

January, 2006

**TRAINING UPDATE
Elections and Training**

We are facing a federal election this month which may have some impact on training programs, level of funding, etc. Education is a provincial jurisdiction but the federal government has been involved for years through its mandate to provide for manpower training. In addition, Unemployment Insurance and, later, Employment Insurance funds have been used to support training. Policy changes by the federal government in 1995 cut this funding drastically and created a number of problems for apprenticeship and other training programs.

Ambercroft Training Centre has recently received some funding from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to acquire equipment through the Training Centre Infrastructure Fund. At present, another round of funding from this program is proposed for 2006-07. A change of government could result in this program being discontinued after this year. On the other hand, the Canada-Ontario Labour Market Partnership Agreement (LMPA) and Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) signed in November by federal minister Belinda Stronach and provincial minister Chris Bentley would probably remain in effect – all other provinces have at least Labour Market Development agreements – although the level of funding provided by the federal government might change.

The Canada-Ontario training agreements are discussed below.

Canada – Ontario Labour Partnership Agreement/Canada – Ontario Labour Market Development Agreement

The LMDA transfers administration of EI-funded training to the province (with some federal civil servants becoming provincial employees) by January 1, 2007. Such programming has been taking place for years. EI administration (distribution of benefits to individuals) will continue to be a federal responsibility. The LMDA is unlikely to be affected by election results.

The partnership agreement (LMPA) promises new funding for a number of priorities including apprenticeship, training for immigrants, and literacy programs to increase on a gradual basis until 2011. This, certainly the level of funding, could be affected by election results. As presently proposed, this is to be a jointly administered program. Potentially, it could mean significantly expanded funding for training programs in Ontario.