



Work-Sharing extended and enhanced to minimize impact of recession

THE HONOURABLE Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, announced that the Government of Canada is enhancing the Work-Sharing program. While speaking to employees at Mascot Truck Parts, in Mississauga, Ontario, Minister Finley highlighted the support Canadian workers are receiving through the Government's "Jobs and Growth Budget" with enhancements to the Work-Sharing program. The enhancements to the program will enable more Canadians to

continue working while companies experience a temporary slowdown.

"The Canadian economy is improving, but full recovery has not yet been achieved, and many Canadians still need our support," said Minister Finley. "That is why our government is taking concrete action to help businesses avoid layoffs, and keep Canadians working."

Recognizing the uncertainty facing many businesses, Budget 2010 provided an extension to the enhanced Work-Sharing measure introduced

in the first year of Canada's Economic Action Plan. Budget 2010 also put in place an extension of up to 26 weeks (to a maximum of 78 weeks) for employers with active, or recently terminated, Work-Sharing agreements. Both of these enhancements will be in place until April 2, 2011.

Since February 2009, the program has helped protect the jobs of more than 255,000 Canadians.

Helping raise worker skill levels in grocery retail

RECOGNIZING the need to develop a highly skilled and flexible workforce, the Government of Canada, through the Sector Council Program (SCP), has approved funding contributions to the Canadian Food Industry Council (CFIC) to develop free National Occupational Standards (NOS) for high volume and warehouse occupations in the grocery retail/wholesale sector.

"Employers will be able to use these standards to develop job descriptions and training plans, evaluate performance, and help employees achieve a professional level of competency," says Cheryl Paradowski, Executive Director of the CFIC. "These standards can also be used by educators and trainers to design training and education programs."

Scheduled for completion in fall 2011, the standards will be developed through consultation with members of the CFIC Board of

Directors and the Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council (CSCSC).

NOS are developed with the collective expertise of sector professionals from across Canada, and define the skills, knowledge and attitudes that an individual needs to perform competently in a given occupation.

Funded by the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program, the CFIC is a nationally recognized, non-profit organization that brings together representatives from business, labour, education, government and other professional groups in a spirit of cooperation to analyze and develop strategies and tools to address the human resource needs within the grocery retail and wholesale industry.

Source: Statistics Canada

Under Work-Sharing, employers can retain employees and avoid expensive re-hiring and re-training costs. Employees are able to continue working and keep their skills up to date. As of March 28, 2010, there were close to 5500 active Work-Sharing agreements nationally benefiting close to 135,000 participants, and since February 2009, the program has helped protect the jobs of more than 255,000 Canadians. Many Work-Sharing agreements are ending early as businesses, such as Mascot Truck Parts, recover and resume normal operations.

"Thanks to support from the Work-Sharing program, I feel good about our future," said Mr. Glenn Hanthorn, President, Mascot Truck Parts. "Work-Sharing has allowed us to avoid layoffs and retain our trained and experienced staff, giving us a competitive head start now that the economy is recovering."

Source: The Government of Canada
