in employment in trades and apprenticeship. The project is resulting in the development of partnership engagements and new project proposals for trades development in various parts of the country. Highlights of the project this year include the launch of a new website, trades related resource materials and research and planning for a national Aboriginal trades forum to be held in Victoria in June 2008.
- The Eastern Canada Aboriginal trades symposium; *Navigating Skilled Trades*, was successfully delivered at Sydney (Membertou), Nova Scotia in November 2006. In advance of the event the council formed a partnership with Membertou First Nation to help plan and execute the symposium. The event attracted investment from private sponsors and a 65K grant from Cape Breton Enterprise (a delivery arm for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA)). The event was designed to help address the skills shortage in Eastern Canadian labour markets and accelerate workplace skills, learning and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in trades, apprenticeship and technology. Highlights of the project this year include the launch of a new website, trades related resource materials and research and planning for a national Aboriginal trades forum to be held in Victoria in June 2008.
- The 570K Job Horizons Project achieved excellent results placing 311 northerners in a variety of occupations, tripling the planned forecast for this year. The majority were placed with firms working in the Alberta oil sands. Job Horizons built a client base of 810 job seekers registered in the database and a client roster of about 97 companies using the project services. A side-bar output of the project resulted in 68 young Aboriginal youth learning more about the apprenticeship system and writing the entrance exam for apprenticeship training. The innovative Job Horizons model has the potential to be scaled up in 2007-08. It is estimated that each client placed earns approximately \$40,000 per year with virtually all the salaries returning to the worker’s home community. Social service costs to all levels of government are reduced for the entire family of each unemployed client placed in a job.

- This year completes the current three-year funding period for the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project (AAP). The council will exit the AAP at the end of March 2008 and has negotiated an additional 847K with provincial and federal agencies for bridge year funding to transition the project. The project has registered more than 300 Aboriginal people for apprenticeship. The goal of the project was to register 255 apprentices by March 31, 2007. The most common trades selected were electrician, welder, heavy equipment technician, plumber and ironworker, although, in total, apprentices were enrolled in 25 different trades. Women continued to be attracted to the trades, accounting for more than 19 per cent of registrations.
- The British Columbia Industry Training Authority awarded the council a 250K grant to develop an Aboriginal trades strategy that will seek to double the number of Aboriginal participants in the British Columbia Industry Training system over a three-year period. Work on this contract will carry over into 07/08. The new strategy will have linkages to the council's national Aboriginal trades agenda.
- Following the momentum of its *Workforce Connex* and *Navigating Skilled Trades* held at Membertou, Nova Scotia in 2006, the council continued its developmental work in this province seeking to coalesce partnership interests around a provincial trades strategy. In January 2007, seeking seed funding for this strategy, the council advanced a 600K proposal to HRSDC for a province-wide Aboriginal trades project. It has received notional approval on the budget and it now requires ministerial sign-off. Subject to this final approval, the project will likely commence in fall 2007.

Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion— an Exemplary Model ● ● ●

- The council is nearing the completion of the information materials built for *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion* (MAI), a unique developmental program which is creating tools to help employers increase Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement. In 06/07 the council grew its program membership to 26 MAI members forming the Networks of Change partnership. In addition to these 180K membership revenues, the council leveraged 906K from HRSDC for three years (2007-2010) of project support to help develop the training and assessment program components. Niche opportunities for the program are also emerging with other sector councils and HRSDC Labour Branch. Next year the council will launch a commercial phase which is intended to provide a long-term sustainability plan for the program. MAI has developed an exemplary public-private program structure.

Final Comments ● ● ●

The 2006/07 has been highly successful for the council. It continues to play an important niche role in Canada's productivity agenda, increasing and accelerating Aboriginal entry to Canadian labour markets. The council's work this year has been decidedly employer focused, helping businesses to gain more ready access to Aboriginal talent. The work of the council in aligning supply with demand has required the development of new tools and 'know how'. The coordination of a sectoral approach to labour market development is most evident in the council's work in the trades, but also in other sectors. Pilot projects continue to be a way for the council to develop innovative investment frameworks which invite partnerships from government, Aboriginal groups and the private sector.

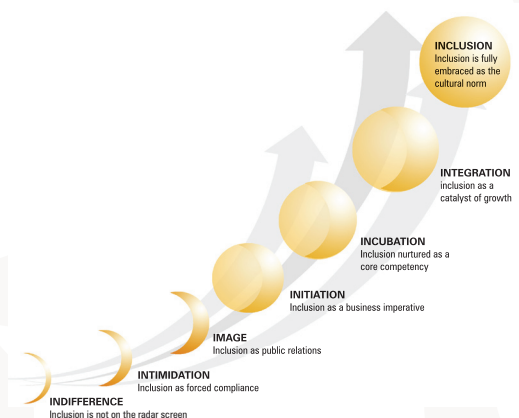
Virginia (Didi) Umperville – 3rd Year Welder Apprentice

Virginia joined the AAP in October 2003 when she registered as an apprentice in the Welder trade. She has finished her technical training and expects to have her hours completed to earn her Journeyman Certificate by September 2007. Virginia says she is very excited about this accomplishment because of the opportunities it will provide her "because I was strong enough to overcome obstacles I was going through during my apprenticeship."

Virginia is a First Nations woman who is a single mother of two girls. This posed a number of issues for her throughout her apprenticeship program. One of the most difficult problems she faced was finding a babysitter so that she could go to work and attend technical training. She urges all people to persevere. "Don't give up on your apprenticeship just because something is standing in your way trying to knock you down. Keep positive. There are so many opportunities for First Nations people." (Quoted from Alberta Aboriginal Apprentice Project Annual Report 2006-07)

THE INCLUSION CONTINUUM

AN EMPLOYER'S MAP TO
ABORIGINAL INCLUSION





ABORIGINAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF CANADA
CONSEIL POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DES RESSOURCES HUMAINES AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA

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