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Human Resources Study of the Broader Canadian Steel Industry

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive Summary

Introduction

The broader Canadian steel industry faces a future which, despite the current buoyancy in steel prices, is still marked by uncertainties, both for its profits and its people.¹ Over the next five years it will continue to operate in a world market in which the impacts of large producers, such as China, India and the Ukraine, will add to the continuing competitive challenges posed by exports to Canada from low-cost producers from many parts of the world. The persistent difficulties of ensuring a level playing field in both the trade and environmental arenas, combined with the currently high value of the Canadian dollar will challenge Canadian firms on international markets. Further rationalizations in the North American and Canadian steel industry remain a virtual certainty, and several are under discussion as this report is being written.

At the same time, technological innovation, in the form of new products and processes, will continue to demand from Canadian companies a capacity to introduce these changes rapidly and effectively. This in turn will place a premium on the adaptability and agility of their work forces.

Against this competitive backdrop, the steel industry is challenged to develop and agree on a vision for how its human resources dimensions are likely to evolve over the next five years. Human resources can play an integral role as part of firms' competitive strategies over this period. This is particularly the case for the primary steelmakers, for whom the last decade has been marked by market uncertainties and downsizing. It is further affected by important human resources challenges facing the industry, including in particular the sector's ageing work force.²

These competitive factors led the Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress to sponsor a human resources sector study of the broader Canadian steel industry. The study objective was to provide a comprehensive diagnosis of the short- and long-term human resource challenges facing the industry, which would serve as a basis for developing a human resource strategy for the industry. The broader steel industry was defined to include:

- Iron and Steel Mills and Ferro-Alloy Manufacturing (NAICS 3311);
- Steel Product Manufacturing from Purchased Steel (NAICS 3312);
- Metal Service Centres (NAICS 4162).

The study was conducted in late 2004, and consisted of a comprehensive program of data-gathering and analysis. This included structured interviews, site visits and employee focus groups at the workplace level, as well as broader surveys of human resources managers and individual employees. These were supplemented by student focus groups, data gathering from community colleges/cegeps, and demographic simulations of aging and retirements within the individual broader steel subsectors.

Developing approaches to address international trade and market issues lay beyond the scope of this study. However, establishing a clear view of the evolving human resources issues within this broader competitive context was very much the focus of this study.

A buoyant steel market may inject into the industry a sense of security which may postpone actions to address the critical human resources issues it faces. However, if high steel prices give way to lower prices, as often occurs in this cyclical industry, it is quite likely that firms would find themselves once again in a time of uncertainty and downsizing. The key difference, however, is that having postponed dealing with critical human resources issues, the industry would find its work force correspondingly older, the urgency of the demographic and other issues correspondingly greater, and the time and capacity of the industry to address these, correspondingly less.

A preferred approach is to seize the opportunity that high levels of profitability provide, in order to direct greater resources into actively positioning the industry to deal with the human resources issues it may face in future. These include skills and training issues and workplace flexibility issues, among many others. While high income levels can provide opportunities for firms to invest in their plant and equipment, they can also provide a greater capacity for firms to invest in their people. With people as with plant and equipment, however, lead time is necessary to plan and carry out investments.

This Executive Summary seeks to draw conclusions, based on the research, on the key human resources challenges facing the broader Canadian steel industry in the next five years, as a basis for recommendations for actions to address them. The study recommendations are presented in a separate section of this report.

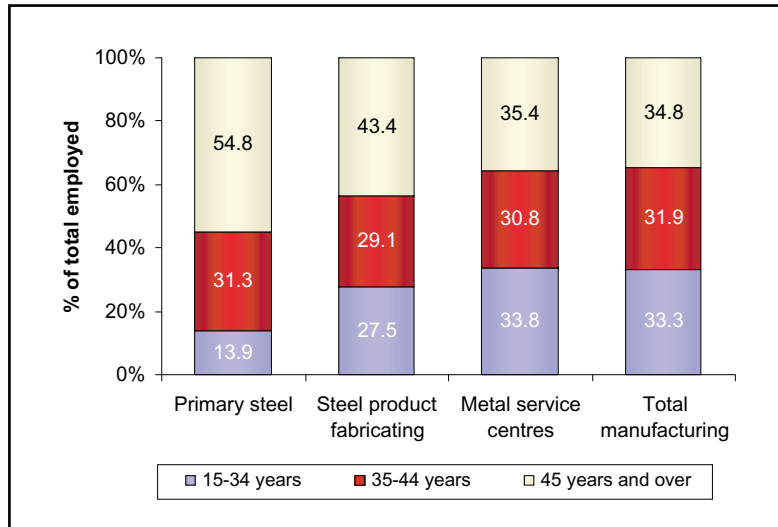
Key Findings:

The report analyses the competitive realities facing the broader Canadian steel industry, concluding that these will involve a continued rationalization and downsizing for many firms. It also stresses that the industry's work force (particularly among primary steelmakers) is relatively old, so that some of this anticipated downsizing will be achieved through retirements. Furthermore, the research suggests that the industry will expect to replace only about 50% of those who retire, which moderates the recruitment challenge.

Under these circumstances, it is tempting to conclude that the industry will achieve a number of its human resources objectives with relatively little overt action from the firms themselves. Such a conclusion, however, would not be supported by the analysis in this report, which points to a number of critical issues facing the industry, particularly in the areas of recruitment, workplace flexibility, and training (including apprenticeship). Indeed, acting to meet these human resources challenges will likely be a key strategic issue for firms in the industry, and a factor in how successfully they are able to position themselves to deal with their future competitive environment.

The urgency of the primary steel industry's demographic issues must be underscored; the chart below shows that in 2001, almost 55% of the subsector's work force was over 45 years of age.

Chart (i). Age Distribution of Employed, by Broader Steel Sub sector



Source:
 Statistics Canada
 2001 Census

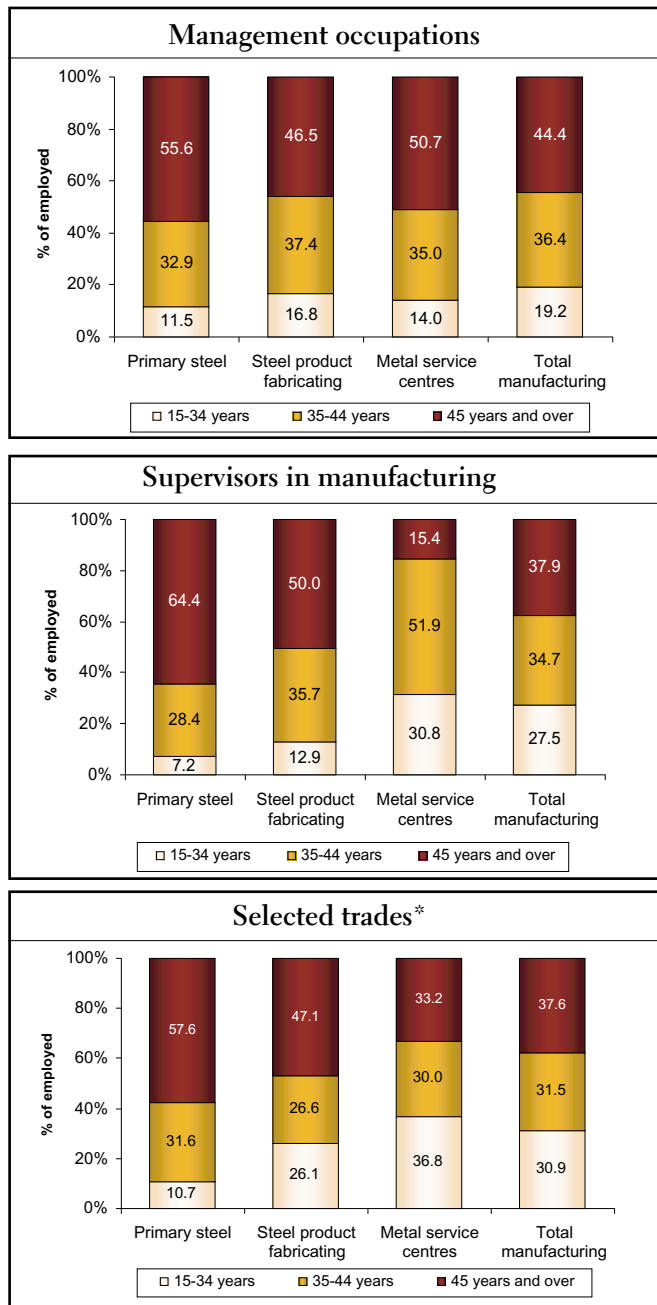
While retirements can be a partial solution to restructuring challenges, they also raise questions about the industry's ability to replace (through recruitment or training) all the skills lost as older workers leave the work force. The balance of this section summarizes the findings of the analysis on the following important human resources issues:

- (i) Recruitment
- (ii) Workplace knowledge transfer
- (iii) Work force flexibility
- (iv) Training culture in the broader steel industry
- (v) Apprenticeship and trades skills
- (vi) Essential skills for older workers
- (vii) Developing skills for operating positions
- (viii) Developing management and supervisory skills
- (ix) CSTECC courses
- (x) The role of community colleges
- (xi) Employee consultation on training
- (xii) Adjustment

(i) *Recruitment*³

The primary steel work force is comparatively old, particularly in terms of its trades, management, supervisory and sales occupations. (Chart 2) Most occupations are heavily skewed towards the older age groups, with the younger age groups significantly under-represented. Despite early retirement arrangements, layoffs of workers with the least seniority and little recruitment have contributed to this overall situation.

Chart (ii). Age Profile of Selected Occupational Groups in the Broader Steel Industry



* Selected trades include:

- (i) Construction trades,
- (ii) Stationary engineers, power station operators and electrical trades and telecommunications occupations,
- (iii) Machinists, metal forming, shaping and erecting occupations,
- (iv) Mechanics

Source:
 Statistics Canada
 2001 Census

Further retirements are anticipated, and even if the industry plans to replace only 50% of those retirements, it will face a significant recruiting challenge.⁴ For example, the study's simulations note that, even if primary steelmakers replace only half of their retiring workers, they would have to recruit an estimated 2,300 new operations and trades workers over the next five years – between two and three times their recruitment rate in the years preceding the study.

This recruitment effort will benefit from the industry's very high levels of wages and benefits, which have meant that recruitment has traditionally not been a major difficulty for the industry. However, future recruitment will have to take place in an environment in which:

- The industry must look at recruiting for all occupations, and in larger numbers than in the recent past;
- The pool of potential recruits will be no larger than its current level because of a more slowly-growing labour force and increased retirements from most manufacturing sectors;
- Other industries will be competing actively for these limited numbers of workers, especially those with some postsecondary education (the main expected source of future recruits to the steel industry);
- The steel industry will have to work against an outdated 'smokestack and manual labour' image among its recruits and the public at large.

There are also regional variations in recruitment issues, which may reflect the different regional labour markets in which firms seek new workers. Firms' differing calculations about their capacity to hire externally will affect the priority they attach to training.

The industry will thus have to pay much greater strategic attention to recruitment, and will have to be proactive, if only to counter the activities of other sectors. This will include ensuring that its frame of reference is wide enough to include some talent pools often underrepresented in the industry. These include recent immigrants (although likely not in trades), Aboriginal Canadians (particularly in the western regions of Canada), and women in non-traditional occupations.

CSTEC has developed information materials to promote the steel industry to students and parents, as well as teachers. These materials, updated as necessary, may form a core of information which can provide the base for a broader publicity campaign to promote the industry. At the same time, other publicity campaigns are under way in Canada to promote apprenticeship more generally.⁵

*(ii) Workplace Knowledge Transfer*⁶

The loss of retiring workers increases the risks that they will take their knowledge and experience with them. This is particularly the case among the 'older' subsectors – primary steelmakers and steel products fabricators – in which formal workplace knowledge transfer strategies were very often absent.

Firms face a greater need to ensure that approaches are in place to systematically capture and retain this workplace knowledge. These approaches can take a wide variety of forms. Some include enabling older workers to shift their roles from production towards a greater focus on training or mentoring. Others involve ensuring that older workers' expertise is more formally documented.

*(iii) Work Force Flexibility*⁷

As part of their downsizing efforts, many firms have placed strong reliance on increasing the flexibility of their work force in order to build a wider array of skills into a given worker complement and benefit from the productivity and cost advantages that can result. Cross-training, multiskilling, job rotation, and some movement to teams have characterized these strategies. In some firms, discussions of fewer job classifications have taken place between management and union, often in the context of collective bargaining.

Unions and workers have also expressed interest in workplaces which are sufficiently flexible that overall work-life balance is improved through innovative ways to accommodate both work and family needs (improved vacation scheduling, etc.)

Firms and unions in the industry need to engage in a constructive dialogue on these issues, to seek to address the interests of each.

*(iv) A Training Culture in the Broader Steel Industry*⁸

The research has identified a need for, and an opportunity to develop, a stronger training 'culture' among a number of individual firms in the broader steel industry. While some aspects of this relate particularly to steel products fabricators and metal service centres, firms in all three subsectors are in a position to strengthen this aspect of their operations.

The need for such a development does not apply uniformly across firms. Indeed, one firm in the primary steel sector stood out in terms of the depth of its training culture, the number of co-op students and apprentices it maintained, and the strength of the link between its broader human resources development strategy and its business strategy. Other firms indicated an intent to move in this direction.

More generally, however, the research uncovered a variety of training philosophies across the broader steel industry, and an almost apologetic description of current training activities among some firms. Union spokespersons were generally very critical of firms' training activities and priorities, noting in particular the absence of training during recent periods of downsizing. Some union representatives noted that earlier training initiatives in a number of firms had been abandoned in recent years.

Several findings suggest that there is room for greater planning of training:

- One third of surveyed employees felt that there was training that they needed, but were unable to take. This was primarily because the training was not offered by their employers, they were too busy at work, or the training was not offered conveniently.
- Employees tended to receive training related to their current job; relatively few received training to prepare them for a future job. Looking forward, however, the number of employees seeking training for a future job was the same as those seeking training for their current job.
- Very few human resources managers were aware of governmental programs to assist training, suggesting that training was often initiated without exploring such assistance, whether through lack of intent or opportunity.

Other findings indicated that employees who participated extensively in formal training also participated relatively frequently in informal learning activities. Far from being a substitute for formal training, then, informal learning may therefore supplement or amplify the formal training itself.

Most responding firms, however, indicated that they would be increasing their training activities in the next five years, particularly their internally developed programs and computer-based training. The stated intent, therefore, is there. With their current profitability levels, firms are likely in a position to make the necessary resources available. There is a need, and an opportunity, to raise the priority of training in the industry and maintain this priority even if future profitability levels change.

This study outlines a number of important aspects of the future skills issue facing firms in the broader Canadian steel industry. Together, they paint a picture of the future which should be factored into the human resources planning activities of firms in the sector, and into the human resource strategy discussions of unions.

There is also room for steel products fabricators and metal service centres to establish a more systematic approach to training. This would include establishing training plans and budgets, identifying training needs using more formal processes, and devoting a higher level of resources to training activities.

(v) *Apprenticeship and Trades Skills* ⁹

In the primary steel and steel fabricating subsectors in particular, older tradespersons, most of whom have gained their skills through apprenticeships, are increasingly in a position to retire in large numbers. There are relatively few young workers in the trades, most of whom do not have their trades papers. The surveys of human resource managers and employees confirmed that apprenticeship programs in primary steelmaking, with one notable exception, are virtually non-existent.

While hiring journeypersons from other industries may be an option, this will depend on the assumed willingness and capacity of other industries to continue to produce these tradespersons and have steelmakers hire them away. It will also imply a continuing wage premium in the steel industry to attract such workers, which will have continuing cost implications for steel firms. Where contracting out for these trades services is considered, the firms will do so against continuing opposition from unions, and will have to assume that contractors' supply of qualified tradespersons will be adequate in future to meet the industry's needs. As continuing strategies, poaching and contracting out both face obstacles.

Recognizing that there is a substantial lead time in training individuals in the trades, firms in the industry will have to adopt a strategy on an urgent basis to address these skill needs. In the process, they will have to address the cost-related and other barriers they have cited which prevent them from hiring apprentices. To clarify the impacts of these perceived costs and address firms' concerns, it would be useful to put in place an initiative to document the return on investment to various approaches to training replacement tradespersons.

Establishing effective approaches to training in trades skills will require resources, both to develop the approaches and to implement actions. These resources may involve maintaining sufficient employment levels to allow tradespersons the time to spend with apprentices. Current steel industry fortunes may provide an opportunity to support employment levels which accommodate higher levels of training.

At the same time, it is recognized that a number of provincial governments have introduced various tax-related programs to support training in general or apprenticeship in particular. Québec, for example, maintains a levy-grant arrangement based on a 1% payroll tax, while Ontario in 2004 introduced an Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit.

(vi) *Essential Skills*¹⁰

The educational attainment of the industry's most senior operating occupations is comparatively low, with a high proportion not having completed high school. The set of essential skills they possess (literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, computers, etc.) may thus be limited in comparison to those of younger workers. These older workers, however, may be in strategic senior operating positions with perhaps another decade of work life ahead of them, and will likely face continuing pressures to increase their skills. Technological change, innovation and the skills implications of increased work force flexibility will create ongoing need for these and other workers to add to their skill sets.

With a limited essential skills 'platform', many of these older workers could face great difficulties acquiring the needed skills. This will affect their employers' capacity to innovate and keep a competitive edge. The industry provides very little training in reading and math, nor have employees reported a strong desire for such training. While at face value this may suggest a continuing low requirement for these types of essential skills, this conclusion must be seen in the context of broader measures of Canadians' literacy and numeracy levels. Section IX of this report has cited International Adult Literacy Survey data which show that the proportion of Canadians with low literacy and numeracy levels is significantly higher for those over 45 years of age than for those who are younger. Given the age structure of the broader Canadian steel industry, and of primary steelmakers in particular, the fact that few workers sought training in reading or math should not be taken to indicate that there are no problems with some workers' literacy or numeracy skills.

Turning to other aspects of essential skills, relatively high proportions of employees report receiving training in areas such as problem-solving, teamwork, or computers. These proportions, however, are greatly exceeded by the proportions of employees who feel they will require more of such training in the next five years.

While essential skills may thus constitute a strategic need for these workers, data gathered in this study indicated that there is considerable room to increase the amount of essential skills training under way in the industry.

CSTEC has recognized that essential skills warrant particular attention, and has undertaken a review of the 'best practices' being followed in other sectors in the area of essential skills.¹¹ It will be very important for the firms and unions in the sector to review this essential skills research and develop a strategy for adopting/adapting relevant approaches within the broader Canadian steel industry.

(vii) *Developing Skills for Operating Positions*¹²

Training for operating positions has been a particular priority in primary steel firms, and is perceived as a continuing priority in future. These occupations are among those for which the greatest increases in required skills are foreseen. The skills needs relate to both technical, job-specific skills, such as metallurgy, and ‘softer’ leadership, problem-solving and teamwork skills. The industry cannot afford to fall short in providing these skill sets; commentators have indicated that the skills of operators will affect the capacity of firms to adapt, and adopt, new technology in future.

(viii) *Developing Management and Supervisory Skills*¹³

Not all replacements of retirees will occur through recruitment alone. Among the retiring workers will be senior managers, operators, supervisors and tradespersons. While some of these can be recruited from outside a firm, many of these positions are best filled through internal development, training and promotion. For these occupations, ‘softer’ skills such as leadership, problem-solving and teamwork will be important requirements. While companies currently provide such training, they will have to maintain a priority for such programs and have in place succession planning practices to ensure that these skills are available when necessary.

The evidence gathered in this study suggests that there is considerable room for improvement on this front. From a number of perspectives, firms’ training activities appear limited in many cases. Colleges have observed this, and have identified opportunities for increased collaboration with companies.

(ix) *CSTEC Courses*¹⁴

Evidence gathered during this study indicates clearly that the skills required of virtually every occupational group in all three steel subsectors are expected to increase during the next five years. While the most critical occupations will vary among subsectors, operating and supervisory occupations are expected to be common priorities in all three. These occupations will increasingly require both technical, job-specific skills and ‘softer’ skills (problem-solving, interpersonal skills, etc.). Existing CSTEC courses cover many of these topics, and many have a college credit attached to them.

There is an opportunity for firms in all three subsectors to supplement their traditional training initiatives with greater use of CSTEC courses, many of which have been underpromoted within workplaces and underutilized within the sector in recent years. For this to happen, however, firms in all three subsectors will have to increase the priority and resources they assign to training and skills development.

(x) *Role of Community Colleges*¹⁵

Notwithstanding the presence of several joint college/firm programs in the industry, overall, surveyed human resource managers and employees in the broader steel industry reported that training from colleges/cegeps had been used in a very limited way in the previous two years. Two per cent of employees in primary steel and steel products fabri-

cating and 4% of metal service centre employees reported taking training from these sources. At the same time, firms rated the training they purchased from colleges less favourably than that received from other sources, particularly from training courses developed internally and from training provided by private trainers.

For their part, colleges viewed the firms' lack of planning for training, the relative lack of firms' training resources, and the difficulty in assembling a sufficient class size as obstacles to working more closely with the industry. They also pointed out their wide array of programs and courses which could be accessed by firms and employees in the steel industry.

There appears to be a noticeable disconnect between the industry and the colleges/cegeps.

For several years, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, with involvement from CSTECC, has maintained a 'steel industry affinity group' of steel-related colleges and cegeps. Through this affinity group, there is an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between firms and colleges, and to address the issues of firms' training resources or their concerns over the effectiveness of college training. There is also a capacity to publicize the services and programs which the colleges could provide to the industry, in much the same way as other sector councils have done. (The Canadian Automotive Partnership Council, for example, has developed publications which can promote relevant college courses and can identify, for the benefit of firms, college programs whose graduates would make good recruits.)

*(xi) Employee Engagement and Consultation on Training*¹⁶

The research identified a strong relationship between the extent to which employees felt they were consulted regularly about their training needs and the overall effectiveness of the training they received. For example, workers who were regularly consulted about their training needs:

- Were less likely to report that they were unable to take training they needed;
- Were less likely to report that they received too little training for their career in the steel industry;
- Were significantly more likely to report that they very often used in their jobs the skills acquired through their training.

Employee consultation, then, was associated with more effective training and greater employee satisfaction with that training.

In addition, employee consultation may also be seen as an indicator of employees' overall 'engagement' in the workplace. For example, workers regularly consulted about their training needs were significantly more likely to comment positively on other aspects of their workplace, such as the degree of employee involvement in decision-making, the opportunity to learn new skills, opportunities for promotion, etc.

Looking forward, the industry faces increasing skill requirements on a very broad occupational front. There is a potentially important role for both workers and management to assess and discuss these evolving skills needs and identify their training implications. The survey results show that such consultations can have important implications for the effectiveness of training activities, as well as for other dimensions of employee engagement.

Consultation with workers around training can occur in many contexts, including health and safety meetings or related planning meetings. Joint labour/management training committees may also play a role in supporting these consultations, although at present they are largely absent from the industry.

In view of their potential implications for training effectiveness and employee engagement, practices which enhance labour/management dialogue and consultation on training may have a helpful role to play among firms' training activities.

*(xii) Adjustment*¹⁷

Retirements may constitute the principal means by which the industry continues to downsize in future, while layoffs may be required less frequently. Nevertheless, to the extent that rationalizations and other production reorganizations result in layoffs, the industry will want to be prepared to address the adjustment needs of those involved. CSTECC's traditional expertise in this regard positions it to play a constructive role in the event of layoffs, and it should be equipped and prepared to play this role as needed. There is also a potential for extending this service more widely through the broader Canadian steel industry.

¹ Sections IV and V of the report describe in more detail the overall emerging trends affecting the broader Canadian steel industry

² The demographic challenges facing the industry are described in detail in Section VI.

³ Recruitment issues are discussed in Section VIII-B.

⁴ Section VII discusses current and future skill shortages in more detail.

⁵ The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage is in the process of conducting such a campaign.

⁶ Workplace Knowledge issues are discussed in Section VIII-F.

⁷ Workplace Flexibility issues are described in Section VIII-C.

⁸ Training issues are discussed in section IX.

⁹ Apprenticeship issues are discussed in more detail in Section IX-E.

¹⁰ Essential Skills issues are discussed in Sections IX-F and IX-K.

¹¹ This research is financially supported by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, and is being conducted by CSTECC.

¹² Skills for operating positions are discussed in Sections IX-D and IX-F.

¹³ Management and supervisory skills are discussed in Sections IX-D and IX-F.

¹⁴ CSTECC courses are discussed in Section IX-L.

¹⁵ The Community Colleges' role is discussed in section IX-H, IX-J, and IX-K.

¹⁶ The importance of employee consultation on training is discussed in Section IX-O.

¹⁷ The priority to be assigned to adjustment issues is highlighted in Section V-B.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1.

It is recommended that the firms and unions in the broader Canadian steel industry, on a priority basis, develop and implement a Work Force Development Plan for the industry as a whole, including the primary steelmakers, steel products fabricators, and metal service centres.

To succeed, the Plan would need the following four elements:

- (i) Senior level management commitment, support, and direction;
- (ii) Implementation by management, employees, and labour working together within each workplace;
- (iii) Coordination across the industry, facilitated through CSTECC;
- (iv) The commitment of necessary resources, efficiently assigned, to training and skills development.

The Work Force Development Plan would consist of the following components:

a. An aggressive program to replace trades skills

This initiative would take the form of a Canada-wide apprenticeship trades/technician program, and would be modeled on a highly successful program developed by CSTECC in conjunction with Mohawk College, local steel companies, and the United Steelworkers of America.

Government assistance would be sought to support the management and coordination of the initiative across the country.

The program would include a strong monitoring component, to ensure positive returns on the training investment.

b. A publicity campaign to promote the industry as a career choice for young people

The campaign would be aimed at high school and college/university students, and their parents. It would promote the technological sophistication of the industry and its occupations, and would incorporate existing and new materials as appropriate. It would be positioned to complement other existing publicity campaigns which are under way to promote apprenticeship more generally.

Specific components would be tailored in appropriate geographical areas to promote the industry as a career choice for new immigrants and Aboriginal Canadians.

c. Active practices to support workplace knowledge transfer

These would include opportunities for older workers, whether on the job or in other settings, to document and share their experience and expertise with younger workers.

d. A strong priority on developing management and supervisory skills

All three subsectors within the broader Canadian steel industry must place greater stress on developing these skills. One very useful action would be to conduct a sector-wide review of the practices by which firms prepare and develop supervisory and management skills, focusing on the provision of ‘softer’ skills.

e. A systematic approach to developing operators’ skills

This would reflect the strategic importance of operators’ skills, and would begin with a workplace-by-workplace review of the effectiveness of current approaches to identifying and meeting operators’ skill needs.

The initiative would include the expansion of the current CSTECC Manufacturing Techniques Program.

f. A program for integrating Essential Skills into the workplace

This program would be based on current CSTECC research on essential skills practices in other sectors.

g. A regular sector-level review of progress in implementing the Work Force Development Plan

This would involve a CSTECC-led monitoring and assessment of the effectiveness of individual activities and the returns on private and public funds invested.

Recommendation 2.

It is recommended that CSTECC develop a detailed business plan, including cost estimates, for the elements of the Work Force Development Plan and seek government financial support as appropriate.

This would include determining which costs can be met internally by individual firms in the sector and which require external resources. One of the key findings of this study is that in the context of lean workplaces, lack of time and resources is a significant barrier to employees’ access to training. One possible measure which should be discussed is the use of other revenue sources such as EI funds in overcoming that barrier. As well, discussion could explore enhanced provincial apprenticeship tax credits and other measures.

Recommendation 3.

It is recommended that firms and unions in the steel industry place a priority on discussions around workplace flexibility.

Management and union viewpoints must be explored with a view to developing approaches which enhance the industry’s competitiveness and offer protection to workers.

Recommendation 4.

It is recommended that primary steelmakers, steel products fabricators, and metal service centres take steps to strengthen their overall ‘training culture’, including:

- Establishing more formal approaches to training, including training plans and budgets;
- Increased engagement and consultation with employees through mechanisms such as health and safety committees or joint training committees;
- More systematic assessment of training impacts and effectiveness.

Recommendation 5.

It is recommended that CSTECC share and promote more formal approaches to training needs assessment, planning and budgeting, to firms in the steel products fabrication and metal service centre subsectors.

This would involve working in active partnership with the appropriate industry associations in these subsectors.

Recommendation 6.

It is recommended that CSTECC update its courses and undertake a campaign to publicize them among primary steelmakers, steel products fabricators, and metal service centres.

Recommendation 7.

It is recommended that the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, with involvement from CSTECC and the colleges’ ‘steel industry affinity group’, strengthen the relationship and communications between the industry and the colleges/cegeps.

In addition, where possible the industry should explore improved links to universities in particular skills areas.

Recommendation 8.

It is recommended that CSTECC, working with governments, develop and maintain the capacity to address the adjustment needs of laid-off workers in the broader Canadian steel industry.