Alberta Board of Skilled Trades
Newsletter - September 2026

Alberta Board of Skilled Trades: A year of leadership, engagement, and progress

Over the past year, the Alberta Board of Skilled Trades (ABST) has continued to strengthen Alberta's skilled trades system through industry engagement, strategic planning, and informed recommendations to government. Board members have worked with employers, training providers, industry associations, and community organizations to promote the skilled trades, address workforce needs, and support a responsive certification system.

Strengthening relationships with industry

Engagement with industry remained central to the ABST's work. Board members attended Apprenticeship and Industry Training Industry Engagement sessions in September 2025 and April 2026, helping maintain communication between the Board, government, and skilled trades partners.

The Board also supported efforts to increase industry participation in Alberta's consultation processes. This included promoting My Skilled Trades Network (MySTN) opportunities, distributing recruitment materials intended to encourage small-business participation, and supporting industry engagement sessions designed to build stronger relationships and clarify the Board's role.

In March 2026, the ABST Chair and Apprenticeship Delivery Support Services Executive Director Jackie Hammond met with organizations, conducted site visits, and attended annual general meetings involving Trade Winds to Success, the Alberta Construction Association, OpenCircle, Construction Labour Relations Alberta, Women Building Futures, the Christian Labour Association of Canada, the Building Trades of Alberta, and CAREERS: The Next Generation. These activities provided opportunities to hear directly from organizations involved in training, employment, workforce development, and the broader skilled trades system.

My Skilled Trades Network

Over the past year, the MySTN continued to strengthen industry engagement and support informed decision-making across Alberta's skilled trades system. As of September 2026, MySTN has grown to 1,433 members. In the last year, MySTN facilitated 178 consultations across 80 designated trades, with 435 distinct subject matter experts participating in 451 meetings and contributing to 41 surveys. Through these consultations, meetings, and surveys, MySTN provided a valuable forum for industry experts to share their knowledge and perspectives, helping ensure Alberta's skilled trades system remains responsive to workforce needs and emerging industry trends. Please see MySTN's accomplishments in its annual Year in Review here.

If you are a final-period apprentice or certified journeyperson in Alberta, we encourage you to join MySTN and share your expertise with industry, government, and fellow trades professionals. Your experience can help inform decisions that affect training, certification, and the continued growth of Alberta's skilled trades system.

Promoting skilled trades careers

ABST members participated in Apprenticeship Week activities across Alberta in September 2025, helping raise awareness of apprenticeship education and skilled trades careers. Members also attended events that connected students, apprentices, educators, and industry representatives.

Throughout the year, the ABST Chair represented Alberta through involvement with Skills Canada, the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, and the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship, including participation in conferences and related activities.

Board members also supported initiatives that introduced young people to skilled trades careers and strengthened the profile of the trades. These included the CAREERS High School Apprentice Golden Ticket event, the AIT Awards of Excellence honoring apprenticeship excellence and Trades Hall of Fame inductees, Skills Alberta events, the Calgary Weld Rodeo, and Try-A-Trade initiatives various locations across the province that encouraged realistic conversations with youth about careers in the trades.

In February 2026, Board representatives attended the grand opening of Lethbridge Polytechnic's Southern Alberta Collegiate Institute, recognizing an initiative that helps connect education, training, and skilled trades career pathways.

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Supporting workforce development

The ABST continued to focus on aligning training with labour-market and industry needs. This included engagement with several post-secondary institutions across Alberta regarding new skilled trades programming and attention to the transition of apprentices from technical training into workplace employment, including the completion of required safety and technical preparation.

The Board also considered ways to reduce barriers to entering the skilled trades. Activities documented during the year included work with CAREERS: The Next Generation to attract new apprentices, engagement with the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum regarding employer use of apprenticeship grants and collaboration with the Oil Sands Alliance on support intended to reduce the financial burden of pre-apprenticeship training for residents.

The ABST is also participating in the Government of Alberta's ongoing work to develop a journeyperson certification program for commercial truck driving. Board members volunteered to participate regularly in commercial-driving industry working-group meetings, supporting consideration of commercial driving as a new or emerging trade.

These efforts support the ABST's broader priority of attracting underrepresented populations, improving diversity and inclusion and ensuring that skilled trades careers are accessible to more Albertans.

Strategic planning and Board development

In November 2025, the ABST held its Strategic Planning Day to review its direction and establish priorities for its ongoing work. ABST reports can be found on Tradesecrets here.

The Board's priorities include promoting skilled trades as respected and sustainable careers, supporting a robust and responsive trades system, reducing barriers to participation, improving transparency and stakeholder communication, and ensuring that MySTN remains relevant and effective.

The ABST also completed its annual Board, member, and Chair evaluation processes in November 2025. These evaluations support ongoing Board effectiveness, accountability, and continuous improvement. In addition, the Board approved the submission of its *Strategic Plan Report Back to Minister 2024–25*. The Board's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan can be found here.

Late in 2025, the ABST welcomed two new members, Shaudia Ricketts (Head of Trades Strategy & Recruitment, North America for the Kiewit Corporation) and Ross Undershute (President of OpenCircle Group of Companies). Their experience and perspectives will be an asset to the Board's continuing work on behalf of Alberta's skilled trades system.

Looking ahead

The past year reflects the ABST's commitment to informed decision-making, meaningful industry engagement and continuous improvement. Through its recommendations, partnerships, and participation in events across Alberta, the Board has helped strengthen connections among government, industry, educators, employers, apprentices, and community organizations.

The ABST will continue working with its partners to promote skilled trades careers, respond to emerging workforce needs, and support a certification system that contributes to Alberta's economic and social prosperity.