

**Deloitte.**

Wuskwatim Training and  
Employment Initiatives  
Evaluation Report –  
FINAL

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# Acronyms

**Table 1: Acronyms**

Acronym	Full term
ACE	Advisory Committee on Employment
AHC	Allied Hydro Council
AIP	Agreement in Principle
AOL	Aski'Otutoskeo Limited
APWG	Aboriginal Partners Working Group
ATEC	Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence
BNA	Burntwood Nelson Agreement
CAC	Construction Advisory Committee
CRD	The Churchill River Diversion
DNC	Direct Negotiated Contract
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
HNTEI	Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative
HPMA	Hydro Projects Management Association
JRS	Job Referral Service
MAC	Monitoring Advisory Committee
MKO	Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.
MMF	Manitoba Métis Federation
NCN	Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
Hydro	Manitoba Hydro
NFA	Northern Flood Agreement
NOC	National Occupational Classification
OJT	On-The-Job Training
PDA	Project Development Agreement
PPT	Pre-Project Training
RMA	Resource Management Area
SAG	Stakeholders Advisory Group
TPC	Taskingahp Power Corporation
WPLP	Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership
WKTC	Wuskwatim and Keeyask Training Consortium Inc.

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.1 Introduction

The Wuskwatim Project (the project) refers to the construction of the 200-megawatt hydro-electric generating station and related infrastructure, located in the Nelson House Resource Management Area (RMA) at Taskinigup Falls on the Burntwood River. The project was developed by the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership (WPLP), a legal entity involving Manitoba Hydro (Hydro) and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN), and was associated with a large scale Aboriginal training and employment program.

For the purposes of this report, the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives (Initiative) is the term used to describe the activities to be included in the evaluation. Specifically, the Initiative focused on providing Northern Aboriginal residents with the knowledge and skills needed for employment on the Wuskwatim Project and related construction projects, and encompassed a number of unique activities related to: pre-project training, on-the-job training, employment services and retention supports.

In 2001, an Agreement in Principle (AIP) was signed between NCN and Hydro. The AIP was a non-legally binding framework that guided future discussions for the Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement. Provisions to increase and facilitate training and employment opportunities for NCN Citizens were identified in the AIP. In 2006, the two parties signed a legally binding Project Development Agreement (PDA), which outlined the obligations of Hydro and NCN including those pertaining to training and employment opportunities. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared in 2003 and filed with the Clean Environment Commission as part of the licencing process required for the start of construction. Contents of the report were used to inform the public, and federal and provincial decision-makers about the anticipated environmental effects of the Wuskwatim Project. The report includes predictions regarding socio economic impacts including employment effects of the project and factors influencing employment including labour demand and relevant labour market data.

From the start of construction to December 31, 2012 there were 6,043 hires<sup>1</sup> on the Wuskwatim work site. Of the total hires, 3,945 or approximately 65% were Manitobans. Total northern Manitoba and northern Manitoba Aboriginal hires represented approximately 51% (2,003 hires) and 43% (1,707 hires), respectively, of total Manitoba hires. Northern Aboriginal hires represented 28% of overall project hires. There were a total of 2,247 Aboriginal hires including 1,683 Status, 512 Métis and 52 other (Inuit and non-Status) hires. There were a total of 650 NCN hires on the project. This reflects 11% of total hires, or 29% of Aboriginal hires.

Employment data indicates that from the start of construction to November 30, 2012, direct employment created on the project amounted to 2,859 person-years. Of this, 70%, or 2,001 person-years represent Manitoba employment. Total northern Manitoba and northern Manitoba Aboriginal employment represents approximately 54% (1,089 person-years) and 47% (944 person years), respectively of Manitoba employment.<sup>2</sup> Northern Aboriginal person years worked represented 33% of total person years worked on the project.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A hire refers to an instance where an individual has been hired to the project site regardless of duration of employment. Individuals hired multiple times would be counted as multiple hires (i.e. a single person hired for three separate contracts or jobs would be counted as 3 hires).

<sup>2</sup> Source: Hydro Wuskwatim employment data.

<sup>3</sup> The person years estimates for Wuskwatim Construction may be understated as a full validation of the employee database had not been completed at the time of this report.



The rate of turnover at Wuskwatim as of December 31, 2012 was 29% of total hires (1,712). Of this number, 846 reported being of Aboriginal decent and 696 reported being of Northern Aboriginal descent. This represents a 38% turnover rate among Aboriginal hires and a 41% turnover rate among Northern Aboriginal hires. The majority of this turnover resulted from resignations – individuals choosing to leave their jobs – as opposed to discharges.<sup>4</sup>

Nearing the end of the Wuskwatim project, the WPLP, issued a request for proposal (RFP) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the major project training and employment programs implemented in association with the project. Deloitte responded to this request and was selected by the engagement Steering Committee, comprised of NCN and Hydro members, to complete the evaluation.

## 1.2 Evaluation approach

An evaluation plan (see addendum to this report) was developed in consultation with the Steering Committee, and was used to guide evaluation activities. The evaluation measures used to assess the training and employment initiatives fall into three key categories; relevance, delivery and performance. Within each measure, evaluation questions were identified, the answers to which provided the foundation for the analysis. The 11 evaluation measures are summarized by category in Table 2.

**Table 2: Evaluation measures and statements**

Relevance	Delivery	Performance
1. Initiative activities address identified needs of planners and implementers. The needs of the planners and implementers were aligned.	2. The structure supported implementation of the Initiative (governance, committees). 3. Roles and responsibilities were clearly documented, understood and fulfilled. 4. Activities met needs and expectations (planned vs. actual activities). 5. Activities reached the intended participants (awareness). 6. Delivery prompted participation by target audience (accessibility). 7. Appropriate resources were made available (human, financial) for implementation.	8. Objectives of the Initiative were achieved. 9. Monitoring and reporting promotes transparency and enables measurement of intended objectives and goals. 10. The Initiative achieved the desired impact. 11. Identified strengths and weaknesses of Initiative.

The Evaluation used a number of data collection methods to obtain the necessary information, which included both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was derived from document review, as well as interviews and focus groups with people involved in planning, implementing and participating in the various initiatives. The number of participants interviewed (98) is not a representative sample of those trained or employed through the Initiative and therefore these findings cannot be attributed to all participants, or the Initiative, overall. However these perspectives are informative and have been included in the main findings. Quantitative data was derived from secondary sources, which included existing Initiative databases and documentation.

## 1.3 Evaluation findings

The Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives encompassed a number of programs, processes and stakeholders that came together with the intention of creating opportunities for Northern Aboriginal residents. Evaluation findings are presented in two main sections; the first section is specific to training and encompasses pre-project training (PPT) and on-the-job training (OJT); the second section is specific to employment and encompasses project employment services, as well as retention supports.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Hydro CED: as at December 31, 2012.

### 1.3.1 Training

Training related to Wuskwatim started prior to construction with the PPT initiative, which eventually included the Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative (HNTEI) and Wuskwatim on-the-job training (OJT) initiatives. OJT initiatives were offered through apprenticeship in designated trades and worker training programs, which were offered by employers in a variety of skill areas. This section provides findings on PPT outcomes and findings, as well as OJT outcomes and findings.

Throughout this document the categories of trainees, hires and workers presented for analysis can be defined as follows:

- **Total Aboriginal:** all Aboriginal persons including Northern and Other Aboriginals. Aboriginal persons identified in this evaluation have self-identified as Status, Non-Status, Inuit or Métis.
- **Northern Aboriginal:** those Aboriginal persons who can be identified as coming from Northern Manitoba as defined by the Northern Affairs Boundary and identified in Schedule D to the Burntwood Nelson Agreement.
- **Other Aboriginal:** all other Aboriginal persons other than those from Northern Manitoba.
- **Non-Aboriginal:** those persons who were not identified as Aboriginals, regardless of location.
- **Project Total:** all persons including Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal.

#### 1.3.1.1 PPT outcomes

PPT was designed to train and prepare Northern Aboriginal workers for employment in a wide range of occupations during the construction of both the Wuskwatim and the future Keeyask projects. Hydro, the Province of Manitoba, and the federal government all contributed to the \$60.3M multi-year HNTEI with the goal to train and prepare over 1,000 Northern Aboriginal residents for an estimated 800 Hydro construction and related employment opportunities.<sup>5</sup> HNTEI was formally established in 2005 and concluded in 2009/10. However, some funding for training infrastructure and programming was provided in advance of HNTEI by Hydro beginning in 2001/02 and the Province of Manitoba beginning in 2002/03.<sup>6</sup> HNTEI was intended to take a community based approach to training delivery.<sup>7</sup> HNTEI was administered by the Wuskwatim Keeyask Training Consortium (WKTC); a separate corporate entity governed by Aboriginal Partners that included NCN, Tataskweyak Cree Nation (TCN), War Lake First Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation, York Factory First Nation, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) and Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) as well as the Province of Manitoba and Hydro.

There were mixed perspectives among planners and implementers from various groups on whether HNTEI original program expectations were met with respect to the nature of course offerings (occupational vs. non-occupational) and training outcomes. In total, 2,670 Northern Aboriginal residents participated in PPT activities, with 1,876 individuals successfully completing at least one course. Of all course completions, just over half (52%) were related to training in designated and non-designated trades.

When the funding through HNTEI concluded there were 140 active apprentices participating in the program, 71% of these were either at or working towards their first level of apprenticeship. Within the designated trades, 27 HNTEI trainees obtained certification as journeypersons. It is possible that HNTEI trainees continued their training, either classroom or on the job (Wuskwatim or elsewhere), following the conclusion of HNTEI and may have progressed in their apprenticeship designation.

The number of training participants employed post-training was 1,395, with 60% of participants obtaining employment in their respective communities<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, data collected by Hydro indicates 189 of the HNTEI participants found employment at Wuskwatim.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal for ASEP funding.

<sup>6</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

<sup>7</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

<sup>8</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

Reporting for HNTEI was conducted as outlined. However, the data gathered does not allow for appropriate assessment of whether or not training objectives were achieved since individual training progression was not tracked, nor reported against. Rather, many of the training activities were monitored by course completion as opposed to program completion.

Training coordination and administration activities provided capacity building opportunities in communities. In addition, training supported personal employment objectives and instilled a sense of pride in some participants. However, there were indicators, through interviews and document review, that training did not provide all the skills required by employers.

### **1.3.1.2 PPT findings**

#### **1.3.1.2.1 Relevance and need**

Through document review, as well as planner and implementer consultation, three primary needs were identified related to training: the need for educational upgrading and life skills training in preparation for occupational training, the need for employment skills training, and the need for access to relevant work experience opportunities. Planners and implementers from each group interviewed agreed that there was a strong need for employment training, but findings suggest that the desired outcomes may have varied by planner and implementer group. Hydro planners indicated that there was a specific need for designated trades people to work on hydroelectric projects, while some Aboriginal Partners appeared to have broader training needs for their communities. These needs included capacity building in management and support services, such as child care workers.

Community skills assessments conducted by Aboriginal Partners indicated that there were few employment ready individuals. As indicated by NCN planners and documented in the Wuskwatim EIS, NCN expected that literacy and educational upgrading training would be required for 90% of NCN trainees and that trainees who wanted to pursue designated trades training would require approximately 52 weeks of upgrading, while those who wanted to pursue careers in the non-designated trades or construction and site services would need approximately 26 weeks of upgrading to prepare them for occupational skills training. NCN also believed each trainee should participate in 8 weeks of life skills training to prepare them for work, particularly work on a construction project. Thus, significant non-occupational training, including academic upgrading and life skills training, would be required.

Funders shared similar goals for capacity building through training; Hydro required designated trades people to support construction and was seeking specific outcomes related to employment skills for opportunities on hydroelectric projects, while government funders sought to support more broad employment capacity building.

#### **1.3.1.2.2 PPT delivery**

PPT under HNTEI was intended to be delivered using a community based approach wherein training decisions were made based on community plans and Aboriginal Partners were engaged in the decision making process. Based on interview results with representatives from the Aboriginal Partners, the general perspective was that the community based approach was beneficial because communities knew the needs of their members and the approach enabled them to develop tailored training opportunities to meet those needs.

Training participants may have experienced barriers to training participation that impacted their retention and resulted in average retention rates between 55% and 65%, depending on the types of courses that were taken. Retention was reported as an issue among those who had to leave their community and their family members to attend training. Overall, over 50% of courses were offered in community.<sup>9</sup>

Research on the delivery of training was not undertaken at the community level, beyond NCN and through ATEC. This is an area that would benefit from future research.

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<sup>9</sup> Hydro statistics.

#### **1.3.1.2.3 WKTC**

Some planners and implementers from NCN and Hydro noted that securing funding and establishing the structures and processes (e.g. setting up WKTC) took time, which restricted the amount of time remaining for training delivery prior to start of Wuskwatim construction. WKTC was seen to have fulfilled its duties in administration of the HNTEI funds, but added an additional step in the PPT process that extended timelines and costs for training. For example, there were delays in the receipt of training funds within communities, due to the administrative requirements for expense reports to be received from all communities prior to releasing subsequent funds to those communities. In addition, some planners and implementers from the Aboriginal Partners felt that while WKTC Board member roles and responsibilities were well documented, they were not followed as they should have been, since the roles were not well understood and the positions taken were considered unreasonable by some members.

#### **1.3.1.2.4 ATEC**

The Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence (ATEC), is a non-profit community based secondary training facility built at NCN. It was funded through HNTEI to address the need for appropriate training facilities to support PPT. The cost to build the facility exceeded original estimates and used 66% of all funds allocated to NCN for PPT. It was widely viewed as a "state of the art" facility, but challenges with oversight and management of ATEC were reported by NCN planners and implementers. As well, the ongoing sustainment of the ATEC facility was acknowledged as a challenge for NCN.

The ability to offer trades training through ATEC at Nelson House was somewhat limited. Two potential reasons noted by planners and implementers interviewed from NCN, as well as funders, were the lack of available instructors and a lack of interest on the part of community colleges to offer community based training. A significant barrier to preparing trainees for employment at Wuskwatim was the lack of opportunities to gain commercial and industrial experience.

NCN planners and implementers noted that more coordination between NCN and Hydro regarding skills required for work at Wuskwatim may have resulted in better alignment between expectations and training offerings.

#### **1.3.1.3 OJT outcomes**

OJT refers to training opportunities at the Wuskwatim construction site in addition to the training opportunities made available through HNTEI. HNTEI also included a work experience component, but this was separate and distinct from Wuskwatim OJT. OJT occurred both formally and informally at Wuskwatim. Through the hiring of registered apprentices, Wuskwatim offered opportunities to gain work experience in a number of designated trades (formal OJT). Beyond apprenticeship, contractors provided training specific opportunities for employees (informal OJT). Several ad-hoc activities were undertaken by Hydro and contractors to create OJT opportunities for Northern Aboriginal workers.

In terms of apprenticeship opportunities, there were a total of 2,040 hires in designated trades, of which 297 (just under 15% of the total) were apprentices. This was below the EIS prediction that 20% of all hires in designated trades would be apprentices. Of these apprentices, there were 85 (29% of the total) self-identified as Aboriginal and 58 of which (20% of the total) further self-identified as Northern Aboriginal. Increased structure, accountability, and incentives were suggested by some planners and implementers from Hydro, as well as the union, to incent more up-take of apprentices by employers.

**Table 3: Apprentice and journeyperson hires for Wuskwatim.**

		Total	Other Aboriginal	Northern Aboriginal	Non Aboriginal	
Apprentice Hire	297		9% (27)	20% (58)	71% (212)	
			Manitoban		Outside Manitoba	
			65% (192)	35% (105)		
Journeyperson Hire	1743		Other Aboriginal	Northern Aboriginal	Non Aboriginal	
			12% (211)	5% (89)	83% (1443)	
			Manitoban		Outside Manitoba	
		52% (903)	48% (840)			

In addition to apprenticeship, ad hoc OJT opportunities were provided, four of which were monitored and reported against. The following table summarizes the results of the four OJT opportunities that were tracked and monitored.

**Table 4: Ad-hoc OJT opportunities**

OJT opportunity	Description of training activities	Completion status
<b>Management training (Direct Negotiated Contract)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;5 Northern Aboriginal workers were provided rotational management roles through OJT.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All but one participant completed the training.</li> </ul>
<b>Turbine and Generator/Electrical and Mechanical Contract</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 Northern Aboriginal apprenticeship trainees were provided with OJT opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three of four individuals advanced apprenticeship levels (two to journeyperson status), one resigned shortly after hire and data is not available for the sixth.</li> </ul>
<b>Carpentry OJT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;5 Northern Aboriginal workers participated in carpentry OJT.</li> <li>Targeted selection of trainees was facilitated through ATEC. Individuals with carpentry as a base skill set, as well as willingness to learn on-the-job, were targeted for participation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All participants completed the training.</li> <li>Contractor recommended that all participants be moved to a full production environment with full journeyman status.</li> </ul>
<b>Labourer Training Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Northern Aboriginal workers participated in an on-the-job labourer training program that was developed to address concerns regarding employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal workers.</li> <li>NCN and ATEC identified individuals for the labourer trainee positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No successful completions.</li> <li>Delays occurred due to administration issues at the outset, which reduced the number of available trainees. The remaining trainees resigned or were terminated.</li> </ul>

### 1.3.1.4 OJT findings

#### 1.3.1.4.1 Relevance and need

OJT opportunities on Wuskwatim helped fill a need to facilitate apprenticeship progression for Northern Aboriginal trainees since it was difficult to find adequate work experience in communities for people who participated in trades training. OJT opportunities extended beyond those reported against to include a number of activities undertaken by employers by their own design.

#### *1.3.1.4.2 Delivery experience*

Some planners and implementers from Hydro and contractors had the perspective that OJT was more successful when selected participants had a work history and a demonstrated interest in pursuing additional training. OJT was seen by participants, some planners, and implementers as one of the more successful employment initiatives for the Wuskwatim project. However, it was noted by planners and implementers from Hydro, as well as project employers, that the need for OJT training conflicted with construction priorities, which focused more on the project schedule and costs. Hydro planners and implementers noted that this may have been driven by the scale of dollars and the associated risks of not meeting contractual requirements.

#### *1.3.1.5 Training key themes*

##### *1.3.1.5.1 PPT key themes*

Four key themes for PPT were developed based on quantitative and qualitative findings and can be summarized as follows:

- Expectations of Funders and Aboriginal Partners differed regarding the type and amount of skill development required for Northern Aboriginal residents to become job qualified. Funders expected to build employment skills and capacity of Northern Aboriginal residents to support specific projects whereas Aboriginal Partners expected to meet the needs of their individual communities which, in some cases, were broader and more attuned to the educational upgrading needs in their communities.
- Time available for training delivery was reduced due to time required to get some funders committed and to establish the structure for administering the HNTEI funds. Talks and a commitment from Hydro started in 2001; however, HNTEI was not established until 2005. In addition, WKTC added an "additional step" and an "administrative layer" between funders and Aboriginal Partners that extended the time and cost required for training delivery.
- **Delivery of training did not match the intended design and desired outcomes.** The funding model for training influenced training decisions as it encouraged individual course participation rather than program completion. In addition, limited access to training in community impacted overall retention rates and limited access to relevant work experience impacted the ability to progress through Apprenticeship.
- **Reporting of training activities and outcomes did not facilitate assessment** as they were focused on individual course completions and did not measure individual participant progression. While the goal of PPT was to provide the skills required to gain employment on the Wuskwatim and Keeyask hydroelectric projects and provide a continuum of training to develop skills and capacity of Northern Aboriginal residents, the funding model, training design, and reporting mechanisms did not support this assessment.

##### *1.3.1.5.2 OJT key themes*

Two key themes for OJT were developed based on quantitative and qualitative findings and can be summarized as follows:

- **Apprentice numbers on Wuskwatim were not as high as anticipated by planners and implementers or what was predicted in the EIS.** Contributing factors to this lower than expected apprentice participation included the advancement of the project schedule and contract incentives for on time or early completion of work, which exceeded the financial benefits made available for contractor-provided training.
- **Ad-hoc opportunities were met with varying degrees of success and many were not monitored;** however these opportunities were cited by participants as one of the benefits of employment at Wuskwatim. It was suggested that OJT was more successful when participants had a work history and a demonstrated interest in pursuing additional training.

## 1.3.2 Employment services and retention supports

Employment results at Wuskwatim were influenced by the programs in place on the project as well as activities that were undertaken specifically to improve Aboriginal worker participation and retention. These programs and activities have been addressed separately as employment services and retention supports. The employment and retention outcomes are presented in the following section followed by findings related to the delivery of each.

### 1.3.2.1 Overall Project employment and retention outcomes

Employment can be measured in a number of ways. Employment at Wuskwatim was measured and reported using the following terms.

- **Employee** refers to an individual who was hired to work on the project
- **Hire** refers to an instance where an individual has been hired to the project site regardless of duration of employment; individuals hired multiple times would be counted as multiple hires (i.e. a single person hired for three separate contracts or jobs would be counted as 3 hires)
- **Re-hire** refers to an instance where employee worker who resigned or was discharged returned to work on the project
- **Person years** were used to standardize the total employment contribution on the project, given the varying contract lengths. One person year represents 2000 hours of employment, or the equivalent of one full-time position for one year

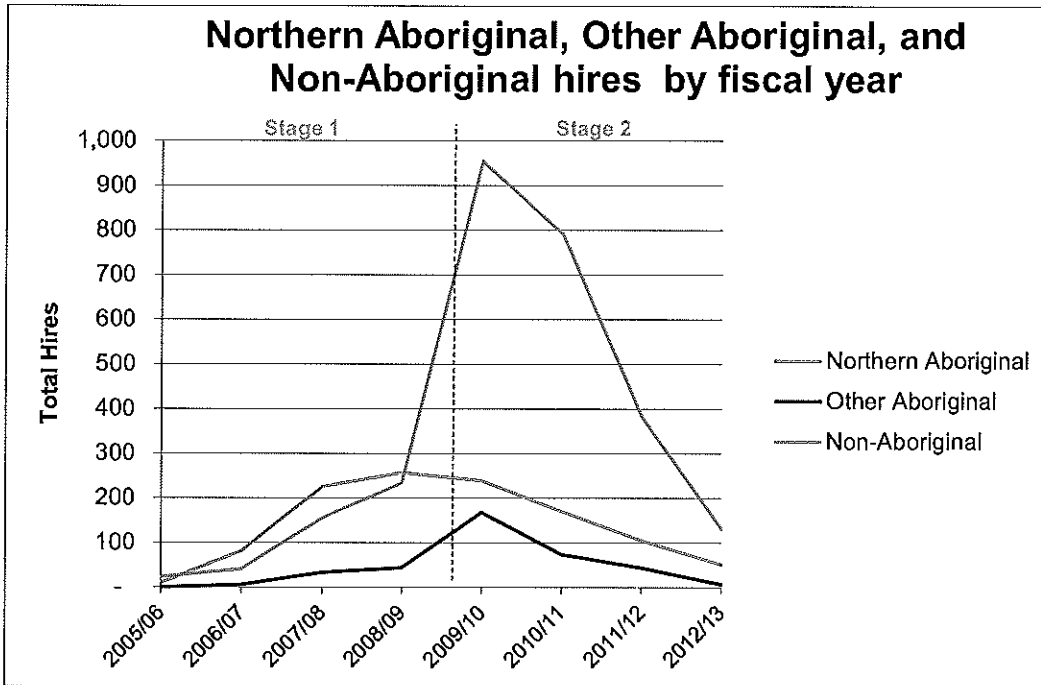
Retention at Wuskwatim was measured two ways:

- **Average duration** refers to the average length of employment in days
- **Turnover rates** were calculated by dividing the number of hires leaving a job as a result of discharge or resignation by the total number of hires

#### 1.3.2.1.1 Employment

Figure 1 illustrates total annual hires for the duration of the project broken down by Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal hires. Northern Aboriginal hires were greater relative to Non-Aboriginal and Other Aboriginal hires for the majority of the first stage of the project. Non-Aboriginal hires were greater relative to Northern and other Aboriginal hires in the second stage of the project. This difference was expected due to the need for more designated trades workers and workers at higher level of apprenticeship in the second stage. However, the relative difference was more pronounced than anticipated due to the advancement of the project schedule, which significantly increased the demand for labour on the project. More workers were needed overall; however, the supply of job qualified Northern Aboriginal job seekers was relatively fixed. As a result, there were more non-Aboriginal workers hired than anticipated and therefore a much higher ratio of non-Aboriginal to Northern Aboriginal hires.

Figure 1: Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal, and Non-Aboriginal hires



Source: Hydro CED: as at December 31, 2012.

The Wuskwatim EIS predicted the project would contribute 1,109.1 person years of employment to the Manitoba economy. Of this employment, it was predicted that 113.2 person years would be generated during Stage 1 of construction (infrastructure development), and 995.9 person years would be generated during Stage 2 of construction (general civil contract). Northern Aboriginal workers were predicted to contribute 110 person years (97%) of employment during Stage 1 and between 396 (40%) to 547.8 (55%) person years of employment during Stage 2. The EIS predictions excluded Manitoba Hydro and supervisory positions on site.

As noted above, from the start of construction to November 30, 2012, direct employment created on the project amounted to 2,859 person years. Construction monitoring of employment impacts includes Manitoba Hydro and supervisory positions in the analysis, which differed from the EIS approach where these positions were excluded from the analysis. Of the total 2,859 person years of employment, the Northern Aboriginal contribution was 322 person years during Stage 1, nearly tripling the original projections. The relative rate of Northern Aboriginal participation during this time was lower than predicted at 64% of the total compared to the predicted 97%. During Stage 2, employment data indicated that Northern Aboriginal person years totalled 621, once again exceeding the EIS projections. Again, however, Northern Aboriginal participation comprised 27% of the total during this stage, as compared to the predicted 40% to 55%.<sup>10</sup>

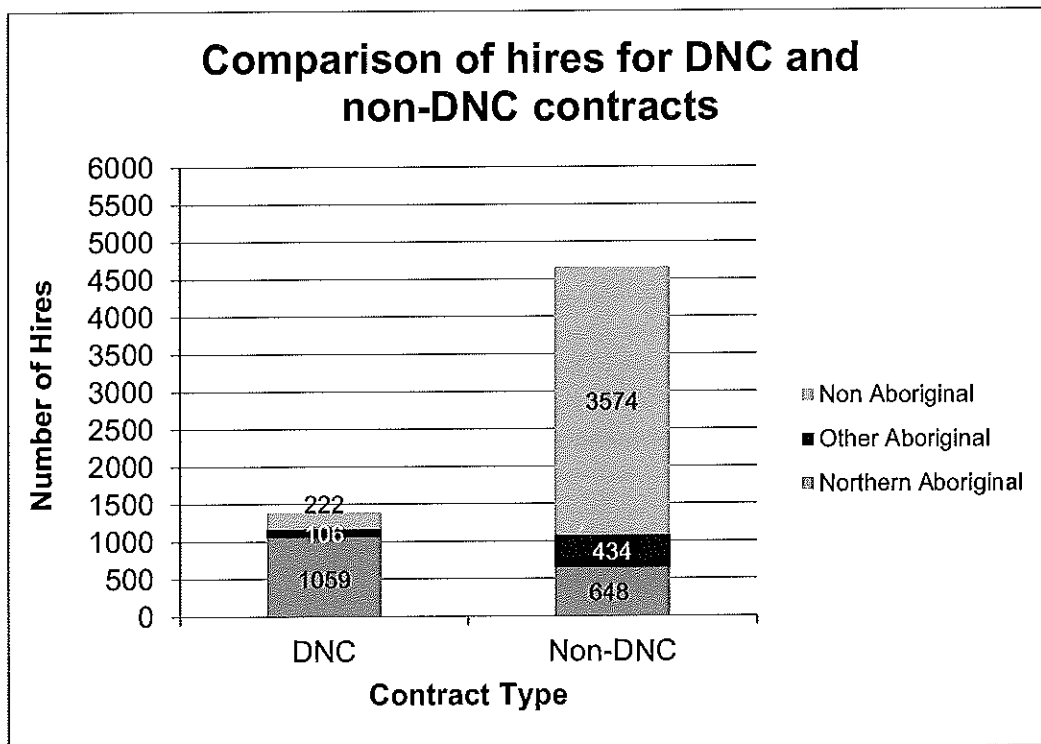
The discrepancy between the Wuskwatim EIS predictions and the actual employment results can largely be attributed to the advancement of the project schedule, the impacts of which are described above. A small portion of this discrepancy is likely attributed to methodological differences in the analysis between EIS predictions and project monitoring, including the inclusion of Manitoba Hydro and supervisory positions (as noted above) as well as slight differences in how a person year was defined.

Figure 2 illustrates the number hires for DNC and non-DNC contracts. Employment data indicates that Northern Aboriginal workers comprised a much higher percentage of total hires on Direct Negotiated contracts (76% of the total DNC hires), than non-DNC contracts (14% of the total non-DNC hires).

<sup>10</sup> The person years estimates for Wuskwatim Construction may be understated as a full validation of the employee database had not been completed at the time of this report



Figure 2: Comparison of hires for DNC and non-DNC contracts



Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

\*Note: "Hires" represents the number of times an individual has been hired.

Overall, Wuskwatim achieved slightly greater Northern Aboriginal employment participation than was achieved on the Limestone project. Northern Aboriginal hires at Wuskwatim represented 28% of total hires, whereas at Limestone, Northern Aboriginal hires represented 25% of the total number of hires.<sup>11</sup>

In terms of person years, Northern Aboriginal employment totaled 944 person years and comprised 33% of total person years at Wuskwatim.

### 1.3.2.1.2 Retention

Figures provided by Hydro indicate that from project inception to December 31, 2012, there were 1,712 occurrences where employees were discharged or resigned from the job site. This represents a rate of turnover of 29% of total hires.<sup>12</sup> The majority of turnover (73%) on the job site comprised resignations as opposed to discharges. A resignation represents an individual choosing to leave a job and does not include layoffs.<sup>13</sup>

Of the 1,712 occurrences where employees were discharged or resigned, 846 reported being of Aboriginal descent and 696 reported being of Northern Aboriginal descent. This represents a 38% rate of turnover among Aboriginal hires and a 41% rate of turnover among Northern Aboriginal hires.

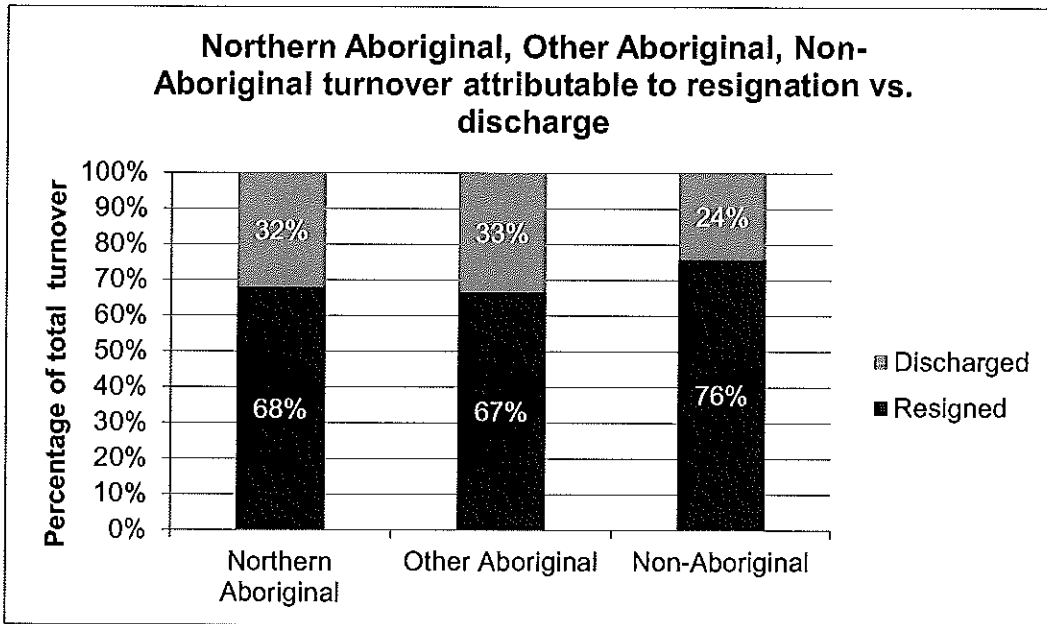
Figure 3 illustrates the breakdown of turnover for Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal workers at Wuskwatim.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012 report; Internal Audit Report: Limestone Project – Retrospective Review (June 1990). Wuskwatim Hires data includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone hires data excludes supervisory and management positions.

<sup>12</sup> Turnover is calculated as the total incidences of discharges and resignations divided by total hires. The total number of resignations has been corrected to exclude circumstances where an individual left a position but was rehired to improve their job level on-site. These situations are different and unique from other forms of being re-hired on the job site and are the product of administrative processes.

<sup>13</sup> Source: Hydro CED.

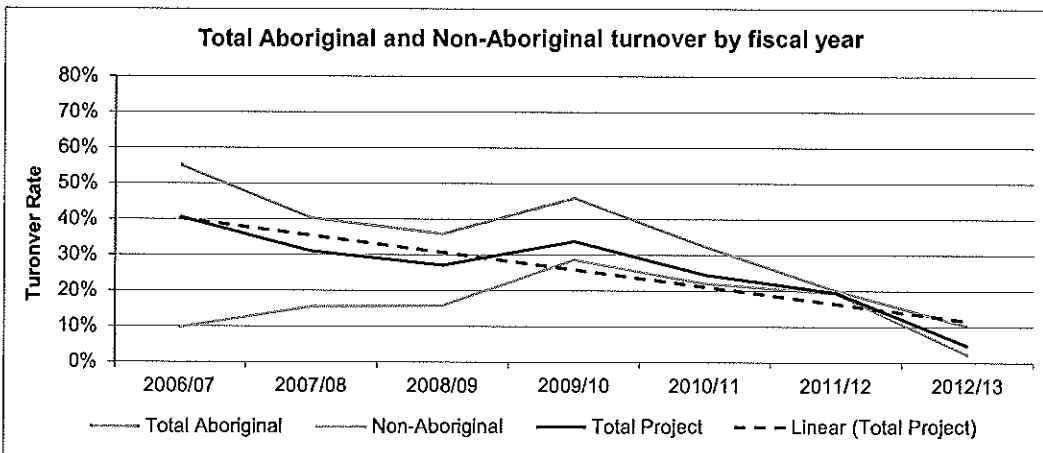
Figure 3: Resignation and discharge turnover



Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

Figure 4 illustrates the annual rate of turnover for hires at Wuskwatim over the course of the project. As indicated, the turnover rate for Aboriginal workers was highest in 2006/07 and rose again in 2009/10. While the rates are higher for Aboriginal workers than for non-Aboriginal workers, the overall trend was fairly similar. **In 2009/10 Aboriginal as well as non-Aboriginal turnover spiked. It was during this time in the construction project that the number of workers on site also peaked.** The combined rather than separate turnover rates for Northern Aboriginal and Other Aboriginal workers are presented in this analysis due to the small population of Other Aboriginal workers in certain years.

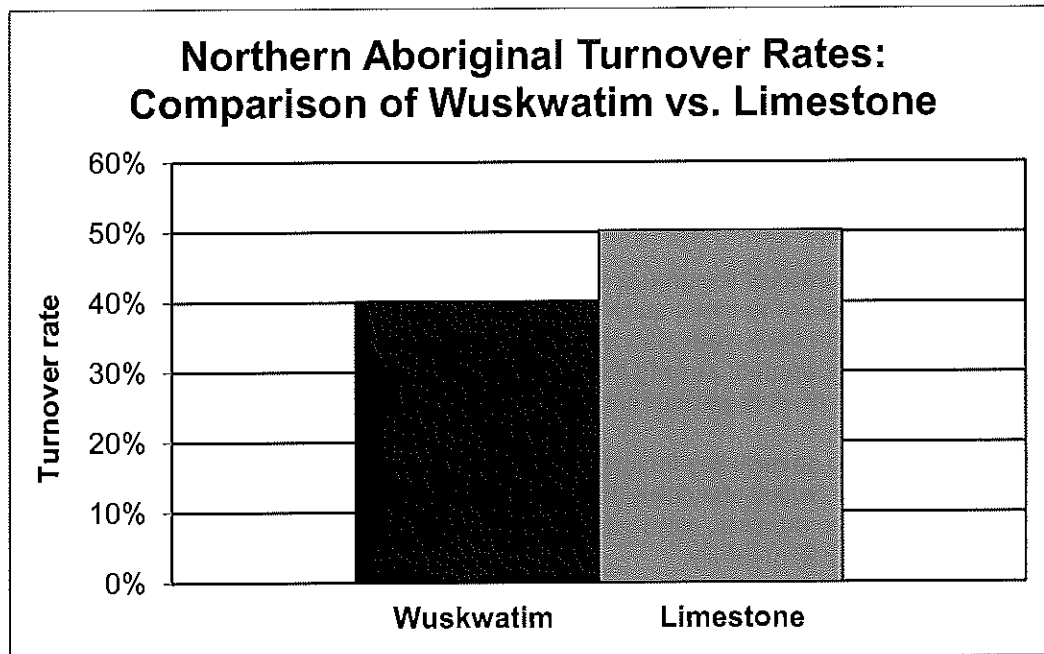
Figure 4: Total Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal turnover by fiscal year



Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

As shown in Figure 5, the average rate of turnover among Northern Aboriginal hires on the Wuskwatim project was 41% compared to 50% on the Limestone project. Accordingly, the turnover rate for Northern Aboriginal hires on Wuskwatim was 9% lower relative to Limestone. At Limestone there was a higher rate of resignation for Northern Aboriginal workers than at Wuskwatim (38% compared to 27%). Rates of discharge remained the same across the two projects.

Figure 5: Northern Aboriginal turnover rates: comparison of Wuskwatim vs. Limestone



Source: Hydro CED; Internal Audit Report: Limestone Project – Retrospective Review (June 1990). Wuskwatim turnover data is as at December 31, 2012 and includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone turnover data excludes supervisory and management positions. Wuskwatim Hires data includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone hires data excludes supervisory and management positions.

There were a number of instances on the Wuskwatim project where employees who resigned, or were discharged, were later re-hired for the project. As of December 31, 2012, this occurred 292 times on the project (17% of total resignations and discharges). Aboriginal employees who were discharged or resigned were more likely to be re-hired (22%), relative to non-Aboriginal employees (13%).<sup>14</sup>

### 1.3.2.2 Employment services findings

There was a commitment by those involved in Wuskwatim to improve Aboriginal employment and retention, with a specific intention to improve upon the outcomes for Aboriginal workers at Limestone. To this end, a number of steps were undertaken to positively impact Aboriginal employment participation. This section includes findings related to relevance and need for employment services and delivery experience of each of the employment services components, as well as structures and processes implemented to support Northern Aboriginal employment on Wuskwatim.

#### 1.3.2.2.1 Relevance and need

The experience at Limestone, NCN community consultation results, and planner and implementer interviews all indicated that employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal workers were a priority at Wuskwatim. Planners and implementers from Hydro, project contractors, and the union indicated that recruiting the required number of experienced and qualified workers for the project would be difficult, and that supports would be required on site to ensure that Northern Aboriginal workers were retained for the duration of their position. In addition, NCN leaders, community members, and Hydro recognized that support would be needed to reduce social and systemic barriers to employment participation and retention.

<sup>14</sup> Source: Hydro statistics.

### 1.3.2.2.2 *The Burntwood Nelson Agreement (BNA)*

Employment at Wuskwatim was guided by the Burntwood Nelson Agreement (BNA). The BNA outlines two primary means by which job seekers could be recruited to positions on Wuskwatim; through the hiring preference outlined in the BNA or directly by Aboriginal owned business employers (direct negotiated contracts or DNC). The hiring procedures in the BNA were implemented using the Job Referral Service (JRS) which is described below. This system was used to implement BNA articles related to job seeker registration, referrals, hiring, layoffs and recalls. Provisions within the BNA also guided hours of work, isolation leaves and the procedures for the layoff and recall of workers.

Planners and implementers from each of the groups expressed the view that some contractors were suspected of using skills qualifications to move quickly through the preference groups that were stipulated in the BNA. Layoff provisions in the BNA were also identified as problematic since they allowed contractors to layoff whoever they wanted, as long the contractor determined that the workers being retained had better skills, abilities or work performance than those being laid off.

In addition the BNA contributed to several key factors cited as impacting retention. In particular, provisions pertaining to Article 15, which stipulates hours of work, and Article 19, which stipulates leave provisions including frequency and duration, were noted as contributing to challenges regarding long work hours and extended periods away from family.

### 1.3.2.2.3 *The Job Referral Service (JRS)*

The JRS, contracted to Manitoba Advanced Education and Training (now Employment Manitoba), was intended to provide an objective referral service for employment at Wuskwatim. This was done through registration of job orders for employers, registration of direct hire individuals, as well as job seeker information for direct hires by Aboriginal owned businesses.. Through an automated matching process, the JRS provided employers a listing of qualified workers from which to select. This was done while implementing the hiring preferences outlined in the BNA.

Access to registering with the JRS was facilitated through a number of different channels, which included: in person, online, by mail, by fax, or through Job Seeker Managers employed in some communities. However, participant interviews indicated that JRS service levels may have varied by location. Employers indicated the JRS was a good screening tool, but lengthened the recruitment process. Planners and implementers from NCN, government and employers, as well as participant interview responses indicated that the JRS and the job qualification matching process presented challenges in a number of different manners:

- Proof of residency was difficult for some individuals living in community
- Individuals whose qualifications exceeded those of a job order would not be referred unless they had indicated they were willing to take positions below their skill level
- Matching required registrants to select the correct skills using National Occupation Codes which presented difficulties for some
- The requirement to renew registrations every six months resulted in a significant number of registrants becoming dormant in the system and as a result not eligible for referral
- The inability to contact job seekers for interviews presented a barrier to the referral process and was noted as a significant reason for not hiring Northern Aboriginal residents (of the northern Aboriginal referrals not hired to the Project site, inability to contact was cited as the reason 42% of the time)
- Initially, recall provisions allowed the preference groups to be overlooked if all employees were to be called back to the job site within 28 days of a lay off; a new interpretation of this was introduced in 2010 intended to rectify this issue

### 1.3.2.2.4 *Direct Negotiated Contracts (DNC)*

DNCs were held by Aboriginal owned businesses and enabled the direct recruitment and hiring of Aboriginal residents. Employment data indicates that DNCs provided significant employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal workers, with catering (which included security and site maintenance) being the most significant area of employment for Northern Aboriginal works on site (43% of all Northern Aboriginal hires were through the catering contract).

### 1.3.2.2.5 Committees

A number of committees were established at Wuskwatim that had employment and retention related activities as part of their mandate. The three advisory committees, and their associated roles and responsibilities, were aligned to requirements in the PDA.

#### **Advisory Committee on Employment (ACE)**

ACE was established to “find solutions to problems, receive and review complaints, monitor/report and make recommendations to the Wuskwatim Project Manager on employment related matters”.<sup>15</sup> Interpretations of the ACE mandate and its subsequent effectiveness varied across the planner and implementer groups. Some interviewees who included Hydro employees, contractors, the union and NCN, indicated that ACE meetings were too infrequent to address issues in a timely manner. ACE representation from both Hydro and NCN presented challenges at the outset but was seen to have improved to some degree as the project progressed. NCN planners and implementers note that concerns with ACE remained for the duration of the project.

#### **Construction Advisory Committee (CAC)**

CAC provided information and recommendations to the General Partner Board on construction related activities and events. Planners and implementers from Hydro indicated that open dialogue at CAC was encouraged through a broader interpretation of the committee mandate.

#### **Monitoring Advisory Committee (MAC)**

MAC was responsible for communicating information on economic, social and environmental project monitoring activities. MAC was viewed as effective by planners and implementers from all groups.

#### **AdHoc Committee on Employment**

The AdHoc committee on employment was an informal committee established to oversee fulfillment of the 18 commitments that were made to end a blockade erected by NCN and others. The committee facilitated ongoing communication between NCN Chief and Council, WIO staff, NCN advisors and Hydro managers. It was noted by NCN planners and implementers that this committee was felt to be more effective than ACE, as it was felt the credibility of ACE had been lost by this point in the project.

### 1.3.2.2.6 The Wuskwatim Implementation Office (WIO)

The Wuskwatim Implementation Office was the project coordinator for NCN. The purpose of the office was to ensure the PDA was implemented and honoured, liaise with Hydro and communicate project information to NCN Citizens and other workers. In addition to the committees outlined above, the WIO provided a number of employment services and retention related supports for residents at NCN and other workers.

### 1.3.2.3 Retention supports findings

In addition to the process and structures established to facilitate Northern Aboriginal access to employment opportunities at Wuskwatim, activities and measures were put in place to support retention of Northern Aboriginal workers on the project. This section presents findings related to various retention supports.

#### 1.3.2.3.1 Relevance and need

The nature of the work environment, cultural factors, historical factors, and previous experience on hydroelectric projects pointed to the need for culturally sensitive measures to support the retention of Aboriginal workers. Participants, planners, and implementers cited a number of work and non-work related factors that impacted retention; lack of transportation to the work site and medical issues were the most commonly cited reasons given by participants for being discharged and resigning. Other reasons included being away from family and community for a long period of time and long work schedules.

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<sup>15</sup> Source: Project Development Agreement Schedule C: Advisory Committee on Employment -Terms of Reference.

#### *1.3.2.3.2 Cross cultural training*

Mandatory cross cultural awareness training was provided to increase awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture, and to improve relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees. Cross cultural training was intended to be mandatory for all employees, but a participation rate of only ~35% was achieved. Some implementers and participants noted not having time, not being permitted to attend by supervisors, and not having the opportunity to attend due to shift schedules or short contract lengths contributed to the low participation rate in cross cultural training. Interviews with participants indicated that cross cultural training increased awareness and understanding among those "open to it". It was also noted that the training might have been more beneficial to Aboriginal employees if it was truly cross-cultural including a component on non-Aboriginal cultures. Overall feedback from implementers and participants was positive regarding the cross cultural training.

#### *1.3.2.3.3 Ceremonies*

Ceremonies, while not implemented specifically to improve Aboriginal employment retention, helped to increase Aboriginal culture awareness. Sweats and feasts were noted by some participants as helping to, "re-energize" workers. Participants would have liked more information on the purpose and details of project ceremonies that were held.

#### *1.3.2.3.4 Counseling*

On-site counseling services were made available to support workers with a range of issues impacting work performance including alcohol and drug use and family stress. Regular site visits from NCN Elders were also implemented to provide support and mentorship to Aboriginal employees.

Although participants who were interviewed indicated limited use of counseling services due to lack of need and comfort of communicating with a counsellor, participants appreciated that counseling was available to them if needed. Participant interview results and some NCN stakeholders noted that Elder visits were viewed as an important support, particularly for younger Aboriginal workers.

#### *1.3.2.3.5 Employment liaison worker*

An Aboriginal employment liaison worker was hired later in construction to monitor Aboriginal employment issues and concerns, and liaise with workers, unions, and Hydro to address any issues that arose throughout the project. The individual from NCN who occupied the role of employment liaison worker on the project declined to participate in the evaluation. Although the employment liaison worker responsibilities were clearly documented, comments from some NCN and Hydro planners and implementers, as well as some participants indicated these responsibilities may not have been fully understood or fulfilled.

Planners and implementers for NCN commented that the employment liaison worker should have had an office at the site to make the person more accessible, and that there was a need for more than one employment liaison officer to support Aboriginal workers. Regular activity reports on cross cultural and employment liaison worker activities were provided to the WIO, which were in turn communicated to Chief and Council and the appropriate project representatives. However, more detailed activity reporting for the employment liaison worker would have enabled a more in-depth understanding of employee needs and concerns that were raised.

The employment liaison role was viewed as an important support by planners and implementers from Hydro and NCN, and the individual on the project was viewed by those interviewed as approachable, and made efforts to address issues directly with WIO, NCN legal counsel, and Hydro. However, it was felt by some participants and NCN stakeholders that this individual could have been more accessible, and could have taken a more directive approach to address employment issues.

Several NCN planners and implementers suggested the employment liaison worker role be carried forward on future projects. It was also suggested that additional employment liaison workers were required and that NCN should have been involved in the selection of candidates for this role.

#### *1.3.2.3.6 Union and dispute resolution*

Project dispute resolution mechanisms were made available to assist with retention. These mechanisms occurred formally through the union, informally through sharing circles (through the talking stick approach), and through assistance from staff at the WIO. Participants noted a number of factors including language barriers and tensions between French speaking workers and Aboriginal workers that negatively impacted the experience of Aboriginal workers. Some NCN planners, implementers and participants felt that the union could have done more to support workers with these employment issues.

The formal dispute resolution mechanism available to in-scope workers on the project, with labour related issues, was through the union. Among Northern Aboriginal workers that were interviewed, there was a general hesitancy to contact the union and concerns as to whether or not the union followed through with issues that were brought to them. Some planners, implementers and participants noted a cultural preference to avoid confrontation and to only discuss issues with other members of the community. Some participants interviewed indicated that they had a lack of familiarity and awareness of the role of the union, even though attempts were made to increase awareness of the role of the union among employees. Access to shop stewards and other union officials may have also been a factor that limited Aboriginal worker interactions with the union.

Available grievance data does not provide an indication of whether Aboriginal workers were more or less likely to file grievances, as the data only reports on total grievances. A total of three hundred and twenty-two (322) grievances were filed for the project, with 91 of those settled, 328 inactive or withdrawn, 0 under review, and 3 possibly going to arbitration. Wrongful or unjust dismissal, and Article 12 of the BNA, which pertains to the hiring procedure and referral system, union security and check off, transfer, lay-off and recall provisions, were cited as the most common reasons for filing a grievance on the project.<sup>16</sup> Some NCN planners, implementers and participants reported the union could have done more to support workers with employment issues to prevent them from leaving out of frustration. A few participants felt Hydro should have been more responsive to allegations of racism, and that zero tolerance policies should have been enforced.

#### *1.3.2.3.7 Camp life*

While not related to the specific training and employment programs at Wuskwatim, and therefore not identified as a key component for evaluation, the camp experience was identified as a factor contributing to employee retention. As part of the interviews, participants were asked about their experience living at camp and their responses have been summarized below.

Individuals who were employed on the project had the option of staying at the on-site camp, or could commute if they lived close to the project. A temporary camp was constructed in the first stage of the project with the permanent main camp completed in 2009..

The vast majority of workers interviewed praised the camp facilities and generally described positive camp life experiences ("camp was almost like home", "camp was awesome", "food, rooms were always clean, no trouble in camp"), including meeting new people and being able to access recreation facility and its associated amenities. Issues with camp partying and excessive drinking were reported by some participants as negative aspects of camp life, primarily those who lived in the temporary camp.

Participant suggestions for improvement included: removing alcohol from the site, better transportation to and from the site, hiring more Aboriginal workers and less out of province workers/French speaking workers, including information on non-Aboriginal cultures in the cross cultural training content, ensuring training sessions were accessible to those working night shifts, having AA counselors to support workers with substance abuse, and enhanced communications on the purpose and details of ceremonies.

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<sup>16</sup> Source: Hydro Statistics – Provided April, 2013.

### 1.3.2.4 Employment services and retention supports key themes

Four key themes for employment services and retention supports were developed based on quantitative and qualitative findings, and are summarized as follows:

- Northern Aboriginal participation in the workforce at Wuskwatim was impacted by the number and timing of skilled labour requirements and changes to the project schedule. As predicted, the participation rate of Northern Aboriginal workers exceeded that of non-Aboriginal workers for the majority of the first stage of the project, and this trend was reversed in the second stage when the nature of work changed and there was a greater demand for individuals certified in the skilled trades. The advancement of the project schedule increased the overall demand for labour at Wuskwatim. The Wuskwatim EIS predicted peak employment to reach 540 however, in the 2009/10 fiscal year workers on the project peaked at just under 1100 workers on site. The increased demand for workers all at once and the relatively fixed amount of job qualified Northern Aboriginal workers resulted in total, Northern Aboriginal person years of employment exceeded predictions across both stages of the project, but comprising a lower than predicted proportion (compared to non-Aboriginal) of the total person years of employment on the project.
- **Systemic issues related to the BNA impacted recruitment and retention of Northern Aboriginal workers.** Although the BNA defined provisions to provide Northern Aboriginal workers with preference for employment opportunities, there was an overwhelming sense that contractors and employers were able to “work around” the provisions. In addition, mechanisms established to address issues (such as ACE) were viewed by some as either too little, too late or not effective. It was also noted that certain provisions in the BNA negatively impacted the effectiveness of the agreement related to Aboriginal employment. In particular: using job qualifications to move through preferences, layoff provisions, recall provisions, and working conditions.
- **Aspects of the JRS process presented barriers to recruitment at Wuskwatim.** The JRS provided a good screening tool and a valid recruitment list for employers; however the process took time and presented some challenges. Examples of challenges included: time required to generate referral lists and validate qualifications, matching qualified job seekers to job order requirements, the inability to contact referrals, 6 month renewal requirement, and lack of effectiveness of ACE committee to address concerns with the process.
- Retention services at Wuskwatim were appreciated and may have contributed to the reduction in turnover of Northern Aboriginal hires relative to Limestone, however, challenges remained for Northern Aboriginal workers. Challenges noted during the interview process included: ineffective dispute resolution mechanisms; transportation, medical issues, time away from family, conflicts with workers, allegations of racism, long hours, physically demanding labour, “culture shock”, substance abuse, and non-confrontational cultural approach to issue resolution.

## 1.4 Conclusion

The Wuskwatim Project, developed through the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership (WPLP), used an innovative approach to partnering with local communities to create skill development and employment opportunities for local residents. The approach taken was one that required significant fore thought, negotiations and planning, but also required the ability to learn from experiences and adapt along the way.

As is typically the case, experience is our biggest teacher, and the efforts of both Manitoba Hydro and NCN to undertake this retrospective review should be acknowledged. The Wuskwatim Project had many moving parts over the past few years, which made a retrospective review challenging. Some components were not necessarily documented or measured, as leadership continually adapted activities to address changing needs. This review has attempted to capture the key elements of these efforts and provide a summary of the perspectives gained through conversations with those involved in the planning and implementation of the various elements that made up the training and employment activities, and a review of many background documents and reports.

Some nuances and perspectives of delivery may not necessarily have been captured in this document; however, there are many successes that should be shared and repeated, and lessons that could inform future efforts. In conclusion, the following section summarizes lessons learned from the perspective of planners and implementers consulted as part of this evaluation.



### **1.4.1 Planner, implementer and participant perspectives**

During the course of the evaluation, planners, implementers and participants identified aspects of the training and employment initiatives that they saw as strengths and also provided suggestions on ways the initiatives could be improved for future consideration.

Among the successes noted for PPT were the community based approach, the supports in place and the subsequent high level of participation. Opportunities for improvement were the need for increased lead time, greater community collaboration and increased alignment between labour skills demand and training activities.

OJT was seen as a positive outcome of Wuskwatim, with the opportunity to learn on the job cited as a key benefit by employees interviewed. Increased incentives for contractors to undertake OJT, a more defined structure for monitoring and increased accountability were identified as opportunities for future consideration.

In terms of employment, Aboriginal employment exceeded predictions for Wuskwatim. Assistance with JRS registration and the convenience of Job Seeker Managers in community were identified by participants as strengths to be repeated, and the direct hire provisions of DNCs were seen as a key to creating Northern Aboriginal employment opportunities. The six month renewal requirements for JRS registration, a broader interpretation of the mandate for ACE and a review of key sections of the BNA were noted as considerations for improvement in the future.

With respect to activities undertaken to improve Aboriginal retention, cross cultural training, Elder visits, ceremonies, and the employee liaison were all noted as positive initiatives. A review of the BNA was once again noted as an opportunity for improvement as well as several other initiatives including the addition of AA counsellors, cultural training beyond Aboriginal culture, a more culturally sensitive dispute resolution process, and more consistency for both site orientation and access to cross cultural training.

## 2. Introduction

The Wuskwatim Project refers to the construction of the 200-megawatt hydro-electric generating station and related infrastructure. The generating station is located in the Nelson House Resource Management Area (RMA) at Taskinigup Falls (where Wuskwatim Lake joins the Burntwood River) on the Burntwood River. This location is 45 kilometres southwest of Thompson and 35 kilometres southeast of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) community, formerly known as the Nelson House First Nation.

Nearing the end of the Wuskwatim project, the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership (WPLP), a legal entity involving Manitoba Hydro (Hydro) and NCN, issued a request for proposal (RFP) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of major project training and employment programs implemented in association with the project. For the purposes of this report, the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives (Initiative) is the term used to describe the activities to be included in the evaluation. It includes a number of unique activities that were undertaken to respond to the needs and issues at the time and move forward toward the overarching goal of creating opportunity for Northern Aboriginal residents. The scope of review outlined in the RFP was to "perform a comprehensive evaluation of the planned versus actual results of the Wuskwatim training and employment program"<sup>17</sup>, including but not limited to:

- Overall employment outcomes related to the project with a focus on employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Northern Aboriginal workers
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of Initiative processes, and participant pathway and progression
- Analysis of skill enhancement and/or growth of workers
- Comparative analysis to Manitoba Hydro Limestone project training and employment results

Deloitte responded to the request and was selected by the engagement Steering Committee to complete the evaluation. The engagement Steering Committee included representatives from both NCN and Manitoba Hydro and acted as project sponsor for the duration of the engagement with Deloitte.

The present report summarizes findings from the evaluation of the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives. This introductory section of the report provides an overview of the methodology used to conduct the evaluation, and an overview of the Wuskwatim project, including background and context.

The remaining sections of the report provide evaluation findings, which are presented in two main sections. The first section is specific to training and encompasses pre-project and on-the-job training; the second section is specific to employment and encompasses project employment services as well as retention supports. Within each of these sections, an overview of the Initiative and anticipated outcomes is provided along with detailed findings, which are organized as follows:

- **Description:** A factual description of the training or employment components
- **Findings:**
  - Quantitative findings based on review of reports and other secondary data
  - Qualitative findings based on experiences, perspectives and opinions gathered through interviews and focus groups with key planners, implementers and participants
- **Summary:** Key findings

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<sup>17</sup> Source: Request for Proposal – Schedule A: Terms of Reference 036037 – Page 3.

## 2.1 Methodology and approach

### 2.1.1 Methodology

An evaluation plan (see addendum to this report) was developed in consultation with the Steering Committee, and was used to guide evaluation activities. The plan specified the evaluation framework and data collection activities and was used to guide overall data collection, including the areas of focus for planner and implementer consultation and associated interview and focus group questions. The framework identified evaluation measures, indicators, questions, data sources and data collection methods.

The evaluation measures used to assess the training and employment initiatives fall into three key categories; relevance, delivery and performance. Within each measure, evaluation questions were identified, the answers to which provided the foundation for the analysis. The 11 evaluation measures are summarized by category in Table 5.

**Table 5: Evaluation measures and statements**

Relevance	Delivery	Performance
1. Initiative activities address identified needs of planners and implementers. The needs of the planners and implementers were aligned.	2. The structure supported implementation of the Initiative (governance, committees). 3. Roles and responsibilities were clearly documented, understood and fulfilled. 4. Activities met needs and expectations (planned vs. actual activities). 5. Activities reached the intended participants (awareness). 6. Delivery prompted participation by target audience (accessibility). 7. Appropriate resources were made available (human, financial) for implementation.	8. Objectives of the Initiative were achieved. 9. Monitoring and reporting promotes transparency and enables measurement of intended objectives and goals. 10. The Initiative achieved the desired impact. 11. Identified strengths and weaknesses of Initiative.

### 2.1.2 Approach

A mixed approach to data collection was taken for the evaluation wherein both qualitative and quantitative data was collected from primary and/or secondary sources and was analyzed to inform the evaluation. Qualitative data was derived from interviews, focus groups and document review. Quantitative data was derived from secondary sources including existing Initiative databases and documentation. Primary data collection through the use of surveys was not conducted considering logistical challenges and the desire to employ research methods more appropriate to the cultural setting of the research. Data collection methods used and outlined below included:

- Interviews and focus groups
- Document review
- Quantitative data review

#### 2.1.2.1 Interviews and focus groups

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Initiative planners and implementers and participants. These groups are defined as follows:

- **Planners:** those involved in the planning stage of the Initiative and activities
- **Implementers:** those involved in the delivery of the Initiative and activities
- **Participants:** those who took part as a recipient of the services resulting from the Initiative including trainees, job seekers and those hired at Wuskwatim

Focus groups (three in total) were also conducted to capture perspectives from individuals who shared similar levels of involvement with the Initiative. A total of 37 planner and implementer interviews and 98 participant interviews were conducted. A set of prepared questions were used to guide the interviews and focus group sessions (See Appendix A).

All individuals interviewed were informed the information they provided would be kept confidential. Results would be shared at a summary level, by group with Steering Committee members, and any reports provided to Hydro, NCN and other relevant parties would only identify common themes by group.

Findings from all interviews were reviewed and summarized by group and by evaluation component and statements as outlined in Table 5. Planner and implementer groupings included Hydro, NCN and Other. The Other grouping included WKTC members and other community representatives and organizations, federal and provincial government funders, contractors, Job Referral Service representatives, and union (Allied Hydro Council) representatives. Participant summary groups were NCN and other communities. Key findings were identified considering common and noteworthy perspectives based on the evaluation measures.

#### *2.1.2.1.1 Planners and implementers*

Planners and implementers were identified by the project Steering Committee based on their involvement in various aspects of the training and employment activities throughout planning and implementation. Selection of these individuals ensured a range of perspectives were captured from the various groups involved. This included Hydro, NCN and other groups such as Wuskwatim Keeyask Training Consortium (WKTC) members, community partners, provincial Job Referral Service (JRS) representatives, employers and union representatives (see Appendix B for a full listing of groups consulted).

All interviews were conducted by Deloitte, and the vast majority were in-person interviews. Where it was not possible to meet with planners and implementers face-to-face, telephone interviews were conducted following Steering Committee approval. A total of 37 interviews and three focus groups, consisting of 46 individuals in total, were conducted with planners and implementers. Almost all of those identified for consultation were able to participate in the evaluation. The exceptions were: an NCN Construction Advisory Committee (CAC) committee member who could not be reached, a Hydro pre-project training (PPT) representative who was not available at the time of the scheduled focus group, a Federal government PPT representative who declined participation and the NCN Employment Liaison Worker on the project who also declined to participate in the evaluation.

#### *2.1.2.1.2 Participants*

The approach taken to participant selection was designed to capture a cross section of experiences from individual members of different Aboriginal communities who had various levels of involvement at Wuskwatim. Five profiles were identified for study in four Aboriginal communities (Cross Lake First Nation, NCN, Opaskwayak Cree Nation [OCN] and Tataskweyak Cree Nation [TCN]), to enable identification of common experiences and any factors that influenced delivery and results of the various activities. Factors considered were gender, contract type, skill level, timing of employment and community. Twenty participants were targeted for each of the five profiles, with greater representation from NCN relative to other communities due to the nature of NCN's involvement as a partner with the project and the higher level of participation in employment from NCN.

Hydro obtained written consent from all participants prior to the interviews. Deloitte conducted all interviews in communities outside of NCN. For participants at NCN, staff from Ask'i'Otutoskeo Limited (AOL), NCN's environmental and socio-economic monitoring company conducted the majority of these interviews in NCN, with support from Deloitte as required. The majority of interviews were conducted in-person, with phone interviews conducted by AOL for some participants identified in the "JRS refused" profile group.

The number of participants interviewed (98) is not a representative sample of those trained or employed through the Initiative and therefore the findings cannot be attributed to all participants, or the Initiative, overall. However these perspectives are informative and have been included in the main findings.

Individuals were identified for profiles based on employment data captured by Hydro.

- Participant experience with JRS registration
- Participant experience with rejecting a job offer
- Participant experience living at camp
- Participant experience with employment separation: Resignations
- Participant experience with employment separation: Discharged
- Participant experience with employment separation: Job complete
- Participant experience working at Wuskwatim

### **2.1.2.2 Document review**

Over 80 documents were reviewed as part of the evaluation to understand the project background and context; documented needs, goals and objectives; planning and development processes; implementation activities; structure; and Initiative results and reporting. Documentation was obtained from online sources, Hydro and NCN. A listing of most documents reviewed can be found in Appendix C.

### **2.1.2.3 Quantitative data review**

Quantitative data was derived from published reports as well as existing Initiative databases<sup>18</sup> including the:

- Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative (HNTEI) training database, maintained by the Province, which contains data related to participant enrollment, participation and completion of courses offered through HNTEI.
- HNTEI employment data maintained by Hydro.
- Provincial Job Referral Service (JRS) database, which contains data on job orders placed by contractors, as well as JRS registrations, referrals, and hires (excluding direct hires).
- Construction Employment Data base (CED), maintained by Hydro, which contains employment data for the entire Wuskwatim project labour force. This includes, but is not limited to, data on all project hires and retention outcome indicators (i.e. employment duration and turnover rates). Information in this database was captured using a standardized employee report form (see Appendix D).

Employment data related to pre-project training outcomes was derived from both the provincial HNTEI database and HNTEI employment data maintained by Hydro. Throughout this document the categories of trainees, hires and workers presented for analysis can be defined as follows:

- **Total Aboriginal:** all Aboriginal persons including Northern and Other Aboriginal. Aboriginal persons identified in this evaluation have self-identified as Status, Non-Status, Inuit or Métis.
- **Northern Aboriginal:** those Aboriginal persons who can be identified as coming from Northern Manitoba as defined by the Northern Affairs Boundary and identified in Schedule D to the Burntwood Nelson Agreement.
- **Other Aboriginal:** all other Aboriginal persons other than those from Northern Manitoba.
- **Non-Aboriginal:** those persons who were not identified as Aboriginal, regardless of location.
- **Other:** all persons other than Northern Aboriginal including Other Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal.
- **Project Total:** all persons including Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal.

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<sup>18</sup> Quantitative data relevant to the review was extracted from existing Initiative databases by Hydro and the Province of Manitoba based on query parameters specified by Deloitte.

### 2.1.3 Evaluation considerations

There are considerations associated with any evaluation or research project, which often relate to the availability and quality of data and information. The considerations outlined in Table 6, impacted the evaluation of the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives, and should be taken into account by the reader when reviewing the evaluation approach and findings presented in this report.

**Table 6: Evaluation considerations**

Consideration	Impact to approach or findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was determined by the Steering Committee, and supported by Deloitte, that surveys would not be an effective or efficient means of obtaining information from participants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approach used face to face interviews with a sampling of participants rather than a survey.</li> <li>To ensure a range of perspectives were captured, careful attention was paid to the selection of participants.</li> <li>The number of participants interviewed (98) is not a representative sample of those trained or employed through the Initiative and therefore these findings cannot be attributed to participants, or the Initiative, overall. However these perspectives are informative and have been included in the main findings.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of different organizations were involved in collecting and maintaining data related to the Initiative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants were not consistently tracked from training through to employment and accordingly it was not possible to conduct quantitative analyses across training and employment components or post-employment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation regarding the training infrastructure or delivery process within communities other than NCN was not reviewed as part of the evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community roles, processes and infrastructure were based on review of background documents.</li> <li>Although implementers were interviewed from each community, discovery was focused on overall WKTC structure, processes and perspectives on overall strengths and weaknesses.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation related to on-the-job training (OJT) activities beyond apprenticeship and targeted activities, was limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review findings are derived from participation data provided by Hydro along with interviews with planners and implementers and participants.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training activities and overall course completion numbers were tracked but training performance and progression, or growth of individual participants was not monitored and reported on.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was not possible to determine the level of skill enhancement or growth that occurred except through participant interviews.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For some respondents, several years had passed since they received training or were employed on the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some respondents had difficulty responding to interview questions given the length of time and accordingly, findings are limited by respondents' abilities to accurately recall event details.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considerable reporting and analysis with respect to employment at Wuskwatim was completed as part of the socio economic monitoring process and was made available to Deloitte. Privacy considerations did not allow for the release of individual employment records.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In some cases where primary data was not available to Deloitte, secondary source data was used for quantitative analyses where appropriate. All data sources have been cited for the analyses.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key planners and implementers from ATEC and the Employment Liaison worker were not available to participate in the interviews conducted for this evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not all planner and implementer perspectives are represented in the findings presented in this report.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not all training and employment activities were documented and tracked in a manner that facilitated an independent retrospective review based on the evaluation measures (e.g. counselling services indicators such as the number of individuals who accessed services were not available).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Findings are based on information gathered through existing documentation and reports, and through conversations with Initiative planners, implementers and participants.</li> </ul>

## 2.2 Background and context

The Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) is located at Nelson House, Manitoba, approximately 800 kilometres north of Winnipeg and 80 kilometres west of Thompson. NCN has approximately 4,600 members living in Nelson House, South Indian Lake, Leaf Rapids, Thompson, Brandon and Winnipeg. More than 60% of members are between 13 and 30 years of age. NCN is a vibrant and thriving First Nation, focused on providing education and opportunities that can help assure a positive tomorrow for their youth, families and Elders. The Band Council promotes "a vision of a sovereignty that sustains a prosperous socio-economic future for NCN" and [their] goal is to build a strong foundation for [their] future...by improving social services and overall wellbeing as a community.<sup>19</sup>

Manitoba Hydro is a Crown Corporation located in Manitoba, Canada and is owned by the Province of Manitoba. The utility's mandate is to provide continuous, reliable and economical energy and services (electricity and natural gas) to the citizens of the Province of Manitoba. The utility is responsible for Manitoba's current and future energy requirements, i.e. planning, designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining all the facilities needed to meet those requirements. Manitoba Hydro generates, transmits and distributes electrical energy and is a distributor of natural gas within Manitoba. In addition, as excess electrical energy is available, the utility undertakes exports to neighboring provinces and the US markets, which provide revenue enabling continued low rates for domestic customers. The Corporate Vision is to be recognized as the best utility in North America with respect to safety, rates, reliability, and customer satisfaction, and to be considerate of all people with whom they have contact.<sup>20</sup>

Hydroelectric development along the waterways of northern Manitoba began in the 1960s and parts of that development directly and significantly impacted northern First Nation communities. The Churchill River Diversion (CRD) was constructed in the 1970s as part of the development of Manitoba Hydro's system in northern Manitoba. The CRD caused changes to the water levels of rivers and lakes, which resulted in flooding and disruptions to waterways that affected hunting, fishing, trapping and sacred sites within First Nation traditional territories.

The 1977 Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) was negotiated in an attempt to define compensation for the damage caused by the CRD. NCN is one of five First Nation communities affected by Hydro developments on the Nelson River system that are covered by provisions of the Northern Flood Agreement. However, at that time, First Nations had considerably fewer resources and although the law of the day was followed, Governments had no duty to consult with First Nations about the use of natural resources in their traditional territory.<sup>21</sup>

After 20 years of struggle for proper compensation, NCN's new outlook on Hydro developments in northern Manitoba was that they needed to look ahead and not back. In 1996, after hard, careful negotiations, NCN signed the NFA Comprehensive Implementation Agreement (CIA) with Manitoba, Canada and Manitoba Hydro. The CIA more clearly defined the compensation and other issues related to the Northern Flood Agreement. The CIA was ratified by NCN Citizens in a secret-ballot vote. This agreement included millions of dollars of compensation, which allowed NCN to make significant investments in community and economic development.

In addition to compensation, the CIA also gives NCN rights over any future development in their Resource Management Area. Article 8 of the Manitoba Hydro/NCN Comprehensive Implementation Agreement (CIA) also sets out the planning principles and processes to be followed in considering future development of water resources for hydroelectric development. The Canadian Constitution and other agreements also provide NCN with recognized, constitutionally protected rights and self-government.

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<sup>19</sup> Source: [www.ncncree.com](http://www.ncncree.com) (accessed August 28, 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Source: [www.hydro.mb.ca](http://www.hydro.mb.ca).

<sup>21</sup> Source: <http://www.ncncree.com/ncn/nfa.html> (accessed August 28, 2013).

## 2.3 Wuskwatim project overview

The Wuskwatim project was developed by the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership (WPLP) a legal entity involving Hydro and NCN. The Wuskwatim project was the first of its kind. Not only did it represent the first time in Canadian history that an electric utility and a First Nation partnered on a large hydroelectric project, it was also associated with a large scale Aboriginal training and employment program. The program focused on providing Northern Aboriginal residents with the knowledge and skills needed for employment on the Wuskwatim project and related construction projects.

Discussions and negotiations leading to the agreement to build Wuskwatim were ongoing for nearly a decade, and involved consultation with the wider community and other interested parties, as well as government regulators. In 2001, an Agreement in Principle (AIP) was signed between NCN and Hydro. The AIP was a non-legally binding framework that guided future discussions for the Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement. Provisions to increase and facilitate training and employment opportunities for NCN Citizens were identified in the AIP. In 2006, the two parties signed a legally binding Project Development Agreement (PDA), which outlined the obligations of Hydro and NCN including those pertaining to training and employment opportunities. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared in 2003 and filed with the Clean Environment Commission as part of the licencing process required for the start of construction. Contents of the report were used to inform the public, and federal and provincial decision-makers about the anticipated environmental effects of the Wuskwatim Project. The report includes predictions regarding socio economic impacts including employment effects of the project and factors influencing employment including labour demand and relevant labour market data.

Project construction commenced in 2006 and was completed in two stages. In the first stage, the infrastructure for the generating station was constructed, specifically, development of the access road to the construction site and camp facilities. In the second stage, construction of the major project works occurred, including the temporary and permanent dams, powerhouse, generators, turbines and gates. The project was completed and the plant went into service in 2012.

Employment at Wuskwatim occurred under the auspices of the Burntwood Nelson Agreement (BNA); an extension of a collective bargaining agreement first negotiated in the 1960s. The BNA stipulates hiring preferences, as well as procedures for adjusting wages and certain benefits during the life of the agreement. It also contains provisions relating to the recruitment, referral, placement, training and retention of Northern Aboriginal workers, and, relevant to Wuskwatim, facilitated the hiring of Northern Aboriginal residents.<sup>22</sup> The agreement was renewed in October 2005 between the Hydro Projects Management Association (HPMA) (representatives for Hydro and Contractors), and The Allied Hydro Council (AHC) of Manitoba (representatives for all participating unions to the agreement) and remains in effect for all in-scope hydroelectric projects until 2017.

Recruitment for the Wuskwatim Project was facilitated through the Job Referral Service (JRS). The JRS was a service contracted through Employment Manitoba and included the receipt and approval of job orders from contractors at Wuskwatim, the validation of job seeker qualifications and the referral of qualified job seekers to employers in accordance with the BNA and based on requirements included in approved job orders. The JRS also captured data for individuals hired by northern Aboriginal businesses for direct negotiated contracts (DNCs) at Wuskwatim.

As previously indicated, a comprehensive set of training and employment activities were implemented in relation to the project. One driver of this Initiative was the desire to improve employment participation and retention of Aboriginal workers relative to Limestone. The Limestone Generating Station project, completed in the 1990s, was the last large-scale hydroelectric project to be built in Manitoba prior to Wuskwatim. Training and employment measures were implemented on Limestone to facilitate employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal residents, and lessons learned from the Limestone experience were used to inform the design and delivery of the training and employment activities at Wuskwatim. These training and employment activities were undertaken to facilitate movement of Northern Aboriginal residents through various stages from training through to recruitment, employment and retention at Wuskwatim.

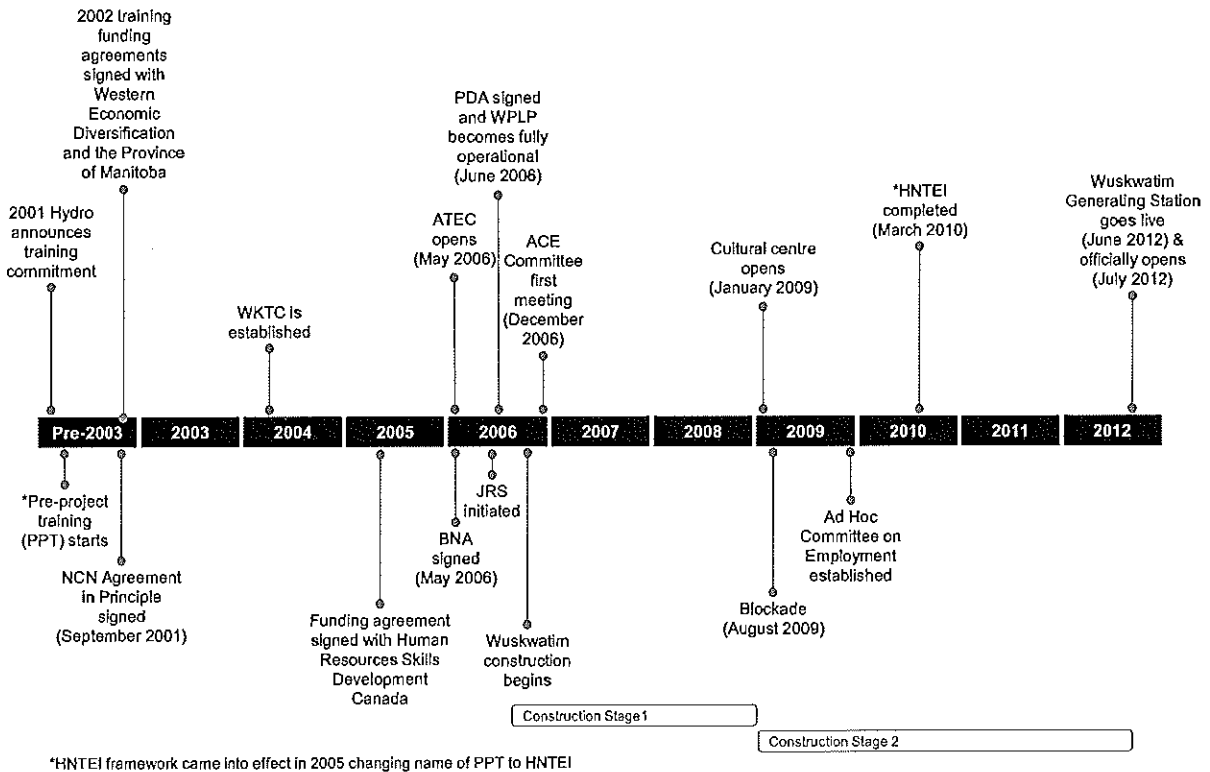
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<sup>22</sup> Source: [http://www.hydro.mb.ca/projects/bna\\_jobs.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/projects/bna_jobs.shtml) (accessed January, 2013).



As shown in Figure 6, Wuskwatim construction began in 2006, shortly after the PDA was signed, and was completed in 2012. Pre-project training activities commenced several years prior to the start of construction and ended in 2010. Key infrastructure and services which supported training and employment activities, such as the Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence (ATEC) facility, the Job Referral Service (JRS) and the cultural centre were established in 2005, 2006 and 2009, respectively. Figure 6 presents a summary of the Initiative; key Initiative components and events will be further described and assessed in the sections that follow.

**Figure 6: Wuskwatim training and employment initiatives timeline**



# 3. Training activities

Training related to Wuskwatim started prior to construction with a Pre-Project Training initiative (PPT), which eventually included the Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative (HNTEI) and Wuskwatim on-the-job training (OJT) initiatives. OJT initiatives were offered through apprenticeship in designated trades and worker training programs offered by employers in a variety of skills areas.

OJT opportunities were a key component of the original PPT concept and additional OJT initiatives were implemented and continued beyond HNTEI through to the end of the construction project. PPT (including HNTEI) and OJT had different objectives and are discussed separately in the sections that follow. It should be noted that this review is focused on activities related to Wuskwatim and as such a detailed review of HNTEI was not conducted. Data informing the findings on the training activities was drawn from NCN's 2002 ATEC/Training proposal<sup>23</sup>, the subsequent HNTEI funding proposal<sup>24</sup> that was submitted to the HRSDC to secure funds through Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP), the WKTC Board of Directors Manual<sup>25</sup>, Manitoba Hydro statistical analyses, HNTEI statistical analysis reports, and training outcomes and perspectives provided by planners and implementers during interviews. This section is organized into the following subsections:

- Description of training activities:
  - Pre-project training (PPT)
  - On-the-job training (OJT)
- Quantitative findings: PPT
- Qualitative findings: PPT
- Quantitative findings: OJT
- Qualitative findings: OJT
- Participant experience with training activities
- Summary of training findings

## 3.1 Description of training activities

### 3.1.1 Pre-Project Training (PPT)

Pre-project training (PPT) was designed to train and prepare Northern Aboriginal residents for employment in a wide range of occupations during the construction of both the Wuskwatim and Keeyask projects. It was acknowledged in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that NCN workforce participation at Wuskwatim was contingent, in part, on the success of pre-project training opportunities, particularly in the second stage of construction.

Funding for training infrastructure and programming was provided by Hydro beginning in 2001/02 and the province of Manitoba beginning in 2002/03.<sup>26</sup> HNTEI was formally established in 2005 and concluded in 2009/10. Hydro, the Province of Manitoba, and the federal government all contributed to the \$60.3M

<sup>23</sup> Source: NCN Proposal; ATEC and Related Training Activities (June 2002).

<sup>24</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

<sup>25</sup> Source: WKTC Board of Directors Manual.

<sup>26</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

multi-year HNTEI initiative. Its goal was to train and prepare over 1,000 Northern Aboriginal residents for an estimated 800 Hydro construction and related employment opportunities.<sup>27</sup>

HNTEI was administered through the Wuskwatim and Keeyask Training Consortium (WKTC) and delivered through community based training agencies. The WKTC was a separate corporate entity governed by Aboriginal Partners, which included NCN, TCN, War Lake First Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation, York Factory First Nation, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) and Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) as well as the Province of Manitoba and Hydro. The funding for HNTEI was allocated between the Keeyask and Wuskwatim projects with 75% of the funds directed to training for Keeyask and the remaining 25% directed to training for Wuskwatim. Of the funds allocated for Wuskwatim, 75% was directed to NCN with the remaining 25% for other communities.

After 2005, HNTEI funding was provided to each of the Aboriginal Partners through WKTC. These communities or organizations submitted multiyear and annual training plans to the Funders for approval. Communities were responsible for making training available that would meet the needs of their citizens as well as the objectives of HNTEI. The goals of HNTEI were to:

- Ensure that participants have the knowledge and skills to take advantage of opportunities to participate fully in the hydroelectric generation projects planned in northern Manitoba and on other major Manitoba construction projects
- Maximize opportunities for the employment of Northern Aboriginal residents in the construction industry or related sectors
- Leverage opportunities on hydroelectric projects for long-term, community-capacity building
- Support the development of northern businesses and community ventures through the provision of products and services to the hydroelectric projects<sup>28</sup>

The overall objectives of HNTEI were to:

- Provide a continuum of training opportunities for up to 1,115 trainees from the Aboriginal Partners organizations or communities
- Secure 794 positions on construction opportunities on the proposed hydroelectric generating stations

In order to achieve these objectives, the HNTEI model identified five (5) phases of activities to support participants these phases were:

1. Assessment
2. Academic Preparation
3. Academic and Technical Instruction
4. OJT
5. Employment

A wide variety of courses were offered and completed through HNTEI, which encompassed both classroom based and on-the-job training. These courses have been broadly categorized in funding requests and subsequent reports as designated trades, non-designated trades, construction support, professional and administrative, and non-occupational training.

- **Designated trades training** refers to both classroom instruction and on-the-job training that meets certification requirements set by the Province of Manitoba, for an apprenticeable trade (e.g. electrician, mechanics, carpentry).
- **Non-designated trades training** courses included classroom instruction and on-the-job training undertaken to meet industry standards or for certification in a non-apprenticeable trade (e.g. heavy equipment operation, truck driving, skilled labourer).
- **Construction support training** was offered for non-trade related jobs on the project including security, catering and environmental monitoring.

<sup>27</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

<sup>28</sup> Source: HNTEI proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

- **Professional and administrative training** courses were offered for professional/technical project support and business management positions (e.g. surveyors, health and safety personnel, management in Hydro's ongoing system operations).
- **Non-occupational training** includes educational upgrading and life skills training. Life skills training (e.g. time management, communication skills) was intended to provide skills to support management of family, community, employment and job training demands, and was required prior to completion of other training, and educational upgrading.<sup>29</sup>

This section is only intended to provide a description of the PPT and the various structures introduced to support Northern Aboriginal residents in training to prepare for successful employment on Wuskwatim. Additional quantitative and qualitative findings are provided in the sections that follow. The structures introduced in this section include:

- Wuskwatim and Keeyask Training Consortium Inc. (WKTC)
- Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence (ATEC)

### ***3.1.1.1 Wuskwatim and Keeyask Training Consortium Inc. (WKTC)***

Information regarding the structure and roles and responsibilities of the WKTC has been drawn from the WKTC Board of Director's Manual, Unanimous Member's Agreement and the contribution agreement between Manitoba Hydro and the WKTC.

As part of the funding agreement with the federal funding partners, a separate non-profit organization, the Wuskwatim and Keeyask Training Consortium Inc. (WKTC), was established in 2005 to administer the remaining training funds. WKTC's responsibilities included approving the multi-year and integrated annual training plans following approval of the funding partners, disbursing funds within the terms and conditions of the contribution agreements with each Aboriginal partner, approving and providing reports to funding partners, and reconciling activities, expenditures and results of HNTEI.<sup>30</sup>

#### ***3.1.1.1.1 WKTC structure***

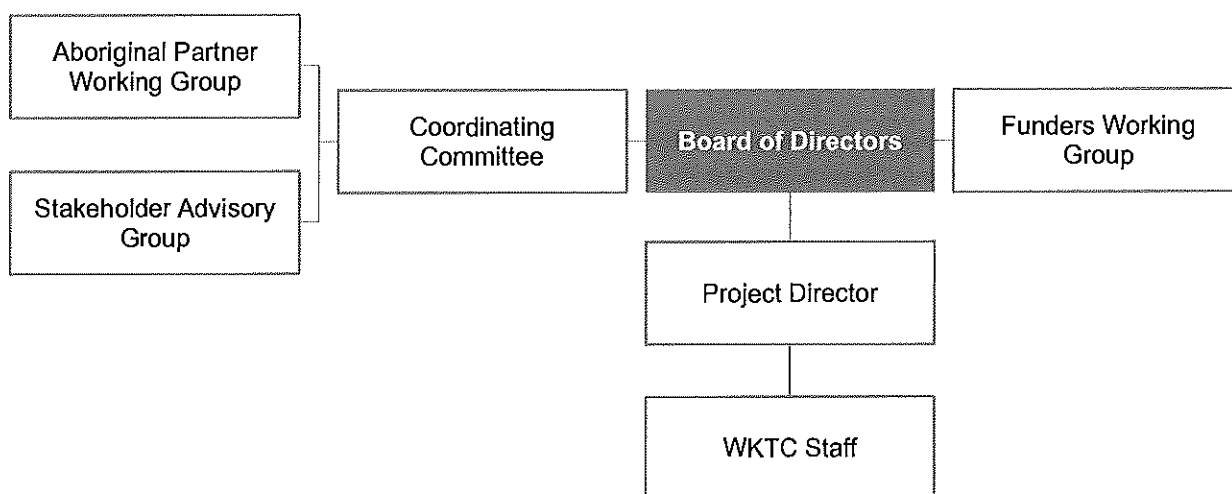
WKTC membership included Hydro and the Province of Manitoba (funding partners) as well as seven Aboriginal Partners (NCN, TCN, War Lake First Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation and York Factory First Nation, MKO and MMF.). The WKTC structure included a Board of Directors with nine voting members; one member from each of Hydro and the provincial government as well as one member from each Aboriginal partner group. The federal government did not participate on the Board as a voting member. The Board was supported by WKTC staff as well the Coordinating Committee. Figure 7 depicts the structure of the WKTC. This section is based on the initial design of WKTC supporting structure, and is not necessarily reflective of actual performance.

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<sup>29</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

<sup>30</sup> Source: WKTC Board of Directors Manual; Unanimous Members Agreement Schedule B.

Figure 7: WKTC structure



The Coordinating Committee included two members from each Aboriginal partner and two members from each funding partner. It met regularly to review the multi-year and annual training plans of each Aboriginal Partner to identify and discuss opportunities for coordination of educational and training programs, activities and potential sources of on-the-job training opportunities. The Committee discussed issues including barriers related to training and employment and shared best practices. The Committee played an active role in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Initiative to make recommendations to the communities and WKTC to maximize the effectiveness of training plans.

The Coordinating Committee received input from two committees, the Aboriginal Partners Working Group (APWG) and the Stakeholders Advisory Group (SAG).

The APWG, made of up representatives from each of the Aboriginal Partners and WKTC staff, met as needed, at least once every quarter, to share information related to training, retention and support, challenges and solutions to training and sharing of resources.<sup>31</sup>

The SAG included representatives from the Aboriginal Partners, WKTC, government, Hydro and construction employers. The SAG provided a forum for discussion and advice and recommendations to the Coordinating Committee related to the education, training and employment of Aboriginal people in the north. The SAG assisted in identifying ways for Northern Aboriginal people to be trained and/or certified to industry standards, to maximize on-the-job training opportunities and to address barriers related to education, training and employment.<sup>32</sup>

A Funders Working Group with representation from the federal and provincial governments and Hydro was established to review and approve the training plans submitted by Aboriginal Partners, disburse funds based on reports and collaborate with the Aboriginal Partners in the coordination and integration of activities. Consensus based decision making was desired, and where this was not possible approval required votes from Hydro, the Province and the majority of the other directors. Therefore, although training was to be community led, in effect, the funders had a veto over what training would be delivered. Hydro advised that to its knowledge the veto did not have to be exercised as the training plans submitted annually were consistent with the goals and objectives of HNTEI.

#### 3.1.1.1.2 Funding process

As outlined above, the design and delivery of training funded through HNTEI was community led. Funding was based on annual training plans submitted to WKTC for approval after being pre-approved by the Funders Working Group. The plans specified goals and objectives for training on basic skills, literacy and

<sup>31</sup> Source: Aboriginal Partner Working Group draft Statement of Intent.

<sup>32</sup> Source: Stakeholder Advisory Group Terms of Reference.

academic upgrading, and job-specific training. A key learning from Limestone was the top down approach taken for that project had prevented “meaningful participation” and engagement of Aboriginal groups.<sup>33</sup>

The documentation reviewed indicates that a community led approach was to have been implemented in order to provide each community with control over the training of its citizens. However, NCN steering committee members expressed that much of the control ultimately rested with those who authorized the flow of funds to a community: Hydro and the Province prior to 2005 and the WKTC Funders Working Group after 2005. Hydro has stated that funds were disbursed in accordance with established policies, and to its knowledge the veto did not have to be exercised as the training plans submitted annually were consistent with the goals and objectives of HNTEI.

The annual training plans were based on the Aboriginal Partners’ multi-year plan. Within the annual plans, a training program was developed for each training activity to be funded under the plan, along with a detailed budget for each activity. An overall summary budget was also provided that consolidated the planned activities as well as the administrative and other training-related costs to be funded by HNTEI.

WKTC entered into bi-lateral contribution agreements with each of the Aboriginal Partners, which outlined the terms and conditions of approval, level of funding and financial and outcome reporting requirements. Funding was disbursed quarterly, based on cash flows developed as part of the annual planning process. Annual and multi-year training plans and activities could be amended. Substantive changes and changes that were not consistent with the multi-year plan required prior approval by the funders.

The Aboriginal Partners submitted quarterly, end of year reports and audited financial statements. Training and employment plans and outcomes, including expenses, were monitored by WKTC, Hydro and the Province of Manitoba on an annual basis. Planners and implementers noted that the federal government monitored the WKTC and the Aboriginal Partners separately. The results were reported back to the WKTC Board of Directors.<sup>34</sup>

### **3.1.1.2 Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence (ATEC)**

Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence (ATEC) is a 27,000 square foot, non-profit, community-based post-secondary training facility which, through arrangements with other Manitoba educational institutions, is able to offer accredited courses. It was constructed in the NCN community and opened in 2006. The construction was funded using HNTEI funds as well as additional funds obtained from other sources as otherwise, NCN planners and implementers noted that most of the HNTEI funds originally allocated to NCN would have been used to build ATEC leaving very little funding for training.

The facility has three classrooms, two shops for trades training, science and computer labs, a library and a variety of amenities including a daycare and a dormitory. ATEC was intended to serve two key functions – provide educational infrastructure in the community, and provide coordination and administration services for training and employment (e.g. employment referrals) for jobs on Wuskwatim and other future hydro and resource development projects.

The ATEC model had three components:

- Infrastructure for classrooms, administration for employment referral and business opportunities, residences for teachers and students, and a daycare centre
- Provision of trades training to maximize employment opportunities starting in 2003
- Provision of Professional and Business Management Training to maximize the ability of NCN Citizens and other northerners to have medium and long term employment in these fields as a direct or indirect result of the Wuskwatim Project, and also post-Wuskwatim<sup>35</sup>

Specifically, the role of ATEC in relation to training, which was documented in the PDA, was to implement NCN’s multi-year training plan and prepare annual implementation plans setting out budgetary

<sup>33</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

<sup>34</sup> Source: WKTC Board of Directors Manual, WKTC Financial Policy.

<sup>35</sup> Source: NCN Proposal; ATEC and Related Training Activities (June 2002).

requirements and anticipated outcomes. Additional funds were obtained by NCN to help pay for the infrastructure and to facilitate training delivery following construction of ATEC. A review of the final HNTEI report indicates that approximately 66% of the total funding NCN received was used for infrastructure. Additional funds were obtained by NCN to help pay for the infrastructure and to facilitate training delivery following construction of ATEC.

### **3.1.2 On-the-Job Training (OJT)**

On-the-job training (OJT) refers to opportunities made available at Wuskwatim for employment skills development. This was in addition to the training opportunities made available through HNTEI, which also included a work experience component. No specific goals or objectives for OJT were identified in the documents reviewed for the evaluation.

OJT occurred both formally and informally at Wuskwatim. Through the hiring of registered apprentices, Wuskwatim offered opportunities to gain work experience in a number of designated trades. Beyond apprenticeship, contractors provided training opportunities for employees and several ad hoc activities were undertaken by Hydro and contractors to create OJT opportunities for Northern Aboriginal workers. It is important to note that OJT was not limited to those activities that were monitored and reported on. Planner and implementer representatives from Hydro and construction contractors cited numerous opportunities for training and advancement that were provided to employees at the initiation of the contractor when the employee demonstrated the desire and ability to develop their skills. In material taken from the Sodexo Canada website, an estimated 38,000 hours of training was provided on site including introduction of a six-month management training program.

Apprenticeship opportunities are included as a provision of some trade management agreements that identify the ratio of apprentices to be hired in relation to journeymen. These agreements are intended to provide for continuity within the trades. This provision is not unique to Wuskwatim; however through the job order and referral process outlined in the BNA, qualified Northern Aboriginal residents received preference for hiring into training positions over other applicants at Wuskwatim.

Documentation related to OJT activities beyond apprenticeship and targeted activities, was limited. As a result, review findings are derived from participation data provided by Hydro along with interviews with planners and implementers and participants.

## **3.2 Quantitative findings: PPT**

Quantitative findings are derived from existing reports and data as provided by the Steering Committee.

### **3.2.1 Course participation and completion**

Pre-project training, funded through HNTEI, saw 2,670 Northern Aboriginal residents participate in training with 1,876 individuals successfully completing at least one course. The term "course" in this context refers to one unit of instruction. A course could be one day in length or several days. For example a single day course on budgeting would be captured in the same manner as a 10-week apprenticeship course.

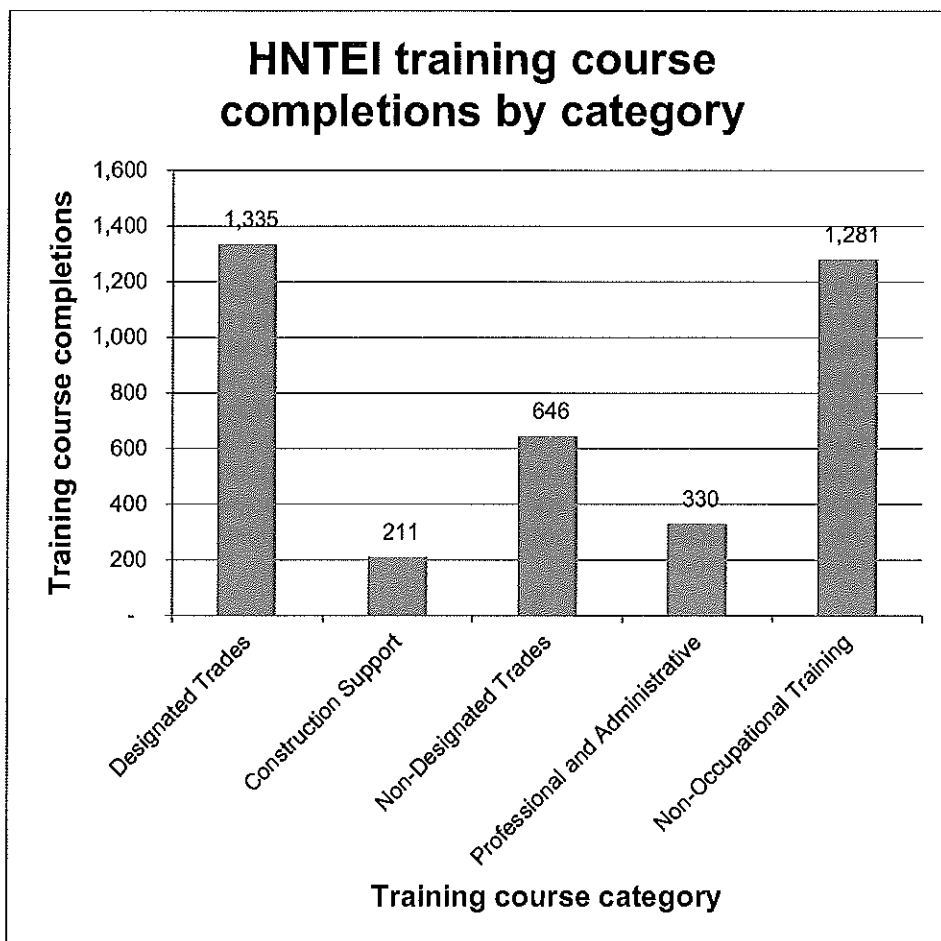
Of the total courses started through HNTEI, 56% were successfully completed<sup>36</sup>. Non-designated trades training had the highest completion rate at 72% and professional and administrative training had the lowest rate at 44%<sup>37</sup>. The completion rate was 51% for designated trades courses, 56% for non-occupational training (including life skills and educational upgrading courses) and 61% for construction supports. When the funding through HNTEI concluded there were 140 active apprentices participating in the program, 71% of these were either at or working towards their first level of apprenticeship. Within the designated trades, 27 HNTEI trainees obtained certification as journeypersons. It is possible that HNTEI trainees continued their training, either classroom or on the job (Wuskwatim or

<sup>36</sup> Source: Hydro statistical analysis (June 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

elsewhere), following the conclusion of HNTEI and may have progressed in their apprenticeship designation presents the total number of course completions by training category.

Figure 8: HNTEI training course completions by category



Source: Manitoba Hydro statistical analysis (June 2011).

It should be noted that the course category “designated trades” includes both accredited apprentice training courses (i.e. courses accredited through Apprenticeship Manitoba) and courses that were not accredited but contributed to general skills development in a designated trade (e.g. basic electrical skills). Only courses accredited through Apprenticeship Manitoba are considered eligible for progression towards certification as a journeyman.

An assessment of target to actual completions for HNTEI training could not be conducted. The targets provided in the HNTEI Proposal (2003) identified the target number of completions leading to employment on hydroelectric projects in specific occupational areas. This type of analysis requires review of individual completions of a series of training courses through the various phases of a program (i.e. academic preparation including upgrading and lifeskills, academic preparation and OJT). Data for HNTEI completions was captured by individual course only. Reasons why completions were tracked in this manner were not uncovered through the evaluation.

### 3.2.2 Apprenticeship training

When the funding through HNTEI concluded there were 140 active apprentices participating in the program, 71% of these were either at or working towards their first level of apprenticeship. As stated in 3.2.1, within the designated trades, 27 HNTEI trainees obtained certification as journeymen.



Carpentry had the highest participation representing 69% of all apprentices.

**Table 7: Active apprentices at the end of HNTeI by level and trade**

Active apprentices at end of HNTeI by level and trade						
	Less than Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Total
Carpenters	47	24	18	5	3	97
Electricians	9	3	4	3	1	20
Plumbers	5	1	0	1	2	9
Millwrights	0	3	1	0	0	4
Cooks	3	1	0	0	0	4
Welders	3	0	0	0	0	3
Heavy Duty Equip Tech	1	0	1	0	0	2
Ironworkers	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>140</b>

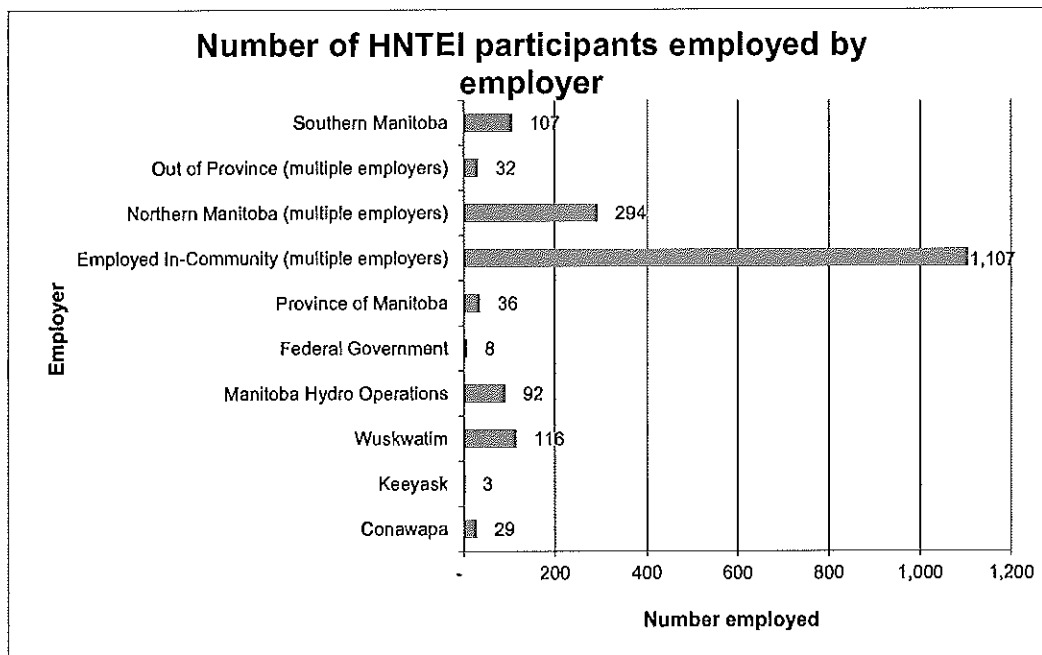
Source: HNTeI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4th Quarter Statistical Analysis Report). Data is as at March 31, 2010.  
 \*Note: "Active" refers to clients registered in an Apprenticeship program.

### 3.2.3 HNTeI employment outcomes

Participant employment outcomes were captured as part of the HNTeI reporting process. Figure 9 illustrates where HNTeI participants were employed following completion of training based on this follow-up. Employment targets for HNTeI were focused on employment at the Wuskwatim and Keeyask projects and did not include other employers; as such a comparison of projected to actual employment outcomes cannot be performed.

As shown in Figure 9, 60% (1,107) of HNTeI participants who found employment post training did so in their communities. Another 16% (294) found employment with employers in Northern Manitoba not related to hydroelectric projects while 6% (116) found employment at Wuskwatim.

**Figure 9: Total HNTeI participants employed post training by employer**



Source: HNTeI Integrated Report 2009-10 Report (4th Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).  
 \*Note: "Employment" for the purposes of HNTeI has been considered 4 weeks of continuous employment in a related field.

\*\*Total Trainees Employed by Employer and Employer Location (1,849) is higher than the Total Number of Trainees Employed (1,395 as trainees can appear in more than one category).

HNTEI involved training for employment on both Wuskwatim and Keeyask. As such, Wuskwatim specific targets were not set. Reports prepared for HNTEI indicate that 116 training participants found employment at Wuskwatim. Hydro independently undertook a rigorous process to identify HNTEI participants on Wuskwatim. The data collected by Hydro indicates that in total 189 HNTEI participants found employment on Wuskwatim and that generally, their employment positions were related to their training activity.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.3 Qualitative findings: PPT

Qualitative findings are based on information, perspectives and opinions derived through secondary sources such as existing reports and documents, and primary sources such as interviews and focus groups with key planners, implementers and participants. Qualitative findings related to pre-project training are presented in the following sections:

- Relevance and need for PPT
- Delivery experience with PPT
- Performance of PPT

#### 3.3.1 Relevance and need for PPT

**Three primary needs were identified related to training through document review and planner and implementer consultation:** the need for educational upgrading and life skills training in preparation for occupational training, the need for employment skills training, and the need to access relevant OJT opportunities.

There were several indicators noted during the course of the evaluation that spoke to these needs including:

- Socioeconomic analysis conducted to inform the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) indicated that based on 1996 Statistics Canada data, over 50% of the population at NCN had not received a high school graduation certificate (requirement for trades training) and only 1% had received trades training. This was validated by the results of the 2000 NCN Opinion Survey, which also informed the EIS.
- As indicated by NCN planners and documented in the EIS, NCN expected that literacy and educational upgrading training would be required for 90% of NCN trainees and that trainees who wanted to pursue designated trades training would require approximately 52 weeks of upgrading, while those who wanted to pursue careers in the non-designated trades or construction and site services would need approximately 26 weeks of upgrading to prepare them for occupational skills training<sup>39</sup>. NCN also believed each trainee should participate in 8 weeks of life skills training to prepare them for work, particularly work on a construction project.

The WKTC Unanimous Member's Agreement noted that community skills assessments conducted by Aboriginal Partners participating in HNTEI indicated **there were few employment ready individuals**. Based on the educational levels demonstrated in these communities, significant upgrading was anticipated to be required to prepare individuals to participate in employment training. In NCN, the **needs related to training extended beyond access to courses, to include the need for infrastructure to facilitate training delivery in the community**. Adequate facilities were not available in the community. Those involved in planning and implementing PPT from NCN that were interviewed for this review described initial training offerings in the community that were hosted in a building where fumes were so bad participants complained of headaches and training could not continue.

**Employers working on Wuskwatim required experienced, skilled workers to staff the project.** Population data provided in the HNTEI proposal and the EIS confirms there was a relatively small labour

<sup>38</sup> Source: Hydro Statistics. Data is as at August 31, 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Source: NCN Proposal; ATEC and Related Training Activities (June 2002).

pool of skilled labour to draw from in the North. This, combined with a heated construction industry, existing and projected shortages of skilled workers in Manitoba and lower labour force participation rates among Northern Aboriginal residents, supported the relevancy of making an investment in developing a skilled workforce in the North to support local employment on construction projects. High rates of unemployment in the North and in local region First Nation communities, for example, 45% in Nelson House<sup>40</sup> based on 1996 census data<sup>41</sup>, along with the high proportion of Aboriginal youth about to transition into the labour force also reinforced the need for employment training for Northern Aboriginal residents.

There was consensus among the planners and implementers interviewed from Hydro, the federal and provincial governments and First Nation communities, that there was a **strong need for employment training in the North**. In an opinion survey conducted in 2000<sup>42</sup> and 2001<sup>43</sup>, more than 90% of NCN Citizens who participated indicated that training and employment opportunities were a priority need.

Interview findings suggest the specific needs related to training outcomes varied somewhat by group:

- In general, funders (Hydro and federal and provincial governments) shared similar goals for the training activities which was to build capacity for Northern Aboriginal residents. Hydro was primarily seeking specific outcomes related to employment skills for opportunities on hydroelectric projects while government funders sought to support more broad employment capacity building. Given the very active state of the construction industry and the overall demand for skilled workers in the province, Hydro's objectives were to have job ready workers to staff the many Wuskwatim positions, and to build capacity for Northern Aboriginal communities. Planners and implementers from these groups all indicated that their expectation was for these skills to be developed through occupational training in the trades.
- **Aboriginal Partners were focused on meeting the needs of their individual communities** and saw that these would be met through building capacity for long-term employment opportunities. This was expected to be achieved through non-occupational (educational upgrading and life skills) as well occupational training in trades and administrative/management positions. Some Aboriginal Partners appear to have had broader training needs with the desire for longer-term capacity building as well as a need to train members for jobs in the community, such as child care workers, that would in turn support and enable members to take advantage of other training and employment opportunities.

WKTC Funders and Aboriginal Partners interviewed suggested that at times, the misalignment between the narrow and broader goals led to disagreements regarding the types of training that should be funded. Despite this, most Aboriginal Partners interviewed felt their needs were given adequate consideration and that funders, for the most part, were flexible in terms of the types of training they agreed to fund.

**Expectations regarding training progression/outputs also appear to have differed** based on a different understanding of the extent of non-occupational training that was needed. Aboriginal Partners interviewed indicated they were aware that significant non-occupational training including educational upgrading and life skills and supports would be needed for their members and that progression through to completion of occupational training and required experience, particularly for skilled trades would take a great deal of time. The need for upgrading to prepare individuals for occupational training was known, however findings from the present evaluation suggest it was not acknowledged in the overall approach, the design of the funding model, or in the anticipated outcomes.

As noted above, documentation as well as interview responses from those involved in planning at NCN indicate there was significant need for upgrading in the community. However, the assumptions regarding the amount of upgrading required, which NCN documented in its 2002 funding proposal were not reflected in the subsequent proposal that was submitted to the federal government for funding. The funding model that was ultimately established for HNTEI included only 20 weeks combined for

<sup>40</sup> Source: Statistics Canada 1996 Census of Canada.

<sup>41</sup> Census data incomplete; based on 20% sample data.

<sup>42</sup> Source: NCN Speaks (Winter 2000). Highlights of the NCN Opinion Survey.

<sup>43</sup> Source: Future Development Newsletter (Special Edition, April 2002). Highlights from the NCN Opinion Survey in South Indian Lake.

educational upgrading and lifeskills training.<sup>44</sup> The manner in which data was collected does not allow for validation of funding model assumptions.

### 3.3.2 Delivery experience with PPT

Delivery experience has been grouped into main themes based on the key findings from planner, implementer and participant interviews.

- Community based approach
- Barriers to accessing training
- Effectiveness of WKTC
- Effectiveness of ATEC
- Effectiveness of training activities
- Timing challenges

Research on the delivery of training was not undertaken at the community level, beyond NCN and through ATEC. This is an area that would benefit from future research.

#### 3.3.2.1 Community based approach

A community based approach to pre-project training was taken wherein the communities involved in HNTEI were responsible for planning, designing and delivering training for their members. This was done to enable communities to have control over training of their citizens for employment opportunities, and to ultimately improve training success and employment outcomes.

The documentation reviewed indicates that a community led approach was to have been implemented in order to provide each community with control over the training of its citizens. However, NCN steering committee members expressed that much of the control ultimately rested with those who authorized the flow of funds to a community: Hydro and the Province prior to 2005 and the WKTC Funders Working Group after 2005. Hydro has stated that funds were disbursed in accordance with the WKTC Financial Policy Manual, and to its knowledge the veto did not have to be exercised as the training plans submitted annually were consistent with the goals and objectives of HNTEI.

**Aboriginal Partners generally felt the community based approach was beneficial because communities knew the needs of their members and the approach enabled them to develop tailored training opportunities to meet those needs.** It was also felt the community based training helped build capacity for training administration and delivery, and that the skills and experience gained by members involved in that capacity (e.g. financial management and reporting skills) were relevant to future employment opportunities.

NCN planners and implementers expressed that the concept of a community driven approach was favourable. The high number of participants who enrolled in training compared to what had been anticipated can be viewed as an indicator that the community based approach encouraged Aboriginal participation. Planners, implementers and participants interviewed indicated that the level of awareness of training opportunities at NCN was high. Targeted attempts were made to build awareness of the opportunities to community members (e.g. radio advertisements). Although Aboriginal Partners interviewed from other communities felt training awareness was generally high among their members, most participants interviewed from communities other than NCN reported that they felt there was little awareness among community members of those opportunities.

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<sup>44</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

### **3.3.2.2 Barriers to accessing training**

Aboriginal Partners' comments and the overall retention rate for training courses of 55% to 65%<sup>45</sup> indicate that barriers to training participation and completion were present. **Access to childcare, transport/logistical challenges and training location were the barriers noted**, with location cited as the most common barrier. Although significant efforts were made to provide training in the communities (of the different types of courses offered, ~50% were offered in community)<sup>46</sup>, this was not always possible or practical, particularly for trades training due to high costs and logistical difficulties associated with training delivery in the North.

**Access to relevant work experience was cited as a significant barrier.** Planners and implementers as well as participants noted that there were insufficient OJT opportunities for PPT participants to gain the work experience required to be qualified to work on Wuskwatim. Initiatives such as the advancement of the road to NCN were undertaken to provide opportunities to gain work experience but feedback indicates they were not sufficient. **A particular challenge with obtaining relevant commercial/industrial work experience was also noted**, which later impacted the ability for trainees to obtain employment at Wuskwatim.

**Retention was reported to be an issue among those who had to leave the community and their family members to attend training.** Some Aboriginal Partners noted that participants were more interested in completing courses that were of a short duration, in part, because longer courses were typically delivered outside the community, but also because these courses tended to result in more immediate employment opportunities.

**Available data also points to a preference for in-community training.** Although retention rates within vs. outside communities were not tracked, available data suggests retention was higher for non-designated trades (72%) and educational upgrading training (56%) which took place largely in community and were shorter in duration, compared to designated trades training (51%)<sup>47</sup> that was several weeks in duration and was often offered outside the community. In addition 50% of all training courses were offered in the community.<sup>48</sup>

### **3.3.2.3 Effectiveness of WKTC**

**Planners and implementers that were interviewed expressed varying perspectives on the overall effectiveness of the WKTC.** Hydro and NCN planners and implementers as well as some of the Aboriginal Partners interviewed indicated the WKTC was an "additional step" in the pre-project training process, or that it created an administrative "layer" between the funders and Aboriginal Partners that extended the time and increased the cost required for training delivery. For other Aboriginal Partners and other funders interviewed, the WKTC was viewed as a necessary and effective structure that enabled open discussion and resolution of issues between the Aboriginal Partners and HNTEI funders.

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<sup>45</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

<sup>46</sup> Source: Province of Manitoba HNTEI data.

<sup>47</sup> Source: HNTEI Integrated Report 2009-10 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Statistical Analysis Report).

<sup>48</sup> Source: Province of Manitoba HNTEI data -- Note training retention rates by location (in community vs. outside the community) were not available.

**Evaluation findings indicate the WKTC fulfilled its responsibilities** as outlined in the Unanimous Members Agreement:

- 6.1 The Corporation shall be responsible for receiving funding from the Funders, pursuant to contribution agreements to be entered into with the Funders and entering in contribution sub-agreements with each of the Training Delivery Members as part of the Initiative [HNTEI], as described in Schedule B. Without limiting the foregoing, the Corporation shall be responsible for:
- a) disbursing the relevant combined resources of the Funders of the Initiative [HNTEI];
  - b) approving multi-year and integrated annual training plans upon recommendation of the Funders Committee and the individual Training Delivery Member;
  - c) entering into individual contribution sub-agreements with Training Delivery Members to ensure accountability;
  - d) disbursing funds in support of individual contribution sub-agreements in keeping with the terms and conditions of each contribution sub-agreement; and
  - e) approving and providing reports to the Funders reconciling activities, expenditures and results of the Initiative [HNTEI].

Challenges that were noted by planners and implementers centered on member roles and responsibilities, processes/policies/timing regarding release of training funds and resources needed to administer training funds and comply with reporting requirements.

**WKTC Board member roles and responsibilities were also clearly documented, however, some planners and implementers felt these documents were not followed as they were not understood or were considered unreasonable.** In particular, some commented that it was difficult and unreasonable to expect Aboriginal members, who had historically negotiated with funders in the best interests of their community, to now set aside their individual community interests and make decisions in the best interest of the training consortium.

**Delays in the receipt of training funding** were noted by some Aboriginal Partners. This was because expense reports for all communities were required prior to release of subsequent funds to any community. Timing of the funding process requirements did not always align to the existing community administration processes. Related to this, a few of the Aboriginal Partners indicated more staff may have been needed to support training fund administration and reporting, as this was a time consuming process, particularly for Partners with a large membership and/or who represented multiple communities.

#### **3.3.2.4 Effectiveness of ATEC**

Many planners and implementers from NCN and Hydro commented that ATEC is a very "modern", "state of the art" facility. However the feasibility of maintaining the building once HNTEI funding was exhausted was questioned at the outset by government and Hydro planners and implementers. **Sustainment of the facility was also acknowledged as a significant challenge in the ATEC review**, which provided recommendations for revenue streams. In addition, construction of the ATEC facility consumed over 66% of all HNTEI and other funds allocated to NCN for training. As a result, there was relatively small portion of funds available to support training delivery. NCN planners and implementers noted that the costs to build ATEC exceeded original estimates, due in part to processes that were required to comply with federal government requirements.

**Challenges with oversight and management of the facility** were reported by NCN planners and implementers. Consistent monitoring of activities at ATEC during the Wuskwatim project was noted as a challenge by some NCN planners and implementers as community leaders were stretched by having to administer multiple project-related activities. ATEC review findings also highlighted issues with ATEC leadership as well as the organizational and reporting structure.

NCN planners and implementers reported that information on training activities was not regularly communicated back to the community. However based on the fact that training was delivered and funds were flowed through WKTC, NCN planners and implementers assumed that ATEC's role was effectively fulfilled related to PPT.

### **3.3.2.5 Effectiveness of training activities**

A wide range of training courses were offered as part of HNTEI, which broadly aligned to the expressed needs of planners and implementers for occupational and non-occupational training. However, planners and implementers interviewed from Hydro, contractors and the provincial government indicated a greater proportion of courses were offered for non-occupational training (educational upgrading and life skills) than they anticipated. Based on planner and implementer interviews, training activities, in particular the emphasis on life skills training, did not meet Hydro and contractor employment skills needs and expectations of the HNTEI program. **Findings were mixed regarding whether training met expectations of NCN and other Aboriginal Partners.** On the one hand, it was expected that significant educational upgrading and life skills training was needed, on the other hand, there was an expectation that more community members would complete training in designated trades. Those interviewed from NCN noted that the degree of required upgrading was expected, however the funding model used to develop HNTEI and timelines that remained once funding was in place resulted in fewer trainees moving forward in designated trades. A few Aboriginal Partners outside of NCN also expected more people to receive training for professional/management positions and felt there should have been more of a focus on training for longer term employment opportunities rather than just those related to the project.

NCN indicated that **better communication with Hydro regarding the specific skills required for work opportunities at Wuskwatim may have resulted in greater alignment** between training content and employer requirements. Expectations of most planners and implementers were exceeded regarding the overall rate of participation; however, it was expected that more skills training would have been undertaken. Some of the reasons noted by planners and implementers for misalignment between activities and expectations included:

- Base skill levels and interest were lower than originally anticipated
- Ability to offer trades training through ATEC at Nelson House was somewhat limited; those interviewed noted the lack of available instructors and a lack of interest on the part of community colleges to offer community based training as two potential reasons for this challenge
- There was a lack of coordination between NCN and Hydro on the skills required to work on Wuskwatim
- Lead time for training wound up being much shorter than intended
- Relevant commercial/industrial OJT opportunities were not available to allow apprentices the gain the required experience to progress in their apprenticeship and meet the subsequent employer requirements at Wuskwatim

Needs and expectations of participants appear to have been met. **The majority of those interviewed from NCN and other communities who participated in training indicated it met their needs and helped with employment.**

### **3.3.2.6 Timing challenges**

Challenges associated with the timing of training in relation to the project were noted. Specifically, it was noted that **training did not start early enough to allow for adequate preparation for employment on Wuskwatim.**

Discussions regarding pre-project training began well in advance of Wuskwatim, as it was recognized through Limestone experiences that a great deal of lead time was required for training preparation and activities.<sup>49</sup> A minimum of 3 to 4 years of training for skilled trades was anticipated. NCN also recognized, based on discussions with its members, that significant time would be required to prepare people for employment on Wuskwatim, particularly considering needs for educational upgrading. However, interview findings indicate that securing training funding and establishing the required structures and processes (e.g. setting up the WKTC) took time, which restricted the amount of time remaining for training delivery prior to the start of construction. The timelines for HNTEI were ultimately extended for an additional year to enable Aboriginal Partners to use unallocated funds. Several planners and implementers commented this extension allowed for more training, but there still was not enough time to prepare people for jobs,

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<sup>49</sup> Source: HNTEI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.

particularly in designated trades, on Wuskwatim. It was the opinion of some interviewed from NCN that the project start delay merely offset some of the delay in establishing the funding.

NCN planners and implementers did note that Hydro advanced funds while HNTeI infrastructure was still being established to commence work on ATEC and initial training activities in the community primarily related to the road advancement project. These funds were then deducted from NCN's allocation of the fund.

Hydro planners and implementers also noted that delays to the start of construction created a lag between training and the availability of work on the project. This impacted apprentice trainees, in particular those who were relying on OJT hours through the project to meet requirements for progression through apprenticeship levels. It also prompted some HNTeI trainees to seek employment opportunities elsewhere. Finally, the delay in the onset of the project meant a longer period between the acquisition of skills and the application of skills on the job, potentially reducing training effectiveness.

Some Hydro planners and implementers interviewed noted that the delay in construction start provided additional time for training to be undertaken. NCN acknowledged that this was partially true and depended on the category of training that was being undertaken. The delay in establishing training funding at the outset limited the ability to complete training prior to construction, which started in August 2006. The delay also limited the ability to complete Level 4 and perhaps one year of employment prior to the start of the Wuskwatim general civil contract in 2008.

NCN planners noted that based on its PPT assumptions, a person pursuing a designated trade would have taken upgrading and life skills training in 2002 and 2003 (funding was not available until the summer of 2002), then enrolled in Level 1 in 2004, and if all went well would have only been able to complete Levels 2 and 3 of their apprenticeship prior to construction starting in August 2006. For trainees in non-designated trades, upgrading would have started in 2002, completed this and life skills in 2003 and then started their employment skills training program, completing it in 2004. Designated trades trainees would not have been able to complete training and certification before construction started and therefore would not have been considered job qualified for purposes of the BNA. Those trainees seeking employment in non-designated trades or construction and site services may have been able to finish their skills training before construction started however there still would have been challenges to obtain the on-the-job training required to become fully job qualified before construction started.

A recommendation outlined in the HNTeI proposal was the early consideration for mechanisms to facilitate work experience, such as partnerships with employers and pool agreements with Band administration to employ apprentices and enable accumulation of on the job hours required for trades training<sup>50</sup>. Planner and implementer interviews with Aboriginal Partners and some of the funders indicated that this experience was not available in every community.

### **3.3.3 Participant experience with training activities**

This section summarizes findings related to participant experiences with HNTeI training. Data was collected through interviews with individuals who had participated in some aspect of the Initiative. As outlined in the approach, case study interviews were conducted with individuals from four First Nation communities. The number of interviews conducted did not represent a sufficient sample size to attribute the findings to the larger population of training participants; however the responses do provide valuable insights into the various perceptions and experiences.

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<sup>50</sup> Source: HNTeI Proposal (November 21, 2003) for ASEP funding.



Participants who were involved in pre-project training described positive experiences with training overall. People were aware of the training opportunities and had heard about them from a variety of sources including word of mouth (most popular), radio, community presentations, and flyers. At NCN, information was also provided by ATEC staff. Participants also generally indicated the training application process was straightforward and support was available if needed. Some participants indicated they were selected for training by someone in the community “they came to look for me, I did not have to apply”. Almost all participants who were interviewed indicated they had completed their training courses. One person reported having to drop out to go back to work.

When asked about the strengths of the training they received, participants comments included: liking the “hands on” aspect of training, training being good/interesting (“good courses, the instructor gave people extra chances”), having supports (“provided a ride, place to stay, get to work on time, talk to us once in a while, office in Winnipeg to provide support”), learning a lot through training, and training being relevant for/helping them get work (“right training to get employed”, “I got skills for work”). On-the-job training and experience was also reported as a key strength by some participants, others felt more on-the-job training should have been provided.

Negative comments about training, which were limited overall, included: “never had a chance to use the skill I was taught”, “[need to] do more training, more long term training”, not much [work] to do with my training – too late in the project”, and “training should include on the job orientation. People were trained in the classroom but they had no experience on site and were expected to be able to come on site and be successful without understanding how to do their work. Kids were trained in the trades but then there were no jobs for apprentices and they had to take a job at a mine site instead. Now we have a lot of experienced truck drivers”.

### **3.3.4 Performance of PPT**

As previously indicated, the stated goals of the Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative were to:

- Ensure that participants have the knowledge and skills to take advantage of opportunities to participate fully in the hydroelectric generation projects planned in northern Manitoba and on other major Manitoba construction projects
- Maximize opportunities for the employment of Northern Aboriginal workers in the construction industry or related sectors
- Leverage opportunities on hydroelectric projects for long-term, community-capacity building
- Support the development of northern businesses and community ventures through the provision of products and services to the hydroelectric projects

This section provides qualitative findings regarding the performance of PPT and is summarized in the following sections:

- Alignment to need
- Meeting objectives and expectations
- Impact and success
- Reporting and communication

#### **3.3.4.1 Alignment to need**

Training funded through HNTEI was intended to provide participants with a continuum of skills development opportunities that would encompass basic skills, literacy and educational upgrading as well as job-specific training. Training needs were expressed as both the need to have the skills required to secure employment and to build capacity within the Northern Aboriginal communities.

Training activity funded through HNTEI was monitored based on individual course participation. The mechanisms put in place to monitor training captured individual participation in a single training event and progression to subsequent training opportunities was not reported. If an individual participated in educational upgrading and then went on to complete their first level in carpentry, this would have been captured as two successful course completions. The individual's progression along the training continuum and true increase in capacity would not be captured or reported. As such, the alignment between training and capacity development cannot be determined.

Training offerings were driven by community training plans and by design are aligned to the needs of the Aboriginal community members. The number of course completions as well as the subsequent employment outcomes presented in.

Figure 8 and Figure 9 of this report provide an indication that there was alignment between the needs of participants as well as employers.

#### **3.3.4.2 Meeting objectives and expectations**

In total, 1,395 individuals who participated in HNTEI found employment post training.<sup>51</sup> While a majority of those who found employment did so in their community, data collected by Hydro indicates a total of 189 HNTEI participants found employment on Wuskwatim. Examination of courses completed compared to the type of work undertaken at Wuskwatim indicates training was relevant to employment opportunities in most cases. **Qualitative data collected indicates mixed perspectives on whether HNTEI objectives and expectations were met.** Training participation was viewed as a success by some Hydro, NCN and government planners and implementers, due to the high number of Northern Aboriginal residents who participated in training and activities (course enrollments, completions). Aboriginal Partners commented that while expectations regarding the number of trade certifications were not met, training did address the need for educational upgrading, life skills development, and capacity building within the community thereby making it a success from their perspective.

As noted earlier, planners and implementers from Hydro, the provincial government and contractors indicated the proportion of educational upgrading and life skills training courses completed in comparison to occupational training was much higher than they anticipated, indicating an **expectation of greater progression through training**. As such, some contractors and Hydro planners and implementers noted specifically that while participation was a success, training outcomes did not meet project needs and organizational expectations for skilled trades/job ready workers.

**Where it was indicated that training did not meet needs or expectations, the following were noted by planners and implementers as factors contributing to this outcome:**

- Expectations related to skilled trades training outcomes were unrealistic as base needs for educational upgrading and life skills training were not fully acknowledged by funders during establishment and design of HNTEI. Initial assumptions provided by NCN in the 2002 ATEC proposal indicated a greater degree of upgrading was required than what was included in the final funding model.
- Training model was focused on achieving a high quantity of training participants as funding was based on the number of individual course participants.
- Member needs for greater upgrading and life skills development were reflected in training delivery as training was funded based on community developed training plans; Educational upgrading and life skills training courses were more likely to be offered in communities than occupational training courses due to challenges and costs associated with delivering employment skills training.
- Subsidies offered to support individuals through training may have, based on comments provided by some planners and implementers, encouraged participation for reasons beyond obtaining employment.
- Delays in establishing funding left insufficient time for trainees to acquire all skills necessary to complete designated trades training.

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<sup>51</sup> Source: Hydro statistical analysis (June 2011). Note: Employment for the purposes of HNTEI was considered to be 4 weeks of continuous employment in a related field.

### **3.3.4.3 Impact and success**

Positive training impacts and training success stories were acknowledged by most planner and implementer groups, regardless of the numbers and types of courses offered. **The training offerings were noted to have contributed to capacity building in the communities through training participation and involvement in training coordination and administration.** Some of the Aboriginal Partners interviewed commented that training instilled confidence and pride in members who completed courses.

Training also appears to have **supported attainment of personal employment objectives for some trainees.** Many of the participants interviewed who took training through HNTEI indicated training helped them gain employment. It was noted by some participants however; that the training offered overlooked certain job requirements (e.g. required driver's licence).

There were some planners and implementers from NCN and other communities as well as employers that provided examples indicating training did not provide all the skills employers were looking for. This was also noted by some participants.

Efforts were made by communities to provide work experience for trades where possible, such as carpenters, however, employers and some of the Hydro planners and implementers interviewed indicated **this training did not provide the required scope of the trade and was specific to residential rather than commercial trades work.** Planners and implementers from NCN, Hydro and contractors indicated this issue proved problematic when qualifying for positions at Wuskwatim.

### **3.3.4.4 Reporting and communication**

The reporting requirements for recipients of HNTEI funds were clearly outlined and enforced. However, **the data collected (course offerings, enrollments and completions) did not allow for appropriate assessment of whether or not HNTEI objectives were achieved.**

The community based training and employment program model outlined in the HNTEI proposal and the WKTC Unanimous Members Agreement suggests that trainees were anticipated to follow a progression of five distinct phases of training beginning with assessment and academic preparation through to employment. Training assessments and the duration of training courses were not tracked, and individual training progress could not be determined based on the data that was collected.

Comments from NCN planners and implementers suggest a lack of communication back to the community regarding training activities and outcomes. Planners and implementers from other Aboriginal partner communities did not identify a challenge with communication back to community. Documents summarizing HNTEI activities did not indicate whether these mechanisms were in place for other communities.

**Reporting was not established to measure the link from training program completion to employment at Wuskwatim and eventually Keeyask.** Rather, information was collected on training outputs with a focus on training activities (course completions) rather than outcomes (individual's learning, individual's ability to secure and sustain employment). Post training employment information was also collected from HNTEI trainees on a quarterly basis. Post training employment data collected did not identify nature of employment as targeted in the HNTEI proposal.

### 3.4 Quantitative findings: OJT

Quantitative findings are derived from existing reports and data as provided by the Steering Committee.

OJT was offered using both a formal and informal approach at Wuskwatim. Apprenticeship opportunities were available throughout construction. In addition to this, OJT activities were implemented on an ad hoc basis as the need and opportunity was identified. Some of this training was funded by Hydro to enable employers to support the development of Aboriginal workers while also maintaining costs. In all, four such activities were undertaken to varying degrees of success. Table 8 provides a summary of the ad hoc on-the-job training opportunities that were reported.

**Table 8: Ad hoc on-the-job training**

On-the-job training opportunity	Description of training activities	Completion status
<b>Management training (Direct Negotiated Contract)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;5 Northern Aboriginal workers were provided rotational management OJT.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All but one participant completed the training.</li> </ul>
<b>Turbine and Generator/Electrical and Mechanical Contract</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 Northern Aboriginal apprenticeship trainee OJT opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three of four individuals advanced apprenticeship levels (two to journeyman status), one resigned shortly after hire and data is not available for the sixth.</li> </ul>
<b>Carpentry OJT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt;5 Northern Aboriginal workers participated in carpentry OJT.</li> <li>Targeted selection of trainees was facilitated through ATEC. Individuals with carpentry base skill set and willingness to learn on-the-job were targeted for participation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All participants completed the training.</li> <li>Contractor recommended that all participants be moved to full production environment at full journeyman status.</li> </ul>
<b>Labourer Training Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Northern Aboriginal workers participated in an on-the-job labourer training program that was developed to address concerns regarding employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal residents.</li> <li>NCN and ATEC identified individuals for the labourer trainee positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No successful completions.</li> <li>Delays due to administration issues at outset reduced number of available trainees, and remaining trainees resigned or were terminated.</li> </ul>

Source: Hydro statistics. Data presented was collected between August 2006 to January 31, 2013. To protect individual confidentiality, the notation "<5" is used in the table for populations of less than five.

Apprentice employment and progression at Wuskwatim was tracked by Manitoba Hydro using the Wuskwatim Employee Report. There were a total of 2,040 hires in designated trades of which 297 were apprentices representing just under 15% of the total. Targets were not identified for Aboriginal apprentice numbers but based on data provided by Manitoba Hydro, there were 85 (29% of the total) Aboriginal apprentices and of those 58 (or 20% of the total) were Northern Aboriginal. Table 9 provides a summary of apprentice and journeyman hires.

**Table 9: Apprentice and journeyman hires for Wuskwatim**

	Total	Other Aboriginal	Northern Aboriginal	Non Aboriginal
Apprentice Hire	297	9% (27)	20% (58)	71% (212)
		Manitoban		Outside Manitoba
		65% (192)	35% (105)	
Journeyman Hire	1743	Other Aboriginal	Northern Aboriginal	Non Aboriginal
		12% (211)	5% (89)	83% (1443)
		Manitoban		Outside Manitoba
		52% (903)	48% (840)	

Source: Hydro statistics.

Appendix E provides a list of all apprentice positions that were available at Wuskwatim as well as a breakdown of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal hires for each position.<sup>52</sup>

There were a number of notable achievements stemming from on-the-job training opportunities. Specifically, there were long-term Northern Aboriginal employees who advanced professionally, achieved certification and secured permanent positions or apprenticeships (e.g. electrical and mechanical apprentices, red seal certified chef, maintenance manager, heavy duty mechanic).

### 3.5 Qualitative findings: OJT

Qualitative findings are based on information, perspectives and opinions derived through secondary sources such as existing reports and documents, and primary sources such as interviews and focus groups with key planners and implementers and participants. Qualitative findings related to on-the-job training are presented in the following sections:

- Relevance and need for OJT
- Delivery experience with OJT
- Performance of OJT

#### 3.5.1 Relevance and need for OJT

In addition to the need for pre-employment training to prepare trainees for skilled trades training, and employment skills training, it was identified by planners and implementers that **on-the-job training opportunities would be required to facilitate apprentice progression**. Employers would be needed that could provide adequate work experience to allow trainees to progress through their trades training. **Challenges in finding work experience of this nature in northern communities compounded the need for on-the-job training opportunities at Wuskwatim.**

Volume 8 of the EIS notes that pre-project and OJT training activities would improve the capacity and skill of local residents to participate in the northern economy and the magnitude of the effect would vary depending on the successful completion of training programs.<sup>53</sup>

With respect to the provision of OJT, it was noted by planners and implementers from both Hydro and government department representatives, that while there was **acknowledgement that training and specifically OJT experience was a need, this need was in conflict with those of the construction project**. A focus on project schedule and finances would contradict the use of apprentices since trainees are often not as efficient as experienced workers, which then impacts schedule and as a result project costs.

#### 3.5.2 Delivery experience with OJT

Some Hydro planners and implementers commented that **OJT activities were more effective when participant selection was targeted to those with work history and demonstrated interest in pursuing on-the-job training in a particular field of employment.**

#### 3.5.3 Performance of OJT

There were no specific goals or objectives documented for OJT against which performance could be assessed.

Employees interviewed confirmed their training was provided on the job and for many it was **considered one of the benefits of working at Wuskwatim.**

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<sup>53</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Generation Project Environmental Impact Statement, Volume 8.

Planners and implementers interviewed were unsure of the level to which the apprentice aspects of the trade management agreements (which are agreements between unions and locals stipulating the number and use of apprentices to encourage continuity of the trade) were monitored. However, there was a **general understanding that apprentice numbers for the project did not reach the predicted numbers**. The EIS indicates that apprentices were anticipated to comprise 20% of the designated trade positions.<sup>54</sup> As indicated in Table 9, apprentice hires comprised 15% of the total for designated trades, falling short of the EIS predictions.

**Increased incentives, more structure and accountability were all suggested as ways in which OJT could have been more effective.** Planners and implementers including contractors, representatives from government, the union and from Hydro all suggested that the framework for OJT could have been improved. Planners and implementers from the union and Hydro commented that while contractors could include training costs in bid opportunities for work at Wuskwatim there was little uptake. It was suggested that incentive for early completion of contracts outweighed the training incentive. Hydro planners and implementers noted that this may have been driven by the scale of dollars and the associated risks of not meeting contractual requirements.

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<sup>54</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Generation Project Environmental Impact Statement, Volume 8.

### 3.6 Summary of training findings

The tables below summarize the qualitative and quantitative findings for both pre project training and on-the-job training.

**Table 10: Key findings for PPT**

Key findings for PPT	
<b>Relevance and need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three primary needs were identified related to training through document review and planner and implementer consultation: the need for educational upgrading and life skills training in preparation for occupational training, the need for employment skills training and the need for access to relevant OJT opportunities</li> <li>• Community skills assessments conducted by Aboriginal Partners indicated there were few employment ready individuals and NCN identified a need for between 26 and 52 weeks of required upgrading depending on their chosen career path; therefore significant non-occupational training including academic upgrading and life skills training would be required to prepare trainees for subsequent employment skills training</li> <li>• Funders shared similar goals for capacity building through training; Hydro was primarily seeking specific outcomes related to employment skills for opportunities on hydroelectric projects while government funders sought to support more broad employment capacity building; all indicated that their expectation was for these skills to be developed through occupational training in the trades</li> <li>• Planners and Implementers agreed that there was a strong need for employment training but findings suggest the desired outcomes may have varied by planner and implementer group; Hydro had a specific need for designated trades people and some Aboriginal Partners appeared to have broader training needs</li> <li>• Expectations regarding training progression and outputs differed based on a different understanding of the extent to which non-occupational training was needed to prepare individuals for skills training; NCN and other Aboriginal Partners identified a significant amount of upgrading was required, which was not captured in the final HNTEI proposal submitted to the federal government to secure funding. Planners from the funding groups expressed that the volume of non-occupational training in relation to occupational training exceeded their expectations</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Partners generally felt the community based approach was beneficial because communities knew the needs of their members and the approach enabled them to develop tailored training opportunities to meet those needs</li> <li>• Of the total courses started through HNTEI, 56% were successfully completed. Non-designated trades training had the highest completion rate at 72% and designated trades and professional and administrative training had the lowest rate at 51%</li> <li>• Completion rates suggest that training participants may have experienced barriers to training participation that impacted retention</li> <li>• Challenges in finding work experience to support trades training in northern communities compounded the need for OJT opportunities at Wuskwatim; lack of opportunities to gain commercial/industrial experience provided a significant barrier to preparing trainees for employment at Wuskwatim</li> <li>• WKTC was seen to have fulfilled its duties in administration of the HNTEI funds but added an additional step in the pre-project training process that extended timelines and costs for training</li> <li>• Some felt that while WKTC member roles and responsibilities were well documented, they were not followed as they were not understood or were considered unreasonable</li> <li>• There were delays in the receipt of training funds due to the administrative requirement that expense reports for all communities represented were required prior to release of subsequent funds to any community</li> <li>• ATEC was widely viewed as a "state of the art" facility using almost 2/3rds of NCN's HNTEI funds; as a result other sources of funding had to be found to complete ATEC to allow some HNTEI funding to remain available for training programs</li> <li>• Sustainment of the ATEC facility was acknowledged as a challenge for NCN</li> <li>• Challenges with oversight and management of ATEC were reported by NCN planners and implementers</li> <li>• The ability to offer trades training through ATEC at Nelson House was somewhat limited; those interviewed noted the lack of available instructors and a lack of interest on the part of community colleges to offer community based training as two potential reasons for this challenge</li> <li>• More coordination between NCN and Hydro regarding skills required for work at Wuskwatim may have resulted in better alignment between expectations and training offerings</li> <li>• Securing funding and establishing the structures and processes (e.g. setting up WKTC) took time, which reduced the amount of time remaining for training delivery prior to start of Wuskwatim construction</li> </ul>

## Key findings for PPT

### Performance

- There were mixed perspectives on whether HNTeI expectations were met
- 2,670 Northern Aboriginal residents participated in PPT training funded through HNTeI with 1,876 individuals successfully completing at least one course; this exceeded the expectations for participation of most planners and implementers
- Reporting for HNTeI was conducted as outlined but; however the data gathered does not allow for appropriate assessment of whether or not objectives were achieved
- Just over half (52%) of course completions were related to trades training, in both designated and non-designated trades
- Within the designated trades, a total of 27 HNTeI trainees obtained certification as journeypersons and certification for seven other trainees was pending for a total of 34 trainees successfully completing their requirements for certification in their trades through HNTeI
- When the funding through HNTeI concluded there were 140 active apprentices participating in the program, 71% of these were either at or working towards their first level of apprenticeship. Within the designated trades, 27 HNTeI trainees obtained certification as journeypersons. It is possible that HNTeI trainees continued their training, either classroom or on the job (Wuskwatim or elsewhere), following the conclusion of HNTeI and may have progressed in their apprenticeship designation
- Data collected by Hydro indicated 189 HNTeI participants found employment on Wuskwatim
- The number of training participants who found employment post training was 1,395, more than double than projected with 60% obtaining employment in community
- Planners and implementers from Hydro, the provincial government and contractors noted specifically that while participation was a success, training outcomes did not meet project needs and organizational expectations for skilled trades/job ready workers
- Training coordination and administration activities provided capacity building opportunities in communities
- Comments from NCN planners and implementers suggest a lack of communication back to the community regarding training activities and outcomes
- Training supported personal employment objectives and instilled a sense of pride in some participants
- Some planners and implementers from NCN and other communities as well as employers provided examples indicating training did not provide all the skills employers were looking for. This was also noted by some participants

Table 11: Key findings for OJT

## Key findings for OJT

### Relevance and need

- OJT opportunities as part of HNTeI were expected to prepare Northern Aboriginal residents for employment at Wuskwatim to meet the demand for skilled labour
- OJT opportunities on Wuskwatim were needed to facilitate apprenticeship progression because it was difficult to find adequate work experience in communities for trainees to progress through trades training
- OJT was offered formally through apprenticeship positions and informally through ad hoc activities both during PPT and at Wuskwatim
- The need for OJT conflicted with priority focus on project schedule and costs, which may have been driven by the scale of dollars and the associated risks of not meeting contractual requirements

### Delivery experience

- During PPT, OJT opportunities were not available locally that included the commercial/industrial experience that was required by employers to work at Wuskwatim
- OJT opportunities extended beyond those reported against to include a number of activities undertaken by employers by their own design
- Perspective that OJT was more successful when participants had a work history and a demonstrated interest in pursuing additional training

### Performance

- OJT was seen as one of the successes of employment on Wuskwatim
- Of the 297 apprentice hires on Wuskwatim, 29% (85) were Aboriginal
- Increased structure and accountability as well as incentives were suggested as means to incent more uptake of apprentices by employers
- Apprentice numbers for the project did not reach the predicted numbers from the EIS; the EIS predicted that 20% of all designated trade positions would be apprentices, project employment data indicates that apprentice hires comprised 14.5% of all hires in designated trades



## 3.7 PPT key themes

The key themes emerging from the PPT qualitative and quantitative findings are:

1. Expectations of Funders and Aboriginal Partners differed regarding the type and amount of skill development required for Northern Aboriginal residents to become job qualified
2. Time available for training delivery was reduced due to time required to get some funders committed and to establish the structure for administering HNTEI funds
3. Delivery of training did not match the intended design in that activities did not always match needs or desired outcomes and the funding model for training influenced training decision as it encouraged individual course participation rather than program completion
4. Reporting of training activities and outcomes did not facilitate assessment as they were focused on individual course completions and did not measure individual participant progression

### ***3.7.1.1 Expectations of Funders and Aboriginal Partners differed***

Through document review, as well as planner and implementer consultation, three primary needs were identified related to training: the need for educational upgrading and life skills training in preparation for occupational training, the need for employment skills training, and the need for access to relevant work experience opportunities. In addition there were two differing sets of expectations: Funders expected to focus efforts and outcomes related to building employment skills and capacity of Northern Aboriginal residents to support specific projects whereas Aboriginal Partners expected to meet the needs of their individual communities which in some cases were broader and more attuned to the educational upgrading needs in their communities. Specifically, the extent to which educational upgrading was required by Northern Aboriginal participants to prepare for occupational training was identified and communicated by the Aboriginal Partners, and specifically NCN in original funding proposals, but was not acknowledged to the full extent in the subsequent funding model for HNTEI.

### ***3.7.1.2 Time available for training delivery was reduced***

Key training success factors based on lessons learned from previous initiatives included the need for significant lead time due to the need for considerable upgrading to prepare trainees for occupational training, and the need to gain appropriate work experience to facilitate trades training.

The time required to establish HNTEI fund administration used up valuable lead time. Talks and a commitment from Hydro started in 2001, however HNTEI was not established until 2005. While some funds were advanced prior to HNTEI, the largest proportion of funding was not available until the fund and structure was established.

WKTC added an "additional step" and an "administrative layer" between funders and Aboriginal Partners that extended the time and cost required for training delivery. However, it was viewed by some as a necessary and effective structure that enabled open discussion and resolution of issues.

### ***3.7.1.3 Design and delivery did not always match needs and at times influenced training decisions***

As a key learning from Limestone and noted by NCN planners, a community based approach to training delivery enables the development of tailored training opportunities based on community needs. Some of the challenges to accessing training that were experienced included access to childcare, transportation/logistical challenges and training location. For example retention was an issue among those who had to leave the community and their family members to attend training. These barriers meant training participants were more likely to choose training offered in their home community, which was typically not related to designated trades.

Access to relevant work experience was cited as a significant barrier as there were insufficient local OJT opportunities for PPT participants to gain the work experience required to become qualified to work on Wuskwatim. Initiatives such as the advancement of the road to NCN were undertaken to provide opportunities to gain work experience but feedback indicates they were not enough. A particular

challenge with obtaining relevant commercial/industrial work experience was also noted which later impacted the ability for trainees to obtain employment at Wuskwatim.

A greater amount of non-occupational training was delivered (relative to trades training) than was anticipated by funders and required by Hydro and contractors. Contributing factors to the high volume of non-occupational training courses include the funding model being based on individual course enrollment rather than programs; and training delivery based on community plans that reflected the significant need for educational upgrading.

#### **3.7.1.4 Reporting of training activities were focused on individual course completions and did not track participant progression**

Reporting for HNTEI was activity-based and did not allow for assessment of individual progression or program completion. While the goal of PPT was to provide the skills required to gain employment on the Wuskwatim and Keeyask hydroelectric projects and provide a continuum of training to develop skills and capacity of Northern Aboriginal residents, the funding model, training design, and reporting mechanisms did not support this. Funds were flowed based on individual course participation, training plans focused on enabling a large volume of participants, and reporting was based on individual course completions. Individual participant progress was not monitored over time.

The degree of skill enhancement of participants was not tracked or measured and progression of an individual through the HNTEI model, from skill assessment, through life skills training, to trades training and then on to employment on Wuskwatim, and then post Wuskwatim was not formerly tracked and reported.

### **3.8 OJT key themes**

The key themes emerging from OJT at Wuskwatim from the quantitative and qualitative findings are:

1. Apprentice numbers on Wuskwatim were not as high as anticipated by planners and implementers or what was predicted in the EIS
2. Ad hoc opportunities were met with varying degrees of success and many were not monitored; however these opportunities were cited by participants as one of the benefits of employment at Wuskwatim

Planners and implementers interviewed noted that in general there was a sense that apprentice numbers did not reach predicted numbers. Quantitative results show that apprentices made up approximately 15% of all hires in the designated trades, falling short of the 20% predicted in the EIS.

Contributing factors to this lower than expected apprentice participation were noted during interviews. One factor was the advancement of the project schedule, which put additional pressure on contractors and workers to be more efficient. This pressure could have resulted in a need for the use of experienced tradespeople, and resulted in less time to support apprentices. The other factor cited during interviews was contract incentives for on time or early completion of work, which exceeded the financial benefits made available for contractor-provided training. Hydro planners and implementers noted that this may have been driven by the scale of dollars and the associated risks of not meeting contractual requirements.

Increased incentives, more structure and accountability were all suggested as ways in which OJT could have been more effective.

The success of the ad hoc opportunities was influenced by the individual participants. It was suggested that OJT was more successful when participants had a work history and a demonstrated interest in pursuing additional training.

While not tracked or monitored, OJT opportunities both Hydro-sponsored and contractor-led were considered one of the benefits of working at Wuskwatim.

## 4. Employment services and retention supports

Employment results at Wuskwatim were influenced by the programs in place on the project as well as activities that were undertaken specifically to improve Aboriginal participation and retention. These structures and activities have been broken into two categories for the purpose of this review. The first covers those related to employment (including recruitment, selection, layoffs and recalls) and the second addresses retention supports. This section is organized into the following subsections:

- Description of employment services and retention supports
- Quantitative findings: Employment services and retention supports
- Qualitative findings: Employment services
- Qualitative findings: Retention supports
- Summary of employment and retention findings

### 4.1 Description of employment services and retention supports

There was a commitment by those involved in Wuskwatim to improve Aboriginal employment and retention, with a specific intention to improve upon the outcomes for Aboriginal workers at Limestone. To this end, a number of steps were undertaken to positively impact Aboriginal participation. Two factors that impacted employment outcomes and retention activities over the course of the Initiative were changing skill demands as construction progressed and a blockade was set up by protestors.

**Skill demands changed over the course of the project as construction progressed** from establishing the infrastructure and camp as well as the all-weather access road to the site, to construction of the main dam and generating station in the second stage of the project. Employment opportunities in the first stage of the project were predominantly for non-designated trades work (e.g. labourers, heavy equipment operators, vehicle drivers). In the second stage of the project, employment opportunities for designated trades workers, including carpenters, electricians and ironworkers, greatly increased as the main general civil works contract got underway. Opportunities for non-designated trade work remained in the second stage, but comprised a much lower proportion of the total opportunities than in the first stage of the project. In August 2009, a roadblock blockade was set up by protestors from NCN and other communities between the main highway and the security gate to the dam. The blockade was established in response to local concerns that not enough Aboriginal workers had been hired at Wuskwatim.<sup>55</sup> The blockade was also linked to concerns by NCN resource users regarding implementation of the ongoing debris management program with Hydro. **Following the blockade, a number of measures were put in place to address NCN's concerns over Aboriginal employment on site.** Examples of these measures include:

- Establishing an Ad Hoc committee, with membership including NCN Chief and Council, Wuskwatim Implementation Office (WIO) staff and NCN advisors as well as Hydro managers and other key staff, to resolve employment issues at an early stage<sup>56</sup>
- Providing a shuttle van service to provide transportation for workers without vehicles
- Hiring an Aboriginal employment liaison worker to serve as an employee representative

<sup>55</sup> Source: Thompson Citizen (August 17, 2009).

<sup>56</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Implementation News (March 2010).

- Providing Elder visits to the work site

#### **4.1.1 Employment services**

Employment at Wuskwatim was governed by the BNA. Structures and processes were established within the JRS to support implementation of the BNA hiring process. This section is intended to build understanding of the BNA and JRS and serves as an introduction to the additional structures and processes implemented to support Northern Aboriginal employment on Wuskwatim. Related quantitative and qualitative findings are provided in the sections that follow. The elements described in this section are:

- Environment Impact Statement (EIS)
- Burntwood Nelson Agreement (BNA)
- The Job Referral Service (JRS)
- Direct Negotiated Contracts (DNC)
- Committees
- Wuskwatim Implementation Office (WIO)

##### **4.1.1.1 Environment Impact Statement (EIS)**

As outlined in the Introduction, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) filed by NCN and Hydro used Project labour force projections and existing demographic data to predict employment impacts, including among the northern and Manitoba population. Both the EIS predictions and the Project labour force projections were used to inform pre-project training activities, and vice versa.

**EIS predictions for Wuskwatim indicated the Aboriginal rate of participation would be highest during the first stage of the project.** This was due in part to the nature of the work and also to the fact that most of the work conducted in the first stage of the project would be through contracts directly negotiated with qualified NCN businesses, who could direct hire qualified Aboriginal employees. It is important to note that EIS predictions are based on assumptions drawn from a specific project plan at a point in time. Any changes to the project plan during implementation were expected to impact predictions. At Wuskwatim a number of events (e.g. unexpected construction delays, the need to retender the General Civil Contract) impacted project timelines. The changes to advance the schedule resulted in a greater number of employees working and residing on site than was predicted.

##### **4.1.1.2 Burntwood Nelson Agreement (BNA)**

As provided earlier, the BNA stipulates hiring preferences, as well as procedures for adjusting wages and certain benefits during the life of the agreement. It also contains provisions relating to the recruitment, referral, placement, training and retention of Northern Aboriginal workers, and, relevant to Wuskwatim, facilitates the hiring of Aboriginal residents and direct hiring by Aboriginal businesses who are awarded direct negotiated contracts. The BNA outlines two primary means by which job seekers could be recruited to positions on Wuskwatim; through the hiring preference outlined in the BNA or directly by Aboriginal owned business employers (direct negotiated contracts or DNCs). The hiring procedures in the BNA were implemented using the Job Referral Service (JRS), which is described below. This system was used to implement BNA articles. Contractors have the ability to directly hire workers from outside Manitoba but only when no job qualified candidates for any of the preference categories outlined in the BNA are found through the JRS. Provisions within the BNA also guide hours of work, isolation leaves and the procedures for the layoff and recall of workers.

There are key provisions in the BNA intended to support increased employment of Northern Aboriginal residents on Wuskwatim. Direct negotiated contracts for Aboriginal businesses were included in Schedule 10.1 of the PDA. It was anticipated that the direct hiring provisions in Article 2.9 of the BNA would have the highest rates of employment for Northern Aboriginal workers and NCN Citizens on the project due in part to a level of familiarity and comfort working with local contractors as well as the job skills required. The hiring of Northern Aboriginal workers is also more straightforward relative to other contracts because, per Section 2.9 of the BNA, Aboriginal businesses with direct negotiated contracts can

hire Aboriginal workers directly rather than having to go through the job order process as outlined in Article 12.1.

In addition a hiring preference provision (Article 12) also specifies the order in which job seekers are referred through the JRS to employers, which is as follows:

1. Qualified Northern Aboriginal residents who live within the Churchill/Burntwood/Nelson River (CBNR) region and surrounding areas as defined in the BNA
2. Qualified northern residents living north of the Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs boundary who are members of a union involved in the project
3. Qualified Northern Aboriginal residents living north of the Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs boundary but not within the Churchill/Burntwood/Nelson River and surrounding areas as defined in the BNA
4. Qualified northern Manitobans living north of the Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs boundary
5. Qualified Manitoba union members
6. Qualified Manitoba workers<sup>57</sup>

The preference gives Northern Aboriginal residents from the Churchill/Burntwood/Nelson River area first priority over all others for job opportunities where job seekers were found to be job qualified. Through a special letter of understanding, NCN Citizens residing at any location in the Province of Manitoba were treated as Northern Aboriginal residents and therefore eligible to be considered under the first preference. When job orders are placed by contractors, a random listing of qualified job seekers from this category are provided from the JRS to the employer. Only once this list is exhausted were employers provided further names, in order, from the next priority groupings as listed above.

Contractors are able to reject any job seeker referred for the following reasons (taken from BNA Section 12.1.1):

- a. If the candidate is not job qualified
- b. If the candidate was previously employed on the Project and resigned within 30 days of being hired or re-hired or was discharged during the twelve month period preceding the job order
- c. The candidate was previously employed on the Project and received more than two written warnings or suspension for inappropriate workplace-related conduct or activities
- d. On any other reasonable ground

Referrals were provided to employers in four stages with candidates provided in order of the six preference categories listed above. The first referral stage included a listing of those job qualified individuals from the first three preference categories. Following exhaustion of this referral listing, a stage two referral listing was provided with candidates from the fourth preference category. This process was repeated until all stages/referral listings were exhausted. When this occurred, contractors were allowed to name hire employees.

#### **4.1.1.3 The Job Referral Service (JRS)**

The JRS was intended to provide an objective referral service for Wuskwatim, process job orders and register job seekers for employment at Wuskwatim, register direct hire individuals and provide employers with a listing of qualified workers from which to select, while implementing the hiring preferences outlined in the BNA. JRS services included the receipt and approval of job orders from contractors at Wuskwatim, the validation of candidate qualifications and the referral of qualified job seekers to employers based on requirements included in approved job orders.

The JRS was a service contracted through Employment Manitoba to facilitate the registration of individuals interested in employment at Wuskwatim. The JRS was rolled out in two phases with an initial service that started in 2006 that was later upgraded in 2008, addressing concerns regarding how the referral list was generated. Prior to the upgrade, a referral list was generated after a single pass through the data base. This could happen any time within the 48 hours allowed in the BNA. If a job seeker that

<sup>57</sup> Source: [http://www.gov.mb.ca/jrs/pdf/w\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/jrs/pdf/w_brochure.pdf) (accessed January 2013).

met the criteria was not yet in the system or had a dormant registration at the time the list was generated their name would not be included on the referral listing. Following the upgrade a continuous search was executed over the specified time period (would run for 48 hours). With the upgraded system, as job seekers became aware of opportunities for which they were qualified, they could complete a registration or update their dormancy and be considered for referral.

Job seekers registered with the JRS and were required to update their registration every six months to ensure accurate contact information. Registrations that were not updated within this period became dormant in the system and were therefore not eligible for referral.

The job referral service was provided through Employment Manitoba as well as through Job Seeker Managers working directly in some communities. It was the responsibility of Job Seeker Managers, also referred to as the Registration Agency, to assist job seekers with JRS registration/renewal, ensure their registrations were up-to-date, provide copies of required documents for verification to JRS, and act as a conduit, when required, between the employer and the member should the employer want to interview the individual.<sup>58</sup> At NCN, the registration process for the JRS was facilitated through ATEC.

The JRS facilitated referrals of job qualified candidates for job orders; however, all hiring decisions were made by contractors. Contractors were required to recruit through the job order process but had the right to refuse referred candidates if they deemed them to be unqualified, could not reach them, or had other reasonable grounds on which to reject their candidacy.

#### **4.1.1.4 Direct Negotiated Contracts (DNC)**

As indicated, Aboriginal owned businesses who held direct negotiated contracts and wished to hire Aboriginal residents were able to recruit and hire candidates directly rather than going through the JRS referral process. Candidates however, were still required to provide the JRS with proof of Aboriginal ancestry in order to be hired.

Although DNCs existed throughout the entire project, the majority were in the first stage of construction (infrastructure development). DNCs included: 1. a joint venture between NCN Construction LP and Strilkiwski North to construct the access road, 2. a joint venture between NCN and Sodexo to undertake the catering and security contract, and 3. NCN undertaking a cross cultural contract.

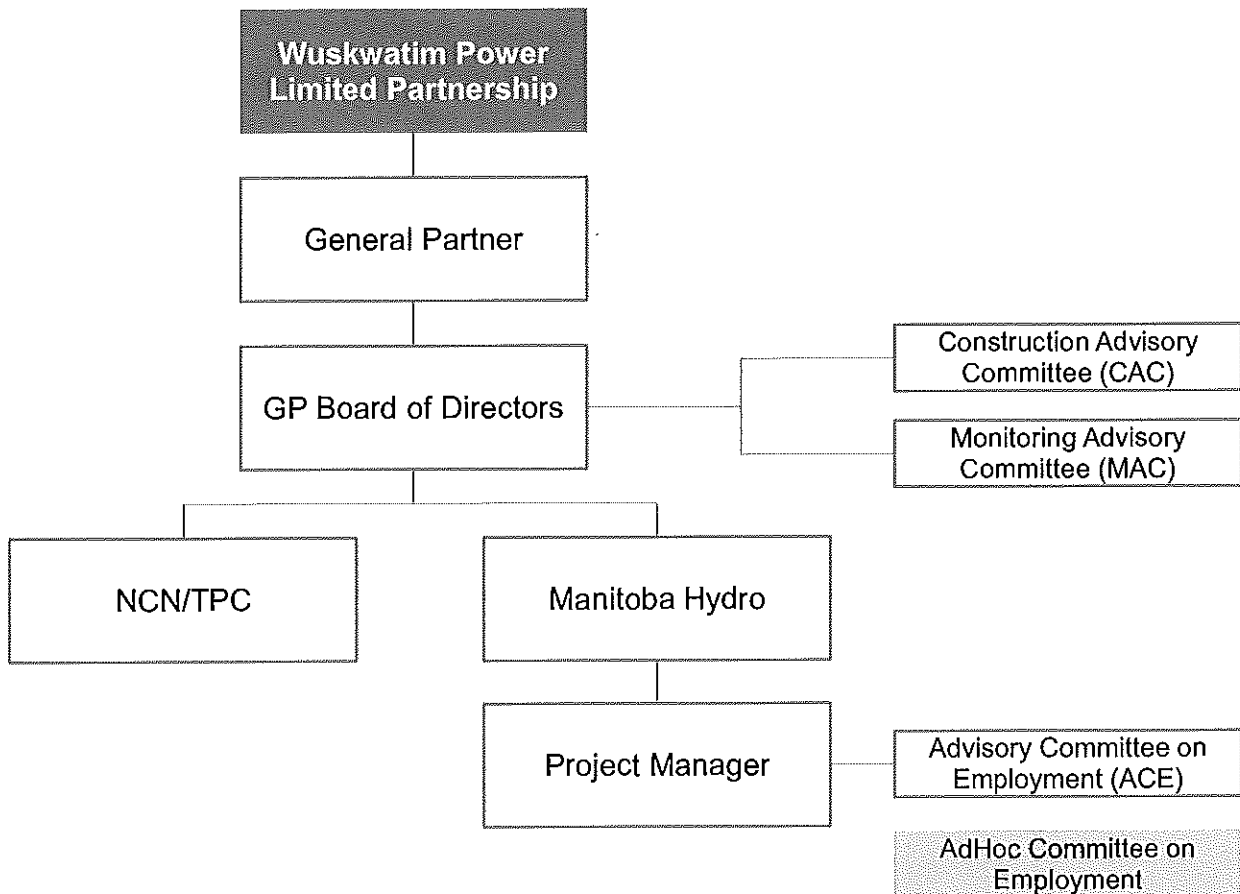
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<sup>58</sup> Source: Job Referral Service Overview. Labour Market Skills Division (June 2012).

#### 4.1.1.5 Committees

A number of committees were established at Wuskwatim that had employment and retention related activities as part of their mandate. There were three advisory committees in this capacity, and their associated roles and responsibilities, were aligned to requirements in the PDA. These committees were the Advisory Committee on Employment (ACE), the Monitoring Advisory Committee (MAC) and the Construction Advisory Committee (CAC). A fourth and informal committee, the AdHoc committee on employment was established to oversee fulfillment of the 18 commitments that were made to end a blockade erected by NCN and others. Figure 10 presents the committee structure for the project. The sections that follow provide additional detail regarding the activities of each of the committees as they related to employment at Wuskwatim.

Figure 10: Wuskwatim committee structure



##### 4.1.1.5.1 Advisory Committee on Employment (ACE)

The Advisory Committee on Employment (ACE) was a structure established to “find solutions to problems, receive and review complaints, monitor/report and make recommendations to the Wuskwatim Project Manager on employment related matters.”<sup>59</sup> It was comprised of two NCN Citizens, two Hydro members, and representatives from Employment Manitoba, AHC, and HPMA. The committee was chaired by a Hydro representative. The committee was mandated to meet quarterly but additional meetings could be called by the chair to address emergent issues.

<sup>59</sup> Source: Project Development Agreement Schedule C: Advisory Committee on Employment -Terms of Reference.

The ACE terms of reference indicates a broad mandate to “serve as a forum for receiving and considering employment related complaints associated with construction of the Wuskwatim project”. Roles and responsibilities of the ACE committee included:

- Provide advice to the Wuskwatim Project Manager regarding the implementation of the job referral process initially, as the process is being developed, and later in response to monitoring/evaluation of its effectiveness
- Review and provide advice to the Wuskwatim Project Manager about the appropriateness of job order qualifications
- Provide advice to the Wuskwatim Project Manager regarding strategies, materials and processes for cross-cultural orientation of workers at the site
- Provide advice to the Wuskwatim Project Manager regarding strategies, materials and processes to help retain Aboriginal workers on the construction site
- Monitor Aboriginal employment associated with the Wuskwatim Project
- Monitor results and effectiveness of the BNA job order, negotiated contract hiring, worker orientation and job retention processes

#### *4.1.1.5.2 Construction Advisory Committee (CAC)*

The Construction Advisory Committee (CAC) was chaired by Hydro’s Construction Project Manager and was comprised of four representatives from NCN and two Hydro nominees. The committee met monthly and provided information and recommendations to the General Partner Board on construction related activities and events including site labour numbers, OJT activities, cultural events and other relevant project issues identified by Elders, community leadership, community members, project management staff and others. The committee also raised NCN concerns to the Board and responded to, or made recommendations on, planner and implementer queries including those from NCN.

#### *4.1.1.5.3 Monitoring Advisory Committee on employment (MAC)*

The Monitoring Advisory Committee on Employment (MAC) also reported to the General Partner Board. It was comprised of three NCN nominees and four Hydro nominees, one of which served as Chair. The committee met bimonthly and was responsible for communicating information on economic, social and environmental project monitoring activities.



#### 4.1.1.5.4 AdHoc Committee on Employment

A fourth committee, referred to as the AdHoc Committee on Employment, was established in 2009 following a blockade by NCN and others that was intended to draw attention to employment related issues on the project. The committee facilitated ongoing communication between NCN Chief and Council, WIO staff, NCN advisors and Hydro managers. A set of 18 commitments were made by Hydro to NCN to bring an end to the blockade. The AdHoc Committee had oversight for the fulfillment of those commitments, which included the following:

**Table 12: 18 commitments<sup>60</sup>**

1	Review ATEC/JRS/Job Order process. The participants will be ATEC, JRS, Contractors, Hydro
2	Provide List of workers by trade, for the remaining work on the Wuskwatim Project
3	Hold a Community Meeting/Open House with all planners and implementers present
4	Inquire about a specific grievance issue
5	Implement a job order review process
6	Investigate issue of disrespect at Cultural Awareness session
7	Investigate Communication Barriers (French workers and Supervision)
8	Review a confidential issue
9	Communication of Injunction
10	Review having a restaurant/lounge at site
11	Hire Liaison Officer
12	Provide communication bulletins on NCN radio
13	Expand site Councillors role at site
14	Look for opportunities for expanded OJT
15	Provide regular updates about actual vs. planned employment statistics
16	Explore having Council Meetings at site (perhaps once a month)
17	Explore having Elders visit site and be available for workers to talk to
18	Open offer for Hydro representative to attend Council Meeting for updates

#### 4.1.1.6 Wuskwatim Implementation Office (WIO)

At NCN, the WIO also provided support with respect to employment in its capacity as project coordinator for NCN. The role of the WIO included monitoring to ensure that the PDA was implemented and honoured, liaising with Hydro and communicating project information to NCN Citizens. The WIO was also responsible for administration of some Wuskwatim-related contracts, including the cross cultural contract.

The office was a point of contact for employers attempting to contact NCN Citizens for jobs on the project, and for individuals with concerns related to employment on the project. NCN planner, implementer and participant comments indicate the WIO would bring forward issues to the appropriate channels on behalf of NCN Citizens and other workers. Transportation of workers to and from the job site was also reported to have been provided by the implementation office staff as required.

<sup>60</sup> Information on the 18 commitments was provided by Hydro and NCN Steering Committee members.

### 4.1.2 Retention supports

This section is intended to provide an introduction to the various retention supports. Additional quantitative and qualitative findings are provided in the sections that follow. Activities and measures put in place to support retention of Northern Aboriginal workers on the project included, but were not limited to:

- Cross cultural contract services – The Wuskwatim cross cultural contract was the first of its kind and was developed to address the unique circumstances of the Wuskwatim project. It was administered by NCN through the cross cultural program coordinator who reported to the WIO. Three key activities were conducted as part of the contract:
  - The provision of mandatory cross cultural awareness training to improve relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees
  - Available on-site counseling services to support workers with a range of issues impacting work performance including alcohol and drug use and family stress
  - Traditional ceremonies, which were conducted at key project milestones and as appropriate throughout the project to respect and honour the local culture and traditions, and to address project impacts on the land. Sweats, feasts and sharing circles were also held throughout the project
- An Aboriginal employment liaison worker was hired later in construction to monitor Aboriginal employment issues and concerns, and liaise with workers, unions and Hydro to address the concerns.
- Regular site visits from NCN Elders were implemented to provide support and mentorship to Aboriginal employees.
- Project dispute resolution mechanisms – The formal dispute resolution mechanism available to in scope workers on the project with labour related issues was through the union. Informal mechanisms such as approaching staff from the WIO to discuss issues, and sharing circles (through the talking stick approach) facilitated by the cross cultural contract coordinator were also employed to assist with dispute resolution.

## 4.2 Quantitative findings: Employment services and retention supports

Quantitative findings are derived from existing reports and data as provided by the Steering Committee.

Considerable monitoring of employment activities and outcomes occurred for the Wuskwatim Project to meet the various reporting requirements. Two data collection streams and databases were maintained for this purpose. Together these databases provide a complete picture of how workers pursued employment at Wuskwatim, how successful they were in gaining employment and related employment outcomes:

1. Manitoba Hydro Construction Employment Database (CED): Total employment on site was tracked by Hydro. This included data on direct hires and hires through the JRS. Using this data management system Hydro tracked and reported on, among other things, the total number of hires and employees on the Project. Retention outcomes were also tracked and reported on through the indicators of average duration of employment and rates of turnover. These indicators were tracked for the total Project labour force, as well as for Manitoba workers (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) and northern Manitoba workers (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal). Data in the CED was collected using a standardized employee report form filled out by all workers on the job site. All demographic information collected on the form was provided by self-declaration.
2. Province of Manitoba Job Referral Database: Data on JRS outcomes was tracked in a central database maintained by the Province of Manitoba. This database tracked numerous indicators related to the registration, referral and hiring process (exclusive of direct hires to the project site).

In addition to these two databases, in some cases employment data was collected on site by contractors and provided to Manitoba Hydro (e.g. data used to calculate person years of employment).

## 4.2.1 Employment and retention measurement

Employment was measured and reported in terms of employees, hires, re-hires, person years, average duration and turnover rates.

- **Employee** refers to an individual who was hired to work on the project.
- **Hire** refers to an instance where an individual has been hired to the project site regardless of duration of employment. Individuals hired multiple times would be counted as multiple hires (i.e. a single person hired for three separate contracts or jobs would be counted as 3 hires).
- **Re-hire** refers to an instance where an employee who resigned or was discharged returned to work on the project.
- **Person years** were used to standardize the total employment contribution on the project, given the varying contract lengths. One person year represents 2000 hours of employment, or the equivalent of one full-time position for one year.
- **Average Duration** refers to the average length of employment in days.
- **Turnover Rates** were calculated by dividing the number of hires leaving a job as a result of discharge or resignation by the total number of hires.

## 4.2.2 Employment

### 4.2.2.1 Total project employment

From the start of construction to December 31, 2012 there were 6,043 hires on the Wuskwatim work site. Of the total hires, 3,945 or approximately 65% were Manitobans. Total northern Manitoba and northern Manitoba Aboriginal hires represent approximately 51% (2,003 hires) and 43% (1,707 hires), respectively, of total Manitoba hires. Northern Aboriginal hires represented 28% of overall project hires. There were a total of 2,247 Aboriginal hires including 1,683 Status, 512 Métis and 52 other (Inuit and non-Status) hires. There were a total of 650 NCN hires on the project, which reflects 11% of total hires, or 29% of Aboriginal hires.<sup>61</sup>

From the start of construction to November 30, 2012, direct employment created on the project amounted to 2,859 person-years. Of this, 70%, or 2,001 person-years represent Manitoba employment. Total northern Manitoba and northern Manitoba Aboriginal employment represents approximately 54% (1,089 person-years) and 47% (944 person years), respectively of Manitoba employment.<sup>62</sup> Northern Aboriginal person years worked represented 33% of total person years worked on the Project.

Although not evaluated in this study, a number of additional project related employment opportunities occurred at Nelson House as a result of the construction of Wuskwatim. These included multi-year positions with the Implementation Office, part-time and seasonal work on Project monitoring activities and community consultation term positions. The WIO captured these opportunities and reported them back to the community through posters. The information provided in the December 2012 poster cited 468 indirect employment opportunities affecting 328 citizens.<sup>63</sup>

In addition, the WPLP undertook a survey of indirect employment opportunities twice during construction of the Project. The survey conducted in 2008 indicated "the main contractors spent \$12.8 million in Thompson and \$4.7 million in Nelson House businesses, exclusive of salaries. Expenditures occurred in the following sectors: construction (63%), retail/wholesale trade (30%), transportation (3.5%), accommodation and food services (2.5%), specialty services (0.5%), and other (0.5%)"<sup>64</sup>. Results from the second survey, conducted in 2010, indicated "the main contractors spent \$14.5 million and \$2.5 million at Thompson and Nelson House businesses, respectively. These expenditures occurred in the following

<sup>61</sup> Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

<sup>62</sup> Source: Hydro Wuskwatim employment data.

<sup>63</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Indirect Opportunities from August 2006 to December 2012 provided by the Wuskwatim Implementation Office.

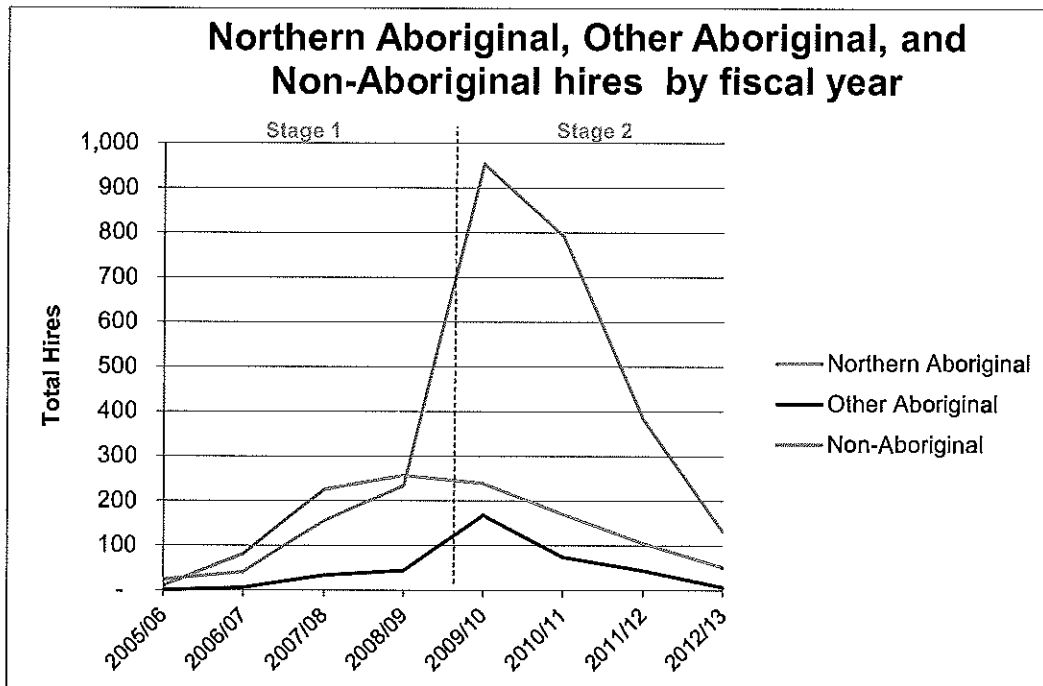
<sup>64</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership. (March 31, 2008). Monitoring overview 2007-2008.

sectors: retail / wholesale goods and services (34%), other (31%), construction (15%), transportation (14%), accommodation and food services (4%), and specialty services (2%)<sup>65</sup>.

Figure 11 illustrates total annual hires for the duration of the project broken down by Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal, and Non-Aboriginal hires. As predicted, Northern Aboriginal employment was greater relative to non-Aboriginal employment for the majority of the first stage of the project. This trend was reversed in the second stage due to the need for more designated trades workers and workers at a higher level of apprenticeship in this stage.

During the 2009/10 fiscal year, workers on the project peaked at just under 1100 workers on site<sup>66</sup>, which greatly exceeded the EIS prediction of 540 workers at peak. As illustrated in Figure 11, it was also at this time that the relative difference between the number of Northern Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal hires was greatest. This difference was more pronounced than expected due to the advancement of the project schedule, which significantly increased the demand for labour on the project. More workers were needed overall; however, the supply of job qualified Northern Aboriginal job seekers available was fixed<sup>67</sup>. As a result, there were more non-Aboriginal workers hired than anticipated and therefore a much higher ratio of non-Aboriginal to Northern Aboriginal hires.

Figure 11: Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal, and Non-Aboriginal hires



Source: Hydro CED: Wuskwatim G.S. Project Construction Employment by Contract reports (fiscal 2006 to fiscal 2013). Data is as at December 31, 2013.

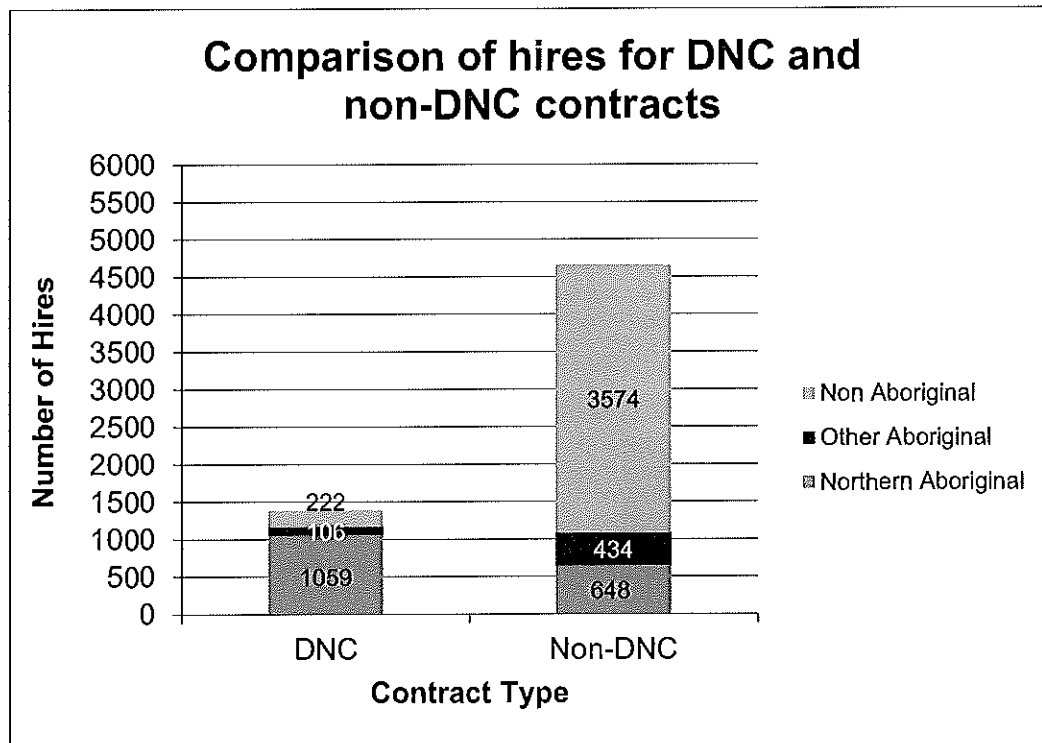
<sup>65</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership. (March 31, 2011). *Monitoring overview 2010-2011*.

<sup>66</sup> Source: Hydro Wuskwatim employment data.

<sup>67</sup> Information provided by NCN and cited in the EIS indicated approximately 200 individuals residing at NCN and South Indian Lake (local region for Wuskwatim) as potential sources of construction and construction support workers. Local labour force statistics as at 1996 indicated a total potential labour force in the Northern Region of 33,505 individuals; however, the labour force participation rate for the region was only 60.8%

Figure 12 illustrates the demographic breakdown of hires on the project for DNC and non-DNC contracts at Wuskwatim. As indicated, among Aboriginal workers, the number of hires was split approximately equally between DNC and non-DNC contracts. Hires of Northern Aboriginal workers were greater for DNC contracts than for non-DNC contracts. As anticipated, direct negotiated contracts were noted by NCN and Hydro planners and implementers to have provided the greatest number of employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal workers. Compared to non-Aboriginal hires, Northern Aboriginal hires were much more likely to work on DNC contracts (76% of the total DNC hires), and much less likely to work on non-DNC contracts (14% of the total non-DNC hires).

Figure 12: Comparison of hires for DNC and non-DNC contracts

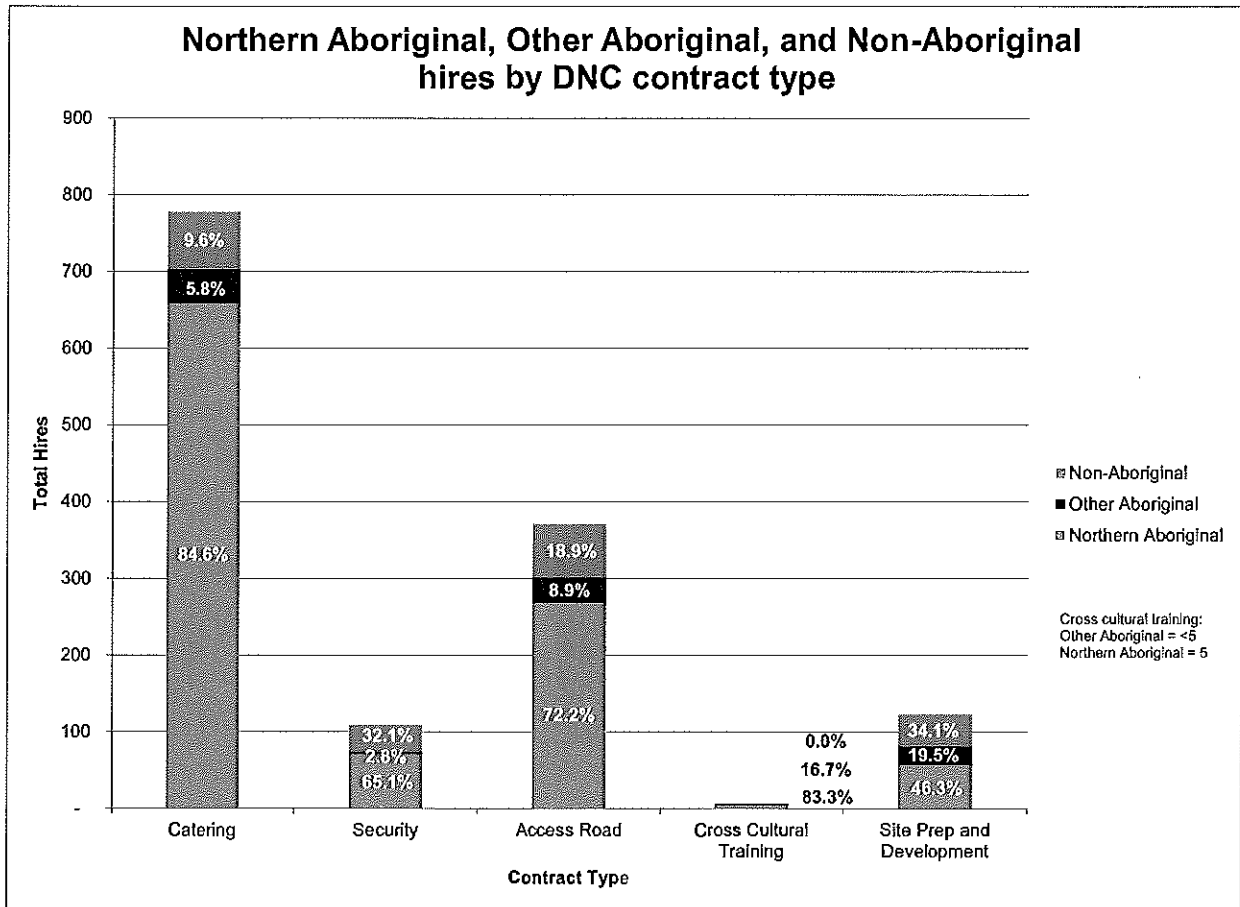


Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

\*Note: "Hires" represents the number of times an individual has been hired.

Figure 13 illustrates the breakdown of employment for each of the five DNCs. As indicated, Northern Aboriginal workers comprised the largest portion of hires for each of the contracts with Northern Aboriginal hires comprising 85% of catering contract hires, 65% of security contract hires, 72% of access road contract hires, close to 100% of the cross cultural contract hires and 46% of site prep and development contract hires.

Figure 13: Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal hires by DNC contract type

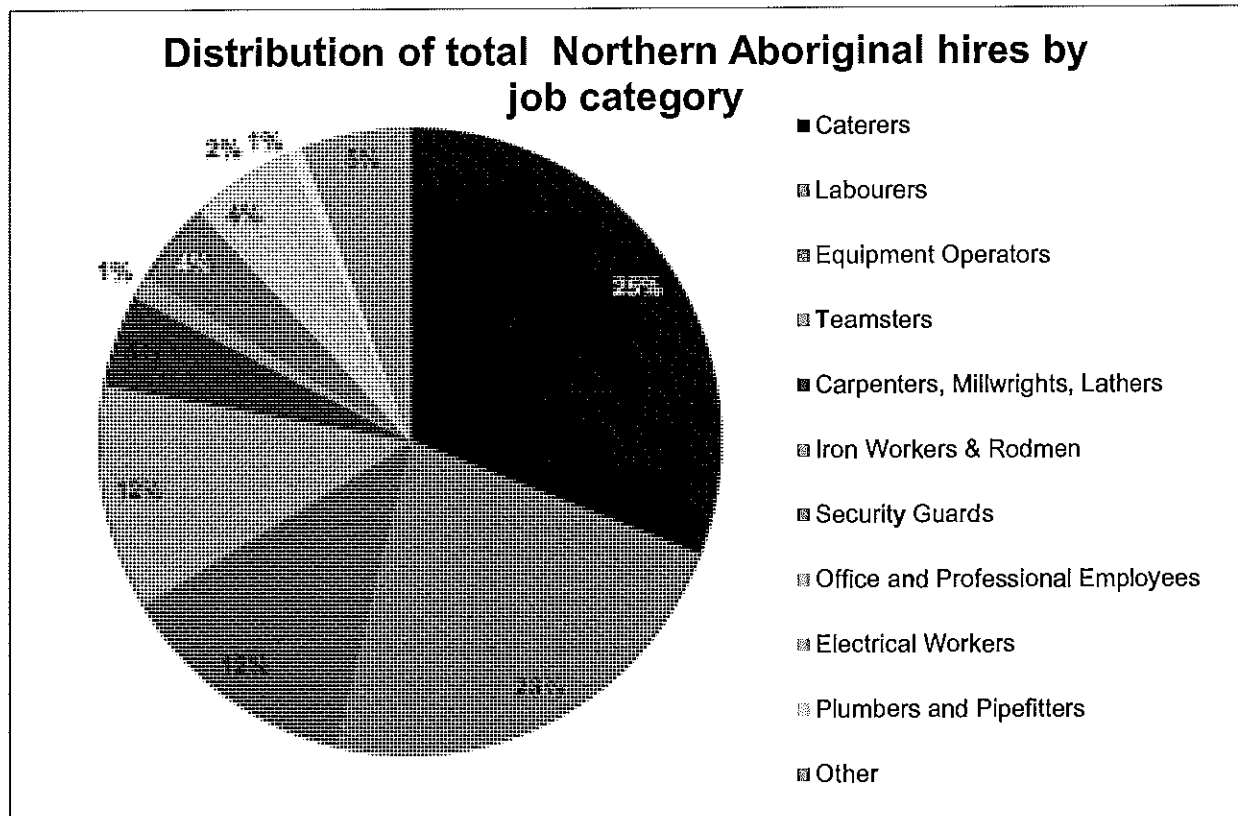


Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

\*Note: "Hires" represents the number of times an individual has been hired.

Figure 14 shows the type of work undertaken by Northern Aboriginal hires across all job categories.. As indicated, Northern Aboriginal workers were employed in a variety of positions related to construction support, designated and non-designated trades. The majority of Northern Aboriginal hires were employed as caterers and labourers.

Figure 14: Distribution of Total Northern Aboriginal hires by job category



Source: Hydro CEO as at December 31, 2012.  
 Other category refers to Sheet Metal & Roofers & Sheeters, Deckers and Cladders, Boilermakers, Plasterers & Cement Mason, Painters, Crane Operators, Management, specialist and supervisory.

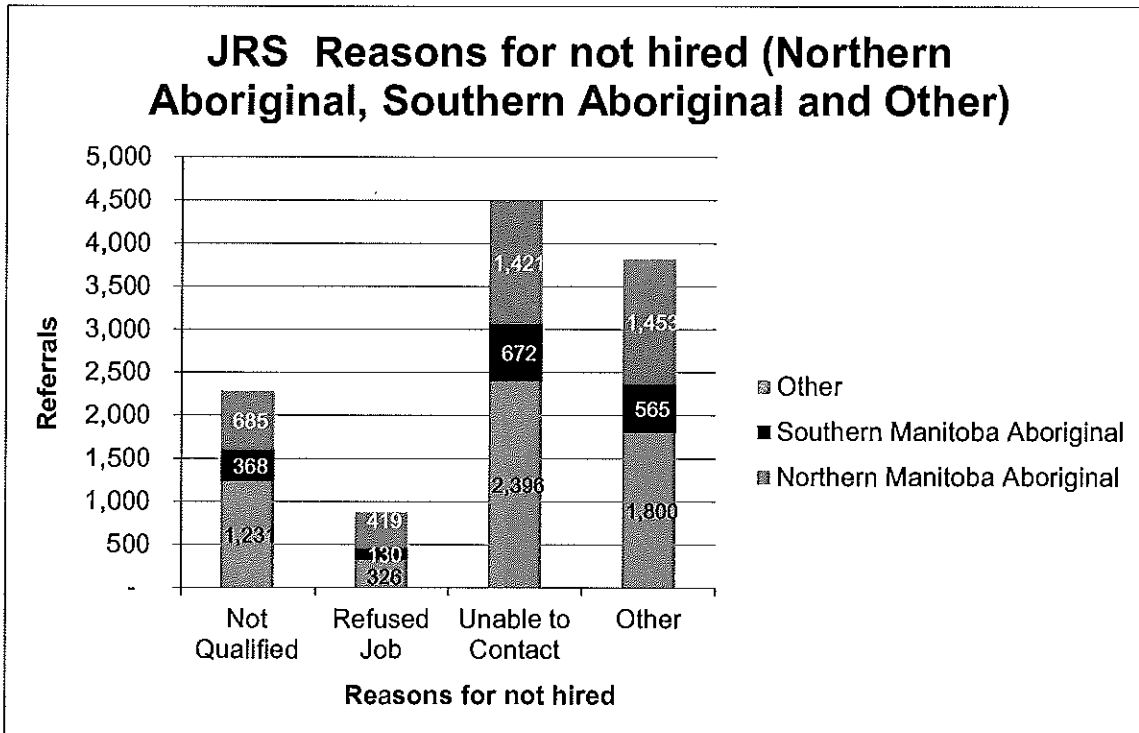
#### 4.2.2.2 Employment through the JRS

A total of 2,067 job orders were completed, and a total of 30,244 referrals were made through the JRS. These referrals resulted in 3,586 hires facilitated through the JRS of which 2,326 were from Manitoba. There were 951 Manitoba Aboriginal hires of which 565 were Manitoba Northern Aboriginal.

There were 11,466 instances where contractors called or attempted to call job seekers who were referred and these individuals subsequently were not hired. Of these instances 11,332 were from Manitoba. Of these, 7,488 were Manitoba Aboriginal job seekers, 5,753 of which were Northern Manitoba Aboriginal job seekers. The reasons for contractors not hiring referred candidates was captured in one of four categories in the JRS database. The categories included the job seeker not being considered job qualified; the job seeker refusing the job; being unable to contact then job seeker; and other. Other could be considered any other reasonable grounds identified by the contractor. The specific reasons in this category were not tracked through the JRS.

Figure 15 provides a breakdown of the reasons cited for not hiring Northern Manitoba Aboriginal job seekers who were referred through the JRS and called by the contractor. As indicated in Figure 15, 2,396 Northern Manitoba Aboriginal referrals were determined to be unsuccessful due to inability to contact, representing 42% of all Northern Aboriginal referrals not hired. This pattern was similar for total Aboriginals and total Manitobans. Challenges related to contacting job seekers are discussed further in Section 4.3.2.2 of this report.

Figure 15: JRS Northern Aboriginal, Other Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal reasons for not hired



Source: Provincial JRS database: JRS Outcomes for Total Registrants – Job Seeker Reason for Not Hired report. Data is as at January 1, 2013.

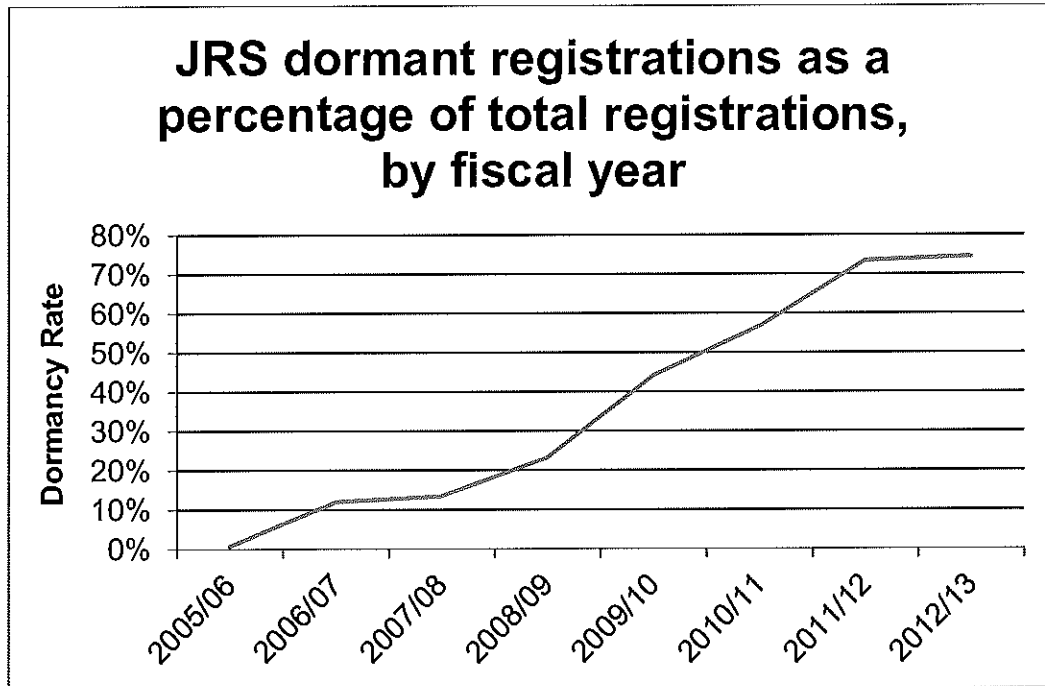
Other refers to Manitoba Non Aboriginals and all outside Manitoba (including outside Manitoba Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal)

The category of "Total Not Hired" only includes those referrals that were called. For example, there could be 10 individuals referred for a job order but only 3 contacted before an individual is hired for the job. The remaining 7 referrals would not be captured in the category of "Total Not Hired."



As noted earlier, JRS registrants were required to update their status in the system every six months to be eligible for referral. Experience on the Wuskwatim project demonstrated that a number of registrants failed to meet this requirement resulting in a significant rate of dormancy within the JRS over the life of the Project. As Figure 16 demonstrates, the rate of dormancy increased as the project progressed. There were a number of factors that contributed to this including the larger number of direct hires during the first stage of the project and the decline in demand for workers towards the end of the project. The average rate of dormancy within the JRS for the entire project was 35%. The dormancies are discussed further in Section 4.3.2.2 of this report.

Figure 16: JRS dormant registrations as a percentage of total registrations, by fiscal year



Source: Provincial JRS database: Wuskwatim Rate of Dormancy analysis report. Data is as at May, 2012 report.

### 4.2.2.3 Employment outcomes compared to EIS predictions

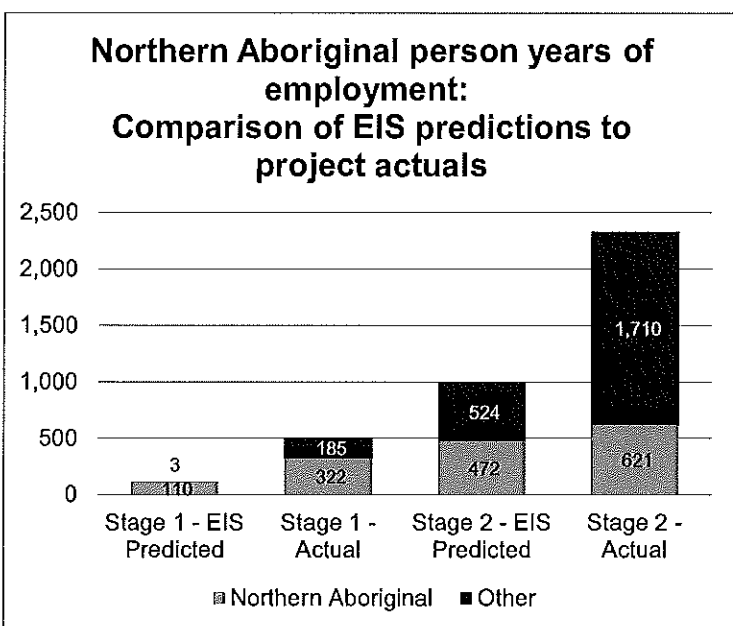
Figure 17 illustrates the actual vs. EIS predicted person years for the two stages of construction. The Wuskwatim EIS predicted the project would contribute 1,109.1 person years of employment to the Manitoba economy. Of this employment, it was predicted that 113.2 person years would be generated during Stage 1 of construction (infrastructure development), and 995.9 person years would be generated during Stage 2 of construction (general civil contract). Northern Aboriginal workers were predicted to contribute 110 person years (97%) of employment during Stage 1 and between 396 (40%) to 547.8 (55%) person years of employment during Stage 2. The EIS predictions excluded Manitoba Hydro and supervisory positions on site.

As noted above, from the start of construction to November 30, 2012, direct employment created on the project amounted to 2,859 person years. Construction monitoring of employment impacts includes Manitoba Hydro and supervisory positions in the analysis, which differed from the EIS approach where these positions were excluded from the analysis. Of the total 2,859 person years of employment, the Northern Aboriginal contribution was 322 person years during Stage 1, nearly tripling the original projections. The relative rate of Northern Aboriginal participation during this time was lower than predicted at 64% of the total compared to the predicted 97%. During Stage 2, employment data indicated that Northern Aboriginal person years totalled 621, once again exceeding the EIS projections. Again, however, Northern Aboriginal participation comprised 27% of the total during this stage, as compared to the predicted 40% to 55%.

The discrepancy between the Wuskwatim EIS predictions and the actual employment results can largely be attributed to the advancement of the project schedule, the impacts of which are described above. A small portion of this discrepancy is likely attributed to methodological differences in the analysis between EIS predictions and project monitoring, including the inclusion of Manitoba Hydro and supervisory positions (as noted above) as well as slight differences in how a person year was defined.

Employment opportunities in the first stage were predominantly for non-designated trades work (e.g. labourers, heavy equipment operators, vehicle drivers). In the second stage of the project, employment opportunities for designated trades workers, including carpenters, electricians and ironworkers, greatly increased as the main general civil works contract got underway. Opportunities for non-designated trades work remained in the second stage, but comprised a much lower proportion of the total opportunities than in the first stage of the project. In sum, total Northern Aboriginal person years of employment on the project greatly exceeded predictions, but made up a smaller proportion of the total person years worked overall than was anticipated.

Figure 17: Comparison of EIS predictions to project actuals



Source: Manitoba Hydro Comparison of EIS Person Year Estimates to Project Actuals. EIS predictions excluded Manitoba Hydro staff and contractor supervisory and management positions. Project actuals are as at November 30, 2012 and include all on-site employees, including supervisory and management positions. Where EIS prediction ranges were provided, the mean of the range was used.

Note: The person years estimates for Wuskwalim Construction may be understated as a full validation of the employee database had not been completed at the time of this report

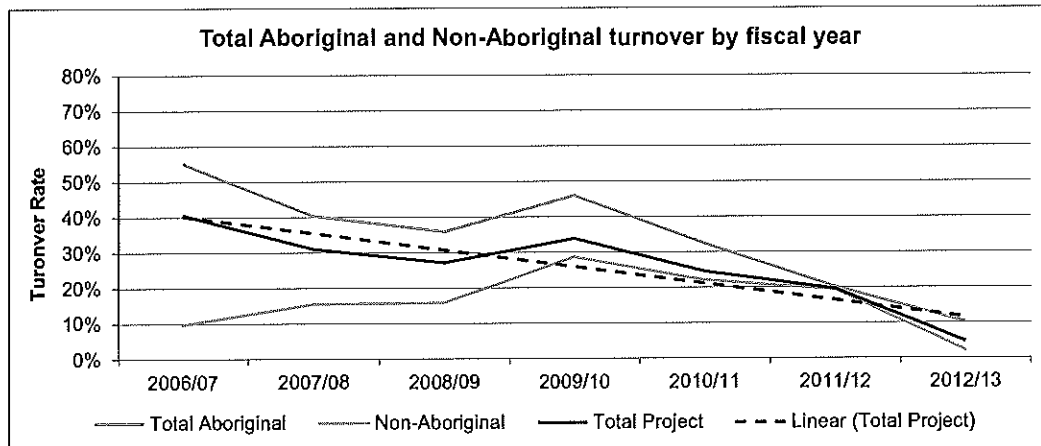
### 4.2.3 Retention

Figures provided by Hydro indicate that from project inception to December 31, 2012, there were 1,712 occurrences where employees were discharged or resigned. This represents a rate of turnover of 29% of total hires.<sup>68</sup> The majority of turnover (73%) on the job site comprised resignations as opposed to discharges. A resignation represents an individual choosing to leave a job and does not include layoffs.<sup>69</sup>

Of the 1,712 occurrences where employees were discharged or resigned, 846 reported being of Aboriginal descent and 696 reported being of Northern Aboriginal descent. This represents a 38% rate of turnover among Aboriginal hires and a 41% rate of turnover among Northern Aboriginal hires.

Figure 18 illustrates the annual rate of turnover for hires at Wuskwatim over the course of the project. As indicated, the turnover rate for Aboriginal workers was highest in 2006/07 and rose again in 2009/10. While the rates are higher for Aboriginal workers than for non-Aboriginal workers, the overall trend was fairly similar. **In 2009/10 Aboriginal as well as non-Aboriginal turnover spiked. It was during this time in the construction project that the number of workers on site also peaked.** The combined rather than separate turnover rates for Northern Aboriginal and Other Aboriginal workers are presented in this analysis due to the small population of Other Aboriginal workers in certain years.

Figure 18: Total Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal turnover by fiscal year



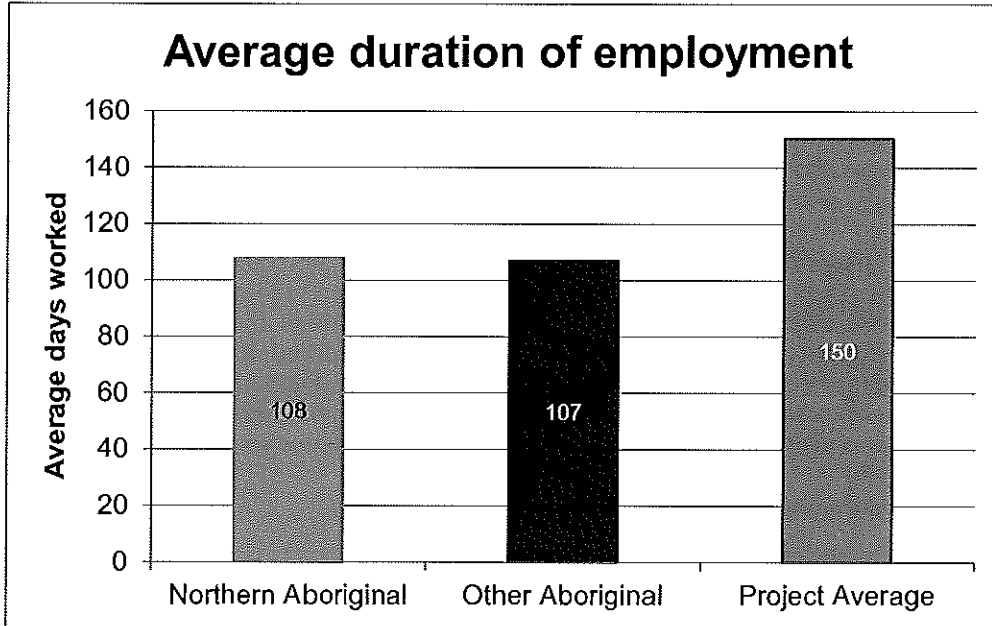
Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

<sup>68</sup>Turnover is calculated as the total incidences of discharges and resignations divided by total hires. The total number of resignations has been corrected to exclude circumstances where an individual left a position but was rehired to improve their job level on-site. These situations are different and unique from other forms of being re-hired on the job site and are the product of administrative processes.

<sup>69</sup>Source: Hydro CED.

As indicated in Figure 19 the average duration of employment for Northern Aboriginal and Other Aboriginal workers was lower than the project average. Turnover among Aboriginal workers is discussed in greater detail in the qualitative findings section of this report (Section 4.3).

Figure 19: Average duration of employment

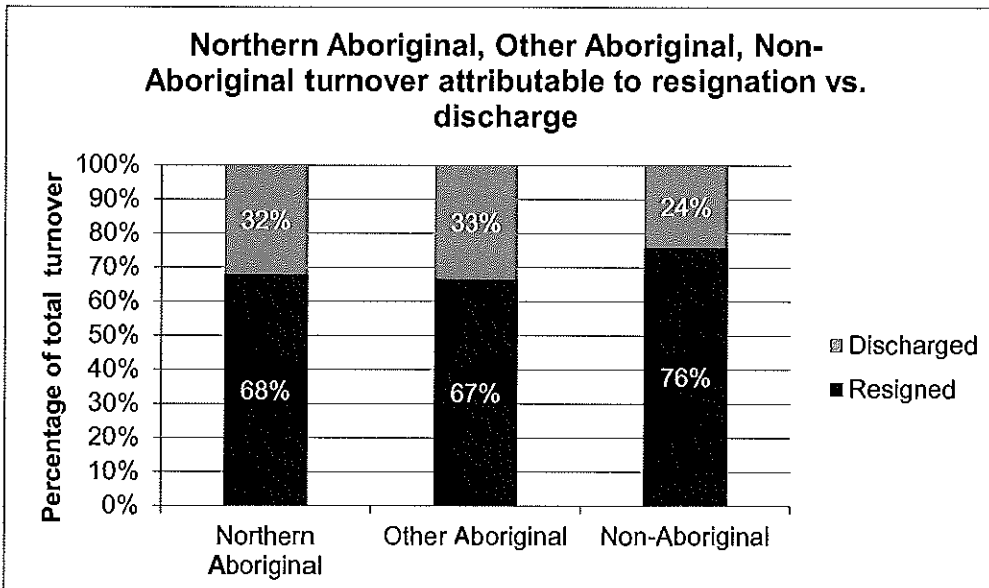


Source: Hydro CED: as at December 31, 2012.

"Duration" has been calculated as Days/Employees, where "Employees" is the number of individuals that have been hired to date. Each individual is counted once regardless of the number of times an individual has been hired.

Figure 20 demonstrates the majority of turnover on the project was due to resignations as opposed to discharges. In other words, most employee turnover was associated with employees choosing to leave the job site. Potential reasons for the high rate of resignation are discussed in Section 4.4 of this report.

Figure 20: Resignation and discharge turnover



Source: Hydro CED as at December 31, 2012.

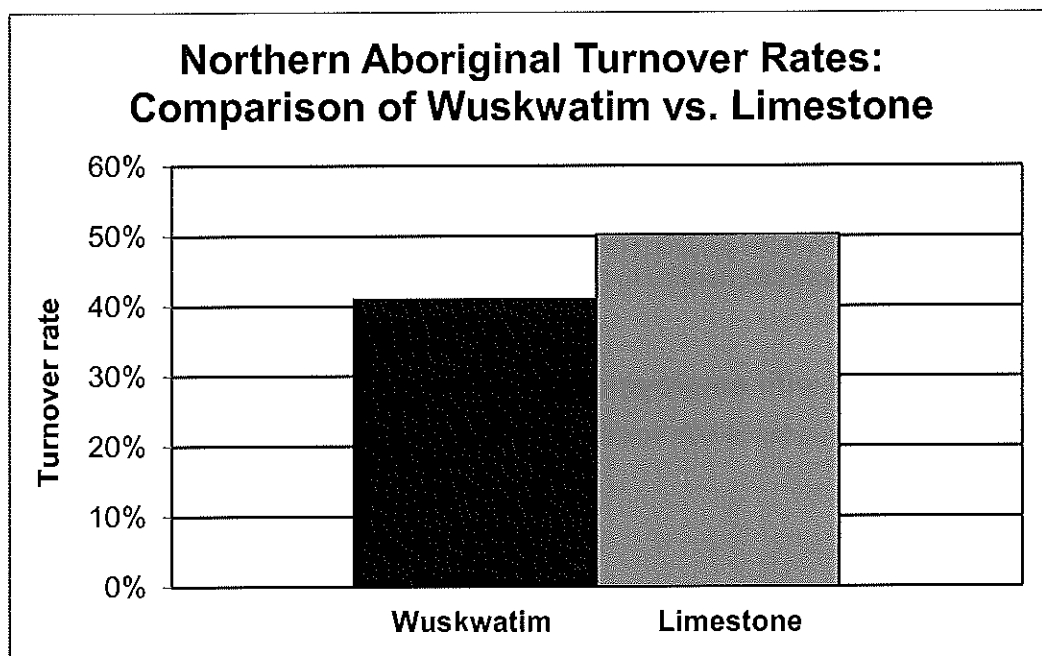
There were a number of instances on the project where employees who resigned or were discharged returned to work on the project (were re-hired). As of December 31, 2012, this occurred 292 times on the project (17% of total resignations and discharges).<sup>70</sup> Aboriginal employees who were discharged or resigned were more likely to be re-hired (22%) relative to non-Aboriginal employees (13%).

#### 4.2.4 Comparison to Limestone

Overall, Wuskwatim achieved slightly greater Northern Aboriginal employment participation than Limestone. Northern Aboriginal hires at Wuskwatim represented 28% of total hires whereas at Limestone, Northern Aboriginal hires represented 25% of the total number of hires.<sup>71</sup>

As illustrated in Figure 21 turnover rates on Wuskwatim were lower than Limestone. The average rate of turnover among Northern Aboriginal hires on the Wuskwatim project was 41% compared to 50% on Limestone, representing a 9% reduction. At Limestone there was a higher rate of resignation for Northern Aboriginal workers than at Wuskwatim (38% compared to 27%). Rates of discharge remained the same across the two projects. Aboriginal turnover rates for Limestone were not available and therefore are not included in the comparative data analyses.

Figure 21: Northern Aboriginal turnover rates: comparison of Wuskwatim vs. Limestone



Source: Hydro CED, Internal Audit Report: Limestone Project – Retrospective Review (June 1990). Wuskwatim turnover data is as at December 31, 2012 and includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone turnover data excludes supervisory and management positions. Wuskwatim hires data includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone hires data excludes supervisory and management positions.

<sup>70</sup> Source: Hydro employment statistics.

<sup>71</sup> Source: Hydro CED, Internal Audit Report: Limestone Project – Retrospective Review (June 1990). Wuskwatim turnover data is as at December 31, 2012 and includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone turnover data excludes supervisory and management positions. Wuskwatim hires data includes supervisory and management positions, Limestone hires data excludes supervisory and management positions.

### 4.3 Qualitative findings: Employment services

Qualitative findings are based on information, perspectives and opinions derived through secondary sources such as existing reports and documents, and primary sources such as interviews and focus groups with planners, implementers and participants. Qualitative findings related to recruitment, selection, layoffs and recalls are presented in the following sections:

- Relevance and need for employment services
- Delivery experience with employment services
- Performance of employment services

#### 4.3.1 Relevance and need for employment services

Low employment participation rates of Northern Aboriginal workers and high turnover relative to non-Aboriginal workers on Limestone pointed to the need for supports at Wuskwatim to increase employment and retention outcomes. Planners interviewed from NCN also commented that employment retention services were a critical issue in the negotiations leading up to the signing of the AIP and PDA.

Employers needed experienced, qualified workers for the project, and were focused on completion of the project on time and on budget. Planners and implementers from Hydro and contractors as well as the union indicated that recruiting the required number of experienced, qualified workers for the project would be difficult and that supports would be required on site to ensure Northern Aboriginal workers were retained for the duration of their position.

As noted earlier, findings from a survey of the NCN community<sup>72</sup> in advance of the Project identified employment opportunities for local residents as a top priority. Planner and implementer interview and document review findings indicate employment opportunities were anticipated to be one of the key socio-economic benefits to NCN from the project. However, NCN leaders, community members and Hydro recognized that supports would be needed to reduce social and systemic barriers to employment participation and retention.

#### 4.3.2 Delivery experience with employment services

Findings related to the delivery experience with employment services are presented in the following sections:

- Participant experience
- JRS registration
- JRS referral
- Hiring Preference
- Layoffs and recalls
- Committees
- Wuskwatim Implementation Office (WIO)

##### 4.3.2.1 Participant experience

Participants were interviewed to understand their experience and perspectives regarding employment at Wuskwatim. There were 98 Northern Aboriginal participants interviewed from 4 different communities (NCN, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation and Cross Lake First Nation). While this is not a representative sample of those trained or employed through the Initiative and therefore the findings cannot be attributed to all participants, or the Initiative, overall they provide a useful sampling of different experiences on site, and relate actual employee experiences with employment and camp life.

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<sup>72</sup>Source: NCN Speaks (Winter 2000). Highlights of the NCN Opinion Survey. Future Development Newsletter (Special Edition, April 2002). Highlights from the NCN Opinion Survey in South Indian Lake.

#### 4.3.2.1.1 Participant experience working at Wuskwatim and living at camp

The following summarizes the findings when participant experiences were reviewed with consideration to their demographic profile.

Experiences were similar across the case profiles, and generally did not vary based on the nature of the work, contract, gender of the participant, or stage of the project. This was consistent with findings from the Wuskwatim Worker and Family Survey that was conducted mid-way through the project.<sup>73</sup> **Elders who worked on the project and those with previous work experience tended to report more positive work experiences overall.** Perspectives on retention supports were also consistent across profiles, but awareness tended to vary by community with NCN Citizens having a higher awareness relative to individuals from other communities. Participants appreciated that retention supports were available and those who accessed these supports generally had positive comments.

NCN Citizens generally expressed more positive and less negative experiences. Members from other communities shared more instances of racism, issues with supervisors, lack of support from the union and difficulty being away from family. **Participants from all communities highlighted camp life, amenities and pay as particularly positive aspects of their work experience.** Some stated that if given the chance to work on Wuskwatim again or to work at Keeyask they would take it.

Individuals who were employed on the project had the option of staying at the on-site camp or those who lived in close proximity to the project could commute. The vast majority of workers chose to reside at the camp. A temporary camp was constructed in the first stage of the project with the permanent main camp completed in 2009. The main camp provided accommodations for ~700 workers and included a kitchen, dining complex, restaurant/lounge, chapel, sports field and recreation facility (gymnasium, weight and exercise room, pool tables, TV and internet rooms, etc.). The cross cultural centre where retention support services were provided was located in close proximity to the main camp. Camp residents had access to the internet, telephones and cable TV. Meals and janitorial service were also provided to residents.

The vast majority of workers interviewed praised the camp facilities and generally described positive camp life experiences ("camp was almost like home", "camp was awesome", "food, rooms were always clean, no trouble in camp"), including meeting new people and being able to access recreation facility and its associated amenities.

Issues with camp partying and excessive drinking were reported by some participants as negative aspects of camp life, primarily those who lived in the temporary camp. The presence of a lounge at the main camp was seen as being helpful to limiting parties within the sleeping quarters, but some saw the lounge and associated restrictions on alcohol brought into camp as a "money grab". Others commented about issues with gossip and related challenges living in close proximity to so many people, with a few NCN Citizens indicating this prompted them to commute rather than stay at the camp site.

Workers all indicated receiving an orientation to camp and the project, which included the guide to working at Wuskwatim ("camp rules") and information on the union. Orientation was conducted by Sodexo on the first day of camp and residents were required to sign off on camp rules. Further safety orientations were conducted by contractors where camp rules were again reviewed including the consequences of not following them. Comments suggest the quality of the orientation varied with some saying they received a very thorough overview of the project, camp, union and available services from the person who oriented them, while others described just being handed written information.

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<sup>73</sup>Source: Wuskwatim Worker and Family Survey.

When asked about improvements that could be made most of the participants interviewed indicated the experience was good overall and had no suggestions. Those that did have suggestions commonly indicated **removing alcohol from the site, better transportation to and from the site, hiring more Aboriginal workers and less out of province workers/French speaking workers**. One person who resigned due to family obligations indicated having family visits on site would have been a positive opportunity for them and enhanced their work experience. Suggestions were made to improve retention supports **by including information on non-Aboriginal cultures in the cross cultural training content, ensuring training sessions were accessible to those working night shifts, having AA counselors to support workers with substance abuse, and enhanced communications on the purpose and details of ceremonies**.

Specific experiences of participants from the profiles identified are presented below. These profiles include participants that resigned, were discharged or that completed their term on site.

#### *4.3.2.1.2 Experiences of participants who resigned*

Participant interviews identified that resignations occurred on the project for a variety of reasons, with medical conditions being the most commonly reported. Other reasons noted included:

- Injury on the job.
- Workload – “walked out” because needed extra staff – asked boss to hire additional person, but didn’t happen.
- Commuting costs to and from the job site.
- Did not get along with manager/supervisor/boss/coworkers.
- Take home pay after taxes not worth it – “after taxes taken off, I might as well have been working in the community”.
- Family responsibilities – hard to be away, family pressure to return home.
- One person reported quitting due to a medical problem with their knees after requesting but being refused knee pads and light duty work.
- Another person reported quitting due to the requirement to wear steel toed boots. The individual noted that medical issues with their feet made wearing the boots painful. A request was made to the supervisor to wear alternative footwear, but was denied.

Participants were asked if they attempted to contact their supervisor or union prior to quitting. Many indicated they did approach their boss and/or the union, but neither was supportive nor helpful.

When participants who resigned were asked about their experience working at Wuskwatim many reported “a good experience overall”. Positive aspects to working included camp life/facilities/food, good pay, learning a lot and a “good experience overall”. Few negative aspects were reported by NCN Citizens interviewed other than being away from family and drinking at camp. As is noted further in the report in Section 4.4.1, these responses differed from those captured by NCN during the worker and family survey or the post blockade NCN interviews where there were indications of several concerns noted.. Members from other communities highlighted issues with their supervisor, the work schedule and long work hours as well as issues with the French speaking workers/racism.

#### *4.3.2.1.3 Experiences of participants who were discharged*

The most common reason reported by participants for being discharged was transportation issues (e.g. inability for worker to get back to the work site at the required time). This issue was irrespective of whether the person worked early vs. late in the project. Many reported that they did not have a reliable ride back to the job site. Other commonly reported reasons noted included:

- Being late – individuals who reported this as a reason acknowledged this was not a one off occurrence as they were “late frequently”.
- One person who worked early in the project reported being terminated while attending to a medical issue, indicating they reported this to their boss but when the person got back his belongings were at the gate. The termination was recorded as job abandonment, but the person reported being sick.
- Another person indicated they were terminated for excessive drinking following the loss of a co-worker.



Some individuals felt they were terminated unfairly ("I didn't show up once and got fired"). When asked if they approached the union with their concerns some indicated they did, but that the union was not helpful or that the union sided with the employer.

Those who were discharged reported positive experiences overall while they were on the job, indicating they "learned a lot", liked camp and the food in particular – "everything [at] camp was good"; there was "warm hospitality and people got along", got paid well and had "the chance to move up the ladder". Relatively few negative aspects were reported by this group. Those that did report negative aspects mainly reported drinking at camp as negative. Racism/ignorance was also cited by a few people.

#### *4.3.2.1.4 Experiences of participants who completed their position/job on site*

Those who completed a job on Wuskwatim reported positive experiences overall, particularly NCN Citizens. Positive aspects of working at Wuskwatim that were cited by this group of employees included:

- Good facilities/staying on camp and good food
- Good pay
- "Learned from older people how to work"
- Opportunity to work
- Work experience will help with other jobs
- Meeting new people
- Coworkers/boss ("worked with a good team")
- Cross cultural training
- Availability of on-site counseling

Negative aspects of working at Wuskwatim provided by those who completed jobs included:

- Being away from family
- Racism and tensions with French speaking workers (reported more often by those outside of NCN)
- Concern was expressed by four participants that "zero tolerance rules were not enforced":
  - One person gave an example of being threatened by French speaking coworkers who were angry that Aboriginal workers did not have to pay taxes
  - Examples were also provided of racial slurs such as calling Aboriginal employees "Chief"
- Alcohol and drugs/loud parties
- Long work schedules (30-35 days on, 7 off)
- 24-hr leave ("transportation – coming home, you only come for a day")
- Language barriers
- Issues with supervisors – predominantly reported by those outside of NCN (e.g. supervisor did not listen to their concerns, supervisor disciplined them in public/had no discretion)

#### *4.3.2.1.5 Participant experience of those who rejected a job offer*

Of those interviewed within the “rejecting a job offer” category, some participants indicated they did not refuse work however they had been categorized as rejecting a job offer. The reasons for the discrepancy have not been investigated. For example, some NCN Citizens, who were identified to have refused work on the project, reported they never received a call about an opportunity. Job opportunities were also reported to have been missed due to missed calls from contractors. One person indicated they called back within 5 minutes but the job had already been filled.

#### *4.3.2.2 JRS registration*

The JRS facilitated the registration of job orders and the registration and referral of job seekers for Wuskwatim. Planners and implementers from Employment Manitoba indicated that a number of sessions were provided in northern Manitoba communities to build awareness of the JRS, and the registration process for work at Wuskwatim. This was confirmed by participants who indicated not only were presentations done to build awareness, but that advertising on local radio stations also encouraged participation. All participants interviewed were aware of the need to register or ‘apply’ for work at Wuskwatim with many indicating they heard of this through word of mouth. Most also knew they had to renew their registration, particularly those who worked mid-late in the project (“I was sent a reminder notice”). There was some confusion on how often participants needed to renew with a handful of people indicating they thought it was annually rather than every six months. Others reported they let their registration lapse after not being called for work within a year or so.

Access to registering with the JRS was facilitated through a number of different channels. Job seekers could apply in person with any Employment Manitoba Service Centre, online, by mail or by fax. In person access was further increased through the use of Job Seeker Managers. Of the participants interviewed who registered with the JRS, all indicated registration was relatively straightforward, and help was available if needed (“ATEC staff helped”, “registered in Thompson. Staff [were] helpful.”).

It was noted, however, **there was a perception by some participants from NCN and Cross Lake that local service providers (Job Seeker Managers) did not have as much knowledge of the job opportunities available at Wuskwatim and were not able to provide as much assistance as the staff at the Employment Centre in Thompson.** Job Seeker Managers were not Employment Manitoba employees, but were trained on the JRS. Planners and implementers from NCN also indicated there was a lack of clarity in the community regarding the role of the Job Seeker Managers and by whom they were employed.

A small number of individuals commented that providing proof of residency was difficult as they did not have the required paperwork because the Band paid the bills and therefore residents do not have bill statements, which can be used to prove place of residence. Some suggested that being able to access information in Cree would have been helpful, and a few noted they were unaware of the six month renewal requirement.

#### *4.3.2.3 JRS referral*

“Referrals” in the context of Wuskwatim are those job seekers screened as job qualified, and whose names were provided to employers for consideration. There could be a number of referrals for one job order.

Article 12 of the BNA provides Employment Manitoba up to 48 hours from the receipt of the job order (exclusive of Saturday, Sunday and holidays) to refer qualified job seekers from the BNA first preference to the contractor. If the contractor is unable to hire from the referral listing from the first order of preference, the union has 48 hours to provide a list of candidates from the second stage of referrals.

Representatives from employer groups noted that the job order/referral process was helpful in that it was a **good screening tool** and provided them with a list of job seekers from which to recruit. The time that the process took due to the preference stages and long lists of referred job seekers for some positions, however, was **noted as a bottleneck and had a negative impact on efficiency**. Examples were provided of instances where the qualifications of the referred candidates had not been accurately verified. With respect to referrals, interviews and research revealed there were three key factors that may have negatively impacted referral and selection of Northern Aboriginal candidates:

- 1. Job Qualification Matching:** The process for matching job seekers' identified skills with those required by employers as submitted on a job order was automated through the JRS system. Job seeker skills and employment experience were captured on a standardized form (skills profile form) that had prepopulated fields for job seekers to check off based on skills and experience related to a specific occupation (e.g. Millwright), which were derived from the National Occupational Classification (NOC) database. Employers completed a similar job order form in which they checked off skills and experience required for a given position on the project. System matches were based on information "checked off" by job seekers and employers. Participants, planners and implementers noted that this **matching process presented a number of challenges**. First, in certain cases, job seekers whose qualifications exceeded those required in the job order were not referred. An example was provided of a position that required a specific motor vehicle license. The job seeker held a higher level license than required and therefore met the licensing qualification for the position. However, the job seeker's name was not returned from the search as the specific license requested was a "Class 5" and the job seeker held a "Class 1". An additional example was provided by NCN of a journeyman carpenter with industrial experience not being matched and instead being placed in a training program at an apprentice pay rate. This matching issue was noted by participants as well as NCN planners and implementers and was documented in the ACE minutes reviewed as part of this evaluation. Second, the matching process was dependant on "ticking the right boxes". If job seekers did not accurately reflect their skills by selecting the appropriate NOC codes, they were not referred. Support was available to those who sought assistance, but as indicated the level of support varied by location.
- 2. Ability to Contact Job Seekers:** The inability to contact job seekers for interviews was noted as a challenge in the referral process by contractors and Hydro planners and implementers. In order to be contacted, job seekers required a telephone number. In a number of cases, job seekers did not have a telephone number, did not have an answering machine, and/or did not have a mobile telephone, making contact difficult. Contractors were under pressure to fill positions quickly to adhere to project timelines, and if a job seeker did not answer the phone, they moved to the next name on the list. As a result there was a perception among some participants and NCN planners and implementers that potentially qualified Northern Aboriginal candidates missed out on employment opportunities. For NCN, amendments to the rules allowed for an alternate number to be provided, and staff at ATEC as well as the WIO provided their telephone number for contact information and would locate the individuals in the community when an employer called. This was seen to have made some improvement on the referral process.
- 3. Registration Dormancy:** The requirement to renew registrations every six months also proved problematic for many job seekers. To ensure qualifications and contact information was up to date, job seekers were required to renew their registration semi-annually, or the registration became dormant and therefore ineligible for referral. While the vast majority of those interviewed who registered through JRS were aware of the requirement for renewal, the dormancy activity would suggest this might not be representative of the larger population. Based on statistics provided by JRS, an average of 35% of registrations were dormant throughout the project and the number of dormancies increased as the work progressed. Planners and implementers indicated this increase was not surprising as the nature of the work and required qualifications changed. High rates of dormancy toward the end of the project are also not unexpected given the project was drawing to a close and fewer individuals would have been interested in working on the project and therefore maintaining their registration status. Several factors may have contributed to these dormancies beyond lack of awareness of the requirement including finding work elsewhere, no longer being interested in a position at Wuskwatim, or no longer being qualified for the type of work available. While it is not possible to quantitatively determine the impact of the requirement to renew on the referral process, available data suggests dormancy numbers were significant and because of this it is likely that some qualified job seekers missed employment opportunities. In order to overcome this barrier, ATEC took measures including having staff issue reminders to job seekers whose registrations were expiring to encourage renewal and hiring additional resources to update

registrations. Interviews with staff at the Employment Centres indicated that Employment Manitoba also made an effort to remind expiring job seekers to renew. It is worth noting that despite the renewal requirement, contractors reported that out of date job seeker contact information was an issue. This suggests the renewal requirement did not necessarily result in better or more up to date job seeker contact information.

Some of the individuals who were referred through the JRS and were offered employment refused the job offer. Common reasons for refusing job offers were due to already having a job or being unwilling to give up a current permanent position for a short term one on the project. Other reasons cited included wages not being competitive – “BNA rates are outdated”, family obligations or inadequate time to make necessary family arrangements before reporting immediately to the job site. (“I couldn’t just pick up and leave”). One person interviewed indicated they did not refuse work, but were told by the employer over the phone they didn’t have the required experience and felt this was not true – felt they were refused work by employer due to racism.

#### **4.3.2.4 Hiring preference**

It was suggested employers were able to use job qualifications to move quickly through the preferences to facilitate named hiring by requiring higher level or more specific skills than necessary. Planners and implementers interviewed from Hydro, NCN and government expressed the concern that some contractors would use skills to reduce the number of “job qualified” job seekers referred from the JRS, particularly from the first two stages in order to name a specific hire following exhaustion of all six preference categories. This issue was also facilitated by provisions in the BNA that allows contractors to reject candidates if they are deemed not job qualified. Some NCN planners and implementers and Aboriginal Partners interviewed felt that too much emphasis was placed on commercial work experience by contractors, and may have been used as a mechanism to by-pass the preferential hiring process.

#### **4.3.2.5 Layoffs and recalls**

Section 12.4.1.1 of the BNA stipulates the order of lay-off, which is in the reverse order of the hiring preference and supports retention of workers from the priority categories. Section 12.4.1.2, however, allows for an exception to this order *“when an employee to whom continuing employment preference is intended is not job qualified to perform the remaining work or whose overall skills, abilities, or work performance, in the judgment of the Contractor, compares less favourably to the overall skills, abilities, or work performance of others similarly employed”*.

It was noted by both Hydro and union planners and implementers that this provision allowed the contractor to layoff whomever they wanted, as long the contractor determined the worker being retained had better skills, abilities or work performance than those being laid off. Employers were able to retain name hires (Hires made following exhaustion of all six preference categories) and layoff those from the previous three stages (i.e. Northern Aboriginal residents, union members and Manitobans). Name hires under the BNA Article 12.1.1.7 are those individuals directly recruited and hired by the contractor to fill positions where a) job order vacancies remain after following the procedures set out in Article 12.1.1.1 to 12.1.1.6; or b) persons referred pursuant to Article 12.1.1.5 and Article 12.1.1.6 do not report to the Project Site within the stipulated time period.

Planners and implementers from Hydro, NCN and the union indicated the BNA allows for out of province workers to be rehired from layoffs before workers hired from the preference. The Lay-Off Subject to Recall provisions (Section 12.4.2 of BNA) stipulates that workers can be recalled within 120 days of layoff. This allows contractors to bring back skilled/trained workers as quickly as possible, regardless of the BNA preference tier they were hired from. However, this means that if a skilled worker, who was not subject to recall, from a higher preference group becomes available during the four month period, they may not be given the preference for employment.

In addition, analysis of the layoff and recall provisions in the BNA Section 12.4.2.3 reveals the preference order can be overlooked when all employees of a similar classification from a collective work assignment are to be hired back within 28 days of the first re-hire. This means out of province workers can be hired back first, as long as all employees in the group are brought back within 28 days giving them a longer employment term.

Stakeholders from Hydro noted that the Hydro Projects Management Association (HPMA), at the direction of Manitoba Hydro, negotiated the following interpretation with the union regarding interpretation of Article 12.4.2 of the BNA. First, the length of the recall period was reduced from 120 days to 60 days. Second, the HPMA directed all Wuskwatim contractors to suspend the application of Article 12.4.2.3 thereby requiring all Wuskwatim contractors to recall all employees in order of hiring preference regardless of the 28 day provision. All contractors would have to recall from the previous three stages (i.e. Northern Aboriginal residents, union members and Manitobans) before recalling name hired employees). This was issued to all Wuskwatim Contractors on June 6, 2010.

#### **4.3.2.6 Committees**

##### **4.3.2.6.1 Advisory Committee on Employment (ACE)**

ACE had a broad mandate related to employment concerns at Wuskwatim. As a result, **interpretations differed across planner and implementer groups**. NCN planners and implementers expressed that issues they felt were within the mandate were often "blocked" or redirected by the committee. Examples were provided of issues pertaining to safety concerns due to language barriers and racism, which were brought forward as employment issues but were not addressed by the committee. This lack of responsiveness was noted by NCN planners and implementers to have been a contributing factor to the blockade. Review of the minutes and comments from non-NCN committee representatives suggest a more narrow mandate interpretation; ACE was viewed as a forum for discussing specific complaints related to the hiring process (pre-employment) and complaints were only reviewed if provided in writing and included specific information such as job order numbers.

A review of the minutes of the inaugural meeting of ACE indicated that the committee mandate was communicated to be "to monitor and address concerns about the referral and hiring process, including job order review."<sup>74</sup> Broad or overarching employment issues do not appear to have been addressed by the committee. These types of employment issues were under the jurisdiction of the Allied Hydro Council. Some NCN planners and implementers suggested the committee should have had a broader mandate and taken a more proactive approach to identifying and mitigating employment issues rather than specific complaints.

**Some NCN planners and implementers reported that ACE met too infrequently to address employment issues in a timely manner.** By the time issues were resolved it was felt the employment opportunities in question had come and gone. The ACE minutes validate this concern and indicate that at times several months elapsed before an issue brought to the committee was resolved and closed. It should be noted, however, that other NCN planners and implementers as well as Hydro planners and implementers expressed a different view. Issue resolution was seen by them as being timely overall, and it was noted that Chairs addressed issues between scheduled meetings if required.

The overall structure of ACE was seen as appropriate by both Hydro and NCN, with the right groups represented. However, some NCN and Hydro planners and implementers commented the committee lacked decision making authority. Some NCN planners and implementers indicated the committee should have reported directly to the General Partner Board.

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<sup>74</sup> Source: Draft minutes from ACE committee meeting December 15, 2005.

**Initial challenges between committee representatives were reported to have detracted from achievement of the ACE mandate.** While Hydro planners and implementers felt that committee representation changes improved the effectiveness of the committee in addressing and resolving employment issues, some NCN planners and implementers felt the committee had lost its credibility by the time changes were put in place. Inconsistent representation and participation by NCN Citizens on the ACE committee was noted by some of the committee representatives/observers. This was seen as impacting the effectiveness of the committee as additional time was devoted to revisiting issues.

NCN planners and implementers noted that there were concerns regarding the lack of availability and responsiveness of the AHC representative at the ACE committee.

Comments by Hydro planners and implementers indicate the ACE Chair played a critical role in resolving complaints due to the person's capacity in other roles (e.g. as an HPMA advisor). This was important as ACE had no decision making authority but, through the Chair's involvement in other roles, certain issues were able to be addressed, or resolved in a timelier manner.

#### *4.3.2.6.2 Construction Advisory Committee (CAC)*

Both Hydro and NCN planners and implementers indicated the CAC committee functioned effectively. **A broad interpretation of the CAC mandate appears to have been taken based on planner and implementer comments.** This was done to encourage open dialogue and resolution of issues between Hydro and NCN. However this makes it difficult to assess whether the mandate was achieved. Comments from planners and implementers from Hydro and NCN indicate that CAC met their mandate in relation to training and employment responsibilities.

#### *4.3.2.6.3 Monitoring Advisory Committee (MAC)*

**Planners and implementers indicated that the MAC mandate was clear and was followed,** roles and responsibilities were documented and understood and there was clear communication back to committee members on decisions made in light of committee recommendations to the board. It was noted by planners and implementers from Hydro and NCN that MAC appeared to meet its mandate as it related to economic monitoring, specifically employment reporting.

#### *4.3.2.6.4 AdHoc Committee on Employment*

The committee appears to have undertaken the activities required to implement the 18 commitments, based on the available documentation and NCN comments. Few comments were made by planners and implementers on the activities conducted by the AdHoc committee.

It was noted by NCN planners and implementers that this committee was felt to be more effective than ACE as it was felt the credibility of ACE had been lost.

#### *4.3.2.7 Wuskwatim Implementation Office (WIO)*

Implementers interviewed indicated that employees would often come to the WIO with any issues related to the project rather than using the established channels. In some cases this was due to a lack of awareness of where to go, and in other cases it was due to a level of comfort in speaking to people they knew. Implementers also noted that employees expressed concerns about a lack of responsiveness and an inability to contact the AHC representative at Wuskwatim. It was described that there seemed to be an unwillingness to address leaves for family and medical reasons.

In addition to ATEC, WIO staff also supported efforts to facilitate contact with applicants for Wuskwatim and would provide their phone number as contacts for prospective employers.

Hydro, NCN implementers and participants also indicated that the WIO was instrumental in building awareness of the opportunities for PPT as well as employment opportunities at Wuskwatim. Project information was regularly communicated to the NCN community through the WIO (e.g. through WIO newsletters and posters).

### 4.3.3 Performance of employment services

The processes and structures described in delivery all contributed to the achievement of employment outcomes at Wuskwatim. The discussion of performance will address the overall outcomes that have been presented and how delivery may have impacted outcomes where applicable.

This section provides qualitative findings regarding the performance of employment services and is summarized in the following sections:

- Alignment to need
- Meeting objectives and expectations
- Impact and success
- Reporting and communication

#### 4.3.3.1 *Alignment to need*

An adaptive approach to employment and retention was taken and services evolved over the course of delivery to align to need, either proactively or reactively to experiences or challenges with implementation (such as first iterations of JRS) or emerging situations (such as the blockade).

#### 4.3.3.2 *Meeting objectives and expectations*

Aboriginal employment at Wuskwatim exceeded predictions. Aboriginal participation in terms of person years exceeded EIS predictions by over 400% in Stage 1 of the project and 200% in Stage 2 of the project (refer to Figure 17). The ratio of Aboriginal relative to non-Aboriginal employment was lower than predicted. Aboriginal employment contributed to 64% of the total in Stage 1 and 27% in Stage 2. These outcomes were a result of an increased demand for labour due to the advancement of the schedule while the supply of Northern Aboriginal labour remained unchanged.

**Consistent with these quantitative findings, Hydro and some NCN planners and implementers indicated the Aboriginal/NCN Citizens who were employed on the project exceeded expectations and projections, but the percentage of the workforce that this group comprised was lower than anticipated.** This was recognized to have been due to the higher overall number of workers on the project compared to what was projected.

Planners and implementers from Hydro, the union and NCN noted that **certain aspects of the BNA contributed to employers' ability to bypass the hiring preference in the BNA when hiring and when recalling laid off workers, negatively impacting Aboriginal participation.** Further, NCN planners and implementers noted NCN raised concerns related to these issues at the time the BNA was negotiated, but were not pursued by the HPMA and as observers in the negotiations NCN had no power to effect changes. The issues related to the BNA have been discussed in detail in Section 4.3.2 Delivery experience and include:

- Use of job qualifications to move through preference categories
- Laying off Aboriginal workers first applying Section 12.4.1.2 and deeming others more qualified
- Recalling Aboriginal workers last through provision in Section 12.4.2.3 that did not require the preference to be applied when all workers in a similar classification were to be recalled within 28 days

NCN planners and implementers indicated the lack of effectiveness of ACE and problems with the JRS, which were previously noted, contributed to issues impacting Aboriginal employment, which ultimately led to the blockade. Some of these issues, related to job order reviews and the referral process later became the mandate of the AdHoc Committee on employment.

#### **4.3.3.3 Impact and success**

A total of 2,067 job orders were completed through the JRS resulting in a total of 3,586 hires, of which 565 were Northern Aboriginal. The JRS is a service and as such did not have specific objectives beyond delivery however it was noted by planners and implementers that the service facilitated Northern Aboriginal participation at Wuskwatim by providing job seeker information to employers for consideration.

Employment success stories on Wuskwatim were acknowledged by both NCN and Hydro planners and implementers, with examples provided of Red Seal cooks, electricians and carpenters. Some indicated that perhaps the total number of success stories was not as great as anticipated, but the level of success achieved in terms of Northern Aboriginal workers who occupied senior and higher level positions, exceeded expectations. A few planners and implementers commented there should have been more communication/profiling of success stories.

Participants interviewed from NCN and other communities who were employed on Wuskwatim consistently reported that they were grateful for the opportunity to gain work experience and were paid well for the work they did. Some indicated they had, or expected to have, future work as a result of training and work experience gained on Wuskwatim (e.g. on Keeyask).

#### **4.3.3.4 Reporting and communication**

**Considerable data was collected and reported regarding employment at Wuskwatim.** Hydro collected and stored significant data related to employment at Wuskwatim. This information/data informed reporting to regulators, the public through annual monitoring overviews, and informed specific communications provided to NCN through the WIO. Data related to job orders and referrals, hires and through the JRS was maintained by the Province of Manitoba and reported to Hydro as required. No issues with reporting of JRS outcomes by the Province to Hydro were noted through the review. However, NCN planners and implementers noted challenges with receiving complete information from Hydro, including information on JRS outcomes (e.g. details regarding why referrals were rejected by contractors). **With respect to employment data, NCN planners and implementers noted that while information was provided by Hydro, it seemed they did not receive the right kind of information.** Hydro could not release specific details regarding rejections or other personal information because of FIPPA regulations. Reporting was in line with what was indicated at the outset but may not have been the best measures. It was noted that the way information was measured and reported made it difficult to gauge progress relative to expectations. Employment was not measured in the same units as EIS predictions. NCN did not have access to the same employment data as Hydro and as such felt they did not have complete information at any point in the project following conclusion of the PDA negotiations. However, NCN planners and implementers acknowledged that reporting on project statistics/information sharing did improve following the blockade.

### **4.4 Qualitative findings: Retention supports**

Qualitative findings are based on information, perspectives and opinions derived through secondary sources such as existing reports and documents, and primary sources such as interviews and focus groups with key planners, implementers and participants.

Retention supports available to workers on the project are discussed in this section, including the supports that were part of the cross cultural contract, in addition to other retention supports such as onsite Elders, the Aboriginal employment liaison worker and project dispute mechanisms. Qualitative findings related to retention supports are presented in the following sections:

- Relevance and need for retention supports
- Delivery experience with retention supports
- Performance of retention supports



#### 4.4.1 Relevance and need for retention supports

NCN and Hydro recognized the need to develop and implement measures to support retention of Aboriginal workers on the project. NCN identified the need for supports during the negotiation process. The nature of the work environment and challenges with Aboriginal retention on Limestone also pointed to the need for these supports.

**Employment retention is affected by a number of work and non-work related factors some of which were acknowledged by planners and implementers to be difficult to address through project supports.** Factors noted by planners and implementers and participants who were interviewed, (which are similar findings identified through a worker and family survey conducted at Nelson House as part of the socio-economic monitoring program mid-way through the Project)<sup>75</sup> were:

- Challenges obtaining transportation to the work site (most frequently cited reason by participants who were terminated)
- Medical issues (most frequently cited reasons by participants for quitting)
- Being away from family and the community for long periods of time
- Conflicts with other workers and/or supervisors, including some allegations of racism and concerns about safety dues to use of French language on job site
- Long work schedules/work hours
- The physically demanding nature of the work
- "Culture shock", which was described as challenges adapting to the project or construction culture, and adapting to demands of working among individuals who were previously unemployed
- Substance abuse
- Cultural norms/preferences for a non-confrontational approach to issue resolution

Planners and implementers from NCN noted the findings of the Worker and Family Survey were consistent with the responses later heard during interviews conducted through the WIO following the blockade. The findings at that time also included issues with family status and bereavement leave, a hesitancy to contact the union, concerns as to whether or not union followed through with issues that were brought to them, and experiences of racism.

Cross cultural support workshops, counseling support, and programs targeting conflict and problem resolution between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees were identified in the AIP as measures to be provided directly or indirectly by Hydro.

There was agreement among planners and implementers interviewed that retention supports were put in place to support Aboriginal employee retention in a manner that reflected Aboriginal culture, and created a more positive and supportive working environment. Document review and planner and implementer comments indicated the need for retention supports and for cross cultural training in particular increased in 2009/10 as the general civil construction work of the project started. This was the peak employment time for the project, and the actual number of workers on site was more than double than what was projected. The population of workers also shifted from being predominantly Aboriginal to predominantly non-Aboriginal, and the majority of work was no longer through DNCs. It was also the time when the permanent camp site was completed, enabling all workers to be based at the same location.

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<sup>75</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Worker and Family Survey – Initial Results (Presentation to Chief and Council December 15, 2009).

## 4.4.2 Delivery experience with retention supports

There was recognition from planners, implementers and participants of the efforts made by the project to support Aboriginal retention. As indicated, a number of activities were undertaken throughout the project that directly or indirectly impacted retention, however, employee awareness and access to these activities varied.

The specific findings on retention supports and dispute resolution mechanisms available to Aboriginal workers are discussed in the following subsections:

- Awareness of retention supports
- Adequacy of retention supports
- BNA contribution to retention challenges
- Cross cultural contract services:
  - Cross cultural training
  - On-site counseling services
  - Traditional ceremonies
- Onsite Elders
- Employment liaison worker
- Project dispute resolution mechanisms

### 4.4.2.1 Awareness of retention supports

Participants from NCN had strong awareness of retention supports available at Wuskwatim, and reported that information was provided to them during orientation or through use of posters and pamphlets/brochures. Participants interviewed from other communities had limited awareness of retention supports, with the exception of cross cultural training. Awareness and understanding of supports available, including the role of the union and dispute mechanisms, appear to have varied based on the quality of the work orientation received. Participants who received a comprehensive orientation that included written information as well as a verbal description/overview of retention supports available generally reported increased awareness of these supports and the role of the union.

Relatively few participants from NCN and other communities who were interviewed reported participating in/accessing retention services and supports. Those who did participate in/access these supports generally provided positive comments.

### 4.4.2.2 Adequacy of retention supports

NCN planners and implementers, union representatives and some of the participants interviewed felt more could have been done to reduce language barriers and tensions between French speaking and all other workers, including Aboriginal workers. Some indicated that tensions “forced out” Aboriginal workers or that attempts were made by Quebec workers on certain contracts to intentionally “weed out” Aboriginal workers by creating a hostile work environment (e.g. through threats, racial slurs, etc.). Language barriers were noted by some planners and implementers as well as participants to have created safety issues. **Some NCN planners, implementers and participants reported the union could have done more to support workers with employment issues to prevent them from leaving out of frustration.** A few participants felt Hydro/the Project should have been more responsive to allegations of racism or that zero tolerance policies should have been enforced.

Few comments were made regarding adequacy of resources for retention supports. The need for a vehicle to transport cross cultural contract staff to and from the project site was noted by some NCN planners and implementers, and in documents reviewed on cross cultural contract outcomes. A few planners and implementers also commented the employment liaison worker should have had an office at the site to make the person more accessible, and that there was a need for more than one employment liaison officer to support Aboriginal workers.

#### **4.4.2.3 BNA contribution to retention challenges**

A review of documentation and comments made by persons interviewed from Hydro, the union and participants indicates that **BNA contributed to several key factors cited as impacting retention**. In particular, provisions pertaining to Article 15, which stipulates hours of work and Article 19, which stipulates leave provisions including frequency and duration were noted:

Article 15.1:

Except as provided in Appendix 1a, due to the nature of the Project, employees will normally be required, if directed, to work up to ten (10) hours per day for six (6) days per week. Unless otherwise provided in the Appendices, Sunday will normally be a day of rest.

Article 19.2.1.3 Limitation Relative to Frequency of Isolation Leaves states:

Notwithstanding any other provisions set out in this Agreement, the time period between Isolation Leaves may be greater than but shall not be less than thirty-five (35) calendar days.

Article 19.2.1.5 Duration of Isolation Leave

When an employee is eligible for and opts to take an Isolation Leave, the employee shall be granted a minimum of six (6) working days as leave without pay. However, at the option of the employee, the leave of absence without pay may be for less than six (6) working days but not less than three (3) working days, except when the Contractor and the employee mutually agree that the leave will be less than three (3) days.<sup>76</sup>

Long work hours and having to work 35 days prior to being able to take isolation leave was noted by both NCN planners, implementers and participants to be a significant challenge for Aboriginal workers that impacted retention. It was also noted that bereavement leave provisions were not culturally sensitive as they were not long enough and the definition of family was overly restrictive.

Planners and implementers from NCN also noted that concerns had been raised by NCN Citizens employed at Wuskwatim about lack of compliance with human rights obligations. It was their perspective that if people had health or family issues they seemed to be let go.

#### **4.4.2.4 Cross cultural contract services**

##### **4.4.2.4.1 Cross cultural training**

Cross cultural training was intended to increase awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture and encourage all employees to "work in harmony together". It was **expected that all employees working on the project would complete training; however, the overall participation rate was ~35%**. In total, 1,574 individuals attended training with some employees attending more than once (e.g. those hired multiple times by different contractors), while others did not attend at all.<sup>77</sup>

Analysis of outcomes related to the cross cultural contract suggested that during the early years of construction activity (infrastructure development) a "sizable portion of new hires" did not attend the mandatory training. **Reasons for low participation during Stage 1 of construction (infrastructure development) included the workforce being predominantly Aboriginal and therefore being familiar with the culture, workers not being able to attend due to work duties, shift change overlapping with session dates, and in some cases, short notification of the session times.**

Similar barriers to participation were noted by participants, planners and implementers interviewed for the present review. Not having enough time/not being permitted by supervisors to attend was the most commonly cited barrier. Other factors noted by Hydro and validated by participants who indicated training was not available during the period in which they worked included:

- The first cross cultural training sessions were delivered six months after the start of the initial project so employees hired on short contracts during this period would not have had the opportunity to attend

<sup>76</sup> Source: [http://www.hydro.mb.ca/projects/bna\\_jobs.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/projects/bna_jobs.shtml) (accessed January, 2013).

<sup>77</sup> Source: Hydro statistics – Provided March 2013.

- Related to the above point, not enough sessions were held per month for all short term contract employees to attend (e.g. those working two-week contracts where no sessions were scheduled)

Some Hydro planners and implementers commented that in hindsight the expectation for all employees to attend cross cultural training was unrealistic given the significant amount of short-term positions and the six month lag between project start and onset of cross cultural training sessions.

In addition, some participants interviewed stated it would have been beneficial for the cross cultural training to have been truly cross cultural by also including information on non-Aboriginal cultures (e.g. Francophone culture).

#### 4.4.2.4.2 *On-site counseling services*

Few participants interviewed accessed counseling services and some cited construction culture as the reason. Other reasons noted by planners, implementers and participants included the desire to discuss issues with a family member or friend rather than through formal mechanisms, and having no need for counseling. A few participants indicated a desire for "AA" counselors on site, and there was a misperception among some participants that there were no male counselors although planners and implementers noted that early on there was a male counsellor on site. Some NCN planners and implementers indicated that employees may have been reluctant to access counseling services because of concerns with confidentiality, and that having the counseling centre offsite or staffed by a third party may have increased access. Limited awareness of the services by participants from communities outside of NCN may have also been a contributing factor.

**Despite limited use of counseling services, participants aware of the service generally reported they appreciated that it was offered/there if they needed it.** Those that accessed counseling services indicated counselors were helpful to them, and were glad to have had someone to talk to.

#### 4.4.2.4.3 *Traditional ceremonies*

Although ceremonies were primarily intended to mitigate negative socio-cultural impacts of the project, as well as demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the local culture, rather than to increase worker retention, NCN planners and implementers comments suggest ceremonies may have had an unanticipated positive impact on retention. **Some reported that ceremonies helped to increase Aboriginal culture awareness. Sweats and feasts were noted by some participants as helping to "re-energize" workers.**

Over 40 milestone ceremonies were held at key points in the project.<sup>78</sup> Comments from planners and implementers suggested that all planned ceremonies were held and that Hydro was flexible in approving the provision of additional ceremonies that were identified over the course of the project. NCN participant interview responses indicated there was a low level of participation by NCN Citizens employed at Wuskwatim in the ceremonies. Few individuals reported attending the ceremonies and **some indicated they wanted more information on the purpose of the ceremonies to better understand what was going on and to be able to answer questions from their non-Aboriginal coworkers in attendance.**

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<sup>78</sup> Source: Hydro statistics: Provided March 2013.

#### **4.4.2.5 Onsite Elders**

Onsite Elder visits were intended to provide support/encouragement and guidance to Aboriginal employees from respected individuals in the NCN community. Elder visits were reported to have occurred on a regular basis (once a month) and the Elders' presence on site was viewed by NCN planners and implementers and those participants aware of the visits, as **an important support for Aboriginal workers, particularly younger workers**. Some of the positive comments reported by participants were that the Elders were easy to speak to and could explain things in a way they understood, that they preferred to "go to Elders over anything else", and that they liked that the Elders passed on their teachings.

A few of the NCN planners, implementers and participants interviewed indicated that there was a need for even more mentorship and guidance for the younger workers to encourage them to "stick it out"/stay on the job. It was suggested that more one on one discussions with Elders and workers who experienced success on the project would have been beneficial.

#### **4.4.2.6 Employment liaison worker**

**The liaison worker role was viewed as an important support**, with several NCN planners and implementers suggesting the role be carried forward on future projects.

Although the employment liaison worker responsibilities were clearly documented (see Appendix F), comments from some NCN and Hydro planners and implementers as well as some participants indicated these responsibilities may not have been fully understood or fulfilled. For example, the expectation for the liaison worker to proactively identify on-the-job training and employment opportunities does not appear to have been met. Some participants also reported having difficulty contacting the employment liaison worker. One planner/implementer commented that initial intent was for the employment liaison worker to have an office at the project site to enable greater access by employees, but that this was never implemented.

The employment liaison worker did not agree to participate in the evaluation. It is therefore not possible to comment on the reasons why responsibilities may not have been fulfilled or did not align to expectations (e.g. due to lack of time, lack of resources, misunderstanding of responsibilities, timing of implementation, etc.).

Activity reports were provided by the employment liaison worker to the WIO manager on a regular basis. Although specific activity details were not provided, sample reports that were reviewed suggest the employment liaison worker was primarily involved in transporting workers, contacting and talking to workers, meeting with contractors as needed to discuss employment issues, supporting with Elder visits, and attending ACE, CAC and MAC meetings.

Comments from planners and implementers as well as the participants who contacted the liaison worker suggest that overall the liaison worker was approachable, but could have been more accessible and could have taken a more directive approach to addressing employment issues. Those interviewed who were involved in implementation noted that the employment liaison worker tried to address issues through WIO and NCN legal counsel with Hydro directly where possible.

#### **4.4.2.7 Project dispute resolution mechanisms**

Article 8 of the BNA set out the formal process for addressing labour related issues that arose for in scope positions at Wuskwatim. It details a process that is initiated with a discussion between the employee and supervisor within five days of the date the circumstances occurred that led to the dispute. If the discussion did not resolve the issue, a grievance was submitted in writing to the Allied Hydro Council and carried through a number of stages until resolved. Shop stewards were onsite to support workers with labour relations issues and the grievance process.

Available grievance data does not provide an indication of whether Aboriginal workers were more or less likely to file grievances, as the data only reports on total grievances. A total of three hundred and twenty-two (322) grievances were filed for the project, with 91 of those settled, 328 inactive or withdrawn, 0 under review, and 3 possibly going to arbitration. The number of grievances filed by Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal workers could not be determined as this information was not collected by the union due to privacy issues. Wrongful/unjust dismissal and Article 12 of the BNA, which pertains to the hiring procedure and referral system, union security and check off, transfer, lay-off and recall provisions, were cited as the most common reasons for filing a grievance on the project.<sup>79</sup>

**Planner, implementer and participant interview findings suggest that Aboriginal employees did not typically go to the union with labour issues.** When questioned about disputes on the job, the majority of participants interviewed indicated they would address any job concerns with their supervisor directly, and/or would “walk away” from the job. NCN Citizens would also raise employment issues with individuals at ATEC and the WIO. NCN planners and implementers, and union representatives indicated reluctance on the part of Aboriginal workers to approach the union.

A number of reasons were provided to explain Aboriginal worker reluctance to contact the union. Some planners and implementers and participants noted a **cultural preference to avoid confrontation and to only discuss issues with other members of the community.** Others indicated a **lack of familiarity and awareness of the role of the union.** This was noted more by participants from communities other than NCN as NCN participants were generally aware of union and shop steward role.

Attempts were made to increase awareness of the role of the union among employees. Information on the union was provided in the camp rules distributed to employees, and planners, implementers and participants interviewed indicated some information was provided to them during orientation. Comments from NCN planners and implementers indicate a brochure intended to increase awareness and understanding of the BNA and worker’s rights was also developed by NCN, but despite several attempts was not accepted by ACE and therefore not distributed.

**Access to shop stewards** may have also been a factor that limited Aboriginal worker interactions with the union. Per Section 6.3.1 of the BNA, there were no dedicated shop stewards on the construction site, stewards were project workers first and performed the duties of shop steward in their off hours. A few of the shop stewards interviewed indicated this, as well as what they perceived to be a high ratio of workers to shop stewards, may have limited access to shop stewards.

Among those participants who were aware of the union, many felt the union was not helpful, reporting the union “just took our money”. Some of the participants who resigned from a position at Wuskwatim or who were terminated indicated they approached the union with concerns, but the union was not helpful to them or sided with the employer.

#### **4.4.3 Performance of retention supports**

There were no stated objectives for employment retention identified in documents reviewed; however, Volume 8 of the EIS noted that experience from Limestone suggested the extent of sustained Local Region employment would depend on measures to retain workers at the construction site.<sup>80</sup> Limestone was noted as an opportunity for lessons learned in both the EIS and in earlier HNTEI proposal content.

This section provides qualitative findings regarding the performance of retention supports and is summarized in the following sections:

- Alignment to need
- Meeting objectives and expectations
- Impact and success
- Reporting and communication

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<sup>79</sup> Source: Hydro statistics– Provided April 2013.

<sup>80</sup> Source: Wuskwatim Generation Project Environmental Impact Statement Volume 8 p. 8-89.

#### **4.4.3.1 Alignment to need**

Retention supports were designed based on needs identified by NCN and Hydro and experiences at Limestone. However, comments from NCN and Hydro planners and implementers indicate that retention support activities evolved to suit the identified needs on-site over the course of the project. In particular a number of supports were put in place to address issues that contributed to the blockade (e.g. shuttle van service). Comments from some NCN planners and implementers indicated that greater supports were needed in some cases to meet the needs of workers. Specifically, it was suggested that more than one employment liaison worker was needed to support Aboriginal employees on the project. Participant comments suggest supports in place were aligned to needs generally. As previously indicated, some participants identified a need for counselling services targeting addictions, greater and more reliable transportation supports to and from the worksite, and cross cultural training sessions that were accessible to those working the night shift and included information on non-Aboriginal cultures.

#### **4.4.3.2 Meeting objectives and expectations**

As indicated previously, **turnover rates for Northern Aboriginal hires on Wuskwatim were 9% lower compared to Limestone.** This reduction is attributable to fewer resignations, or a greater number of Northern Aboriginal workers choosing to stay on the job at Wuskwatim, and may be an indicator that retention supports were effective. That said, the rates of turnover among Northern Aboriginal hires (41%) and Other Aboriginal hires (38%) on Wuskwatim were significantly higher than among non-Aboriginal hires (22%).

#### **4.4.3.3 Impact and success**

As there are a number of factors which combine to influence employment retention, it is difficult to assess the relative impact of the retention supports that were put in place on Wuskwatim. Qualitative data suggests the cross cultural contract services and other retention supports were viewed positively by planners, implementers and participants overall, but some questioned whether they impacted retention. Others noted that "all the right supports" were in place, but that individuals needed to take advantage of them.

Cross cultural training was perceived to be effective at increasing awareness of Aboriginal culture, among those who were "open to it". Planners, implementers and participants consistently praised the training content and how it was delivered. The approach to the cultural awareness training sessions was viewed as "welcoming and inclusive" and participant evaluations were very positive. Nevertheless, some participants interviewed commented they expected to learn more about other (non-Aboriginal) cultures indicating the training wasn't very cross cultural, or was "one sided".

Cross cultural training, ceremonies and on-site Elder visits were noted as particular strengths by the majority of planners, implementers and participants who were interviewed. Participants also commented that having counselors available on site was a strength, despite the fact that few accessed this service. Some participants from communities outside of NCN reported that cross cultural training and ceremonies made them feel at home and helped people get along better.

A few NCN planners and implementers commented that the cross cultural component of Wuskwatim raised awareness of the culture and traditions for NCN Citizens, particularly the youth. It was also noted by some that involvement by the Elders in the cultural events enabled a level of healing from the past to occur.

#### **4.4.3.4 Reporting and communication**

Regular activity reports on cross cultural and employment liaison worker activities were provided to the WIO, which were in turn communicated to Chief and Council and the appropriate project representatives. Annual reporting of cross cultural training activities and ceremonies as well as retention (turnover) statistics were published in the WPLP Monitoring Overview Reports.

**Retention outcomes (turnover rates, employment duration) were maintained in detail and reported on regularly by Hydro.** The number of cross cultural training sessions held and participation was tracked, and course evaluations were completed for each session by participants. However, a summary report was not compiled to provide an overall picture of participant training perceptions. Although training was mandatory, it does not appear there was any follow-up with employers/employees in this regard.

Counseling session activities, such as the number of individuals who accessed counseling and the types of supports they sought, was not adequately reported and therefore not available to inform this review. Planners and implementers did not feel that counts of individuals accessing counseling necessarily provided a meaningful measure of program impact, and indicated that the availability of the service was important in and of itself. However, doing so would have been beneficial to planning for future projects as it would enable insight into the types of counseling that are most needed by employees. Similarly, more detailed activity reporting for the employment liaison worker would enable a more in-depth understanding of employee needs and concerns that were raised.

#### 4.5 Summary of employment services and retention supports findings

The tables below summarize the quantitative and qualitative findings for both employment services and retention supports.

**Table 13: Key findings for employment services**

Key findings for employment services
<p><b>Relevance and need</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience at Limestone as well as NCN community consultation results and planner and implementer interviews all indicated that employment opportunities for Northern Aboriginal residents were a priority</li> <li>• Planners and implementers from Hydro and contractors as well as the union indicated It was understood that recruiting the required number of experienced, qualified workers for the project would be difficult and that supports would be required on site to ensure Northern Aboriginal workers were retained for the duration of their position</li> <li>• NCN leaders, community members and Hydro recognized that supports would be needed to reduce social and systemic barriers to employment participation and retention</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to registering with the JRS was facilitated through a number of different channels however JRS service levels may have varied by location</li> <li>• Employers indicated the JRS was a good screening tool but lengthened the recruitment process; time that the process took due to the preference stages and long lists of referred job seekers for some positions was noted as a bottleneck and had a negative impact on efficiency</li> <li>• Job qualification matching process presented challenges in a number of different manners: Individuals whose qualifications exceeded those of a job order would not be referred and matching required registrants to select the correct skills using National Occupation Codes which presented difficulties for some</li> <li>• The requirement to renew registrations every six months contributed to a high number of dormancies</li> <li>• The inability to contact job seekers for interviews presented a barrier to the referral process and was noted as the reason for not hiring Northern Aboriginal job seekers for 42% of those not hired where contractors had attempted to call</li> <li>• Planners and implementers expressed the view that some contractors used skills qualifications to move quickly through the preference groups that were stipulated in the BNA to enable them to name hire staff</li> <li>• Layoff provisions in the BNA allowed contractors to layoff whoever they wanted as long as the contractor determined the worker being retained had better skills, abilities or work performance than those being laid off</li> <li>• Recall provisions allowed the preference groups to be overlooked if all employees were to be called back within 28 days; this was the case until a reinterpretation was negotiated in 2010</li> <li>• Interpretations of the ACE mandate varied across the various groups of planners and implementers</li> <li>• Some indicated that ACE meetings were too infrequent to address issues in a timely manner</li> <li>• ACE representation from both Hydro and NCN presented challenges</li> <li>• Open dialogue was encouraged through a broader interpretation of the CAC mandate</li> <li>• MAC was viewed as effective by planners and implementers</li> </ul>



## Key findings for employment services

### Performance

- The Wuskwatim project resulted in a total of 2,859 person years of employment; Northern Aboriginal person years (322 in Stage 1 and 621 in Stage 2) exceeded EIS predictions (110 in Stage 1 and 472 in Stage 2) but relative participation was lower with Northern Aboriginal making up a total of 64% of the total in Phase 1 and 27% of the total in Stage 2 vs. the predicted 97% in Stage 1 and 40%-55% in Stage 2
- Northern Aboriginal employment totaled 944 person years and comprised 33% of total person years at Wuskwatim
- DNCs provided a significant employment opportunity for Northern Aboriginal residents (1059 hires) with Catering providing the most significant employment opportunity (658 hires)
- NCN and Hydro acknowledged employment success stories
- Significant data was captured to inform reporting requirements
- NCN planners and implementers felt that they did not receive the right kind of information

**Table 14: Key findings for retention supports**

## Key findings for retention supports

### Relevance and need

- The nature of the work environment, cultural factors, historical factors, and previous experience on hydroelectric projects pointed to the need for culturally sensitive measures to support retention of Aboriginal workers.
- Participants and planners and implementers cited a number of work and non-work related factors that impacted retention: Lack of transportation to the work site and medical issues were the most commonly cited reasons given by participants for being discharged and resigning, others included being away from family and community for a long period of time and long work schedules.
- The need for retention supports and for cross cultural training in particular increased in 2009/10 as the general civil construction work of the project started. This was the peak employment time for the project and a number of factors changed the nature of the worker experience.

### Delivery experience

- Awareness of retention services was high among NCN Citizens and lower in other communities; limited use of these services was reported, particularly with respect to on-site counselling.
- A number of factors including language barriers and tensions between French speaking workers and Aboriginal workers negatively impacted the experience of Aboriginal workers; some NCN planners, implementers and participants reported that the union could have done more to support workers with these employment issues.
- BNA contributed to several key factors cited as impacting retention: In particular, provisions pertaining to Article 15, which stipulates hours of work and Article 19, which stipulates leave provisions including frequency and duration were noted as well as the lack of cultural sensitivity with respect to bereavement leave.
- Low awareness, understanding or acceptance of the role of the union as well as somewhat limited access to shop stewards may have contributed to low contact between Aboriginal workers and the union.
- Cross cultural training was intended to be mandatory for all employees, but a participation rate of only ~35% was achieved.
- Not having time/being permitted to attend by supervisors, and not having the opportunity to attend due to shift schedules or short contract lengths contributed to the low participation rate.
- Cross cultural training increased awareness and understanding among those "open to it"; it was also noted that the training might have been more beneficial to Aboriginal employees if it was truly cross-cultural including a component on non-Aboriginal cultures.
- Although participants who were interviewed indicated limited use of counseling services, due to lack of need and comfort accessing this service, participants appreciated that counseling was available to them if needed.
- Ceremonies helped to increase Aboriginal culture awareness. Sweats and feasts were noted by some participants as helping to "re-energize" workers.
- Elder visits were viewed as an important support by planners and implementers as well as participants that were aware of them; noted by some participants as particularly important for younger Aboriginal workers.
- The employment liaison role was viewed as an important support by NCN planners and implementers, and the individual on the project was approachable, but could have been more accessible and taken a more directive approach to addressing employment issues.
- Planner, implementer and participant interview findings suggest that Aboriginal employees did not typically go to the union with labour issues; some planners and implementers and participants noted a cultural preference to avoid confrontation and to only discuss issues with other members of the community. Others indicated a lack of familiarity and awareness of the role of the union.

## Key findings for retention supports

### Performance

- Retention outcomes were maintained in detail and reported on regularly by Hydro: Reporting related to retention activities did not facilitate the ability to attribute the activities to retention results
- The average duration of employment for Northern Aboriginal workers (108 days) and Other Aboriginal workers (107 days) and was lower than the project average of 150 days
- In 2009/10 Aboriginal as well as non-Aboriginal turnover spiked. It was during this time in the construction project that the number of workers on site also peaked
- The rates of turnover among Northern Aboriginal hires (41%) and Total Aboriginal hires (38%) on Wuskwatim were significantly higher than among non-Aboriginal hires (22%)
- The majority of turnover was due to resignations as opposed to discharges with 68% of turnover for Northern Aboriginal hires being attributed to resignation
- The rate of re-hire for Aboriginal workers was 22% compared to 13% for non-Aboriginal employees
- Turnover rates on Wuskwatim were 9% lower relative to Limestone for Northern Aboriginal employees; significantly less Northern Aboriginal workers resigned on Wuskwatim compared to Limestone however, Northern Aboriginal and Other Aboriginal turnover rates remained higher than the rate of turnover among non-Aboriginal hires
- Cross cultural training, ceremonies and on-site Elder visits were noted as particular strengths by the majority of planners and implementers and participants who were interviewed
- Elders who worked on the project and those with previous work experience tended to report more positive work experiences overall
- Participants from all communities highlighted camp life and amenities, and pay as particularly positive aspects of their work experience
- Aboriginal employees were reluctant to approach the union with labour related issues, preferring instead to discuss issues with their supervisor or someone from their community
- Participant suggestions for improvement included: "no drinking", better transportation, hiring more Aboriginal workers and less out of province workers/French speaking workers, including information on non-Aboriginal cultures in the cross cultural training content, ensuring training sessions were accessible to those working night shifts, having AA counselors to support with substance abuse, and enhanced communications on the purpose and details of ceremonies

## 4.6 Employment services and retention supports key themes

The four key themes emerging from the employment and retention findings are:

1. Northern Aboriginal participation in the workforce at Wuskwatim was impacted by the number and timing of skilled labour requirements and changes to the project schedule
2. Systemic issues related to the BNA impacted recruitment and retention of Northern Aboriginal workers
3. Aspects of the JRS process presented barriers to recruitment at Wuskwatim
4. Retention services at Wuskwatim were appreciated, and may have contributed to the reduction in turnover rates on Wuskwatim relative to Limestone. However, dispute resolution processes were viewed by some as ineffective

### 4.6.1.1 Project timing and labour requirements

As predicted in the Wuskwatim EIS, the participation rate of Northern Aboriginal workers exceeded that of non-Aboriginal workers for the majority of the first stage of the project, and this trend was reversed in the second stage when the nature of work changed and there was a greater demand for individuals certified in the skilled trades.

The advancement of the project schedule increased the overall demand for labour at Wuskwatim. The increased demand for workers all at once and the relatively fixed amount of job qualified Northern Aboriginal workers resulted in total Northern Aboriginal person years of employment exceeding predictions across both stages of the project, but comprising a lower than predicted proportion (compared to non-Aboriginal) of the total person years.

#### **4.6.1.2 Systemic issues related to the BNA**

It was understood that recruiting and retaining the required number of experienced, qualified workers for Wuskwatim would be difficult and that supports would be required on site to reduce barriers to Northern Aboriginal employment participation and retention.

Although the BNA defined provisions to provide Northern Aboriginal residents with preference for employment opportunities, there was an overwhelming sense that contractors and employers were able to "work around" the provisions. In addition, mechanisms established to address issues (such as ACE) were viewed by some as either too little, too late or not effective. It was noted that certain provisions in the BNA negatively impacted the effectiveness of the agreement related to Aboriginal employment. In particular:

- Using job qualifications to move through preferences
- Laying off Aboriginal workers first applying Section 12.4.1.2 and deeming others more qualified
- Recalling Aboriginal workers last through provision in Section 12.4.2.3 that did not require the preference to be applied when all workers in a similar classification were to be recalled within 28 days
- Working conditions influenced by BNA provisions pertaining to Article 15, which stipulates hours of work and Article 19, which stipulates leave provisions including frequency and duration

#### **4.6.1.3 Barriers to recruitment from JRS**

The JRS provided a good screening tool and a valid recruitment list for employers; however the process took time and presented some challenges. Key contributing factors that may have negatively impacted referral activity included:

- The time required to generate a referral lists and validate employee qualifications
- The challenges associate with matching qualified job seekers to job order requirements
- The inability to contact job seekers referred to contractors
- Requirement to renew registration every 6 months to avoid dormancy
- The effectiveness of the ACE committee to address concerns raised regarding the job order and referral process

#### **4.6.1.4 Retention services positively impacted turnover however dispute resolution process was ineffective**

Retention services were appreciated by participants and may have been a contributing factor to the increase in retention experienced at Wuskwatim relative to Limestone. Specifically, Northern Aboriginal turnover rates on Wuskwatim were 9% lower than reported for Limestone, which was largely due to fewer people choosing to leave their jobs.

Feedback from participants suggests Aboriginal worker employment retention was impacted by a number of work and non-work related factors including:

- Challenges obtaining transportation to the work site (most frequently cited reason by participants who were terminated)
- Medical issues (most frequently cited reasons by participants for quitting)
- Being away from family and the community for long periods of time
- Conflicts with other workers and/or supervisors, including some allegations of racism
- Long work schedules/work hours
- The physically demanding nature of the work
- "Culture shock", which was described as challenges adapting to the project or construction culture, and adapting to demands of working among individuals who were previously unemployed
- Substance abuse
- Cultural norms/preferences for a non-confrontational approach to issue resolution

Dispute resolution processes were viewed as somewhat ineffective. Participants did not normally feel comfortable going to the union for support with labour issues. They would rather approach their direct supervisor or someone at the WIO. Others simply "walked away" from the job. There were also concerns expressed that the AHC representative was seen as unreachable or ineffective at addressing issues.

# 5. Conclusion

The Wuskwatim Project, developed through the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership (WPLP), used an innovative approach to partnering with local communities to create skill development and employment opportunities for local residents. The approach taken was one that required significant forethought, negotiations and planning, but also required the ability to learn from experiences and adapt along the way.

As is typically the case, experience is our biggest teacher, and the efforts of both Manitoba Hydro and NCN to undertake this retrospective review should be acknowledged. The Wuskwatim Project had many moving parts over the past few years, which made a retrospective review challenging. Some components of this evaluation were not necessarily documented or measured, as leadership continually adapted activities to address changing needs. This review has attempted to capture the key elements of these efforts and provide a collective perspective gained through conversations with those involved in the planning and implementation of the various elements that made up the Training and employment activities, and a review of many background documents and reports.

Some nuances and perspectives of delivery may not necessarily have been captured in this document; however there are many successes that should be shared and repeated, and lessons that could inform future efforts.

## 5.1 Planner, implementer and participant perspectives

During the course of the evaluation planners, implementers and participants identified aspects of the training and employment initiatives that they saw as strengths and also provided suggestions on ways the initiatives could be improved for future consideration. Table 15 summarizes these perspectives.

**Table 15: Planner, implementer and participant perspectives on strengths and opportunities for improvement**

	Strengths to be repeated	Opportunities for improvement
Pre-project training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The community led approach enabled community control and built capacity for such things as training coordination and financial management.</li> <li>Supports put in place, such as the provision of subsidies, were strengths that helped to remove barriers to participation and improved retention.</li> <li>There was high participation of Northern Aboriginal residents in training and the wide variety of training courses offered through HNTel.</li> <li>There were some excellent success stories stemming from training and employment opportunities. Examples were provided of individuals graduating through HNTel and the pride they felt for doing so.</li> <li>WKTC enabled accountability and opportunity for collaboration among Aboriginal Partners.</li> <li>189 participants found employment at Wuskwatim.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater community collaboration/coordination regarding training delivery would enable pooling of resources, ultimately enabling more individuals to be trained (noted by some Aboriginal Partners).</li> <li>Sufficient lead time was not provided for training in general, and for skilled trades training in particular.</li> <li>Related to the above point, planners and implementers felt that not enough people were trained in designated trades through the Initiative and training did not result in enough employment ready individuals.</li> <li>Better understanding and alignment of training supply (base skill/needs) and demand (employment needs/projections) would drive more focused training activities.</li> <li>Enhanced collaboration between Communities and Hydro to understand employment needs to ensure training meets employer needs.</li> </ul>

	Strengths to be repeated	Opportunities for improvement
On the job training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some planners and implementers felt OJT was more effective than PPT, particularly when there was strong employer buy-in and accountability.</li> <li>Trainees also noted the opportunity to learn on the job was the greatest strength of the training and employment services.</li> <li>Contractors and Hydro took initiative to offer OJT opportunities where possible beyond apprenticeship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased financial incentives to contractors might improve uptake.</li> <li>More structure and accountability to hire apprentices would improve participation rates.</li> <li>It was suggested by some planners and implementers that PPT training funding should have been directed to on-the-job training instead.</li> </ul>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall Aboriginal employment outcomes exceeded predictions for hires and person years.</li> <li>Participants commented that there was a great deal of assistance available to complete the registration process.</li> <li>Individuals appreciated the convenience of being able to register in the community for jobs at Wuskwatim.</li> <li>The JRS provided employers with support to make hiring decisions.</li> <li>ACE strengthened relationships with various parties through open dialogue.</li> <li>The direct hire provisions in the DNC created employment opportunities.</li> <li>Participants felt that work experience gained at Wuskwatim will help them obtain future employment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A means to address the six month dormancy is required.</li> <li>Consideration should be given to the JRS intake form to support better matches.</li> <li>Challenges were experienced in contacting candidates.</li> <li>A focus on broader employment issues would have made ACE more effective.</li> <li>Sections of the BNA were outdated and should be reviewed.</li> </ul>
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturally sensitive retention services were available to those who needed them and participants interviewed appreciated availability of these services.</li> <li>The cross cultural contract was a ground-breaking activity that laid the foundation for future cross cultural programs on hydroelectric projects.</li> <li>Cross cultural training in particular was very well received by those who attended and was effective at increasing awareness among individuals who were "open to it".</li> <li>On-site Elder visits were viewed as an important activity that enabled guidance, support and mentorship of Aboriginal workers.</li> <li>Ceremonies were noted as a strength as they demonstrated respect for the land and traditions, and raised awareness of Aboriginal culture according to some planners and implementers and participants.</li> <li>The employment liaison worker role was viewed as an important role on the project.</li> <li>There was a formal dispute resolution mechanism in place for employees with labour related concerns.</li> <li>Participants overall reported a positive work experience at Wuskwatim, indicating that camp facilities were a particular strength.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provisions in the BNA surrounding work hours, schedules and bereavement leaves were reported to have negatively impacted retention and were not culturally sensitive.</li> <li>The formal dispute resolution mechanism/grievance process did not align to cultural preferences (e.g. Aboriginal worker preference to raise issues with supervisor or someone from the community or to walk away).</li> <li>Union was viewed by several participants as being non-responsive/not having a strong presence on site.</li> <li>Some felt Hydro/the Project should have been more responsive to allegations of racism or that zero tolerance policies should have been enforced.</li> <li>It was not possible for all workers to complete the mandatory cross cultural training as there were no sessions held for the first six months of the project, and session timing did not accommodate the night shift schedule and short-term contracts.</li> <li>Cross cultural training could also focus on awareness and understanding of non-Aboriginal cultures.</li> <li>Enhanced communications regarding purpose and details of ceremonies was suggested by participants.</li> <li>Inconsistent orientation of workers was reported. Those who received a more comprehensive orientation had higher awareness and understanding of retention services.</li> <li>Supports targeting retention of younger workers (e.g. more mentoring, 1:1 guidance from Elders, etc.) was noted as an opportunity for improvement.</li> <li>Presence of specialized addictions counselors (AA) was suggested to support workers with alcohol and drug problems.</li> <li>Additional employment liaison workers and involvement of NCN in selection of candidates for this role was suggested.</li> </ul>

	Strengths to be repeated	Opportunities for improvement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A role similar to an employment outreach worker was suggested to provide additional support with adjustment to work and camp life.</li> </ul>

# Appendix A – Question guides

- Planning
- Implementation
- Focus Group
- Participant Case Study



# Appendix A – Question guide – Planning

## Introduction

Deloitte has been engaged to conduct an evaluation of the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives. As part of our data collection, we are interviewing individuals who were involved in the Initiatives to hear their perspective on the planning and implementation of the various activities that made up the Initiatives. You have been identified as an individual who had involvement with planning activities at Wuskwatim. We would like to talk to you about your experience and perspective specifically related to the training and employment activities. Your answers will be kept confidential. All information will be collected and analyzed by Deloitte with key findings presented to the project steering committee. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

## Questions

1. Can you describe what your involvement has been related to training and employment at Wuskwatim? Has your role changed over time?

## Planning

2. A variety of activities (PPT/JRS/Cultural training and counseling/BNA) were undertaken as part of the training and employment initiatives. From your perspective, were these activities done in response to an identified need?
3. If yes, who expressed the need and how was it expressed? (Community members, leadership, Hydro)
4. If no, what, from your perspective, prompted the activities?
5. Were there needs that were expressed that were not met through the training and employment activities? If yes, please explain.
6. Several planners and implementers were involved in the training and employment initiatives including Manitoba Hydro, First Nation communities, trainees, and employers. Do you feel that the needs of each group were aligned? If yes, please explain what the common needs were.
7. If no, how did their needs differ? How were the varied needs reconciled through the initiative? Were everyone's needs addressed?
8. Did the structure that was established for oversight and management of the various initiative components make sense? Why or why not?
  - a) Decision making authority was clear? Effective?
  - b) WKTC mandate and participation appropriate? (Training)
  - c) Committee mandate and participation reflective of need? (CAC/MAC/ACE/AdHoc Employment Committee)
  - d) Committees were effective at achieving mandate?
  - e) Right participation on committees (representative, number, authority, knowledge, commitment)
  - f) Committees responsive? Fulfilled duties?
  - g) Clear and open communication channels? Why or why not?
  - h) BNA effective at supporting Aboriginal hiring? Supporting employee relations? Why or why not?

9. What, if any, opportunities for improvement did you identify?
10. Were the various roles and responsibilities of those involved in delivery of the initiative clearly documented and understood? Please explain.
11. Were the right resources available for delivery? (financial, people, equipment) Were there any gaps?

## **Performance**

12. Does the established monitoring/reporting enable measurement of the intended goals and objectives? Explain.
  - a) Do the measures and indicators reflect the goals and objectives of the initiative? Explain
  - b) Does it promote transparency? Why or why not?
  - c) Have the results been communicated broadly? To the right people? Gaps in communication?
13. Which aspects of the initiative were successful in achieving their objectives? Please explain.
14. Were there any that were not successful? Why?
15. What do you feel were the key impacts that resulted from the training and employment initiative?
16. Were there any unintended benefits that resulted from initiative activities?
17. What do you feel are/were the key strengths of the training and employment initiative? Weaknesses or challenges?
18. Were there any additional factors that contributed to the overall planning and delivery that we have not addressed?

# Appendix A – Question guide – Implementation

## Introduction

Deloitte has been engaged to conduct an evaluation of the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives. As part of our data collection, we are interviewing individuals who were involved in the Initiative to hear their perspective on the planning and implementation of the various activities that made up the Initiative. You have been identified as an individual who had involvement with implementation activities at Wuskwatim. We would like to talk to you about your experience and perspective specifically related to the training and employment activities. Your answers will be kept confidential. All information will be collected and analyzed by Deloitte with key findings presented to the project steering committee. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

## Questions

1. Can you describe what your involvement has been related to training and employment at Wuskwatim? Has your role changed over time?

## Delivery

2. Did the structure that was established for oversight and management of the various initiative components make sense? Why or why not?
  - a) Decision making authority was clear? Effective?
  - b) WKTC mandate and participation appropriate? (Training)?
  - c) Committee mandate and participation reflective of need? (CAC/MAC/ACE/AdHoc Employment Committee)
  - d) Committees were effective at achieving mandate?
  - e) Right participation on committees (representative, number, authority, knowledge, commitment)
  - f) Committees responsive? Fulfilled duties?
  - g) Clear and open communication channels? Why or why not?
  - h) BNA effective at supporting Aboriginal hiring? Supporting employee relations? Why or why not?
3. What opportunities are there for improvement?
4. Were the various roles and responsibilities clearly documented and understood? Please explain.
5. Did the actions/activities of the organizations or groups demonstrate understanding of their role and responsibilities? Why or why not?
6. From your perspective, did the delivery of the various initiative activities meet expectations? Why or why not? (Training/JRS/BNA/CC training/counselling)
7. Were the right resources available for delivery of each of the activities that made up the training and employment initiative? (financial, people, equipment) Were there any gaps?
8. Did the services and supports reach the right people?
  - a) Awareness building activities
  - b) Gaps
9. Did the approach that was taken encourage participation? (information, location, timing, process)
10. Were there any barriers to participation?

## Performance

11. Does the established monitoring/reporting enable measurement of the intended goals and objectives? Explain.
  - a) Do the measures and indicators reflect the goals and objectives of the initiative? Explain.
  - b) Does it promote transparency? Why or why not?
  - c) Have the results been communicated broadly? To the right people? Gaps in communication?
12. Which aspects of the initiative were successful in achieving their objectives? Please explain.
13. Were there any that were not successful? Why?
14. What do you feel were the key impacts that resulted from the training and employment initiative?
15. Were there any unintended benefits that resulted from initiative activities?
16. What do you feel are/were the key strengths of the training and employment initiative? Weaknesses or challenges?
17. Were there any additional factors that contributed to the overall planning and delivery that we have not addressed?

# Appendix A – Question guide – Focus group

## Introduction

Deloitte has been engaged to conduct an evaluation of the Wuskwatim Training and Employment Initiatives. As part of our data collection, we are interviewing individuals who were involved in the initiative to hear their perspective on the planning and implementation of the various activities that made up the Initiative. You have been identified to participate in a focus group based on your involvement with pre-project training at Wuskwatim. We would like to talk to you about your experience and perspective specifically related to pre-project training. Your answers will be kept confidential. All information will be collected and analyzed by Deloitte with key findings presented to the project steering committee. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

## Questions

1. Who were the planners and implementers with respect to pre-project training? What were the needs of each group? Were those needs aligned?
2. Did the structure of WKTC facilitate the implementation of the training Initiative? Why or why not?
  - a) Process
  - b) Communication
  - c) Participation (right people and effectiveness)
  - d) Decision making
  - e) Roles and responsibilities
3. Did the activities accomplish the intended objectives?
  - a) Type of training
  - b) Reasons for any changes
  - c) Availability of training programs
  - d) Alignment of training to employment opportunities
4. Were the right people aware of the Initiative? What was done to increase awareness of pre-project training and how effective were those activities?
5. Were the training opportunities accessible to the intended participants?
  - a) Geographic location?
  - b) Timing?
  - c) Access to information/support?
  - d) Did the delivery process enable participation or hinder it? What were the barriers?
6. Were the resources needed to implement training available (people, money, facilities)?
7. Did the training Initiative achieve what it was intended to? Did it have the desired impact? Why or why not? Did the right people attend training?
8. How were the achievement of objectives and desired impact measured? Who was accountable for training outcomes?
9. What do you feel are/were the key strengths of the training initiative? Opportunities for improvement?
10. Were there any additional factors that contributed to the overall planning and delivery of PPT that we have not addressed?

# Appendix A – Question guide – Participant case study

1. Please describe your general involvement with Wuskwatim.
  - a) Did you participate in training related to jobs at Wuskwatim?
  - b) Did you apply for work at Wuskwatim?
  - c) Were you employed there?
  - d) Were you hired through your registration with JRS or were you hired directly from an employer?
2. When did you attend training/work at Wuskwatim?

## Training participants

3. How did you find out about the training opportunities for Wuskwatim? (website, ATEC, community presentation, other)
4. Was it easy to find information about training for working at Wuskwatim?
5. Why did you sign up for training? What did you expect to get out of going for training?
6. Were the right types of training available? Why do you feel this way?
7. What types of training were you interested in taking? Why?
8. Was it easy to apply for training? Why or why not?
9. Were you able to get help with applying for training when needed? Please explain.
10. Was the training offered in at a convenient time? Location? Why or why not?
11. Are there any recommendations that you would make regarding the training that was offered?
12. Did you complete the training program(s) that you enrolled in?
13. What was good about the training process? What didn't you like about it? Why?

## Incomplete

14. Why did you not finish the training? (location hard to get to, personal obligations, too difficult, not what you expected)
15. Is there anything that could have been done differently that would have encouraged you to finish?  
Please explain
16. What, if anything, would have made the training experience better?

## Complete

17. Did the training meet your expectations? Why or why not?
18. Did you obtain the skills that you needed to apply for work at Wuskwatim? If no, why not?
19. What do you think should have been done differently? Explain.

## JRS registration

20. Were you aware that you needed to register for employment opportunities at Wuskwatim? If yes, how did you become aware of this?
21. Was the registration process easy to understand and follow? Location convenient? Why or why not?
22. Was information readily available what was needed to get a job at Wuskwatim?
23. Was information available and clear on how to register with the Job Referral Service?
24. Was help available to register for jobs on Wuskwatim when you needed it?
25. Did you have access to all the information that you needed to complete the registration form?
26. Did you experience any challenges with registering with Job Referral Service (JRS)? Explain.
27. How long were you registered with the JRS?
28. Did you know that you needed to update your registration every 6 months? If yes, how did you find out?
29. Did your registration result in a call from a prospective employer? If yes, did you proceed with the hiring process? Why or why not?
30. Did you understand why you had to apply for Wuskwatim jobs through the JRS? (aware of BNA and hiring preference)
31. Do you feel that the JRS was effective at ensuring that Northern Aboriginal residents had access to the employment opportunities at Wuskwatim?
32. What, if any, improvements could be made to the registration process? Why?
33. What do you feel was good about the registration process? What should have been done differently?

## JRS – Job offer refused

34. We understand that you registered with the JRS to work at Wuskwatim, and received a call offering you a job. Is this correct?
35. At any time, did you refuse an offer to work at Wuskwatim? If yes, please tell us why you decided not to accept the job offer?
36. What, if anything, could have been done differently to make you want to accept the job offer?

## Employment experience

37. Are you currently employed on Wuskwatim? If no, what is the reason? (quit, dismissed, laid off, job completed)
38. Please list all the jobs that you have or are still working on at Wuskwatim, and approximate dates you started and ended those jobs.
39. How would you describe your overall experience working at Wuskwatim?
40. What contributed to the positive aspects of employment there?
41. What, if anything, made it challenging working there?

## Quit

42. Why did you quit your job at Wuskwatim? (Location, personal obligations, too difficult, not what you expected, etc.).
43. Is there anything that could have been done differently that would have encouraged you to stay in your job? Please explain.
44. What, if anything, would have made your work experience better?

## Complete

45. Did the training meet your expectations? Why or why not?
46. Did you obtain the skills that you needed to apply for work at Wuskwatim? If no, why not?
47. What, if any, changes do you think would have improved the training? Explain.

## **Terminated**

48. What is your understanding of the reason why you were terminated?
49. Did you seek assistance to understand or dispute your termination? If yes, where did you go for help? Was there information available on what services were there to assist you?
50. Is there anything that could have been done differently that might have prevented you being terminated from your job?
51. What, if anything, would have made your work experience better?

## **Employment supports**

### ***Cross cultural training***

52. Did you attend cross cultural training? If no, why not?
53. Do you feel the cross cultural training helped to improve working conditions? Why or why not?
54. What was good about the cross cultural training that was offered? What about it wasn't as good?

### ***Counseling services***

55. Were you aware counseling services were available at Wuskwatim for workers? Was information available on these services? Was assistance available to help workers access these services?
56. Did you use the counseling services? If yes, did they meet your expectations? Why or why not?
57. Do you feel the counseling services helped improve the employment experience? Why or why not?
58. What was good about the counseling services that were offered? What could have been better?

### ***Ceremonies***

59. Were you aware of the ceremonies conducted during the Wuskwatim project? Was information available on these ceremonies?
60. Did you attend the ceremonies? If yes, were they what you expected? Why or why not?
61. Do you feel the ceremonies helped improve the employment experience? Why or why not?
62. What about the ceremonies helped? What could have been changed?
63. Did having Elders at Wuskwatim improve the work experience? Why or why not?
64. Overall, what, if any changes would you recommend to the employment support services and why? What, if any, additional supports would have helped improve your experience working on Wuskwatim?

## **Employment relations**

65. Do you know what the Burntwood Nelson Agreement is? Please describe what you know about it.
66. Was information available regarding the BNA? Help? Where?
67. Do you feel that the BNA helped protect you as a worker at Wuskwatim? Why or why not?
68. What is your understanding of the role of the union? From your experience did they fulfill that role? Why or why not?
69. What information and assistance was available to assist workers if they had a dispute with their employer? From your experience, how well did it work?
70. Were you aware of the employee liaison officer at Wuskwatim? Did you know why this role was created and what it was supposed to accomplish? Were you able to meet with the liaison officer, when needed?
71. Were you aware of the Advisory Committee on Employment (ACE)? Did you understand why the ACE committee was created and what they were intended to do?
72. What were the strengths of the employer/employee relations supports at Wuskwatim?
73. What were the weaknesses?
74. What, if any, recommendations would you make to improve the overall employer/employee experience at Wuskwatim?



## Closing questions

75. What do you feel the impacts were of the training and employment programs at Wuskwatim? Why?
76. Overall what you feel was done well?
77. What do you think could have been improved?
78. Do you have any additional comments you would like to make regarding your experience at Wuskwatim?

# Appendix B – Planner and implementer interview participants

## Planners and implementers

Organization/role	Name	NCN/Hydro	Interview/Focus Group location	Complete
<b>Planning</b>				
Wuskwatim Project Manager	Terry Armstrong	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
WPLP Chair	Ken Adams	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
PPT Hydro	Shawna Pachal	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
	Liz Carriere			√
	Regan Windsor			Unable to attend focus group
	Robynn Clarke			√
PPT federal government (ASEP/HRSDC/INAC/WED)	Barb Jones Glenda Restoule	Hydro	Phone interview	√ Glenda declined
PPT provincial government	Shirley Prokopchuk	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
PPT provincial government	Scott Sinclair	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
New Gen Partnership Implementation	Jane Kidd-Hantscher Vicki Cole	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Provincial government (JRS)	Karen Conrad	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
WKTC other community reps and organizations	FLCN Rep: Rita Spence, Training Advisor, Fox Lake Cree Nation	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
WKTC other community reps and organizations	MMF Rep: Tracey Como Manitoba Metis Federation	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
WKTC other community reps and organizations	YFFN Rep: Danielle Beardy, Chief Financial & Executive Officer, York Factory Learning Institute, York Factory First Nation	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
WKTC other community reps and organizations	MKO Rep: Chris Bignell, AHRDS/ASETS Program Manager, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.	Hydro	Thompson	√
WKTC other community reps and organizations	CNP contact: Victor Spence, Manager, Future Development, Tataskweyak Cree Nation	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
WKTC other community reps and organizations	Tataskweyak Cree Nation Rep – Sarah Cole	Hydro	Winnipeg	√

Organization/role	Name	NCN/Hydro	Interview/Focus Group location	Complete
<b>Planning</b>				
<b>Implementation</b>				
Job Referral Service – northern and southern reps	Cecile Rathwell	Hydro	Winnipeg (in person – Cec) Phone interview (Val)	√
	Valerie Hepp			√
Job Referral Service – Hydro rep	Angie Adams	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
ACE -- Hydro Rep	Jason Peterson	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
New Gen Partnership Implementation	Jane Kidd-Hantscher Vicki Cole	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
New Gen Construction Division Manager	Ralph Wittebolle	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Pre-construction Project Manager	Ed Wojczynski	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Wuskwatim Cross Cultural Contract	Susan Koblinski	NCN	NCN	√
NCN Contract Administration	Bruce Hickey	NCN	Winnipeg	Part of NCN focus group
	Adolph Gawaziak	NCN	NCN	√
	Darcy Linklater	NCN	NCN	√
NCN Employment liaison	Charlie Joe Hart	NCN	NCN	Declined
NCN Infrastructure liaison	David Kobliski	NCN	NCN	√
NCN BNA Representative	Terry Linklater	NCN	NCN	√
ACE Committee Representative	Alvin Yetman	NCN	NCN	√
	Terry Linklater			√
Committee Representative	Burnell Anderson	NCN	By phone	Not reached
Committee Representative	Edward Primrose	NCN	NCN	√
Committee Representative	Dennis Linklater	NCN	NCN	√
WIO and NCN Future Development Office	Norman Linklater	NCN	Winnipeg	√
	Bruce Hickey			√
	Marcel Moody			√
	Valerie Matthews Lemieux			√
	Jimmy Hunter Spence			Did not attend
ATEC	Aron Hart (JRS)	NCN	NCN	√
	Fred Prince			√
	Veronica Buck-Spence			√
Allied Hydro Council	David Martin	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Allied Hydro Council – Shop Steward	Brian Smith	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Allied Hydro Council – Shop Steward	Ade Doerkson	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Allied Hydro Council – Shop Steward	Kris Remillard	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Allied Hydro Council – Shop Steward	Clarence Anderson	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Contractor – Sodexo	Robert Lambert	Hydro	Winnipeg	√
Contractor -- O-N-E	Don Strickland	Hydro	Winnipeg	√

## Participants – Case profiles

Case type	Complete
<b>NCN</b>	
Enrolled in training (11)	9
Employed – job completed (11)	11
Terminated – (11)	11
Quit – (11)	11
JRS – refused work (11)	11
<b>Cross Lake</b>	
Enrolled in training (3)	1 (No one else on the list available during visit)
Employed – job completed (3)	4
Terminated – (3)	4
Quit – (3)	7
JRS – refused work (3)	1 (Two additional interviewees from other categories also refused work – JRS refused questions were asked)
<b>TCN</b>	
Enrolled in training (3)	3
Employed – job completed (3)	3
Terminated – (3)	3
Quit – (3)	3
JRS – refused work (3)	1 (Two additional interviews to be completed by phone)
<b>OCN</b>	
Enrolled in training (3)	3
Employed – job completed (3)	2
Terminated – (3)	3
Quit – (3)	3
JRS – refused work (3)	2 (Two additional interviews to be completed by phone)

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# Appendix D – Employee report – Wuskwatim



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING "EMPLOYEE REPORT - WUSKWATIM" FORM

### INTRODUCTION

The following instructions are intended to assist you with the data collection and completion of the "Employee Report - Wuskwatim Project" form required by Manitoba Hydro.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Completed forms for all project employees are to be submitted to Manitoba Hydro at the Wuskwatim Site Engineering Office, within 24 hours of hire, separation or reclassification. Contractors are advised to keep copies of completed forms.

All submissions must include Contract Data and Part I, II, III or IV as required. Partially completed forms will be returned to the Contractor to complete and resubmit.

### CONTRACT DATA

To be completed by the Contractor and includes:

**Contract Description**

Contract name as it appears on the contract.

**Contract Number**

The digit number as it appears on the contract

**Employer name (Contractor, Subcontractor, Consultant or MH)**

Name in full for tracking purposes

**If Manitoba Hydro employee, specify Section, Dept. & Division**

This applies to all Manitoba Hydro employees including staff and regular status, term, part-time, casual or student

For each new hire:

- Complete Contract Data section of the form and proceed to Part I.

### PART I: RESIDENCY, ANCESTRY & HIRE DATA

Required for each new hire:

- complete Part I of the form;
- the new employee signs the form (see Consent below);
- deliver the original form to Manitoba Hydro at the Wuskwatim Site Engineering Office.

#### Social Insurance Number:

It is not a legal requirement for an employee to provide their SIN for these data collection purposes. Instead, the first three numbers and last three numbers of their SIN is required as an identification number to enable individual tracking.

#### Consent:

Ensure every new employee reads the Privacy Statement found at the bottom of the form. Once the employee has read and understands the statement, have him or her sign and date the box found within Part I. It is important to remember that changing any information after the employee has signed the form will result in a new form having to be completed and a new signature required. Therefore, ensuring the data is complete the first time will reduce the amount of time spent going back and forth between employee and form.

City, Town, Village or Community: Refers to the employee's "place of residence during their term of employment."

Northern Resident: A person who has resided in Northern Manitoba (i.e. north of the Northern Affairs Boundary) for a minimum of 5 years accumulatively and a minimum of 6 consecutive months prior to Date of Hire as per ENA Article 13.

Aboriginal: Persons who are status Indians, Métis, non-status Indians and Inuit.

Project Hire Date: Refers to the date upon which the employee began work at the Project site. In the case of an employee who has been re-hired, the project hire date is the date upon which the employee resumed work.

ENA Appendix: Refers to ENA appendix number.

Classification: Refers to ENA classification or other job classification.

**Referral/Recruitment Information:**

- *Referred by JRS (Job Referral Service)* as administered by Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade (CTT), formerly MAET. If an employee is hired through this process there must be a corresponding Job Order No. and Job Seeker No. provided in appropriate boxes.
- *Recruited by Contractor* includes all direct hires under BNA Article 2.9 and name hires under BNA Article 12.1.1.7. Also includes contractor employees hired outside the scope of the BNA.
- *Recruited by Manitoba Hydro* includes all Manitoba Hydro employees including staff and regular status, term, part-time, casual or student.
- *Other* includes any union referrals or other referral/recruitment methods that are not included in the other three referral/recruitment options.

**Hydro Northern Training & Employment Initiative Training:** Project training received prior to hire from a recognized Manitoba Hydro Pro Project Training program. Please include the agency that provided the training and the date completed.

**PART II: SEPARATION DATA**

*To be completed by the Contractor within 24 hours of separation*

**When an employee separates:**

- complete Part II;
- deliver updated form to Manitoba Hydro, at the Wuskwatim Site Engineering Office.

**Nature of Separation:**

- *Resigned* - employee choosing to terminate employment.
- *Laid off* - employee released from active employment due to a lack of work.
- *Discharged* - employee terminated by contractor for reasons other than a lack of work.
- *Job completed* - employee terminated upon completion of overall contract.
- *Other* - includes any separation reasons that are not included in above.

**Actual Days Worked:** Refers to the actual number of days the employee worked, not including scheduled days off.

**Actual Hours Worked:** Refers to the actual number of hours the employee worked. All time is to be rounded up to the nearest hour.

**Other Formal On-The-Job-Training:** Completion of formal training in one of the trades defined in the applicable contract. Please include trade, job classification and date training was completed.

**PART III: RECLASSIFICATION DATA**

*To be completed by the contractor for all employee reclassifications within 24 hours of reclassification.*

**When an employee is reclassified:**

- Complete Part III, line 1 as necessary.
- Please place a check mark under the appropriate reason for reclass. If choosing "other" a reason must be specified.
- To be completed by the contractor for all employee reclassifications within the same BNA Appendix. Any employee moving from a job classification in one BNA Appendix to a different BNA Appendix must be separated and rehired.
- Deliver updated form to Manitoba Hydro at the Wuskwatim Site Engineering Office.
- If the employee has more than one reclassification, follow the steps above, but complete next line as applicable (2 or 3).

**PART IV: CROSS CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING**

The Cross Cultural Training is mandatory, every supervisor and employee must participate in the training. Training sessions will be coordinated through Manitoba Hydro.

This section will be completed by Manitoba Hydro once the employee has attended the Cross Cultural Training at site.

# Appendix E – Wuskwatim employment data summary – Apprentice breakdown

Job description	Aboriginal content	
	Aboriginal hires	Non-Aboriginal hires
BOILERMAKER APPRENTICE LEVEL I	<5	<5
BOILERMAKER APPRENTICE LEVEL III		<5
CARPENTER (OTHER)		<5
CARPENTER APPRENTICE LEVEL I	10	7
CARPENTER APPRENTICE LEVEL II	<5	27
CARPENTER APPRENTICE LEVEL III	11	50
CARPENTER APPRENTICE LEVEL IV	11	32
CARPET & RESILIENT FLOOR TILE LAYERS APPRENTICE LEVEL I		<5
CEMENT MASON APPRENTICE LEVEL III		<5
CRANE OPERATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL I – MOBILE & CRAWLER		<5
CRANE OPERATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL I – TOWER CRANE OPERATOR		<5
CRANE OPERATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL I – BOOM TRUCK HOIST OPERATOR		
CRANE OPERATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL II – TOWER CRANE OPERATOR		<5
CRANE OPERATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL II – BOOM TRUCK HOIST OPERATOR		
DRYWALL APPLICATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL III		
DRYWALL APPLICATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL V		<5
ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICE LEVEL I	7	5
ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICE LEVEL II	<5	8
ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICE LEVEL III	<5	<5
ELECTRICIAN APPRENTICE LEVEL IV	<5	<5
ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN		<5
GLASS & METAL MECHANIC APPRENTICE LEVEL III		<5
HEAVY DUTY MECHANIC APPRENTICE LEVEL I		
HEAVY DUTY MECHANIC APPRENTICE LEVEL III		<5
HEAVY DUTY MECHANIC APPRENTICE LEVEL IV	<5	<5
INSULATOR APPRENTICE LEVEL II		<5
JOURNEYMAN CEMENT MASON		
JOURNEYMAN ELECTRICIAN	<5	<5

Job description	Aboriginal content	
	Aboriginal hires	Non-Aboriginal hires
JOURNEYMAN MILLWRIGHTS		<5
MECHANIC'S HELPERS, WELDER'S HELPERS, SERVICEMAN'S HELPERS & OILERS		<5
MILLWRIGHT APPRENTICE LEVEL I	<5	<5
MILLWRIGHT APPRENTICE LEVEL II	<5	<5
MILLWRIGHT APPRENTICE LEVEL III	<5	<5
MILLWRIGHT APPRENTICE LEVEL IV	<5	<10
PAINTER APPRENTICE LEVEL I (BRUSH & ROLLER)		
PIPE FITTER & PLUMBER APPRENTICE LEVEL I	<5	5
PIPE FITTER & PLUMBER APPRENTICE LEVEL II	<5	6
PIPE FITTER & PLUMBER APPRENTICE LEVEL III	<5	4
PIPE FITTER & PLUMBER APPRENTICE LEVEL IV	<5	6
PIPE FITTER & PLUMBER APPRENTICE LEVEL V		<5
POT & DISHWASHER		
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER IV		<5
REINFORCING RODMEN APPRENTICE LEVEL I		
ROOFER APPRENTICE LEVEL III		<5
SHEET METAL APPRENTICE LEVEL III		<5
STRUCTURAL IRONWORKERS, IRONWORKER WELDERS APPRENTICE LEVEL I	<5	<5
STRUCTURAL IRONWORKERS, IRONWORKER WELDERS APPRENTICE LEVEL II	<5	<5
STRUCTURAL IRONWORKERS, IRONWORKER WELDERS APPRENTICE LEVEL III	<5	6
SURVEY HELPER		<5
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>212</b>

Source: Wuskwatim Employment Statistics provided by Manitoba Hydro

# Appendix F – Employment liaison worker job description



Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

## Wuskwatim Implementation Office

Ensuring the Future of Our Children & Our Children's Children...



### JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Employment Liaison Worker
ORGANIZATION:	Wuskwatim Implementation Office
REPORTS TO:	Wuskwatim Implementation Manager

### **PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO NCN MEMBERS**

#### NATURE OF WORK:

Establishes and maintains excellent working relationships with Hydro, ONE, Sodexo, other contractors, AHC, and individual workers, to assist NCN Members secure employment opportunities, by ensuring that they are aware of appropriate placement processes, their rights and that issues are investigated and brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel.

#### ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

- Work with contractors to identify their recruitment and training needs and how sustainable employment opportunities can be made available to NCN Members and other First Nations peoples;
- Interview workers to obtain information about their working experience and to identify any issues that may impact their ability to establish a sustainable employment relationship;
- Where employment issues are identified, support the worker by assisting them contact their shop steward, AHC or the contractor, depending upon the nature of the issue.
- Work with ATEC to identify training opportunities for NCN Members to assist them in overcoming a lack of qualifications or other employment barriers and ensure that they take

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steps to maintain necessary registrations and memberships to enhance their employment opportunities;

- Respond to enquiries from NCN Members employed on the project and those who wish to be employed on the project, and where possible, assist such workers resolve their concerns;
- Ensure that appropriate investigations of complaints are undertaken by the contractors and/or AHC where complaints are made.
- Attend any required site meetings as the WIO representative and prepare weekly and monthly reports to the Manager, which reports will provide part of the WIO regular reports to Chief and Council.
- Monitor the availability of business opportunities and report such opportunities immediately to the WIO Coordinator so that steps can be taken to enhance opportunities for NCN Members.
- Assist in identifying other employment, business and training opportunities that may become available outside of Wuskwatim so that workers can get experience that will assist them obtain employment at Wuskwatim.
- Assist in providing employment retention support for NCN members at Wuskwatim by working with the NCN On-Site Counselors and other support groups

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- The successful candidate would ideally have post-secondary education in project management or construction, with several years demonstrated experience. An equivalent combination of education, training and experience will be considered.
- Requires strong interpersonal relationship skills, including problem solving and conflict resolution skills.
- An understanding of a unionized, construction environment, including working with collective agreements.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team.
- Understanding of contractor recruitment processes and how they may be improved.
- Must have excellent writing skills with an ability to produce documents under time constraints.
- Good oral communication skills, including the ability to speak in Cree and English, as well as the ability to make public presentations.
- Ability to utilize a personal computer along with experience using a variety of business software.

**SALARY:**

Ranging from \$45,000 to \$55,000 depending upon qualifications and experience, plus travel expenses in accordance with approved NCN practices.

Resumes, accompanied by a cover letter, will be received at the HR Department, c/o Danielle Moose, until noon, August 24, 2009.

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