



Labour Market Monitor

Cape Breton



October 2011

The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report providing a summary of labour market news events for the Cape Breton Region.

The Cape Breton Region includes Cape Breton, Inverness, Richmond and Victoria Counties.

LABOUR MARKET NEWS BY INDUSTRY

Construction

Construction trades workers in the twelve unionized building trades unions on Cape Breton signed a new three year collective agreement on October 13, 2011. The Cape Breton Island Building Trades Council agreement with the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Association is effective August 18, 2011 and includes wage increases on commercial and industrial jobs. (Cape Breton Post, October 27)

Manufacturing

Irving Shipbuilding Inc. of Halifax was awarded the \$25 billion combat vessel shipbuilding contract for the federal government. The contract involves building six to eight arctic patrol ships and 15 Canadian Surface Combatants to replace the existing fleet of frigates and destroyers. The Conference Board of Canada estimates projected benefits for Nova Scotia from the 30 year project will include a peak of 11,500 new jobs and a \$ 900 million increase in the province's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). (Chronicle Herald, October 20)

Cabot Gypsum began production in September at their wallboard manufacturing facility in Point Tupper. The company, which is owned by Acadia Drywall, modernized the former Federal Gypsum plant that had been shut down approximately three years ago. Cabot Gypsum has sold its gypsum wallboard to all provinces in Atlantic Canada. (Port Hawkesbury Reporter, October 19)

Retail Trade

Hart Stores Ltd. will close its Port Hawkesbury location which is located in the Port Hawkesbury Mall. The parent company is closing 32 of its 92 locations in Eastern Canada as part of their restructuring under bankruptcy protection. The closure will affect approximately eleven employees at the Port Hawkesbury store. (Cape Breton Post, October 26)

The Blockbuster store in Sydney was among the final stores closed by Blockbuster Canada. The receiver for Blockbuster Canada was unable to find a buyer willing to invest in the business. The retail chain has faced competition from the growth of digital movies, as well as a weaker economy and new ownership of the U.S. chain which left the Canadian operation in debt. (Canadian Press & Various Sources)

The Sydney Video location on Townsend St. in Sydney will cease operations and the location will be converted to a self serve automated spa. The Sydney Video Townsend St. store has been operating for 31 years, but has seen business decline due largely to the increase in digital downloading services. There are three other Sydney Video locations still operating in the area. (CBC October 20)

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Health Outcomes Worldwide of New Waterford has received \$250,000 in funding from Innovacorp and \$89,800 from the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism to help develop their business and expand operations. The company has developed a web based measurement system for the health care sector that can track and report care and costs for wound treatment. The company, which has current customers in Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and Ontario, is planning on expanding to work in other areas of health care. The company currently employs 10 people across Canada. (Cape Breton Post, October 28)

Educational Services

Student enrolment numbers are down again this year at the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board and the Strait Regional School Board. Enrolment is also down slightly at Cape Breton schools under the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial. Preliminary figures show an enrolment of about 14,600 at the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board, which is 606 fewer students than the previous year. The Strait Regional School Board has just dropped below 7000 students, and estimate a decline of a couple of hundred students each year for the next couple of years. School Boards in Nova Scotia are mandated to reduce their teaching staff levels in accordance with a provincial formula which is based on student enrolment. (Cape Breton Post, October 17)

Enrolment at Cape Breton University has increased for the 2011-2012 academic year. There are 3,168 enrolled at the university which is an increase of 2.1 percent over the previous year. Full time enrolment increased by 4.5 percent while part time enrolment fell slightly. There was an increase of 283 international students over last year for a total of 688. Enrolment at CBU from local area high schools declined slightly. (Cape Breton Post, October 24)

Note: In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of the department.

Prepared by: Labour Market Information (LMI) Division, Nova Scotia

For further information, please contact LMI at lmi-imt@workingincanada.gc.ca

For information on Labour Force Trends, please visit Statistics Canada's website at

<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/lfss05b-eng.htm>