

An Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy



An Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship
Implementation Plan

2009

Implementation Plan

An Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Implementation Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO) is the embodiment of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy. The purpose of the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario is to ensure that the seven components of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy are well articulated through a plan of action, which will have measurable and positive results throughout the province.

Over the past year, the AABO has realized the approach being taken to implement the Strategy was inconsistent with the approach set out in the original implementation plan.

At a regularly scheduled meeting on October 22, 2008 the AABO members discussed the need to examine the implementation plan for consistency and relevance. A committee comprised of John Wabb, Brenda Nadjiwan and Brian Doolittle was tasked to undertake the action. Subsequent meetings with Deanna Dunham of Pallas Communications led to the restructuring and development of this, the 2009 AABO Implementation Plan.

The most significant change planned this year for AABO is the inclusion of a Regional component of the delivery model to complement the Provincial and Frontline components.

Aboriginal Construction Employment Referral Services (A.C.E.R.S.) will function as the Regional component of AABO's delivery model. A.C.E.R.S. will be created to develop partnerships and tools that will facilitate, enhance and support the recruitment, retention and advancement of Aboriginal people in the skilled construction trades.

Employer engagement and the placement of Aboriginal workers in apprenticeship and skilled trades' positions are critical components of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy. Since up to 90% of apprenticeship training occurs while employed, the absence of employer engagement and employment placements in the trades would seriously threaten the success of any apprenticeship delivery plan.

Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders and their delivery agents are currently providing limited employer services. The A.C.E.R.S. will expand on these services and improve employer engagement, bringing AABO closer to meeting the objectives outlined in the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy.

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ABORIGINAL APPRENTICESHIP BOARD OF ONTARIO

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to increasing the number of Aboriginal people in the trades in Ontario.

The AABO is the embodiment of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy as defined in the document "Supply Meeting Demand." Its purpose is to ensure that the components of the Strategy are well articulated through a plan of action, which will have measurable and positive results throughout the province.

AABO is composed of Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders to whom the Board is ultimately responsible. The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario works in conjunction with a Partnership Advisory Committee comprised of industry and government representatives.

Mission

"Increase the number of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people working in the trades through improved access and opportunity to apprenticeship and long-term gainful employment."

Vision

Improve the socio-economic well being of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people of Ontario through successful inclusion in the skilled trades.

Values

Inclusion, Respect, Advocacy, Relevance, Awareness

Pillars

AHRDA Holders, Workplace Partnerships, Training Institutes, Capacity Building, Governance.

Driving Force

To develop partnerships and tools that will facilitate, enhance and support the recruitment, retention and advancement of Aboriginal people in the skilled trades.

Purpose

The purpose of the AABO is to ensure that the seven components of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy, as outlined below, are well articulated through a plan of action, which will have measurable and positive results throughout the province.

Seven components of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy

- Outreach
 - Promote trades as a viable career choice
- Marketing/promotion
 - Broaden awareness of apprenticeships
- Education
 - Find alternative methods of achieving educational requirements.
- Partnerships
 - Expand on the number of active participation from identified stakeholders
- Policy/Government
 - Increase collaboration with all levels of government
- Research & Development
 - Determine challenges, set measurable goals and develop solutions.
- Finances
 - Solicit funding sources

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Goals

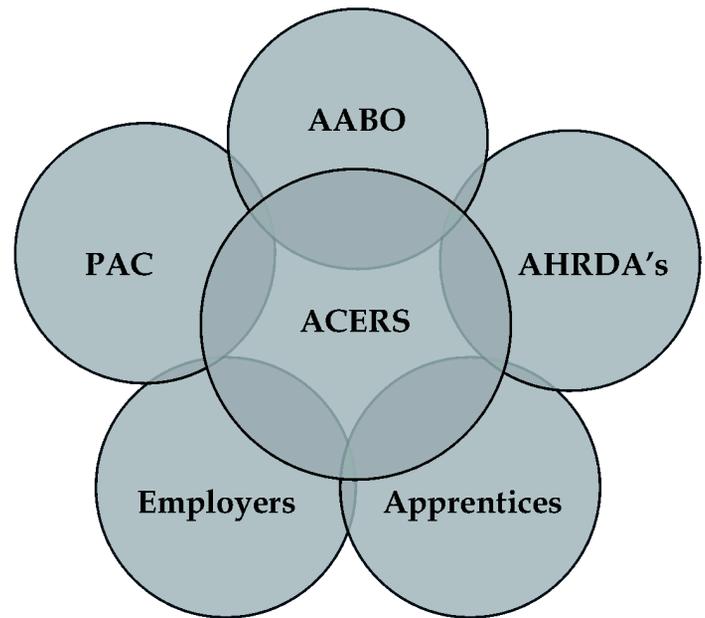
1. Implement a comprehensive strategic framework for action that addresses the identified problems facing Aboriginal people in gaining employment in the skilled trades;
2. Strengthen the relationships among and within all sector stakeholder groups and senior levels of government
3. Secure core financial resources for the implementation of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy
4. Fortify all sector disciplines working and interacting cohesively and collaboratively to create greater accountability and effectiveness
5. Reinforce a dynamic and effective communications network across and between community sectors
6. Promote and respect the diversity and differences amongst people and organizations
7. Increase public education and awareness of apprenticeship programs

Accountability and Authority

1. The AABO is accountable to the AHRDA Holders and by extension to the broader Aboriginal community of Ontario.
2. The AABO has the authority to make decisions, by consensus for all issues pertaining to the Implementation plan.
 - Each participating AHRDA may appoint a representative to the AABO.
 - The group of AHRDA Holders provides support and guidance to the AABO, ensuring that a proper flow of communication is maintained with the AABO.
 - Each participating AHRDA Holder is responsible for reporting back to their respective community with the results and progress of the AABO initiatives.

Relationship Structure

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO) is composed of representatives of the Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders. The PAC represents government, industry, and employers and, unlike the AHRDA's, has no direct link with apprentices. The Aboriginal Construction Employment Referral Services (ACERS) are an AABO initiative and work directly with AHRDA's, Employers, and Apprentices to become a sponsoring agent and indenture Aboriginal clients who enter into apprenticeships.



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AABO Governance

Terms

Board members will be appointed by their respective bodies for a minimum of two years to ensure continuity.

Decision Making

The AABO will address/discuss issues that require a decision within the Board's mission. The AABO members will exercise their abilities to participate in discussions that will create decisions by consensus. The board will set policy to facilitate the realization of the goals of the AABO and the general operating procedures of the organization.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Board:

- Solicits the appointment of representatives to the Partnership Advisory Committee
- Acts as spokesperson for the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy
- Seeks appropriate funding
- Defines strategies and priorities
- Reviews and updates plans
- Lobbies policy makers, public opinion leaders and stakeholders at the provincial and federal levels
- Evaluates the implementation plan and prepares an annual report on activities and progress.

Roles of the Co-Chair

The Board members will select co-chairs from the AHRDA representatives and the Partnership Advisory Committee.

The co-chairs will ensure the integrity of the Board's process and, secondarily, occasionally represent the Board to outside parties.

Integrity:

- The co-chairs job is to ensure that the Board behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
- Meeting discussion content will be on those issues which, according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide or to monitor.
- Information which is for neither monitoring performance nor Board decisions will be avoided or minimized and always noted as such.

- Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough, but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.
- The co-chairs are empowered to chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position (e.g. ruling, recognizing).

Secondarily:

- The co-chairs may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions.
- The co-chairs may delegate this authority, but remains accountable for its use.

Meetings

The Board meets at a minimum of four times per year.

Compensation and Expenses

No compensation will be awarded to the Board members. Time spent with and for AABO is considered as an in-kind contribution from each participating organization.

Travel expenses will be reimbursed based on Treasury Board Guidelines.

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THE ONTARIO-BASED ABORIGINAL APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY

The AABO is the embodiment of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy as defined in the document "Supply Meeting Demand." Its purpose is to ensure that the components of the strategy are well articulated through a plan of action, which will have measurable and positive results throughout the province.

The seven components of the Ontario-Based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy are:

Outreach

To increase awareness and promotion of the trades as a positive career opportunity.

Marketing and Promotion

A sustained and financially supported effort to increase general public knowledge of available programs and services in the trades.

Development of targeted Aboriginal-specific trades promotional materials.

Education

Advocacy for new standards in Ontario curriculum to increase awareness and understanding of skilled labour requirements.

Recognition of the needs and reality of Aboriginal people as it relates to experience and formal education.

Partnership

Collaborative intervention of all major stakeholders of the strategy to develop an Ontario-based solution to increasing Aboriginal participation in apprenticeships and the skilled trades.

Research and Development

A program of ongoing research is required to ensure that Ontario Apprenticeship Initiatives are appropriate, inclusive and comprehensive.

An evaluation plan that will measure the effectiveness of the program in meeting its goals, measurements, and objectives.

Policy and Government

Apprenticeship as a provincial jurisdiction requires the full support of government of Ontario collaboration between the federal and the provincial governments (MTCU, HRSDC, INAC, Labour Departments, etc.) and AHRDA's to ensure an increased Aboriginal participation in apprenticeship and skilled trade occupations in Ontario.

Finance

Additional funding from both levels of government to ensure the successful implementation of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy.

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AABO DELIVERY MODEL

The seven components of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy will be implemented in three ways:

1. **Provincially** i.e. AABO in its relationship with Ontario-wide stakeholders as represented by the Partnership Advisory Committee.
2. **Regionally** i.e. The Aboriginal Construction Employment Referral Services (A.C.E.R.S.) in the development of community and regional partnerships that collectively share a vision to promote construction trades certification to Aboriginal people of all ages.
3. **Locally** i.e. AHRDA Apprenticeship Services in its frontline role of articulating the apprenticeship program (including pre-apprenticeship initiatives) and working directly with clients, MTCU, training institutions and related organizations, employment counsellors, and the community.

Provincial Component

The AABO will oversee the implementation of the seven components of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy at the provincial level. In essence, the purpose of the Strategy is to “increase the number of Aboriginal people working in the trades through improved access and opportunity to apprenticeships and long-term gainful employment to trades journeyman status”. For this to happen however, a great deal of effort will have to go into influencing changes in thinking and attitudes at many levels of society.

In this respect the AABO must spend a great deal of time and energy in establishing an effective relationship with provincial leaders, i.e. decisions makers, law makers, public administrators, major business and trade union organizations, opinion leaders, etc.

AABO - PROVINCIAL COMPONENT

- Solicits the appointment of representatives to the Partnership Advisory Committee.
- Represents the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy.
- Seeks appropriate funding.
- Defines strategies and priorities.
- Reviews and updates plans.
- Lobbies policy makers, public opinion leaders and stakeholders at the provincial and federal levels.
- Evaluates the implementation plan and prepares an annual report on activities and progress.

ACERS - REGIONAL COMPONENT

- Registers Aboriginal people as apprentices in the construction trades.
- Creates an employer service to match qualified Aboriginal clients to construction jobs.
- Provides ongoing support to individuals as they advance to journeyman status.
- Develops community and regional partnerships that collectively share a vision to promote construction trades certification to Aboriginal people of all ages.
- Educates and promotes the multiple opportunities available in construction trades.

AHRDA FRONTLINE APPRENTICESHIP SERVICES - LOCAL COMPONENT

- Recruits, selects and refers apprentices.
- Coaches and mentors apprentices.
- Provides local employer services.
- Liaises with regional MTCU, training institutions and partners.
- Performs outreach activities in local communities.
- Monitors programs and collects data.

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Partnership Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) is to provide a link to employers, unions, government and Aboriginal communities. The group is comprised of committed and engaged stakeholders who share the objectives of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy. Representatives of the PAC participate on the AABO.

The Partnership Advisory Committee is composed of a core group of stakeholders which may include, but not limited to, the following representatives:

- Aboriginal Education Council (AEC)**
- Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC)**
- Aboriginal Institute Consortium (AIC)**
- Canadian Union of Skilled Workers (CUSW)**
- Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF)**
- Heads of Apprenticeship Training (HAT)**
- Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC)**
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)**
- Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU)**
- Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA)**
- Service Canada**
- Construction Sector Council (CSC)**
- Employers and Unions (organization to be determined)**

**From time to time other representatives may be invited to participate, as their expertise is required.

PAC Roles and Responsibilities

The Partnership Advisory Committee:

- Shares relevant information with the AABO on government's policy directions, new funding programs, etc;
- Uses their contacts and networks to influence and facilitate the implementation of the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy throughout the province;
- Provides a link to employers, Unions, government and Aboriginal communities.

Regional Component

Aboriginal Construction Employment Referral Services (A.C.E.R.S.) will function as the AABO's Regional Platform. A.C.E.R.S. will be created to develop partnerships and tools that will facilitate, enhance and support the recruitment, retention and advancement of Aboriginal apprentices in the skilled construction trades.

Aboriginal Construction Employment Referral Services (A.C.E.R.S.)

The purpose of A.C.E.R.S. is to become the sponsoring agent and indenture Aboriginal clients who possess the necessary interests and aptitude, coupled with a strong desire to make a serious commitment to entering and completing all requirements of an apprenticeship.

The A.C.E.R.S.model will:

- Improve the socio-economic well being of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people of Ontario through successful inclusion in the skilled trades as a sustainable career
- Provide seamless, user friendly support mechanism, that will increase the number of Aboriginals obtaining construction trades certification.
- Reduce the unemployment rate of Aboriginal populations through an intensive program designed to educate, solicit and support Aboriginals in their effort to gain trades certification
- Increase opportunities for economic development and improvement to residential areas of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit. It is a reasonable expectation that an increase in individuals with trade certification will i) promote the formation of construction businesses and ii) provide opportunity for targeted residential improvement initiatives (e.g. Habitat for Humanity) that can be developed and completed by Aboriginals for Aboriginals.

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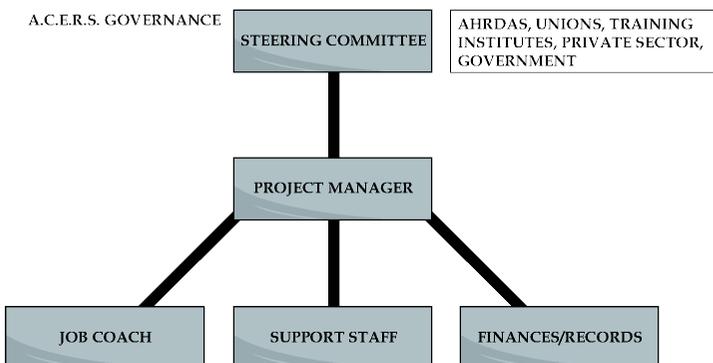
- Develop a model that can be implemented province wide that will include all components that determine success of the program including (but not restricted to), marketing campaign and materials, formation of realistic and mutually beneficial partnerships, administration (including computerized templates), budget projections, case management and follow up and follow through activities with educational, business and trade union partners.
- Break the “poverty cycle” of the Aboriginal population who may be entrenched in seasonal/casual positions as a direct result of the lack of sustainable career and/or marketable skills.

A.C.E.R.S. Roles and Responsibilities

- Register Aboriginal people as an apprentice in the construction trades
- Create an employer service to match qualified Aboriginal clients to construction jobs
- Provide ongoing support to the individuals as they advance to journeyman status
- Develop community and regional partnerships that collectively share a vision to promote construction trades certification to Aboriginal people of all ages.
- Be based on the belief that the Aboriginal community can and will benefit both socially and economically as a direct result of the project
- Educate and promote the multiple opportunities available in construction trades

A.C.E.R.S. Organizational Structure

REGIONAL PLATFORM/ ACERS SECTION



Local Component

The frontline platform of AABO’s delivery model is implemented by Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holder apprenticeship services. First and foremost, the frontline apprenticeship services ensures the accompaniment of the apprentice throughout his/her journey, and even before, as some candidates will need to embark on a pre-apprenticeship program.

It equally accompanies the engaged employer ensuring that they too receive all the necessary support. The AHRDA Frontline Apprenticeship Services link a network of people and organizations that are called on at one time or another to be directly involved in the apprenticeship process.

The Frontline Apprenticeship Services will also implement outreach activities in the community and ensure that the apprenticeship progress is well monitored.

Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) Holders

Collectively the 13 AHRDA Holders, on behalf of the Aboriginal Community in Ontario, are the ultimate guardians for the effective, efficient delivery of the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy. The group, in turn, bestows the responsibility of implementing this strategy to the AABO.

Roles & Responsibilities

- Recruits, selects and refers apprentices.
- Coaches and mentors apprentices.
- Provides local employer services.
- Liaises with regional MTCU, training institutions and partners.
- Performs outreach activities in local communities.
- Monitors programs and collects data.

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CONCLUSION

The exclusion of Aboriginal people from the workforce in Canada is not a recent phenomenon, and change going forward must be made daily and on an ongoing basis. The Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy is an evolving framework that has expanded to include collaboration at every level. Policy makers and educators, employers and employment councillors, and most importantly, Aboriginal People and their communities must all participate in order to move forward.

The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario (AABO)'s new delivery model, lead by the development of the A.C.E.R.S., will better meet the needs of Aboriginal People in Ontario. With a new focus and more exciting changes in the future, we look forward to making greater strides in Aboriginal apprenticeship in 2009.

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Appendix A

Glossary

AABO	Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario
ACERS	Aboriginal Construction Employment Referral Services
AEC	Aboriginal Education Council
AHRDA	Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement
AHRDCC	Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada
AIC	Aboriginal Institute Consortium
CAF	Canadian Apprenticeship Forum
CUSW	Canadian Union of Skilled Workers
LMPA	Labour Market Partnership Agreement
CON*NET	Colleges of Ontario Network for Education & Training
HRSDC	Human Resources and Social Development Canada
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
LDM	Local Delivery Mechanisms
MTCU	Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
MAA	Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs
OAAWG	Ontario Aboriginal Apprenticeship Working Group

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APPENDIX B

History

January 2003:

- The AIC hosts a forum on apprenticeship
- 139 recommendations to address Aboriginal apprenticeships
- Creation of OAAWG to ensure a follow-up to the forum

March 2004:

- Initial OAAWG planning meeting

February 2005:

- OAAWG hosts a symposium "Supply Meeting the Demand – Confirming a Strategy for Increasing Aboriginal Apprenticeship in Ontario"
- Validation of a proposed strategy
- Consensus on determining the "Take Action" phase

June 2005:

- OAAWG hosts a meeting in Sudbury to consult with participants of the February symposium (Resource Group).
- Publication of the document: "Supply Meeting Demand – An Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy Blueprint for Action"

February 2006:

- OAAWG submits a draft delivery model to the Ontario Aboriginal Employment and Training Frontline Community (Resource Group), the objective being the validation of the feasibility of the proposed delivery model

March 2006:

- OAAWG meets in Thunder Bay to receive the completed delivery model and implementation plan for the Ontario-based Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy.

April 2006:

- Acceptance of draft document by OAAWG.

May 2006:

- AHRDA Holders determine legal status of AABO and appoint members of AABO Governing Council.

November 2006:

- Presentation of Delivery Model and Implementation Plan at AHRDA meeting in Ottawa.

April 2007:

- Initial meeting in Garden River to review RACERS program and discuss possibility of a similar regional platform in Ontario

March 2008:

- Recruitment event for Partnership Advisory Committee held in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

March 2008:

- Apprenticeship training for AHRDA frontline workers in Niagara Falls, Ontario funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities.

January 2009:

- AABO reviews and revises Implementation Plan.

