



Building bright futures

Electricity Sector
Labour Market Information Project:

Saskatchewan/ Manitoba Region





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Summary of Findings

The Electricity Sector Council (ESC) is undertaking research to explore the sector's labour market needs. This report is based on the data collected for the 2008 Labour Market Information Project, commissioned by the ESC in partnership with Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC). The report is a regional analysis, which provides a comparison of the regional data with the national data. It presents some of the key metrics that employers in Canada's electricity sector can use to better plan for future human resource needs. A regional perspective is helpful for employers to more accurately gauge their position in relation to the national average.

The report is not meant to be representative of all establishments in the region, but rather of the establishments that provided data for the 2008 ESC Employer Survey.

Below are some of the key findings from the regional analysis.

Key Findings

- Among respondents from Manitoba and Saskatchewan, significant sources of competition for new hires are the Oil & Gas industry, Construction industry, and other Utilities. 75% of employers cited each of these, which is higher than the national averages;
- Data from employers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan suggests that they are more likely to hire co-op students, interns, and summer students, but less likely to have hired apprentices, compared with the national average;
- Enrolment in engineering programs has declined in the Prairies, whereas it has increased nationally, and graduation from university engineering programs is growing at a lower rate in the Prairies than it is nationally.
- Retirements in the region were not as high as the national average, and are not predicted to be as high in either 2009 or 2012. Furthermore, fewer employees were reported as being eligible for either their full or partial pension;
- Vacancy rates across all occupational groups are much higher in the Prairies than nationally. Overall, the provincial rate was reported at 5% compared with 3% nationally. Most notable was among Engineers and Technicians/Technologists, where the regional vacancy rate was double the national average for this major occupational group; and
- The supply/demand gap is predicted to be smaller than the national average in 2009, but bigger by 2012.

Section 1: Background

1.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the Labour Market Information Project was to assist the Electricity Sector Council in understanding the current and future supply and demand of labour in the electricity sector.

One outcome of the presentation of results to the project Steering Committee in June was a desire to undertake further analysis of the results on a regional scale. A regional analysis of key metrics is essential to assist companies within each region to better assess their strengths and weaknesses, and better understand the opportunities and threats they may face in light of the projected labour shortages.

Based on previous studies conducted for the ESC, regional breakdowns are as follows:

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan and Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Atlantic Provinces

Each regional report includes background information on the Human Resource context within each region, in addition to the analysis of key metrics presented in the Labour Market Information project report. Contained in this report is an analysis of the Saskatchewan/ Manitoba region.

1.2 Research Considerations

The primary reason the regional analysis was not included in the main project report was that for many questions, the number of companies responding was very few. The result was that 1) the data could not be considered as representative of the entire universe, and 2) the anonymity of the respondents would be compromised. In keeping with research integrity, the following report does not claim to be representative of all establishments in the electricity sector, operating in Saskatchewan/ Manitoba. Rather, this report provides respondents with a picture of where they stand in relation to the national average. It should be noted that some respondent organizations did not provide information for all survey questions; therefore, survey results based on smaller samples or employee counts should be interpreted with caution.

Section 2: Context

2.1 Overall Labour Force and Employment Trends in the Region

Employment has seen an overall growth in recent years in both Saskatchewan and Manitoba. According to a presentation prepared for the ‘Statistics Canada Conference on the Saskatchewan Labour Force’, delivered in February, 2008, “the recent surge in employment started late in 2005 and continued until January 2007, generating an employment increase of approximately 25,000”¹. While the provincial annual average of employment growth between 2001 and 2007 was smaller than the national annual average, according to the presentation one of the reasons for the lack of employment growth in the province is a shortage of workers². Further to this, employment growth was mostly in the resources, utilities, and construction industries.

As of the end of August, 2008, the national unemployment rate was 6.1% and the national employment rate was 63.4%. The following table provides a comparison of the national average with the Prairie rates.

Exhibit 2.1: Employment and Unemployment Rates as of August, 2008			
	National	Saskatchewan	Manitoba
Employment	63.4%	66.5%	66.5%
Unemployment	6.1%	4.5%	3.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, August, 2008

As the table above illustrates, the Prairie region is recording higher employment rates and notably lower unemployment rates than the national rates. Given the recent news from the Conference Board of Canada that Canada’s Prairie provinces are expected to lead economic growth in 2008³, employment rates will likely increase and unemployment rates decrease – thus further widening the gap between regional and national rates. According to the Conference Board of Canada, the two main reasons for the expected economic growth in the region are 1) Manitoba’s booming manufacturing industry, and 2) the high price of commodities coming out of Saskatchewan driving mining activity and boosting construction projects. Additionally, new migrants are bolstering Saskatchewan’s domestic economy⁴.

The economic outlook for the two provinces is exceptionally optimistic. Manitoba’s economy is expected to grow by 3.7% in 2008, and Saskatchewan’s is expected to grow by 3.6%. Increased competition for employees from manufacturing, natural resource extraction, and construction will be a particular challenge for employers in the electricity sector. While in recent years the provinces of Alberta and BC have been considered the country’s fuel for economic growth, according to the Conference Board of Canada’s economic outlook for 2008, “attention this year has shifted away from Alberta to Saskatchewan and Manitoba, as high prices for nearly all of their natural resources will make them the two fastest-growing economies in Canada”⁵.

¹ <http://www.sasktrends.ca/LF%20Overview%20Stats%20Can%20Feb27.pdf>

² *ibid.*

³ <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/press/2008/provincial-winter08.asp>

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Conference Board of Canada Economic Outlook for 2008, accessed through <http://www.canada.com/calgaryherald/news/story.html?id=4bed779d-1eb8-451c-b154-8f609603ce86>

Growing economies have increased the demand for skilled workers, and both provinces have seen rising immigration numbers in recent years, largely due to their successful Provincial Nomination Programs.

Section 3: Employment Profile

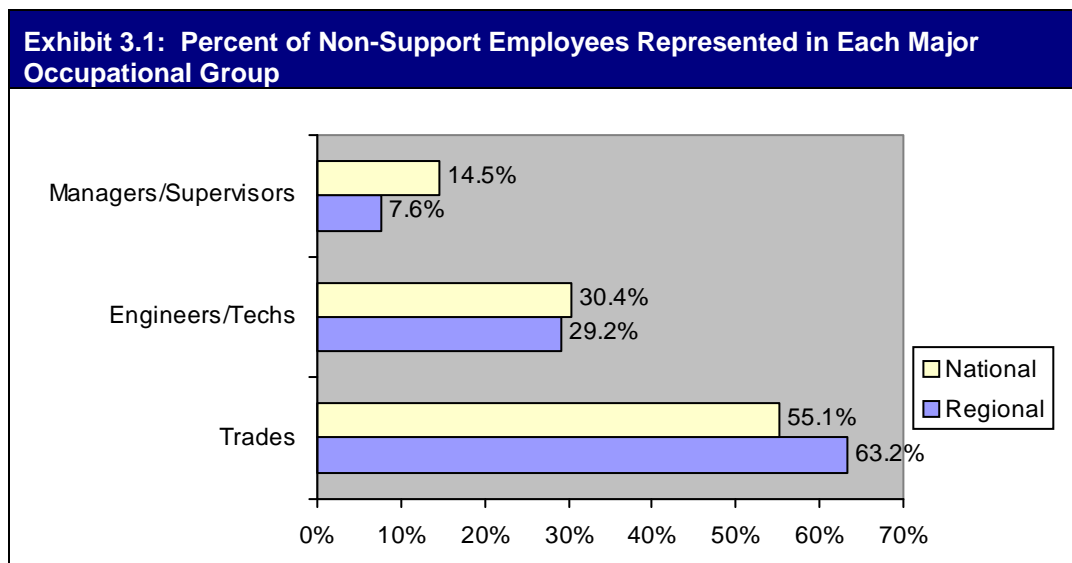
This section outlines the general employment profile of respondents to the 2008 ESC Employer Survey.

3.1 Support and Non-Support Staff

In total, employers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba reported employing 4,162 non-support staff. According to the total number of employees reported for the region, non-support staff comprises 54% of employment in the electricity sector in the region. This proportion is much lower than the national figures, where approximately 64% of the sector’s workforce is classified as non-support.

3.2 Number of Employees by Occupation

The following graph presents the percent of non-support employees represented in each major occupational group, compared with the national percentages.



NOTE: totals do not include 'other managers', 'other engineers and technicians', or 'other non-support occupations', as these were not included in the survey design.

Source: 2007 ESC Employer Survey (n=87 nationally, n=4 regionally)

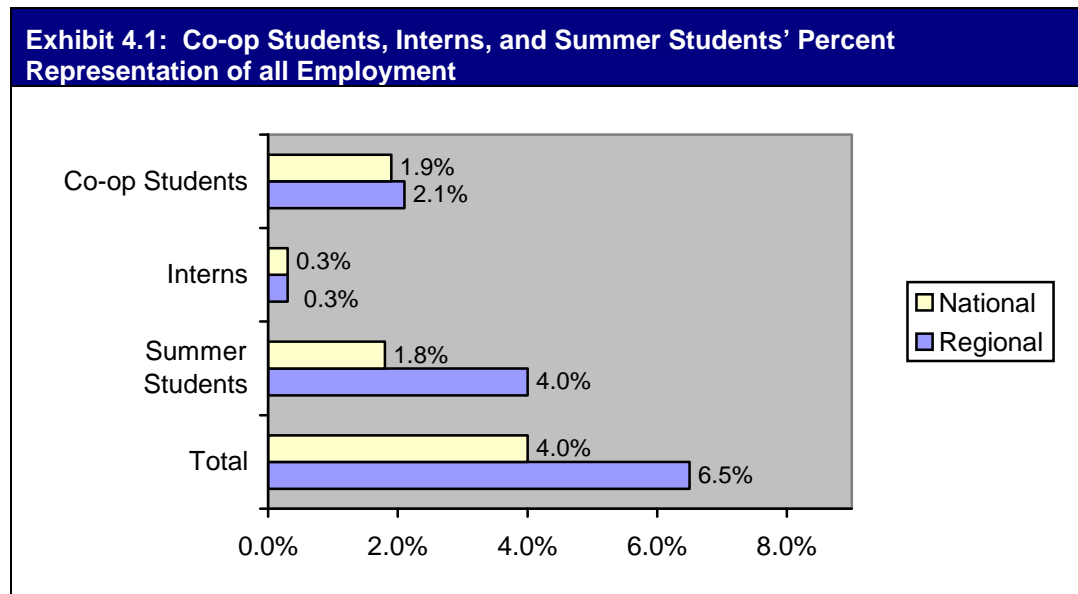
As the graph illustrates, a larger portion of non-support staff are represented in the Trades occupations at the regional level than at the national level. There are roughly the same proportion of Engineers and Technicians, but a remarkably smaller proportion of Managers at the regional level than at the national level.

The precise reason for the differences cannot be discerned from the data. Furthermore, the vacancy rates reported by the region for Managers and Supervisors, while higher than the national rates, are not as high as those reported for either Engineers and Technicians, or Trades occupations (see section 7 of this report).

Section 4: Supply of Workers

4.1 Co-op Students, Summer Students, and Interns

There were a total of 2,818 co-op students, interns, and summer students taken on in 2007 across the country by employers in the electricity sector. Regionally, there were 182. The following graph details the percent of total employment that each group represents.



Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=81 nationally, n=3 regionally)

Note: Percentages are based on all employment. The 'n' includes all companies who provided data for at least one of the categories, and the percentages are calculated based on total employment of these companies.

In each of the categories, employers in the Prairies reported higher incidents of hiring co-op students, and summer students, than the national average. Overall, employers in the region hired students and interns representing almost 7% of total employment. This figure is remarkably higher than the national average of 4%. One key reason for this could be due in part to the high demand for labour, given the region's growing economy. It should be noted that there were only 3 respondents in the region, so this data cannot be considered as representative of all employers in the Prairies.

The next section illustrates that the number of university enrolments and graduates in the Prairies comprises a very small percent of the overall national figures – only 4.5% of all enrolments in 2005. Given that the highest proportion of students were summer students, and that the university enrolments declined, it could be speculated that a number of the summer student hires were high school students, or students in college who were not necessarily registered in an apprenticeship program (section 4.3 indicates that there were fewer apprentices taken on in the Prairies, compared with the national figures reported).

4.2 Supply of Engineers

As reported in the main LMI report, the number of graduates from engineer programs in Canadian universities has increased overall by 7% between 2003 and 2005. However, the number of students enrolled in electrical engineering programs decreased by 10% over this same time period.

Reproduced below are the national figures of the number of enrolments and graduates in 2003 and 2005 by program, and the percent change of each. All the data contained in this section of the report comes from Statistics Canada's Post Secondary Information System (PSIS). The most recent data available at the time of reporting was from 2005. Readers are reminded that more recent figures, when they become available, may present different trends.

Exhibit 4.2: Student Enrolment and Graduates in Engineering Programs (National Figures)			
Year	2003	2005	% change
Number of Students Enrolled			
Electrical Engineering	17,382	15,693	-10%
Mechanical Engineering	14,742	15,600	6%
Civil Engineering	7,929	9,186	14%
Chemical Engineering	5,124	5,631	9%
Materials Engineering	504	924	83%
Systems Engineering	666	657	-1%
Nuclear Engineering	21	177	743%
Total	46,368	47,868	3%
Number of Graduates/ Completers			
Electrical Engineering	3,702	3,849	4%
Mechanical Engineering	2,979	3,849	29%
Civil Engineering	1,518	1,710	13%
Chemical Engineering	1,083	1,092	1%
Materials Engineering	120	144	20%
Systems Engineering	153	141	-8%
Nuclear Engineering	3	3	0%
Total	9,558	10,212	7%

Source: Statistics Canada PSIS Data

The regional figures are presented in the table below. A quick comparison of the figures show some startling differences. Overall, universities in the Prairies reported declining rates of enrolment, whereas these rates grew at the national level. Similarly, growth rates among graduates were larger at the national level than at the regional level. Enrolment across all engineering programs declined by 13% in the Prairies, and graduation increased only slightly by 1%, compared with the national figures of 3% and 7% respectively. These figures suggest that the Prairies likely experienced lower rates of graduation between 2005 and 2009, as enrolment declined. Employers will therefore likely have a smaller pool of local graduates to draw from to meet their needs, and may need to consider ways of attracting engineering graduates from other regions.

Exhibit 4.3: Student Enrolment and Graduates in Engineering Programs (Regional Figures)			
Year	2003	2005	% change
Number of Students Enrolled			
Electrical Engineering	1,017	645	-37%
Mechanical Engineering	774	753	-3%
Civil Engineering	513	573	12%
Chemical Engineering	177	192	8%
Materials Engineering	0	0	0%
Systems Engineering	0	0	0%
Nuclear Engineering	0	0	0%
Total	2,481	2,163	-13%
Number of Graduates/ Completers			
Electrical Engineering	180	129	-28%
Mechanical Engineering	135	183	36%
Civil Engineering	99	102	3%
Chemical Engineering	30	36	20%
Materials Engineering	0	0	0%
Systems Engineering	0	0	0%
Nuclear Engineering	0	0	0%
Total	444	450	1%

Source: Statistics Canada PSIS Data

Of particular interest is the sharp decline in both enrolments in and graduates from Electrical Engineering. Electrical Engineering saw the steepest decline of all engineering programs in the Prairies. Enrolments in Mechanical Engineering also experienced a decline, while Civil Engineering increased by 12%. It is not clear whether these trends are a result of increased or decreased “seat availability” within the universities, or a result of external influences. Either way, the trends among these three engineering programs reflect those of the national average.

4.3 Apprentices in Key Trades

Employers were asked to report on the number of apprentices they had taken on in 2007 for four key trades in the electricity sector. The following exhibit presents a comparison of regional data with national averages.

Exhibit 4.4: Apprentices Employed in 2007 for Key Trades

	Total Employees in Occupation at Responding Companies		Apprentices Taken on in 2007		Apprentices as % of Total Employees in Occupation	
	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional
Power System Electricians	4,103	178	829	26	20.2%	14.6%
Power Line and Cable Workers	5,660	539	1,033	80	18.3%	14.8%
Power Systems Operators	746	90	234	0	31.4%	0%
Power Station Operators	1,319	0	237	0	18.0%	0%
Total	11,828	807	2,333	106	19.7%	13.1%

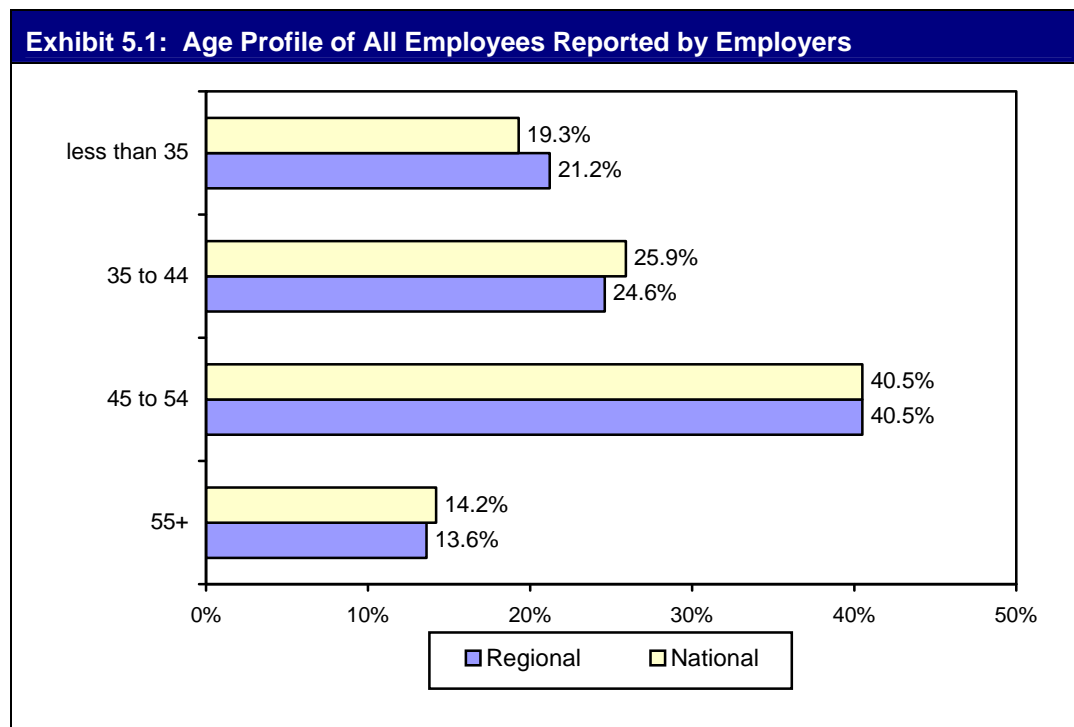
Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=60 nationally, n=2 regionally)

While employers in the region reported hiring a larger proportion of co-op students, summer students, and interns, they reported lower incidents of taking on apprentices when compared to the national averages across all four key occupational groups.

Section 5: Age and Retirement Trends

5.1 Age of Employees

The graph below outlines the age profile of both support and non-support employees as reported by employers in the 2008 ESC employer survey.



Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=84 nationally, n=4 regionally)

The age profile of employees in NAICS 2211 in the Prairies mirrors fairly closely the national profile. The region has a slightly higher proportion of employees under the age of 35, and a somewhat smaller proportion who are over the age of 55. Overall, just under 46% of employees in the region are under 45, less than 1% higher than the national average.

5.2 Retirements per year by major occupational group

Presented in exhibit 5.2 are the reported figures for actual retirements in 2006 and predicted retirements in 2009, and 2012, for each major occupational group, represented as a percent of current employment. Readers are reminded that the data in the table should be considered with caution as fewer than 3 employers provided data for a number of occupations.

Exhibit 5.2: Estimated Retirements Reported by Employers by Occupation						
Occupation Group	Retired in 2006		Estimated Retirements in 2009		Estimated Retirements in 2012	
	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Managers	3.6%	5.3%	5.7%	7.2%	8.5%	7.2%
Engineers and Technicians/ Technologists	2.4%	2.4%	4.2%	3.6%	5.3%	3.8%
Trades	1.6%	1.1%	4.1%	1.4%	6.0%	7.0%
Other Critical Key Occupations	4.8%	1.4%	8.2%	4.1%	7.6%	4.1%
Total	2.4%	1.8%	4.7%	2.6%	6.2%	6.0%

Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=82 nationally, n=4 regionally)

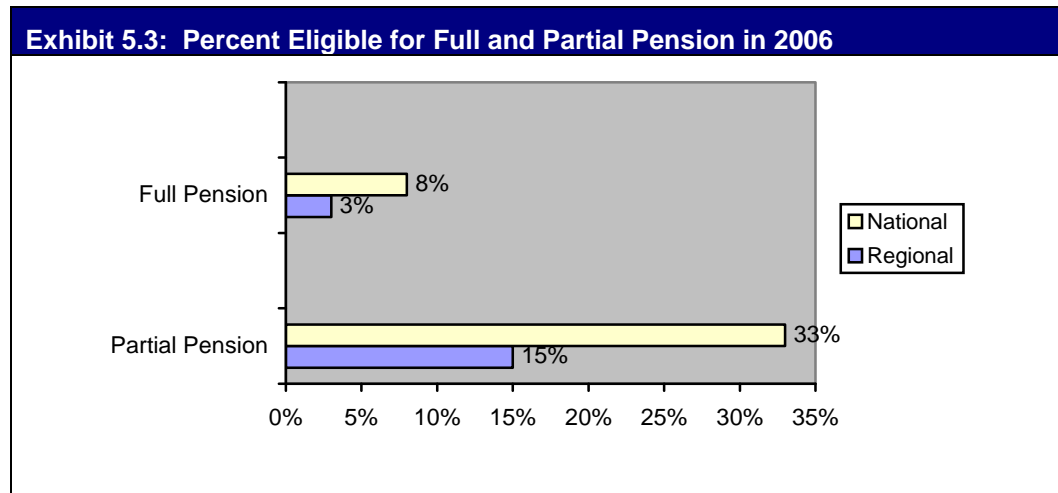
The most notable trend that emerges is among the Trade occupations. Retirements in the Trades are predicted to increase dramatically at the regional level. Some notable figures from the above table include:

- Expected retirements among Trades occupations are predicted to be much lower at the regional level than the national level in 2009, but by 2012 they are predicted to be slightly higher at the regional level;
- Retirements are expected to be lower regionally among 'Engineers and Techs', and 'Other Critical Key Occupations' in both 2009 and 2012
- Overall, retirements in the Prairies were lower than the national average in 2006, and are predicted to be lower again in 2009. By 2012, overall estimates are fairly similar.

Despite similar age profiles, employers in the Prairies do not expect their retirements to be as high as at the national level.

5.3 Pension Eligibility

The following graph illustrates the percent of employees who were eligible for their full or partial pension in 2006. In the Prairies, a smaller proportion of employees were eligible for either their full or partial pension, as compared to the national average.



Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=49 nationally, n=2 regionally)

A more detailed table below presents the percent of employees within each occupation who were eligible either for their full or partial pension in 2006. One important note of caution in interpreting the data is that pension eligibility rules can differ greatly from one business to the next. Given the low 'n', these figures below need to be considered with caution.

Exhibit 5.4: Eligibility for Pension – by Occupation

Occupation Group	Eligible for Full Pension in 2006		Eligible for Partial Pension in 2006	
	National	Regional	National	Regional
	%	%	%	%
Managers	10%	11.8%	37%	23.5%
Engineers and Technicians/ Technologists	9%	4.8%	32%	14.3%
Trades	6%	0.0%	33%	13.7%
Total*	8%	3.4%	33%	15.7%

*Total includes only non-support staff

Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=49 nationally, n=2 regionally)

Of particular note in the data presented above is that generally speaking, the percent of employees who were eligible for their full pension in 2006 among regional employers was higher than the national averages among Managers. This is consistent with the percent of Managers who were reported to have retired in 2006 and who are expected to retire in 2009. Exhibit 5.2 shows that the regional percents of Managers who retired in 2006 and who are expected to retire in 2009 are higher than the national percentages.

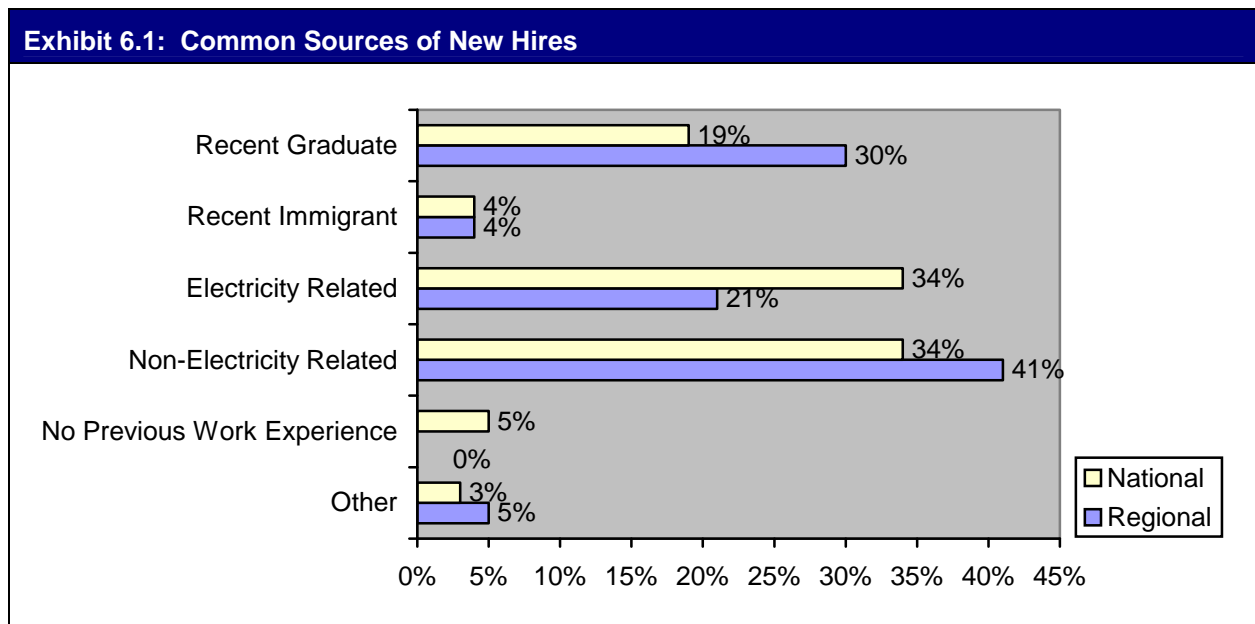
Further to this, the percent of employees who were eligible for their full pension in 2006 was lower among all other occupational groups, which is again reflective of the retirement figures reported in Exhibit 5.3. Furthermore, the regional percentages were lower across all major occupational groups with respect to eligibility for partial pension.

It should be noted again that readers are cautioned that the low 'n' results in data that cannot necessarily be considered as representative of the entire region.

Section 6: New Hires

6.1 Common sources of Recruitment for New Hires

This section details the most common sources of recruitment for new hires, and common sources of competition for employees. When compared to the national figures, there are some remarkable differences



Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey, (n=53, national); (n=3, regional)

A look at the graph presented above illustrates that employers in the Prairies hired a much larger portion of their new hires as recent graduates and from other non-electricity related industries. These data suggest that employers in the region are branching out beyond the existing pool of trained employees, and are bringing on employees who might need some extra on the job training. This practice is one strategy to address the possible labour shortages. Provided employers can give new hires, whether they be recent graduates who need a first job, or are transitioning from other industries or careers, the necessary training and opportunities to learn, utilizing these pools of potential labour can be an effective means for employers to fill potential labour gaps.

The following table details the percentage of new hires in 2006 in each major occupational group, and the source of recruitment.

Exhibit 6.2: Percent of New Hires Recruited from Given Source in 2006 – by Occupation Groups Weighted by employment

Occupation Group	Source in Percent											
	Recent Grads		Recent Immigrant		Electricity Related		Non-Electricity Related		No Previous Work Experience		Other	
	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional
Managers	4.1%	0%	5.7%	0%	62.0%	0%	22.0%	0%	0.0%	0%	6.1%	100%
Engineers and Techs	28.6%	52.4%	7.9%	7.9%	32.5%	33.2%	24.5%	6.5%	6.6%	0%	0.0%	0%
Trades	18.0%	12.0%	2.4%	0.0%	33.5%	12.4%	37.5%	75.6%	6.5%	0%	2.1%	0%
Other Critical Occupations	10.4%	0%	3.4%	0%	24.0%	0%	48.3%	100%	4.6%	0%	9.3%	0%
Total	19%	30%	4%	4%	34%	21%	34%	41%	5%	0%	3%	5%

Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey, (n=53, national); (n=3, regional)

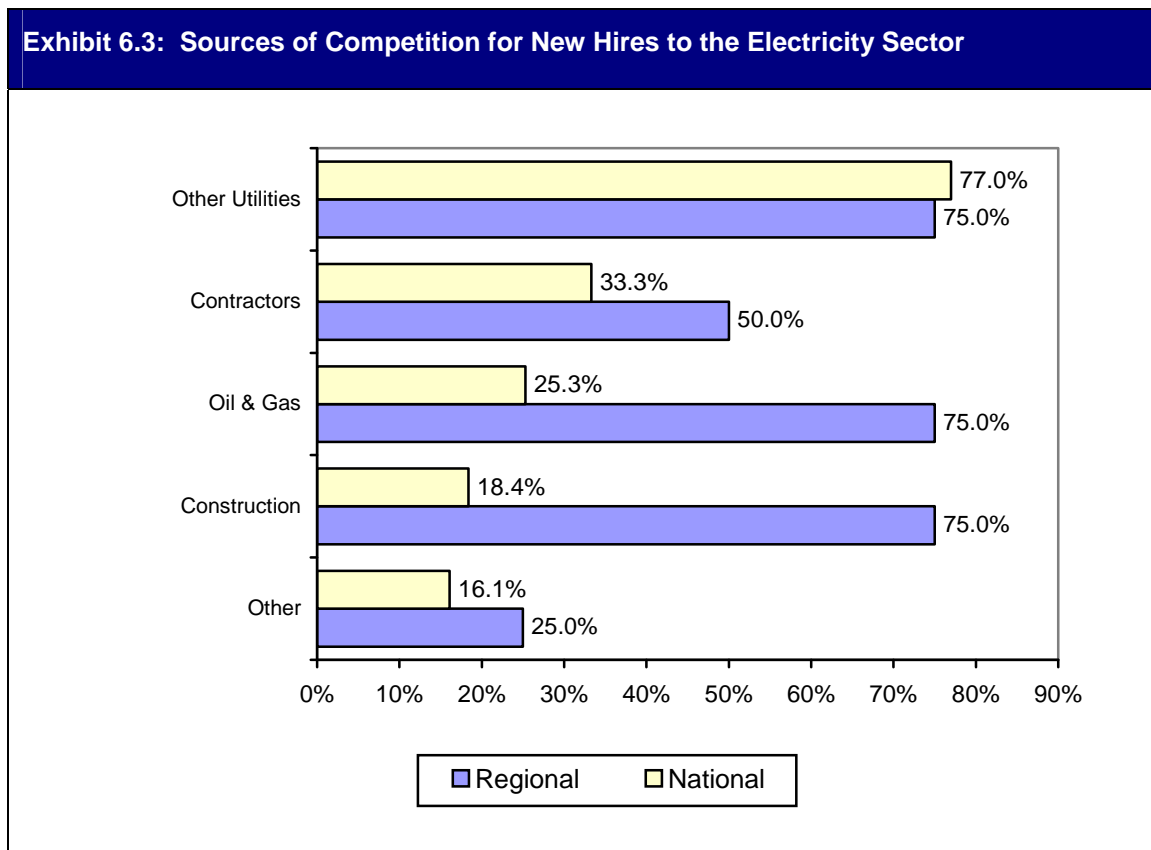
Some notable figures from the above table include:

- The highest proportion of Engineers and Techs that were hired in the Prairie region were recent graduates (52%) followed by electricity related sources (33%);
- The vast majority (76%) of new hires to the Trades in the Prairies were from non-electricity related sources, compared with 38% nationally;
- In the Prairies, fully 100% of new hires for Other Critical Occupations were from non-electricity related sources, and another 100% of Manager new hires were from 'other' sources

Again, these figures need to be considered in the context of three respondents, reporting on the source of hire for 65 new hires. Nonetheless, the figures suggest that employers in the Prairies were more likely to hire recent graduates and employees from other non-electricity related industries. The higher likelihood that they hire recent graduates is more a reflection of the region's labour market than it is a reflection of the number of trained graduates produced by educational institutions in the region. Recent graduates from other areas in the country are likely to seek employment wherever there are job opportunities. The recent growth in the region's economy is a possible factor in the number of graduates who seek employment in the region.

6.2 Common Sources of Competition for Employees

Employers were asked whether or not the following were sources of competition for employees. The graph illustrates the percent of respondents who felt that these were in fact sources of competition for employees.



Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey, (n=87; national), (n=4; regional)

As per the data presented in each of the tables and graphs, given the low 'n', these data should be considered with caution. Nonetheless, they provide some interesting insight into regional trends. As discussed in the Context section of this report, and further to the above discussion, the region's economy has experienced significant growth in recent years in part due to a booming manufacturing industry, and increased mining and construction. The growth of these industries has resulted in greater competition among employers to hire employees with the needed skills. This is reflected by employers' responses, presented in the above graph: Other Utilities, Oil & Gas, and Construction are a significant source of competition for employers in the Prairies.

Section 7: Vacancy Rates

7.1 Vacancy Rates Reported

This section outlines the vacancies reported by employers, and the vacancy rates, broken down by occupation and major occupational group.

Exhibit 7.1: Vacancy Rates by Occupational Group						
Occupation Group	Vacancies		Currently Employed		Vacancy Rate	
	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional
Managers	132	12	5,941	313	2.2%	3.7%
Engineers and Technicians/ Technologists	405	78	12,466	1,200	3.1%	6.1%
Trades	821	120	22,599	2,594	3.5%	4.4%
Total	1,358	210	41,006*	4,107	3.2%	4.9%

Source: 2008 ESC Employer Survey (n=87 nationally, n=4 regionally)

The data presented in this table is illustrative and reflective of the region's low unemployment rates, and expanding economy. The higher than average vacancy rates suggest that the region is having difficulties finding enough employees with the required skills and abilities for the jobs. This is consistent with the assertion that the main reason for the region's smaller than average employment growth is that the region simply has a shortage of workers, as mentioned in the Context section. Of particular note is the high rate among Engineers and Techs, which is double the national average.

Section 8: Supply/Demand

The following section outlines the hypothetical labour supply and demand gap. Two scenarios are presented: a low growth and a high growth scenario. The same assumptions were made in these forecast models as were made in the models presented in the main LMI report. Where possible, the assumptions were broken down to the regional level, and applied to each region's supply and demand models. The information used to project growth in demand came from responses to the LMI survey. Demand figures were derived from the percent of reported retirements and projected growth by region. The national separation rate was applied because there was not enough regional information on separation rates to accurately determine the different regional rates. Thus, the national rate was applied. It therefore should be noted that the demand figures are limited to being based entirely on employer responses to the survey.

The supply figures were derived from a combination of employer reported apprenticeships (for the trades, broken down by region), and Statistics Canada's PSIS data for the number of engineers reported to have graduated (broken down by region). Other sources of labour such as immigration were also included. Again, these figures were taken from the main LMI supply/ demand model and had regional weights applied based on Statistics Canada's reported immigration figures.

8.1 Low Growth

The following exhibits present a projected supply-demand gap in the electricity sector, based on low and high growth scenario assumptions.

Exhibit 8.1: Estimated Supply and Demand Gap – Low Growth Scenario Engineers and Other Non-Support Positions		
Group/Period	Annual Estimates	
	2009	2012
Current Total Workforce¹		
Engineers	1,329	1,329
Trades/other non-support	2,835	2,835
Total	4,164	4,164
Estimated Demand – Low Growth Scenario²		
Engineers	48	93
Trades/other nonsupport	102	198
Total	150	291
Estimated Supply³		
Engineers	27	29
Trades/other non-support	22	23
Total	49	53
Supply-Demand Gap⁴ (per year)		
Engineers	(21)	(64)
Trades/other non-support	(80)	(175)
Total*	(101)	(239)

¹ Total estimated workforce in electrical occupations, 2008 ESC Employer Survey

² No additional employment growth required for demand increases or replacement requirements. Retirements based on organization estimate of likely retirements, not the proportion eligible for retirement.

³ Portion of graduates who secure employment in electricity sector upon graduation as discussed in Section 4 of the main report

⁴ Difference between estimated demand and current education supply capacity

*Note: Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding

8.2 High Growth

Exhibit 8.2: Estimated Supply and Demand Gap – High Growth Scenario Engineers and Other Non-Support Positions		
Group/Period	Annual Estimates	
	2009	2012
Current Total Workforce¹		
Engineers	1,363	1,416
Trades/other non-support	2,961	3,160
Total	4,324	4,576
Estimated Demand – High Growth Scenario²		
Engineers	71	122
Trades/other nonsupport	181	301
Total	252	423
Estimated Supply³		
Engineers	27	29
Trades/other non-support	22	23
Total	49	53
Supply-Demand Gap⁴ (per year)		
Engineers	(44)	(92)
Trades/other non-support	(159)	(277)
Total*	(203)	(370)

¹ Total estimated workforce in electrical occupations, 2008 ESC Employer Survey

² No additional employment growth required for demand increases or replacement requirements. Retirements based on organization estimate of likely retirements, not the proportion eligible for retirement.

³ Portion of graduates who secure employment in electricity sector upon graduation as discussed in Section 4 of the main report

⁴ Difference between estimated demand and current education supply capacity

*Note: Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding

The table below presents a comparison of the projected gap in the Prairies with the national projections. The figures are represented as a percent of the workforce. Regionally, the gap ranges from 2% to 5% of the current non-support workforce in 2009, and from 6% to 8% of the current non-support workforce in 2012.

Exhibit 8.3: Predicted Supply/Demand Gap as a Percent of Employment								
Group	2009				2012			
	Low		High		Low		High	
	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional	National	Regional
Engineers	2.3%	1.6%	4.5%	3.2%	3.7%	4.8%	6.0%	6.5%
Trades/other non-support	4.5%	2.8%	6.5%	5.4%	5.9%	6.2%	8.0%	8.8%
Total	3.8%	2.4%	5.9%	4.7%	5.2%	5.7%	7.4%	8.1%

According to the hypothetical scenarios presented, the Prairies are projected to experience a smaller supply/demand gap in both scenarios in 2009 within both major occupational groups than the national predicted gaps, but larger gaps by 2012. Readers are reminded however, that these are hypothetical scenarios. They are also reminded that there may be some differences between the two provinces. These data are based on the reported figures from employers in region as a whole, and have not been weighted. The actual growth scenarios may further be affected and/or influenced by the changing economic condition. Other factors to consider, which have not been accounted for at the regional level, include the degree to which companies rely on consulting firms or contractors to complete projects. As mentioned in the 2004/2008 Comparative Analysis, large international and multinational engineering consulting companies such as SNC Lavalin play a significant role in the supply of labour for large infrastructure and construction contracts in the country's electricity sector. Thus, readers should also be cognizant of the availability of these workers in their region when interpreting the data, and when planning their human resource strategies.

Conclusion

While the age profile of employees in the Prairies is similar to that of the national average, the region had a smaller percent of its workforce retire in 2006 compared with the national figures, and it expects a small percent to retire in 2009. However, by 2012 employer estimates for retirements are similar to the national figures. One of the most striking findings from the data is that a large portion of new hires to the region's electricity sector come from other non-electricity related industries and as recent graduates. This could be a reflection of the region's expanding economy, and employers' reactive response to broaden their scope of recruitment. A further signal of this is that 100% of new hires to manager positions came from an "other" source, not specified. However, this source could be an internal hire. Nonetheless, it suggests that employers are not relying exclusively on hiring employees with all the required training and experience already under their belt, but rather they may be willing to provide new recruits with these opportunities in house, or provide them with their first professional work experience. This is an excellent human resource strategy which will likely aid in retaining employees and building employee loyalty.

List of Participating Companies

The following companies in the Prairies participated in the 2008 Electricity Sector Council Employer survey:

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Saskatoon Light & Power (City of Saskatoon Utility Services)

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