

## **Atlantic construction leaders prepare for growth as population declines**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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– Atlantic Canada’s construction industry will see moderate to record growth over the next several years. The key focus will be on Newfoundland and Labrador where the dramatic ramping up of major industrial and utility/resource projects will challenge the construction industry’s ability to meet demand for non-residential trades and occupations. Limited population and labour force growth across the Atlantic region may complicate managing the peak labour requirements for these projects.

In New Brunswick construction employment reached a record high in 2010, up by 25% compared to 2008. Going forward, however, employment is estimated to decline as current projects wind down.

Nova Scotia’s construction industry will experience moderate growth across the scenario. Employment in non-residential construction hit a record high in 2010 and is estimated to remain at near current levels until 2013 before activity declines as major industrial and engineering projects end.

For PEI, current levels of construction activity are high by historical standards. Job gains are strongest in industrial and engineering projects, ramping up employment by as much as 30% in some trades and occupations.

Those are among the highlights in the latest nine-year forecast of labour supply and demand released by the Construction Sector Council. *Construction Looking Forward: An assessment of construction labour markets from 2011 to 2019 for Atlantic Canada* says meeting peak demand for major projects will require mobility across the region and likely recruiting from outside the local labour market. In addition, the long-term demographic trends point to the need for industry to retain focus on attracting new recruits even in during periods of limited employment growth.

“These workforce fluctuations require considerable effort to manage because they are unfolding in a regional economy with an older age profile and declining population trends,” says Tim Flood, President, John Flood and Sons (1961) Ltd. Over the forecast scenario an estimated 17,000 workers are expected to retire, 26% of the region’s current construction labour force.

“In addition to sustaining training and recruitment initiatives – particularly campaigns to attract and retain local youth – there are several options for filling these gaps, including more women, Aboriginal people, and temporary or permanent immigration,” says Tim Flood, President, John Flood and Sons (1961) Ltd.

“The construction cycles in the four provinces may also allow provinces to take advantage of interprovincial mobility,” adds Dave Wade, Executive Director, Newfoundland & Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council. “Regional collaboration will be an important part of addressing labour requirements going forward.

*Construction Looking Forward* reports, which detail workforce supply and demand by trade, province and region, help industry, training providers and government decision makers manage workforce requirements. They are released annually following consultations with industry leaders, including owners, contractors and labour groups, as well as governments and educational institutions.

The CSC is a national industry-led organization committed to the development of a highly skilled workforce that will support the future needs of Canada’s construction industry and is funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program.

Available at [www.constructionforecasts.ca](http://www.constructionforecasts.ca), the forecasts allow for instant access to information on the availability of trades, as well as residential and non-residential construction investment data.

FOR MORE INFORMATION –

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