ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN:
THE ALBERTA MÉTIS BUSINESS SCENE
March 2012
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1.0 OVERVIEW

This document provides a detailed snapshot of the environment for Métis business and economic development in Alberta in 2012. The environmental scan includes information on:

- Alberta’s current economic development context, including the potential opportunities presented by the Northern Gateway project.

- Key features of the Alberta Métis business and economic development environment.

- The business and economic development services available to Métis entrepreneurs in the province.

- The Métis-specific financial institution operating in Alberta, as well as additional sources of lending and equity capital that may be available to Métis entrepreneurs in Alberta.

- Organizations and opportunities that may be available to assist Métis entrepreneurs to grow their businesses through networks and partnerships.

- The gaps and issues related to capital supply for Métis entrepreneurs, financial institutions and economic development organizations.

- Metis business inventories and directories.

- Successful ventures and best practices that have been identified in the area of Métis business and economic development.

- The need for capacity building in business management and corporate governance—along with gaps in management training—in the Metis business sector.

- Métis educational and skills development and gaps in employee skills development.

Links to additional information are provided throughout the document.

Information specific to the Alberta Métis population is not always available. Information about the Canadian Métis population or the Aboriginal population in Canada or Alberta is referenced to round out the environmental scan in some areas.
2.0 ALBERTA ECONOMIC OVERVIEW FOR 2012


Alberta Economic Forecast

• Alberta’s economy is growing briskly despite a slowdown in the global economy and escalation of the Eurozone debt crisis. Economic growth in the province is forecast at a solid 3.8% in 2012 on the heels of an estimated 3.5% gain in 2011.

• **Energy:** In December 2011, the average number of drilling rigs increased by 27.9% to 344 as compared to December 2010. For all of 2011, the average number of active drilling rigs rose by 38.2% to 286 as compared to 2010. In October 2011, crude oil production was up 13.1% while natural gas production fell 4.1%. Between January and October of 2011, crude oil production was 7.8% higher than for the same period in 2010 while natural gas production was 3.6% lower over the same period.
  
  o Aided by rising demand in emerging markets, oil prices are expected to average US$96.25 per barrel in 2011/12, and to rise to just under US$110 per barrel over the forecast period. The strength in oil prices, along with rock bottom interest rates, buoyed investment in both the conventional and non-conventional oil sectors in 2011. Oil exports are expected to expand at a double digit pace in 2012 and to make a strong contribution to Alberta’s growth throughout the forecast period.

  o Natural gas activity is on a much different path than that of oil. With US shale gas supplies continuing to flood the North American market, gas prices are expected to remain soft in 2012. The price outlook remains weak and declines in Alberta’s natural gas production are forecast to continue.

• **Non-energy business investment** is also expected to pick up in 2012 and to grow over the forecast period on the back of increasing economic activity in the province and low interest rates.

• **Manufacturing:** Manufacturers saw shipments approach their pre-recession peak in late 2011 and are forecast to experience further annual gains through 2015. In November 2011, the value of Alberta’s manufacturing shipments increased by 23.0% from November 2010, to $5.2 billion. The largest gain, of 74.2%, was registered for machinery followed by a 31.7% increase for metal fabricating and a 27.6% increase for petroleum and coal products. Year-to-date manufacturing shipments increased by 17.9%, compared to the same period in 2010. This increase was driven by large increases in machinery (up 23.6%), petroleum and coal products (up 29.5%), metal fabrication (up 20.9%), and chemicals (up 20.6%).

• **Agriculture:** Agricultural prices increased in 2011 and are expected to
remain strong over the forecast horizon, along with agricultural exports.

- **Construction:** Increasing migration, declines in rental vacancy rates and continued low interest rates bode well for Alberta’s housing sector. While falling overall in 2011, housing starts picked up near the end of last year and are expected to strengthen in 2012 before reaching 30,000 per year over the medium term. In December 2011, the number of urban housing starts increased by 48.3% from December 2010. For the year 2011, urban starts fell by 2.8%, compared to 2010, due mostly to a 12.9% decrease in single starts. Multiple starts increased by 17.8% over the same period. In November 2011, the value of building permits rose by 2.6% from the same month in 2010. Residential rose by 22% while commercial and industrial permits fell by 27.1% and 26.8%, respectively. In the first 11 months of 2011, the value of Alberta building permits was 7.0% higher than the value recorded for the same period in 2010.

- **Consumer spending:** Alberta consumers are lining up at the tills, spurred on by solid income and job gains. Real consumer spending is expected to remain strong, above 3.5% annual growth over the medium term, helping to sustain Alberta’s economic expansion.

- **Retail:** Alberta retail sales were 10.4% higher in October 2011 than in the same month of 2010. The largest increases were noted for gasoline service stations (up 19.7%), motor and recreational vehicle sales (up 19.0%) and clothing and accessories (up 13.7%). Year-to-date, retail sales increased 6.9% to $52.8 billion. The largest increase of 20.8% was registered for gasoline service stations, mainly as a result of higher gasoline prices. In November 2011, the number of new motor vehicle sales increased by 12.9% from the same month in 2010. Year-to-date, motor vehicle sales increased by 9.3%. In December 2011, the number of home re-sales via the Multiple Listing Service rose by 0.6% from December 2010. Alberta’s Consumer Price Index rose 2.9% in December 2011, as compared to the same month in 2010. Nationally, consumer prices increased by 2.3% over the same period.

- **Exports:** The value of Alberta’s international merchandise exports was 26.0% higher in November 2011 than it was in the same month of 2010. On a year-to-date basis, exports increased by 16.5% from the same period in 2010. Export gains of 29.0%, 26.3% and 17.7%, respectively, were noted for mining and energy, primary agriculture and manufacturing industries. Nationally, merchandise trade exports increased by 12.4%.

- **Bankruptcies and Incorporations:** In October 2011, the number of business bankruptcies increased by 25.0% while consumer bankruptcies fell

### MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Location</th>
<th>Investment ($ 000,000)</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake</td>
<td>98,664.1</td>
<td>125,773.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Athabasca - Grande Prairie</td>
<td>14,212.1</td>
<td>10,070.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Edmonton Region</td>
<td>26,222.7</td>
<td>21,810.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Red Deer Region</td>
<td>1,724.9</td>
<td>1,631.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Banff - Jasper</td>
<td>1,769.1</td>
<td>1,195.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Calgary Region</td>
<td>25,399.9</td>
<td>22,462.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Camrose - Drumheller</td>
<td>3,239.7</td>
<td>3,115.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Lethbridge - Medicine Hat</td>
<td>5,914.0</td>
<td>3,270.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Other</td>
<td>16,041.6</td>
<td>19,450.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>193,188.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>208,779.2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *Inventory of Major Alberta Projects* tracks projects valued at $5 million or greater that are planned, underway, or have been recently completed.
by 26.5%. Year-to-date, business and consumer bankruptcies fell by 27.9% and 14.3%, respectively. For all of 2011, the number of business incorporations totalled 41,323, 5.6% higher than what was recorded in 2010.

Labour Market
- Alberta had the strongest job growth in the country in 2011. Employment expanded by an impressive 3.8%, driven by new full-time, private sector positions and broad-based gains across most sectors. The momentum from 2011 is expected to carry over into this year, with employment growth forecast to be 2.7% in 2012 before averaging about 2% annually over the medium term.
- Employment gains have pushed down the unemployment rate below 5%, a sharp improvement from the recessionary peak of 7.6%. The unemployment rate is forecast to dip to 4% by 2015, leading to general shortages of labour and upward pressure on wages.
- Significant employment gains were registered in the following industries in 2011: retail trade (up 28,000), healthcare and social assistance (up 15,300) and mining and oil and gas extraction (up 14,900).
- Attracted by new job opportunities and high wages, net migration is expected to pick up. After experiencing net outflows of interprovincial migrants in 2010, Alberta gained 13,700 people from other provinces in 2011. Overall net migration, both international and interprovincial, is expected to increase in 2012 and 2013 before stabilizing to around 40,000 per year over the remainder of the forecast period. As a result, population growth is expected to rise to 1.8% annually through 2015.

Vulnerabilities
- Uncertainty over the resolution of the European debt crisis has contributed to recurring cycles of volatility in financial markets, higher bond yields in some heavily indebted economies and declines in consumer and business confidence. These factors will continue to undermine global economic growth.
- Emerging markets have thus far been able to sustain global growth and commodity prices; however, risks exist. Economic growth slowed in China and India in the second half of 2011 and a further cooling would hurt world growth prospects.
- As economic activity continues to expand in Alberta, inflation is expected to rise to 2.5% in 2012 and remain above 2% per year over the forecast period.
- As an economy heavily reliant on trade and commodities, Alberta remains vulnerable to downturns in global economic activity as well as financial and currency market instability.
2.1 NORTHERN GATEWAY PROJECT

The proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway infrastructure project for the energy industry is expected to have major implications for the economy of Alberta, particularly in the Edmonton, Northwest and Central regions. Enbridge is proposing collaborations that could provide substantial benefits for Aboriginal people. The following assessment of anticipated benefits for Alberta is based on material provided by Enbridge. For additional information visit www.northerngateway.ca/economic-opportunity/benefits-for-albertans.

Proposed Benefits for Alberta

![Construction phase and Project Highlights](image)

**Alberta Employment Anticipated**
- 1,400 person-years of direct on-site employment
- 15,000 person-years of total employment (on-site, purchases, indirect, induced)

**Edmonton region:**
- Total project construction spending in Edmonton region is estimated at $224 million
- Project engineering, design and management in Edmonton region estimated at $146 million
- 1,540 person-years, including engineering, project management and construction; 1,445 from within region
- $27 million in goods and services, Edmonton region:
  - Equipment rentals - $10 m
  - Accommodations/food - $7 m
  - Clearing/logging/salvage - $1 m
  - Fuel - $3 m
  - Stockpiling pipe - $2 m
  - Trucking - $1 m
  - Equipment parts - $2 m
  - Surveying - $1 m
  - Access roads - $1 m
  - Other - $2 m

**Alberta Central region:**
- Total project construction spending in Alberta central region is estimated at $508 million of which $76 million will be spent on a pump station near Whitecourt
• 675 person years including engineering, project management and construction; 405 years from region
• Pipeline and pump station construction labour will require 490 person years; 245 from within the region
• $63 million in goods and services, AB central region:
  - Equipment rentals - $21 m
  - Accommodations/Food - $16 m
  - Clearing/logging/salvage - $2 m
  - Fuel - $7 m
  - Stockpiling Pipe - $4 m

**Alberta NW region:**
• Total Project construction spending in Northwest Region of AB is estimated at $847 million of which $76 million will be spent on a pump station near Smoky River
• 280 kilometres of pipelines and one pump station near Smoky River
• Total Construction Employment: 1,320 person years including engineering, project management and construction; 790 person years from region
• Estimated $142 million in goods and services in Region:
  - Equipment rentals $33 m
  - Accommodations/Food $32 m
  - Clearing/logging/salvage $26 m
  - Fuel $16 m
  - Stockpiling Pipe $7 m
  - Trucking $3 m
  - Equipment Parts $4 m
  - Surveying $2 m
  - Access Roads $1 m
  - Other $4 m

**Proposed Aboriginal Benefits**

Enbridge Northern Gateway says it is aiming for maximum participation of Aboriginal communities in economic opportunities that arise from the project, including equity ownership, directed procurement and employment. Acting on input from Aboriginal groups and stakeholders, Enbridge has developed a package of environmental and economic commitments for the communities along the route. Enbridge has entered into some formal protocol agreements with Aboriginal groups along the proposed pipeline corridor. It has stated it is prepared to make the following safety and economic commitments to make the sustainability objectives a reality:

- **Aboriginal Equity Ownership.** Northern Gateway is offering Aboriginal people a 10% share in a $5.5 billion project. The Metis Nation of Alberta has not to date indicated its acceptance
of the equity offer from Enbridge.

- **Procurement, Employment and Training.** Aboriginal people are expected to comprise approximately 15% of regional construction employment. Northern Gateway will work to identify direct and indirect employment opportunities for members of neighbouring Aboriginal communities. Northern Gateway anticipates that combined employment, procurement and joint venture opportunities will reach approximately $400 million in value over the three years during construction, for Alberta and B.C. Aboriginal business involvement in construction activities will be dependent upon community capacity and desire to participate. Enbridge is currently entering into commercial memorandums of understanding to ensure interested communities are able to fully participate.

- **Community Trust.** A Community Trust will be established for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities with a commitment of 1% pre-tax domestic profit to support the trust, measured on a five year rolling average basis. It’s estimated to exceed $100 million over the 30-year economic life of the Project.

- **Stewardship Programs.** Aboriginal communities along the right-of-way will have access to existing Enbridge stewardship and habitat protection initiatives such as Neutral Footprint Program, Natural Legacy, Schools Plus, and Safe Community (as applicable).

**For detailed information on the proposed Aboriginal benefits see:**

### 3.0 OVERVIEW OF THE ALBERTA METIS BUSINESS SCENE

There are close to 85,000 people of Métis heritage in Alberta. The Alberta Métis population is relatively young, well trained, and upwardly mobile, and also increasingly business-oriented. Economic self-sufficiency for individuals and communities is an important value in Metis culture and the entrepreneurial spirit of the Metis has been a constant throughout Metis history.

Alberta is the only province in Canada with a recognized Métis land base entrenched in provincial statute – the Metis Settlements. Approximately 8,000 people live on the eight Metis Settlements, which cover a land base of 1.25 million acres.

**East Prairie Métis Settlement**
East Prairie Métis Settlement is located east of Grande Prairie. The population is 906 and the land area is 32,635 hectares. East Prairie Métis
Settlement offers an employment services, and self-employment and small business and industry training. Economic activities include forestry, construction, transportation and recreation.

**Elizabeth Métis Settlement**
The Elizabeth Settlement is situated along the Alberta/Saskatchewan border 32 kilometres south of Cold Lake. It has a population of 644 members and a land-base of 25,641 hectares. The community offers career building services, support services and economic development information. Economic activities include oil and gas, construction, transportation and recreation.

**Kikino Métis Settlement**
Kikino is located near Lac La Biche. The land base consists of 44,743 hectares and the population is 1295. Economic activities include agriculture, aggregate sales, oil and gas, forestry, construction and retail.

**Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement**
Buffalo Lake has a land base of 35,356 hectares and a population of 1,236. Buffalo Lake is located in east-central Alberta, 200 km northeast of Edmonton and 50 km southwest of Lac La Biche. Economic activities include oil and gas, construction, transportation, forestry and recreation.

**Fishing Lake Métis Settlement**
Fishing Lake is situated in northeast Alberta on the Saskatchewan border about 67kms north of Cold Lake. The land base is 37,800 hectares and the population is 785. Economic activities include oil and gas, cattle production, tourism, mining, transportation and recreation.

**Gift Lake Métis Settlement**
Gift Lake is 40 km northeast of High Prairie. It includes 84,307 hectares and has a population of 1300. Economic activities include oil and gas, construction, logging, a hotel and a recreational facility, and vast resources in the hunting and fishing industry.

**Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement**
Located 77 km south of High Level, Paddle Prairie covers 169,909 hectares and has a population of 1,464. Oil and gas, agriculture, construction, transportation and recreation are the major industry sectors.

**Peavine Métis Settlement**
Peavine Métis Settlement is located northeast of High Prairie. The population is 993 and the land base is 82,364 hectares. Economic activity includes oil and gas, agriculture, construction, transportation and outdoor recreation.

Peavine Métis Settlement offers a small business loan program as well as help with business plan development.
4.0 BUSINESS/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

This section provides an overview of the business and economic development infrastructure and related services for Métis entrepreneurs in Alberta.

The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA)
www.albertametis.com/

Since its inception in 1928, the MNA has existed to advocate on behalf of and meet the needs and aspirations of Métis people in Alberta. The mandate of the MNA is to:

• Be a representative voice on behalf of Métis people in Alberta;
• Provide Métis people an opportunity to participate in government’s policy and decision making process and, most importantly;
• Promote and facilitate the advancement of Métis people through the pursuit of self-reliance, self-determination and self-management.

The MNA has made a transition from solely a representative body to an organization responsible and accountable for the ongoing delivery of a variety of programs and services. The MNA has continued to make significant strides as an organization and has been successful in developing and implementing a number of projects and initiatives, including Apeetogosan Development Inc., its small business lending arm. The Metis Nation of Alberta Provincial Office has also created an Industry Relations Unit. The role of the Industry Relations Unit is to ensure that the Metis community, represented by the MNA, is informed of proposed resource development projects and is included in Government’s and Industry’s consultation processes.

Apeetogosan Development Inc. Capital Corporation
See information in Section 5.

Pinnacle Business Services Ltd.
www.apeetogosan.com/pinnacle.html

Pinnacle Business Services Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc., is committed to providing professional, efficient and effective business advisory assistance to the Alberta Aboriginal business community. There is no charge for initial consultation. Services provided include: business plans, feasibility studies, business valuations, marketing plans, accounting set-up, bookkeeping services, management support services, business workshops and seminars.

Duty to consult and accommodate

In 2008, the federal government began a process to address the duty to consult and accommodate based on court decisions that require governments to ensure
that Aboriginal perspectives are considered when projects will have an impact on the Aboriginal way of life. In March 2011, the Federal Government issued updated Guidelines of several Supreme Court of Canada decisions that held that the Crown has a duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate when the Crown contemplates conduct that might adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal or Treaty rights.


Alberta Métis Policy Framework
www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/966.cfm

Since 1987, the Government of Alberta and the Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA) have worked cooperatively through a series of Framework Agreements. On June 11, 2008, Alberta and the MNAA signed a seven-year Framework Agreement that aims to:

- Promote Métis economic and community well being
- Improve input for Métis people into public policy development in Alberta
- Improve Métis access to provincial services

To implement the objectives of the Framework Agreement, Alberta has a Framework Funding Agreement with the MNAA. Since 2008, Alberta has provided $1.5 million annually to the MNAA. Of this funding, $522,672 goes to the central MNAA office. The balance of funds is distributed equally amongst the six MNAA Regions, in the amount of $169,000 each.

The Tripartite Process Agreement (TPA)
http://www.albertametis.com/getdoc/ecaboaf0-8874-44f6-884b-70a57de05ac4/tripartite.aspx

The MNA Tripartite department operates out of the Provincial Office in Edmonton and coordinates the 3-way interaction between the Métis Nation of Alberta, the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta. The goal of the TPA is to promote the following:

- Access to joint federal/provincial programs in terms of devolution, delegated authority or contractual arrangements;
- Métis Nation of Alberta input to federal/provincial policies and decisions affecting Métis;
• Inter-departmental coordination among federal and provincial departments acting on Métis interests.

The Senior Manager, Federal/Provincial Initiatives researches and develops province-wide pilot proposals for funding, processes, models, partnerships and agreements. Once a proposal is funded, it is managed by the Senior Manager, who coordinates the activities of relevant contractors, sectors managers or regions for implementation and delivery of programs and services.

Current federal priorities that relate to the Métis include economic development, education, governance reform and children’s services. The province’s priorities focus on economic development and education, as well.

**The Métis Settlements General Council**
http://www.msrgc.ca/default.ksi

The Metis Settlements General Council represents the only collectively-held land-based Métis populations in Canada. Each of the eight settlements has significant economic and business development activities, many supported by the Settlement Investment Corporation (see information in Section 5).

**Procurement**

Alberta has no specific procurement program or set-asides for Aboriginal suppliers. Purchasing of goods and information technology supplies for the Government of Alberta is centralized through Procurement Services. Each ministry, however, defines its own requirements for specific goods and information technology supplies. Ministries are also directly responsible for the acquisition of any services they require. Key Purchasing Contacts in the Alberta Government:


The Government of Canada does have a Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Businesses (PSAB). (See information in Section 7).

**Alberta Aboriginal Development**
http://employment.alberta.ca/BI/4860.html

The Aboriginal Development Initiative is committed to increasing participation of Aboriginal communities and businesses in Alberta’s regional economic development by:

• Increasing participation of Aboriginal communities in regional economic development initiatives with Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) through:
  o Regional Gatherings that will assist in identifying collaborative projects (which may become demonstration projects)
Aboriginal Awareness Training sessions delivered to REDA members
- Funding and supporting regional demonstration projects
  - Increasing the number of Aboriginal owned businesses within Alberta
  - Providing Aboriginal communities and businesses with management consulting expertise

The Ministry supports the development of Aboriginal businesses by increasing access to business advisory services:
- Through The Business Link’s Aboriginal Business Development Services
- By providing financial support for Aboriginal tradeshows and entrepreneurial conferences
- By supporting Aboriginal labour force development

**Aboriginal Business Development Services (ABDS)**
[www.canadabusiness.ab.ca/index.php/aboriginal](http://www.canadabusiness.ab.ca/index.php/aboriginal)

Aboriginal Business Development Services is committed to supporting the growth of Aboriginal entrepreneurship across Alberta. The program assists entrepreneurs by providing information and resources from business start-up and market research to financing options and growing your business. These resources are tailored to meet unique requirements of Aboriginal clients and are accessible by phone, fax, e-mail, the Internet and walk-in sites.

**Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association**
[www.naaba.ca](http://www.naaba.ca)

The Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association (NAABA) is a non-profit organization that consists of a growing interest group of Aboriginal Businesses, committed to enhancing and creating an environment, which promotes businesses, jobs, and training for the betterment of all native people in the region. Services include public relations, business development, and networking.

**Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. - Aboriginal Business Development**
[www.alpac.ca](http://www.alpac.ca)

Alberta-Pacific produces pulp from the resource on its Forest Management Agreement area (FMA) in northeastern Alberta. Alberta-Pacific has formed numerous partnerships with 40,000 Aboriginal people within and adjacent to its FMA area to increase the economic and human resource capacity of this community.

**Community Futures Network of Alberta**
[www.cfna.ca](http://www.cfna.ca)
Community Futures Network of Alberta is a network of community-based, volunteer-led community economic development organizations designed to assist community growth and diversification through a variety of services. The Alberta Community Futures organizations provide support to businesses including business counselling, assistance with Business Planning, small business training and loans. Many Alberta Community Futures organizations also deliver the Self-Employment Benefits Program.

**Canadian Executive Service Organization - CESO Aboriginal Services**
[www.ceso-saco.com](http://www.ceso-saco.com)

CESO Aboriginal Services is a not-for-profit agency dedicated to working with Aboriginal businesses, organizations and communities across Canada. It has a talent bank of more than 3,600 volunteers with expertise in over 150 professional and management areas. Services are available to any Canadian status or Non Status Indian, Métis and Inuit individual or group.

CESO’s mission is to assist Aboriginal communities and business of Canada to achieve greater self-sufficiency and growth. Its objective is to transfer skills and knowledge, to best utilize the experience and expertise of CESO Volunteer Advisers, to develop needed products and services, to accumulate and disseminate knowledge of best practices and to provide accessible and cost effective services.

**Aboriginal Mall**
[www.aboriginalmall.com](http://www.aboriginalmall.com)

Aboriginal Mall offers solutions for Aboriginal businesses throughout Canada to showcase their companies and make their presence known. Listing and linking information on this portal is free.

**Four Winds & Associates**
[www.fwinds.net](http://www.fwinds.net)

Four Winds is an Aboriginal owned and operated company, working extensively with Aboriginal communities, organizations, governments and industry in the areas of Aboriginal Awareness, organizational, community, social and economic development and relationship building.

**Meyers Norris Penny (MNP)**
[www.mnp.ca](http://www.mnp.ca)

The MNP team provides world-class expertise in auditing and a wide range of business advisory services. The fastest growing CA firm in Canada, they have more than 2000 team members, including a number of Aboriginal descent. MNP has had rewarding relationships with many Aboriginal communities,
organizations and members over the years. Services include: entrepreneur training, governance and corporate structuring, long-term business plans, government grant audits, executive search, corporate reorganization, and debt restructuring.

Northern Alberta Business Incubator (NABI)
www.nabi.ca

NABI assists with business start-ups and offers business counselling, workshops and seminars, mentorship, shared resources and a resource library. It also offers facilities, boardrooms, and office space rentals and provides referrals for services not already provided.

5.0 ABORIGINAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (AFI) CAPACITY

This section lists the Métis-specific financial institutions operating in Alberta.

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (AMDI)
www.apeetogosan.com

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. is committed to providing profitable and sustainable financial services and support to clients who seek the means to attain economic self-sufficiency. Services Provided Include:

• Small Business Loans
• Support Service Programs
• Business Advisory Services (Through Pinnacle Business Services Ltd.)
• Aboriginal Business Canada Program Delivery

Add MEF

Settlement Investment Corporation
http://www.settlementinvestcorp.com/

The Settlement Investment Corporation encourages and assists Métis entrepreneurs to start businesses or expand their existing business by providing loans, and business consulting. Applicants must be a resident of an Alberta Métis Settlement. Loans may be used for business expansion, purchase of fixed assets, equipment or working capital. Business loans are available up to $150,000 and agriculture loans up to $75,000. Youth (18-36) loans are also available.

SIC will assist in the preparation of business plans, assist in the identification of relevant business material and provide workshops directed at increasing awareness about business management.
6.0 ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF LOAN AND EQUITY CAPITAL

This section lists a number of sources of loan and equity capital that may be available to Métis entrepreneurs in Alberta.

The CAPE Fund  
http://www.capefund.ca/

The CAPE Fund is a $50 million private-sector investment fund initiated by 21 of Canada’s leading companies, individuals and U.S. based Foundations. CAPE Fund is focused on mid-market opportunities with a strong degree of Aboriginal involvement and connection to Aboriginal communities throughout Canada.

- Fund investments will generally be between $1 million and $7.5 million in the aggregate, per investee. These may occur in one or more rounds of investment. Aboriginal businesses anywhere in Canada are eligible.
- The Fund will invest in virtually all business segments albeit with some sector restrictions. The Fund will proactively seek out both financial and industry partners to facilitate and accelerate the growth of its investee companies.
- The Fund focuses on projects that are linked, either through ownership, employment or geographic proximity, to an Aboriginal group or community.

Community Futures Network of Alberta  
www.cfna.ca

Community Futures Network of Alberta is a network of community-based, volunteer-led community economic development organizations designed to assist community growth and diversification through a variety of services, including loans (up to $150,000) for qualified businesses seeking to start or expand in rural Alberta (communities outside Calgary and Edmonton). The 27 Alberta Community Futures organizations also provide support to businesses including business counselling, assistance with Business Planning, small business training and information services. Many Alberta Community Futures organizations also deliver the Self- Employment Benefits Program. Locations of Community futures offices can be found at http://www.cfna.ca/location-finder.php

The Rural Alberta Development Fund (RDF)  
http://www.radf.ca/about/

RADF is a not-for-profit organization that “works with Alberta's change agents to help the province flourish.” The organization was created as a key outcome in the Government of Alberta's rural development strategy to help rural communities, regional alliances, and organizations kick-start projects that would contribute to
the betterment of rural Alberta. In 2007, the organization was capitalized with $100 million from the Government of Alberta to fund innovative rural development projects. RADF has funded more than $90 million worth of change and innovation. It has a contractual agreement with the provincial government to commit the remainder of the funds by March 31, 2012 and to disburse all of the money by March 31, 2014.

**First Nations Bank Micro Loan Program**
www.firstnationsbank.com

The First Nations Bank Micro Loan Program from Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) and the First Nations Bank of Canada offer micro loans to help start or expand a business. It enhances self-employment opportunities for Aboriginal peoples by supporting the ideas and skills of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal entrepreneurs who lack the assets and capital required by traditional lenders.

**Alberta Women Entrepreneurs (AWE)**

AWE offers innovative services and support for women entrepreneurs across the province. AWE can help you start, manage, or grow your businesses through:

- repayable loans of up to $150,000
- training and workshops
- access to networks and markets

Over the past year, AWE financing helped entrepreneurs purchase businesses, start new ventures and grow their existing businesses, which created nearly 130 direct jobs with a projected economic impact of $54 Million.

**NextStep to Success**
http://www.awebusiness.com/pages/Advice/NextStep.aspx

NextStep is AWE’s program for Aboriginal women entrepreneurs. Women with AWE to build, update or improve, and implement their business plan through program services tailored to meet each client’s needs. Services include:

- Sharing experience and knowledge through mentoring and coaching.
  - creating a strong business plan
  - building a network of resources

- Providing access to learning opportunities related to owning and managing one’s own business.
  - business skills training
  - workshops
  - tradeshows
Offering non-traditional financing for business ventures.
- loans up to $10,000 that can be supplemented by other sources of financing
- If qualified, loans up to $150,000

What is required?
- ownership and control of at least 50% of the business by an Aboriginal woman
- residence and business location in Alberta
- 18 years or older
- a strong idea and personal commitment

7.0 NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Aboriginal Business Canada
http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033140

Aboriginal Business Canada works with the Aboriginal business community to address the shortage of available credit to finance Aboriginal small business development. Aboriginal Capital Corporations (ACCs) owned and controlled by Aboriginal people concentrate on providing developmental loans to enterprises not yet ready to successfully secure business loans from banks. Some ACCs also provide business services, and have diversified their operations to be able to house External Delivery Services for Aboriginal Business Canada.

Government of Canada - Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB)
http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033030

The PSAB works to help Aboriginal firms do more contracting with all federal government departments and agencies and assists Aboriginal businesses gain access to the overall procurement process. The PSAB, while led by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), is a Government of Canada initiative. All federal government departments and agencies are encouraged to participate in this initiative.

Public Works and Government Services Canada: Set-Aside Program for Aboriginal Business (SPAB)
www.pwgsc.gc.ca

In accordance with the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB) and the Set-Aside Program for Aboriginal Business (SPAB), contract requirements ($5000 and over) designated by client departments
as set aside will be restricted to qualified Aboriginal businesses. Aboriginal persons must have at least 51% ownership and control in the business. Also eligible is a joint venture consisting of two or more Aboriginal businesses or an Aboriginal business and a non-Aboriginal business(es), provided that the Aboriginal business(es) has at least 51% ownership and control of the joint venture. When an Aboriginal business has six or more full-time employees at the date of submitting the bid, at least 33% of them must be Aboriginal persons, and this ratio must be maintained throughout the duration of the contract. The bidder must certify in its submitted bid that it is an Aboriginal business or a joint venture constituted as described below.

**The National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association (NACCA)**
http://www.nacca.net/eng-splash.html

NACCA has been established to provide products and services such as training, access to capital initiatives, advocacy and other institutional capacity building to the Aboriginal Financial Institutions (AFIs), which constitute its membership. AFI has become the umbrella term for the ACCs and Aboriginal Community Futures Development Corporations.

**Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) Aboriginal Banking**
http://www.bdc.ca/EN/i_am/aboriginal_entrepreneur/Pages/aboriginal_banking.aspx

BDC offers a variety of consulting and financial services for Aboriginal businesses. In addition to conventional lending and advice, BDC's Aboriginal Banking also offers a number of special activities and initiatives.

- **Aboriginal Business Development Fund (ABDF):** A program that provides tools for Aboriginal entrepreneurs who choose to start their own businesses. The funds, which are available through a community-based organization, increase access to capital for Aboriginal entrepreneurs who would normally not qualify for a loan. Loans combine financing with management training and on-going mentorship. Funds are delivered at the grassroots level and involve amounts varying from $5,000 to $20,000. The loans are fully repayable with terms varying from 2 to 3 years depending on the project's cash-flow expectations.

- **Growth Capital for Aboriginal Business (GCAB):** BDC's specialized financing increases access to capital for Aboriginal entrepreneurs wanting to expand an existing business or start a new one, on or off a reserve in Canada. Under the GCAB program, you can obtain financing to a maximum amount of $25,000 for start-ups and up to $100,000 for existing businesses. If businesses require additional funds, BDC offers other financing options.
• **Peer lending:** Micro-lending initiatives to help groups obtain money for small business startups.

• **Business management coaching:** Support is available through a special alliance with CESO Aboriginal Services. Includes ongoing mentoring and business management advice for the first 2 years following loan approval. Costs for business coaching can be incorporated into the financing package.

**Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business - Western Region**

[http://www.ccab.com](http://www.ccab.com)

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) was founded in 1984 as a national non-profit organization. More than 200 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal businesses are members and supporters of CCAB across Canada. CCAB is Canada's leading organization dedicated to promoting the full participation of Aboriginal people in the Canadian economy. Its mission is to connect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and companies with the opportunities they require to achieve personal and business success. CCAB is a broker of relationships. It helps build successful partnerships in employment, business creation, youth development and community relations.

**Aboriginal Banking Services**

The following chartered banks provide specialized Aboriginal services:

- RBC Royal Bank: [http://www.rbcroyalbank.com/aboriginal](http://www.rbcroyalbank.com/aboriginal)

**8.0 ASSETS TO LEVERAGE NEW BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS**

**Métis Settlements**

The Métis population on the Métis Settlements in northern and north-central Alberta have a land base and natural resources that can be used to leverage business partnerships. The Métis Settlements Land Protection Act 1990 granted fee simple title to Métis settlement land to the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC), making it the largest landowner in the province other than the Crown. It protected the land base by requiring the consent of the individual Settlement councils and most of the people on the settlements for any alienation of settlement land. The Constitution of Alberta Amendment Act protected the land...
grant by prohibiting amendment or repeal of the Métis Settlements Land Protection Act or the dissolution of the MSGC without the agreement of the MSGC. It also stated the province’s commitment to seek protection of the land grant in the Canadian Constitution.

The province retained subsurface rights on the settlements, but it agreed to co-manage the exploration and development of non-renewable resources on the settlements with the MSGC and settlement councils. The Métis Settlements Act 1990 provided for a co-management agreement that requires oil and gas companies seeking to operate on the settlements to enter into development agreements with the settlement government, providing the latter with royalty and participation rights in oil and gas projects. The guaranteed working interest of the settlement councils in these projects shapes partnerships with oil and gas companies.

Off Settlements

The majority of Alberta Métis living off the Settlements must utilize their own entrepreneurial skills and capital to grow their businesses through partnership opportunities. The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has assisted the creation and expansion of their businesses through the financial services of Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. The MNA has used its other province-wide service delivery assets to foster partnerships with industry and government.

The MNA is a leader in labor market and skills development programs which it delivers to clients through ten full-time Métis Employment Services (MES) sites located throughout Alberta. Its staff also provide itinerant services on a part-time basis to other communities where numbers warrant, and through its Mobile MES RV. Through its Métis Training to Employment Program, it seeks to develop partnerships with industry, government and other Aboriginal organizations in order to expand existing opportunities for Métis across Alberta. The MNA has also used its labor market assets in innovative ways to forge partnerships; for example, purchasing an oil drilling rig for training purposes which it eventually exchanged for shares in a fast growing energy services providing company, in the process creating high-paying jobs for Métis.

The MNA is also a leader in Aboriginal urban housing and has accumulated considerable assets that are being used to leverage partnerships. Its Métis Urban Housing Corporation is the largest Section 95 Aboriginal housing program in Canada, with 902 units across the Province currently housing over 3000 tenants. When mortgages on the properties it manages are paid off, ownership passes to its Métis Capital Housing Corporation which is a developer of a variety of housing projects.
9.0 GAPS IN CAPITAL AND TANGIBLE ASSETS

Analyses of Métis entrepreneurs access to capital have identified a number of gaps and issues related to capital supply. In particular, several key problems of the Métis Capital Corporations (MCCs) were identified:

- Insufficient capital for larger investments
- Excluded from mid-range loan market ($250,000 loan cap)
- Government replenishment of capital is not guaranteed
- Operate as lenders of last resort
- Cannot take equity position in businesses
- Transfer of ABC program from Industry Canada to INAC has resulted in very slow flow of funds to AFI resulting in some lost projects.

Most Aboriginal funds provide very low rate of return for reinvestment. ACCs/AFIs need to be able to invest directly in key industrial sectors in order to:

- Grow existing funds reinvestment capital through higher return rate to fund (fund stability)
- Take advantage of higher value more/sophisticated opportunities
- Balance risk tolerance of existing funds
- Partner with private sector funds and venture capital opportunities
- Funding is required for training Aboriginal managers in management skills (HR, finance, marketing, etc.), market assessment, business expansion techniques, networking, the ability to use technology, and aftercare.

- While a $250,000 cap on loans is a measure aimed at ensuring portfolio diversification, the three prairie MCCs have indicated that more than 20 loans to Métis businesses could not be placed due to lack of capital and the existence of a lending cap. One MCC, for example, pointed to high demand for mid-cap financing in the value added and service sectors; more than 10 recent opportunities could not be supported due to the $250K cap.

The Métis Entrepreneurship Fund (MEF) Business Plan prepared for the Métis National Council by Meyers Norris Penny (October 14, 2010), available at [http://metisportals.ca/ecodev/?page_id=3&sourcePage=5](http://metisportals.ca/ecodev/?page_id=3&sourcePage=5), offers a more detailed analysis of gaps in capital requirements for Métis businesses in the Prairie Provinces. The analysis determined that:

- Data from Statistics Canada on SME financing indicates that approximately $13.6 billion was requested for both short and long term financing in the Prairie Provinces in 2007. Of total financing requested, $12.6 billion in financing was authorized. The average amount requested for all loan requests in the Prairies was approximately $250,588.
- From the data and the experience of the Métis Capital Corporations (MCCs) it is assumed that the average loan size is a non-normal distribution with
significantly more loans being processed which are below the average total loan request amount. The data indicates that this non-normal lending distribution is due to the upper end of the distribution consisting of a comparatively small volume of loans of a significant size relative to the average. Data from the MCCs on loan size indicates that the average size of loans funded by the MCCs is approximately $100,000.

- The distribution of requests on loan size is further supported by data provided the MCCs on declined loans. Loan requests exceeding the lending limits of the MCCs account for between 1% and 4% of all loan requests. This suggests a non-normal distribution of requested funding amounts from loan applicants when indexed to the SME Statistics Canada data. From the sample provided by the shareholder MCCs, the average loan size requested was approximately $555,000, which is significantly higher than the $250,000 average.

- Between 15 and 20% of total loan requests received by the MCCs, based on summary loan data including loan enquiries, are for amounts beyond established limits. This data demonstrates that approximately 80 to 85% of loan requests fall within the $250,000 existing lending capacity of the MCCs.

- In other words, MCCs currently are not able to provide funding for about 15 to 20% of the market that requires loans in excess of $250,000.

- The number of Métis SMEs in the prairies is estimated to be between 2,225 and 2,750. Statistics Canada indicates that roughly 60% of SMEs in the Prairie Provinces have made requests for external financing. Using this data it can be estimated that between 1,202 and 1,760 prairie Métis SMEs would require financing on an annual basis. These SMEs include those requiring loan amounts both below and above the existing $250,000 MCC loan limit. Indexing this lending activity against the segment of SMEs requiring loans greater than $250,000 (approximately 15%), analysis indicates that a market exists for approximately 120 to 352 loans from Métis businesses annually.

- Considering the existing market share of the MCCs of approximately 5 to 6%, this would translate to the potential for 6 to 18 new or existing SMEs requiring funding annually based.

- A sample of loans declined by MCCs indicates an annual market demand of approximately $9.4 million without any marketing or advertising of loans over $250,000. MCC managers are also aware of additional Métis entrepreneurs in their regions that require larger amounts of capital but have not approached the MCCs for funding due to perceived lending limits and availability of capital. MCC managers also reported receiving loan requests which exceeded their lending limits, but clients reduced their requests to within limits to receive funding.

- Additional data provided by Apeetogosan on declined loans over a-13 year period indicates over $21.0 million in lending opportunities in Alberta which were not pursued due to lending limits.

- The declined opportunities range in size between $250,000 and $2 million and span across a number of different industries. There were a select number of opportunities which could be financed through syndicated lending agreements. However these loans were restricted in both industry and
The Métis Entrepreneurship Fund was established to begin filling the gap in the mid-range loan market, enabling its owners- Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (Alberta), Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation, and Louis Riel Capital Corporation (Manitoba)- to provide loans to growing Métis businesses (loans in excess of $250,000). Building on the proven track record of the capital corporations dating back to the 1980s, this syndicated lending institution presents an innovative approach that can grow Aboriginal Financial Institutions by combining the following features of the Métis Nation business model:

- joint ownership and administration
- professional management and Board
- arms-length decision-making
- low cost leveraged delivery based on existing financial management and business development officers
- accountability to directly elected leadership of the MNC member organizations

The Province of Alberta has lagged behind Canada and the other two Prairie provinces in working with Métis financial institutions and businesses to fill the gaps in business financing, both loan and equity. The Métis Entrepreneurship Fund was initially capitalized by the Government of Canada. The other prairie provinces have supported the creation of funds that provide equity capital to Métis entrepreneurs.

The Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Fund is administered and operated by First Nations and Métis Fund Inc., a corporation wholly owned by Saskatchewan’s Crown Investments Corporation. Westcap provides professional fund management services. The fund makes investments of between $1 million and $3 million in the form of debt, sub-debt; equity; and/or a combination of various financial instruments. The First Nations and Métis Fund considers investments for the following purposes:

- Start-ups – new businesses which have developed or acquired products or services and are ready to proceed to commercialization;
- Early-stage investments – businesses which have been in operation for some time, but have not yet fully developed their product or service;
- Expansions – businesses which require financing to expand sales, or to launch a new product or service;
- Management buyouts – adding new management and capital to acquire control of a business and realize its potential for expansion; and
- Restructuring or turnarounds – adding investment and making changes in management, staffing, operations or marketing strategies to help the business succeed.
The Province of Saskatchewan has also supported the Clarence Campeau Development Fund (CCDF), a professionally managed, arms-length Métis financial institution affiliated with the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. CCDF is capitalized with a small percentage of gaming revenues in that Province and offers programs that provide equity for Métis businesses, support to community economic development initiatives, and assistance for the development of the management skills of Métis business owners and entrepreneurs. CCDF received $5 million from the federal government to operate a Major Resource and Energy Development (MRED) Fund, which will make equity investments in medium and large Métis businesses so that they may participate and partner in major development projects.

The Province of Manitoba and the federal government have also jointly capitalized a Métis Nation equity capital provider, the Metis Economic Development Organization (MEDO), an arms-length business investment and management firm affiliated with the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) that seeks to generate profit and build capacity for the long term sustainability of the Metis within Manitoba. MEDO also provides support to other Metis business owners and entrepreneurs through access to programs and services, business partnerships, and potential sources of equity for business development. It operates an Affinity Loyalty Program, a reward-based program for Metis consumers, measuring their impact on local, provincial and national companies. It also owns and operates MEDO Developments, a property development and management company acting as a major partner for core area development within the City of Winnipeg and property infrastructure throughout Manitoba.

The Province invests in MEDO through its $10 million Metis Economic Development Fund that makes equity investments in Metis business. The federal government has contributed $3 million to the capitalization of MEDO’s Metis Generation Fund For Resource and Energy Development, that invests in Manitoba Metis-owned businesses helping to increase Metis participation in the province’s mining, oil and gas, forestry, fishing and renewable energy sectors.

10.0 INVENTORIES OF MÉTIS BUSINESSES

Aboriginal business directories, which include Métis businesses:

- Help government buyers identify Aboriginal businesses as bidders and potential suppliers of goods and services required by departments.
- Provide a networking opportunity for suppliers, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to do business with one another.
- Promote procurement from Aboriginal business in other ways such as joint ventures and/or sub-contracting.
• **Kikino Métis Settlement Business Directory**

• **Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement Business Directory**

• **Elizabeth Métis Settlement Business Directory**

• **Fishing Lake Métis Settlement Business Directory**

• **Industry Canada Aboriginal Business Directory**

  The companies listed in the online directory are pre-qualified under the Procurement Strategies for Aboriginal Business (PSAB).

• **Apeetogosan Métis Business Directory**
  [http://apeetogosan.com/directory.html](http://apeetogosan.com/directory.html)

  This directory is under development.

**11.0 SUCCESSFUL VENTURES AND BEST PRACTICES**

A number of successful ventures and best practices have been identified in the area of Métis business and economic development.

• **Individual Entrepreneurs**

  The entrepreneurial spirit of the Alberta Métis is best exemplified by the keynote speaker at the Métis Economic Development Forum in Grande Prairie on March 15-16, 2012, Doug Golosky. Beginnings as a welder in his hometown of Fort McMurray with one truck travelling from job to job, he created the Golosky Group of companies that employs more than 1,000 people in various oilfield services.

  Golosky’s companies provide a wide variety of industrial products and services to various clients, such as Syncrude and Suncor, involved in the oil and gas industry, oil sands, the pulp and paper industry, as well as construction. An innovative and creative entrepreneur, Golosky invested
in research and development; one of his companies, Matrix Wear Technologies, designed a machine to produce pipe longer than what was currently available by other processes. Other companies in the Golosky Group include Golosky Trucking and Contracting, Phoenix Machine Company Ltd., Al-Con Steel Ltd., RPM Equipment Transport Ltd., Brospec Inc., and Abraxus Construction Group Inc.

• Métis Capital Corporations
The three capital corporations of the MNC Governing Members on the Prairies—Saskatchewan Métis Economic Development Corporation, Louis Riel Capital Corporation (Manitoba) and Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (Alberta)—have been in existence since the 1980s and make loans to Métis small business. They have emerged as effective, professionally-managed, arms-length development institutions with an impressive financial performance track record.

Since the mid 1980s, Métis Capital Corporations (MCCs) in the Prairie Provinces have made over $75 million in loans, supporting over 2000 businesses and creating thousands of jobs. The success range for businesses funded by MCCs is 70-80%, above the average for SME startups in Canada.

Apeetogosan (Métis) Development Inc. (Alberta) has distinguished itself in this regard. It has rolled over its initial capital of $8 million received from the federal government in the mid-1980s six times without ever having been “topped-up”. While covering its costs, it has facilitated the start-up and expansion of hundreds of businesses that created thousands of jobs.

12.0 GOVERNANCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CAPACITY-BUILDING NEEDS

Needs for capacity building in business management and corporate governance—along with gaps in management training—have been identified in the Aboriginal business sector, included Métis businesses.

The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), in partnership with Environics Research Group, has identified a number of these needs in its study Promise and Prosperity: The Aboriginal Business Survey (ABS) 2011 (http://www.ccab.com/uploads/File/CCAB-businessurvey-F2-singles.pdf). It also identifies key characteristics of Aboriginal businesses. The ABS is not Métis specifics, but includes Métis businesses.

• Ownership - Most Aboriginal businesses (72%) included in the survey are unincorporated, operating as either a sole proprietorship (61%) or a partnership (11%). One-quarter (26%) are incorporated under a federal or
provincial charter, a proportion largely consistent with that reported by the 2006 Census. In the case of the Métis, less than half of businesses (47%) are owned by one person. Sole proprietors are more likely to be in the services sector, and are less likely to be successful (i.e., have not been profitable in the past year, have not experienced increased sales and do not expect income growth in the next two years).

• **Training** - Just three in ten Aboriginal business owners have taken business-training courses. A minority of Aboriginal business owners has had formal business training at the college or university level. Three in ten (28%) say they have taken business-training courses, while seven in ten (71%) have not. Business training is more common among incorporated firms with no employees (39%), firms in the service sector (36%) and women business owners (37%). Such training is also understandably more common among those with a college or university education; only nine percent of those with a high school diploma or less education have taken formal business training.

• **Financial Management** - Managing issues related to financing, cash flow, budgeting and payroll are the most challenging aspect of being an Aboriginal small business owner, followed by the burden of responsibility and long hours at work.

• **Challenges** - Aboriginal small business owners also identify a number of disadvantages or challenges (when asked unprompted, without offering response options). The most commonly identified challenge is financing, cash flow, budgets and payroll (37%). Responsibility, stress and risk (21%), and the long hours and limited time off (19%) are also seen as major challenges. Smaller proportions mention a number of other challenges or disadvantages, including competing with larger businesses (10%); recruitment, management and retention issues (9%); dealing with regulations, governments and bureaucracy (9%); finding and retaining clientele (8%); and marketing and advertising of services and products (5%).

  • The perceived disadvantages of small business ownership vary somewhat by business type, Aboriginal identity group and age. The smallest businesses (i.e., non-incorporated with no employees) are more likely than others to cite challenges related to finding customers and marketing their products or services, and are less likely to express concern about having to compete with other businesses. In contrast, incorporated businesses with employees are more likely to mention issues related to employees, dealing with regulations/governments/ bureaucracy and taxes. Non-incorporated businesses with employees are least likely to mention the amount of responsibility and stress as a disadvantage.

  • Long hours and limited time off are challenges more commonly mentioned by younger business owners (under 45 years), and by Métis and First Nations peoples, compared to Inuit. Métis and business owners in the Prairie Provinces are more likely than others to say dealing with regulations and governments is a challenge.

The ABS identified several areas where capacity building may be needed:

• **Business Plans** - Focusing efforts on the development of a business plan
could improve Aboriginal entrepreneurs’ prospects for success. Business success among Aboriginal entrepreneurs appears to be linked to the use of an annual business plan. Business plans are vital because they provide a clear picture of the desired future of a company. The creation and implementation of a business plan is not only good business practice, but it can be essential to obtaining start-up or ongoing financing. Aboriginal small business owners who learn more about and implement annual business plans are likely to see the benefits in their business performance.

• **Networking** - Building stronger networks will lead to sharing of expertise and knowledge among and between Aboriginal businesses. Aboriginal businesses tend to operate in isolation from other businesses and business organizations – there is need for more active support systems that offer mentorship and advice to help small businesses operate more effectively. There is an opportunity to build stronger Aboriginal business networks – locally, regionally and nationally. Relatively few Aboriginal small business owners identify professional groups or individuals to turn to for business advice. Even fewer know what type of business guidance they would seek even if it were available. This business community could benefit from mentorship offered by Aboriginal organizations, chambers of commerce or other companies. One effective strategy may be to foster the development of networks at the local or regional level.

• **Mentoring** - Aboriginal entrepreneurs are most likely to want advice related to financial issues, accounting or business management, offering financial institutions the opportunity to become true mentors in these areas. While Aboriginal business owners generally view banks as supportive of business performance rather than as impediment to the process, very few think of their bank as a key source of guidance or advice about their business. Financial institutions can enhance their Aboriginal business services by acting in the role of business advisor. Government can support the more than 37,000 Aboriginal small businesses by building greater awareness of existing government programs through more effective marketing and outreach.

• **Procurement** - The current federal Aboriginal procurement strategy has added to the capacity of Aboriginal businesses seeking to bid on government contracts. Provincial governments, Crown corporations and even municipal governments can implement procurement programs that will support eligible Aboriginal businesses seeking to make government a customer. The federal Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB) assists Aboriginal businesses to become familiar with bidding on federal contracts through contract set-asides. At a relatively small cost to government and taxpayers, PSAB helps to strengthen Aboriginal business bidding capacity, competitiveness, and Aboriginal employment. The Manitoba Government was one of the first provincial governments to emulate PSAB with the introduction of the Aboriginal Procurement Initiative. Aboriginal companies hire, train and retain Aboriginal people. Like Manitoba, other provincial governments, Crown corporations, and even municipal governments, should capitalize on the chance to support Aboriginal business in their respective jurisdictions.
Management Buyouts - A 2006 study by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) noted that a substantial number of small business owners are planning to exit their business and only 10% have a formal succession plan. This could have a major impact on the economy, particularly outside the major cities. Large corporations are concerned that if small businesses are not transitioned to new owners, there will be a shortage of services such as plumbing mechanical/electrical, property management, etc. This situation presents an opportunity for Métis entrepreneurs, but also creates a need to enhance management capacity.

- Aboriginal business-focused financial institutions state a preference to finance the acquisition of existing businesses, which have a balance sheet and financial statements. As well, this type of well-defined opportunity presents better possibilities for management buyouts and succession planning through mentorship of new owners with the existing business owner.
- Beyond the market, there is no well established existing vehicle to enable successful transitioning of business ownership, including succession planning, facilitating mentorship from existing to new ownership and links to financing for business acquisition/expansion. A recent consulting study for Enterprise Saskatchewan examines and defines the requirements for successfully assisting these important transition opportunities.
- Métis institutions could play a role in supporting Métis entrepreneurs in building capacity participate in this opportunity,

Governance - Capacity building for the governance of economic institutions has also been identified as a need in the Métis community. Ensuring sufficient Métis receive the kind of training that would facilitate their involvement in institutions, including involvement at the Board level, is a priority. Adequate support is needed for professional development initiatives such as the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada and the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers. Adequate support will foster the skills required for Métis people to manage and operate business and economic development institutions.

Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Resources

Métis Entrepreneurial Program
http://www.metisemployment.ca/looking-for-training/entrepreneurial-program

The Métis Entrepreneurial Program from the Rupertsland Institute has been designed to provide self-employment training for those starting a new business or expanding an existing business. The financial contribution may include:

- Tuition for a self-employment training (usually 16 weeks)
- Mentoring and support while developing your business plan
- Income support for up to 26 weeks while you are in training and implementing your business plan.
A partnership with Apeetogosan will ensure access to expert support and information about business start-up and business expansion financing.

**The Banff Centre for Management - Aboriginal Leadership and Self-Government Programs**
www.banffleadership.com

The Centre has provided thirty-five years of national Aboriginal Leadership and Management programs. Scholarships are available to qualified participants.

**Aboriginal Albertans in Business Series**
http://canadabusiness.ab.ca/index.php/aboriginal

The following guides are included in the Aboriginal Albertans in Business Series:
- **Is Running A Business For Me?** Provides information to help Aboriginal people decide whether starting a business is a good choice for them.
- **What’s the Right Business for Me?** Provides information about business trends and business sectors that may be attractive to new business people. Includes a listing of contacts for additional information.
- **Aboriginal Service Providers in Alberta** Provides a comprehensive listing for Aboriginal entrepreneurs of business service providers.
- **Aboriginal Financing Options in Alberta** Financing options for Aboriginal entrepreneurs.
- **Aboriginal Business Planning Workbook** Provides a step-by-step approach in developing a business plan.
- **How to Become an Independent Contractor**
- **Finding and Keeping Aboriginal Employees**

13.0 **MÉTIS SKILLED WORK FORCE INVENTORY AND GAPS IN EMPLOYEE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

No current inventory of the Métis skilled work force in Alberta is available for reference. The following snapshot of Métis educational and skills development, gaps in employee skills development, and the implications for employment is derived from a variety of sources. In most cases, the information in this section comes from the 2006 census; some sources refers to all Aboriginal people, including Métis people, and much of the information on the Métis population refers to the whole country, including Alberta. The information is derived from the following documents:

• Assessment of Métis labour force 2006, HRSDC

Alberta Métis education, employment and unemployment statistics

Alberta Aboriginal People Off-Reserve Labour Force Statistics

Unadjusted, 3-Month Moving Average

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<td>71.2%</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate (%)</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate (%)</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alberta Aboriginal People Off-Reserve Labour Force Statistics
Alberta Aboriginal People Off-Reserve Employment Characteristics
Unadjusted (000s), 3-Month Moving Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Métis</th>
<th>January 2012</th>
<th>December 2011</th>
<th>January 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Employment</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Employment</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector Employees</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sector Employees</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employed</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aboriginal People Off-Reserve Employment
Alberta Economic Regions Unadjusted, 3-Month Moving Average
### Alberta Aboriginal People Off-Reserve (ages 15-64) Labour Force by Educational Attainment Unadjusted (000s), 3-Month Moving Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Métis</th>
<th>January 2012</th>
<th>December 2011</th>
<th>January 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some post-secondary education or less</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed post-secondary education</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Alberta Aboriginal People Off-Reserve (ages 15-64) Employment Rates by Educational Attainment Unadjusted (000s), 3-Month Moving Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Métis</th>
<th>January 2012</th>
<th>December 2011</th>
<th>January 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some post-secondary education or less</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed post-secondary education</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Canadian Métis Demographic Overview

- **Educational Attainment Overview** - Among the three Aboriginal groups, relatively more Métis aged 15 and over had completed high school in 2006 (65%). However, this was still lower than the non-Aboriginal rate of 77%. On the opposite side of the educational spectrum, the percentage of Métis with a university certificate or degree in 2006 was 7%—12 percentage points less than the non-Aboriginal population (19%).
• Between 2001 and 2006, the share of all Métis without a high school certificate decreased seven percentage points from 42% to 35%, and those with a university certificate, diploma or degree increased from 5% to 7%. The most popular fields of post-secondary study for Métis were: architecture, engineering, and related technologies; business, management and public administration; and health, parks, recreation and fitness.

• **Educational Attainment (High school)** - On average, Métis aged 15 and over had a lower educational attainment in 2006 than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. More than a third of Métis (34.6 per cent) had not completed high school nor obtained another diploma or certificate, compared to only 23.1 per cent of non-Aboriginal Canadians.

• **Educational Attainment (Trades, etc.)** - In terms of apprenticeship, trade, college and other non-university certificates or diplomas, the Métis and non-Aboriginal populations had similar levels of educational attainment, with about 30 per cent of their respective populations with these certifications as their highest educational achievement.

• Aboriginal attendance and completion rates for non-university post-secondary education do not differ substantially from non-Aboriginal rates, especially among Metis and off-reserve Status Indians. Of adults aged 15+, 20.7% of non-Aboriginal people have completed, compared with 21.1% of Metis, 17.7% of off-reserve Status, and 10.7% of on-reserve Status. There have been substantial improvements in completion rates since 1996 for both Metis and off-reserve Status Indians, but little or no improvement on reserve.

• **Educational Attainment (University)** - The difference in educational attainment between non-Aboriginal and Métis people was almost entirely due to the sharp difference in university-level education. In 2006, only 9.8 per cent of Métis people had university-level certification, compared to 23.0 per cent for non- Aboriginal Canadians. In other words, of those Métis obtaining at least a high school degree, only 15 per cent continued and obtained a university-level certification: among non- Aboriginais, 30 per cent did. The proportion of Métis with university-level certification was identical to that of off-reserve North American Indians (9.8 per cent), and only slightly above that of North American Indians as a whole (8.1 per cent).

• The reduction in the gap between the proportion Métis and non-Aboriginal with no certification conceals a much worse picture at the university level. In fact, the Métis/non-Aboriginal gap in terms of university certification increased for every cohort since 1966. Among those aged between 65 and 74 years, the gap in 2006 was 10.1 percentage points. In the latest cohort, those aged 25 to 34 years, the gap was twice as big (19.7 percentage points). Not only has the gap increased steadily across cohorts, but the proportion of Métis completing university stagnated between the 1976 and 1996 cohorts (from 10.9 per cent to 11.6 per cent).
The increase for Métis aged 25-34 in 2006 (3.1 percentage points higher than those aged 35-44) is encouraging, but it remains below the progress made by non-Aboriginal Canadians (4.0 percentage points).

- The majority of Aboriginal university graduates are female. Of Metis women, 5.8% have completed degrees, compared to 3.8% of men. In Winnipeg, 7.2% of Metis women and 6.6% of Status women have completed a degree.
- Metis youth are three times as likely to complete a university degree by age 30 than are Status Indians (3.7% versus 1.1%). However, Status Indians are as likely to attend or complete university during their lives than Metis — and Status Indians residing off reserve are more likely. This is unusual, given that Metis high school graduations rates are higher, and is due to Band support for post-secondary university education funded through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, which is not available to Metis and non-Status Indians. Metis are, however, eligible for non-university education through labour market training funding, and therefore tend to steer toward community colleges rather than university.

- **Educational Attainment (Rural/Urban)** - Only a very small part of these differences in educational attainment can be attributed to the higher proportion of Métis living in rural areas. Both Métis in rural areas and Métis in urban areas clearly underperform their non-Aboriginal counterparts. For example, in 2006 only 6.7 per cent of Métis living in rural areas obtained a university-level certification compared to 13.9 per cent for non-Aboriginal. In urban areas, the respective proportions were 11.2 and 25.2 per cent — in CMAs in particular, it was 13.3 and 27.7 per cent. In all cases, the proportion of Métis completing a university certification was about half that of non-Aboriginal Canadians. In fact, if the Métis population were distributed like that of the non-Aboriginal population (with higher shares in better-performing urban areas), the proportion of Métis with university education would increase only marginally, from 9.8 per cent to 10.3 per cent approximately.

- The graph depicts the Canadian distribution of Métis aged 15 years over by educational attainment compared to non-Aboriginals. Assumedly, the Alberta distribution is similar. There was 23.1% non-Aboriginals compared to 34.6% Métis with no certificate, diploma or degree, 25.7% non-Aboriginals compared to 25.6% Métis with High School certificate or equivalent, 10.8% non-Aboriginals compared to 13.1% Métis with an Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, 17.4% non-Aboriginals compared to 16.9%
Métis with a College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma and 18.5% non-Aboriginals compared to 7.0% Métis with a University certificate or degree.

- **Representation in Managerial Positions** - Métis workers are under-represented at the managerial and professional level. They are almost equitably represented in skilled technical occupations, and over-represented in semi-skilled and low-skilled occupations. Between 1996 and 2006, the Métis experienced only small employment increases in managerial (1%) and professional (2%) occupations. The number of individuals in semi-skilled occupations decreased five percentage points from 39% to 34%, and low-skilled occupations decreased from 22% to 19%.

- **Occupational Skill Level** The graph depicts the distribution of Métis in Canada by Occupational Skill Levels compared to non-Aboriginals. Assumedly, the Alberta distribution is similar. There was 9.4% non-Aboriginals compared to 6.2% Métis in the Managerial level, 16.3% non-Aboriginals compared to 9.0% Métis in the Professional level, 29.4% non-Aboriginals compared to 31.3% Métis in the Skilled level, 31.4% non-Aboriginals compared to 34.3% Métis in the Semi-skilled level and 13.4% non-Aboriginals compared to 19.1% Métis in the Low-skilled level.

- **Type of employer** - The following information pertains to the Aboriginal population in general; a Métis-specific breakdown was not available. Like industry and occupation, the distribution of core-aged workers by public, private or self-employment status differs slightly for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. A higher percentage of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal workers tend to work in the public sector. On the other hand, non-Aboriginal workers were more represented in self-employment than were Aboriginal workers. Among Aboriginal core-aged workers, job losses between 2008 and 2010 were mainly in the private sector. In 2010, there were also fewer self-employed Aboriginal workers than two years earlier, a trend similar to their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

- **Job tenure** - From 2008 to 2010, a higher percentage of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal core-aged workers had worked for their current employer 5 years or less, an average of 58% versus 49%, respectively. During
this same period, job tenure averaged 6.7 years for Aboriginal core-aged workers, lower than the 8.2 years for non-Aboriginal workers.

- **Multiple jobs** - In 2007 and 2008, a similar proportion of core-aged workers were multiple jobholders between both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (around 5.3%). While this rate did not change for non-Aboriginal workers during 2009 and 2010, a slightly higher percentage of Aboriginal workers were taking on more than one job at a time in 2010, at 6.0%.

- **Temporary status** - Aboriginal core-aged employees were more likely to be working on a temporary basis than non-Aboriginal employees in 2010. The percentage of Aboriginal employees who worked on a seasonal, contract, or term basis increased to 14% in 2010 from an average of 12% in the previous three years. For the non-Aboriginal population, the percentage of temporary workers increased from 9.1% in 2009 to 9.8% in 2010.

- **Unionization** - Aboriginal workers are more likely to be represented by a union or covered by a collective agreement (37.2%) than non-Aboriginal core-aged workers (34.2%) in 2010. At $847.36, Aboriginal employees made 92% of the average weekly salary of non-Aboriginal workers ($916.85) in 2010.

### Selected employment characteristics of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations (Canada) aged 25 to 54, 2008 to 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of employed who are...</th>
<th>Aboriginal population</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector employees</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector employees</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple jobholders</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working part-time</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average usual hours at main job</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average usual hours at all jobs</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Job tenure in current job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aboriginal population</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average job tenure (in years)</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of employed who worked 5 years or less in current job</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Percentage of employees who are... | | | | |
|-----------------------------------| | | | |
| Temporary                         | 11.7                  | 14.0                      | 8.7 | 9.8 |
### Covered by a union or collective agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wages of employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average hourly wage (in current dollars)</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.13</td>
<td>22.15</td>
<td>23.29</td>
<td>24.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average weekly wage (in current dollars)</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>812.88</td>
<td>847.36</td>
<td>878.44</td>
<td>916.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note(s):** Data exclude people living on reserves and in the territories.

**Source(s):** Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

- **Training provided by employers** - The majority of Aboriginal-owned businesses with employees provide them with formal training. Six in ten (63%) supported or provided training or education for its employees in the past year. Employee training is most likely to be offered by businesses in the agriculture, construction and service industries, and least common among secondary industries. Training is also more common among firms who have received government grants. Also, successful firms (i.e., those firms that have been profitable in the past year, had increased sales and expect income growth in the next two years) are more likely to provide training.

- **Hiring, Training, Retaining Employees** - For Aboriginal Economic Development Corporations (EDCs) the focus on creating employment opportunities, in addition to the growth of these enterprises, creates challenges in terms of hiring, training and retaining qualified employees. Employee-related issues are one of the most common challenges facing EDCs. As a result, among EDCs who anticipate capital investment increases over the coming year, large majorities intend to invest in their workforce by developing and training employees (80%) or by hiring new talent (70%), ahead of facility or equipment upgrades. The larger the organization, the more challenging it is to find qualified Aboriginal employees. Aboriginal peoples comprise an average of 82 percent of the workforce of smaller EDCs (those with less than 100 employees), but an average 59 percent of the workforce of larger EDCs (100 or more employees).

- **Finding Qualified Employees** - When EDCs were asked what challenges their corporations face, the two most common are finding and keeping qualified employees, and financing. Employee-related issues include the challenges associated with training (22%), recruiting (20%) and retaining (14%) talented employees.

- **Employee management priorities** - Training, professional development and employee retention are the main employee management priorities for EDCs. Most spend between two and five percent of their operating budget on employee training. Because of their significance to the communities in which they operate, the employee management practices and priorities of Aboriginal EDCs are important contributors to the economic success of their community.
  
  - Executives tend to focus on three interconnected priorities for employee management: training, skill and professional development, and employee retention. When discussing their training priorities, some executives noted...
that a workforce that is properly trained makes the workforce stronger, not only because it minimizes workplace risks related to health and safety, but also because training allows employees to develop the experience and expertise necessary to grow alongside the business. Similarly, professional development encourages employees to become better managers, to become more fiscally involved and responsible, and encourages them to stay at a particular organization longer. Participants who focused on employee retention noted that they wanted to encourage skilled, talented employees to stay with the company by developing performance management incentives, by creating and enforcing positive human resources policies, and by providing employee development opportunities. While relatively few executives identified Aboriginal-specific priorities, those who did stressed the importance of bringing in and fostering Aboriginal talent.

Training Programs

Métis Training to Employment (MTE)
www.metisemployment.ca

The Labour Market Development Program formed by the Métis Nation of Alberta in 1999, was given the mandate to design and deliver labour market programs for non-Settlement Métis. After 15 years of successful labour market programming, the Métis Nation of Alberta is transferring responsibility for this activity to a newly created affiliate called Rupertsland Institute (RLI). Under RLI the Métis Training to Employment program (MTE) will continue to offer the same labour market programs and services currently available to Métis individuals.

RLI is signatory to a 4.5 year ASETS agreement (Aboriginal Skills, Employment, and Training Strategy) with the federal government. The RLI ASETS agreement is one of the largest in the country in terms of scope and funding, extending throughout the whole province of Alberta.

The MTE vision is “A Skilled Métis Labour Force.” The MTE mission is “Métis clients will achieve self-sufficiency through training and employment.”

The MTE program has a multi-level structure designed to meet Métis peoples’ needs at the local and regional level with a decentralized service delivery system while at the same time promoting policy and expressing accountability through a centralized financial and program management network. MTE programs and services are delivered to clients through ten full time Métis Employment Services sites located throughout the province.

Client Services

The MTE Program provides high quality employment services through a
province-wide network of 10 Métis Employment Services (MES) offices and a Mobile Métis Employment Services RV. In this way, the MTE Program ensures that Métis people from across the province receive standardized employment assistance in their communities. Each MES has well trained staff with knowledge of the local community and the employment outlook in their respective regions. Métis Employment Services also have the latest technology to facilitate employment planning and to put clients in touch with employers and training institutions not only in Alberta but also across the country. Services available at each MES include:

- Employment assessment and action planning to help clients meet employment goals
- Employment counselling to help clients resolve individual labour market issues
- Services for persons with disabilities
- Assistance with entrance to, and funding for, post secondary and other training programs
- Information and access to custom designed training projects specially designed for Alberta Métis
- Information on scholarships and bursaries
- Assistance to develop a high quality resume
- Referral to jobs and employers
- Assistance with interviewing skills
- Career planning, educational and other labour market information
- Access to computers, photocopiers and other resources

**Services for Employers**

The MTE Program can help employers find Métis candidates that match their current and future needs and link them up with opportunities to bring out their potential. Métis Employment Services offers employers:

- The opportunity to post company job openings on the MES Job Board and for possible circulation to selected community agencies within the targeted area.
- Referral of qualified Métis clients that may help solve labour shortages
- Assessment of referred candidates to ensure qualified, motivated jobseekers
- Continued support to referred clients that are placed with employers
- Wage incentive Programs for employers who provide clients with career related work experience and training
- Access to an employer resource library
Métis Targeted Wage Subsidies (TWS)
This Program is open to employers who provide direct work experience and practical on-the-job training to Métis people who have the required skills and accreditation, but lack related work experience. Under the TWS, employers can access a subsidy of up to 50% of the employee's wages for a maximum of six months (or one year for a person with a disability). The employer must commit to hiring the trainee at the conclusion of the subsidy period.

Métis Youth Career Internship Program
The Métis Youth Career Internship Program is available to employers who can provide career related work experience to Métis youth (ages 15 to 30) who have completed secondary school or post secondary training. Employers can access a wage subsidy of up to 50% of the employee's wages for a period of up to six months. The employer must commit to hiring the trainee at the conclusion of the subsidy period.

Métis Youth Summer Employment Program
This Program is available to employers who hire a Métis youth, between the ages of 15 to 30 during the summer months. The job must be for minimum period of six and a maximum of sixteen consecutive weeks between May and August, and the client must intend to return to school in September. Employers can receive a subsidy of 50% of the wages paid to the employee to a maximum contribution by the program to equal the provincial minimum wage.

Partnerships
The MTE Program seeks to develop partnerships with industry, government and other Aboriginal organizations. Its goal is to develop and expand existing opportunities for Métis across Alberta. Examples of Partnerships include:

- The Métis Health Transition program was designed by the Métis Training to Employment program to assist Métis clients in entering a career in the health field. The partnership involved NAIT which provided the academic upgrading required for entry into health technology programs such as Diagnostic Medical Imaging Sonography, Medical Radiology, and Lab/X T Ray Technology etc. Capital Health contributed work exposure opportunities for clients to experience what the work involved in order to make an informed career choice; while NAIT went on to provide guaranteed entry into these highly competitive programs for those clients successfully completing the Transition program.
- Tradewinds to Success is a program designed to assist aboriginal people make an informed career decision to work in trade occupations including boilermaker, ironworker, carpenter, pipe
fitter/steamfitter, plumber, or welder. Funding is provided by the federal and provincial government, as well as aboriginal organizations that also fund their clients throughout the training. Four trade union partners provide exposure in the trades streaming component.

**Strategic Training Initiative Society (Métis Settlements)**
http://www.msc.ca/Departments/Strategic+Training+Initiatives/Default.ksi

Under the direction of the Metis Settlements General Council, the Metis Settlements Strategic Training Initiatives Society (STI) empowers Metis people from settlements with training that helps them realize their potential – and their dreams. STI delivers Labour Market Development Programs through the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) to assist Metis Settlements residents for the workforce and for a career by preparing, obtaining, and maintaining employment. STI training also provides options for disabled persons.