



## Skill Standards Questions and Answers

### **Q. What are the CPISC skill standards and how were they developed?**

**A.** Skill standards are essentially statements on what an employee should know and be able to do on the job.

Comprehensive standards, like those produced by CPISC, also indicate the level of performance a given job requires.

CPISC has now completed the second and third phases of its innovative suite of skill standards and occupational profiles, with today's release of standards for prepress and finishing and bindery workers.

The latest skill standards add to those for press workers, which were released in 2008.

All of the CPISC skill standards have been developed and validated by industry, with leadership and support from CPISC.

As the printing industry's sector council, the mandate of CPISC is to identify and implement strategies to address skills development within the sector

Buy-in from industry has been critical to ensure the credibility of both the national skill standards and CPISC as a sector council.

### **Q. What if CPISC did not address skills issues?**

**A.** In a changing economy, a focus on skills is critical. Employers want to be sure they have workers with the right mix of skills to get the job done.

Companies in the printing sector also need to compete in a global marketplace, which means being up-to-date with the latest in information-based technology. To keep up, employers must be able to recruit, train and retain a skilled workforce.

The focus of CPISC is to ensure the print industry remains competitive in a changing global environment.

As Canada's fourth-largest manufacturing employer, the health of the industry is vital to both the national economy and the 85,000 people it employs across Canada.



### **Q. How can the standards be used by employers and workers?**

**A.** For employers, the benefit of skill standards is the potential for better trained, more adaptable workers.

Standards enable an employer to assess the skills of new and current workers. Employers are then better able to identify what training and development is most needed, to ensure that company employees have the skills required to get the job done.

In general, well-trained employees are also easier for employers to retain because their skills are being recognized and utilized.

For employees, skill standards provide a set of criteria against which they can judge their progress towards occupational goals and career progression.

Employees can ensure their skills are up-to-date, making them more employable – even in difficult economic times.

### **Q. How are the standards being used by educational institutions?**

**A.** Educational institutions have already started using the CPISC skill standards to redevelop their programs so that graduates are more employable, have the skills that industry needs, and are better equipped to meet future industry challenges and demands.

### **Q. What will the occupational profiles be used for?**

**A.** Skills profiles describe various operational duties in the printing industry. They outline what the job entails, the availability of jobs in Canada and the kind of education and personal attributes that best contribute to success in each specific field.

Profiles can be used as recruitment tools, *selling* specific jobs to potential employees. They can also help people interested in the industry decide if a career in printing is for them.



**Q. Who contributed to this project?**

**A.** CPISC received funding for the project from the Government of Canada through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

CPISC also wishes to acknowledge the considerable contribution of the Project Working Groups made up of representatives from printing companies, suppliers, education and training, and unions.

We also wish to acknowledge the support of the industry in validating our work through focus groups and online validation sessions.

**Q. Where can people get access to the standards?**

**A.** The standards can be downloaded and ordered through the CPISC website at [www.cpisc-csic.ca](http://www.cpisc-csic.ca) The standards are available in English and French.

**Q. What are the next steps?**

**A.** CPISC is in the process of developing and validating skill standards for colour and output specialists working within the printing industry. It is anticipated that these standards will be released in September 2009.

CPISC is also working with industry to identify possible options and methods for certification of employee skills, using the national skill standards.

Future plans also include the development of skill standards for the production support area and skill standards implementation guides and tools for employers and employees.

