



Halifax Labour Market Monitor



~July 2010~

This is an overview of the Halifax Region which includes all of Halifax County. It consists of dense urban areas, as well as less populated communities. The Halifax County line starts along the coast just west of Hubbards and runs along the coast including Dartmouth, Lawrencetown, Tangier, Sheet Harbour, and Moser River. Communities along the top of the border include Enfield, Milford, Upper Musquodoboit, and Dean.

The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report focusing on Labour Market Information.

Labour Force Trends

Employment in Halifax increased by 1,100 in July 2010 compared with the same month last year. The increases in part-time work (900) accounted for the majority of the employment gains. The labour force expanded slightly during the same period. With employment growth outpacing labour force growth, the level of unemployment decreased by 700 on a year-over-year basis, and consequently, the unemployment rate declined from 6.6 percent to 6.2 percent this month.

For more information, please visit the Statistics Canada website at:

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

| Halifax | July | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | 2009 | 2010 |
| Region: 250 | | |
| Labour Force (000) | 235.1 | 235.4 |
| Employed (000) | 219.6 | 220.7 |
| Full Time | 183.4 | 183.6 |
| Part Time | 36.2 | 37.1 |
| Unemployed (000) | 15.4 | 14.7 |
| Participation Rate (%) | 73.2 | 72.4 |
| Unemployment Rate (%) | 6.6 | 6.2 |

Data is 3 month moving average from the Labour Force Survey - Statistics Canada

Labour Market News by Industry

Agriculture Forestry Fishing and Hunting

A joint report from the **Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and the Ecology Action Centre** notes that many farms are experiencing difficulty, many farmers are leaving the industry, and children of farmers are choosing other jobs rather than taking over. As an example, there are now four major hog producers in Nova Scotia compared with 90 a decade ago. The report encourages consumers to buy local products in support of the industry, and states Nova Scotians spend a smaller percent of their food dollar on local farm products now than they did 11 years ago. (Chronicle-Herald, July 28)

Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction

Exxon Mobile, the lead owner of the **Sable** natural gas project, announced it will not go ahead with an expansion of Nova Scotia's only offshore gas-producing development. Production has been in decline for years, and will continue for a few years. Current low prices for natural gas were one factor in making the expansion uneconomical at this time. (Chronicle-Herald, July 9)

Construction

PCL Construction Canada of Edmonton has been awarded a contract to build a new **RCMP headquarters** in Burnside which will house the 500 workers now employed in 10 locations around Halifax. The project will employ 125 to 150 local construction workers, and is scheduled to be completed by December, 2013. (Halifax Metro, July 14)

Metro Transit will construct a new bus terminal behind the Dartmouth Sportsplex by the fall of 2010 to replace the nearby existing



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structure. The terminal is currently the busiest in the city, with 18,000 commuters using it each day. The new facility will include a platform for 16 buses, layover lane and passenger waiting area, ticket vending and some commercial space. (Halifax Metro, July 30)

Manufacturing

A work stoppage affecting about 250 unionized workers is underway at **Farmers Co-operative Dairy Ltd.** Those affected work at the plant on Hammonds Plains Road, or are shippers or stock shelves around the province. Employees have been without a contract since October, 2009 and the two sides are at odds over wages, pension adjustments and other monetary issues. The average wage is \$20.71 an hour. (Chronicle-Herald, July 13)

The Dartmouth location of British owned defence giant **Ultra Electronics Maritime Systems** has won a \$25-million contract to build high-tech sonars aimed at detecting enemy submarines for the Dutch navy. The company, once known as Hermes Electronics, will add about 10 high-end engineers to its current workforce of about 130 on Atlantic Street, Woodside. (Chronicle-Herald, July 27)

Trade

Pro Hockey Life Sporting Goods Inc. (www.prohockeylife.com), a large Quebec based hockey megastore, has opened at Dartmouth Crossing. (Chronicle-Herald, July 14)

Source Atlantic Limited, an Irving subsidiary, is taking over Dartmouth-based industrial equipment and supplies distributor **Schooner Industrial Limited**, and its subsidiaries **Millennium Welding Supply Inc. and A-1 Tools**. (Chronicle-Herald, July 14)

Transportation and Warehousing

Jazz Air says it has reached a tentative labour contract with its 760 flight attendants represented by the Canadian Flight Attendants

Union. No details will be released until the deal is ratified. (Chronicle-Herald, July 1)

Pilots at **Jazz Air**, represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, have voted to ratify a new six-year collective agreement. Specific details have not been disclosed, but the union said earlier that the pilots had been seeking improved pensions and modest salary increases. Jazz pilots earn an average of \$75,000 a year, but the union says that ranges from \$34,000 to \$106,000 annually. (Chronicle-Herald, July 10)

Information and Culture

Information technology firm **SheepDogInc.ca**, which had originally planned to hire at least 60 people over five years under a provincial payroll rebate deal, now could have more than 100 on staff by the summer of 2011. The firm operates out of Bayers Lake Business Park and currently has 35 full-time employees. The company is a certified Google Apps partner, and is involved in services such as cloud computing, training, consulting, and product development. (Chronicle-Herald, July 16)

Bell Aliant announced plans in July to cut three of its five Atlantic contact centres to streamline costs, after unionized employees had rejected a tentative contract. The company also intended to contract out fibre optics installation, consolidate its operations and engineering group, and eliminate subsidized, post-employment health and medical benefits. However, by the end of the month reports indicate both sides may strike a deal which could avoid layoffs. Results of the vote on the deal will be known in September, and it would see a 1.75 percent wage increase in 2011 followed by a three-year wage freeze. (Charlottetown Guardian, July 31)

Despite a high Canadian dollar and increased competition which continue to challenge the film industry, a rise in the Nova Scotia film tax credit (from 35 to 50 percent) and strong domestic production have helped stabilize the industry, according to **Film Nova Scotia**. Business declined in the fiscal year 2009-10 from a record year in 2008-09 million, but was

still well above the recession affected low figure of the decade recorded in 2007. The tax credit was increased in 2007 with benefits noticed within the next year, and local production carries the industry even when it is hard to attract foreign production. The current calendar year has seen increased activity with the shooting of several feature films and large budget television series. (Chronicle-Herald, July 26)

A new radio station, **Live 105**, owned by Evanov Communications, will start broadcasting in early September, 2010. The station, a sister station to Z103.5, will target men ages 18 to 34, focus on contemporary rock music, and hire 10 to 12 people. (Chronicle-Herald, July 28)

There may be layoffs of master control and videotape operators at **CTV Atlantic** in Halifax in September, 2010 as the company merges the traffic and master control departments. There are 26 employees in the two departments, but management and the unions are working on reducing potential layoffs. Some employees may opt for severance or early retirement packages. (Halifax Metro, July 29)

Radian6 (www.radian6.com), a Fredericton company which has developed a tool for companies to track what is being said about them on the Internet, plans to create 40 jobs in Halifax by the fall of 2010. The positions would involve sales and pay an average of \$70,000 annually. The company has an office in Cogswell Tower, but has been looking at other downtown locations. (Chronicle-Herald, July 30)

HB Studios, a video game developer with its headquarters in Lunenburg, will close its Halifax operation in September, 2010. The company had set up in Halifax in 2008 but has since expanded the Lunenburg operation, and feels it is not currently viable to maintain both so close together. The company employs more than 130 people in the two locations, and 25 of 29 staff in Halifax have been offered the chance to relocate. Six of them have taken the offer. (Chronicle-Herald, July 31)

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Bristol Group Inc., one of the region's largest marketing firms, has filed for bankruptcy. The company blames the situation in Atlantic Canada on substantial losses linked to operations in Qatar. Bristol had offices in Halifax, St. John's, and Moncton. More than 75 of the company's approximately 100 employees are expected to join the **m5** group of companies, (www.m5.ca), which has offices in the same locations as well as Manchester, N.H. (Chronicle-Herald, July 27)

eEye Digital Security (www.eeye.com) of Irvine, California, a company involved in the security of IT infrastructure, has opened an office at 1801 Hollis Street, Halifax. The company has already hired 11 people locally, and plans to create 40 new full-time positions within five years in Halifax with help from the provincial payroll rebate program. The positions include application developers, project managers, lead engineers and quality assurance people, with a focus on the research, development and design of software products. Salaries will range from \$50,000 to \$70,000 annually. (Chronicle-Herald, July 30)

Health Care and Social Assistance

According to a recent report by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, Nova Scotia has a high number of MRI scanning machines per capita compared to the rest of the country, but tends to use them less. According to the **Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists**, Nova Scotia has trouble recruiting technologists certified for MRI work and their 2009 report indicates there were 28 certified MRI technologists in the province. (Chronicle-Herald, July 28)

Note: In preparing this Labour Market Monitor, Service Canada has 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. Readers 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 Service Canada.

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