

**CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee**  
**Report to Convention – April 2018**

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2018 marks a turning point for the Skilled Trades Committee. We remain focused on and committed to promoting Red Seal trades and access to apprenticeships, with a focus on First Nations workers and women in the trades; working to better collective agreement language; and playing a larger role in our participation with the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum.

CUPE BC has become a member of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF), which gives us access to resources and reports as well as voting rights on the Board. Randy and Kirk have submitted a presentation called “Public Sector Apprenticeships: How to Change the Culture to make Apprenticeship work for Unions and Employers” and will be presenting this at the 2018 National Apprenticeship Forum Conference June 10 -12 in Montreal. The Skilled Trades Committee now has the opportunity to make a difference in how Public Sector Apprenticeships are perceived. We are proud to lead the way in this.

Our Committee, working with the CUPE BC Action Plan 2017/2018, will continue to build solidarity thought our relationships with the BC Federation of Labour, affiliated Unions and other progressive related organizations like BC Tradeswomen Society, and the “BC Women in the Trades” Facebook group. We will continue to look for programs like the Aboriginal Initiatives Skills Training Plan 2015-18 that includes the Enhanced Construction Craft Workers Program (E-CCW), and Aboriginal Initiatives Canada Jobs Fund (CJF) Programs, all run though the Industry Training Authority to help assist our members.

We are hopeful that with the change in government, this will lead to the Industry Training Authority taking back a stronger leadership role in working with Unions and The Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA), which is responsible for the Red Seal Program, which develops common interprovincial standards and

examinations. The CCDA is undertaking the Harmonization Initiative in 30 Red Seal trades by 2020. The goal is to substantively align apprenticeship systems across Canada by making apprenticeship training requirements more consistent in the Red Seal trades.

CUPE BC with the Skilled Trades Committee contributed to the BC Fed published paper “BC’S (NOT SO) GREAT APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING EXPERIMENT- A DECADE RECONSIDERED”, which was released on February 27th accompanied by an op-ed condemning the mistakes made in the apprenticeship program over the last 16 years by the BC Liberals.

With this new year our committee is looking into how Field Safety Reps are used throughout our workplaces. From our discussions, it may be apparent that consistent procedures are not being followed.

### Skilled Trades Statistics

In 2015-16 the Apprenticeship Completion Rate was 40%, while just a year before it was as low as 33%- (*ITA Your Ticket*).

The government set an aspirational goal of having 25% of the jobs on publicly funded projects set aside specifically for apprentices on projects over \$15 million- (*Trades Talk Fall 2016*).

Across Canada rates of employer participation in apprenticeship programs remain at a shockingly low 19% (BC falls below this average)- (*Canadian Apprenticeship Forum surveys*).

Throughout BC, the number of apprenticeships working for municipal governments, universities, school boards and hospitals is 361 (255 from BC’s crown corporations- (*Trade Talk Fall 2016*)).

Of 20 CUPE locals polled that represent municipalities, universities, and school districts there were 448 tradespersons with only 6 active apprenticeships- (*Skilled Trades Working Group survey*).

In Surrey School District there are 33 apprentices being reported as working on the new École Salish Secondary, there are currently no active apprenticeships in their maintenance department- (*CUPE 728*).

Respectfully submitted:

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Randy Anderson-Fennell, Co-Chair  
Darrell Beck  
Dino Echelli  
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