



**Canadian Apprenticeship Forum –  
Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage**

**Apprenticeship Summit 2004**

***“Building on Commitments”***

***CAF-FCA Conference Summary***

# **2004 Apprenticeship Summit “Building on Commitments” CAF-FCA Conference Summary**

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## **Introduction – Building on Commitments**

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage (CAF-FCA) is a multi-partite organization including representatives of business, labour, the Interprovincial Alliance of Apprenticeship Board Chairs (IPA), educators, persons with disabilities, women, members of visible minorities, aboriginal persons, the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).

CAF-FCA's objectives are to promote apprenticeship as an effective training and education system that contributes to the development of a skilled labour force and to provide a mechanism for the key stakeholders to support the apprenticeship delivery systems across Canada.

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage hosted its second pan-Canadian Apprenticeship Summit “*Building on Commitments*” from June 6-8, 2004. The Summit, held in Halifax, Nova Scotia again saw over 400 delegates in attendance. The conference program was designed to be interactive in nature with a focus on discussing, over the 2 ½ days, strategies/activities and ideas from various segments of the apprenticeship community.

The broader themes and priorities discussed at the conference are highlighted within this summary; more detailed information presented in each particular session is available on our website at [www.caf-fca.org](http://www.caf-fca.org). The information presented on the website reflects the opinions of the individual presenters and are not necessarily the opinions of CAF-FCA.

## **Building upon Commitments**

Apprenticeship in the skilled trades is essential to our global competitiveness and future prosperity. This is an important message for the leadership of our country. A collaborative approach to apprenticeship, including the commitment and partnership of all stakeholders continues to be considered an important element to the ongoing success of apprenticeship in Canada.

Ways and means of encouraging apprentices to enter and remain in the skilled trades, the support for pan-Canadian standards and a continued commitment towards apprenticeship training were key themes.

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A general overview of key messages heard in the 3 plenary sessions are presented below:

#### **Shifting Societal Attitudes**

The perception of youth, students and parents towards apprenticeship still leads to an overall negative image of apprenticeship and skilled trade careers. Trades are perceived by some, as second-class with little potential for advancement, and these perspectives may impact the career choices youth make. Youth and their influencers are affected by a socialization process that appears to perpetuate these attitudes. It would appear that society continually emphasizes an overall bias towards university career paths as being more significant and a more appropriate path than one that leads to an apprenticeship. Apprenticeship training and jobs for apprentices needs to be promoted as a model of training that leads to valued and respected careers.

#### **Portability and Mobility**

Providing opportunities for all Canadians to learn and develop their skills and abilities will enable Canada to maintain economic prosperity. The Canadian labour market is not uniform; while skilled labour shortages exist in some areas, there are in other areas, sometimes pockets of workers who cannot find jobs. Mobility between provinces is therefore a key consideration when addressing the need for skilled labour in the work force. The apprenticeship community has been involved for many years in establishing a variety of strategies to aid in employment mobility between provinces and territories.

#### **The Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program**

Pan-Canadian approaches for training, and curriculum development will allow workers from one part of Canada to relocate with the assurance that their skills would be recognized and applicable. The Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) continues to facilitate Interprovincial mobility through the development and implementation of the Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program. In addition, a mechanism to meet the needs of the labour market through Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) continues to be an important element contributing to effective apprenticeship training systems.

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The overall conference program included workshop presentations that can be accessed on line at [www.caf-fca.org](http://www.caf-fca.org). There were 6 workshop presentations and 3 plenary presentations as listed below:

- Shifting Societal Attitudes
- Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program
- Investing in Apprenticeship – The Bottom Line, What’s in it for You?
- Skills and Labour Shortages – Myth or Reality?
- Funding Apprenticeship
- Stepping Back in Time to Improve the Results in the Future
- Portability and Mobility
- Understanding Essential Skills and Their Impact on Apprenticeship
- The Impact of Trades being Compulsory or Voluntary

### Key Themes:

The 2004 Apprenticeship Summit “**Building on Commitments**” touched on a variety of key discussions. Here’s what the delegates said:

- *“Standards need to be established, agreed to and maintained”.*
- *“Portability and Mobility is an important issue”.*
- *“The integrity of the examination process is vital”.*
- *“Collaboration and the continued commitment to a partnership amongst all stakeholders is paramount”.*
- *“The business case for apprenticeship needs to be articulated and promoted so that everyone can understand the true cost and/or return apprenticeship training investment”.*
- *“We need to promote the concept that Apprenticeship is valued and respected”.*
- *“The cyclical nature of many skilled trades may result in just in time training, rather than a planned approach to human resources, we need to build commitment from the top down to change the culture”.*

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## Overall Evaluations

- Conference delegates were asked to rate all aspects of the conference. Respondents were asked to measure their satisfaction levels with respect to a variety of key conference components.
- Delegates were asked to rate aspects of the conference in terms of Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor. Approximately 24% of the delegates responded to the evaluations (96 evaluations were received).

## General

- The overall feedback indicates that the event provided the apprenticeship community with a good opportunity to share information and to network. The respondents rated most aspects of the conference as either good or excellent. The chart below demonstrates the overall satisfaction level experienced by the respondents.

### OVERALL CONFERENCE EVALUATION

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
Networking	47%	46%	7%	0%	7
Program	31%	49%	17%	3%	9
Length	43%	52%	4%	1%	3
Registration/Promotion	35%	61%	4%	0%	0
Location	48%	44%	8%	0%	2
Food & Beverage	34%	40%	21%	5%	1
Organization	47%	47%	5%	1%	3

## Detailed Evaluation of the Conference

### Plenary Sessions

The Respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with respect to all the Keynote speakers selected for *“Building on Commitments”*. Featuring the Honourable Jamie Muir, Minister of Education, Government of Nova Scotia, Karen Jackson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and Dr. John Walsh, Associate Dean for the Faculty of Management at the University of Guelph, Ontario provided delegates significant incentive to attend the conference.

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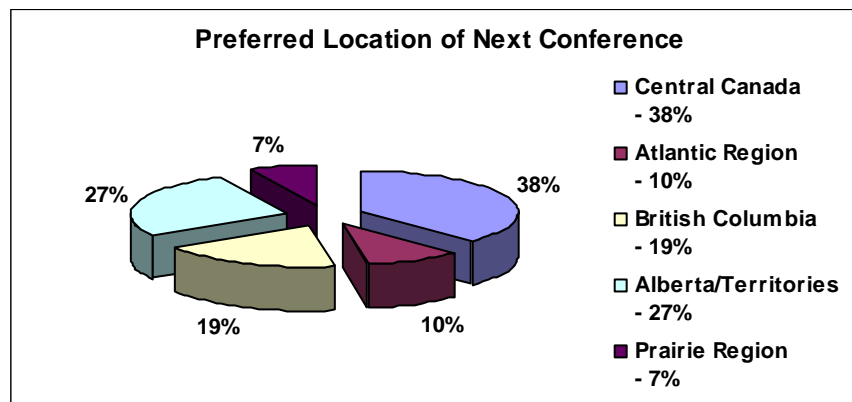
## Conference Facilities

Out of those who have responded, Respondents were asked to rate the conference facilities. CAF-FCA staff received feedback indicating the conference location was ideal and the respondents indicated a reasonably high satisfaction level.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
Plenary Room	51%	47%	1%	1%	4
Workshop Rooms	26%	49%	23%	2%	5
Meal Room	47%	47%	5%	1%	10
Food Quality	38%	35%	22%	5%	4
Exhibitor Area	18%	51%	29%	2%	9
Hotel Rooms	32%	54%	13%	1%	18
Kitchen Ceilidh	80%	19%	1%	0%	22

## Future Planning

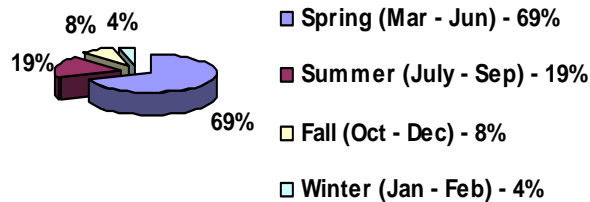
The majority of the respondents indicated a preference for holding the next conference in the spring, and suggested that every two years would be ideal. The chart shows an initial preference for the next conference to be held in Central Canada.



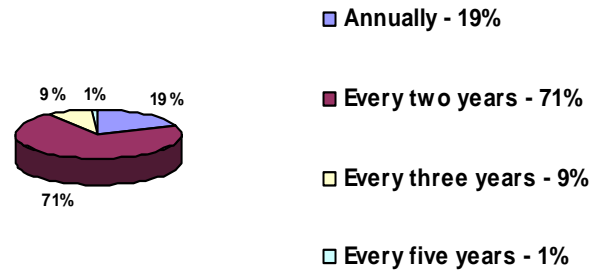
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Preferred Time of Year



Conference Frequency



In terms of developing the next conference program, respondents provided suggestions for future presentations. The following broad topics were suggested:

- Employers – how to retain and recruit employees, and their involvement in apprenticeship training system
- Pan-Canadian supply demands forecasting
- Retirement and succession planning
- Opportunities to address barriers to apprenticeship
- Best practices – focusing on positive attitudes/solutions
- Funding and delivery models of apprenticeship – comparison from all provinces/territories
- Apprenticeship – its importance to the economy
- Mobility
- Coaching/Mentoring/Training

## Success Measures

There are a variety of indicators that demonstrate that the objectives as set out by CAF-FCA were achieved. The following success indicators are listed below:

- Over 400 delegates in attendance (sold out event).
- Feedback obtained in the majority of categories listed on the conference evaluation summary ranked either excellent or good.
- The apprenticeship community had a valuable opportunity to network and share ideas about new directions and strategic activities for apprenticeship training from a pan-Canadian perspective.

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- The event supported the promotion of apprenticeship training in Canada and highlighted the work of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage.

### Conclusion

Based upon the analysis of the survey data and the individual comments received at the conference, the **2004 Apprenticeship Summit “*Building on Commitments*”** was an overwhelming success. The Summit covered many areas of concern to apprenticeship stakeholders such as:

- *Shifting the perceptions and attitudes of young people and those who influence their career decisions.*
- *Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all partners and explaining the relationships required to make the partnership work.*
- *Examining the requirements and needs of business and labour in terms of maintaining pan-Canadian standards while ensuring portability and mobility among workers.*
- *Examining the complexity surrounding the issue of skills and labour shortages, and highlight a variety of thought-provoking views on this topic.*
- *Focusing on recommendations/ideas that address specific funding challenges.*

“***Building on Commitments***” provided an excellent opportunity to share and exchange ideas about new directions and strategic activities for apprenticeship training in Canada.