

PHASE II - FINAL REPORT

**ABORIGINAL
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS
IN THE FOREST SECTOR**

INDUSTRIAL ADJUSTMENT SERVICES (IAS) COMMITTEE

AGREEMENT NUMBER NHQ-113

JULY 1992 TO DECEMBER 1994

FOREWORD

This is the final report from Phase II of a project done by the Industrial Adjustment Services (IAS) Committee, **Aboriginal Forestry Training & Employment Review (AFTER)**. This document builds on Phase I which created one of the most comprehensive overviews of national Aboriginal opportunities, needs and barriers in the Canadian forest sector to date. This document builds on the work done in Phase II by implementing many of the recommendations of Phase I with some modifications as agreed by the AFTER committee.

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Background

This IAS Committee, **Aboriginal Forestry Training & Employment Review (AFTER)**, was initiated by the National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) under the umbrella of their National Aboriginal Forest Strategy with the expressed purpose of "establishing a process of consultation, research and assessment, and planning, leading to the development of a long term strategic approach to Aboriginal human resource development in the forest sector".

As discussed in Phase I, "the main issue that AFTER is attempting to address is the large number of aboriginal people being displaced from their traditional lifestyles/living by resource extraction (primarily logging) and population encroachment. Most of these people are well suited for forestry employment because they live in areas where intensive forestry programs exist, and are often very familiar with the forests within their local areas. Other significant factors that shaped the need and context for this work included:

1. The development, and subsequent support from the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers at the National Forest Congress, of the National Aboriginal Forest Strategy by NAFA. Among other things, this strategy identified the need to increase the numbers of professional aboriginal resource managers at the most senior management level in the Canadian forest sector.
2. The growing public concern for sustainable development especially in the forest sector. The Bruntland report recognized that industrialized societies could learn a great deal from indigenous people's world view with respect to the human relationship to the environment. The net result of this recommendation, and many other's recognition of this basic truth, is that many government, industry, education, and environmental groups are working closer with aboriginal groups to learn more about this world view.
3. The recent political decisions to focus on resolving past grievances and current social conditions with Canada's aboriginal peoples through the settlement of land claims, joint resource management agreements, priority access to hunting and fishing resources, and the cabinet level Four Pillars strategy.
4. The critical shortage of skilled aboriginal people in the area of natural resource management.
5. Limited participation of aboriginal people in the forest industry, and all other natural resource sectors for that matter.

- 6. Absence of training programs at the worker, vocational, technical and professional levels, that incorporate the aboriginal world view, and are delivered with a focus on success of the aboriginal individual.

These factors can be summarized as a recognized and well documented dislocation, strong political and public support for the overall aboriginal cause, and a large demand for more technical and professional aboriginal people in the natural resources field. All, elements which necessitate the work done in this project."

Figure 1 shows how the AFTER project will be done in 3 phases. Phase I of the project used a consulting team to produce a report that documented a national overview of the; supply and demand for labour in the forest sector (highlighting aboriginal); current aboriginal participation in the forest sector; forestry training and education programs noting those that incorporate aboriginal content; barriers to aboriginal participation in the forest sector; and provided a number recommendations to increase aboriginal participation in the training, education and employment areas of the forest sector. This report summarizes work to the end of Phase II which addressed the recommendations raised in Phase I.

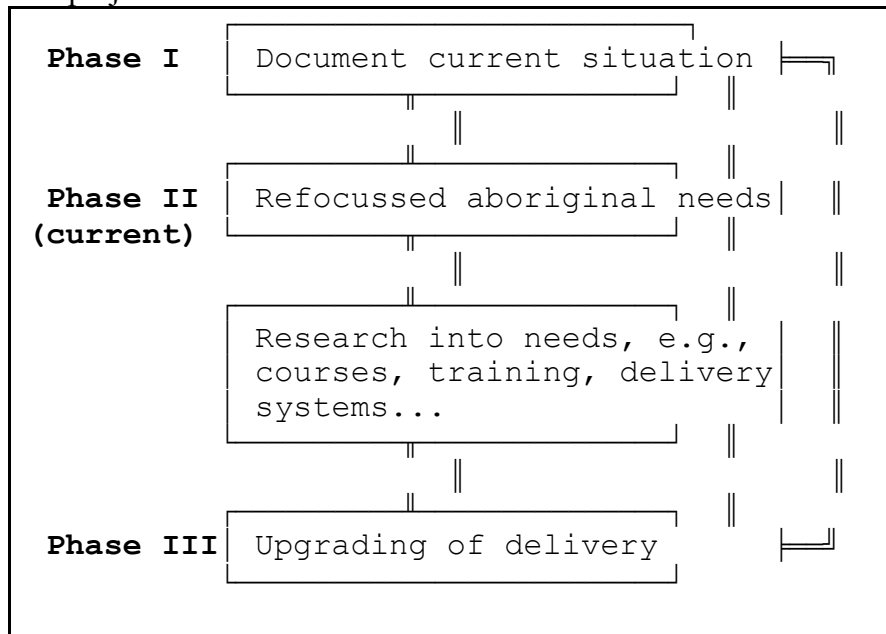


Figure 1: AFTER Project Phases

The original project was conceptualized and initiated by NAFA, and submitted to Industrial Adjustment Services of the Centre for Employment and Immigration Canada (CEIC) and Natural Resources Canada. Both agencies responded with funds to carry out Phase I and Phase II of the project, with agreement in principle to support Phase III contingent on the work of Phase II.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for Phase II, as defined in the IAS Agreement included in Appendix 3, are as follows:

A. Establish a working network of universities and technical colleges

1. Identify universities and technical colleges which have, or that are interested in, incorporating Aboriginal forest values into their programming (done in Phase I).
2. Develop and deliver a recruitment program which will bring other universities and technical colleges into the working network.

B. Modify existing university and technical college programs.

1. Develop a curriculum framework (principles, learning guidelines, values, structure, delivery methods) that incorporates Aboriginal forest values, and develop a generalized curriculum based on this framework (specific course content that can be modified for different local conditions)..
2. Define the educational culture in which Aboriginal students are most likely to succeed based on existing successful programs (mostly done in Phase I).
3. Incorporate elements of the generalized curriculum framework and/or curriculum into the working network's programs.
4. Modify learning environment and/or delivery methods and style in the working network's programs to incorporate elements of the educational culture defined in step 2.
5. Establish contact with provincial ministries responsible for post-secondary education to assist in curriculum development and delivery.

C. Promote individual Aboriginal interest in pursuing further forestry education.

1. Pursue means to encourage forest technologists to continue on to forestry degrees including, but not limited to;
 - modify existing working network programs to promote this avenue;
 - establish a national funding program to promote professional development in this area; and
 - develop and distribute materials to all Aboriginal forest technologists in Canada, which outline why they should pursue a degree and outline their choices (programs in the working network).
2. Pursue means to encourage Aboriginal students in high schools and vocational schools to pursue further forestry training at the professional, technical and worker levels including, but not limited to;
 - develop a network of high schools and vocational schools that will assist in promoting this cause;
 - develop materials for this network; and
 - integrate these materials into the network's career counselling program and assist individual schools to get these materials to their aboriginal students if necessary.
3. Promote the establishment of an organization of Aboriginal resource managers and technicians to encourage information sharing and professional development in this field.

D. Promote Aboriginal forestry understanding and participation throughout the forest sector.

1. Establish a network of organizations interested in Aboriginal forestry.
2. Continue developing the Phase I database on aboriginal participation in forestry.
3. Prepare and distribute, to Aboriginal communities and organizations, materials based on Phase I research and other sources that describe the opportunities available in Aboriginal forest management, the special skills required to implement management plans, the Aboriginal land ethic, the importance of forest

management to Aboriginal people, approaches to developing new working arrangements, and the availability and special skills of the Aboriginal labour force.

4. Prepare and distribute, within the forest sector at large, materials based on Phase I research and other sources that describe the importance of forest management to Aboriginal peoples, approaches to developing new working arrangements, and the availability and special skills of the Aboriginal labour force.

E. Promote increased Aboriginal employment and skill development in the forest sector.

1. Prepare a syllabus of retraining requirements of Aboriginal people already in the forest sector.
2. Develop courses for a forest worker training programs that could be taught through various ad hoc training programs.
3. Institute training and education funding programs to deliver these courses at the community levels.
4. Institute this worker training into existing major forest companies.
5. Working with individual forest industry companies and/or their associations, carry out an investigation of the barriers to hiring Aboriginal people in the forest industry and develop means to overcome these barriers.
6. Establish contact with provincial ministries responsible for labour and employment equity to coordinate the development and delivery of programs to encourage more Aboriginal employment in the forest sector.

F. Establish continuing support and coordination for these initiatives.

1. Develop Terms of Reference and establish membership of a "First Nations Human Resource Develop Committee" that will coordinate this program. This committee should represent a cross section of First Nations and other training institutions, forest industry, and elders. This could be an ongoing extension of the Aboriginal Human Resource Planning and Development Committee.

2. Secure funding for Phase II and III from existing funding sources and other federal, provincial, industry and other organizations.
3. Institute other changes to existing government programs to focus on training and employment in Aboriginal forestry, and to support any other activities of this committee.

These Terms of Reference were developed on the basis of the Phase II recommendations, input from the AFTER committee and the ongoing work and input of NAFA.

Committee Meetings

The Phase II AFTER Committee had 14 members as summarized in Appendix 1. Committee executive included the Chairperson, Mr. Garry Merkel, and the Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. Harry Bombay (NAFA). These 2 individuals carried over their delegated signing authority for Committee funds as authorized by the Committee.

Four committee meeting were held to plan and supervise the overall project. The general purpose and results of each of these meetings were:

January 26 & 27, 1993: This was a full committee meeting held in the Abitibi Price offices in Toronto, Ontario. The purpose was to review the results of Phase I, finalize the financial and contractual aspects for Phase II, and develop a work plan for Phase II.

February 19, 1993: This was a full committee meeting held in the Abiti Price offices in Toronto, Ontario. The purpose of this meeting was to finalize the Phase II work plan, and to review progress on tasks identified in the previous meeting. An important policy that the committee ratified was, "all future AFTER meetings will be held in regions that require substantial knowledge of national Aboriginal forestry initiatives, and will include a workshop component for all interested parties."

February 2 & 3, 1994: This was a full committee meeting held in at the Forestry Canada offices and Laval University in Quebec City, Quebec. The first day was a workshop on various national Aboriginal forestry initiatives, as per the policy ratified at the previous meeting, and the second day was an operational AFTER committee meeting (review progress).

December 1 - 3, 1994: This was a full committee meeting held at the University of Toronto in

Toronto, Ontario. The first day was a committee meeting to finalize Phase II and discuss a preliminary Phase III work plan. The second day was a meeting with the U. of T. Faculty of Forestry to discuss means to increase Aboriginal participation in the faculty. The third day was an open workshop addressing increased Aboriginal participation in the University's Faculty of Forestry.

Minutes for each of these meetings are included in Appendix 2.

The first meeting for Phase III will be held as soon as funds are in place. The purpose will be to continue work on a detailed work plan for the next phase. Note that much of this work was done at the last meeting (Dec. 1, 1994).

Results Achieved

Specific results that were achieved in Phase II through the functioning of the AFTER Committee included:

1. Improved networking of individuals and institutions working in the area of Aboriginal natural resources education & training, and expansion of this network into other areas including industry, labour and government.
2. Increased awareness of the need and support of this "cause" in the Aboriginal, industry, labour and government communities.
3. Translation of the Phase I report and distribution of over 500 copies to Quebec plus an extended audience of industry and post-secondary natural resource training institutions.
4. Preparation, and national distribution of a number of materials to promote aboriginal students to pursue careers in natural resources including advertisements, brochures, posters, leaflets, etc. Samples and distribution lists are included in Appendix 4.
5. Creation of an Aboriginal forestry database outlining industry and education organizations involved in Aboriginal forestry across Canada. This database will be available for public distribution shortly.
6. Increased effort by 4 major Canadian universities to increase Aboriginal participation in

their forestry programs including:

- i) Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario who recently released a proposal entitled "**FORESTS, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLE: A FRAMEWORK FOR PARTNERSHIP AND ACTION**". This was prepared largely as a result of Lakehead's participation with the AFTER initiative.
 - ii) The University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C. recently hired a First Nations Liaison Coordinator, Mr. Gordon Prest, largely as a result of their association with AFTER and the Chair, Mr. Garry Merkel.
 - iii) The University of Toronto in Toronto, Ontario held an Aboriginal Forestry Orientation field camp for its students, and has hosted 2 workshops to explore means to increase aboriginal participation in their forestry faculty. These initiatives were organized in partnership with AFTER.
 - iv) The Laval University in Quebec City, Quebec hosted a provincial workshop (in partnership with AFTER) on national Aboriginal forestry issues, and are discussing increased Aboriginal participation in their faculty with the AFTER committee.
7. The AFTER committee hosted 2 workshops, one Laval University and one at the University of Toronto. The first workshop provided the forestry community in Quebec with an overview of aboriginal forestry and land issues on a national level. The second workshop provided the University of Toronto with a number of specific recommendations to increase aboriginal participation in their Forestry Faculty.
 8. Created a working link to the Model Forest Network and attended their operational meeting in May/93 to discuss means to improve Aboriginal employment and participation in that initiative.
 9. Addressed the issue of Aboriginal employment and training at a number of key meetings across the country (list included in Appendix 7).
 10. Secured support from Pathways to hire a dedicated Aboriginal forester, Ms. Peggy Smith, at the NAFA office to support the work of the AFTER committee.

11. Secured a library of natural resource training institutions in North America which includes an emphasis on those including Aboriginal programming. This will be catalogued and kept at NAFA for further work and public use.
12. Developing a full list of scholarship opportunities for Aboriginal students entering natural resources training, have secured one scholarship, \$500 from the Toronto Dominion Bank to date (we are widening our network for this program).

Another less tangible, but still important, result includes the increased funding allocated to projects related to Aboriginal natural resources education & training. This is largely due to the overall momentum in this whole area, which has significantly improved through the work of the AFTER Committee.

Recommendations

Phase I identified a number of issues regarding Aboriginal participation in the national forest sector including;

- a disproportionately high percentage of young Aboriginal students entering the career years;
- decreasing activity in the national forest products market;
- increasing activity in the resource management/silviculture areas;
- decreased employment due to restructuring of the industry and increased mechanisation;
- highly competitive forest products market;
- discrimination by industrial employers;
- lack of flexibility or understanding of Aboriginal versus industrial needs from the forest;
- rigid and often slow federal forestry funding programs;
- difficult to access crown lands and resources;
- most vocational jobs tend to be short term which restricts the individual's ability to build a long term livelihood;
- very few Aboriginal role models;
- low Aboriginal self esteem and productivity experienced by industrial employers;
- high start-up costs for normally short term employment;
- absence of career objectives in training programs;
- centralized, versus rural, distribution of training delivery;
- lack of awareness of career possibilities;
- shortage of Aboriginal instructors;

- entrance requirements are often restricting to the disproportionately high Aboriginal school drop-out rates;
- many areas have limited, if any, Aboriginal involvement in curriculum design; and
- limited involvement of community members and incorporation of an Aboriginal world view in training and education programs.

Many of these issues are being addressed through a number of other advocacy activities by various Aboriginal forestry groups (e.g., NAFA, B.C. First Nations Forestry Council, Indian Forestry Development Program (IFDP), Intertribal Forestry Association of B.C. (IFABC)).

Phase II confirmed these issues, but also raised a number of additional issues related to the process to increase Aboriginal employment in the forest sector. This proved more difficult than hoped due to the diffuse nature of the industry, and because the committee chose to focus its primary efforts in the education and training area. There were a number of recommendations developed at the December meeting of the AFTER committee to carry on with the work of Phase II and to address new issues that arose during Phase II. These are outlined in the proposed Phase III work plan included in Appendix 8.

Public Adjustment Measures

A number of public adjustment measures have been initiated to promote successful Aboriginal participation in the natural resource training area. These are outlined in detail in the previous section, **Results Achieved**. AFTER's mandate was address the relatively low Aboriginal participation in the employment and training aspects of the forest sector as a means to offset impacts of this industry on their traditional livelihoods. The committee's strategy was to focus our efforts on increasing the number of trained Aboriginals in the field, because it appeared that there was a large employment demand in this area but a serious shortage of qualified individuals.

Observations and Conclusions

The AFTER Committee contains one of the most qualified group of individuals in the Aboriginal training and employment field from across Canada. Each individual contributed to the success of the group in addressing the committee's mandate. The efforts of this group are beginning to materialize in terms of increased effort by post-secondary training institutes and we expect that the numbers of trained Aboriginal natural resource managers will rise dramatically in the coming

few years as the results of our promotion, support to post-secondary institutions and scholarship program begin to take hold.

This type of work always has a number of operational challenges including;

- the extremely large geographical area being addressed;
- the diverse nature of the Aboriginal community;
- the lack of current, reliable, detailed information on almost every aspect that we were addressing;
- limited funds to support a broader consultation process, i.e., travel and community costs;
- a large Committee (14 members) made meetings and other logistics difficult to organize; and
- defining and limiting the scope of work to something realistic given the holistic nature of Aboriginal forestry and the complexity of the issues to be addressed.

We addressed these obstacles by: utilizing committee members as much as possible and limiting our use of outside professionals; narrowing our focus to increasing access and success in the training and education and securing funds to hire a full time support person.

This work represents one of the first steps in what promises to be a long process. Changing social patterns on a large scale is a complex process, especially when the people needed to assist with this change have to be developed first. Our observations tell us that there is immense opportunity and demand for Aboriginal employees in most aspects of the forest sector. However, our ability to capitalize on these opportunities is severely limited by the lack of trained Aboriginal natural resource managers. Our primary focus during Phase II has been to create the means to increase the numbers and success ratios of Aboriginal students attending post-secondary natural resources training programs.

Phase III will continue with this work, and will also begin to address means to increase the number of Aboriginals employed in the trades and operations areas of the forest sector. There are a large number of community members who do not want to become technical natural resource managers, and who would rather pursue careers in a trade or in an operations. Addressing these needs will also assist with our overall goal of increasing the numbers attending post-secondary training as the idea that natural resource education is important becomes deeper enshrined in the individual communities.

On a final note, I (Garry Merkel, Chair, AFTER) would like to say that this initiative has been a pleasure to have the honour to be involved with. Foundations are being built, mountains are beginning to move and broad social change in Aboriginal natural resource management is at a threshold. AFTER has been a key element of this trend and could easily be a primary driving

force in the changes to come. Based on my experience with all aspects of the forest sector across this country, I know that many of my colleagues in the industry, academia, First Nations, government and other areas will be extremely grateful as the Aboriginal community builds its expertise and capacity to become full partners in forest lands management. Reduced conflict, increased social harmony, improved standards of land care and a healthier economy are some of the benefits we can look forward to. With continued optimism and hopes for success. . .

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Appendix 1 Project Players

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CEIC Pathways Program