

CONSULTATION SUMMARIES FOR EOPG

Aboriginal Engagement

Phase one of the Aboriginal engagement took place between February and April 2014, and presented an opportunity to provide partners with an overview of the state of employment and training programs, goals for integration as well as explore the current employment and training services landscape in Aboriginal communities. Approximately 93 Aboriginal partners participated, which included 10 focus groups and 20 interviews across Ontario.

Several themes emerged including:

- The different profile of the Aboriginal learner due to factors such as extreme remoteness of many Aboriginal communities, ongoing challenges with poverty, and different cultural and world views;
- The critical importance of pre-employment supports, and the acknowledgement that these services often take time to produce results;
- Several positive aspects of the current system, such as the level of collaboration across service providers and the incorporation of Aboriginal culture into programming; and
- Areas for improvement, including the need for greater flexibility within programs.

Broad-Based Stakeholder Consultation

Phase one of a broad stakeholder consultation with service providers, advocacy groups and umbrella organizations took place between February and early April 2014. This consultation focused on integration objectives and outcomes for an integrated employment and training system. Approximately 114 stakeholders from 104 organizations participated, which included 14 focus groups and 22 interviews across Ontario.

Overall, stakeholders were positive about an integrated system. Several other notable themes emerged including:

- The need for a 'no wrong door approach' to employment and training services that considers local context and coordination;
- The need for an online tool to capture the entire placement process; and
- Effective employer engagement strategies, including the need for continuous communication, coordinated outreach, and customized multi-pronged outreach tools.

Employers

The Ministry also worked with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and Essential Skills Ontario (ESO) to conduct eight employers roundtables across the province

between March and May 2014. The roundtables focused on building awareness of the Canada-Ontario Job Grant and solicited feedback on employers' role in training and potential employer-driven programming.

The results from the roundtables will inform future-state design of employer-driven programming in Ontario. Common themes raised during the roundtables include:

- The need for flexible programming to meet unique employer needs;
- Some interest in sector-based consortia approaches to training; and
- Delivery mechanisms, including concerns with providing training through a third-party provider, as required by the Canada-Ontario Job Fund Agreement.

On September 4, 2014, the OCC and ESO released a public report with recommendations from the roundtables entitled *Moving Forward Together: An Employer Perspective on the Design of Skills Training Programs in Ontario*.