

CCIF PREVIEW

On the Horizon

Nova Scotia makes a move toward compulsory certification.

by Corrie Robley

Welcome to the second in an ongoing series of articles, intended to act as a virtual toolbox for today's progressive collision repair facility. These articles appear courtesy of their authors and the Canadian Collision Industry Forum (CCIF).

Since its formation in 1999, CCIF has served as a venue for industry thought leaders to present ideas and models for improving business, profitability, cycle time, and other important aspects of the Canadian collision repair industry.

While these presentations are of great value to those able to attend, many collision repairers and other industry stakeholders find it impossible to attend every meeting. To that end, Collision Repair magazine, in conjunction with CCIF, is pleased to present previews of upcoming presentations.

In this issue's CCIF Preview, we hear from Ms. Corrie Robley, Project Manager for Nova Scotia's Automotive Human Resources Sector Council. Corrie will be speaking at CCIF Halifax on June 24 about the move towards compulsory certification for collision repair technicians working in the province of Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia Auto Body Industry employers are planning for their future. And the future is looking bright. The Nova Scotia Automotive Human Resource Sector Council, a not-for-profit industry organization, working with the Collision Repair

Association of Nova Scotia, is completing phase II of the Compulsory Certification in 2004.

COMPREHENSIVE

A comprehensive Needs Assessment study was conducted in 2004 followed by a Workforce Impact Study in 2005. The Sector Council recently completed a series of provincial communication meetings with employers and employees to discuss how transitioning to compulsory certification will affect auto body repairers.

The application for re-designation was put forth to the Provincial Apprenticeship Board in September 2005, industry consultations were completed in March, and the industry is awaiting recommendation to the Minister of Education.

A natural evolution of Auto Body Repairer trade certification will be to research the needs and interest of the Automotive Glass Repair and Installation sector in establishing a sub-trade.

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Meanwhile, the Insurance Appraisers Association of Nova Scotia is also moving forward with a strategy to elevate their standards of a Certified Appraiser.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

The most recent workforce study gave industry a clear picture as to the challenges and issues that must be addressed. Research gave us access to the following statistics:

- 136 (47%) employees are certified journeypersons.
- 119 (44%) are non-certified techs.
- 26 (9%) are registered apprentices.
- 80% have been employed in the collision industry for over 10 years.
- 62% are between 31 - 65 years of age.
- Industry had seven new entrants between ages 16- 20.
- There was one new registered apprentice in 2004.
- There were two new certified journeypersons in 2005.

The industry has a challenge ahead - to transition 53% of the industry's workers into the Apprenticeship system, enable those qualified to challenge the Journeyperson exam and attract, hire and retain new skilled workers.

Three key strategies will help to alleviate the barriers. The industry must embrace a formal mentorship strategy, develop a strong partnership with the Apprenticeship Training Division and engage youth at a younger age through Youth Apprenticeship.

SERIOUS SHORTAGE

To further assist the industry in addressing the industry's training needs, human resource management skills upgrading and the serious skills shortage, the Automotive Sector Council has developed its 2006/07 business plan.

The plan incorporates the development of an Essential Skills Workplace Education Program, researching the human resource skills needs of business owners and operators, and implementing phase II of a Provincial Immigration strategy.

Establishing training standards through compulsory certification is only the first step in improving workforce development and the landscape of the collision repair industry.



Corrie Robley is the Project Manager of the Nova Scotia Human Resources Automotive Sector Council. She will be presenting information on Nova Scotia's Compulsory Certification at CCIF Halifax on June 24, 2006.



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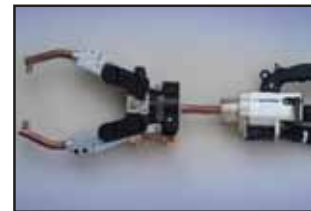
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