

# Issue Update

## Good News for Companies Seeking Carpenters and Crane Operators!

A new pilot program aimed at helping with the skill shortages in several industries was announced yesterday by The Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, the Honourable Colin Hansen, Minister of Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative and the Olympics for British Columbia, and the Honourable Olga Ilich, British Columbia's Minister of Labour and Citizen's Services. Under the new pilot, an Expedited Labour Market Opinion process, or E-LMO will be available for certain occupations. Two construction trades, carpenters and crane operators, are on the list for British Columbia and Alberta. Eligible employers who agree to meet program requirements will receive LMOs within three to five days.



Companies looking to hire foreign trained carpenters and crane operators can apply for eligibility. All that is required from the employer is proof that reasonable efforts have been undertaken to hire Canadians or permanent residents (for occupations under pressure such as carpenters and crane operator an ad on the National Job Bank will suffice), that there is no labour dispute in progress at the employer's workplace, and that the working conditions meet the minimum acceptable conditions for the occupation. Service Canada has developed regional wage data in order to determine whether the wages offered are acceptable.

In addition to the E-LMO pilot the ministers announced that a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the Federal and Provincial governments in order to share information with a view to strengthening protection of foreign workers. If companies fail to meet the requirements they will be excluded from this E-LMO pilot but are still able to apply under the regular LMO process.

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