

AWIC

Algoma
Workforce
Investment
Committee



Trends, Opportunities and Priorities (TOP) Report

January 2008



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Ontario's employment & training network

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For further information please contact:

Jack McGoldrick

Algoma Workforce Investment Committee

705.941.9341

jmcgoldrick@sympatico.ca

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The Algoma Workforce Investment Committee (AWIC) is a community-based planning organization funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities whose members are knowledgeable about the labour force development issues in the District of Algoma. AWIC's objective is to engage the community, and community partners in a local labour market research and planning process, that will lead to cooperative efforts to find local solutions, to local labour market issues.

To achieve this objective, AWIC undertakes the following activities:

- Engages communities in a locally-driven process to identify and respond to key Trends, Opportunities and Priorities that prevail in the local labour market;
- Facilitates a local planning process where community organizations and institutions agree to initiate and/or implement joint actions to address local labour market issues of common interest;
- Creates opportunities for partnership development activities and projects that respond to more complex and/or pressing local labour market challenges; and,
- Organizes events and undertakes activities to promote the importance of education, training, lifelong learning and skills upgrading.

Annually AWIC publishes a Trends, Opportunities & Priorities (TOP) report that identifies labour market trends, issues and opportunities in the District of Algoma using census data, research reports, surveys and in-depth consultations with community partners. Building on the TOP work of the preceding year AWIC engages stakeholders in a labour force planning process that can be the foundation for solutions sustainable over the long term.

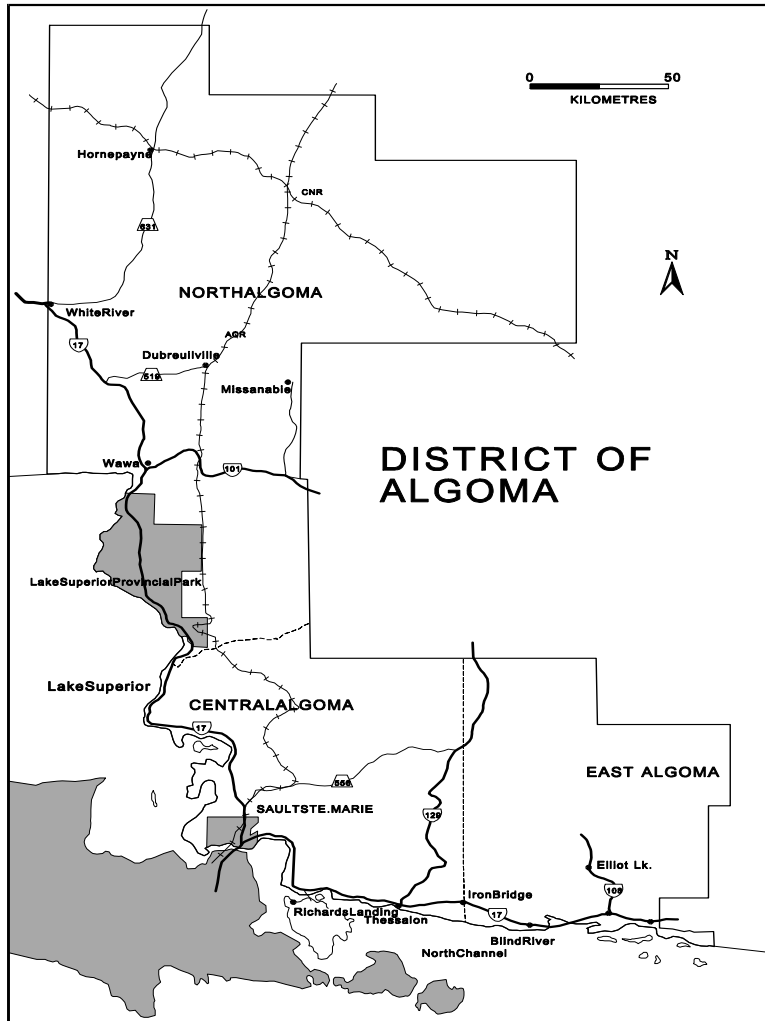
The TOP report is a community action plan that is an ongoing process that does not end with the release of the TOP Report. With participation from the community, AWIC is continually tracking current and emerging labour market issues, gathering ideas for solutions to these issues, and facilitating or leading action that will improve our labour market.

The Algoma Workforce Investment Committee would like to thank all the community partners who supported the development of the 2008 TOP Report by participating at the TOP Community Forums. We appreciate the commitment and efforts of all stakeholders to build a strong and vibrant labour market in the District of Algoma.

Review of Trends

The trends from the January 2007 TOP Report have not significantly changed in the past year. The following are the seven trends identified in the January 2008 report:

1. Skilled Trade Shortages
2. Workforce Shortages in many sectors
3. Youth Out-Migration
4. There is an Aging/Population Workforce in the District
5. Rural/Urban Differences in Communities
6. Shift in Key Employment Sector (Forestry Products Industry Closures/Decline)
7. Marginalized Workforce



Located in North-Eastern Ontario and bordering the north shore of Lake Superior and Lake Huron, the District of Algoma with a population of 117,460ⁱ covers 48,737 square kilometres from White River in the northwest to Spanish in the east. The District is divided into the following sub-districts: North Algoma, Sault Ste. Marie and Area, Central Algoma and East Algoma. Driving time from Hornepayne in the northwest to Spanish in the east is approximately 7 to 8 hours.



Student House Building Project



Student House Building Project

ⁱ 2006 Canadian Census

SECTION 2: COMMUNITY PROFILEⁱⁱ

Economic growth in the District of Algoma as with the rest of Northern Ontario has been significantly less than the provincial average since the 1970's and since workforce development is seen as crucial to economic development, AWIC is therefore necessarily involved in economic development discussions. Population and demographic trends is an indicator of economic development; these trends also have an important impact on future development decisions, therefore it becomes very important for us to understand what trends exist in the region.

Ontario's labour market has been performing well, nevertheless certain industries, geographic regions, and demographic groups in Ontario have been experiencing challenges. Service industries in the District of Algoma have been growing strongly and creating jobs while the manufacturing and forestry sectors are experiencing significant pressures and layoffs bringing about regional differences in labour market performance, with certain communities facing high rates of unemployment and low rates of employment growth. The Hospitality and Tourism Industry reported a noticeable increase in human resource demand in 2005-2006, and acknowledged that access to supply had become a challenge, but was not yet a crisis.ⁱⁱⁱ

Historically, the unemployment rate for the Northern Region has been higher than the average in Ontario. The unemployment rate for the Northern Region has declined since 1998 and the gap between Ontario and the North almost disappeared in 2005. However, the declining unemployment rate is due to withdrawal of people from the labour force in the Northern Region rather than job creation.^{iv} In 2006, the average unemployment rate of the Northern Ontario Region was 7.4%, which was higher than the provincial average of 6.3%.

A number of regional differences are very apparent in the North. Ontario's population is aging and this is particularly the case in Northern Ontario. The North has the oldest age profile in Ontario, due largely to out-migration of younger age groups and is the only region in Ontario to project a steady decline in population out to 2031.

Aging Population Trends in the District of Algoma

In 2006, the percentage of seniors in the District of Algoma had increased significantly to 19.1% from 16.6% in 2001. This is significantly higher than the aging rates of Northern Ontario and represents the highest percentage increase of the entire northern district. The main reason for this high rate increase can be found in Elliot Lake, which increased its percentage of seniors, by 26% between 2001 and 2006^v by promoting the community as a retirement community.



Elliot Lake Top Consultation Meeting,
September 2007

ⁱⁱ Appendix I Complete Community Profile, source 2001 & 2006 Canadian Census

ⁱⁱⁱ Algoma Workforce Investment Committee, Hospitality Tourism Human Resource Study, October 2006

^{iv} A Summary report on Northern Region Consultation & Discussions, MTCU Northern Region, Sudbury

^v 2006 Census Research Paper Series # 3- Aging Population Trends in Northern Ontario, Chris Southcott, Ph.D. Lakehead University, September 2007

Elliot Lake Top Consultation Meeting September 2007

Table 1: Percentage of the Population 65 Years and Older by Northern District

	Pct. of Pop. 65 and Over 2001	Total 65 and Over 2006	Pct. Of Pop. 65 and over 2006
Ontario	12.9	1649185	13.6
Northern Ontario	14.4	124215	15.8
Parry Sound	18.8	8620	21.1
Algoma	16.5	22300	19.1
Manitoulin	16.6	2400	18.3
Timiskaming	16.5	6025	18.1
Rainy River	15.5	3485	16.2
Nipissing	14.7	13485	15.9
Sudbury	13.3	3365	15.7
Thunder Bay	13.9	22620	15.2
Greater Sudbury	13.9	23480	14.9
Cochrane	12.2	11310	13.7
Kenora	10.7	7125	11.1

The Changing Population in the District of Algoma

Based on analysis of 2006 Census data on population, there appears to be six main population trends occurring in Northern Ontario.^{vi}

- The population has stabilized; statistically speaking the population of Northern Ontario was virtually the same in 2006 as it was in 2001.
- In 2001 Northern Ontario represented 6.9% of the total population of Ontario. By 2006 this percentage was down to under 6.5%.
- Most Aboriginal communities in Algoma show population increases. Average growth rates for these communities increased to 16.5%.
- We see return of growth to the largest urban centre. The urban area Sault Ste. Marie, saw its population grow during this period.
- Mining dependent communities were better off than forest dependent communities. While there were exceptions, several mining communities across the North saw growth from 2001 to 2006 while many forest dependent communities continued to experience declines.

From 2001 to 2006, the population of Algoma decreased by the relatively small percentage of 1.2% unlike the situation in 1996 and 2001 when the decline was 6.9% the City of Sault Ste. Marie actually grew by 0.5%. The largest declines occurred in Elliot Lake and the northern communities of Algoma such as Michipicoten, Dubreuilville and White River.

^{vi} Census Research Paper Series # 1- The 2006 Changing Population of Northern Ontario, Chris Southcott, Ph.D. Lakehead University, May2007

Table 2 Communities in the District of Algoma

Community	Type of Community	Population		Change in Population	% Change in Population
		2006	2001		
District of Algoma		116252	117746	-1494	-1,2
Algoma, Unorganized, North Part	NO	5717	6114	-397	-6,5
Algoma, Unorganized, South East	NO	0	0	0	
Blind River	T	3780	3969	-189	-4,8
Bruce Mines	T	584	627	-43	-6,9
Dubreuilville	TP	773	967	-194	-20,1
Elliot Lake	CY	11549	11956	-407	-3,4
Garden River 14	IRI	985	859	126	14,7
Goulais Bay 15A (1)	IRI	82	68	14	
Gros Cap 49	IRI	54	61	-7	-11,5
Hilton	TP	243	258	-15	-5,8
Hilton Beach	VL	172	174	-2	-1,1
Huron Shores	MU	1696	1794	-98	-5,5
Jocelyn	TP	277	298	-21	-7
Johnson	TP	701	658	43	6,5
Laird	TP	1078	1021	57	5,6
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen, Additional	TP	1550	1452	98	6,7
Michipicoten	TP	3204	3668	-464	-12,6
Missanabie 62	IRI	0	0	0	
Mississagi River 8	IRI	414	360	54	15
North Shore	TP	549	544	5	0,9
Plummer, supplémentaires	TP	625	671	-46	-6,9
Prince	TP	971	1010	-39	-3,9
Rankin Location 15D (1)	IRI	566	473	93	
Sagamok	IRI	884	870	14	1,6
Sault Ste. Marie	CY	74948	74566	382	0,5
Serpent River 7	IRI	340	323	17	5,3
Spanish	T	728	816	-88	-10,8
St. Joseph	TP	1129	1201	-72	-6
Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional	TP	388	466	-78	-16,7
Thessalon	T	1312	1386	-74	-5,3
Thessalon 12	IRI	112	123	-11	-8,9
White River	TP	841	993	-152	-15,3

(1) Adjusted Population Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001 and 2006.

Youth Out-migration Trends in the District of Algoma

Since the 1980's, youth out-migration from the region has been identified as a trend that concerned most communities in Algoma. These concerns continued to be expressed in TOP reports issued by Northern Ontario Local Area Boards over the past 4 years.

The rate of youth out-migration has increased substantially since 1996 to the point where, according to available data, rates of youth out-migration during this period were the highest ever. Analysis of trends within Northern Ontario showed that Aboriginal

communities tended to have the lowest rates of youth out-migration in the region^{vii}. As well, out-migration rates for females were less than for males. While most communities that experienced in-migration were Aboriginal communities, some “suburban” communities in Northern Ontario also saw youth in-migration. Finally, the data indicates that overall, unorganized areas of Northern Ontario had higher rates of youth out-migration.^{viii}

Table 3 Youth Out-migration Rates for Communities in the District of Algoma

Community	Type of Community	15 to 29 Year Olds in 2001	20 to 34 Year Olds in 2006	Decrease in Cohort 2001 to 2006	Percentage Change in Cohort
District of Algoma		19925	17265	-2660	-13.4
Jocelyn	TP	50	25	-25	-50.0
Hilton	TP	35	25	-10	-28.6
Hilton Beach	VL	20	5	-15	-75.0
St. Joseph	TP	185	115	-70	-37.8
Laird	TP	170	140	-30	-17.6
Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional	TP	55	55	0	0.0
Johnson	TP	100	85	-15	-15.0
Plummer Additional	TP	100	65	-35	-35.0
Bruce Mines	T	90	45	-45	-50.0
Thessalon 12	IRI	15	15	0	0.0
Thessalon	T	210	165	-45	-21.4
Huron Shores	MU	235	150	-85	-36.2
Blind River	T	695	500	-195	-28.1
Spanish	T	145	90	-55	-37.9
North Shore	TP	65	45	-20	-30.8
Elliot Lake	C	1530	1080	-450	-29.4
Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional	TP	265	210	-55	-20.8
Sault Ste. Marie	C	13195	12345	-850	-6.4
Prince	TP	160	130	-30	-18.8
Sagamok	IRI	190	140	-50	-26.3
Serpent River 7	IRI	50	50	0	0.0
Mississagi River 8	IRI	70	70	0	0.0
Garden River 14	IRI	205	200	-5	-2.4
Michipicoten	TP	695	515	-180	-25.9
Gros Cap 49	IRI	20	5	-15	-75.0
Dubreuilville	TP	255	185	-70	-27.5
White River	TP	225	150	-75	-33.3
Algoma, Unorganized, North Part	UNO	895	660	-235	-26.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001 and 2006

^{vii} A large number of aboriginal communities for various reasons are improperly counted, if Statistics Canada cannot properly count a community, the population of that community is not included in the population totals for that census division.

^{viii} Census Research Paper Series # 2- Youth Out-migration Trends in Northern Ontario: 2001 to 2006, Chris Southcott, Ph.D. Lakehead University, September 2007

Note: Table 3 looks at the changes in the total number of people in a given age cohort or group. For this report, we take the number of people in Algoma who were between the ages of 15 and 29 in 2001 and see what the total number of this group was in 2006 by seeing what the total was of people between the ages of 20 and 34 as reported in the 2006 Census. If the 2006 total of this group is less than the total for 2001, there has been net out-migration of youth.

SECTION 3: SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

The definition of what constitutes a “significant impact” may differ from one area to the next; for example: the loss of 200 jobs in a small community would have a much greater impact on its local economy than similar losses in a major urban centre with a diversified economic base.

Over the past year “Significant Changes” that may have an impact on the local economy and worthy of emphasis are as follows:

Forest Products Industry Sector

In September 2007 Weyerhaeuser OSB (Oriented Strand Board) located in Wawa announced it will indefinitely curtail activities, citing low customer demand for its product, a housing slow-down in the U.S. and the strong Canadian dollar as the culprits for the closure that eliminated 157 jobs. These job losses are in addition to upwards of 100 jobs lost in Wawa and White River in the past year by Domtar, Dubreuil Forest Products and Forest Care.



Wawa Top Consultation Meeting,
September 2007

Sault Ste Marie’s 111 year old St Mary’s Paper, one of 12

specialty paper makers in North America, after a nine week shutdown following a failed restructuring and bankruptcy was reborn as St Mary’s Corp in June 2007. The mill with a 283-member workforce, about 100 fewer than prior to bankruptcy, is coping with the still surging Canadian Loonie, which has taken flight against the U.S. dollar.

Furthermore Dubreuil Forest Products announced November 8, 2007 it will shutdown its entire sawmill operation in Dubreuilville until the end of January 2008 idling 140 employees.

Health Care Sector

A groundbreaking ceremony for the New Sault Area Hospital, the largest public infrastructure project to the Sault Ste. Marie Community in generations, took place in August 2007. With a completion date of October 2010, this \$498 million (today’s dollars) new state-of-the-art Sault Area Hospital will improve our ability to attract medical professionals and provide a significant boost to the local economy.

The Sault Area Hospital (SAH) is welcoming internationally trained doctors to supplement the work of local physicians.^{ix} The two-year pilot project will use physician assistants for the first time in different inpatient departments where they can help doctors deliver emergency and every day medical services.

SAH will receive only internationally trained physicians, who are educated and certified in countries not yet recognized in Ontario.

Construction Sector

Construction investment in Ontario is expected to increase by over two percent per year over the next eight to ten years with the pace of growth reported to be well suited to attracting, recruiting, and training the industry's workforce.

There is evidence to suggest that the construction industry in the Algoma District may differ from the provincial experience with a greater potential in the short-term for skilled shortages for industrial and engineering projects and with a greater demand for trades associated with residential and non residential construction. Sault Ste. Marie is experiencing a construction boom that is expected to last well into 2008. New construction investment is proposed to be close to \$700 million. For a community of its size, Elliot Lake's proposed residential construction is significant as Elliot Lake Retirement Living promotes the sale of 400 waterfront lots and the building of seasonal and permanent dwellings.^x

In December 2007, three months after announcing their intention to build a \$120 million, 20-megawatt solar farm in Sault Ste. Marie, developers have tripled their vision of generating capacity and investment. The new capacity will give Pod Generating Group the largest solar farm in Canada by 2010. This project will create about 45 construction jobs for each 10 MW phase and create 9 to 15 permanent jobs for operations and maintenance.^{xi}

The Sault's north end and Great Northern Road continues to be a beehive of construction activity.

A new hospital is under construction and down the street, more retail outlets are springing up around the Wal-Mart/Home Depot plaza. The arrival of big box stores like Wal-Mart and the construction of the new Sault Area



Great Northern Road

Hospital are attracting some complementary businesses along with new housing.

A Boston Pizza and TSC farm hardware store are opened this fall with other undisclosed chain retailers going up on the east side of Great Northern Road. Those stores are going in the same plaza as the newly opened Future Shop, Reitmans, Payless Shoes and Mark's Work Warehouse.

^{ix} Sault Star, October 12th, 2007.

^x Human Resource Study, The Construction Industry in the District of Algoma, 2006

^{xi} Sault Star December 8th, 2007

There are other commercial developments in the works for Great Northern including a major financial institution. The opening of the city's biggest-ever institutional project, the new Sault Area Hospital, in 2010 and its 1,700 employees will attract new business.

The construction consortium of Hospital Infrastructure Partners is heading up a new project to replace the downtown Plummer Memorial Hospital and General Hospital. The total estimated project costs of \$988 million of construction, furnishings, and equipment outfitting and ongoing operational costs will be spread out over 30 years.

The \$5.6 million Ontario Provincial Police Forensic Identification Unit and the \$7.8 million secure custody facility for youth both had groundbreaking ceremonies in Sault Ste. Marie in February 2007. More than 200 construction jobs are expected to be created, lasting until the spring of 2008.

Steel Industry Sector

Sault Ste. Marie's largest industrial employer, Algoma Steel, launched an apprenticeship program to train employees it needs, the last batch of apprentices that Algoma took on was in the late 1980's. The company has partnered with Sault College to host an apprenticeship program to train 10 Industrial Mechanics, 10 Industrial Electricians, 10 Fabricator Welders and 8 bricklayers and Stone Masons, 2 HVAC Technicians and 6 Hoisting Engineers.

Essar Global Limited, India, through its wholly owned subsidiary Essar Steel Holdings Limited and Algoma Steel Inc. announced in April 07 that they have signed a definitive arrangement agreement providing for the acquisition by Essar of all of the common shares of Algoma.

Tenaris Algoma Tubes laid off 145 workers at its Sault Ste. Marie operations, 69 in February 2007 and a further 76 in March 2007. The company, which makes seamless pipe used for drilling oil and gas, attributes the layoffs to a downturn in the gas and oil markets as well as the increase in value of the Canadian dollar. The company also states it has been negatively impacted by cheap offshore imports, mainly from China. Tenaris started operations in November 2000 with 90 employees and had 664 workers prior to the February layoffs.

Manufacturing Sector

A local manufacturer Teleflex Eco Trans Technologies L.P. that established over the last 14 years a reputation for the production of fuel-efficient emission-compliant, auxiliary power units for the North American trucking and locomotive markets announced in August 2007 the permanent closure of the Sault Ste. Marie plant idling approximately 55 workers.

Hospitality & Tourism

A year and a half after first announcing intentions to move to Sault Ste. Marie Boston Pizza scheduled a December opening creating 100 to 125 new jobs in the industry.

Numbers released in September by Statistics Canada confirm the worst fears of tourism operators, as travel from the United States fell to its second-lowest level in 35 years.

Statistics Canada said the decline might be partly a result of the soaring Loonie, which increased for a sixth straight month in July hitting a 30-year high. With parity coming less than six years after the Loonie an all time low of 61.79 U.S. cents, small tourist operations are already hurting from six years of declining American business.

Post Secondary Education

Sault College of Applied Arts & Technology

Apprenticeship enrolment at Sault College has increased by 35% this year with 207 apprentices having enrolled as of November 1, 2007. Further to this 35% increase in apprentices, the November 1, 2007 enrolment numbers as compared to last year also show increases in several other areas of the College.

- 6.6 % increase in first year post secondary
- 22 % increase in academic upgrading, literacy and basic skills training
- 11% increase in Continuing Education attracting 1356 registrants

“I am especially pleased with the tremendous growth in apprenticeship training,” says Dr. Common, Sault College president. “Sault College is equipped to train these apprentices and is committed to working with industrial employers to meet the critical shortage of skilled trade workers.”

Apprenticeships planned for 2007-2008 include construction and maintenance electrician, automotive service technician, steamfitter, plumber, cook advanced, small engine mechanic, and ironworker programs.

Algoma University College

With the support of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities it was announced in May 2007 that the government intends to introduce legislation to establish an independent Algoma University. Legislation to be introduced would not only create a new, independent Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, but also expand opportunity and choice for Northern families. Moving forward with granting Algoma its independence, after decades of being an affiliate college would mean a brighter future for the district, more opportunity for our youth, greater economic growth, and a new vibrancy for our community. Since it was first established in 1965, Algoma College has been an affiliate campus of Laurentian University in Sudbury.

Currently at over 1200, Algoma College's student body has grown by 73 per cent since 1998-99. An independent Algoma University will support continued growth of post-secondary opportunity in the area by offering a wider array of degree programs, expanding partnerships, increasing student recruitment, and improving teaching and research capacity. Many of Algoma's students are First Nations students, and they use the education earned here to transform their communities.

Economic Indicators^{xii}

- Northern Ontario's small one-industry forestry towns have been shaken by mill shutdowns and closures. Most of the Ontario towns that had negative population growth between the census years were in Northern Ontario.
- High Canadian dollar hurting the forestry industry and tourism industry.
- High gas prices hurting the tourism sector.
- US border security/passports impacting tourism 23% of Americans hold passports, 40% of Canadians. Daytrips at lowest level since 1972.
- Mining looks positive: gold, nickel, and diamond.
- Algoma Steel very strong locally.
- Energy investment is strong.

Workforce Concerns^{xiii}

- Deaths outnumbered births for 3 consecutive years.
- High percentage of part-time workers in Algoma 23% vs. 17% in Ontario (2006 LFS).
- Aging workforce-2001 Census Algoma median age of 41.4 Ontario median age of 37.2.
- The 2006 Census showed Algoma median age had risen to 45 while the Ontario median rose to 39.
- 3,000 people under the age of 45 left Algoma District between 2000-2003-just starting to return now.
- Shortage of skilled workers.
- Shortage of entry-level workers.

SECTION 4: OUR TOP CONSULTATION PROCESS

The TOP planning model and consultation process places a significant emphasis on ongoing community involvement for validation and prioritization of identified labour market issues. The Algoma Workforce Investment Committee continually gathers and assesses the District of Algoma's labour market activity throughout the year by participating in and often leading community stakeholder meetings, reviewing relevant workforce development research reports and through local and national media reports.

This information is reviewed through the TOP Consultation process where the community confirms the existing and emerging labour market trends documented in this research and develops partnerships and a community action plan to address the most important of these issues.

AWIC held TOP Community Consultation meetings in Elliot Lake (14 participants), Blind River (26 participants) Wawa (13 participants) and Sault Ste. Marie (67 participants) in September and the early part of October 2007^{xiv}. These sessions which lasted about

^{xii} Labour Market Information Presentation, Raymond Running Labour Market Information Analyst

^{xiii} Labour Market Information Presentation, Raymond Running Labour Market Information Analyst

^{xiv} For a complete list of attendees see appendix II

four hours, were well attended with representation from all the stakeholder groups, including business, labour, equity groups and government.

The format for these meetings included a presentation of updated Labour Market Information (LMI) from Service Canada and a review of the current trends and issues identified through the findings of the research, followed by a focus group session where groups of 8-10 participants were asked to prioritize the trends and issues to be addressed.

Contact information (email) was collected at each of the sessions, allowing for ongoing electronic communication with participants.

The publication of the 2008 TOP Reports marks the culmination of an ongoing local planning process led by AWIC that brought together community stakeholders interested in coordinating their efforts and maximizing their resources to take action on local labour market issues.

SECTION 5: ACTIONS TAKEN ON TRENDS IN 2007

The following is a listing of actions taken to address various trends identified in last year's TOP Report for the Algoma District.

1. Skilled Trade Shortages

- Skills Canada-Ontario in partnership with AWIC hosted the "Skills Work for Women" Networking Dinner that introduced 23 young women in high school to 10 female mentors who are currently working or studying in a skilled trade or technology field.
- The Algoma Workforce Investment Committee has planned for early February 2008 a Skilled Trades/Apprenticeship Forum of community stakeholders to promote and garner support to move forward with the formation of an Algoma Industrial Consortium (AIC) who would assume the role as sponsoring agent for the apprentices.
- Sault College held on November 21st, 2007 a successful "Apprenticeship Works" event where over 270 area high school students were exposed to careers in the skilled trades.
- The Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie with local school boards promoted to students the "Specialist High Skills Major" in construction and hospitality and tourism.

2. Workforce Shortages in many Sectors

- Algoma University College and Sault College in partnership with AWIC produced a CD-video and collateral material that markets the quality of life in our communities, including: cost of living, access to health care, public transportation, educational institutions, schools and demand for workers and job availability.
- Destiny Sault Ste Marie, in partnership with Sault College and other community stakeholders formed a steering committee and developed a working outline for a

MTCU Labour Market Partnership proposal to conduct a Labour Study that will include as key project objectives a comprehensive profile of the short and long term human resource issues facing the District, a gap analysis and an action plan to address the issues identified in the gap analysis.

- The City of Sault Ste. Marie is currently building a Web portal (discoverthesault.ca) that will be a primary source of information for those wishing to either relocate to Sault Ste. Marie from abroad or other regions of the country. The vision is to create the “one-stop” information source for the target market segments.
- Destiny Sault Ste. Marie has developed an immigration strategy that takes action to increase the diversity of our community to accelerate economic growth and help address the current labour shortages.
- In the fall of 2007 the Sault Community Career Centre launched “New To The Sault” to provide an information and referral service for newcomers to Sault Ste. Marie.

3. Youth Out-Migration

- The Enterprise Centre of Sault Ste. Marie delivered a “Summer Company” program on behalf of the Ministry of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, which encourages youth to develop entrepreneurial and self-employment skills.
- Sault College Job Connect, in partnership with the Algoma Workforce Investment Committee (AWIC), hosted a community “Careers of the Future” information sessions designed to assist students, teachers, parents, and guidance counsellors on the types of positions expected over the next 2 to 5 years. Presentations on behalf of Sault College of Applied Arts & Technology, North American Construction, Algoma District School Board and RCMP on the different kind of careers in their organizations were given to over 130 attendees.

4. Rural Urban Differences

After a five-year absence in the district, Sault College developed a college level post secondary Construction Pre-Trades Training program for delivery in East Algoma to prepare students for entry level careers in the area’s burgeoning cottage construction industry.

5. Shift in Key Employment Sector (Forestry Products Industry Closures/Decline)

Labour Adjustment committees in White River and Wawa formed to assist with worker adjustment due to the recent closures/lay-offs in the forest products sector.



Blind River Top Consultation Meeting,
September 2007

6. Marginalized Workforce

- Rotary Employment Partnership through Community Living Ontario have worked to encourage members to look at hiring “people with disabilities” through:
 - Awareness presentations to Rotary clubs throughout the district;

- Encouraging Rotary Clubs to adopt this initiative as “Vocational Pillar”;
- Dispelling the “myths” surrounding people with disabilities; and,
- Identifying “Champions” within Rotary Clubs.

SECTION 6: CURRENT TRENDS & ACTION PLAN

1. Trend-Skilled Trade Shortages

“There is a big shortage of skilled labour and not so many youth are looking to work in the trades. This has to be addressed by government, and make it known that trades work is good and meaningful”.

Most employers do not sign up recruits for the apprentice program, because often when the employee has finished their apprenticeship, they are hired by someone else”^{xv}

Priority Issue I

Not enough Employers are hiring apprentices, resulting in skilled trade shortages.

Proposed Action

Encourage & promote a region-wide “Apprenticeship/Technician Trades Program in partnership with First Nation Communities, area employers, unions and educational institutions that would allow employers to jointly train community apprentices. This program would allow the apprentice to gain formal training and valuable relevant work experience directly with industry through paid co-op placements, significantly reducing the time to train an apprentice.

Lead Partner

Algoma Workforce Investment Committee (AWIC)

Timelines

2 year duration-Spring 2008 through to 2010

Expected Outcomes

The Algoma Industrial Consortium will work with MTCU Apprenticeship Branch to register 30 new apprentices in the skilled trades.

Priority Issue II

The trades are not seen as a preferred career option by students, parents and teachers.

Proposed Action

As part of the planned comprehensive Labour Report for the District of Algoma, perform a skills assessment and training needs study to identify those skilled trades at risk and the skill trades workplaces are seeking. Identify training opportunities and promote these opportunities to students and their parents.

Lead Partner

Destiny Sault Ste. Marie

Timelines

2 year duration-Spring 2008 through to 2010

^{xv} *Apprenticeship Training: Lessons Not Learned, Results of CFIB Ontario Trades Training Survey, Canadian Federation of Independent Business, February 2007.*

Expected Outcomes

A comprehensive Labour Report for the District of Algoma will be produced that will identify and quantify where employment activity is growing and identify current and future workforce imbalance.

2. Trend-Workforce Shortages in many Sectors

Thousands of young people in Ontario don't have the necessary skills and education to find a good job, while employers complain they can't fill many positions because they can't find qualified people. In today's workplace, technological change means people's skills will become obsolete in just a decade, yet significant retraining is hard to find.^{xvi}

Priority Issue I

Employers are experiencing workforce shortages due to high retirement rates and high youth out-migration.

Proposed Action I

Complete the objectives of the planned Labour Report for the District of Algoma that include:

- a comprehensive profile of the short and long term human resource issues and challenges facing employers and workers in communities in the District of Algoma; and,
- a gap analysis that would serve as a basis for developing a workforce development action plan for employers, educational institutions, training providers and service providers and workers in communities in the District of Algoma.

Lead Partner

Sault College of Applied Arts & Technology

Timelines

Start date Spring 2008-1 year duration

Expected outcomes

A comprehensive Labour Report for the District of Algoma will be produced that will identify and quantify where employment activity is growing and identify current and future workforce imbalance.

Proposed Action II

Implement the Sault Ste. Marie Immigration Strategy & Plan

Lead Partner

Destiny Sault Ste. Marie

Timelines

January 2008 – March 2009

Expected Outcomes

Meet or exceed the measurable outcomes of the Sault Ste. Marie (SSM) Attraction and Retention (immigration) Growth Strategy

^{xvi} *The challenge Ahead: Averting a Skills Crisis in Ontario, Ontario's Workforce Shortage Coalition Report 200.7.*

Proposed Action III

Work with other communities in the District of Algoma to develop an Immigration Strategy.

Lead Partner

East Algoma Labour Force Advisory Committee (EALFAC)

Timelines

April 2008 – March 2009

Expected Outcomes

An immigration strategy for rural communities in the District of Algoma

3. Trend-Youth Out-migration in the District of Algoma

The rate of youth out-migration for the area has fallen to 13.4% in 2006 from 24.8% in 2001. The major reason was the rapid decline in the youth out-migration rate of the largest urban area, Sault Ste. Marie, whose population comprises over 70% of the total population the District of Algoma, saw its rate decline to 6.4%. Elliot Lake also saw its rate of youth out-migration decline but at 29.4%, it is still significantly higher than the average for Northern Ontario.

Priority Issues I

Youth are leaving the District of Algoma because of a perceived notion that there are few job opportunities resulting in entry level jobs not being filled

Proposed Action I

Develop a Youth Retention Strategy for the District of Algoma beginning with a series of youth focus group meetings throughout the district to determine why youth are leaving our communities.

Lead Partner Action I

Algoma Workforce Investment Committee & Sault College Job Connect.

Timelines

Spring & Fall 2008 Hold Youth Focus Group Meeting
December 2008-March 2009 Develop Youth Retention Strategy

Expected Outcomes

Comprehensive Youth Retention Strategy for the District of Algoma

Priority Issue II

Youth in communities outside of Sault Ste. Marie are leaving because of a lack of opportunities for post-secondary education resulting in workforce shortages.

Proposed Action

Develop and implement an employment/communications strategy targeted to area employers and youth that would a) identify and inventory area jobs, job descriptions and skill requirements and match training required to area to training providers b) move forward on a plan for youth worker and attraction, modelled on the Michigan Cool Cities concept.

Lead Partner

East Algoma Labour Force Advisory Committee (EALFAC), Team Sault Ste. Marie

Timelines

Start date-2year project duration

Expected Outcomes

- a) Inventory of jobs & employers and an Inventory of training providers
- b) A youth attraction and retentions strategy “Cool Cities” concept

4. Trend-There is an Aging Population/Workforce in the District

As Canada’s workforce ages and labour force declines, retraining mature workers is essential to the nation’s productivity and competitiveness. Workers over age 45 now account for the largest segment of the industrialized nations’ labour force.^{xvii}

Priority Issues I

An aging workforce and aging business owners will require employers to prepare for knowledge transfer and succession planning to avoid workforce shortages and lost productivity.

Proposed Action

Develop promote and deliver four Succession Planning Seminars, focused on ownership transfer, to small business owners and future owners in communities in the District of Algoma.

Lead Partner

Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie

Timelines

6 months - September 2008 to March 2009

Expected Outcomes

Succession Planning Seminar developed and delivered in 4 communities in the District of Algoma.

Priority Issue II

An aging workforce that remains working may limit the opportunities for youth

Proposed Action II

The planned Labour Report for the District of Algoma will gather analyze demographic data through an employer survey and will include recommendations on how best to address the issue.

Lead Partner

Algoma Workforce Investment Committee (AWIC)

Timelines

Start date Spring 2008, 1 year duration

Expected Outcomes

A labour report with recommendations on the age of the current workforce by sector.

5. Trend-Rural/Urban Differences in Communities

Priority Issue

The availability of post secondary education and training programs in rural areas puts rural residents and employers at a disadvantage when competing for employment or when training is needed to upgrade the skills of the workforce.

^{xvii} Ontario’s Looming Labour Shortage Challenges, Conference Board of Canada, September 2007.

Proposed Action

Develop a Web-based inventory of available training providers and programs available in the district and identify any training gaps.

The technology offered by the new Sault College Multi-media Centre will help meet the needs of the regional and rural business community which identifies training and upgrading employee skills as a major challenge to remaining competitive. This new facility will be used intensively to deliver structured programming and other college or community events that will contribute significantly to the social and economic well-being of northerners.

Lead Partner

East Algoma Labour Force Advisory Committee (EALFAC) & Sault College

Timelines

September 2008 to March 2009

Expected Outcomes

An inventory of training providers and programs in the area linked to the Sault Ste. Marie web-portal.

6. Trend-Shift in Key Employment Sector (Forestry Products Industry Closures/Decline)

Priority Issue

A major shift in the forestry products industry through worker layoffs and closures requires a process to assess skills, identify gaps and determine training needs in order to assist workers to take advantage of available job opportunities.

Proposed Action

Address the needs of the laid-off adult worker through an in-depth needs analysis to assess the skills of the available workforce vs. the skill requirements of area employers.

Partners: White River & Wawa Labour Adjustment Committees

Timelines

6 to 8 week project beginning February 2008

Expected Outcomes

A needs analysis report that will identify the skills of the laid-off workforce, an analysis of the skill sets required by local employers and recommendations how to address, if any, the skill gaps.

7. Trend-Marginalized Workforce

According to a survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2001, there were 1.5 million disabled individuals in Ontario, representing 13.5% of Ontario's population.^{xviii}

Priority Issue

Our marginalized workers (people with disabilities) are underutilized due to employer's perceived notion about their lack of abilities resulting in low employment rates.

Proposed Action

Host an education forum for employers to promote the hiring of persons with disabilities, the forum will be informative and interactive, creating a greater awareness and sensitivity about the different kinds of disabilities, workplace accommodations and benefits of hiring persons with disabilities.

Produce print & electronic promotional materials targeted to employers to consider hiring persons with disabilities. These materials would identify and dispel some of the "myths" surrounding hiring people with disabilities.

Partners

Community Living Algoma

Timelines

Fall 2008

Expected Outcomes

Increased community awareness among employers of the opportunities available to hire persons with disabilities. Increased opportunities for employment for persons with disabilities.

^{xviii} Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), 2001, released in September 2003.

SECTION 7: APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Community Profiles – Statistics Canada

Table 1 - Total Population - A Declining and Aging Population

Main Cities/Towns	2006 Census Population	2001 Census Population	Change from 2001 Census
Sault Ste Marie	74,948	74,566	0.50%
Elliot Lake	11,549	11,956	-3.40%
Blind River	3,780	3,969	-4.80%
Michipicoten(Wawa)	3,204	3,668	-12.60%
Thessalon	1,312	1,386	-5.30%
Hornepayne	1,209	1,362	-11.20%
Spanish	728	816	-10.80%
Dubreuilville	773	967	-20.10%
White River	841	993	-15.30%

Source: 2006 Canadian Census

Table 2 - Age Characteristics - Male/Female Population Similar to Ontario

Characteristics of the Population	Total	Male	Female
Total All Persons	117,460	57,190	60,275
Ages 0 to 14	17,830	9,255	8,570
Ages 15 to 64	77,340	37,650	39,690
Ages 65 and over	22,300	10,280	12,015
Ages 80 and over	5,110	1,905	3,210
Median age of the population			
% of population over age 15	89.2%	87.1%	91.1%

Source: 2006 Canadian Census

Table 3 - Language

Language(s) First Learned and Still Understood	Total
Total – All persons	116,075
English only	95,260
French only	8,010
Non-official Language	11,735
Both English and French	575
English and non-official language	470
French and non-official language	15
English, French and non-official language	10
Source: 2006 Canadian Census	

Table 4 - Immigration Characteristics

Immigration Characteristics	Total
Total - All persons	116,075
Canadian-born population	104,450
Foreign-born population	11,230
Immigrated before 1991	10,435
Immigrated between 1991 and 1995	260
Immigrated between 1996 and 2000	295
Immigrated between 2001 and 2006	235
Source: 2006 Canadian Census	

Table 5 - Visible Minority Status

Visible Minority Status	Total
Total population by visible minority groups	117,200
Visible minority population	1,400
Chinese	375
South Asian	210
Black	265
Filipino	120
Latin American	110
Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available April 2, 2008)	

Table 6 - Aboriginal Populations

Aboriginal Population	Total	
Total - All persons	117,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michipicoten First Nation • Batchewana First Nation • Garden River First Nation • Thessalon First Nation • Mississauga First Nation • Serpent River First Nation
Aboriginal identity population	10,810	
Non-Aboriginal population	106,385	
Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available January 15, 2008)		

Table 7 - Highest Level of Schooling

Education Levels in 2001, Algoma District	Total population 20 years and over by highest level of schooling			
	Ontario	% of Pop.	Algoma	% of Pop.
Less than grade 9	723,360	8.70%	9,610	11.00%
Grades 9 to 13	2,577,275	31.10%	31,585	36.20%
Without high school graduation certificate	1,402,505	16.90%	18,685	21.30%
With high school graduation certificate	1,174,770	14.20%	12,895	14.70%
Trades certificate or diploma	843,480	10.20%	12,245	14.00%
College	1,961,265	23.70%	19,765	22.60%
Without certificate or diploma	545,775	6.60%	5,565	6.30%
With certificate or diploma	1,415,490	17.10%	14,200	16.20%
University	2,176,780	26.30%	14,435	16.50%
Without degree	590,415	7.30%	4,755	5.40%
Without certificate or diploma	403,395	4.90%	3,525	4.00%
With certificate or diploma	187,020	2.30%	1,230	1.40%
With bachelor's degree or higher	1,586,365	19.20%	9,675	11.00%
TOTAL Population for Sample	8,282,160		87,640	
Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available March 4, 2008)				

Table 8 - Employment Statistics in 2001, Algoma District

	Unemployment Rate	Employment Rate	Participation Rate
Algoma	10.30%	51.70%	57.60%
Sault Ste. Marie	9.50%	53.80%	59.40%
Elliot Lake	13%	33.00%	38.00%
Blind River	13.50%	51.50%	59.50%
Michipicoten (Wawa)	9.20%	64.30%	70.80%
Ontario	6.10%	63.20%	67.30%

Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available March 4, 2008)

Table 9 - Earnings in 2000

Earnings in 2000	Total	Male	Female
All persons with earnings	57,320	29,735	27,585
Average earnings (all persons with earnings (\$))	28,428	35,406	20,908
Worked full year, full time	27,300	16,400	10,900
Average earnings (worked full year, full time (\$))	41,356	47,398	32,264

Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available May 1, 2008)

Table 10 - Algoma District

Industry	Total	Male	Female
Total - Experienced labour force	53,915	28,280	25,635
Agriculture and other resource-based industries	2,440	1,940	510
Manufacturing and construction industries	10,765	9,590	1,175
Wholesale and retail trade	7,865	3,725	4,145
Finance and real estate	2,050	750	1,300
Health and education	10,265	2,175	8,090
Business services	7,335	4,305	3,030
Other services	13,195	5,810	7,380

Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available March 4, 2008)

Table 11 – Labour Force

Occupation	Total	Male	Female
Total - Experienced labour force	53,915	28,280	25,635
Sales & Service Occupations	15555	5865	9690
Trades & transport	9515	8895	620
Business/Administration	7685	1775	5910
Social science & education	4545	1525	3020
Management	4390	2675	1715
Other	12225	7545	4680
Source: 2001 Canadian Census (2006 Census Available March 4, 2008)			

Appendix 2 - Participating Community Partners

Community Partners who participated in the 2007/08 TOP process:	
Active Living	
Algoma District School Board	
Algoma District Services Administration Board	Conseil d'administration des services du district d'algoma
Algoma Region Human Resources Association	
Algoma Steel Inc.	
Algoma University College	
Algoma Workforce Investment Committee	Comité d'investissement dans la main-d'œuvre d'Algoma
Blind River Business Retention and Expansion	
Blind River Development Corporation	
Blind River District Health Centre	Pavillon Santé du District de Blind River
City of Sault Ste. Marie	Ville de Sault Ste. Marie
Collège Boréal	Collège Boréal
Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie & Area	Société d'aide au développement des collectivités de Sault Ste. Marie
Community Quality Improvement	
Contact North	Contact Nord
Destiny Sault Ste. Marie	
Dubreuil Forest Products	
East Algoma Community Futures Development Corporation	Société d'aide au développement des collectivités d'Algoma-Est
Elliot Lake Secondary School	
ELNOS	
FedNor	
Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board	

Community Partners who participated in the 2007/08 TOP process:

Indian Friendship Centre	
Richmont Mines Inc.	Mines Richmont
John Howard Society	La Société John Howard du Sault Ste. Marie
Local Health Integration Network	
Lucidia Studios	
Member of Parliament	
Michipicoten First Nation	Premières Nations de Michipicoten
Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities	Ministère de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Miramar Design Studio	
Mississauga First Nation	Premières Nations de Mississauga
New Leaf Training	
North Channel Literacy Council	
Northern Development & Mines	Ministère du Développement du Nord et des Mines
NuComm International	
Ontario Works	Programme Ontario au travail
Public Utilities Corporation	
Rdee Ontario	Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de l'Ontario (RDEE)
Regional Employment Help Centre	
Safe Communities Partnership	
Sault & District Labour Council	
Sault Career Centre	
Sault College - Job Connect	Connexion employ de Sault College
Sault College of Applied Arts & Technology	
Sault College - East Algoma Job Connect	
Sault Ste. Marie Construction Association	
Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation	
Service Canada	
Social Services Sault Ste. Marie	
St. Basil's Secondary	
St. Mary's College	
Superior Children's Centre AMOEY	
Superior East Algoma Community Futures Development Corporation	Société d'aide au développement des collectivités de Supérieur-Est
Tenaris Canada	

Community Partners who participated in the 2007/08 TOP process:

Township of the North Shore	
Township of White River Economic Development Corporation	
United Steelworkers Union Local 2251	
Upper Lakes Environmental Research Network (ULERN)	
Wawa Economic Development Corporation	
YMCA Employment Centre & Services	Emploi YMCA

Appendix 3 - List of Meeting Dates

Meeting Dates	Organisation
April 5, 2007	Community Quality Improvement Forum
April 11, 2007	Northern Development Council Meeting
April 11, 2007	Blind River Business Retention & Expansion Meeting
April 17, 2007	Apprenticeship Meeting
April 18, 2007	Local Advisory Committee meeting
April 19, 2007	Recruitment, Retention Forum
April 28, 2007	Algoma Workforce Investment Committee Meeting
May 2, 2007	Business Retention & Expansion Meeting
May 10, 2007	Apprenticeship Meeting
May 10-12, 2007	Training Board Conference
May 16, 2007	Employment Network – Blind River
May 16, 2007	East Algoma Local Advisory Committee Meeting
May 18, 2007	Business Retention & Expansion Meeting
May 22-23, 2007	Superior East Strategic Planning Meeting
May 25, 2007	Immigration Meeting
May 30, 2007	Energy Forum Meeting
June 7, 2007	Conference Call Rick/Dan/Shawn
June 7, 2007	Worker Attraction Meeting
June 11, 2007	LMI Project
June 12, 2007	CED – Community Sustainability Workshop
June 15, 2007	Team Sault Ste. Marie Meeting
June 19, 2007	Aboriginal Apprenticeship Meeting
June 20, 2007	East Algoma Community Futures Development Corp Meeting
June 25, 2007	Innovation Centre – AUC Steve Morassut
June 28, 2007	Meeting with Lauri Cunningham – TOP planning
June 29, 2007	AWIC Committee Meeting
July 5, 2007	Meet with Jim Hopper – Lucidia
July 6, 2007	Meet with Caroline Hepburn – Sault College
July 10, 2007	Energy Meeting
July 12-13, 2007	Northern Boards Meeting – Sudbury
July 17, 2007	Immigration Strategy Meeting
July 23, 2007	Meet with Lauri Cunningham
July 24, 2007	TOP Planning Process Meeting

Meeting Dates	Organisation
July 26, 2007	MTCU Stakeholders Meeting
August 8, 2007	Meet with Rick Thomas – SSM Construction Association
August 21, 2007	Immigration Strategy Meeting
August 29, 2007	Northern Executive Directors Meeting – Sudbury
September 6, 2007	CQI Focus Group Meeting
September 10, 2007	Destiny Meeting – Report Coordination
September 18, 2007	Immigration Strategy Meeting
September 19, 2007	LMI Webinar Meeting
September 21, 2007	Team Sault Ste. Marie
September 22, 2007	Algoma District Municipal Association Meeting
September 24, 2007	Elliot Lake TOP Consultation Meeting
September 26, 2007	Blind River TOP Consultation Meeting
September 27, 2007	Wawa TOP Consultation Meeting
October 2, 2007	Immigration Strategy Meeting
October 4, 2007	Northern Boards Conference Call
October 11, 2007	Stakeholder Event Conference Call
October 12, 2007	Sault Ste. Marie TOP Consultation Meeting
October 16, 2007	Immigration Strategy Meeting
October 19, 2007	Team Sault Ste. Marie Meeting
October 22, 2007	Pre-test of site – Stakeholders Meeting
October 23, 2007	Site Meeting Discussion – Conference Call
October 24, 2007	Facilitation Material and Process Meeting – Conference Call
October 26, 2007	National Apprenticeship Coordinator Meeting
October 30, 2007	Ministry of Training, Colleges & University Stakeholders Video Conference
November 6, 2007	White River Adjustment Committee Meeting
November 20, 2007	Immigration Strategy Meeting
November 26, 2007	Energy Planning Conference
November 29, 2007	Skills Work! For Women Networking Dinner
December 11, 2007	Careers of the Future Information Session
December 12, 2007	Meeting with Lauri Cunningham – TOP Report Review
December 17, 2007	Budget Review
December 20, 2007	AWIC TOP Report Review

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