



PRINCE ALBERT, SK – October 17, 2012 -- Yesterday the Government of Saskatchewan released the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth. Importantly it identified labour and skill shortages as a critical issue affecting Saskatchewan’s future prosperity. It further outlined a series of targets and approaches to ensuring Saskatchewan has the skills and people it needs for the decade ahead. Merit Saskatchewan Executive Director Karen Low congratulated Premier Wall and the government saying “We appreciate the government’s clear recognition of the problem and their proposals for practical and credible solutions”.

This past July, Merit commissioned Abingdon Research to conduct a survey of Saskatchewan contractors regarding the supply of skilled labour in the province. The study noted:

- 74% of respondents were unable to hire a journeyperson within 3 months and 42% were unable to hire one at all
- 85% of companies report having at least some difficulty in retaining employees
- 81% believe this is as bad as or worse than any labour shortage in the province’s history

Ms. Low noted “the government’s commitment to improve graduation rates for aboriginals and to land more immigrants through the Provincial Nominee Program tells me our message has gotten through”.

A recent Conference Board of Canada study argued that by 2015 the labour force growth would slow to approximately 0.5%. This projected shortfall of new workers entering the Saskatchewan workforce would harm economic growth.

About Merit

Merit Contractors Association, founded in 1988, is the only open shop association in Saskatchewan. They provide human resource support for businesses large and small. The association is administered by an elected Board of Directors, ensuring that the direction and initiatives undertaken by Merit Saskatchewan are member driven. Merit Saskatchewan is part of a Canada-wide network of Merit associations and a founding member of Merit Canada. Merit is proud to support the open shop construction community, over 80% of the contractors in the province and believes success should be based on merit.

***The complete copy of the survey results is available upon request**

To arrange an interview with Karen Low, or for more information, please contact:

Wendy Walker

Consultant, Fleishman-Hillard

(403) 813-4186