ABSTRACT

The Construction sector is a significant contributor to Atlantic Canada’s overall economy and is the third largest employer in the region. In addition to steady demand for services generated through maintenance and renovations, the industry is heavily influenced by the amount of major project activity in the region, leading to fluctuating periods of demand for skilled construction labour.

This profile provides an overview of recent labour market conditions for the Construction sector. It discusses the changing levels of employment and wages among employees and highlights the shifting and temporary nature of employment. The specific sub-sectors within Construction are: Construction of buildings, Heavy and civil engineering construction and Specialty trade contractors. Trends and outlooks for employment in the Atlantic Region are provided when relevant and sufficient data are available.

The following are some key highlights:

- Low commodity prices and spending on major projects will factor into growth prospects in the Construction sector, going forward.

- Newfoundland and Labrador, which experienced several years of construction-related growth, will now see its employment prospects diminish as work on major projects slows and as resource development declines due to low commodity prices.

- Capital spending on major projects is expected to fall in 2017, with New Brunswick being the only province that is expected to see growth. Federal infrastructure spending, supported by other levels of government, should mitigate losses to some degree.

- The use of overtime hours, which had been trending upwards for over a decade, has been declining since 2013, reflecting perhaps a re-alignment of labour supply and demand conditions.

If you would like a pdf copy of the full profile, please contact the Labour Market Analysis Directorate, Service Canada, Atlantic Region at: ATL-LMI-IMT-GD@hrdc-drhc.net