



Merit Canada Supports Government's Speech from the Throne

OTTAWA (Oct. 16, 2013) – Merit Canada applauds a number of announcements in today's Speech from the Throne. Initiatives such as promoting a career in the skilled trades and a renewed commitment to the Canada Jobs Grant will support Canada's Open Shop construction industry, creating and supporting thousands of jobs.

"The government's continued commitment to promote skills and training addresses the current gap in our economy's labour force needs," said Terrance Oakey, President of Merit Canada. "Without intervention, there is an increasing disparity between the jobs available in Canada's construction sector and the skills of the Canadian workforce."

According to the Construction Sector Council, there will be a shortage of over 300,000 skilled trades people in Canada by the end of the decade.

"Merit Canada and its provincial associations spend millions of dollars annually on apprenticeship tuition refunds, scholarships and the delivery of supervisory, safety and pre-employment training. Announcements made in today's Speech from the Throne leverage these investments," continued Oakey.

Merit Canada also welcomes a commitment to renew infrastructure investments. However, to benefit from these investments, the provinces and municipalities must eliminate closed tendering practices which exclude non-unionized workers from undertaking work. "All Canadians, whether they are members of a union or not, deserve the opportunity to work on taxpayer-funded projects," stated Oakey.

Merit Canada is the national voice of Canada's eight provincial Open Shop construction associations. Open Shop companies and workers build more than 70% of the industrial, commercial/institutional and residential construction projects coast-to-coast-to-coast. As of June 2011, the Canadian construction sector employed 1.26 million Canadians with 900,000 working in the Open Shop sector.

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