

East Meets West in Marine Industry Training Agreement

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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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British Columbia and Nova Scotia are shaking hands over an agreement to share training resources for Marine Service Technician apprenticeships.

The Nova Scotia Boatbuilders Association, based in Halifax, will use training programs developed by Quadrant Marine Institute of Sidney, BC, for a new Marine Service Technician Apprenticeship Program being developed in support of an MST trade recently designated by the Government of Nova Scotia.

Marine Service Technicians repair and maintain pleasure boats, yachts and light commercial vessels. They are trained in a wide range of trade skills involving everything from sailboat rigging to engine installations.

Quadrant has been delivering their MST apprenticeship (formerly Marine Repair Technician) since 1995 and currently provides their four year training package under contract with the Industry Training Authority in BC. Certified technicians can now be found employed in boatyards, marinas and boat building facilities across the province.

The NSBA, in partnership with NS Labour & Advanced Education, has offered a Boat Building apprenticeship in Nova Scotia since 2005, under a licensing agreement with New Zealand. More recently the association has been working with their province to develop a new MST trade, which shares many common elements with the BC program.

“Training is critical to business success in this industry,” said Quadrant President, Campbell Black. “To have both east and west coasts collaborating on this much-needed program is a huge step forward.”

The need for more trained and highly skilled professionals in the industry has grown dramatically in recent years as the technologies for building and servicing pleasure and commercial craft becomes more complex. At the same time boat owners are demanding higher levels of quality from repair and maintenance facilities. Industry companies are struggling to keep up with the changes and have been suffering from a shortage of skilled workers.

“We’re very excited about this new partnership,” says Tim Edwards, NSBA Executive Director, “as the new MST apprenticeship program will give much-needed recognition to the existing workforce as well as help attract new workers to the industry.”

Under the three year east-west deal Quadrant will provide NSBA with curriculum materials, assessment tools and ongoing consulting expertise for the new program, which will be available to workers in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

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