



## **Growing economy, tight labour market for engineers and technologists ahead: B.C. forecast**

*Industry's approach to recruitment expected to change to manage short supply*

10/26/2015 (Vancouver, B.C.) – Looming labour market supply challenges for engineers, geoscientists, technologists and technicians, will see more than 31,000 job openings needing to be filled by 2024, according to a new study released today. Nearly 11,500 new jobs in 31 key occupations will be created.

Southeast and Northern B.C. will experience the greatest labour tightness and shortages in the province due to small populations and billions of dollars in anticipated resource projects.

The study, titled *Engineers, Geoscientists, Technologists and Technicians Labour Market Information*, is part of a jointly funded initiative to provide important supply and demand information on 31 occupations in B.C. The study looks at Northern B.C., Southeast B.C., Vancouver Island/Coast, Lower Mainland, and B.C. as a whole.

"This research has provided in-depth regional data that will support a critical examination of what needs to be done to bridge the gap," said Janet Sinclair, Chief Operating Officer, APEGBC. "As a result, trends in labour supply management are shifting away from today's boots-on-the-ground model to accommodate the global nature of these professions."

Industry's challenge will be meeting the growing B.C. demand for highly-trained professionals, with a very tight supply that isn't bound by geography, Sinclair noted.

According to the study, part of the solution to fill job vacancies over the next 10 years includes employing immigrants and workers who are new to the workforce. Most workers new to Canada first settle in the Lower Mainland, which accounts for three-quarters of the jobs available in the 31 occupations, while workers moving out of the Lower Mainland are a major source of supply for other regions of the province.

"In the near term and continuing over the next decade B.C. will need technology skills in industry sectors directly tied to the province's economic productivity, growth and innovation," said John Leech, Chief Executive Officer, ASTTBC. "The partners who produced this study are committed to working collaboratively with industry and government to address imminent skills gaps in order to create a vibrant B.C. labour supply of the future."

Experienced workers moving in from other sectors of the labour force or coming to B.C. from out of province will make up 10 per cent of the new supply of workers. While these channels have been a preferred source for recruitment, their relatively smaller supply numbers will fall short of meeting B.C.'s growing demand. Projections suggest more than 40 per cent of workers would need to come from other countries to meet expected demand.

“Employers will be required to develop innovative ways to acquire and integrate skilled talent in the key positions highlighted in the study,” said Keith Sashaw, Chief Executive Officer, ACEC-BC. “Since the North and the Southeast regions in particular are facing acute shortages in key occupations, they will need to adapt to the new realities of recruitment in a tight market.”

Companies and employers can use this data to help determine their labour needs and make informed business decisions to support their bottom line. Prospective workers can also refer to the data to learn more about career opportunities within the Asia Pacific Gateway.

The study was delivered by four associations: the *Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table*, *Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC*, *Association of Consulting Engineering Companies British Columbia*, and *Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia*. The project is funded in part by the Government of Canada’s Sectoral Initiatives Program, which aims to address current and future skills shortages. The BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training provided additional support to aid in the process.

The study is available on the Asia Pacific Gateway’s new website <http://www.lmionline.ca/projects/egtt/>, a central portal for data and studies about B.C.’s current and future labour market. A highlights summary with additional information is also available at <http://www.lmionline.ca/news/>.

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### ***Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table***

The Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table is a non-profit, regional partnership between labour, business and education/training institutions. Our mission is to ensure the Asia Pacific Gateway has enough people with the right skills and training to meet its needs.

### ***Association of Consulting Engineering Companies British Columbia (ACEC-BC)***

ACEC-BC, formerly known as the Consulting Engineers of BC (CEBC), is British Columbia's provincial association of engineering consulting firms. ACEC-BC represents 90 of BC's consulting engineering companies that provide engineering and other technology-based intellectual services to the public and private sectors.

### ***Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia (APEGBC)***

Founded in 1920, APEGBC regulates and governs the engineering and geoscience professions under the authority of the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act*. The association is charged with protecting the public interest by setting and maintaining high academic, experience and professional practice standards for all 32,000 members.

### ***Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC)***

Incorporated under the *Applied Science Technologists and Technicians Act*, ASTTBC’s purpose is to protect the public interest through professional certification of engineering and applied science technologists and technicians and regulation of their practice. ASTTBC's over 10,000 technology professionals make a significant contribution to BC's economic growth and development and to the sustainability of the environment.

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