



Labour Market Monitor

North Shore, Nova Scotia



October 2011

The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report providing a summary of labour market news events for the North Shore Region of Nova Scotia.

The North Shore Region includes Antigonish, Colchester, Cumberland, Guysborough and Pictou Counties.

GENERAL EVENTS

Irving Shipbuilding Inc., Halifax, was selected to build 21 combat vessels for Canada. The combat package is estimated to be worth \$25 billion in total from 2012 to 2030 (direct impact). With direct, indirect and induced economic impacts, the Conference Board of Canada estimates the project will generate an average of 8,400 jobs across Nova Scotia each year and 11,500 at peak activity. Negotiation of contracts with the Federal Government will take place over the next number of months, after which Irving Shipbuilding expects specific program details will be released. (Chronicle Herald, October 19)

LABOUR MARKET NEWS BY INDUSTRY

Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction

In the next month, **Forent Energy** will begin to spend an estimated \$4.5-million on a project to drill three wells between Stewiacke and Upper Stewiacke. The Calgary-based company hopes to find oil or natural gas in the area. The first well is about 10 miles from downtown Stewiacke, between Birch Hill and Stewiacke. The second drill is an estimated 20 miles from Stewiacke's downtown area and the third well will be south of Otterbrook, near Upper Stewiacke. (Truro Daily News, October 12)

Construction

Concrete USL Ltd. of Bolton, Ontario, has postponed its plans to set up a facility in the Truro Industrial Park until next spring. The construction business now plans to open by June of 2012 and could bring between 30 and 50 jobs to the area over the next five years. (Truro Daily News, October 18)

Pine Breeze Logging Services is the Mi'kmaq business clearing the land for the new **Northeast Correctional Facility** in Pictou County. The Nova Scotia government requested bids from Mi'kmaq owned companies only for this portion of the project. Pine Breeze had seven workers complete the \$26,000 project. The next phase is installation of sewer, water lines, parking lots and building area. (The News, October 1)

Manufacturing

DSTN, a subsidiary of Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering, is facing challenges as it tries to establish itself in the wind energy market. The Pictou County plant is finding it difficult getting enough welders trained in specialized arc welding used in making circular tower units. There are currently 164 employees. Competition for labour is also cited as a challenge as wages in the oil sands in Western Canada sometimes price workers out of range for the Nova Scotia plant. DSTN is focusing on Atlantic Canada and New England as their primary markets for the short-term. (Chronicle Herald, October 18)

Northern Pulp's scheduled maintenance and environmental improvement shutdown from October 16– 24 is taking significant steps toward completing three major Green Transformation projects: A boiler upgrade that will reduce oil use by 2.5 million litres per year; a recovery cycle project that will reduce chemical used in the pulp process; and an odour reduction project that will cut the Mill's odour emissions by 70%. To date, an average of over 600 contractors, 145 term employees, and over 200 Northern Pulp employees have been onsite each day to carry out the various shutdown activities. This shutdown is a \$20 million investment including \$8 million for the maintenance work and \$12 million for work on the environmental improvement projects which are scheduled to be completed by end of 2011. (Chronicle Herald, Oct 22)

Retail Trade

Margolians Maritimes Ltd., the oldest existing department store in Truro, is permanently closing in January of 2012. Some 30 employees will lose their jobs. The reasons cited are largely due to increased competition and deteriorating economic conditions. (Truro Daily News, October 19)

Cavanaugh's Food Market on Main Street, Bible Hill is closing on Oct. 15th, 2011. The owner did not cite a reason, although competition from larger stores usually plays a factor. Other plans for the site may be revealed in the near future. (Truro Daily News, October 4)

Craig's Grocery and Take-Out on the Sunrise Trail in Northport will not be closing in October 2011 as announced a few months ago. The owners have re-examined their decision. They hope business and traffic will improve for them by next summer season. (Amherst Daily News, October 12)

The **Truro Mall** will have a new tenant opening in December 2011. **Pseudio** is an independent clothing store based out of Halifax and will be opening a 3,000 square-foot facility beside the food court. Another tenant to the mall, **Telus** has recently expanded and relocated across the mall from its former location. (Truro Daily News, October 18)

Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

First Mutual Properties of Dartmouth say interest is high in its planned \$5 million assisted-living complex in Pictou County. Sunny Brae Communities will have 33 residential units with customizable care options. The lower level will be available for commercial use targeted at health related businesses. Located in New Glasgow

across from the Aberdeen Hospital, the complex is targeting young retired people. Construction is expected to start in the spring 2012 and take six months to complete. (The News, October 28)

Transportation and Warehousing

The province has renewed funding for the **Cape Breton and Central Nova Scotia Railway (CBNS)** for three years until September 30, 2014. The province provides **RailAmerica**, who operate the CBNS, up to \$2 million yearly for working capital and maintenance costs. The CBNS runs 245 miles of track from Truro to Sydney, Nova Scotia and interchanges with the Canadian National Railroad at Truro. (Guysborough Journal, October 5)

Educational Services

Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) researchers have been awarded a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Agricultural Genetic Diversity, valued at \$100,000 annually for five years. The research focuses on exploiting genomics technologies to promote the long-term economic and environmental sustainability of the fruit growing industry. NSAC holds two other prestigious Canada Research Chairs - one in Tree-Fruit Biochemistry and Bio-products, the other in organic agriculture. (Truro Daily News, October 12)

The **Nova Scotia Community College** is developing a metal fabrication program with help from the Nova Scotia government and **Irving Shipbuilding**. Irving will supply state-of-the-art welding machines and supplies. The province is providing funds for creating curriculum and equipment. Based on its order book and labour supply, Irving sees a need for more steel fabricators over the next five-to-seven years for its shipbuilding work. (Nova Scotia Business Journal, October 1)

Health Care and Social Assistance

The **Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital** will soon house the province's second collaborative emergency centre (CEC). The first CEC was piloted in Parrsboro in July and is working well. When operational, the centre will include access to primary health care by a team of professionals, including doctors and nurse practitioners, for 12 hours a day, seven days per week; same-day or next-day access to medical appointments and 24/7 access to emergency care. (Truro Daily News, October 4) Since that time two more CECs are being set up with similar arrangements at the **North Cumberland Memorial Hospital** in Pugwash and most recently in **All Saints Hospital** in Springhill (Amherst Daily News, October 25)

For 2012-13, the Nova Scotia government is asking all nine district health authorities and the IWK to target a three per cent reduction in spending. Health care funding represents 40 per cent of all provincial government spending, or \$3.8 billion this year. The **Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority (GASHA)** say the reduction is closer to 5.2 percent or \$3.5 million because it includes absorbing higher annual costs, such as, wage increases and fuel costs. GASHA has been reviewing each staff vacancy that occurs to decide if a position can be eliminated. They have focused on management positions and expect to take out seven positions by March 2011. They continue to be challenged by people staying in hospital while waiting for a nursing home placement. (Guysborough Journal, October 26)

Ernst & Young will conduct a study for the nine **Nova Scotia District Health Authorities** and the **IWK hospital** to find possible savings and service improvement potential in combining administrative and support services

amongst the group. The \$98,000 study is cost shared between the hospitals and the province and will take three months to complete. Ernst & Young will recommend a short list of up to six services, out of thirteen being considered, for shared services. (The News, October 1)

Accommodation and Food Services

The Brownstone Cafe will not be locating in Stellarton's Albion Power Centre. Owners of the restaurant have decided to open in Antigonish. They were to be part of a strip mall in the Centre which was supposed to be ready for this fall, however, design changes have led to a delay in construction. (The News, October 1)

Wong's Restaurant in Antigonish will close its doors October 29, 2011. Several full-time and part-time employees are losing their jobs at the Main Street restaurant. (The Casket, October 19)

Public Administration

Some \$2.6-million in federal funding was recently announced to support two **Native Council of Nova Scotia** projects through the Aboriginal Peoples Training and Employment Commission. *Building Aboriginal Skills to Employment (BASE) and Driving Towards Industry Service Standards* will assist some 100 aboriginal peoples to access training and improve their employability. (Truro Daily News, October 28)

The **Cumberland Regional Economic Development Authority (CREDA)** is restructuring their management and staff as part of a new human resources model that is being implemented, as the result of a recent succession plan study. The review and development of a new HR structure was 50 per cent funded by the province and will be used as a model for other regional development authorities across the province. (Various Sources, October 28)

***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.*

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For information on Labour Force Trends, please visit Statistics Canada's website at www.statcan.gc.ca or more specifically you can go directly to the latest LFS stats for all the areas of Nova Scotia at: <http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/lfss05b-eng.htm>