



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

Annual Report ~ 2002-2003

Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada
Inclusion Solutions - Creating Employment

Executive Summary

- In 2002 the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada adopted a new *Strategic and Operational Plan* that significantly changed the complexion of the public-private partnership and resulted in a much more targeted organization. Through its new work plan the Council has helped develop inclusion solutions by partnering on innovative projects that create employment and training and identify effective Aboriginal human resource practices.
- In this year's *Annual Report* the Council's activities and results are reviewed and summarized. It has been a year of innovation and collaboration with the development of an ever-widening circle of partners that have joined the Council in its important national mandate. It may be concluded that the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada is on track to meet or exceed expectations as measured against the key performance indicators adopted as part of its results-based management framework.
- Champions value the Council for its ability to make a difference at the practitioner level. At their 2002 meeting Champions offered many new and practical ways that they could align their organizations' resources with the Council's 2002-2004 work plan.
- One of the main accomplishments of the Council's Board of Directors this year was the completion of a new *Strategic and Operational Plan*. The Board, using a rigorous planning process called a Results-based Management Framework (RMAF) completed this plan over a five month period ending in March 2002. Central to the Council's RMAF is a logic model with short, medium and long term objectives. For the period 2002 - 2004 the Council's medium-term objectives are:
 - *Increased number of employers that recruit, retain and promote Aboriginal people;*
 - *Aboriginal HR strategies and templates implemented by demand and supply organizations across Canada;*
 - *Aboriginal people with the skills and learning needed for employment.*
- As a national organization the Council is playing an important role with its partners bringing *lessons learned* and *human resource templates* to a national audience. The Council is developing a growing library of HRD resource materials and it is working with its partners developing effective communications and information strategies that build awareness about emerging opportunities as well as providing needed road maps on ways of achieving employment and human resource development successes. For example, in 2002 it collaborated with the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Committee which developed the innovative *ThinkTrades* communications plan, tools and web-site that encourages Aboriginal people to consider career opportunities in Alberta apprenticeship.
- In 2002-2003 the Council continued to build partnerships, extending its reach and building allies and colleagues who are aligned with its mission. In a variety of ways, the Council demonstrated its competency to leverage other organizations' resources, expertise, knowledge and systems; encouraging them to engage in a national Aboriginal HR agenda.

- The Council leveraged an estimated \$4,837,000 through its various work plan activities compared with AHRDCC expenditures of \$846,500. Some of these leveraged funds represent a commitment that will flow over the next three years as projects are implemented. In addition to the above figure for “leverage” it is noteworthy that, two sector councils with which AHRDCC has currently partnered have received or are in the process of attaining approximately \$3.5 million for Aboriginal project initiatives
- In its intermediate outcome to provide Aboriginal people with the skills and learning needed for employment, the Council has achieved the following results for 2002-2003.
 - *The number of Aboriginal people that will be provided a job or skills or learning through the lifecycle of the various activities that the Council is undertaking or in which it is partnered is estimated at 7905 over the next 15 years.*
 - *The employment generated for the 2002-2003 reporting period through the Council's activities was approximately 320 (Aboriginal) person years of employment.*
- During the reporting period thirty-five AHRDA holders were “highly” engaged in the Council's innovative pilot clusters or other activities while all other AHRDAs were engaged at either a “medium” or “low” level. The Council's goal was to work with 8-10 AHRDAs/LDMs in a variety of ways over the course of the two year work plan. It has demonstrated its ability to work effectively with AHRDA Holders adding value to and supporting these organizations in a variety of ways.
- The Council has played a niche role in the AHRDS Renewal process working effectively with the AHRDS Renewal Committee (ARC), conducting a national AHRDA survey, making three presentations at the AHRDA conferences, attending the Halifax regional forum and delivering a private sector engagement forum. Through the AHRDS renewal process the Council significantly increased its own understanding of the AHRDS Strategy (its opportunities and challenges), AHRDA holders' needs and the role of partnership and collaboration in the AHRDS.
- The Inclusion Network is rolling out with growing uptake from both the private sector and AHRDA Holders. This web-based employment system was officially launched in February 2002 and is now connecting Aboriginal jobseekers, AHRDAs, employers, sector councils and practitioners. AHRDAs and LDMs received complimentary memberships and 50 employers, educators and organizations have become active members. By year end the initiative leveraged in excess of \$85,000 in new memberships and sponsorships.
- The Council is partnered in 16 projects that are at varying stages of start up and/or implementation. These projects are addressing critical skills/learning challenges by bring partners together and developing collaborative solutions.
- The Council has made significant progress in its career development activities with AHRDAs and Sector Councils. A notable achievement is that it developed a formal partnership with some leading experts in the career awareness field. The Council's partnership with Dr. Norm Amundson, Dr Rod McCormick and Gray Poehnell has resulted in the development of a national resource tool called *Guiding Circles*. The Council has demonstrated an ability to attract innovative thinkers to develop Inclusion Solutions.



- The Council advanced its trades agenda during the reporting period. It achieved results in the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project. It transplanted some of the knowledge gained from this project to British Columbia. It facilitated the development of a new Vancouver Trades and Apprenticeship Project in collaboration with three AHRDAs and two sector councils. Further efforts were made to extend this collaboration to a province-wide status. A British Columbia 'Trades Forum' for 103 participants was co-organized by the Council and NRCAN. Initial planning progress was made with two Manitoba AHRDAs for a proposed Manitoba trades forum.
- The AHRDCC's results for the reporting period not only support its short and medium-term outcomes but also its candidacy for *exemplary status* as a sector council. During the reporting period the AHRDCC has promoted the sector councils to the AHRDA network. The Aboriginal sector council worked directly with 6 sector councils on projects, serving on committees and playing an executive role on the Alliance for Sector Councils. The AHRDCC has also set the stage for more collaboration with sector councils in the future. During the reporting period it developed and received approval from HRDC for a concept proposal for a sector council/ AHRDA Forum to be held in fall 2003.
- The time and effort spent developing the Council's long, medium and shorter term goals has given the organization a high degree of stability and direction. It may be anticipated that these goals will remain essentially unchanged for the foreseeable future though, of course, programming activities may change in response to new opportunities and new circumstances.
- The Council has embraced the innovations agenda and it is positioned to do more in this area. One of the roles that are emerging for the Council is that of an "incubator" that develops new product and service innovations in response to Aboriginal employment and HRD needs. The challenge ahead is to determine the Council's progressive roles throughout the pre and post-development lifecycle of these innovative products and services.

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Introduction

In 2002 the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada adopted a new *Strategic and Operational Plan* that significantly changed the complexion of the public-private partnership and resulted in a much more targeted organization. This *lazer like focus* that Champion Tim Penner challenged the Council to adopt has brought the organization to a new level in its mission to *increase Aboriginal participation in Canadian labour markets*. Through its new work plan the Council has designed and contributed to a growing number of *inclusion solutions* by partnering on innovative projects and initiatives that create employment and training and identify effective Aboriginal human resource practices. In this year's 2002-2003 *Annual Report* the Council's activities and results are reviewed and summarized. It has been a year of innovation and collaboration with the development of an ever -widening circle of partners that have joined the Council in its important national mandate.

Champions Message

Last year Champion Mr. Tim Penner, President, Procter and Gamble Canada Inc. challenged the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada to focus its planning and activities with "lazer-like" accuracy. In 2002, the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Secretary of State for Children and Youth encouraged the Council to further develop its role as a "pillar" in the *Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) Strategy* - HRDC's \$1.6 Billion dollar community-based strategy.

At their December 2002 Annual Meeting Champions were pleased with the new direction that they saw the Council taking in response to the challenges that were made of the organization. The Honourable Jane Stewart and Ethel Blondin-Andrew, ministers for Human Resources Development Canada and the Secretary of State for Children and Youth respectively gave strong endorsements to the Council's new direction and accomplishments to date. Ray Ahenakew and Eric Newell summarized Champions' sentiments and concluded *that the Council, with its new strategic direction, is well positioned to meet or exceed the expectations they have of their organization in its mandate and mission to increase Aboriginal participation in Canadian labour markets.*

How can Champions work with the Council in its new strategy to develop *inclusion solutions* that impact Canada's skills shortages while creating Aboriginal employment and *skills & learning* opportunities? This was the fundamental question discussed at the 2002 Champions meeting. At this meeting Champions' commitment to the organization and its mandate was reaffirmed with a full account of the many ways that these business innovators, government ministers and Aboriginal leaders have directed their energy and the resources of the organizations they represent to the principles of Aboriginal inclusion.

Champions *appreciate* the Council for its grass roots approach to Aboriginal inclusion solutions. They see an enthusiastic organization that is now guided by an effective strategic plan and making a positive impact with front-line human resource professionals across the country. At their 2002 meeting Champions offered many new and practical ways that they could align their organizations' resources with the Council's 2002-2004 work plan.

Next year, Mr Charlie Coffey, Vice President of RBC Canada Inc has the honour of representing the Champions along with Mr Ahenakew as the organization's co-chair. At the 2002 Annual Champions meeting outgoing Co-chair Mr Eric Newell was honoured by the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew and her fellow Champions who acknowledged the tremendous contribution that he made to the Council over his years as co-chair. Mr Newell was a founding member of the Council. He continues as a Champion. Mr Charlie Coffey, echoing a sentiment held by his fellow Champions, stated that the Council offers an important value proposition for its partners and those it serves. Champions are pleased to be a part of the successes that the Council's inclusion solutions are creating.

Message from the Board of Directors

One of the main accomplishments of the Council's Board of Directors this year was the completion of a new *Strategic and Operational Plan*. The Board, using a rigorous planning process called a Results-based Management Framework (RMAF) completed this plan over a five month period in March 2002. For the period 2002 - 2004 the Council's medium-term objectives are:

- *Increased number of employers that recruit, retain and promote Aboriginal people;*
- *Aboriginal HR strategies and templates implemented by demand and supply organizations across Canada;*
- *Aboriginal people with the skills and learning needed for employment.*

The rigour with which this plan was undertaken by the Board of Directors means that the Council is now very targeted in its direction. Council activities are now focused and coordinated within three main areas: *Education and Advocacy*, *HRD Knowledge Development and Transfer* and *Innovative Partnership Clusters* with Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) Holders.

The Council is an innovative organization evidenced especially by its deployment of web-based strategies, its *Guiding Circles* career awareness activities and its e-literacy pilot. It is also gaining a solid reputation as a facilitator and *design strategist*. The Council is making significant headway working with a wide group of interests and developing unique collaborative arrangements that advance key agendas such as skills & learning or participation in specific sectors such as the trades.

The Council is also working closely with the network of sector councils. The Council is working with sector councils introducing them to the AHRDA network so that employer networks are better able to work with AHRDAs to tap into the Aboriginal talent pool.

As a national organization the Council is playing an important role with its partners bringing lessons learned and human resource templates to a national audience. The Council is developing a growing library of resource materials and it is working with its partners developing effective communications and information strategies that build awareness about emerging opportunities and providing needed *road maps* on ways of achieving employment and human resource development successes.

This year, the Council's board of directors wished its co-chair Bob Loader farewell as he embarked on a career change. Bob was honoured at the Annual Champions meeting for his tireless efforts working with Syncrude as one of the founding companies that established the Council over five years ago. He leaves a Council that has passed through adolescence and ready to take on new challenges as a maturing organization. The co-chairship is being passed to Mr. Keith MacDonald, Manager of Aboriginal banking with RBC Canada who joins Anne Noonan as the incoming co-chairs of the Council's board of directors.



In 2002 the Council was pleased to have new members join its Champions: Honourable Jim Antoine, Government of the Northwest Territories; Gerald Brown, President, Association of Canadian Community Colleges; Honourable Pearl Calahasen, Government of Alberta; Honourable Herb Dhaliwal, Natural Resources, Government of Canada; Honourable Oscar Lathlin, Government of Manitoba; Honourable Eldon Lautermilch, Government of Saskatchewan; and President Audrey Poitras, Interim President, Métis National Council.

The board takes this opportunity to welcome its new members and to affirm their dedication to the principles on which the Council is founded

President's Message

Now fully 12 months into the Council's 2002-2004 work plan, there are already many promising results, impacts and outcomes that are emerging from the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada's (AHRDCC) new strategic and operational plan. For the period 2002-2003 Council's management initiated a variety of projects and activities that meet the objectives of the organization's new results based management and accountability framework.

To better achieve its objectives the Council organized its work activities around three main "business" divisions. In one of these divisions it work with Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement Holders (AHRDAs) to bring together a wide range of partners in innovative clusters to design and deliver skills and learning pilot projects. A second area of the Council works with sector councils and employers engaging them in inclusion strategies. While a third business division addresses knowledge transfer between employers, Aboriginal groups and practitioners (i.e. supply and demand side organizations).

The Council ensured that its work plan and its various business divisions were fully integrated. That is, the Council worked with individual or small groups of employers and with AHRDA holders and it mined these experiences for the "lessons learned" and "HR blueprints" which were identified as the Council worked through the stages of its *innovative partnership pilot projects*. The Council continues to document its and its partners' experiences into information products which are made available to supply and demand organizations. The Council calls this dividend the *learning multiplier* effect of its action research agenda. In many ways the Council value proposition lies in it being a conduit for knowledge transfer.

In 2002-2003 the Council played a *niche* role in the AHRDS renewal process working effectively with the AHRDS Renewal Committee (ARC), conducting a national AHRDA survey, and presenting at the renewal conferences. The Council's private sector forum was a notable accomplishment and it brought an important perspective to the AHRDS renewal. The current AHRDS sunsets in 2004 and there is a pressing need to see it renewed for another five year period.

The Council's communications activities were significantly improved over previous years. As a result of it hiring a communications specialist, the Council has become more proficient at communicating its HR products and services and it allocated more time and resources to ensure that the products and services it markets are high quality, innovative in their design and well packaged for the variety of end users.

During the reporting period the Council advanced its national trades agenda by growing grass roots trades projects, creating linkages between projects, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and creating new 'sectoral' networks in labour market planning.

A key accomplishment of the 2002-2003 reporting period was the Council's success with partnership development. A partnership approach to the issues of Aboriginal employment is

an essential thrust of the Council's current work plan. In 2002-2003 it continued to build the quality and quantity of its partnership roster extending its reach and building allies and colleagues who are aligned with its mission.

In a variety of ways, the Council demonstrated its competency to leverage other organizations' resources, expertise, knowledge and systems; encouraging them to engage in a national Aboriginal HR agenda. The ability to create both financial and non-financial leverage is a result of the Council's 'collaborative' approach and the facilitation, design and implementation of partnership models in a range of programming dimensions.

The AHRDCC exceeded its expectations to extend its "reach" to AHRDA Holders, other sector councils, and an expanded network of supply and demand organizations. The Council's goal was to work with 8-10 AHRDAs/LDMs in a variety of ways over the course of the two year work plan. In its first year alone the Council has actively engaged thirty-five AHRDAs in one of the many innovative project clusters.

The Aboriginal sector council worked directly with 6 sector councils on projects, serving on committees and playing an executive role on the Alliance for Sector Councils. The AHRDCC has also set the stage for more collaboration with sector councils in the future. During the reporting period it developed and received approval from HRDC for a concept proposal for a sector council/ AHRDA Forum to be held in fall 2003.

These and other results of the Council's 2002-2003 reporting period are detailed in the coming section of this Annual Report. The Council has been making excellent progress on its work plan and with the continued support and direction from its Board of Directors and Champions it will continue to make a positive impact on its mission statement.

The Year in Review ~ Results and Outcomes

The past year was a successful one for the Council working with its partners and collaborating on a variety of innovative activities that are helping to advance its mission and contributing to short and medium term goals.

In its intermediate outcome to provide Aboriginal people with the skills and learning needed for employment, the Council has achieved the following results for 2002-2003.

- *The number of Aboriginal people that will be provided a job or skills or learning through the lifecycle of the various activities that the Council is undertaking or in which it is partnered is estimated at 7905 over the next 15 years.*
- *The employment generated for the 2002-2003 reporting period through the Council's activities was approximately 320 (Aboriginal) person years of employment.*

In its short term outcome to leverage Public and private sector resources to support Aboriginal HR strategies:

- *the Council leveraged an estimated \$4,837,000 through its various work plan activities compared with AHRDCC expenditures of \$846,500. Some of these leveraged funds represent a commitment that will flow over the next three years as projects are implemented*
- *In addition to the above figure for "leverage" it is noteworthy that, two sector councils with which AHRDCC has currently partnered have received or are in the process of attaining approximately \$3.5 million for Aboriginal project initiatives.*

A review of the Council's chief results and outcomes arranged in its "business divisions" follows here.

Education and Advocacy

In this component of its work plan the Council plays an education and advocacy role increasing employers' awareness of Aboriginal human resource development issues and helping companies to adopt more inclusive strategies.

- The Council achieved modest results in its efforts to encourage increased numbers of employers who, with the support of the AHRDCC, have designed and developed 'inclusion strategies' to recruit, retain and promote Aboriginal people. During the reporting period, the Council's impacts working with individual employers was surpassed by its engagement of increased numbers of employers through more effective relationships developed with employer networks (such as those offered by sector councils and through collaborative pilot clusters). Notwithstanding these caveats, the Council has made considerable progress understanding the degree of

effort that is required to affect change within larger corporations encouraging them to become more inclusionary organizations.

- The Council's network of contacts essentially doubled over a six month period during 2002-2003. The Council's messages were directed to just over 2100 people through numerous speaking engagements and other representations. There are an increasing number of organizations and practitioners that want to be aligned with the Council and kept informed of its activities.
- The AHRDCC increased its knowledge base of information about Aboriginal employment and HRD matters with its HR library growing its library or resources that are listed on the Council's web site and available to the general public. The acquisition and availability of this information as well as other outreach that the Council is doing is helping to position the organization's reputation in this field.

Knowledge Development & Transfer

In this component of the work plan the Council works with individual AHRDAs and employers to encourage skills & learning and employment opportunities. It mines these experiences and it translates them into bite-sized information and systems that can be used by other organizations across Canada. The intent is to build knowledge and know-how and to leverage these into accelerated HR progress.

- In February 2003 the Council officially launched the Inclusion Network, its web-based employment system connecting Aboriginal jobseekers, AHRDAs, employers, sector councils and practitioners. By March 2003 over fifty organizations had joined the network and the initiative has leveraged in excess of \$85,000 in new memberships and sponsorships over the course of the reporting period. The Inclusion Network received a strong endorsement from HRDC's Employment Equity Branch and it may be anticipated that employer interest in the network will grow as more referrals are made. Nine people have been hired through the Inclusion Network to date.
- At the 2002 Champions meeting Rose Dashchuk representing Weyerhaeuser and its Champion Vice President Mr. Steve Smith made a special announcement of a \$30,000 contribution toward the Inclusion Network. In her remarks Ms. Daschuck praised the innovative design of the Inclusion Network and spoke to the need that it is filling within Weyerhaeuser as more of their human resource professionals become trained and acquainted with the tool.
- The Council increased the number of Aboriginal employment and HRD information products producing an Inclusion Assessment Tool, an organizational inclusion model; 6 templates, *blueprints*, *lessons learned documents* and other documents for distribution to a national audience of supply and demand organizations.
- The Council implemented a variety of new communications activities including two quarterly print newsletters, six electronic monthly newsletters, 22 advertisements, 21 databases and a new website structure all in an effort to reach supply and demand

organizations more effectively and efficiently. These communications activities are enabling the Council to reach increased supply and demand organizations more effectively and efficiently.

Innovative Partnership Clusters

The Council is a partner in innovative pilot projects designed to create employment and impart skills and learning. The projects cut across a broad range of sectors and labour markets. Several of the projects are trades related consistent with the Council's national trade's agenda. There are also projects that are preparing Aboriginal people for their participation in professional occupations. Although the focal beneficiaries of the projects are AHRDA Holders, most of the projects bring together a cluster of beneficiaries including educational facilities, government, employers and in a few cases organized labour.

The Council is partnered in 16 projects that are at varying stages of start up and/or implementation. Projects include the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project (AAP), Manitoba Aboriginal Employment initiative (AEI), TeKnoWave, Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR), Northern Neighbours - a Partnership for Jobs, INROADS Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Construction Careers Initiative, British Columbia Coordinated Aboriginal Trades Strategy, Saskatchewan Forest Industry Communications Project, Trucking Project with the Canadian Trucking Sector Council, Career Awareness Project with the Construction Sector Council, British Columbia Coordinated Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy, West Coast Aquaculture Project Guiding Lights an e-Literacy Pilot Project and Guiding Circles a pilot to introduce a new career awareness tool to Aboriginal people. A summary of each of the Council's projects are provided here.

Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project (AAP)

- The Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project (AAP) is an apprenticeship trade's project designed to increase Aboriginal participation in the apprenticeship trades. The AAP was established in 2001 by the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Committee to promote apprenticeship and industry training to Aboriginal people, communities and organizations in Alberta. Over the course of the project 180 qualified Aboriginal people will enter and complete apprenticeship programs.
- By March 2003 the project had succeeded with 20 Aboriginal people committed to becoming apprentices. An innovative employer/employee support model was developed and over 500 companies were visited by AAP managers and efforts were made to formally engage these companies in the AAP initiative. Community-based committees were formed in each of Edmonton, Fort McMurray and High Level consisting of industry leaders, elders and Aboriginal representatives. These committees operationalized the support model for apprentices and employers in their area.
- AHRDA holders in Alberta looked for ways to partner with the AAP to increase the number of members who could qualify for the project. The first program developed,

and offered in September 2002 and January 2003, was the *Integrated Trades Program* through Fairview College. The program was funded by Metis Nation of Alberta for eligible Metis people in the Peace River, High Level and Grand Prairie regions. The program was designed to help people acquire entry-level skills for an apprenticeship program, and provide on-the-job experience in the trades. In Fort McMurray, the Athabasca Tribal Council and Metis Nation of Alberta collaborated with NAIT to offer a *pre-trades program for the welding trade* to their members. The 19-week program began in May 2003.

- The first 18 months of the AAAP initiative were documented in a communication document called "*The Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project - Year One in Review*" released in June 2002. Driven by a new communications strategy completed by Hok Nik, a communications firm contracted by the AAAP, an innovative *ThinkTrades* branding concept was developed which has national application. There is now a *ThinkTrades* web site and various promotional materials including a poster, leaflets and information sheets. Two hundred copies of a 12 minute video were produced featuring Aboriginal trades' people offering their reflections about their choice of career and the positive experiences they have had as trades' people. The video and materials are downloadable from the project's website at www.thinktrades.com.
- The AAAP's project organizers were instrumental in the formative stages of the BC Coordinated Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy (CAAS) by providing "knowledge transfer" and other assistance. Representatives and partners (including the AHRDCC) from AAAP promoted the initiative and the "lessons-learned" about the project. This project continues to serve as a model for collaboration and it is providing a skills/learning template which will be of interest and benefit to a national audience.

Manitoba Aboriginal Employment Initiative (AEI)

- The Aboriginal Employment Initiative was initiated in March 2000 to promote new employment and economic opportunities for Aboriginal people residing and working in Manitoba. The initiative is overseen by a partnership of interests including Manitoba Business Council, Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, Western Economic Diversification the Manitoba Government and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada. The focus of the project was/is on small and medium sized businesses (SME's).
- In 2002-2003 approximately 155 job postings were circulated from the project to the AHRDA holders over a six month period. Seven people got jobs arising from their attendance at the fair. With a net cost of \$3,000 to the AEI the cost per job was about \$400-\$500.

TeKnoWave

- The long term goal of the TeKnoWave project is to develop 1000 Aboriginal IT professionals by 2005. In 2002-2003 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by partners signifying their intent to collaborate on the project. Signatories included the

Odawa Native Friendship Centre through the OG-I project, University of Winnipeg, Willis College of Business & Technology, the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC), the University of Winnipeg, Donna Cona Inc.

- The immediate objective is to offer the program as a pilot in September 2003. The pilot will be run throughout the school year and the results will be evaluated. Based on the evaluation a feasibility plan will be developed and a national roll-out will be considered. The intermediate objective by the end of 2003-2004 is to have in place a framework and strategy to achieve the project's long term goal of developing 1000 Aboriginal IT professionals for the work place.

Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR)

- The Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry (CCHREI) and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) entered into partnership in 2001 *Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR)*. The project continued in 2002-2003. Funded by Human Resources Development Canada, BEAHR is committed to increasing Aboriginal employment in the environment sector through career awareness, the provision of training and employment resources, and recognition of environmental excellence.
- A national strategy for Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) is now in place following consultations gathered at national roundtables held across the country. A key goal of this strategy is to increase *the employment of Aboriginal people in the environment sector by 6000 positions, over the next 15 years*. In 2002-2003 a planning document *Moving Forward* was produced that identified demonstration projects that BEAHR could develop as part of short and medium-term efforts to address the goals of the strategy. A contribution for the second phase of BEAHR was negotiated with HRDC with a commitment for an additional \$1.3 million in funding commencing 2003 for the next three years to complete an employer's guide, a centre of excellence implementation plan, baseline research, marketing as well as a school and work experience implementation plan. A *Memorandum of Understanding* was signed between the AHRDCC and the Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Industry (CCHREI) in May 2003 to formalize and extend the collaborative arrangements which have served them effectively in the delivery of the BEAHR initiative to date.
- The results achieved in this BEAHR initiative in the effort to join the sector council and AHRDA networks under a common bridging strategy has encouraged the AHRDCC to work with other sector councils in similar ways. In January 2003 the AHRDCC advanced a proposal to HRDC for two forums that will bring together AHRDAs and sector councils to identify ways that they can collaborate together similar to what is being achieved with the AHRDCC helping to bridge the environment sector council and AHRDAs. The proposal has since received final approval for funding to deliver the forums in the fall 2003 and winter 2004.

Northern Neighbours - a Partnership for Jobs

- The *Northern Neighbours – A Partnership for Jobs* project was undertaken to respond to the social and economic problems facing the communities of Saskatchewan's northwest area including Laloche. Northern Neighbours has been a collaborative effort involving local councils, Aboriginal authorities, employers and government agencies. This project sought to match skilled and semi-skilled workers unemployed in Saskatchewan with employment opportunities stemming from Alberta's expanding labour market in the northern part of the province. During the reporting period 20 northerners were placed in Oil Sands Sector jobs. In addition, the Project has referred 21 other northerners to mineral sector jobs in Saskatchewan. These figures are compared with the original target established for the project at the beginning of the 2002-2003 fiscal year i.e. a target of 60 placements/annum. Approximately \$10,000 per employee has been expended directly on placing northerners in Oil Sands Sector jobs in Alberta. This one-time placement cost is significantly less than the annual cost of social assistance or unemployment benefits that the majority of unemployed workers were receiving.

INROADS Saskatchewan

- INROADS is a USA based mentorship program for post-secondary youth who are fast-tracked into leadership roles with Corporations. INROADS Saskatchewan is the first 'Aboriginal' focused program in North America. Procter and Gamble is one of the key corporate drivers of this project. A non-profit corporation was registered in 2002 to oversee the project in Saskatchewan, the first INROADS ever to be dedicated solely to Aboriginal intern candidates. Five Founding Corporations: Procter & Gamble, Sask Tel, Rawlco Communications, Bank of Montreal, Hong Kong Bank of Canada have joined INROADS. Each of these employers have contributed \$20,000 toward the costs of the project and is evidence of their commitment. The organizational framework for INROADS was completed in 2002-2003. Student intake into the program and subsequent employment opportunities for students will take place in the upcoming 2003/2004 academic year. Progress on this project has been delayed due to some management changes with the project manager.

Saskatchewan Construction Careers Initiative

- The Saskatchewan Construction Careers Initiative consists of two projects taking place in Regina and Saskatoon. The project provides services to Aboriginal job seekers looking to gain entry into construction trades sector. Each site has a walk-in service office that assists clients in the job search and recruitment process, placement of workers, as well as providing information to employers looking to hire candidates. *Construction Careers Regina* has been operational since 1998 and Construction Career Services, Saskatoon has been operating since 2000. Over the course of this project 2600 individuals have been interviewed, assisted and counseled (registered participants) and over 1600 employment positions have been secured for project participants. Over 500 people were placed in training courses that led directly to industry jobs and over 140 new apprentices were created with 121 indentured to the SIIT JTC and the remainder indentured to contractors and

industry organizations. This project has been a positive example of innovation and partners effectively collaborating to increase the opportunities for employment of Aboriginal peoples.

Saskatchewan Forest Industry Communications Project

- In 2000, the Saskatchewan-based Forestry Training Sub-Committee (FTSC) of the Northern Labour Market Committee and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC) developed a partnership for a multi-party training to employment program to increase Aboriginal participation in the Saskatchewan forestry labour market. The Saskatchewan Forest Industry Communications Project built on this first project by developing and delivering medium and longer term communications activities that would encourage greater awareness of the career opportunities for northerners in the forestry sector. Through this project a school and youth-related communications project was developed and delivered as a means of promoting awareness about the employment and other opportunities available in the forest industries sector of the Saskatchewan economy. The communities involved were La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Green lake and Carrot River.

Coordinated Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy– Vancouver/Sunshine Coast

- The overarching goal of the three-year Coordinated Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy (CAAS) initiative is to create employment and training opportunities for 250 Aboriginal people in Vancouver area trades labour markets. Of this number, approximately 100 will be encouraged to acquire formal apprenticeship training. In addition to the project's goals to increase employment in the trades, it will also introduce new support systems for employers and employees that increase the likelihood of employee retention. Additionally, the project will provide pre-employment support and training to new trades entrants and employment candidates. And, it will encourage more awareness about employment prospects in Vancouver-area trades. The production and distribution of career awareness materials encouraging Aboriginal youths' entry to the trades will be an important goal of this project.
- The strategy will initially have a project focus in Vancouver and the sunshine coast area. However, the intention is to try to ramp up the model to a province-wide initiative.
- In the development of the CAAS the Council played a facilitating role. To date, Concert Properties, LEDCOR and Terasen Gas, Windance Reinforcing and the Painters Union have formally aligned with the strategy. Other partners include Indian and Northern Affairs, Canadian Mortgage and Housing, Natural Resources Canada and the Government of British Columbia. Other employers and partners will be invited to participate in the strategy.
- As part of the engagement effort for the Strategy a Forum was held in Vancouver on Feb 03, 2003 which was jointly organized by the Council, an interdepartmental

group, AHRDA representatives and Natural Resources Canada. The Forum attracted 130 representatives from the private sector, unions, education, Aboriginal groups and government. The forum resulted in agreement from stakeholder interests on key principles that will guide the coordinated Aboriginal apprenticeship strategy.

- Planning was also initiated for a dedicated trades meeting to examine opportunities and discuss buy-in for the ramp up of the Coordinated Strategy to a BC wide status. A discussion paper was developed by the AHRDCC as a stimulus for partnership and collaborative working arrangements. A discussion document and formative work was completed about the need for a new apprenticeship model for Aboriginal people that is consistent with the changes currently being undertaken to trades training and certification in the province of British Columbia.

Trucking Project with the Canadian Trucking Sector Council

- This project is a partnership between the Trucking Sector Council, the AHRDCC, Aboriginal communities, and trucking companies including, for example, the Arnold Brothers Company, and the ECL Group of Companies. As part of this project a pilot is planned that will see the ECL Group of companies working with the Aboriginal community and educational organizations to upgrade participants that fall below the necessary standards to a level where they can apply for positions. The potential for the selected candidates to improve their truck driving skills through targeted training based on the outcome of an Essential Skills test will allow them greater access to employment opportunities.

Ironworkers Career Awareness Project with the Construction Sector Council

- The AHRDCC worked closely with the Construction Sector Council (CSC) on the development of a project proposal that would potentially see further resources and alignments with the trades initiative underway with Vancouver-based and other BC AHRDAS. In the coming year, the CSC and the AHRDCC will establish formal linkages with the International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Ironworkers. The International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental & Reinforcing Ironworkers (IABSORI) represents Ironworkers in Canada. The primary goal of this initiative is *to increase Aboriginal entry to Ironwork apprenticeship and career opportunities in Canada*. The project is awaiting funding confirmation and is expected to commence in the fall 2003.

West Coast Aquaculture Project

- The shellfish industry focused on the coastal areas of British Columbia is positioned for growth. Although the industry is splintered and there are regulatory and developmental issues relating to its growth, there are many opportunities for growth in employment. In the past year the Council has been working on an initiative to increase Aboriginal participation in various forms of shellfish aquaculture. A cluster of AHRDA Holders could be matched with employers and other interests with a view to developing a pilot project aimed at increasing Aboriginal entry to this emerging labour market. Planning for this project is still at the formative and has been

grounded in research, project conceptualization and partnership identification. The Council is working closely with HRDC's Aboriginal Affairs Unit on this project. Further meetings are required individually and collectively with the coastal AHRDA Holders in order to develop a concept brief.

Guiding Lights ~ e-Literacy Pilot

- In concert with its partners Skillcore and the Sto:Lo Nation the Council implemented an e-literacy pilot in spring of 2003. A key innovation of the pilot was the deployment of a new electronic reading skills development tool, part of the *UpSkillReading Program from SkillCore Inc.* - an accelerated intervention tool to help underachieving readers get quickly up to grade level. The Council's strategy in this pilot was to test the program in three pilot/demonstration sites before moving to a national roll-out. The pilot at the Sto:Lo Nation was the first of these three.
- The pilot project is being accomplished by a partnership of interests that are collaborating together. Apart from the Council, *Skillcore* is the private sector lead for the project. Sto:Lo as well as two other AHRDA holders will also be involved in the pilots. As well, Nexinnovations, a national information technology firm, provided substantial funding as a sponsor to the project. HRDC/ARO funded the first pilot.
- The pilot illustrates the application of new innovations to the issue of literacy. Subject to a successful pilot, and a positive evaluation there is considerable potential for a national roll out of the new literacy pilot. The current plan is to continue with the pilots, complete a formal evaluation and then to develop a business plan for the product roll-out. For the reporting period, there are no formal results for the pilot in terms of advancing literacy skills. The forecast is to include from 30-50 participants in each of the three pilots who would receive the benefit of the e-literacy tool and thereby gain an increase in their reading skills.

Guiding Circles

- The Council made significant progress in its career development activities with AHRDAs and with sector councils. A notable achievement is that it developed a formal partnership with leading experts in the career awareness field. The Council's partnership with Dr. Norm Amundson, Dr Rod McCormick and Gray Poehnell resulted in the development of a national resource tool called *Guiding Circles*. In 2002-2003 the new booklet was piloted with 9 AHRDAs in 8 provinces and territories with generous funding support from HRDC's Aboriginal Relations Office.

The Year Ahead

The time and effort spent developing the Council's long, medium and shorter term goals has given the organization a high degree of stability and direction. It may be anticipated that these goals will remain essentially unchanged for the foreseeable future though, of course, programming activities may change in response to new opportunities and new circumstances.

Other opportunities are likely to influence the Council's work in the future. For example, in a renewed AHRDS, the Council could play an increasing role as a support to the overarching needs of the AHRDS and to AHRDA Holders. It will provide needed support to AHRDA Holders and strategic support to the AHRD Strategy as a whole.

The Council will continue to explore its role as a bridge between the AHRDAs and sector councils connecting their respective career products, *HR knowledge and know-how* and employer networks. In 2002 the ground work was laid for two sector council/AHRDA forums that will be scheduled for fall 2003 and early 2004.

The Council will continue to develop its national trades agenda. In 2004 it will be a co-organizer of a western trades forum to be held in Saskatoon. This forum will provide an opportunity for trades practitioners to meet and to exchange best practices.

Changes to the AHRDCC's by-laws will enhance the organization's ability to respond to the growing number of employer, government educational and Aboriginal groups that want to align with the Council and its mission.

The Council has embraced the innovations agenda and it is positioned to do more in this area. One of the roles that are emerging for the Council is that of an "incubator" that develops new product and service innovations in response to Aboriginal employment and HRD needs. The challenge ahead is to determine the Council's progressive roles throughout the pre and post-development lifecycle of these innovative products and services.



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