



Labour Market Research Project: What's in it for your Business?

BC Wood is leading a project, funded through the BC Sector Labour Market Partnership Program, to investigate the labour market challenges facing BC's value-added wood products sector. The labour market information (LMI) gathered through this project will help industry and employers understand and respond to changing labour market demands. Using the information, Industry and employers can make informed plans, choices, and decisions for a variety of purposes, including business investment decision-making, career planning and preparation, education and training offerings, job search opportunities, hiring, and public or private workforce investments.

How Can You Help?

To meet the research objectives, it is critical that the project is informed by direct and broad-based input from Industry. To ensure information gathered is reflective of industry's experience, BC Wood will be calling on employers to respond to a short 10-minute on-line survey. An on-line employee survey will also be available for you to pass on to your workers that will gather information to get a snapshot of their experience. *Expect the survey to arrive in your in-box mid-March 2018.

About the Project

In its most basic form, an LMI study begins with quantitative data elements that are collected, organized, and analyzed in ways that measure and assess the:

- Size and characteristics of the workforce participating in the sector
- Industry and occupational characteristics of the work being done
- Factors that influence labour supply and demand
- Current issues such as labour and skills shortages
- Capacity and immediate results from education, training, and job placement
- Combination of data sets to describe the workforce by industry, occupation, or educational attainment

To form the overall picture of the labour market, the quantitative data is then combined with information about:

- Trends in the economy, workforce and sector
- Needs and expectations of industries
- Needs and expectations from an employee perspective
- Perceived value of education and certificate programs (existing and proposed)
- Relevant best practices from other jurisdictions and sectors

In February 2017 BC Wood was engaged to establish leadership and direction under the Province's Sector Labour Market Partnerships Program (SLMP) to carry out an exploratory



analysis of the Value-added Wood manufacturing labour market. The process resulted in the July 2017 BC Value-added Wood products: Sector Engagement Report (phase 1 report).

Through interviews with 15 employers and two educational representatives and discussion with an industry advisory group, three areas of concern emerged and were presented in the phase 1 report:

1. A shortage of qualified skilled workers in a number of occupations.
2. A lack of suitable training and education, especially about the changing demands of technology and its implications for production processes and output.
3. Difficulty attracting new, especially young, entrants to the field.

Based on the recommendation of the advisory group and with support from the BC Wood board, a second project was initiated to conduct a more detailed and in-depth study of the labour market. The project will involve a thorough undertaking of sector-specific research and analysis to augment the information currently available through the province's Labour Market Outlook and other available resources and expand on the findings from phase one.

Activities for this project include: working with the advisory group, employer/employee surveys, industry round table discussions and interviews with subject matter experts.

By August 2017, the project will produce:

1. A detailed description of the advanced wood sector, including: types and number of businesses by subsector, types of occupations, characteristics of the workforce (age, gender, education levels, certification requirements, length of service)
2. Current and forecasted labour market conditions and economic trends impacting the advanced wood manufacturing sector provincially, including regional nuances.
3. An analysis of recruitment and retention issues/barriers impacting the sector (including cross-generational and regional issues).
4. An analysis of occupations and key skills gaps reported by advanced wood manufacturing sector employers in the province.

For BC Value-added Wood Products: Sector Engagement Report (phase 1 report) see:

<http://www.bcwood.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/BC-Value-Added-Wood-Products-Sector-Engagement-Final-Report-July-2017.pdf>

For information on the Labour Market Partnership Program and examples of other industry's Labour Market Reports go to:

<https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Industry/Industry-Information/Sector-Labour-Market-Partnerships.aspx>