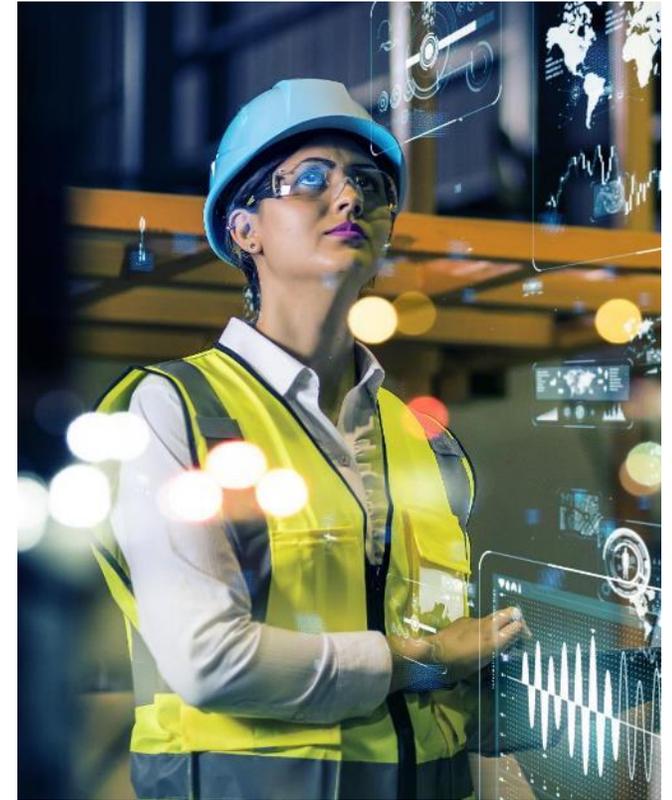


# Skilled Trades Certification in B.C.

MINISTRY OF ADVANCED  
EDUCATION AND SKILLS  
TRAINING

TECHNICAL BRIEFING

JUNE 2021





# What is Skilled Trades Certification?

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Skilled Trades Certification means uncertified workers in selected trades will need to become certified or register as an apprentice with the Industry Training Authority (ITA) to be legally able to work in that trade.

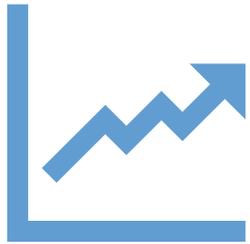


# Why is government introducing this change?

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- Since 2003, B.C. has been the only province in Canada with non-compulsory trades certification.
- This means there are currently thousands of trades workers across the province without formal recognition of their knowledge or skills levels.
- These uncertified workers are often paid less and have lower rates of employment stability and mobility — particularly in a challenging economy.
- **By requiring trades workers to be either a certified journeyperson or a registered apprentice, skilled trades certification provides a pathway to:**
  - ✓ **Significantly raise the skill level of B.C.'s existing trades workforce.**
  - ✓ **Ensure we have enough skilled trades workers to meet the demands of our future economy.**
  - ✓ **Provide opportunities for more trades workers to benefit from post-secondary training and certification that leads to better jobs and higher wages.**

# Meeting B.C.'s future labour market needs



## Demand for Trades Workers is Strong

B.C.'s Labour Market Outlook forecasts 73,000 trades job openings by 2029. While many of these jobs are driven by new growth, the majority will be the result of 38,000 workers retiring in the construction trades alone by 2029.



## Skills Needs are Evolving

Rapid technological advancements, automation and new demands from emerging sectors like the clean economy are changing the technical “on-the-tools” skills trades workers need. Almost 80% of the job openings in B.C. over the next ten years will require some post-secondary education or training.



## Fewer Younger Workers are Entering the Trades

Fewer youth are choosing a trades career over other professions that require a post-secondary education, due to the stigma around trades careers as blue-collar jobs that lack the prestige of more academic careers.



## COVID-19 has increased inequities faced by vulnerable workers

Uncertified trades workers (which include many Indigenous Peoples, new immigrants and other equity-seeking groups) are at increased risk of emerging from recovery with higher levels of unemployment, wage disparity and poverty.

# On what evidence did government base this decision?

The business case for Skilled Trades Certification fully explored opportunities and implications of implementing this policy, including:

## Skills Gap Analysis

Between certified and uncertified workers which impacts their ability to keep pace with changing technology and increase their standard of living

(BC Institute of Technology)

## Social/Economic Analysis

To understand impacts on workers, employers and the provincial economy

(PricewaterhouseCoopers)



## Transparent & Measurable Framework

To determine which trades are best suited for Skilled Trades Certification, considering impacts on workers, employers and the public

(Stakeholder Advisory Working Group)

## Implementation Plan

To ensure workers transition successfully

(AEST & Partners)

# What are the key findings?

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1

## Standardizes skills at a high level

- Increases wages & job opportunities for workers and enhances productivity for employers.
- A more highly skilled trades workforce can better meet future skill needs

2

## Increases the prestige of the trades

- Improves perception of trades by making them equal to other professions requiring a post-secondary education- attracting more youth to enter the trades to replace retiring workers

3

## Improves equality in trades careers

- Supporting vulnerable uncertified workers to achieve certification leads to better access to good-paying jobs and employment resiliency in a changing economy – while dispelling the myth that certification is unachievable for some.

# Stakeholder Advisory Working Group recommendations

The 16-member Working Group (representing industry associations; labour; post-secondary institutions; Indigenous skills trainers; and the ITA) fully reviewed research findings and provided additional perspectives and expert advice to government (**see Appendix A for a list of members**).



- 1) Recommended the 10 initial trades for mandatory certification:** The Working Group based their recommendations on an evidenced-based approach that assessed all ITA trades against standardized criteria, in addition to trades occupation labour market data and input from technical experts.



- 2) Validated key findings:** The Working Group validated research findings and provided additional context and perspectives from member experience across a variety of trades & work environments which were included in the business case findings.



- 3) Provided guidance for successful implementation:** The Working Group recommended ensuring there was a robust compliance and enforcement model (led by ITA); that government establish journeyman to apprentice ratios for mandatory trades to ensure apprentices receive adequate levels of supervision; and that workers and employers are given enough time to successfully transition.

# How were the 10 initial trades chosen?

- Over 18 months, the Working Group assessed all ITA trades against six criteria using labour market data and input from technical experts.
- The trades chosen for initial Skilled Trades Certification were determined to benefit workers by improving their skills and standard of living while maintaining existing high safety standards, and benefiting employers and the public by minimizing labour disruptions and/or increases in consumer costs.
- The Working Group recommended that other trades be considered for Skilled Trades Certification in the future once a permanent process has been established with industry.

01

**Trade is in high demand**

02

**Trade requires a high level of skill**

03

**Trade may be critical to large infrastructure projects, such as LNG**

04

**Vulnerability to economic shifts and disruptions**

05

**Trade has a public expectation of high safety standards**

06

**Trade is a service purchased by the public, with high quality expectations**

# What are the initial 10 trades?

- Skilled Trades Certification will begin with 10 trades: 3 electrical, 4 mechanical, and 3 automotive.
- Once legislation is introduced, uncertified workers will have a least one year before they must register as an apprentice or challenge a certification exam to become a journeyman.

01

Electrician (Construction)

02

Industrial Electrician

03

Powerline Technician

04

Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic

05

Gasfitter A&B

06

Steamfitter/Pipefitter

07

Sheet Metal Worker

08

Heavy Duty Equipment Technician

09

Automotive Service Technician

10

Auto Body and Collision Technician

# How will workers and employers be supported?



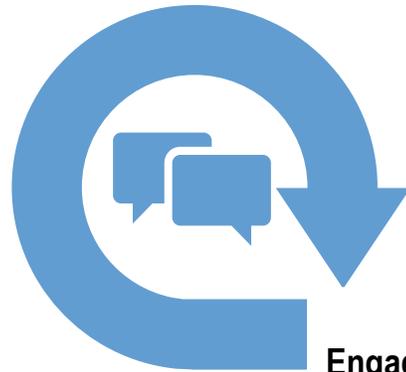
**Successful implementation of Skilled Trades Certification**

# Public engagement launch

Beginning in June 2021, a public engagement process will seek input on implementing Skilled Trades Certification, including how to best support current workers and employers during this transition. Government will be consulting with apprentices, trades workers, small to large employers, unions, and Indigenous partners, as well as women, new Canadians, and other groups critical to growing the trades workforce in B.C.

## Community Dialogues

Regional dialogue sessions with Indigenous Communities.



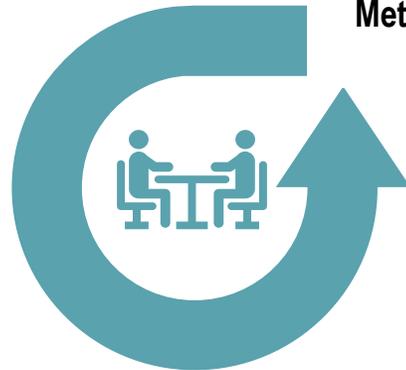
## Roundtable Discussions

Roundtables with apprentices, employers, uncertified workers.



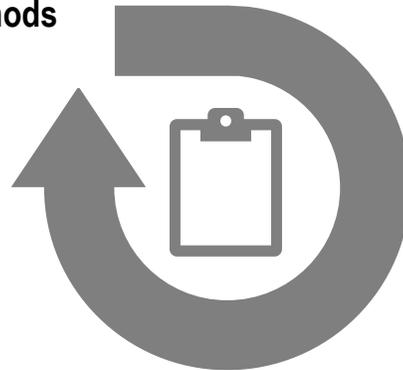
## One-on-one Meetings

One-on-one meetings with representatives from industry



## Public Website & Survey

Opportunity for the public to share their thoughts, concerns and suggestions.



Engagement  
Methods

# Appendix A – Stakeholder Advisory Working Group Membership

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**Laird Cronk,**

President BC Federation of Labour

**Jud Martell,**

Representative for BC Building Trades

**Rieghardt van Enter,**

Tybo Contracting

**Larry Richardson,**

Director of Training -CLAC

**Chris Atchison,**

CEO - BC Construction Association

**Helen Boyce,**

Access Trades

**Lisa Langevin,**

Director, Women in Trades ITA

**Kathy Kinloch,**

President – BCIT

**Ken Tourand,**

President - Nicola valley Institute of Technology

**Kaanesh Ghosh,**

Employee & Labour Relation Manager- LNG Canada

**Irene Kerr,**

CEO -BC Infrastructure Benefits

**Abigail Fulton,**

Executive Director - Construction Foundation of BC

**Ron Tremblay,**

Chair - Automotive Retailers Association

**Robin Lucas,**

President - Allteck Power Line Contractors

**Shelley Gray,**

Chief Executive Officer - ITA ex-officio member

**Ken McCormack,**

Construction Labour Relations Association