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# news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Government of Canada supports Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship

**SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN, May 7, 2009**—The Government of Canada is providing additional support to the Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship project, which helps expand Aboriginal work in trades and apprenticeship programs. The announcement was made today by Mr. Maurice Vellacott, Member of Parliament for Saskatoon–Wanuskewin, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development.

Through the Sector Council Program, the Government of Canada is providing an additional \$97,549 for a project by the Aboriginal Human Resource Council that provides national coordination, guidance and transition support to regional Aboriginal trades and apprenticeship projects currently underway across Canada. To date, the project has already received \$2.9 million in funding from the federal government.

“Through Canada’s Economic Action Plan, the Government aims to create more and better opportunities for Aboriginal Canadians,” said Mr. Vellacott. “This project will play a key role in increasing and accelerating Aboriginal participation in trades and apprenticeship programs across Canada.”

The Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship project enables the Aboriginal Human Resource Council to maintain its national commitment to expanding Aboriginal work in trades and apprenticeship programs. It also provides a basis for transitioning regional partnership projects to local models of governance and facilitating the Council in developing and sharing best practices to support current and future Aboriginal apprenticeship and trades initiatives in other jurisdictions.

“These funds support our work to promote the economic benefits of advancing Aboriginal people in trades and apprenticeship,” said Mr. Kelly Lendsay, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Human Resource Council. “In Saskatchewan, the funds support our Job Horizons program, which has placed 277 Aboriginal workers with 83 employers and registered 337 Aboriginal people in trades.”

This support builds on the Council’s existing work to help Aboriginal people in trades and apprenticeship programs, including:

- facilitating the building and strengthening of partnership networks among stakeholder groups;
- ensuring continuity and sustainability for successful projects by supporting transitions to local models of governance; and
- updating and submitting an evaluation of project achievements.

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The Government of Canada is working with the provinces and territories and other stakeholders to make sure that Canadians get the training, skills and opportunities they need to participate in the workforce and contribute to the quality of life in their communities.

Sector councils are a part of the Government of Canada's strategy to create the best educated, most skilled and most flexible workforce in the world. The Government underscored this commitment in January when it introduced Canada's Economic Action Plan. A key component of the Plan is to create more and better opportunities for Canadian workers through skills development.

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This news release is available in alternative formats upon request.

Visit the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Web site at [www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca).

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# backgrounder

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Developing Canada's human capital is increasingly vital to compete in today's competitive global economy. The Government of Canada recognizes the need to maintain Canada's knowledge advantage and ensure that Canada has the best educated, most skilled and most flexible workforce in the world. Through the Sector Council Program, the Government of Canada works with the private sector to enhance adult workers' knowledge and skills and to address industry-wide human resources issues.

## **Sector councils**

Sector councils embody the principles of partnership. Operating at arms length from the Government, they bring together business, labour and educational stakeholders to share ideas, concerns and perspectives about current and anticipated human resources and skills issues. They look at their industry's labour market issues and find solutions that are right for them.

## **The Sector Council Program**

The Program is guided by four principal objectives:

- increase industry's investment in skills development to promote a quality workforce;
- improve learning systems to better meet the needs of industry;
- reduce barriers to labour mobility, creating a more efficient labour market; and
- enhance the ability of industry to recruit and retain workers and to address human resources issues.

Some of the activities funded include labour market forecasting and analysis, workplace learning, the development of national occupational standards and essential skills, the development of curricula tailored to industry needs, and the integration of foreign workers into the Canadian labour market.

## **Aboriginal Human Resource Council**

The Aboriginal Human Resource Council creates and markets a wide range of resources to help Aboriginal people participate fully in Canada's economy. The Council does this through building bridges—with connections, partnerships and solutions—between Canada's Aboriginal and business communities.