

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO, August 27, 2008—The Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council (CPISC) released today the first in a set of national skills standards and occupational profiles for the printing and graphic communications industry.

CPISC developed the standards in 2007-2008 in close consultation with industry representatives and with funding from Human Resources and Social Development Canada's (HRSDC) Sectoral Partnerships Initiative. The standards released today were specifically for press occupations. CPISC will add to the package by developing skills standards and occupational profiles in 2008-2009 for pre-press and finishing operators and bindery operators.

"This is a bold and decisive first step to address the needs of the printing industry," said Duncan Brown, Co-Chair of CPISC. "It will provide valuable direction as we work together with manufacturers, suppliers and educators to adjust existing training programs and implement new options for training and apprenticeships."

To remain competitive in an aggressive global market the printing industry has undergone profound transformation. It has embraced new information-based technologies, creating an urgent need for a highly educated, multi-skilled workforce willing to continually upgrade its skills.

No international skills standards exist for the printing industry, which puts CPISC on the leading edge of global human-resource development for this sector. With the new standards for press, Canadian firms and educational institutions now have a national benchmark against which they can develop recruitment and training programs for that segment of the industry.

For workers, widely-accepted skills standards will provide a portable credential, enabling them to change employers and move among the provinces and territories with the confidence that they are qualified to find rewarding work. For employers, the standards will serve as a reliable gauge of potential employees' proficiency and will inform the development of training programs.

"With the support of HRSDC's Sector Council Program, the CPISC will be able to develop tools and services geared to the specific needs of the industry," says Jeff Ekstein, Co-Chair of CPISC.

The standards were released during an awards ceremony for the printing industry's first Team Canada Selection Event. The event provides young Canadians working in the printing industry with an opportunity to test their expertise against that of their peers. The winner will join the printing sector's Team Canada at the WorldSkills competition.

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