

August 2009*

The upward seasonal employment trend continues in Southern Nova Scotia

- August marked the fourth straight month of employment gains in Southern Nova Scotia. The current employment level is below that of August, 2008 but by only a small margin. The employment base of a year ago consisted of more full-time jobs than we see in Southern Nova Scotia today, however.
- While the number of unemployed has been decreasing since the Spring, it is still higher than we saw last year. Participation in the labour force has also been rising and is higher than this time last year. This has contributed to higher unemployment in the region this August despite the employment gains.
- Southern Nova Scotia's employment level rose almost steadily from 1996 to peak in 2004. It declined sharply for the next two years and rebounded in 2007 and 2008. The number of employed has diminished somewhat in 2009 but still remains near the upper end of the long-term trend.
- Overall employment has been following the usual seasonal pattern for Southern Nova Scotia in 2009 but at a lower level in each month than last year. Employment peaked in July last year, though, and as of August, this year, it is still rising.
- Goods Sector employment declined from July and is lower than it was in August of 2008. The Service Sector is up from July and from last August. The Trade industry group has achieved the most notable job gains when compared to both of these reference months.

Economic Region Data: 3 month average (ending in August 2009)					
	Cape Breton	North Shore	Annapolis Valley	Southern NS	Halifax
Population 15+	114,900	131,300	101,700	103,300	321,300
Labour force	65,700	81,100	61,700	65,400	234,900
Employed	56,800	72,100	57,000	59,400	218,800
Unemployed	8,800	8,900	4,700	5,900	16,100
Participation rate	57.2%	61.8%	60.7%	63.3%	73.1%
Unemployment rate	13.4%	11%	7.6%	9%	6.9%

Source: Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey Data

*This report is an analysis of three month moving average data from Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey. The reader should be cautioned that because of relatively small sample sizes in subprovincial regions, data reliability may be an issue.

In the News

Bowater Mersey Paper Company closed down for another five-weeks beginning at the end of August to October 4, placing about 175 full-time employees out of work. This is the fourth five-week shut down since last December. The company is citing market conditions for newsprint as the cause. AbitibiBowater lost \$510 million last quarter and the union expects at least four more mills will close, something the company has not confirmed. *Liverpool Advance - 18 August 2009*

Office supply retailer, **Staples**, confirmed its intention to open an outlet in the Pine Grove area just outside Bridgewater sometime in 2010. However, the company has not released any other details about the construction; including timeframes, store size and employment levels. *Bridgewater Bulletin - 4 August 2009*

Terra Beata Cranberry Farm's expansion and equipment-buying plans were aided by a \$99,000 loan from ACOA. The company already built an addition to its plant and will upgrade processing equipment to meet demands for their ready-to-drink juice. *Bridgewater Bulletin - 4 August 2009*

CUPE members held an information picket at South Shore Regional Hospital in mid-August to warn residents about the possibility of labour issues this fall. The union's contract expired in March 31, and they are currently negotiating with the Nova Scotia Association of Health Organizations. Over 550 employees of South Shore Health are members of CUPE, including health staff and those in environmental and nutrition services. *Bridgewater Bulletin - 18 August 2009*

The marketing situation facing the **lobster industry** is no better in the U.S. this summer than it was for southwestern Nova Scotia this past season. Shore prices as low as \$2.35 a pound were being paid to Maine fishermen in late July. The situation is only slightly better in Massachusetts with the price hovering around \$3.00 a pound, \$1.50 less than last year. The local association stated that restaurant business is down 30 to 40 percent for all meals, not just lobster. *Yarmouth Vanguard - 4 August 2009*

Shelburne Ship Repair was down to a skeleton crew of about 10 to 15 people by mid-August. Approximately 60 workers have been laid off since mid-July. Until repairs and upgrades are made to the rail slipway, it cannot be re-certified and cannot be used. The yard can accommodate smaller repair jobs without the upgrades but that would not keep the current workforce employed. *Shelburne Coastguard - 4 August 2009*

Construction of a movie-version-church along Dock Street in Shelburne has confirmed the rumours of a **TV mini-series production of Moby Dick** in the community but filming specifics have remained under wraps until shooting dates are closer. The film crew will also utilize SeaCoast Studios in Sandy Point for the production. Dock Street will be transformed into a scene from the 1800s, in keeping with the classic novel. *Shelburne Coastguard - 25 August 2009*

According to **Digby's tourist bureau stats**, tourist visits were down 24 percent from last year as of the end of July. The bureau manager stated that figures were picking up in August. By comparison, the visitor information centre in Weymouth reported tourist visits on par with last year, with far fewer American tourists but more from Nova Scotia and Europe. *Digby Courier - 11 August 2009*

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