

RESEARCH REPORT



Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada

HOUSING ISSUES OF SEASONAL WORKERS IN CANADA

ANALYSIS REPORT

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Housing Issues Facing Seasonal Workers

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

This study documents the nature of the housing issues seasonal workers face across Canada. The researchers reviewed literature, analyzed data and interviewed industry sector councils and other industry organizations to collect information about seasonal workers and their housing issues.

DEFINING SEASONAL

Seasonality refers to more-or-less-consistent fluctuations in economic activity and labour market conditions within a year and from year to year. It results from factors, such as the weather, harvest times for crops and fish species and institutional factors, such as school terms and holidays. This study focuses on seasonal changes in employment.

Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Survey of Labour Income and Dynamics (SLID) ask respondents if their jobs are permanent or seasonal. The surveys identify seasonal workers and their characteristics and make it possible to calculate seasonal employment as a proportion of total employment.

DATA ISSUES AND LIMITATIONS

The findings of this study are limited. The most important limitation is the use of LFS and SLID data to estimate the number of seasonal workers and identify their demographics and characteristics. The LFS and SLID provide data on large occupational and industry groups. Limitations on the statistical reliability of the survey data meant that it could not be used for information on specific occupations and industry sub-sectors. The researchers interviewed industry experts to fill this information gap.

The study's data and information sources did not provide information on items of interest such as the relationship of labour mobility and standard of living aspirations to the housing situation of seasonal workers. There was no information on the relationship between the

skills transferability of seasonal workers and their housing circumstances. There was limited information about work incentives for seasonal workers and the relationship between incentives and housing issues.

The lack of literature dealing with housing for seasonal workers also limited the study. Existing studies focus primarily on seasonal employment as an economic or labour supply management problem. They pay little attention to the working and living conditions of seasonal employees.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SEASONAL WORKFORCE

SLID data estimates that seasonal workers made up 4.8 per cent—589,000 workers—of the total Canadian workforce.

The most highly seasonal occupational groups are:

1. Primary industry occupations, including farm workers, loggers and fishermen.
2. Art, culture, recreation and sport occupations, including musicians, actors and film camera operators.
3. Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations, including carpenters, electricians and truck drivers.

The occupational analysis shows that a large number of seasonal workers are in sales and service, which includes occupations ranging from cooks to tour guides to teacher assistants.

The most seasonal industry groups are:

1. Fishing, hunting and trapping.
2. Forestry and logging.
3. Agriculture.

The construction industry has the largest number of seasonal workers.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SEASONAL WORKERS

The research study compares the characteristics of seasonal and permanent workers. The study compares age; gender; household composition; education; skill levels; job tenure and duration; number of employers; and degree of unionization. Some key findings are:

- A high percentage of workers under 25 are seasonal workers. LFS and SLID data show that in 2004 and 2005 about 43 per cent—253,270 people—of the seasonal workforce was under 25 years old.
- Males make up between 60 and 65 per cent of the seasonal workforce compared to about one-half of permanent workers.
- There is no significant difference between the family sizes of permanent and seasonal workers.
- Education and skill levels of seasonal workers are significantly below those of permanent workers.
- Permanent employees work in their jobs longer than seasonal workers and a higher per-centage of permanent workers work for one employer.
- The percentage of unionized seasonal workers is significantly less than the percentage of unionized permanent workers.

The study concluded that a high proportion of seasonal workers fall into four overlapping groups:

1. Young—under 25 years—workers.
2. Workers in primary industries.
3. Construction workers.
4. Tourism workers.

Proportionally, the seasonal workforce is higher in rural areas than in urban areas and higher in Atlantic Canada than in the rest of the country. Seasonality is particularly acute in Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island. Although seasonality is greatest in rural and Atlantic Canada, there is a significant degree of seasonality in the urban labour force. One study included in the literature review estimated that 57 per cent of all seasonal workers in the country live in urban areas.

An interesting finding is that there is no consistent, overall pattern for seasonal employment across the country and within provinces. For some industries and regions, there are high levels of employment in winter months; in others, employment is highest in the summer.

The study found conflicting evidence about the growth or decline of seasonality. The literature review and interviews show that seasonality has declined over the past 20 to 25 years. But LFS data for the years 1997 to 2005 show that seasonality, as a percentage of total employment, has remained steady.

The literature review and data collection reports are convincing evidence that seasonal workers have significantly lower earnings than permanent workers. Analysis of LFS data for 2003 shows that seasonal workers in Canada earned 28 per cent less than permanent workers.

The analysis also shows that the percentage of seasonal workers who relied on Employment Insurance (EI) was much higher than the percentage for permanent workers. Research by de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent¹ (p. 19-22) has found that:

- Men make up more than two-thirds of seasonal workers who have claimed EI two or three times; and
- Seasonal workers who relied on EI the most often tend to be older than other types of EI claimants.

The research shows that most seasonal workers received EI after being laid off. But EI use varied significantly by region—being significantly higher in Atlantic Canada. The availability of job opportunities and differences in EI eligibility rules by region were factors explaining the regional differences. Further, De Raaf *et al* conclude that their findings dispel the myth that all seasonal workers are frequent EI claimants. These findings show that while most seasonal workers regularly rely on EI, a significant proportion do not.

Foreign guest workers account for a significant proportion of seasonal workers. The literature review shows that the international movement of migrant workers has increased in recent years and is expected to rise further. Migrant workers have been especially important in the agriculture industry in Canada for many years.

1 de Raaf, Shawn, Kapsalis, Costa and Vincent, Carole, “Seasonal Employment and Reliance on Employment Insurance: Evidence From the SLID”, *SRDC Working Paper Series 03-04*, June 2003

HOUSING ISSUES

Research conducted for this project indicates that availability, affordability and adequacy are the most important housing issues faced by seasonal workers. The definitions of affordability and adequacy used in this report are:²

- Affordable dwellings cost less than 30 per cent of before-tax household income.
- Adequate dwellings are those reported by their residents as not requiring any major re-pairs. In addition, they have enough bedrooms for the size and makeup of the household as set by the National Occupancy Standards³ (NOS).

A definition for availability could not be found in the literature reviewed for this study. It is defined in this study as housing that is accessible, obtainable and adequate for seasonal workers. In this context, availability implies that housing is affordable.

There is a great deal of variation in the seasonal workforce. The study shows that housing issues are fundamentally different for:

- Domestic seasonal workers who work and live in the same community.
They work and live in the same community and own or rent permanent homes. Employers do not provide accommodations.
- Domestic seasonal workers who migrate to their region of work.
These workers require temporary accommodations. They face fundamentally different issues with the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing than domestic workers. Some employers either provide or subsidize temporary housing.
The level and form of employer involvement in providing and subsidizing temporary housing depends on a number of factors and varies significantly by industry and even from firm to firm within industries. As a result, it is not possible to generalize about the housing situation of mobile workers.
- Foreign migrant seasonal workers.
These workers come to Canada through guest worker programs overseen by governments. They face housing issues similar to those of domestic workers, but programs that bring these workers to Canada sometimes set out employer responsibilities for housing.

It is noteworthy that, overall, tourism representatives say that housing is a significant issue for seasonal workers at hotels, resorts and recreational facilities despite employer efforts to provide accommodations.

CONCLUSIONS

Some important conclusions about the housing issues faced by seasonal workers can be drawn from the study.

A high proportion of seasonal workers is young

Almost one-half of seasonal workers are under 25. Policies to improve housing for seasonal workers should focus on young people. The diversity in the circumstances of young people affects their housing needs and circumstances.

For example, students are in a much different situation than non-students. Some students live at home; others travel to remote locations and need temporary accommodations.

This diversity makes it difficult to design housing policies for all young people in the seasonal workforce.

Low-income workers face housing issues

Seasonal workers, who earn low or very low incomes, either because of the industries they work in, the nature of their jobs or their low skills, face serious housing issues. These situations arise to a greater degree in rural areas and Atlantic Canada. Availability, affordability and adequacy of housing may be a problem both for non-mobile workers in rural communities and mobile workers having to find temporary housing away from their home areas. This housing issue reflects low incomes and social marginality, not seasonal work itself.

The role of employers

There can be housing problems if employers actively recruit seasonal workers but neither provide nor ensure that there is housing or provide sub-standard housing. Although the research found no systematic or compelling evidence, in remote construction, mining or forestry work sites or in seasonal agricultural, fishing or tourism operations, employers may not live up to basic responsibilities to provide safe, healthy and affordable housing.

Immigration and economic growth lead to housing issues

The literature review and interviews suggest that the most serious availability happens when seasonal expansion of the workforce coincides with general population growth. Examples are peak season in tourism regions with a limited housing supply, or in economic

2 See: "2001 Census Housing Series: Issue 4 Revised Canada's Metropolitan Areas", *Research Highlight*, CMHC Socio-economic Series 04-008, May 2004, p. 6.

3 According to the National Occupancy Standards, enough bedrooms means one bedroom for each cohabitating adult couple; unattached household member 18 years of age and over; same-sex pair of children under age 18; and additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite sex siblings under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e., a unit with no bedroom).

Research Highlight

Housing Issues Facing Seasonal Workers

boom regions such as Fort McMurray, Alta. If there is a shortage of housing generally, seasonal workers may be more vulnerable than other groups seeking housing. They may have lower incomes, they may not be landlords' preferred tenants, or they may not be a priority for municipal authorities or even for employers trying to house their permanent labour force.

Initiatives to address housing issues

Evidence shows that when population growth and peak housing demand combine to pose serious housing problems for seasonal workers, industry leaders and local government authorities are very aware of the issue and make efforts to come up with solutions. In Alberta, for example, employers are developing long-distance commuting systems to meet their labour supply needs without putting further pressure on local housing stock.

Policy implications associated with the diversity of the seasonal workforce

It is very clear from the data that the category "seasonal worker" includes several distinct sub-categories. The differences between the sub-categories are in most cases more significant than the similarities. That makes it impossible to describe set of housing issues that is common to the overall seasonal labour force.

There are housing issues, but they are diverse and disparate, reflecting local housing market and local labour market conditions, not an overall condition for a clearly defined and homogenous segment of the working population.

Overall policy implications of the analysis of this report

This report raises the question of whether housing quality and adequacy issues should be addressed through policy and programs specific to seasonal workers, or whether they should be approached as general housing regulations, enforcement of the building code and other health and safety regulations.

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Housing Research at CMHC

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Problèmes de logement des travailleurs saisonniers

OBJECTIFS ET MÉTHODES

La présente étude vise à présenter des données sur la nature des problèmes de logement que connaissent les travailleurs saisonniers partout au pays. Les chercheurs ont étudié la documentation pertinente, analysé des données et interviewé les membres des conseils sectoriels de l'industrie et d'autres organismes en vue de recueillir des renseignements sur les travailleurs saisonniers et leurs problèmes de logement.

DÉFINITION DE SAISONNIER

La saisonnalité désigne les fluctuations plus ou moins constantes de l'activité économique et des conditions du marché du travail qui se produisent en un an ou d'une année à l'autre. Ces écarts tiennent à divers facteurs, notamment au climat, aux périodes de récolte des cultures et des espèces de poissons, ainsi qu'aux facteurs institutionnels, comme la période scolaire ou les vacances.

La présente étude porte principalement sur les variations saisonnières de l'emploi. Dans le cadre de l'Enquête sur la population active (EPA) et de l'Enquête sur la dynamique du travail et du revenu (EDTR), Statistique Canada a demandé aux répondants de préciser s'ils occupaient un emploi permanent ou saisonnier. Les résultats de ces enquêtes permettent, d'une part, d'identifier les travailleurs saisonniers et de décrire leurs caractéristiques et, d'autre part, d'évaluer la proportion des emplois saisonniers par rapport au nombre total d'emplois.

LIMITES DES DONNÉES ET PROBLÈMES CONNEXES

Les résultats découlant de cette étude ont une portée limitée. Leur plus importante limite concerne l'utilisation des données de l'EPA et de l'EDTR pour estimer le nombre de travailleurs saisonniers et déterminer leur profil démographique et leurs caractéristiques. Ces deux enquêtes fournissent des données sur de grands groupes

professionnels et industriels. À cause des limites posées par le degré de fiabilité statistique des résultats de l'enquête, les données n'ont pu être utilisées pour obtenir des renseignements sur des occupations particulières ou sur des sous-secteurs d'activité. Dans le but de combler cette lacune, les chercheurs ont interviewé des spécialistes du travail.

Ni les résultats de l'étude, ni les sources d'information n'ont fourni de renseignements sur des points d'intérêt, comme le lien entre la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre et les attentes quant au niveau de vie en regard de la situation de logement des travailleurs saisonniers. Il n'y a aucune information sur la relation entre la transférabilité des compétences des travailleurs saisonniers et leurs conditions de logement. Par ailleurs, on n'a pas beaucoup de renseignements sur les mesures d'incitation au travail visant les employés saisonniers ainsi que sur la relation entre ces incitatifs et les problèmes de logement.

Un autre facteur a limité la portée des résultats de l'enquête : le manque de documentation sur le logement des travailleurs saisonniers. La plupart des études réalisées portent sur les enjeux économiques du travail saisonnier et les problèmes liés à la gestion de l'offre de main-d'œuvre, de sorte que très peu d'importance est accordée aux conditions de travail et de logement de ces travailleurs.

DESCRIPTION DE LA MAIN-D'ŒUVRE SAISONNIÈRE

Selon les données de l'EDTR, on estime que les travailleurs saisonniers, au nombre de 589 000, représentaient 4,8 % de la population active du Canada.

Les groupes professionnels suivants affichent le plus haut niveau de saisonnalité :

1. Métiers associés aux industries primaires, notamment les ouvriers agricoles, les bûcherons et les pêcheurs.

2. Emplois associés aux secteurs des arts, de la culture, des loisirs et des sports, dont les musiciens, les comédiens et les cadres.
3. Gens de métier, conducteurs, opérateurs d'équipement et travailleurs de domaines connexes, comme les charpentiers, les électriciens et les camionneurs.

D'après l'analyse des métiers et professions, c'est dans les secteurs des ventes et des services, ce qui englobe notamment les cuisiniers, les guides touristiques et les aides-enseignants, que travaille la majeure partie de la main-d'œuvre saisonnière.

Les secteurs suivants présentent le plus haut niveau de saisonnalité :

1. Pêche, chasse et piégeage.
2. Foresterie et exploitation forestière.
3. Agriculture.

C'est dans le secteur de la construction que l'on a relevé le nombre le plus élevé de travailleurs saisonniers.

PROFIL DÉMOGRAPHIQUE ET CARACTÉRISTIQUES DES TRAVAILLEURS SAISONNIERS

L'étude dont il est question ici établit une comparaison entre les caractéristiques des travailleurs saisonniers et celles des employés permanents, selon les facteurs suivants : âge, sexe, composition du ménage, scolarité, niveau de compétence, ancienneté professionnelle et durée de service, nombre d'employeurs, et degré de syndicalisation.

Voici certaines des principales constatations dégagées :

- Une forte proportion de travailleurs de moins de 25 ans occupent un emploi saisonnier. Selon les données de l'EPA et de l'EDTR, cette catégorie d'âge représentait en effet environ 43 % de la main-d'œuvre saisonnière (253 270 personnes) en 2004 et en 2005.
- Entre 60 et 65 % des travailleurs saisonniers sont des hommes, comparativement à environ 50 % des travailleurs permanents.
- Aucune différence importante n'a été constatée entre la taille de la famille des travailleurs permanents et celle des travailleurs saisonniers.
- Le degré de scolarité et le niveau de compétence des travailleurs saisonniers sont bien inférieurs à ceux des personnes occupant un poste permanent.
- Les employés permanents gardent plus longtemps un même emploi que les travailleurs saisonniers; par ailleurs, un pourcentage plus élevé de travailleurs permanents ont un seul employeur.

- La proportion de travailleurs syndiqués parmi les personnes occupant un emploi saisonnier est largement inférieure à celle qui est observée chez les employés permanents.

Selon les résultats de l'étude, une forte proportion de travailleurs saisonniers appartiennent à quatre catégories qui se chevauchent :

1. Jeunes travailleurs de moins de 25 ans;
2. Employés des industries primaires;
3. Travailleurs de la construction;
4. Employés dans le domaine touristique.

Le pourcentage d'employés saisonniers est plus élevé dans les régions rurales qu'en milieu urbain, et au Canada atlantique que dans le reste du pays. La saisonnalité de l'emploi est particulièrement élevée dans les provinces de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador et de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. Bien que les régions rurales et le Canada atlantique affichent la proportion la plus marquée d'emplois saisonniers, on constate aussi un important degré de saisonnalité de la main-d'œuvre en milieu urbain. Selon l'une des études faisant partie de l'analyse documentaire, 57 % du total des travailleurs saisonniers au pays vivaient en milieu urbain.

Fait intéressant : on n'a dégagé aucune tendance globale systématique dans l'emploi saisonnier ni à l'échelle nationale, ni dans les provinces. Dans certaines industries et régions, on constate un taux d'emploi élevé en hiver; dans d'autres, le taux d'emploi atteint son maximum en été.

Par ailleurs, des faits contradictoires concernant une hausse ou une baisse de la saisonnalité ont été relevés dans le cadre de l'étude. L'examen de la documentation et les résultats des entrevues indiquent que le degré de saisonnalité a diminué au cours des 20 ou 25 dernières années. Toutefois, les données de l'EPA portant sur la période de 1997 à 2005 révèlent que le taux de saisonnalité de l'emploi, en tant que pourcentage de l'emploi global, est demeuré stable.

L'analyse documentaire et les rapports de collecte de données présentent des preuves convaincantes selon lesquelles les travailleurs saisonniers gagnent des salaires largement inférieurs à ceux des employés permanents. D'après l'analyse des données de l'EPA, les gains des travailleurs saisonniers au Canada étaient de 28 % inférieurs à ceux des employés permanents en 2003.

On y constate en outre que la proportion de travailleurs saisonniers ayant recours à l'assurance-emploi (AE) était beaucoup plus élevée que celle des personnes occupant un emploi permanent. Des recherches effectuées par de Raaf, Kapsalis et Vincent¹ (pages 19 à 22) révèlent ce qui suit :

1 de Raaf, Shawn, Kapsalis, Costa et Vincent, Carole, *Seasonal Employment and Reliance on Employment Insurance: Evidence From the SLID*, série de documents de travail de la SRSA, 03-04, juin 2003.

- Les hommes représentent plus des deux tiers des travailleurs saisonniers qui ont reçu des prestations d'assurance-emploi à deux ou trois occasions.
- Les travailleurs saisonniers qui bénéficient le plus souvent de prestations d'assurance-emploi sont généralement plus âgés que les autres catégories de prestataires.

Selon les résultats de ces recherches, la plupart des travailleurs saisonniers ont obtenu des prestations d'AE après avoir été mis à pied. Toutefois, le recours aux prestations d'AE variait d'une région à l'autre, mais il était largement plus marqué au Canada atlantique. Plusieurs facteurs expliquent ces écarts régionaux, notamment les possibilités d'emploi et les critères d'admissibilité aux prestations d'assurance-emploi qui diffèrent selon la région. De plus, de Raaf et collaborateurs ont conclu que les résultats de leurs recherches dissipent le mythe voulant que tous les travailleurs saisonniers soient des prestataires fréquents de l'assurance-emploi. Certes, les résultats obtenus montrent que la plupart des employés saisonniers ont souvent recours à l'assurance-emploi, mais aussi qu'une proportion importante n'y a pas recours.

Les travailleurs étrangers invités représentent une proportion substantielle des employés saisonniers. D'après l'analyse documentaire, le flux international des travailleurs migrants s'est intensifié au cours des dernières années et on prévoit qu'il s'accroîtra davantage. Les travailleurs migrants sont particulièrement nombreux dans le secteur agricole canadien depuis un grand nombre d'années.

PROBLÈMES LIÉS AU LOGEMENT

Selon les résultats des recherches effectuées dans le cadre de cette étude, les problèmes les plus importants que rencontrent les travailleurs saisonniers par rapport au logement concernent la disponibilité, l'abordabilité et la qualité des habitations. Voici les définitions des concepts d'abordabilité et de qualité utilisées dans ce rapport² :

- Les logements abordables coûtent moins de 30 % du revenu familial avant impôt;
- Les logements de qualité convenable sont ceux qui, d'après les occupants, ne nécessitent pas de réparations majeures. De plus, ils comptent suffisamment de chambres par rapport à la taille et à la composition des ménages qui les occupent, selon les prescriptions de la Norme nationale d'occupation³ (NNO).

La documentation étudiée aux fins de cette étude n'a fourni aucune définition du terme disponibilité. Dans le présent rapport, ce concept correspond aux logements accessibles, disponibles et de qualité convenable pour des travailleurs saisonniers. Dans ce contexte, disponibilité suppose abordabilité.

Il existe d'importantes variations au sein de la main-d'œuvre saisonnière. Selon les résultats de l'étude, les problèmes de logement diffèrent fondamentalement en fonction des catégories de travailleurs suivantes :

- Employés saisonniers canadiens travaillant et vivant dans la même collectivité.
En plus de travailler et de vivre dans la même collectivité, ils possèdent ou louent un logement permanent. L'hébergement n'est donc pas fourni par l'employeur.
- Employés saisonniers canadiens qui quittent leur région pour travailler.
Ces travailleurs ont besoin de logements temporaires. Ils éprouvent des problèmes essentiellement différents de ceux des travailleurs de la catégorie précédente quant à la disponibilité, à l'abordabilité et à la qualité des habitations. Certains employeurs fournissent des logements temporaires ou une aide à l'habitation. Le degré ou la forme d'assistance fournie par l'employeur à cet égard est fonction de plusieurs facteurs et varie sensiblement selon le secteur, voire d'une entreprise à l'autre. Il est donc impossible de formuler des généralisations concernant la situation de logement des travailleurs mobiles.
- Travailleurs saisonniers étrangers.
Ces personnes viennent au Canada en vertu de programmes gouvernementaux visant les travailleurs invités. Elles font face à des problèmes de logement semblables à ceux des travailleurs canadiens. Toutefois, certains programmes gouvernementaux définissent les responsabilités de l'employeur par rapport au logement des personnes embauchées.

Il convient de signaler que, globalement, les représentants du secteur touristique affirment que le logement pose d'importants problèmes aux personnes qui travaillent dans les établissements hôteliers, les centres de villégiature et les installations de loisir, malgré les efforts déployés par les employeurs pour offrir des services d'hébergement.

2 Voir Le Point en recherche, *Série socio-économique 04-008, SCHL, Série sur le logement selon les données du recensement de 2001- Numéro 4 Révisé Régions métropolitaines du Canada* 2001, mai 2004, page 7.

3 Selon la Norme nationale d'occupation, « suffisamment de chambres » signifie une chambre pour chacune des catégories d'occupants suivantes : couple d'adultes qui cohabitent; personne seule de 18 ans et plus faisant partie du ménage; deux enfants de même sexe âgés de moins de 18 ans; fille ou garçon additionnel dans la famille, sauf s'il y a deux enfants de sexe opposé âgés de moins de cinq ans, qui peuvent partager la même chambre. Un ménage composé d'une personne seule peut occuper un studio (c'est-à-dire un logement sans chambre distincte).

CONCLUSIONS

On peut tirer d'importantes conclusions de cette étude concernant les problèmes de logement qui touchent les travailleurs saisonniers.

Une forte proportion des travailleurs saisonniers sont jeunes

Près de la moitié des employés saisonniers ont moins de 25 ans. Les politiques visant à améliorer les conditions de logement de ces travailleurs devraient donc être axées sur ce groupe d'âge. De plus, les jeunes ont tous des situations bien différentes, qui influent sur leurs besoins et leur situation en matière de logement.

À titre d'exemple, la situation des étudiants diffère nettement de celle des autres jeunes. Certains étudiants vivent à la maison, d'autres voyagent dans des endroits éloignés et ont besoin d'un hébergement temporaire.

À cause de ces différences, il est difficile d'élaborer des politiques applicables à tous les jeunes faisant partie de la main-d'œuvre saisonnière.

Les travailleurs à faible revenu éprouvent des problèmes de logement

Les travailleurs saisonniers ayant un revenu faible ou très faible, que soit à cause de leur secteur d'emploi, de la nature de leur travail ou de leur manque de compétences, éprouvent de graves problèmes de logement. L'incidence de ces problèmes est plus prononcée dans les régions rurales et le Canada atlantique. La disponibilité, l'abordabilité et la qualité des logements peuvent représenter un problème tant pour les travailleurs non mobiles vivant dans des collectivités rurales que pour les travailleurs mobiles qui doivent trouver un logement temporaire à l'extérieur de leur région. Ce problème est attribuable à la faiblesse des revenus et à la marginalité sociale plutôt qu'au travail saisonnier en tant que tel.

Le rôle des employeurs

Des problèmes de logement peuvent survenir lorsque les employeurs recrutent activement des employés saisonniers sans leur fournir d'hébergement ou sans veiller à ce que des logements soient disponibles, ou en ne leur offrant que des habitations inférieures aux normes établies. Bien que les recherches effectuées n'aient fourni aucune preuve systématique ou probante à cet effet, il se peut que des employeurs de travailleurs saisonniers des secteurs de la construction, des mines et des forêts en région éloignée, ou des secteurs agricole, de la pêche ou du tourisme n'assument pas toujours leurs responsabilités fondamentales qui sont d'offrir des logements sûrs, abordables et conformes aux normes de salubrité.

L'immigration et la croissance économique suscitent des problèmes de logement

D'après l'analyse documentaire et les résultats des entrevues, les problèmes de logement les plus graves surviennent lorsque l'expansion saisonnière de la main-d'œuvre coïncide avec une croissance démographique globale – par exemple, pendant la haute saison dans des régions touristiques où l'offre de logements est limitée, ou encore dans des secteurs en plein essor, comme Fort McMurray (Alberta). Généralement, s'il y a pénurie de logements, les travailleurs saisonniers peuvent être plus vulnérables que d'autres groupes cherchant une habitation parce qu'ils ont un revenu plus faible, qu'ils ne sont pas des locataires de choix pour les propriétaires-bailleurs et qu'ils ne constituent une priorité ni pour les autorités municipales, ni pour les employeurs qui s'efforcent de trouver un lieu d'hébergement pour leurs employés permanents.

Initiatives visant à trouver des solutions aux problèmes de logement

Les faits indiquent que lorsque croissance démographique et demande maximale d'habitations se conjuguent et provoquent d'importants problèmes pour les travailleurs saisonniers cherchant un logement, les chefs d'entreprise et les administrations locales sont très conscients de la situation et s'efforcent de trouver des solutions. En Alberta, par exemple, les employeurs mettent sur pied des systèmes de navettes sur de longues distances dans le but de répondre à leurs besoins de main-d'œuvre, sans pour autant amplifier les pressions sur le parc de logements existants.

Incidences de la diversité de la main-d'œuvre saisonnière sur les politiques

Il ressort clairement des données que la catégorie « travailleur saisonnier » englobe plusieurs sous-catégories distinctes. Dans la plupart des cas, les différences qui existent entre ces sous-catégories sont plus prononcées que leurs similarités. Il est donc impossible de cerner un groupe de problèmes liés au logement qui touche l'ensemble des employés saisonniers.

Certes, les problèmes de logement existent, mais ils sont diversifiés et traduisent la conjoncture locale des marchés de l'habitation et du travail, et non les conditions globales d'un segment précis et homogène de la population active.

Répercussions politiques globales des résultats de l'analyse présentée dans ce rapport

Ce rapport soulève la question de la façon appropriée de régler les problèmes liés à la qualité et à la conformité des logements : au moyen de politiques et de programmes visant expressément les travailleurs saisonniers, dans le cadre de règlements généraux sur le logement ou par l'application du code du bâtiment et des règles générales en matière de santé et de sécurité.

Directeur de projet à la SCHL : Bruno Duhamel

Consultants pour le projet de recherche : Praxis Research and Consulting Inc.

Recherche sur le logement à la SCHL

Aux termes de la partie IX de la *Loi nationale sur l'habitation*, le gouvernement du Canada verse des fonds à la SCHL afin de lui permettre de faire de la recherche sur les aspects socio-économiques et techniques du logement et des domaines connexes, et d'en publier et d'en diffuser les résultats.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. Objectives and Methods

The objective of this study is to document the nature and magnitude of the housing issues faced by seasonal workers across Canada. Three research methods were used to collect information on seasonal workers in Canada and the housing issues experienced by these workers. These are a literature review, an analysis of existing secondary data, and interviews with industry Sector Councils and other industry organizations. Separate reports on these research methods are included as Appendices to this study.

1.2. Definition of the Seasonal Workforce

Seasonality refers to fluctuations in economic activity and labour market conditions that occur in a more or less consistent pattern within a year, and from year to year. Seasonality results from factors such as the weather, harvest times for crops and fish species and also from institutional factors such as school terms and holidays. Seasonal changes occur in a wide variety of economic and labour market variables including gross domestic product, employment, unemployment and the labour force. Seasonal changes in employment are the focus of this study.

Seasonality in employment can be estimated using quantitative techniques applied to data such as the Labour Force Survey (LFS) produced by Statistics Canada or directly from surveys such as the LFS and the Survey of Labour Income and Dynamics (SLID). These surveys ask respondents if their jobs are permanent or seasonal and allow for the identification of seasonal workers and their characteristics and for the calculation of seasonal employment as a proportion of total employment.

Quantitative methods for estimating seasonality are reviewed in the Literature Review Report attached as Appendix A of this report. However, the primary focus of this report is the estimation of seasonality, and the characteristics of seasonal workers, directly from data produced by the LFS and SLID.

1.3. Data Issues and Limitations

The findings of this study are limited by the data and information used in this analysis. The most important limitations arise from the use of the LFS and SLID data to estimate the number of seasonal workers and to identify the demographics and characteristics of these workers. The LFS and SLID provide data on large occupational and industry groups but cannot be used to obtain information on specific occupations and industry sub-sectors due to limitations on the statistical reliability of the survey data. Interviews with industry experts were required to fill this information gap.

The data and information sources used in this study did not provide information on some items of interest including the relationship of labour mobility and standard of living aspirations to the housing situation of seasonal workers. In addition, information on the relationship between the skills transferability of seasonal workers and their housing circumstances was not available. Furthermore, limited information was obtained on the work incentives provided to seasonal workers and the relationship between these incentives and housing issues.

The study was also limited by the lack of literature dealing directly with the subject of housing for seasonal workers. Contemporary studies focus primarily on seasonal employment as an economic or labour supply management problem and pay little attention to the working and living conditions of the seasonally employed.

1.4. Description of the Seasonal Workforce

Data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) provided by Statistics Canada estimate that seasonal workers comprised 4.8% of the total Canadian workforce in 2004.

This study shows that the most highly seasonal occupational groups in Canada are: (1) Occupations Unique to Primary Industries including farm workers, loggers and fishers, (2) Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport including musicians, actors and film camera operators and (3) Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations including carpenters, electricians and truck drivers. The occupational analysis also shows that the largest absolute number of seasonal workers is in the large Sales and Service occupational group which includes occupations which range from cooks to tour guides to teacher assistants.

The most highly seasonal industry groups in Canada are: (1) Fishing, Hunting and Trapping, (2) Forestry and Logging and (3) Agriculture. The largest absolute number of seasonal workers in Canada is found in the Construction industry.

1.5. The Demographics and Characteristics of Seasonal Workers

The study documents the characteristics of seasonal workers compared to the permanent workforce in Canada. The documentation includes: age and gender profiles, household composition, education and skill levels, job tenure and duration, number of employers and the degree of unionization. Some key findings of the study are:

- Workers under the age of 25 account for a high percentage of the seasonal workforce. Data from both the LFS and SLID indicate that approximately 43% of the seasonal workforce was under 25 years old in 2004 and 2005.
- Males account for roughly 60% to 65% of the seasonal workforce compared to about one-half of the overall workforce.
- There is no significant difference between the family sizes of permanent and seasonal workers.
- The educational attainment and skill levels of seasonal workers are significantly below those for permanent workers.
- Permanent employees work in their jobs for a longer time than seasonal workers and a higher percentage of permanent workers work for one employer.
- The percentage of seasonal workers that are unionized is significantly less than the percentage of permanent workers.

The study concluded that a high proportion of seasonal workers fall into four overlapping groups:

- Young workers (under the age of 25);
- Workers in Primary industries;
- Construction workers; and
- Workers in the Tourism sector.

The study shows that the proportion of the total labour force that works on a seasonal basis is much higher in rural areas compared to urban areas and in Atlantic Canada compared to Canada as a whole. Seasonality is particularly acute in the provinces of Newfoundland & Labrador and Prince Edward Island. Although seasonality is greatest in rural and Atlantic Canada, there is a significant degree of seasonality in the urban labour force. One study included in the literature review estimated that 57% of all seasonal workers in the country live in urban areas.

An interesting finding of the study is that there is no consistent overall pattern for the seasonal variations in employment across the country. High levels of employment in some industries and regions occur in the winter months, while in other industries and regions employment is highest in the summer months. Significant variations in the timing of seasonality can occur within a province as well as across the country.

The study found conflicting evidence concerning the growth or decline of seasonality in Canada over time. The literature review and interviews provide evidence that seasonality has declined over the past 20 to 25 years whereas LFS data covering the 1997 to 2005 period indicate that seasonality, as a percentage of total employment, has remained steady.

The Literature Review and Data Collection Reports conducted for the study provide convincing evidence that seasonal workers have significantly lower earnings than permanent workers in Canada. The analysis also shows that the percentage of seasonal workers that relied on Employment Insurance (EI) was much higher than that for permanent workers. The study shows that the majority of seasonal workers received EI after being laid off from their jobs but that EI use varied significantly by region with usage being significantly higher in Atlantic Canada than in the rest of the country. The availability of job opportunities and differences in EI eligibility rules by region were factors that explained the regional differences in EI use.

Foreign workers account for a significant proportion of seasonal workers in Canada and the literature review indicates that the international movement of migrant workers has increased in recent years and is expected to rise further. Migrant workers have been especially important in the agriculture industry in Canada for many years.

1.6. Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers

Research conducted for this project indicates that availability, affordability and adequacy are the most important housing issues faced by seasonal workers. The definitions of affordability and adequacy used in this report are as follows:¹

- Affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of before-tax household income.
- Adequate dwellings are those reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs. In addition, they have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.

A definition for availability could not be found in the literature reviewed for this study. It is defined in this study as housing that is accessible, obtainable and adequate for seasonal workers. In this context, availability implies that housing must be affordable for seasonal workers.

The documentation and description of the seasonal workforce shows that there is a great deal of variation in the seasonal workforce. This variation leads directly to differences in the housing issues facing individual segments of the seasonal workforce. The study shows that housing issues are fundamentally different for three groups of seasonal workers:

- Domestic seasonal workers who work and live in the same community;
- Domestic seasonal workers who migrate to their region of work; and
- Foreign migrant seasonal workers.

Domestic seasonal workers who work and live in the same community own or rent permanent homes and employers are not involved in the provision of accommodations.

¹ See: "2001 Census Housing Series: Issue 4 Revised Canada's Metropolitan Areas", Research Highlight, CMHC Socio-economic Series 04-008, May 2004, p. 6.

Domestic seasonal workers who migrate to their region of work require temporary accommodations and, as a result, face fundamentally different issues with the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing than non-mobile workers. In some cases employers are involved in providing or subsidizing temporary housing for mobile workers, although this is not always the case.

Research conducted for this study indicates that the level and form of employer involvement in the provision and subsidization of housing for workers requiring temporary accommodations depends on a number of factors and varies significantly by industry and even from firm to firm within industries. As a result, it is not possible to generalize about the housing situation of mobile workers.

Foreign migrant seasonal workers come to Canada through guest worker programs overseen by governments. The housing issues faced by these workers are similar to those of domestic workers except that employer responsibilities for the provision of housing are sometimes specified within the programs under which these workers are brought into Canada.

1.7. Conclusions of the Study

Some important conclusions about the housing issues faced by seasonal workers can be drawn from the study. These conclusions are summarized here

1.7.1. A High Proportion of the Seasonal Workforce is Young Workers

Almost one-half of seasonal workers are under 25 years old. For this reason, policies designed to improve the housing circumstances of seasonal workers should focus on young people. There is a great deal of diversity in the circumstances of young people that affect their housing needs and circumstances. For example, students are in a much different situation than non-students in terms of their housing circumstances and needs. In addition, some students live at home whereas others travel to remote locations and require temporary accommodations. This diversity would

make it difficult to design housing policies that applied to all young people in the seasonal workforce.

1.7.2. Low Income Workers Face Housing Issues

Seasonal workers, who earn low or very low incomes, either because of the industries they work in, the nature of their jobs or their low skills, may face serious housing issues. The analysis in this report suggests that these situations arise to a greater degree in rural areas and Atlantic Canada. In these circumstances, the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing may be a problem. This would be true for non-mobile workers in rural communities as well as for mobile workers having to find temporary housing away from their home areas. The housing issue here reflects low incomes and social marginality rather than seasonal work per se.

1.7.3. The Role of Employers

Housing problems can occur in situations where employers are actively recruiting seasonal workers to an area but are not taking steps to ensure that adequate housing is available, or are themselves providing sub-standard accommodations. Although no systematic or compelling evidence was generated in the study, there may be situations in remote construction, mining or forestry worksites or in seasonal agricultural, fishing or tourism operations, where employers are not living up to basic responsibilities to provide safe, healthy and affordable housing.

1.7.4. Policy Implications Associated with the Diversity of the Seasonal Workforce

It is very clear from the data describing seasonal work in Canada that the category “seasonal worker” encompasses several distinctive sub-categories whose differences are in most cases more significant than their similarities. Therefore it is not possible to describe an over-arching set of housing issues that are common to the seasonal labour force overall. Nor is it advisable or potentially worthwhile to consider at a national level a comprehensive policy and programmatic response to the issue of housing for seasonal workers. There are housing issues, but they are diverse and disparate, reflecting local housing market and local labour market conditions rather

than some overall condition for a clearly defined and homogenous segment of the working population.

1.7.5. In-Migration and Economic Growth Lead to Housing Issues

Information from the literature and from key informants suggests that the most serious availability issues occur in situations where seasonal expansion of the workforce coincides with general population growth, such as during peak season in tourism regions with a limited housing supply, or in economic boom regions such as the Fort McMurray area. In other words, if there is a shortage of housing generally, seasonal workers may be more vulnerable than other groups seeking housing: they may have lower incomes, they may not be the preferred tenants from the landlord's perspective, or they may not be a priority group in the eyes of municipal authorities or even of employers attempting to accommodate their full-time labour force.

1.7.6. Initiatives to Address Housing Issues

Evidence shows that in situations where population growth and peak housing demand conditions combine to pose serious housing problems for seasonal workers, industry leaders and local government authorities are very aware of the issue and are making efforts to come up with solutions. In Alberta, for example, employers are developing long distance commuting systems to meet their labour supply needs without putting further pressure on local housing supplies.

1.7.7. Policy Implications of the Analysis of this Report

The analysis in this report raises the question of whether housing quality or adequacy issues should be addressed through policy and program interventions specific to seasonal workers, or whether they should be approached from the point of view of general housing regulations, enforcement of the building code and other health and safety regulations, and perhaps labour standards regulations.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Objectives, Goals and Methods

The objective for this study is to document the nature and magnitude of the housing issues faced by seasonal workers across Canada. Given this objective, the specific goals for this report are to analyze:

- The collected data to create an accurate and detailed picture of the nature and magnitude of seasonal work in Canada, including:
 - ✧ The nature and magnitude of income issues faced by seasonal workers in relation to annual income levels and use of EI with a focus on duration and frequency of use, but also as related to financial security, labour mobility, skills transferability, etc.
 - ✧ The nature and magnitude of housing issues faced by seasonal workers in relation to availability, affordability and adequacy but also as related to labour mobility, household formation, work incentives, standard of living aspirations, etc.
- The effectiveness of current measures aimed at addressing housing and/or income issues faced by seasonal workers;
- The expected growth or decline of the seasonal industries and potential growth or decline of demand for seasonal workers; and
- The relevant federal, provincial and municipal legislation and regulations governing housing for seasonal workers.

This objective and goals of the project will be met by completing the following tasks:

- Documentation of the characteristics of jobs in seasonal industries;
- Documentation of the demographics of seasonal workers;
- Focusing on the housing issues faced by seasonal workers;
- Including income issues faced by seasonal workers;

- Maintaining a national perspective, yet focus on regions where seasonal work is most prevalent;
- Using existing statistical data and interview results; and
- Documenting any measures currently used by employers and/or employees in seasonal industries to address any housing issues faced by seasonal workers.

The analysis considers the following three categories of seasonal workers:

1. Domestic seasonal workers who work and live in the same community;
2. Domestic seasonal workers who do not live and work in the same community but migrate to their region of work; and
3. Immigrant seasonal workers.

The study will identify and categorize seasonal work by region and identify housing issues associated with seasonal industries according to the profitability of the industries and the earnings of workers.

Three research methods were used to collect information on seasonal workers in Canada and the housing issues experienced by these workers. These are a literature review, an analysis of existing data, and interviews with Sector Councils² and other industry organizations. Separate reports on these research methods are included as Appendices to this study.

2.2. Limitations of the Study

Unfortunately, no data or information were available on the labour mobility or standard of living aspirations of seasonal workers. For this reason, the relationship between these factors and the housing situation of seasonal workers is not examined in the report. An analysis of the skill levels of seasonal workers compared to permanent workers is completed in

² Sector Councils are organizations that bring together representatives from business, labour, education, and other professional groups to analyze and address sector-wide human resource issues in 29 sectors in Canada.

Section 5.5.2 of the report although no information exists on the relationship between the skills transferability of seasonal workers and their housing circumstances. Little information existed on the work incentives provided to seasonal workers and the relationship between these incentives and housing issues. Section 10 of the study does report that foreign workers are offered the same incentives, incomes and benefits as domestic workers in the oil and gas industry due to the competitive nature of the labour market. The issue of household formation of seasonal workers compared to permanent workers is addressed in Section 5.4 of the report.

2.3. Limits of the Literature

There are no contemporary studies dealing directly with the subject of housing for seasonal workers. The available literature tends to be more historical in nature, and deals mainly with primary resource workers – loggers, miners, fishers or farm workers. Contemporary studies focus primarily on seasonal employment as an economic or labour supply management problem and pay little attention to the working and living conditions of the seasonally employed. (Grady and Kapsalis)

In years gone by many seasonal workers were housed in work camps, described in considerable detail by Bradwin, with planned, single-industry “company towns” evolving later. Now, with the advent of long distance commuting (LDC) and “fly in, fly out” camps, the housing of seasonal and other mobile workers appears to be coming full circle.

Although one early study dealt with farm worker families travelling mainly by automobile in limited geographical areas (Hathaway), much of the literature on housing for migrant workers is concerned with single males who “rode the rails” over a vast expanse of territory. In a recent study, Higbie points out that in addition to camps, shacks and bunkhouses the migrant worker of the early 20th century also inhabited neighbourhoods in the mid-western United States that catered to the needs of traveling labourers, known by hoboes as the “Main Stem.” (Higbie, p. 33)

Contemporary studies focussing on housing for seasonal workers come predominantly from the United States, and are concerned mainly with the housing needs of one group of seasonal workers – migrant farm labourers.

There are a number of Canadian studies that indirectly deal with the issue of housing for seasonal and migrant workers in the course of addressing such topics as:

- Rural housing;
- Northern and remote area housing;
- Housing in “boom towns” or “instant towns”;
- Long distance commuting;
- Homelessness; and
- Housing and the changing nature of work.

3. DEFINITION OF SEASONALITY

Seasonality refers to fluctuations in economic activity and labour market conditions that occur in a more or less consistent pattern within a year, and from year to year. An article by Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey provides a definition of seasonality and explains its causes:

“Economic activity and employment vary regularly over the year as a result of various factors such as weather, harvest times, school terms, tax-filing patterns, and Christmas shopping periods. In economic terms, a seasonal pattern is a sub-annual pattern in a time series that repeats itself more or less regularly year after year.” (Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey, p. 1)

Seasonal changes occur in a wide variety of economic and labour market variables including gross domestic product, employment, unemployment and the labour force. Seasonal changes in employment are the focus of this study. A 1997 article by Dominique Pérusse in the Statistics Canada periodical *Perspectives on Labour and Income* defines a seasonal job as follows:

“Seasonal jobs last for one or more limited periods at the same time each year. They are structured by the annual labour demands of industries such as farming, fishing, forestry, construction and tourism.” (Pérusse, p. 39)

Two methodologies were used to estimate the seasonality of employment:

- Quantitative estimates of seasonality based on analyses of monthly employment data produced by the Labour Force Survey (LFS)³ with the objective of identifying seasonal patterns; and
- Direct estimates of the number of seasonal workers based on surveys, notably the LFS and the Survey of Labour Income and Dynamics (SLID),⁴ which ask survey respondents if their jobs are permanent or seasonal. This question allows for the calculation of seasonal jobs as a proportion of total employment.

Quantitative and survey methods of estimating seasonality are reviewed in the Literature Review Report completed for this project. The main findings of the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports are included in this report.

³ The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a household survey carried out monthly by Statistics Canada. Since its inception in 1945, the objectives of the LFS have been to divide the working-age population into three mutually exclusive classifications - employed, unemployed, and not in the labour force - and to provide descriptive and explanatory data on each of these categories.

LFS estimates are subject to both sampling errors and non-sampling errors. In the case of the LFS, the target population is the civilian population 15 and older living off reserve in the 10 provinces.

⁴ The Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) complements traditional survey data on labour market activity and income with an additional dimension: the changes experienced by individuals over time. SLID includes all individuals in Canada, excluding residents of the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, residents of institutions and persons living on Indian reserves. Overall, these exclusions amount to less than 3 percent of the population.

The samples for SLID are selected from the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) and thus share the latter's sample design. The LFS sample is drawn from an area frame and is based on a stratified, multi-stage design that uses probability sampling. The total sample is composed of six independent samples, called rotation groups, because each month one sixth of the sample (or one rotation group) is replaced.

The SLID sample is composed of two panels. Each panel consists of two LFS rotation groups and includes roughly 17,000 households. A panel is surveyed for a period of six consecutive years. A new panel is introduced every three years, so two panels always overlap. Refer to: <http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3889&lang=en&db=IMDB&dbg=f&adm=8&dis=2#b1>.

4. SEASONAL INDUSTRIES AND JOBS

4.1. Highly Seasonal Occupations

The Literature Review and the Data Collection Reports both indicate that the most highly seasonal occupational groups are:

1. Occupations Unique to Primary Industries;
2. Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport; and
3. Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations.

A custom run of SLID, using 2004 data, was carried out to generate estimates of the proportion of seasonal to total workers by occupational group classified according to the National Occupational Classification – Statistics (NOC-S), 2001. The results are presented in Table 1.⁵

⁵ The accuracy of SLID data are subject to two types of errors as described as follows by Statistics Canada. “There are two types of errors inherent in sample survey data, namely, non-sampling errors and sampling errors. The reliability of survey estimates depends on the combined impact of non-sampling and sampling errors.”
(<http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3889&lang=en&db=IMDB&dbg=f&adm=8&dis=2#3>).

| TABLE 1: SEASONAL WORKERS BY OCCUPATION CANADA, 2004 | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Occupational Group | # of Seasonal Workers ('000) | % of Total Workforce |
| Occupations Unique to Primary Industry | 123 | 34.6% |
| Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport | 49 | 14.2% |
| Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations | 146 | 8.4% |
| Sales and Service Occupations | 152 | 4.6% |
| Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities | 42 | 4.6% |
| Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations | 18 | 2.0% |
| Business, Finance and Administrative Occupations | 36 | 1.6% |
| Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion | 13 | 1.5% |
| All Occupations | 589 | 4.8% |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

The SLID data indicates that three occupational groups: Sales and Service occupations, Trades and Related occupations, and occupations Unique to Primary Industry account for almost three-quarters of the seasonal workforce in Canada. There is some degree of seasonality in most occupational groups although data on the number of seasonal workers were too unreliable to be published for the Management and Health occupational groups. Occupations Unique to Primary Industry, occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport and Trades and Related Occupations are the most highly seasonal in terms of the percentage of the workforce that is seasonal. Approximately 5% of all employees in Canada worked in seasonal jobs in 2004.

The analysis of seasonality by occupation using the SLID data is limited by the fact that data are available on a highly aggregated basis, i.e., by occupational group rather than by individual occupation.

Each occupational group contains numerous individual occupations and Table 1 provides no information on which of these occupations contains the greatest number of seasonal workers. Some highly seasonal occupations exist within occupational groups that are not highly seasonal as a whole.

For example, while the occupational group Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities has an average degree of seasonality overall, key informants indicate that the occupation Fish Plant Worker within this larger group is among the most highly seasonal jobs in Canada.

4.2. Highly Seasonal Industries

The 2004 SLID data also provided information on the number of seasonal workers by industry. These data are presented in Table 2. In interpreting the table, it is important to note that data were too unreliable to be published for the following industries: Utilities, Wholesale Trade, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing and Health Care and Social Assistance. The number and percentage of seasonal workers for industries where reliable data exists is presented in Table 2.

| TABLE 2: SEASONAL WORKERS BY INDUSTRY CANADA, 2004 | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Industry | # of Seasonal Workers ('000) | % of Total Workforce |
| Fishing, Hunting and Trapping | 14 | 66.7% |
| Forestry and Logging with Support Activities | 24 | 35.8% |
| Agriculture | 46 | 29.5% |
| Construction | 101 | 14.8% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 89 | 14.1% |
| Management, Administrative and Other | 40 | 8.2% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 61 | 6.5% |
| Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction | 9 | 5.4% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 27 | 4.9% |
| Public Administration | 26 | 3.3% |
| Manufacturing | 54 | 3.0% |
| Retail Trade | 42 | 2.7% |
| Other Services | 10 | 2.4% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 13 | 1.9% |
| Educational Services | 12 | 1.5% |
| All Industries | 589 | 4.8% |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Table 2 shows that Fishing, Hunting and Trapping, Forestry and Logging with Support Activities and Agriculture are the most highly seasonal industries in terms of the proportion of the workforce that is seasonal. The largest absolute number of seasonal workers is found in the Construction industry followed by the Information, Culture and Recreation industry, the Accommodation and Food Services industry and Manufacturing.

The ranking of industries by seasonality in the SLID data is very similar to the ranking completed using LFS data in the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports completed for this project. The proportion of workers in all industries identified as being seasonal in the SLID data was 4.8% in 2004 compared to 3% estimated from the LFS data on average over the period 2003 to 2005.

4.3. Seasonality by Industry and Occupation

2004 SLID data show the number of seasonal workers by industry and occupational group as presented in Table 3. The five occupational groups with the largest number of seasonal workers account for 87% of all seasonal workers in Canada in 2004.

**TABLE 3: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION
CANADA, 2004 ('000)**

| | All Occupations | A Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation & Sport | B Sales & Service Occupations | C Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators | D Occupations Unique To Primary Industry | E Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing & Utilities |
|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| All Industries | 589 | 49 | 152 | 146 | 123 | 42 |
| Agriculture | 46 | 0 | F* | F | 40 | 0 |
| Forestry & Logging | 24 | 0 | F | F | 19 | 0 |
| Fishing, Hunting & Trapping | 14 | 0 | 0 | F | 13 | F |
| Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction | 9 | 0 | 0 | F | F | 0 |
| Construction | 101 | 0 | F | 96 | F | 0 |
| Manufacturing | 54 | 0 | F | F | F | 39 |
| Retail Trade | 42 | 0 | 35 | F | 0 | 0 |
| Transportation & Warehousing | 27 | 0 | F | 19 | 0 | F |
| Professional, Scientific & Technical Services | 13 | F | 0 | F | F | 0 |
| Management, Administrative & Other Support | 40 | F | F | F | 26 | F |
| Educational Services | 12 | F | F | F | F | 0 |
| Information, Culture & Recreation | 89 | 27 | 37 | F | 10 | 0 |
| Accommodation & Food Services | 61 | F | 47 | 0 | F | 0 |
| Other Services | 10 | F | F | F | F | F |
| Public Administration | 26 | F | F | F | F | 0 |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

*Note: In cases where the letter F appears, the data are too unreliable to be published. Reliability is based on the coefficient of variation which is calculated as the estimated standard error as a percentage of the estimate. The standard error measures the degree of variation introduced in estimates by selecting one particular sample rather than another of the same size and design. Refer to:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/75F0011XIE/2006001/methodology.htm#suppression>.

Key findings from Table 3 are:

- Although Sales and Service occupations have a below average degree of seasonality, they account for more seasonal workers than any other occupational group. Sales and Service occupations account for 83% of seasonal workers in Retail Trade, 42% in the industry group Information, Culture and Recreation and 77% of the seasonal workers in the Accommodation and Food Services industry group.
- Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations account for 95% of the seasonal workers in the Construction industry and 70% of seasonal workers in the Transportation and Warehousing industry.
- Occupations Unique to Primary Industry represent the third largest group of seasonal workers and, as shown in Table 1, are by far the most highly seasonal occupational group. This occupational group accounts for 87% of seasonal workers in Agriculture, 79% of seasonal workers in Forestry and Logging with Support Activities, 93% of seasonal workers in Fishing, Hunting and Trapping, 65% of seasonal workers in the industry group Management, Administrative and Other Support and 11% of seasonal workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry group.
- Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities account for 72% of seasonal workers in Manufacturing.
- Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport account for 30% of the seasonal workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry group.

While Table 3 provides valuable insights into the occupational breakdown of the industries that make up the Canadian economy, the insights are limited by the high degree of industry and occupational aggregation. Each occupational grouping contains numerous individual occupations and the table provides no information on which of these occupations contributes the greatest number of seasonal workers.

It is necessary to caution the reader about the reliability of the results in Table 3, especially for industry/occupational combinations with very small

numbers. Data for the following industries and occupations were too unreliable to be published and were excluded from Table 3:

Industries – (1) Utilities, (2) Wholesale Trade, (3) Finance and Insurance, (4) Real Estate and Leasing and (5) Health Care and Social Assistance.

Occupations – (1) Business, Finance and Administrative occupations, (2) Natural and Applied Sciences and Related occupations, (3) Health occupations and (4) Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion.

4.4. Seasonal Occupations by Industry based on Interviews

Interviews with key informants from Sector Councils and other industry organizations were conducted to identify highly seasonal occupations within the occupational groups shown in Table 3. The results, presented in Table 4, do not represent a comprehensive list of seasonal occupations since the information in the table is based on the knowledge of selected industry human resource experts.

Table 4 shows the industry groups in which employees in highly seasonal occupations worked (left column). It also shows the organizations that were the source of the information (middle column). The right hand column shows the specific occupations identified by interviewees as being most highly seasonal. It also shows (in bold type) the occupational groups, as defined in Table 3, that include each occupation listed in the right hand column.

TABLE 4: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR AND ORGANIZATION

| Industry | Organization | Seasonal Occupation |
|--|--|--|
| Agriculture | The Canadian Horticultural Council | Planting, maintenance and hand harvesting jobs pertaining to fruits and vegetables (D – Occ. Unique to Primary Industry) |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council | Truck drivers, construction trades people (C – Trades) |
| | Petroleum Human Resources Council | Well site services and drilling occupations, technologists/technicians, pipeline construction occupations and geophysics seismic workers (C – Trades) |
| | Forest Products Employment Research Council | No information provided |
| | Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada | Planters – silviculture operators. Planting is generally done by students (D – Occ. Unique to Primary Industry) |
| | Canadian Silviculture Association | Tree planters, thinners, brushers, spacers, fertilizers and pruners – a high proportion of this work is done by students (D – Occ. Unique to Primary Industry) |
| | Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters | Crew members, owner-operators (D – Occ. Unique to Primary Industry) |
| Construction | Construction Sector Council | Occupations on exterior components of houses and buildings including framing, foundations and roofing (C – Trades) |
| | Canadian Home Builders' Association | Occupations associated with landscaping and paving (C – Trades) |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | Cultural Human Resources Council | Actors, musicians, dancers and live performing artists (A – Occupations in Art and Culture) |
| | Software Human Resource Council | No occupations listed |

TABLE 4: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR AND ORGANIZATION

| Industry | Organization | Seasonal Occupation |
|---|--|--|
| Accommodation and Food Services | Hotel Association of Canada | Housekeepers and food servers (B – Sales and Service Occ.) |
| | Yukon Tourism Education Council | Front desk agents, housekeeping room attendants, guest service attendants, B&B owner-operators, hunting/fishing guides, ski lift operators, golf course staff, food and beverage servers (B – Sales and Service Occ.) |
| | Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council | Adventure/Recreation: hunting and fishing guides, tour guides, any position at golf clubs, parks staff (regional, provincial and national parks); accommodations: housekeeping, front desk staff, etc. (resorts); food and beverage: servers, cooks, etc. (resorts) (B – Sales and Service Occ.) |
| | Tourism Industry Association of Canada | Front line service providers, including food and beverage servers, desk clerks, sales agents at point of purchase sites, visitor reception centre staff (B – Sales and Service Occ.) |
| Transportation and Warehousing | Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada | No occupations listed |
| | Canadian Trucking Human Resources Sector Council | Truck drivers (C – Trades) |
| Public Administration | Canadian Police Sector Council | Clerical/technical positions (NA)⁶ |
| Manufacturing | National Seafood Sector Council | Fish plant production workers (E – Occ. Unique to Processing) |
| | Wood Manufacturing Council | No occupations listed |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | Biotechnology Human Resources Council | No occupations listed |

⁶ Clerical/Technical positions are part of the occupational group Business, Finance and Administrative Occupations not shown in Table 3.

| TABLE 4: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR AND ORGANIZATION | | |
|---|---|---|
| Industry | Organization | Seasonal Occupation |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | Child Care Human Resources Sector Council | Front-line practitioners who look after school age children (NA) ⁷ |

Source: Personal interviews completed by PRAXIS.

One striking aspect of Table 4 is that virtually all of the occupations identified by respondents as being highly seasonal fall into one of the five occupational groups identified in the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports as being most highly seasonal. Table 4 makes three contributions to the study: (1) it confirms the findings of the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports, (2) it identifies the specific occupations within each occupational group that are most seasonal and (3) it shows the industry group within which each occupation works.

⁷ Front-line practitioners who look after school age children are part of the occupational group Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion not shown in Table 3.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF SEASONAL WORKERS IN CANADA

5.1. Introduction

This section summarizes information drawn from the literature, secondary data resources and key informant interviews on the makeup of the seasonal labour force in Canada.

5.2. Age Profile

LFS and SLID data show clearly that young people make up a much higher percentage of the seasonal workforce than of the overall workforce. Both surveys indicate that approximately 43% of the seasonal workforce was under 25 years old in 2004 and 2005. The LFS estimated that the percentage of the seasonal workforce accounted for by employees under 25 varied significantly by industry as illustrated in Table 5.⁸

⁸ In reading this table it should be born in mind that the actual numbers of seasonal workers in a particular industry sector may be quite low. The table only describes the percentage of all seasonal employees who are 15 to 24 years old. The coefficient of variation (CV) for the LFS is approximately 2.5% for national indicators (http://www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/document/3701_D2_T2_V3_E.pdf). Generally, estimates with CVs less than or equal to 15% should be considered reliable enough for most purposes. Estimates with CVs greater than 15% but less than or equal to 25% are reliable enough for some purposes but should be used with great caution. Estimates with CVs greater than 25% should be considered as unreliable and should not be used. For CVs of monthly and annual estimates for provinces, please refer to the Data Quality Statement for the LFS, Tables 1 and 2. See: "Guide to the Labour Force Survey", Catalogue no. 71-543-GIE, Statistics Canada, February 2006.

| TABLE 5: PERCENTAGE OF SEASONAL TO TOTAL EMPLOYEES BY INDUSTRY 15 TO 24 AGE GROUP, CANADA, 2005 | |
|--|------------|
| All Industries | 43% |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing | 65% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 61% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 60% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 58% |
| Trade | 58% |
| Public Administration | 58% |
| Other Services | 46% |
| Business, Building and Other Support Services | 46% |
| Educational Services | 42% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 41% |
| Agriculture | 37% |
| Manufacturing | 34% |
| Construction | 26% |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 24% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 18% |
| Utilities | 0% |

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

Table 5 shows that young people accounted for over 50% of the seasonal workforce in many industries. It is important to note that younger workers made up a relatively smaller proportion of the seasonal workforce in industries such as Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas and Construction. Table 2 showed that these industries have the highest proportion of their workforce that is seasonal.

Interviews with industry key informants indicate that young seasonal workers fall into two broad groups:

- Students working in summer jobs; and
- Young non-students who are new entrants into the labour market.

The evidence indicates that student workers are more highly educated and more mobile than other young seasonal workers, and are often saving their earnings for university. The interviewees pointed to Silviculture (Forestry), Tourism and Child Care⁹ as sectors with significant numbers of seasonal student workers. There was a significant degree of diversity in terms of earnings, gender composition and housing needs depending on the industry and industry sub-sector in which young people worked.

Key informants also identified a group of young workers who were non-students working in seasonal jobs in the Oil and Gas sector. This group had high earnings but low levels of education. Although not identified in the interviews, there are undoubtedly large numbers of non-student workers under the age of 25 working in entry-level seasonal jobs in many sectors of the economy. Unfortunately, available data do not identify non-student workers separately from student workers so this assertion cannot be confirmed empirically.

⁹ Seasonal Child Care workers are only one component of the Child Care workforce. Child Care workers are classified in the National Occupational Classification system for Statistics, 2001 (NOC-S) under the following categories: Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants (NOC-S G812) and Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers (NOC-S G814). The majority of this workforce (56% in the 2001 Census) work more than 40 weeks per year and cannot be considered seasonal. An interview with the Executive Director of the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council indicates that the demand exhibits a degree of seasonality as the need for Child Care workers increases during the Christmas and summer holidays. The Executive Director further indicated that this increased seasonal need for Child Care workers is met primarily by students.

Individuals working as Camp Counselors could also be considered as Child Care workers. These workers are classified under the occupational group Program Leaders and Instructors in Recreation and Sport (NOC-S F154) along with other occupations. The 2001 Census shows that workers in this occupational group experience a significantly greater degree of seasonality than workers described in the previous paragraph as 40% of the workforce worked one to thirteen weeks in 2001 and 40% worked 40 weeks or more. These workers also would have different housing needs than the Child Care workers described in the first paragraph.

5.3. Gender Profile

The Literature Review and Data Collection Reports indicate that males account for roughly 60% to 65% of the seasonal workforce compared to about one-half of the overall workforce. The seasonal workforce by gender and industry is illustrated in Table 6.

| TABLE 6: SEASONAL JOB HOLDERS BY GENDER, BY INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 2005 ('000 AND PERCENT) | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | Male | Female | % Female |
| Total Seasonal Employees | 274 | 154 | 36% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 2 | 7 | 79% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 14 | 26 | 65% |
| Educational Services | 7 | 11 | 61% |
| Trade | 19 | 22 | 54% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 5 | 5 | 51% |
| Public Administration | 10 | 9 | 47% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 29 | 25 | 46% |
| Agriculture | 20 | 12 | 38% |
| Other Services | 5 | 3 | 36% |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing | 4 | 2 | 35% |
| Manufacturing | 30 | 16 | 34% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 15 | 6 | 26% |
| Business, Building and Other Support Services | 18 | 5 | 21% |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 26 | 2 | 9% |
| Construction | 68 | 3 | 5% |
| Utilities | 2 | 0 | 0% |

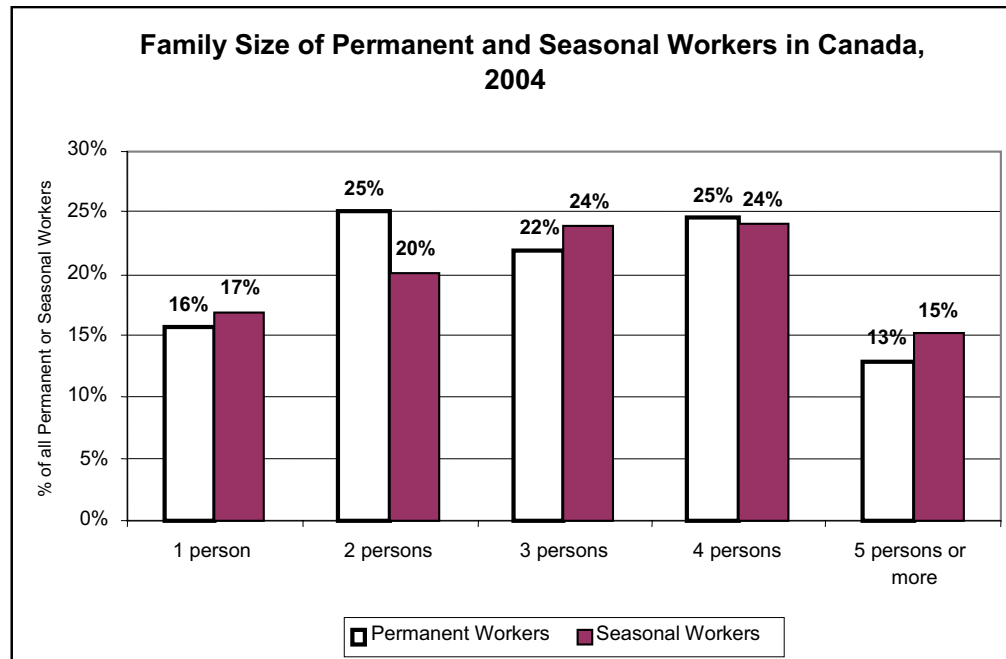
Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

While females accounted for just over one-third of seasonal workers overall, they accounted for the majority of seasonal jobholders in a number of industry groups, notably Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services and Educational Services. However, they accounted for a small minority of seasonal jobholders in highly seasonal industries like Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas and Construction.

5.4. Household Composition

The only identified source of information on household composition for seasonal workers was the SLID data for 2004 on the family sizes of seasonal workers. These data are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

The data indicates that there was not a significant difference between the family sizes of permanent and seasonal workers in 2004. De Raaf et al estimated that the percentage of seasonal workers who lived with a partner in 1993 to 1998 was 70%. Unfortunately, no comparable data were presented on the workforce as a whole.

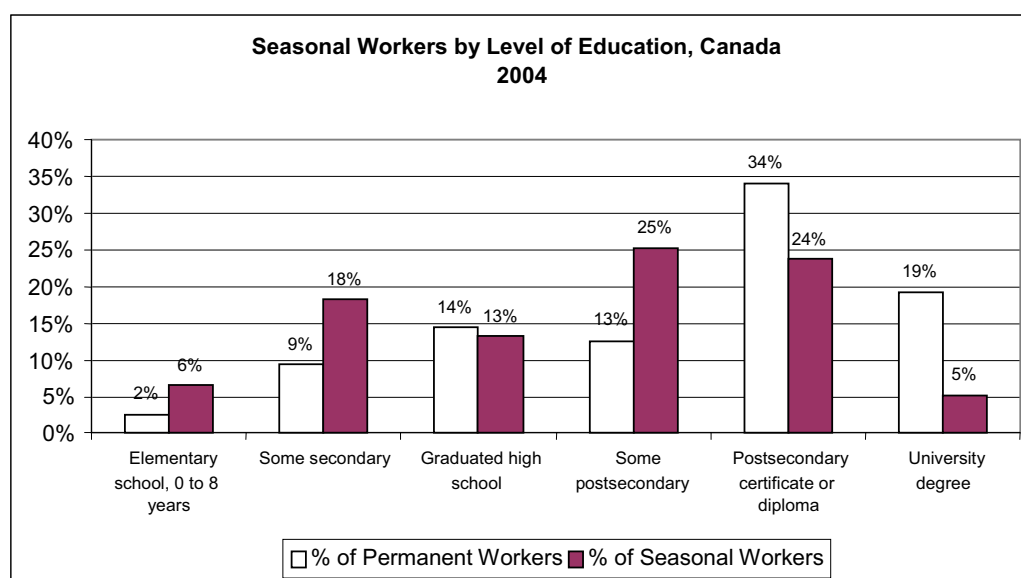
5.5. Education and Skill Levels

5.5.1. Education

The Literature Review and Data Collection Reports indicate that the educational attainment levels of seasonal workers were significantly below those for permanent workers. The research showed that two to three times as many seasonal workers have less than a high school education compared to permanent workers. At the other extreme, three to four times as many permanent workers held a university degree compared to seasonal workers, and non-seasonal workers had significantly higher levels of other post-secondary certification.

The SLID data on educational attainment in 2004 are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

5.5.2. Skill Levels

The Literature Review and Data Collection Reports indicate that the skill levels of seasonal workers were significantly below those of permanent workers. Galarneau (p. 13) showed that a very low proportion of seasonal employees, both men and women, had managerial and professional skills. This study also showed that the majority of both men and women in seasonal jobs had skills associated with secondary school or less, and the

proportion of seasonal employees was much higher than the proportion of permanent employees at this skill level.

The 2004 SLID data also contain information on the skill levels of permanent and seasonal workers. Four skill levels were used to classify workers:¹⁰

- Professional occupations, usually requiring university education.
- Technical occupations, usually requiring college education or apprenticeship training.
- Intermediate occupations, usually requiring secondary school and/or occupation-specific training.
- Unskilled occupations, usually requiring only on-the-job training.

Table 7 shows the percentage of permanent and seasonal workers in each skill level category by occupational group in Canada in 2004.¹¹

¹⁰ Skill designations were provided by Statistics Canada based on a matrix matching occupations and skill levels provided by Service Canada. Refer to: National Occupational Classification Matrix, Human Resources Development Canada, 2001.

¹¹ These data should be interpreted with caution due to reliability issues associated with small numbers in the sample.

| TABLE 7: SKILL LEVELS OF PERMANENT AND SEASONAL WORKERS BY OCCUPATION CANADA, 2004 | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | % of Permanent Workers | % of Seasonal Workers |
| Business, Finance and Administrative Occupations | | |
| - Professional | 15% | F* |
| - Technical | 32% | 42% |
| - Intermediate | 54% | 53% |
| Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations | | |
| - Professional | 52% | F |
| - Technical | 48% | 83% |
| Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport | | |
| - Professional | 39% | F |
| - Technical | 61% | 92% |
| Sales and Service Occupations | | |
| - Technical | 25% | 13% |
| - Intermediate | 37% | 33% |
| - Unskilled | 38% | 53% |
| Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations | | |
| - Technical | 58% | 42% |
| - Intermediate | 36% | 40% |
| - Unskilled | 7% | 18% |
| Occupations Unique to Primary Industry | | |
| - Technical | 36% | F |
| - Intermediate | 39% | 44% |
| - Unskilled | 26% | 41% |
| Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities | | |
| - Technical | 14% | F |
| - Intermediate | 68% | 57% |
| - Unskilled | 18% | 40% |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

*Note: The figure "F" indicates that the data is too unreliable to be published.

Although the analysis is limited by the small number of workers in each occupation, the data in Table 7 indicate that the skill levels of seasonal workers are lower than those of permanent workers for all occupations included in the table.

5.6. Job Tenure, Duration and Number of Employers

It was found in the Literature Review and the Data Collection Reports that permanent employees worked in their jobs for a longer time than seasonal workers. The 2004 SLID data show that permanent employees worked for an average of 89 months in their current jobs compared to 24 months for seasonal workers. Galarneau's 2003 LFS information on the job tenure of permanent and seasonal workers is summarized in Table 8.

| TABLE 8: SENIORITY OF PERMANENT AND SEASONAL WORKERS CANADA, 2003 | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| | Permanent | Seasonal |
| Total Employees ('000) | 8,738.0 | 185.6 |
| Seniority | % | % |
| 1 to 3 Months | 3.3 | 22.2 |
| 4 to 6 Months | 3.9 | 15.0 |
| 7 to 9 Months | 3.5 | 5.5 |
| 10 to 12 Months | 3.0 | 3.3 |
| 13 to 24 Months | 9.8 | 12.8 |
| More than 24 Months | 76.5 | 41.1 |

Source: Galarneau, Table 4, p. 10.

Table 8 shows that a much higher percentage of seasonal workers (37.2%) than permanent workers (7.2%) had six months or less of seniority in their jobs in 2003. By contrast, approximately three-quarters of permanent workers had more than two years of seniority compared to about 41% of seasonal workers.

The 2004 SLID data show that approximately 81% of permanent employees worked for one employer in 2004 compared to 62% of seasonal workers.

5.7. Unionization

The only information on the unionization of seasonal workers comes from Galarneau. His analysis of LFS data (Table 4, p. 10) for 2003 found that the percentage of seasonal workers that were unionized (26.4%) was significantly less than the percentage of permanent workers that were unionized (35.5%).

6. REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF SEASONAL WORK

The Literature Review and Data Collection Reports both show that the proportion of the workforce that works on a seasonal basis was much higher in rural areas compared to urban areas and that the same finding holds for workers in Atlantic Canada compared to Canada as a whole.

Galarneau (2005) uses LFS data to show the regional breakdown and urban/rural split of seasonal and permanent workers as defined in the LFS. Table 9 presents Galarneau's data for 2003.

| TABLE 9: PROFILE OF PERMANENT AND SEASONAL WORKERS, 2003 | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Permanent | Seasonal |
| Total Employees ('000) | 8,738.0 | 185.6 |
| | % of All Permanent Workers in Canada | % of All Seasonal Workers in Canada |
| Province | | |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 1.3 | 7.1 |
| Prince Edward Island | 0.4 | 1.9 |
| Nova Scotia | 2.7 | 7.3 |
| New Brunswick | 2.2 | 6.9 |
| Québec | 23.7 | 25.8 |
| Ontario | 41.0 | 22.7 |
| Manitoba | 3.5 | 2.9 |
| Saskatchewan | 2.8 | 3.2 |
| Alberta | 10.4 | 9.0 |
| British Columbia | 12.1 | 13.2 |
| Urban/Rural Split | | |
| Rural | 21.4 | 43.4 |
| Urban | 78.6 | 56.7 |

Source: Galarneau, Table 9.

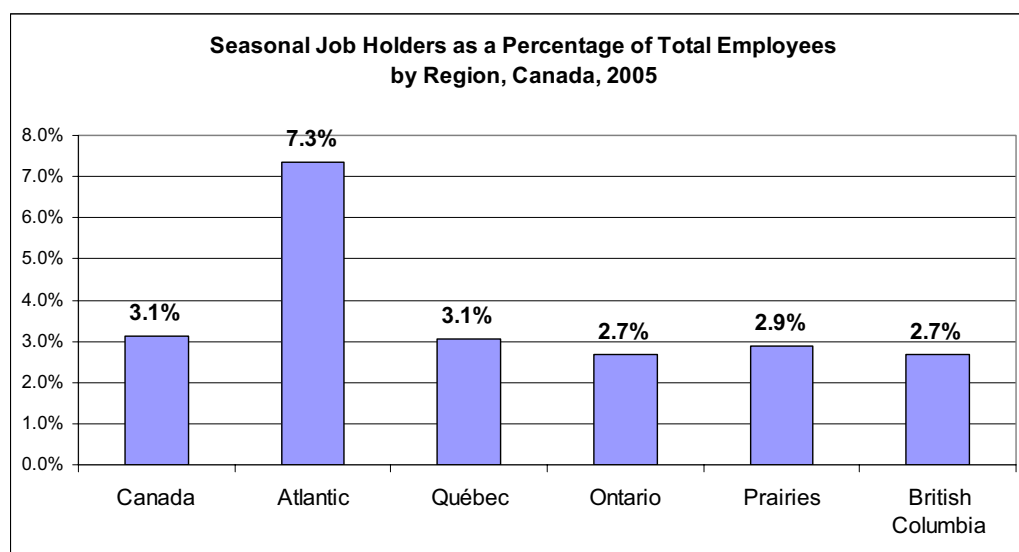
Table 9 shows the national percentage of permanent and seasonal workers in each province and in rural areas as opposed to urban areas. It demonstrates that the Atlantic Provinces were home to 23.2% of the seasonal workforce in Canada compared to only 6.6% the permanent workforce.

Seasonality in 2003 was particularly acute in the provinces of Newfoundland & Labrador and Prince Edward Island. Newfoundland & Labrador accounted for over five times as many of the nation's seasonal workers compared to permanent workers while the ratio for Prince Edward Island was just below five to one.

Table 9 also shows that rural areas accounted for about double the proportion of the seasonal workforce (approximately 43%) of the country compared to permanent workers (approximately 21%). It should be noted that there is still a significant degree of seasonality in the urban labour force – 57% of all seasonal workers in the country were in urban areas.

Figure 3 presents data from the 2005 LFS on seasonal employment as a percentage of total employment by region.

Figure 3



Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

Figure 3 shows that the seasonal workforce as a proportion of total employees in Atlantic Canada was about 2.4 times that for the nation as a whole. Thirteen of the key informants interviewed for this study indicated that seasonality varied by region in their industry sectors, while five stated that it did not and three felt that the question did not apply to their sector because it was not seasonal.

All key informants for the Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Mining, Oil and Gas, and Construction sectors indicated that seasonality varied by region. Factors that influenced seasonality included the weather, the timing of crops, resource availability and resource management systems. The influence of the weather on seasonality was greatest in northern areas of Canada and in Forestry, Mining, Oil and Gas, and Construction.

It is interesting to note that there is no consistent overall pattern for seasonal variations of employment by industry sector and by region across the country. For Mining, Oil and Gas and even for some inland and saltwater fisheries, activity is greatest in the winter months and lowest in the summer. For Agriculture, Construction, Forestry and most fisheries, activity is greatest in the summer but depends on unique factors such as the timing of a given crop or the availability of a specific species of fish. These factors can vary significantly within a province as well as across the country. For example, seasonality in fish harvesting follows a quite different pattern in Southwest Nova Scotia where fishing occurs in the winter months than in the northeast part of the province where fishing is concentrated in the spring.

There was no clear consensus on the regional variability in seasonality in the Tourism industry in Canada. Clearly, however, regional differences exist due to the influence of the weather on activities and attractions that draw tourists such as fishing, hunting, skiing and sightseeing. Once again, differences in seasonality may be experienced at a local level depending on the degree to which localities depend on these activities and attractions.

Interview respondents representing the Cultural Human Resources Council and Child Care Human Resources Sector Council did not feel that their sectors experienced regional differences in seasonality. The reason for this is that seasonality in these sectors was a function of institutional factors such as holidays and the timing of school terms that are, for the most part, common across the country.

A summary of the information on the regional differences in seasonality obtained from interviews is provided in Table 10.

| TABLE 10: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SEASONALITY | | | |
|--|-----|----|---|
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| The Canadian Horticultural Council | ✓ | | The degree of seasonality is dependent on the crop in relation to region. |
| Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council | ✓ | | Far northern regions more likely to need ice roads; activity stops in the summer. |
| Petroleum Human Resources Council | ✓ | | Seasonality is greatest in northern areas where on-shore/on-land exploration takes place and road access is a major issue. Most northern areas have to wait until winter to build ice roads as access to drilling and exploration sites. At other times of the year the area is too boggy to access. Winter (4 th quarter of the year) is the busiest followed by the 1 st quarter of the year. |
| Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada | ✓ | | In forestry, seasonality is dictated by access to the land, which in turn is determined by the weather. Southern areas have access to the land for greater proportions of the year. For example, Southern Ontario has a longer forestry season than Northern Ontario. |
| Canadian Silviculture Association | ✓ | | Seasonality in Silviculture depends on the terrain. The season is short in the Northern Interior and longer on the East Coast reaching 6 to 8 months in Newfoundland. |
| Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters | ✓ | | Seasonality in fisheries is determined by resource availability and management strategies. Seasons vary greatly from one region of the country to another. While fisheries in most regions occur in the spring, summer and fall, freshwater fisheries occur in the winter months. |
| Construction Sector Council | ✓ | | Seasonality is a function of the weather conditions in various parts of the country. For example, B.C. has a mild climate and seasonality is relatively low whereas it is more significant in Northern Canada. |
| Canadian Home Builders' Association | ✓ | | Seasonality is minimal in Southern Canada but more significant in the North. |

| TABLE 10: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SEASONALITY | | | |
|--|-----|----|--|
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| Cultural Human Resources Council | | ✓ | The highest concentration of workers is in the urban centres but there are no real differences in demand by region. |
| Software Human Resource Council | NA | | Not applicable because the sector is not seasonal. |
| Hotel Association of Canada | ✓ | | Alberta, Ontario and Québec are most seasonal. |
| Yukon Tourism Education Council | ✓ | | The tourist season is approximately 100 days long in the Yukon Territory. |
| Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council | ✓ | | Areas within the province of Saskatchewan that depend on adventure tourism such as hunting and fishing are most seasonal. |
| Tourism Industry Association of Canada | | ✓ | 40% of tourist volume is concentrated in the summer months in Canada but there is no real variation by region. |
| Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada | NA | | Not applicable because the sector is not seasonal. |
| Canadian Trucking Human Resources Sector Council | ✓ | | Areas and provinces such as B.C. and Atlantic Canada that rely most on industries such as fisheries, agriculture and construction experience the greatest degree of seasonality. |
| Canadian Police Sector Council | | ✓ | No comments provided. |
| National Seafood Sector Council | ✓ | | Seasonality by province and region depends on the timing of the fisheries. |
| Wood Manufacturing Council | | ✓ | Not aware of variations in seasonality by region. |
| Biotechnology Human Resources Council | NA | | Not applicable because the sector is not seasonal. |
| Child Care Human Resources Sector Council | | ✓ | Seasonality generally does not vary by region. Demand for child care workers is a function of the number of school age children and parents who work during school holidays. |

Source: Personal interviews completed by PRAXIS.

7. CHANGING DEMAND FOR SEASONAL WORKERS

There is conflicting evidence concerning the growth or decline of seasonality in Canada over time. The literature review and interviews provide evidence that seasonality has declined over the past 20 to 25 years whereas LFS data indicate that seasonality, as a percentage of total employment, has remained steady.

Studies by Marshall (1999) and Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey (2000) provide evidence that seasonality declined over the two decades prior to 1997 and suggest reasons for this trend.

With a large resource sector and a climate that is one of the most varied in the world, the Canadian labour market naturally exhibits large seasonal fluctuations in output and employment every year. In recent decades, however, the contribution of seasonal work to the Canadian economy has gradually diminished as industries have become modernized and more diversified. In their analysis of seasonality in employment in Canada, Marshall (1999) and Guillemette, L'Italien, and Grey (2000) report that the average monthly swings in employment due to seasonality declined during the 1976 to 1997 period. Two principal trends have contributed to this reduction in seasonality of Canadian industries. The first is a decrease in the degree of seasonality within traditionally seasonal industries due to the adoption of labour-saving technological advances. The second trend is an overall decrease in the share the traditionally seasonal industries have of total employment in Canada due to increasing demand for services and decreasing demand for manufactured goods. (de Raaf, Kapsalis, and Vincent, p. 1)

Sharpe and Smith (2005) describe these trends in the Canadian economy as follows:

The seasonality of the Canadian economy has declined since 1976 according to a wide range of output and labour market variables. However, since 1996 unemployment rate seasonality has increased. (Executive Summary, p. v)

They identify the following causal factors:

The fall in seasonality in Canada in recent decades is related to a number of factors, including: the declining importance of highly seasonal primary industries such as fishing and agriculture; technological advances that make work possible during periods when it was once not possible (e.g. pouring of concrete in winter); and the falling share of youth in the labour force. The employment pattern of youth is highly seasonal because of the labour force behaviour of students. (Sharpe and Smith, 2005, p. 3)

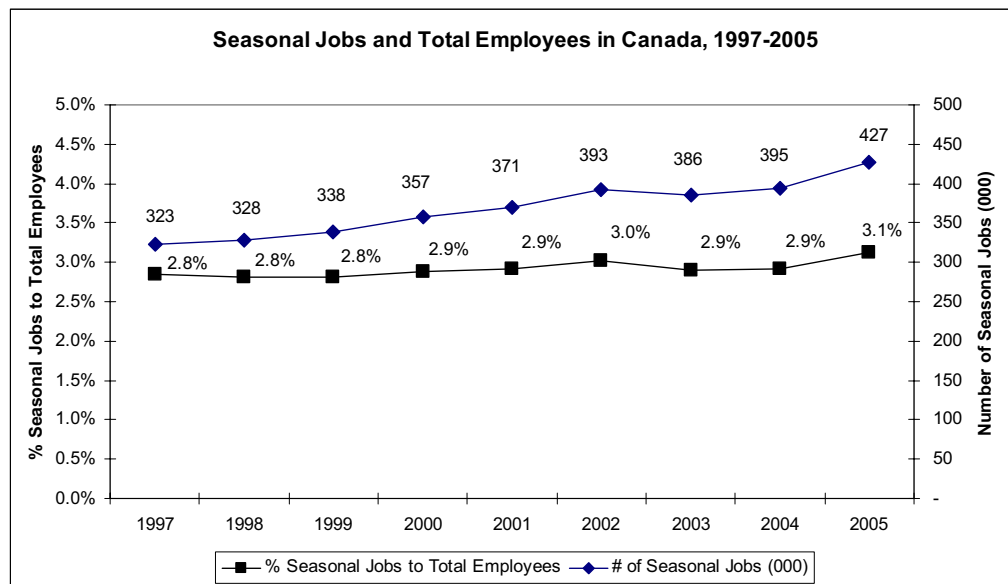
Some industry human resource experts corroborate this view. The representative of the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) made the following comment about the various sectors of the construction industry:

More and more these sectors are becoming year-round. The only slowdown comes at Christmas and under severe winter conditions.

Key informants from the Construction Sector Council and the CHBA agreed that many sectors of the construction industry are using new technology and construction methods to reduce winter-induced slowdowns.

Data from the LFS shows the trend in the number of seasonal jobs in the economy and the proportion of seasonal jobs to total employment. These trends are illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4



Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review, 2005.

These data are not consistent with findings from the literature review and interviews. According to LFS data the number of seasonal workers in Canada grew from approximately 323,000 in 1997 to 427,000 in 2005. The percentage of seasonal jobs to total employees grew slightly over the period as well, from 2.8% of total employees in 1997 to 3.1% in 2005. This discrepancy may be explained in part by the fact that the LFS data is for the period 1997 to 2005 whereas some of the studies considered in the literature review covered time periods before 1999.

8. INCOME ISSUES FACED BY SEASONAL WORKERS

The Literature Review and Data Collection Reports provide convincing evidence that seasonal workers have lower earnings than permanent workers in Canada. Galarneau (Tables 2 and 3, p. 9) analyzed LFS data and concluded that seasonal workers in Canada earned an average of \$14.41 per hour in 2003, or 28% less than permanent workers at an average of \$19.98 per hour.

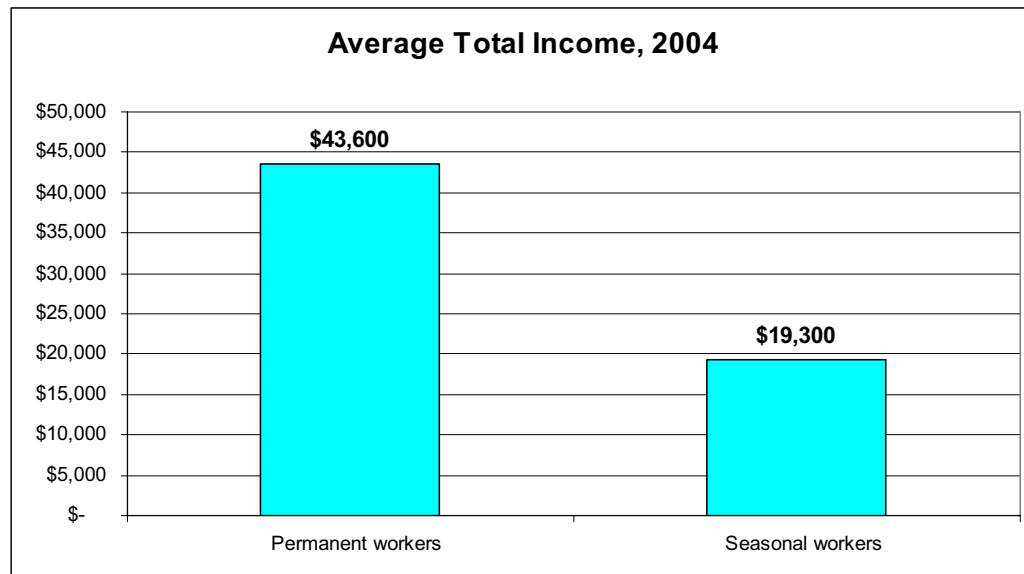
- Seasonal male workers earned an average of \$15.88 per hour or 27% less than male permanent workers.
- Seasonal female workers earned an average of \$11.14 per hour in 2003 or 38% less than permanent female workers.

Galarneau further found that the hourly earnings gap between permanent male workers and their seasonal counterparts narrowed to 18% after factoring in the hours worked by both groups of workers and the earnings of their spouses. Similarly, the earnings gap between seasonal and permanent female workers narrowed to 14% after factoring in the hours worked by both groups of workers and the earnings of their spouses.

The 2004 SLID provide evidence of an even greater discrepancy in the earnings of seasonal and permanent workers. The average hourly wage of permanent workers was \$20.30 compared to \$13 per hour for seasonal workers. Average annual earnings¹² of seasonal workers were \$14,500 compared to \$41,000 for permanent workers – almost three times that of seasonal workers. The average total incomes¹³ of permanent and seasonal workers are illustrated in Figure 5.

¹² Earnings include wages and salaries before deductions and self-employment income.

¹³ Total incomes include earnings from employment plus non-employment income from pensions, Employment Insurance benefits, etc.

Figure 5

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Figure 5 shows that the average total income of seasonal workers, including income from all sources such as Employment Insurance, was on average about 44% of the average total income of permanent workers.

The strong growth in the Canadian economy in 2005 and 2006, especially in Western Canada, has resulted in upward pressure on the wages of both seasonal and year round workers. Wage increases would tend to improve the ability of seasonal workers to afford housing but Section 11.5.7 of this report which discusses housing issues in the Construction industry shows that the strong economic growth in Western Canada has resulted in housing shortages and increasing prices for accommodations.

9. USE OF EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The literature review included a number of studies that examined the relationship between seasonality and the use of Employment Insurance (EI). These researchers made use of the Survey on the Repeat Use of Employment Insurance (SRUEI), the Canadian Out of Employment Panel (COEP), the EI Coverage Survey (EICS) and SLID.

The EICS and SLID surveys found that approximately 60% of seasonal workers reported receiving EI benefits after being laid-off from their seasonal jobs over the 1993 to 1998 period. (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, pp. 11 and 23) The SRUEI estimated that 57.4% of respondents who were classified as frequent EI claimants described their main job in 1997 as seasonal. (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 9)

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent concluded that the use of EI by seasonal workers is related to their local job opportunities as well as the EI eligibility rules for their region. The EI program has variable entry requirements that fluctuate according to local labour market conditions, meaning a seasonal worker living in a region with lower unemployment rates will not only be required to have more hours of work to qualify for EI, but will also receive fewer weeks of benefits for a given amount of work than a seasonal worker living in high unemployment regions.

The authors found that nearly half of the seasonal workers who never claimed EI lived in low unemployment regions while over two-thirds of workers with three years of receipt lived in regions with unemployment rates of 9% or higher. The authors concluded that this finding reflected regional differences in terms of both the availability of off-season work and the generosity of the EI program.

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent found that the change in 1996 from a weeks-based system to an hours-based system for determining eligibility may have had a positive impact on the eligibility and entitlement of EI claimants. The switch to an hours-based system was made in part to address concerns that a large and growing proportion of the employed workforce was not eligible for EI benefits should these workers become unemployed. However, it also

meant weeks worked by seasonal workers — who tend to work more hours per week — would be insured to a greater extent under the new regime, allowing many seasonal workers to qualify sooner for benefits due to their working schedules.

Additional findings by de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent (p. 19-22) regarding the relationship between seasonality and EI use are:

- Men comprise over two-thirds of seasonal workers who claimed EI two or three times.
- Seasonal workers who relied on EI the most frequently tend to be older than other types of EI users.
- Long-term seasonal workers who rely on EI the most intensively are more likely to live in Atlantic Canada and Québec where unemployment rates tend to be higher and where seasonal work is more integral to the economy.
- A significant population of seasonal workers exists in Ontario and the Western Provinces. The majority of workers who claim EI in two or fewer years live in these provinces. The study found the end of a seasonal spell of employment for these workers did not necessarily lead to a claim for EI benefits. The most likely reasons for this situation were stricter regional EI eligibility requirements or a greater availability of off-season work.
- The majority of seasonal workers lived with a partner and this share became even larger as the intensity of reliance on EI benefits increased. However, this does not mean the seasonal workers claiming EI more frequently are better off financially. Seasonal workers with one or no EI claims associated with their seasonal employment spells were more likely to be in the highest family income category (\$60,000 plus), even though they were less likely to be living in households where there was potentially another adult income earner. Workers with the two or three claims were more likely to be in the lowest income category (under \$35,000).
- Seasonal workers continue to comprise a large and growing proportion of EI beneficiaries.

- Seasonal claims do not decline in periods of strong economic growth.

De Raaf et al conclude that their findings dispel the myth that all seasonal workers are frequent EI claimants. These findings show that while a majority of seasonal workers do rely on EI on a regular basis, a significant proportion never rely on EI following any of their seasonal job spells.

Analysis of the SLID data for 2004 show that that seasonal workers were unemployed for an average of six weeks in 2004 while permanent workers were unemployed for two weeks on average. The SLID data also show that approximately 13% of permanent workers drew Employment Insurance in 2004 compared to 42% of seasonal workers. The average earnings from Employment Insurance were \$4,700 for permanent workers and \$6,000 for seasonal workers.

The interviews with industry key informants indicate that seasonal workers in Fish Harvesting, Seafood Processing and Construction relied heavily on EI to supplement their earnings in the off-season. Interviewees further indicate that young seasonal workers in the Child Care and Oil and Gas sectors did not rely on EI while the reliance on EI for young workers in the Tourism and Silviculture industries depended on the region in which the workers were employed. Most young workers from the Atlantic used EI to supplement their incomes while workers from Central and Western Canada did not.

9.1. Key Groups of Seasonal Workers in Canada

The analysis and profile of seasonal workers has important implications for housing issues. It identifies industry and occupational groups that contain the majority of seasonal workers and describes the demographics and characteristics of these workers. It allows the discussion of housing issues, and of policies to address these issues, to be focused on specific industry and occupational groups that are most seasonal. Table 11 presents a summary overview of the industry sectors that contain large numbers of seasonal workers and of the young workers who comprise the largest group of seasonal workers.

| TABLE 11: KEY GROUPS OF SEASONAL WORKERS | | |
|--|---------|---------------------------|
| Target Groups | Number | % of All Seasonal Workers |
| Young student workers | 255,000 | 43% |
| Young non-students in entry level jobs | | |
| Workers in primary industries ⁽¹⁾ | 93,000 | 16% |
| Construction workers | 101,000 | 17% |
| Tourism workers ⁽²⁾ | 177,000 | 30% |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Note⁽¹⁾: The number and percentage of seasonal workers in primary industries is understated because workers in fish and food processing and other sectors that depend on primary industries are classified as manufacturing sector workers.

Note⁽²⁾: Tourism is not a separate industry in NAICS 2002 but tourism is an important component of several industries including: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services and Transportation and Warehousing. Many of the seasonal jobs in these industries are in fact in the tourism sector and therefore we have included all seasonal jobs in these sectors in this table. For this reason, the number of workers included in the Tourism industry in Table 11 may be overstated.

The reader should bear in mind that there is duplication in the numbers of seasonal workers in Table 11 and the percentages add to more than 100%. For example, a significant proportion of the seasonal workers in the Tourism sector are young workers. For this reason, young Tourism workers are counted twice in Table 11.

Despite the issue of duplication, it is safe to say that at least 60% of all the seasonal workers in Canada work in one of the target groups identified in

the table. In reality the proportion of seasonal workers identified in these groups likely is in the order of three-quarters of all seasonal workers. The obvious policy implication is that measures to address housing issues should focus on these groups.

However, these groups are not homogeneous in terms of factors that could influence housing needs and issues. These factors include:

- Whether the seasonal workers require permanent or temporary accommodation;
- Income levels;
- Age profile;
- Region of residence;
- The existing housing and building infrastructure relevant to each group;
- Government legislation and policies that apply to housing for each group; and
- The profitability of industries that employ each target group.

The implications of the non-homogeneity of target groups for the housing issues faced by each group are discussed below.

10. FOREIGN SEASONAL WORKERS

The international movement of migrant workers has increased in recent years and is expected to rise further. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), there were some 86 million economically active migrant and immigrant workers in 2000, including 20.5 million in North America. Although some migrants work in high-tech or professional occupations, most are found in low-paid, less-skilled jobs in agriculture, construction, domestic service or the sex-industry – the so-called 3D jobs: “dirty, dangerous and degrading.” (ILO, June 2004)

Employment of migrant labour in agriculture is a growing phenomenon internationally. About 500,000 seasonal workers from non-European Union countries – about 10% of the total agricultural seasonal workforce – are employed in EU agriculture annually. The use of migrant workers to harvest crops is expanding in the U.S. and Canada to include related activities like large-scale livestock operations and meatpacking plants. (Ziebarth, Bruce, and VanDean)

Migrant workers have been important for the agriculture industry in Canada for many years. The federal government’s Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) has facilitated temporary workers coming to Canada from the Caribbean since 1966 and from Mexico since 1974. It accounts for only a small percentage of the farm labour force in Canada, but because it is a regulated program more is known about these workers than about the rest of the seasonal farm labour force. Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) describes this program as follows:

The Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) allows the organized entry of foreign workers to work in agricultural labourer occupations in Canada. The SAWP was developed by HRSDC and CIC in cooperation with agricultural producers and a number of foreign countries including Mexico and several Commonwealth Caribbean countries.

The SAWP currently operates in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and meets the needs of specific agricultural commodity sectors. (<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/seasagri.shtml>)

The SAW Program brought 19,000 workers to this country in 2002 (MacLellan, Mares, p. 15), with about 10,600 coming from Mexico. (Igartua, p. 6) The majority of SAW Program participants go to the province of Ontario, although farmers from all other provinces except Newfoundland also hire them. Québec and British Columbia were the last to take part.

There are also a number of Mennonite farm workers who live in South America but retain Canadian citizenship and come regularly to work on Canadian farms under the auspices of the Mennonite Central Committee.

A survey by the British Columbia government in 1998 found that most seasonal workers hired by farm labour contractors in that province were recent immigrants of East Indian origin. (Commission for Labour Cooperation [CLC], p. 8) In addition, the sugar beet fields of Southern Alberta have long employed both temporary-seasonal and immigrant labourers from Japan, Europe and Aboriginal communities. (Laliberte, Satzewich) Another sector that relies on foreign workers to some degree is domestic service.

An interview with a representative of the Petroleum Human Resources Council indicated that the Temporary Worker Program (TWP) is used in the oil and gas industry and that temporary workers are offered the same incentives, incomes and benefits as domestic workers due to the competitive nature of the labour market.

Spokespersons for the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) indicated that over the last five years 350 temporary workers have participated in the Construction Recruitment External Worker Services (CREWS) program. The CHBA was not sure about housing arrangements and felt that they probably varied by employer.

The Hotel Association of Canada indicated that employers are responsible for providing lodging for 400 to 500 foreign workers employed in resorts in that industry.

11. HOUSING ISSUES

11.1. Focus on Availability, Affordability and Adequacy

A Research Highlight in CMHC's Socio-economic Series (04-008, May 2004) entitled "2001 Census Housing Series: Issue 4 Revised Canada's Metropolitan Areas" includes definitions of the affordability and suitability of housing. (CMHC, May 2004, p. 6) For the purposes of this report suitability is assumed to be a component of adequacy. The definitions are as follows:

- *Adequate dwellings are those reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs.*
- *Suitable dwellings have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.*
- *Affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of before-tax household income.*

The report goes on to note that:

According to the National Occupancy Standard enough bedrooms means one bedroom for each cohabitating adult couple; unattached household member 18 years of age and over; same-sex pair of children under age 18; and additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite sex siblings under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e., a unit with no bedroom).

Affordability and adequacy, as defined above, are important housing issues faced by seasonal workers in Canada. Research conducted for this project confirms the importance of these issues.

The availability of housing also is an important issue for seasonal workers in Canada. A definition for availability could not be found in the literature reviewed for this study. It is defined in this study as housing that is accessible, obtainable and adequate for seasonal workers. In this context, availability implies that housing must be affordable for seasonal workers.

This report focuses on the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing for seasonal workers.

Sections 4 to 9 of this report show that there is a great deal of variation in the seasonal workforce. Interviews with industry representatives confirmed that this variation leads directly to differences in the housing issues facing individual segments of the seasonal workforce. For this reason, the analysis of housing issues of seasonal workforce must be undertaken separately for each distinct segment of the seasonal workforce.

11.2. Differences in Housing Issues for Mobile and Non-Mobile Workers

As discussed in the introduction to this report, the Statement of Work included in the contract for this study indicated that housing issues should be addressed for the following three categories of seasonal workers:

1. Domestic seasonal workers who work and live in the same community;
2. Domestic seasonal workers who do not live and work in the same community but migrate to their region of work; and
3. Immigrant seasonal workers.

It is clear from the literature review, and from key informant input, that the housing issues for these groups differ fundamentally. The nature of the differences is discussed in this section of the report.

11.2.1. Domestic Seasonal Workers Who Work and Live in the Same Community

Most of these seasonal workers own or rent permanent homes and employers are not involved in the provision of, or payments for, accommodations. The available qualitative findings indicate that housing issues of availability, affordability and adequacy for workers who live in permanent housing depends on a range of factors notably their income levels in relation to the housing infrastructure and costs in the areas in which they live. Research also indicates that there is an overlap of the housing issues of seasonal workers and wider issues of income security, rural policy and rural housing generally.

The evidence suggests that a significant proportion of the seasonal workers in this sector of the labour force share certain basic characteristics:

- They are based predominantly in rural communities.
- A large number are employed in Primary Production industries, Construction and Tourism, Accommodations and related sectors.
- They generally have lower education levels and fewer professional qualifications and are therefore less mobile and less able to take advantage of new employment options.
- They generally have lower income levels and a higher dependence on Employment Insurance and other income transfers.
- They are generally older than both the labour force overall and the seasonal labour force overall.
- They are a much larger proportion of both the labour force, and the seasonal labour force, in the Atlantic Region and Québec than in the rest of Canada.

There is further evidence that this sector will shrink in overall size as primary industries continue to shed labour through technological change (e.g., forest products) and falling production levels (e.g., the fishery).

There is, in fact, substantial research evidence that housing is a key factor in holding people in marginal seasonal occupations in some rural regions. For example, in studies on fisheries adjustment programs after the groundfish collapse in Atlantic Canada in the mid-1990s, many displaced workers expressed the view that with their qualifications, they could not afford to move to available jobs in urban areas because much higher housing costs would substantially lower their disposable income and standard of living. (ARC Consultants & GTA Consultant, Summative Evaluation Report on The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy [TAGS] Program, for Human Resources Development Canada, 1999)

11.2.2. Domestic Seasonal Workers Who Migrate to their Region of Work

This category of seasonal worker is comprised of different sub-categories including:

- Young unskilled workers moving to areas of high labour demand to find entry-level jobs;
- Medium-skilled and experienced workers moving to seasonal jobs in Agricultural production, the Accommodations and Food Services sector; and
- Highly skilled trades and professional workers with access to high-paying jobs in industries such as Mining, Construction, Oil and Gas exploration and certain fields within the Tourism, Food Service and Recreation sectors.

Housing issues will vary widely among these different situations.

Workers who move away from their home areas require temporary accommodations and, as a result, face fundamentally different issues with the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing than non-mobile workers. Key differences are the ownership of housing, employer involvement in the provision of housing and the causes of availability, adequacy and affordability problems.

In some cases employers are involved in providing or subsidizing temporary housing for mobile workers, although this is not always the case. Research conducted for this study indicates that the level and form of employer involvement in the provision and subsidization of housing for workers requiring temporary accommodation depends on a number of factors and varies significantly by industry and even from firm to firm within industries. Interviews with key informants indicate that it is impossible to generalize about the housing situation of mobile workers and a case by case analysis is required.

The literature review and interviews suggest that workers who move away from their home areas to work in other parts of their regions or of the country can face serious housing issues related to availability, affordability and adequacy. In some cases employers are involved in providing or subsidizing housing for such temporary workers, but often not.

The status of housing for workers requiring temporary accommodations provided or paid for by employers is influenced by legislation designed to address this issue. An overview of this legislation is provided in Section 11.8 of this report.

11.2.3. Foreign Migrant Seasonal Workers

Foreign migrant seasonal workers come to Canada through guest worker programs overseen by governments. The housing issues faced by these workers are similar to those of domestic workers except that employer responsibilities for the provision of housing are sometimes specified within the programs under which these workers are brought into Canada. One such program is the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP).

The literature review completed for this study included the findings of a review of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program completed by Canada's North-South Institute. The review documented a number of problems with the adequacy of housing provided by employers under the program while also pointing out the good practices of some employers. The review recommended some changes that would improve the adequacy of housing provided by employers to workers in the program. The recommendations included:

- Fewer workers housed in smaller units;
- A private bedroom for each worker;
- Indoor plumbing;
- A separate social space away from eating and sleeping areas;
- More frequent inspections; and
- Updated housing guidelines.

The literature review and interviews also showed that many industries ranging from Tourism to Construction are importing foreign workers into Canada. Employer responsibilities with respect to housing are not included in Service Canada's Foreign Worker Application that must be completed by employers. As noted above, an interview with the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) indicated that the provision of housing for foreign workers under the Construction Recruitment External Worker Services (CREWS) program varies from employer to employer.

The research has not generated evidence of significant housing problems for most categories of migrant workers. Workers who come to Canada through guest worker programs overseen by government seem to be well protected. There were suggestions that in situations where bringing in foreign workers is a new phenomenon, as in the seafood processing sector on the East Coast, due attention may not be paid to housing issues, but there was no indication of serious problems to date.

11.3. Data Limitations

11.3.1. Inability to Differentiate Mobile and Non-Mobile Seasonal Workers

Section 11.2 showed that the nature and magnitude of housing issues is fundamentally different for seasonal workers who are mobile and those who live and work in the same community.

Quantitative data are not available to distinguish seasonal workers who live and work in the same community (i.e., non-mobile seasonal workers) from

those who require temporary accommodation to work at sites that are remote from their permanent homes (i.e., mobile seasonal workers). The inability to determine the number of seasonal workers who are mobile and non-mobile makes it impossible to relate quantitative data to the housing issues experienced by each group.

11.3.2. Lack of Industry and Occupational Specific Data on the Characteristics of Seasonal Workers

The LFS and SLID provide useful data on the demographics and characteristics of seasonal workers as a whole but not for industry and occupational sub-sets of seasonal workers or for target groups identified in Table 11. As a result, it is not possible to examine characteristics such as the income, education and skill levels of young seasonal workers or workers in a given industry or occupational grouping. For example, we know that seasonal workers as a whole have low incomes which would lead to problems with the affordability of housing but we cannot say with certainty and precision that young seasonal workers, or workers in primary industries, share this problem. This limitation of the data decreases our ability to relate the demographics and characteristics of distinct groups of seasonal workers to their housing circumstances.

Table 11 of this report showed that a high proportion of young workers, and workers in Primary, Tourism and Construction industries, are seasonal and that roughly three-quarters of all seasonal workers in Canada fall into these four groups. This finding implies that the discussion of housing issues should be focused on these four groups. The following sections contain this discussion.

11.4. Housing Issues of Young Workers

As noted previously in this report, interviews show that there are two distinct groups of young seasonal workers – students and non-students. These groups would undoubtedly face different housing issues but there are no data on the relative numbers in each group or their characteristics.

It also is impossible to determine the proportion of young workers that work and live in the same community or travel outside their communities

and live in temporary accommodations. As noted in Section 11.2.2 of this report, mobile workers who live in temporary housing face very different housing issues than workers who live and work in the same community.

These deficiencies limit the ability to use data on young seasonal workers to analyze housing issues faced by this group. Furthermore, no literature exists on the housing circumstances of the four distinct sub-groups of seasonal workers under 25 years of age: (1) young student workers who live and work in the same community, (2) young mobile student workers, (3) young non-student workers who live and work in the same community and (4) young mobile non-student workers.

The interviews did provide some information on housing issues of students and non-students. This information is summarized in the next two sections of the report.

11.4.1. Student Workers

The interviews indicate that young seasonal workers often were highly mobile students who were single and relatively highly educated. They often earned reasonably high wages or made reasonable incomes from piece work (Silviculture) and tips (Tourism). The exception is seasonal Child Care workers. While the majority of Child Care workers do not work on a seasonal basis, students often work as Child Care workers on a seasonal basis during the Christmas and summer holidays. Information provided by the Executive Director of the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council indicates that both year round and seasonal Child Care workers earn relatively low incomes. This assertion is supported by a study entitled “A Snapshot of the Child Care Workforce” produced by the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (undated) which shows that centre-based Early Childhood Educators and Assistants (ECEs) earned \$21,519 in 2002 according to the 2001 Census while home-based ECEs and Assistants earned \$14,916. This compares with an overall salary of approximately \$39,000 for workers in Canada in 2000.

Interviews indicate that many student workers in the Tourism and Hospitality industry are provided with housing by their employers although all or part of the cost is recovered from the workers. Interviews

also show that employers often make some provision for housing students who work in seasonal jobs such as tree planting or construction.

The representative of the Child Care sector indicated that housing was not a significant issue in this sector because most Child Care workers are employed in their own community. The representative was aware of summer camps where counselors are provided with housing by the employer. The only possible issue raised by the representative related to the adequacy of accommodations in cases where parents provided housing to live-in nannies or babysitters but these issues would arise on a case by case basis and generalizations were impossible.

11.4.2. Non-Students

Information from the literature and from key informant interviews indicates that young non-student seasonal workers may work in lucrative jobs in the Oil and Gas industry or low paying, entry-level jobs in the service industry. There are indications that housing can be a significant problem for young entry-level workers who often earn relatively low incomes and who predominantly occupy low-skill positions with limited career prospects.

Young non-student workers would share the problems of all seasonal workers employed by resorts and recreational facilities. The most significant problems related to the availability and affordability of housing at peak tourist season when the demand for accommodations exceeds its supply for a period of time. The extent of the problems faced by seasonal workers depends on the provision and subsidization of accommodations by employers. Interviews indicate that in some cases employers do not make provision for housing seasonal staff and, in these circumstances the workers experience serious housing problems.

11.5. Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Primary Industries

The situation of Primary workers varies significantly from industry to industry. Seasonal workers in the Fish Harvesting and Seafood Processing industries tend to live and work in the same community. Hunters and Trappers have traditionally required temporary housing although the

numbers of these workers has declined and their accommodation requirements have changed significantly. Forestry workers sometimes live and work in the same community but a significant percentage of these workers live in temporary accommodations while seasonally employed. A significant proportion of the seasonal workforce in the Agriculture industry is migrant workers who require temporary accommodation. Seasonal domestic agricultural workers may live in permanent residences or in temporary accommodations.

A relatively high proportion of Primary workers live in rural areas and many work and live in the same community. The housing problems of these workers would be similar to those documented for rural areas in report such as David Bruce's "Housing Needs of Low-Income People Living in Rural Areas". The Bruce report showed that the availability of rental housing is an issue as there is less rental housing in rural areas compared with urban areas. The Bruce report went on to show that more of the rural housing stock is older and in need of major repairs. The Bruce study estimated that 11.3% of rural households did not have adequate housing.

The Bruce report also showed that affordability was a significant housing issue in rural areas. The findings of the Bruce report on affordability were summed up as follows in the Research Highlights document of February 2003:

"The statistical review revealed that 15 per cent of rural households and 17.8 per cent of rural off-reserve Aboriginal households faced affordability problems in 1996 as measured by the core housing need model."¹⁴

The literature review indicates that northern areas experience housing issues and problems that are unique in many ways including:

- Climate makes housing more expensive to build and operate;
- Costs are increased by the absence of local building materials;

¹⁴ "Housing Needs of Low-Income People Living in Rural Areas", Research Highlights, CMHC Socio-economic Series, Issue 116, February 2003.

- The small population and scattered nature of settlement, combined with higher costs, reduce the viability of the private market which in turn reduces housing options;
- The fact that many indigenous people do not benefit from the resource economy means that there is a marginalized sector of society that faces difficult housing circumstances;
- Overall, the evidence suggests that the level of housing need is considerably higher in northern and remote areas;
- In terms of Core Housing Need, affordability is less of a problem than adequacy and suitability. This is likely due to factors such as a high level of subsidized housing which reduces affordability problems and a lack of municipal infrastructure which means that many homes do not have indoor water or plumbing or adequate sewage disposal or adequate fire protection; and
- Suitability problems are generally more common because housing units are often smaller and family units larger than in the South.

Interviewees indicate that the cause of the housing affordability problems in the North goes back to the high cost of living in the North compared to wage levels in this area.

An industry by industry analysis of the housing issues of Primary workers is presented in the ensuing sections of this report.

11.5.1. Housing Issues in the Fishing Industry

The housing needs of fishers often depend on the type of fishery in which they are engaged. On the East Coast, the fishery is conventionally divided into inshore, nearshore and offshore operations. Inshore and nearshore fishermen typically live in fishing villages located in close proximity to their vessels. These fishers sometimes spend a night or two on the vessel but, for the most part, travel back to their homes upon the completion of a daily fishing trip.

The circumstances of offshore fishers in Atlantic Canada differ significantly than those of the inshore/nearshore fishers. These fishers may spend weeks or even months aboard vessels. It is important to note that the offshore fleet declined drastically with the collapse of groundfish stocks and the number of vessels and fishers participating in the Atlantic offshore also dropped dramatically.

Internationally, the International Labour Organization has proposed a comprehensive standard to govern conditions of work in the fishing sector. The standard includes living conditions aboard offshore fishing vessels. Our literature review did not turn up any evidence of issues concerning living conditions aboard modern day offshore vessels involving Canadian crews.

No major housing issues emerged in the interviews for workers in the Fish Harvesting sector. For the most part workers in this industry work and live in the same community and have done so for many years. Accommodation is provided by vessel captains to their crew in cases where vessels remain at sea over night.

11.5.2. Housing Issues in Seafood Processing

Until recent years, the dominant model on the East Coast was that of the small fish plant located in a fishing community and worked mainly by the wives of fishers. Despite the consolidation of processing facilities on both coasts (and the closure of fish plants in many coastal communities) the majority of fish plant workers are still drawn from the local community. According to the National Seafood Sector Council, in both 1996 and 2001, about 25% of workers moved to take jobs in the industry. However, there is no indication in the literature that these moves created any housing issues for workers or employers. Although the industry has expressed concern about an aging workforce and a low rate of recruitment, there is also no indication that Canadian seafood processors are having to resort to aggressive recruitment campaigns – like some Alaska firms – or to use illegal immigrants, as has happened in the United Kingdom.

No major housing issues emerged in the interviews for workers in the Seafood Processing sector. As with workers in the Fish Harvesting sector, workers in the Seafood Processing sector generally live in the same

community where they work and do not require housing. Recently, shortages of labour in the Seafood Processing sector have led to importing workers from other provinces and other countries such as Russia. The interview for the Seafood Processing sector indicated that there was no employer or government housing support provided to workers moving from one province to another to process seafood but did not know of support available to workers coming from other countries to process seafood.

11.5.3. Housing Issues in Forestry

The literature review indicates that camps are still an important source of housing in the forest industry but the issue of living conditions in the camps seems to have fallen off the radar screen. Information available from the websites of integrated forestry companies such as Canfor, Kruger or Abitibi suggest that there may be hundreds of logging camps across Canada. Some are run by large integrated forestry companies, others by logging contractors.

The adequacy and availability of housing for temporary workers in the forest industry are influenced by the fact that most provinces have regulations setting minimum standards for temporary accommodations. In addition, strong unions within the logging industry have had an impact in ensuring adequate living conditions in lumber camps. However, this could become less of a factor as more camps become the responsibility of logging contractors, many of whom are non-union.

The representative of the Forest Products Employment Research Council interviewed for this study stated that housing did not seem to be a big issue for the sector. He did note that there were differences by region and that he was only familiar with the situation in Eastern Canada.

The representative of the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada (FERIC) indicated that logging camps still exist in the forest industry but are now found in the more remote areas such as Northern Ontario and parts of Atlantic Canada. He stated that, while some companies have camps, their numbers were fewer and fewer. He estimated that there are probably around 100 or so still in existence.

The FERIC representative felt that housing problems in the forest industry were most significant in Silviculture. He stated that housing conditions vary from one employer to another but that accommodations were most often the responsibility of employees. He knew of cases where seasonal Silviculture workers lived in their own trailers or tents. He also noted that these workers often did not have access to showers or other common domestic facilities.

The FERIC representative also noted that employers in the logging sector provided high quality lodgings in camps and that the situation had changed significantly from the poor accommodations provided in the 1950s. Modern camps have amenities such as satellite dishes and exercise rooms. He stated that his organization responds to the research needs of the forestry sector and housing issues have not emerged as a big issue in the sector.

An interview with a representative of the Canadian Silviculture Association (CSA) indicates that employers in the Silviculture sector sometimes provide “tent” camps (temporary structures) with showers and privies for their workers. He indicated that workers sometimes bring their own tent and equipment to the job and, in some areas, employees also have the option of staying in a motel or even staying at home (depending on the distance to the camp). The representative stated that there were no difficulties with respect to housing in the Silviculture sector and no need for additional housing to be provided to workers. He pointed to legislation such as the Camp Standards Act in B.C. that called for the provision of amenities such as hot showers, hard wood floors in food preparation areas, and covered eating areas with tables, generators and water filtration systems even in remote camps.

The representative felt that the camps provided by employers were functional and of high quality noting that wood stoves were commonly used for cooking. He did indicate, however, that there had been problems in the past and pointed to a situation 10 years ago when there were carbon monoxide deaths in Québec.

The CSA representative indicated that the biggest issue is ensuring that there is potable drinking water at Silviculture camp sites. The representative noted that the Western Silviculture Contractors’ Association

was seeking a provincial drinking water standard for Silviculture camps as part of the implementation of the B.C. Drinking Water Protection Act enacted in 2003. He noted that the association met with the province's Drinking Water Leadership Council as part of a consultation process to create practical drinking water guidelines for transient Silviculture camps.

The CSA representative pointed out that the normal practice in the Silviculture industry is that workers lodged in a motel are charged the full cost of the motel although he also pointed out that contractors usually had an agreement with hotel owners to charge relatively low rates.

11.5.4. Housing Issues in Hunting and Trapping

There are a number of historical sources dealing with the housing conditions experienced by Aboriginal Hunters and Trappers. However, as the number of persons employed as Hunters and Trappers has declined, so apparently has information on their housing needs.

Henricksen described the practices of Naskapi hunters in Labrador who traditionally spent summers engaged in inshore fishing from their homes in Davis Inlet. The Naskapi spent the winter hunting caribou in the Labrador interior and living in tents. But in more modern times people return on the same day from caribou hunting by snowmobile. In summer, the Inuit fished and hunted seals, living in tent villages set up along the coast. Seal netting also took place along the coast, often involving permanent camps. Nowadays, however, there are few if any hunting, trapping or fishing camps because there is very little or no fish to catch, no animals to hunt and seals are not in demand.

11.5.5. Housing Issues in the Mining Industry

A representative for the Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council interviewed for this study stated that mining is not a seasonal sector and indicated that there were no issues of the availability, adequacy and affordability of housing in the sector.

11.5.6. Housing Issues in Tourism

The literature review found indications of problems with housing availability and affordability for tourism industry workers. The issue – identified by organizations such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Government of France, the Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Housing for Everyone (SAGE) and the Village of Whistler, B.C. – is that low wages in the tourism industry are exacerbated by higher-than-normal housing costs in resort areas. The result is that many tourism workers cannot afford to live in the communities in which they work.

A potential issue facing the tourism industry in Canada is the housing of foreign workers. The industry maintains that over the next decade it may be unable to fill as many as 300,000 positions and will therefore need to attract foreign workers. Several approaches are being explored – including Foreign Credentials Recognition, working with Provincial Nominee Programs or using the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. The literature review found that the requirement of this program that employers pay travel costs and facilitate accommodation for foreign workers may be beyond the capacity of small operators who make up 43% of tourism businesses.

Representatives of four Tourism organizations, two national and two provincial, were interviewed for this study. The organizations had significantly different views on housing issues facing seasonal workers in the Tourism sector. One of the national organizations, the Hotel Association of Canada, indicated that there were no major housing issues as the labour force is provided with housing. The representative of this association indicated that housing ranges from dormitories to single family dwellings depending on the position and pay scale of the worker. He indicated that all those who work in the resort, except for local residents, are provided with accommodation.

The other national organization interviewed, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), stated that providing housing for seasonal workers is a big problem in Western Canada. The representative of TIAC indicated that workers are sometimes forced to live in campers and trailers during the tourist season because they can not afford rental housing. A shortage of housing occurs because of the temporary increase in the

demand for housing resulting from a high level of tourist activity. He provided the example of Dawson Creek in the Yukon where the population swells from 800 in the winter to 5,000 in the summer months.

The representative of the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council agreed that there was a seasonal shortage of housing available for workers in the Tourism sector in the summer months. This individual provided the example of Waskesiu in the Prince Albert National Park as an area that experiences a significant seasonal shortage of housing. This individual indicated that the adequacy of housing available to seasonal workers varied from one employer to another and that the availability of housing was a greater factor than cost.

An interview conducted with the Yukon Tourism Education Council indicates that the biggest housing issue faced by seasonal workers in that area is the high rental cost plus the low vacancy rate for housing. These issues vary by region. For example, in some small communities the RV parks and hotels are fully utilized by the tourists with no room to house staff. It does not benefit an employer economically to house their staff in their properties if it is taking away space from paying customers.

The Yukon Tourism Education Council indicated that there is a severe housing shortage in both rural and urban areas of the North with many workers having to tent for the six months when they are working in a remote location.

In the Yukon, there has been a "freeze" on opening up any more development properties for new housing projects so there will not be any significant new housing available. This problem likely will decrease the availability and affordability of housing in the future.

The overall conclusion of interviews of tourism representatives indicate that the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing were significant issues for seasonal workers at hotels, resorts and recreational facilities despite employer efforts to provide accommodations for their workers.

11.5.7. Housing Issues in Construction

Interviews with the Construction Sector Council and the Canadian Home Builders' Association pointed to the existence of significant housing issues related to the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing in areas with a high level of economic activity and in-migration. Fort McMurray was the most frequently cited example. The Sector Councils indicated that, in such cases, there was limited housing available for Construction workers and the municipal infrastructure often was not adequate to support the number of workers who had migrated to the area. They cited cases where workers were forced to "bunk together to save money." The interviewees indicated that housing arrangements are part of the contract between the employer and employee and the responsibility for providing and paying for housing varies on a case by case basis.

The tight labour market in Alberta and influx of workers from other areas brought on by the oil and gas boom was noted by interviewees as a cause of the housing shortages in that area. Regulatory constraints on building houses in this area also were mentioned as a problem and the municipal infrastructure in some communities was not considered adequate to handle the influx of workers.

The representative of the Petroleum Human Resources Council indicated that employers in the Oil and Gas sector sometimes set up camps for employees. Camps provided by employers are well equipped and included aqua trailers with recreational facilities. The representative stated that there are no municipal health and safety standards governing housing provided to seasonal workers but felt that companies were offering facilities that were "above standard" because they are competing for labour. The interviewee noted that the time line for companies in the Oil and Gas industry is at most 10 years. For this reason, companies do not want to build a lot of infrastructure and then not be able to sustain it in the future. The representative advised that flexible solutions are needed to solve the housing problem.

The literature review found that the Construction industry is giving consideration to the nature of accommodations available to migrant nationals working on projects such as the oil sands. This follows the

publication in 2005 of the study “Working Mobile” by the Construction Sector Council. The study reported that personal expenses incurred on the job site and at home could become a barrier to workers’ willingness to work mobile. The study also reported negative views about the adequacy of accommodations in construction camps – in particular the lack of privacy and personal space. The report pointed out that cost considerations ruled out alternative accommodations and the affordability of temporary accommodations also was a significant issue. (CSC)

11.5.8. Housing Issues in Film Production

The literature review could not find evidence of housing issues for workers in Film Production. This may be because on average, workers in the Canadian motion picture and video industry earned \$31,511 in 2000, similar to the average earnings of the workforce at large. (Ekos/Audley) This would mitigate affordability issues that face many other seasonal workers. In addition, the industry’s revenues and labour force are highly concentrated in three large urban centres – Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. This may reduce the need for seasonal film workers to travel to work. It appears that when film crews, directors or actors do travel, accommodation is the responsibility of the film companies. In addition, when film companies go on location, crews, extras and other personnel are frequently hired locally to take advantage of labour-based tax credit programs.

Housing affordability is the biggest concern of workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation sector according to an interview with the Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC). Businesses in this sector include those in Motion Picture and Video Production, Sound Recording Studios and Television Broadcasting. Income levels for workers in these businesses are quite low; in fact they often are at poverty levels. The Council indicated that this trend is consistent across Canada with no real regional or urban/rural differences. The availability and adequacy of housing are less of a concern than the ability of workers to afford housing that is available.

The Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) has made a case to the Standing Committee on Finance of the federal government to act on the issue of low incomes of workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry. In particular, the CHRC has asked for the introduction of income

averaging over a five-year period. The federal government has not responded to the request.

11.6. The Role of Incomes on the Availability, Affordability and Adequacy of Housing for Seasonal Workers

Section 8 of this report provides convincing evidence that incomes of seasonal workers are significantly lower than those of workers who are employed on a year round basis. This fact is dramatically illustrated in Figure 5 which shows that the average total income of permanent workers in Canada was \$43,600 in 2004, over twice the average total income of \$19,300 for seasonal workers.

The relatively low incomes of seasonal workers undoubtedly would decrease the affordability of housing for these workers. Low incomes also would reduce the housing that is available to seasonal workers as well as the adequacy of housing.

Having made this broad statement, it is more difficult to generalize about the relationship between incomes and housing for specific groups of seasonal workers. Data do not exist on the relative incomes of seasonal workers by industry, occupation or for target groups such as workers under the age of 25. As a result, it is impossible to discuss the relationship between the incomes of a specific occupation such as fish plant workers and their housing circumstances.

Data available in the Census do provide evidence that incomes are relatively low in many of the highly seasonal industry sectors and occupations identified in this report. Unfortunately, these data do not separate seasonal and permanent workers and conclusive findings cannot be made from them.

The analysis completed in this report shows that the housing circumstances of workers are influenced by a number of key factors other than incomes. The most important of these factors is whether they live and work in the same community or are mobile. The availability, affordability and

adequacy of housing is fundamentally different for these two groups as housing issues for the first group relate to permanent housing while those of the second group relate to temporary accommodations.

This report also demonstrates that there is a great deal of diversity in the housing situation of workers within the two broad groups of mobile and non-mobile workers. For example, the housing circumstances of mobile seasonal workers are influenced by the ability and willingness of employers to provide or subsidize housing while those of non-mobile workers depend on the geographic location of the communities within which workers lived and worked. The complexity of factors influencing the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing for a given group of seasonal workers makes it impossible to make a direct link between their level of incomes and their housing circumstances.

11.7. The Role of Employers

11.7.1. Summary of the Influence of Industry Profitability on the Provision of Housing for Seasonal Workers

The profitability of firms employing seasonal workers affects the housing provided to seasonal workers in two ways. For seasonal workers that live and work in the same community, the profitability of firms would affect the wages paid to the workers which would in turn influence the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing as described above. Research conducted for this study shows, however, that other factors such as the existing housing infrastructure, the cost of housing and the state of the home building and renovation industry in a given geographic area play an important role in the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing. These factors could outweigh the influence of industry profitability and the wages of seasonal workers in any given situation.

For mobile seasonal workers requiring temporary accommodations, the profitability of firms would affect their ability to provide or subsidize housing for their workers. Interviews completed for this study confirm that highly profitable firms such as those in the Oil and Gas industry make more significant contributions to housing for their workers than less profitable firms such as small enterprises in the Tourism industry. For example, in

some cases employers have set up well-equipped camps for employees that include aqua trailers with recreational facilities.

It is difficult to generalize about the relationship between industry profitability and the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing because of the complexity of factors that influence each individual situation. For example, highly profitable firms in the Oil and Gas industry in areas such as Fort McMurray may make greater contributions to housing than firms in small, less profitable industries. It is not clear, however, that the greater contributions made by employers in the Oil and Gas industry result in housing that is more available, affordable and adequate than that for workers employed by less profitable firms in the Tourism industry. Research conducted for this study shows that the excess demand for housing in areas such as Fort McMurray has negative implications for the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing for seasonal workers that may outweigh the contributions of employers.

11.7.2. Employer Measures to Address the Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers

Five respondents interviewed for this study indicated that employers are increasingly covering the cost of accommodations although the share covered by employers and employees varies on a case by case basis.

The interviews showed that employers in the Oil and Gas industry have begun to take responsibility for providing housing for workers as a way to attract workers and are working with municipalities to find a solution to the housing problems being experienced in localities which are experiencing excess demand for housing. Some employers cover the cost of getting to work, provide housing allowances, offer signing bonuses, subsidize mortgage payments, and even outright buy a house. Employers have begun to set up camps for employees that include amenities such aqua trailers with recreational facilities and well-equipped accommodations. The interviews indicate that these accommodations exceed standards set out in existing legislation and regulations.

The interviews and literature review also indicate, however, that the large influx of workers in a short period of time has posed a huge challenge for

providing housing and accommodations that are readily available, affordable and adequate to meet the needs of their workforce. Respondents felt that the ultimate success of the employer efforts is still an issue.

The interviews indicate that companies in a number of industries such as Construction, Mining, Oil and Gas are looking to be more flexible on how employees choose to work. There are more fly in/fly out arrangements offered to employees resulting in the emergence of a labour force that commutes to work over long distances. These arrangements represent an attempt by employers to use the efficacy of modern transportation systems to reduce the need for permanent housing and its associated municipal infrastructure. The downside of this practice is that it puts a strain on short-term housing in affected communities and can have negative implications for the adequacy and affordability of housing for seasonal workers.

The interviews also indicate that housing arrangements are company specific and cannot be generalized. There are variations in practices and norms between industries but also between firms within a given industry. In some cases employers provide housing free of charge or fully cover the cost of housing while in others employers leave the procurement and payment of housing totally up to workers. This diversity makes it impossible to draw conclusions and make generalizations for a given industry or a specific seasonal occupation.

The literature review discussed the results of a survey of mobile workers in the Industrial Construction industry in Canada that showed a significant level of dissatisfaction among workers regarding the adequacy and affordability of temporary housing provided by employers in this sector.

Interviews indicate that the cost of accommodation is a concern for workers in the Hotel industry although the cost is generally subsidized by employers with employees paying for a portion of the costs. The Hotel Association of Canada indicates that cost-sharing arrangements depend on location, labour markets and other factors. There are some cases where employees pay for all of the accommodation provided by the employer and others where employees make no contribution.

In resort areas, the labour force is provided with housing ranging from dormitories to single family dwellings depending on the position and pay scale of the employee. All those who work in the resort (except local residents) would be provided with accommodation.

Only one Sector Council commented on the effectiveness of measures being taken to address housing issues and this was the Petroleum Human Resources Council speaking of the Fort McMurray situation as follows:

“The major barrier faced by employers is the magnitude of the problem due to the significant growth in demand for labour. Companies are starting to take more ownership of these issues. They are working with municipalities and governments to address the housing issues. It is the job of government to provide services – but a tax base is needed. The time line for oil and gas development is at most 10 years. It would not make sense to build a lot of infrastructure and then not be able to sustain it in the future. As a result, there is a need for flexible solutions.”

Employers utilizing the Temporary Worker Program provide accommodations to seasonal workers according to the provisions of this program. The literature review showed that this housing was required to meet minimum standards set out in the program but that there was room for improvement in the adequacy of accommodations provided by the program.

11.8. Summary of Legislation and Regulations Affecting Housing for Seasonal Workers

Employer-provided worker housing in Canada is regulated by the Provinces and covered by the same legislation and regulations applied to industrial camps in general.¹⁵ British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Québec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have enacted regulations that set detailed minimum standards for temporary accommodations (such as tents or

¹⁵ Industrial Camps Health Regulation, British Columbia Regulation 427/83; Work Camps Regulation, Alberta Regulations 251/85; Camps in Unorganized Territory Regulation, Ontario, 1990 Reg. 55; Regulation Respecting Sanitary Conditions in Industrial Camps, Revised Regulations of Québec, 1981; Occupational Health and Safety Act, New Brunswick Regulation 91-191, Part II; Regulations Respecting Industrial and Construction Camps, Regulations of Nova Scotia 1942. (cited by CLC:22).

bunkhouses) for workers. (CLC: p. 15) The specific regulations in these provinces are presented in Table 12.

| TABLE 12: PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS ON TEMPORARY HOUSING PROVIDED BY EMPLOYERS | |
|--|--|
| Province | Regulation |
| British Columbia | Industrial Camps Health Regulation, British Columbia Regulation 427/83 |
| Alberta | Work Camps Regulation, Alberta Regulations 251/85 |
| Ontario | Camps in Unorganized Territory Regulation, Ontario, 1990 Reg. 55 |
| Québec | Regulation Respecting Sanitary Conditions in Industrial Camps, Revised Regulations of Québec, 1981 |
| New Brunswick | Occupational Health and Safety Act, New Brunswick Regulation 91-191, Part II |
| Nova Scotia | Regulations Respecting Industrial and Construction Camps, Regulations of Nova Scotia 1942 |

Source: CLC:22.

The regulations included in Table 12 address such matters as water quality, waste disposal, washing facilities, ventilation and construction. The provincial regulations are of varying vintage – Nova Scotia's were enacted in 1942, the most recent updating was in New Brunswick in 1991. The regulations also mandate a range of different construction standards, province to province. (CLC: p. 15) None, however, come anywhere close to the standards suggested in the North-South Institute Report cited in Section 11.2.3 of this report.

The usual requirement of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program is that employers pay travel costs and facilitate accommodation for foreign workers.

Foreign migrant seasonal workers come to Canada through guest worker programs overseen by governments. One of the programs is the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP). The guidelines for this program state that employers should expect to:

Provide free seasonal housing to the foreign worker that has been approved by the appropriate provincial/municipal body.
[\(<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/seasagri.shtml>\)](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/seasagri.shtml)

The literature review completed for this study also showed that special guidelines exist for the hiring of live-in caregivers in Canada under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. These guidelines include a provision that the caregiver must be provided with a private, furnished room within the home. (see: <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/lcp.shtml>)

The Construction Recruitment External Worker Services (CREWS) program website (<http://www.constructionworkers.ca/apply/terms.htm>) contains the following statement about accommodations:

"Where required, accommodation is supplied to assist workers in the initial arrival stage. Employers may recover accommodation costs through payroll deductions."

As noted in Section 11.5.3, the adequacy and availability of housing for temporary workers in the forest industry is influenced by the fact that most provinces have regulations setting minimum standards for temporary accommodations. For example, the Camp Standards Act in B.C. calls for the provision of amenities such as hot showers, hard wood floors in food preparation areas, and covered eating areas with tables, generators and water filtration systems even in remote camps.

Section 11.5.3 of this report also showed that the Western Silviculture Contractors' Association was seeking a provincial drinking water standard for Silviculture camps as part of the implementation of the B.C. Drinking Water Protection Act enacted in 2003.

The representative of the Canadian Silviculture Association noted that, according to the B.C. employment standards, employers may charge Silviculture workers a fee for lodging of no more than \$25 per day for camp costs and that the costs are lower in Québec. He stated that the actual costs to employers to house and feed workers is higher – roughly \$150 to \$180 per day including showers, food and bathroom facilities.

The "freeze" on opening up any more development properties in the Yukon documented in the interview with the Yukon Tourism Education Council shows that municipal regulations and policies have a major impact on housing construction which affects the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing for all workers, including seasonal workers.

11.9. Summary Overview

11.9.1. Availability

In the more developed and highly organized industries that depend on hiring skilled and semi-skilled workers on a temporary basis, employers tend to plan for the accommodation of the workforce as part of their overall management of the project. Key examples would be construction, mining or energy exploration in remote areas. Similarly many of the larger hotels and resorts provide accommodations to employees who are hired on a seasonal basis.

Information from the literature review and from key informants suggests that the most serious availability issues occur in situations where seasonal expansion of the workforce coincides with general population growth, such as during peak season in tourism regions with a limited housing supply, or in economic boom regions such as the Fort McMurray area. In other words, if there is a shortage of housing generally, seasonal workers may be more vulnerable than other groups seeking housing: they may have lower incomes, they may not be the preferred tenants from the landlord's perspective, or they may not be a priority group in the eyes of municipal authorities or even of employers attempting to accommodate their full-time labour force.

11.9.2. Affordability

The evidence suggests that the affordability issue is closely linked to availability in the sense that cost will generally vary in inverse proportion to the supply of housing. Key informants described situations like Whistler, B.C. and Dawson Creek in the Yukon where high demand for housing during particular seasons seriously affects affordability for seasonal workers.

It is evident, however, that in these situations both industry leaders and local government authorities are very aware of the issue and are making efforts to come up with solutions. In Alberta, for example, employers are developing long distance commuting systems to meet their labour supply needs without putting further pressure on local housing supplies.

11.9.3. Adequacy

There is little research evidence available relating to the adequacy of housing beyond what has been said above about affordability and availability. Logic suggests that in situations where there are problems with availability and/or affordability there will be workers living in sub-standard accommodations.

This discussion gives rise to a more general question of whether housing quality or adequacy issues should be addressed through policy and program interventions specific to seasonal workers, or whether they should be approached from the point of view of general housing regulations, enforcement of the building code and other health and safety regulations, and perhaps labour standards regulations.

11.9.4. Overall Conclusions

This study has relied on the available secondary data resources, on the research literature and on key informant interviews to assess the nature and extent of housing problems for seasonal workers in Canada.

It is very clear from the data describing seasonal work in Canada that the category “seasonal worker” encompasses several distinctive sub-categories whose differences are in most cases more significant than their similarities. Therefore it is not possible to describe an over-arching set of housing issues that are common to the seasonal labour force overall. Nor is it advisable or potentially worthwhile to consider at a national level a comprehensive policy and programmatic response to the issue of housing for seasonal workers. There are housing issues, but they are diverse and disparate, reflecting local housing market and local labour market conditions rather than some overall condition for a clearly defined and homogenous segment of the working population.

There are three clearly identifiable situations where certain categories of seasonal workers may face serious housing issues:

1. Situations where seasonal workers earn low or very low incomes, either because of the industries they work in, the nature of their jobs or their low skills. In these circumstances, the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing may be a problem. This would be true for non-mobile workers in rural communities as well as for mobile workers having to find temporary housing away from their home areas. The housing issue here reflects low incomes and social marginality rather than seasonal work per se.
2. Situations where mobile workers are drawn on a seasonal basis to geographic regions or labour markets where there are serious housing shortages due to rapid economic growth and in-migration. In these situations seasonal workers are no different than mobile workers in general except that their temporary status may put them at a disadvantage in the competition for the available housing.
3. Situations where employers are actively recruiting seasonal workers to an area but are not taking steps to ensure that adequate housing is available, or are themselves providing sub-standard accommodations. Although no systematic or compelling evidence was generated in the study, there may be situations in remote construction, mining or forestry worksites, or in seasonal agricultural, fishing or tourism operations, where employers are not living up to basic responsibilities to provide safe, healthy and affordable housing.

APPENDIX A:

HOUSING ISSUES OF SEASONAL WORKERS IN CANADA

LITERATURE REVIEW REPORT April 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Literature Review constitutes the first phase of study of housing issues of seasonal workers in Canada. Findings from the Literature Review will be combined with those from an analysis of data and from interviews with industry Sector Councils to provide a comprehensive analysis of seasonality and seasonal workers in Canada along with the housing issues and measures being implemented by employers to address housing issues.

The purpose of the Literature Review is to examine existing information on seasonal workers, the housing issues facing seasonal workers and the steps taken by employers to deal with those issues. It includes recent studies on seasonal employment and the characteristics of seasonal workers, information on seasonality in specific industries and the housing needs of seasonal workers in those industries. Housing literature that relates indirectly to the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing for workers in seasonal industries also is examined.

Section 2 of this report reviews literature available on the definition and measurement of seasonality. Section 3 presents information on the characteristics of seasonal workers. Section 4 discusses the current state of knowledge about the housing issues facing seasonal industries and helps to identify the gaps to be filled in the next phase of the project.

2. THE DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT OF SEASONAL WORKERS

2.1. The Definition of Seasonality

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for this study states that:

“The objective of this project is therefore to document the nature and magnitude of the housing issues faced by seasonal workers across Canada.”

The first task in addressing this objective is to identify seasonal workers. To accomplish this task it is useful to have some background on the definition and measurement of seasonality in the Canadian labour market. This section provides a brief review of the literature on this subject.

Seasonality refers to fluctuations in economic activity and labour market conditions that occur in a more or less consistent pattern within a year. An article by Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey identifies the following causes and definition of seasonality:

“Economic activity and employment vary regularly over the year as a result of various factors such as weather, harvest times, school terms, tax-filing patterns, and Christmas shopping periods. In economic terms, a seasonal pattern is a sub-annual pattern in a time series that repeats itself more or less regularly year after year.” (Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey, p. 1)

A 1997 article by Dominique Pérusse in the Statistics Canada periodical Perspectives on Labour and Income defines a seasonal job as follows:

“Seasonal jobs last for one or more limited periods at the same time each year. They are structured by the annual labour demands of industries such as farming, fishing, forestry, construction and tourism.” (Pérusse, p. 39)

A 1999 article by Katherine Marshall in the same periodical defines a seasonal job as follows:

“A seasonal job is a non-permanent paid job that will end at a specified time or in the near future, once the seasonal peak has passed.” (Marshall, p. 17)

The Marshall article shows that seasonal jobs result in seasonal work patterns which are described as follows:

“A seasonal pattern reveals regular increases and decreases that repeat year after year in a time series of estimates. These movements reflect annual climate cycles or recurring institutional events.” (Marshall, p. 17)

It is important to understand that economic and labour market conditions can vary for reasons other than seasonality. Guillemette et al (p. 2) identify three factors other than seasonality that result in changes in economic and labour market activity. These are:

- Long-term economic and labour market trends stemming from long-term growth;
- Cyclical changes in economic and labour market activity stemming from changes in business conditions; and
- A residual component.

Measurements of seasonal changes in economic and labour market activity must remove changes resulting from long-term, cyclical and residual forces.

Seasonal changes occur in a wide variety of economic and labour market variables including: gross domestic product, employment, unemployment and the labour force. Seasonal changes in employment are the focus of this study. The identification of seasonal industries in this report is based on estimates derived from analysis of Labour Force Survey (LFS) data. The Data Collection Report produced for this study includes LFS estimates of the proportion of total employment by industry accounted for by seasonal workers. The upcoming sections of the Literature Review Report summarize the findings of a number of reports using LFS data.

2.2. Measurement of Seasonality

Seasonal changes in employment can be measured from the perspective of an industry or a worker. These perspectives differ because workers can be employed in a number of industries over the course of a year. Seasonality is measured using quantitative methodologies applied to data, such as that

produced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), and from surveys of workers and EI recipients. Estimates of seasonality based on quantitative methodologies and surveys are reviewed here.

2.2.1. Quantitative Methods of Measuring Seasonality

2.2.1.1. Methodology

An article by Sharpe and Smith (p. 1) identifies three quantitative methods of measuring seasonality:

- The raw peak-trough measure;
- The seasonal amplitude measure; and
- The mean seasonal variation (MSV) measure.

Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey describe the raw peak-trough measure as follows:

“The peak-trough index is constructed as the excess of the peak 2-month average employment level relative to the lowest 2-month average ...”
(Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey, p. 3)

The index suffers from two problems: (1) it does not measure seasonality outside the two highest and lowest months and (2) it does not control for fluctuations due to long-term and cyclical factors and is therefore an imprecise estimate of seasonality.

The seasonal amplitude and mean seasonal variation (MSV) methods are based on monthly data that are seasonally adjusted using techniques such as the X-11-ARIMA model used by Statistics Canada. Seasonal ratios are created by dividing actual monthly data by the seasonally adjusted data. In the seasonal amplitude method the lowest monthly seasonal ratio is subtracted from the highest to derive an estimate of the range of monthly variation in a given year. In the mean seasonal variation method, monthly seasonal ratios are subtracted from a reference level of 100% and averaged over the entire year to derive an estimate of the average monthly variation in employment.

As opposed to the raw peak-trough method, both the seasonal amplitude and mean seasonal variation methods differentiate fluctuations in employment stemming from seasonal factors from those resulting from long-term and cyclical factors. The seasonal amplitude method provides a measure of the variation between the month with the highest employment level and the month with the lowest. The mean seasonal variation method provides an estimate of the monthly variation in employment throughout the entire year.

This report reviews quantitative estimates of seasonality made by Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey, Sharpe and Smith and Marshall based on data from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS).

2.2.1.2. Estimates by Industry

Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey

The ranking of seasonality by industry group using the mean seasonal variation (MSV) method in Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey is shown in Table 1.

| TABLE 1: MEAN SEASONAL VARIATION OF EMPLOYMENT AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, AVERAGE, 1976-1997, CANADA | |
|--|--------------|
| Fishing and Trapping | 13.14% |
| Construction | 10.17% |
| Forestry | 9.84% |
| Agriculture | 7.77% |
| Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas | 4.93% |
| Public Administration | 3.83% |
| Utilities | 2.31% |
| Manufacturing | 2.29% |
| Wholesale Trade | 2.08% |
| Transportation, Warehousing and Communications | 1.90% |
| Retail Trade | 1.17% |
| Finance, Insurance and Real Estate | 1.05% |
| Community, Business and Personal Services | 0.88% |
| All Industries | 2.20% |

Source: Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey (Table 2.6B, p. 20).

Table 1 shows that the five most seasonal industries for Canada as a whole over the 1976 to 1997 period were: Fishing and Trapping, Construction, Forestry, Agriculture and Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas. Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey summed up their findings as follows:

“Generally speaking, across Canada, employment is the most seasonal in the primary and construction industries. Apart from public administration, where employment is quite seasonal, tertiary industries, and in particular community, business and personal services, finance, insurance and real estate, and retail trade, are the least seasonal. Nonetheless, the fact that employment seasonality is widespread is important.” (Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey, p. 21)

The widespread nature of seasonality in the Canadian economy was explained as follows in an article by de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent:

“Seasonal work, no matter how it is defined, has long been an important aspect of the Canadian labour market. With a large resource sector and a

climate that is one of the most varied in the world, the Canadian labour market naturally exhibits large seasonal fluctuations in output and employment every year.” (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 1)

The de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent article goes on to explain that studies by Marshall (1999) and Guillemette, L’Italien and Grey (2000) show that seasonality declined over the 1976 to 1997 period for two reasons:

- The adoption of labour saving technologies in seasonal industries; and
- The decrease of the share of total employment accounted for by seasonal industries.

Sharpe and Smith

Sharpe and Smith also estimated seasonality of employment by industry using the mean seasonal variation method. The estimates by Sharpe and Smith use different industry aggregations than those made by Guillemette, L’Italien and Grey and are based on 2003 rather than the 1976 to 1997 period. Their estimates are presented in Table 2.

| TABLE 2: MEAN SEASONAL VARIATION OF EMPLOYMENT AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, CANADA, AVERAGE, 2003 | |
|--|--------------|
| Agriculture | 5.80% |
| Construction | 5.60% |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 5.10% |
| Education Services | 4.80% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 3.97% |
| Business, Building and Other Support Services | 3.23% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 2.79% |
| Public Administration | 2.10% |
| Manufacturing | 1.77% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 1.22% |
| Retail and Wholesale Trade | 1.01% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 0.73% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 0.59% |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing | 0.57% |
| Utilities | 0.00% |
| All Industries | 1.36% |

Source: Sharpe and Smith, Table 3.

Both estimates show that seasonality is greatest in the primary (Fishing and Trapping, Forestry, Agriculture and Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas) and Construction industries. Smith and Sharpe also show that a number of other industry sectors also experience a significant degree of seasonality, including: (1) Education Services, (2) Information, Culture and Recreation, (3) Business, Building and Other Support Services and (4) Accommodation and Food Services. These sectors are not identified separately in the analysis completed by Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey.

Marshall

The 1999 report by Katherine Marshall referenced above includes a table comparing the seasonal variation in employment by industry in Canada in 1997. The methodology used to measure seasonal variation in Marshall was described as follows:

“Seasonal variation (or seasonality) refers to the degree to which employment rises and falls because of the seasonal pattern (caused by climate and/or institutional events). It governs the extent to which employment estimates must be changed in order to remove the seasonal pattern. It is calculated by taking the absolute value of the difference between the unadjusted and adjusted counts averaged over 12 months. The average monthly employment adjustment count can also be expressed as a percentage of annual average employment. For example, in 1997 the seasonal variation for construction was 9.5%, meaning that, on average, monthly unadjusted employment estimates were increased or decreased by 9.5% in order to remove the seasonal pattern.” (Marshall, p. 17)

Marshall presented a table showing seasonal variation by industry in Canada in 1976 and 1997 using the methodology described above and data from the LFS. Selected 1997 data from this table are presented in Table 3.

| TABLE 3: SEASONAL VARIATION IN EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 1997 | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| | Seasonal Variation % |
| Fishing and Trapping | 26.8% |
| Logging and Forestry | 14.0% |
| Construction | 10.6% |
| Agriculture | 8.9% |
| Government Services | 4.6% |
| Educational Services | 3.9% |
| Business and Personal Services | 3.4% |
| Non-durables Manufacturing | 3.0% |
| Utilities | 2.6% |
| Mining, Quarrying and Oil Wells | 2.4% |
| Transportation, Storage and Communication | 2.2% |
| Wholesale Trade | 1.7% |
| Retail Trade | 1.3% |
| Durables Manufacturing | 1.3% |
| Finance, Insurance and Real Estate | 1.2% |
| Health and Social Services | 1.0% |
| All Industries | 3.4% |

Source: Marshall, Table 1, p. 19.

Marshall defined highly seasonal industries as those whose seasonal variation was more than double the overall average. Using this definition the following industries were identified as being highly seasonal: Fishing and Trapping, Logging and Forestry, Construction and Agriculture.

2.2.1.3. Estimates by Occupation

Sharpe and Smith also estimated seasonality of the Canadian workforce by broad occupational group using the mean seasonal variation method. These estimates are presented in Table 4.

| TABLE 4: MEAN SEASONAL VARIATION IN EMPLOYMENT, CANADA BY BROAD OCCUPATION, 2003 | |
|---|--------------|
| Primary Occupations | 11.15% |
| Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport | 3.43% |
| Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators | 3.01% |
| Social Science, Education, Government and Religion | 2.27% |
| Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities | 2.20% |
| Natural and Applied Sciences | 1.94% |
| Sales and Service | 1.18% |
| Health | 0.58% |
| Business, Finance and Administrative | 0.53% |
| Management | 0.00% |
| All Occupations | 1.36% |

Source: Sharpe and Smith, Table 4.

Table 4 shows that Primary Occupations are by far the most seasonal followed by occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport and occupations in the Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators group.

2.2.1.4. Conclusion from the Quantitative Analyses

Industry sectors identified as the most highly seasonal in all three quantitative analyses are the Primary industries, the Construction industry as well as sectors of the Public Administration, Business and Personal Services and Accommodation and Food Services industry groups. These findings support findings in the November 2004 Liberal Task Force Report

entitled “The Seasonal Economy: Responding with Care” which indicated that seasonal industries in Canada include: trapping, construction, tourism, agriculture, fish processing, film production, forestry, school support staff and parks workers. The Task Force report also noted that there are other industries and occupations across the country that are seasonal.

2.2.2. Estimates of Seasonality Based on Surveys of Workers and EI Recipients

2.2.2.1. Overview of Surveys

A number of on-going and special surveys that provide information on the seasonality of employment are reviewed in this section. Table 5 provides an overview of the surveys and their linkages to the LFS.

| TABLE 5: SURVEYS OVERVIEW AND LINKAGES | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| | Survey Sponsor | Survey Frame | Frequency and Timing | Information Linkages to the LFS |
| Labour Force Survey (LFS) | Statistics Canada | Stratified random sample of approximately 54,000 households across Canada | Monthly, on-going | |
| The Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) | Statistics Canada | Sample of roughly 17,000 households drawn from the LFS sample | Bi-annual, on-going | Data can be linked with LFS data because the same survey frame is used |
| New Brunswick Seasonal Workers Survey (SWS) | Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) - New Brunswick Region | 5,014 New Brunswick households | Conducted in 1997 to collect data for 1996 | No information linkages to the LFS |

TABLE 5: SURVEYS OVERVIEW AND LINKAGES

| | Survey Sponsor | Survey Frame | Frequency and Timing | Information Linkages to the LFS |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Survey on the Repeat Use of Employment Insurance (SRUEI) | The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) with participation by Statistics Canada | Sample of 22,586 individuals who applied for and received regular EI benefits in 1996 | Conducted in 1998 to collect data for 1997 | No information linkages to the LFS |
| Canadian Out of Employment Panel (COEP) Survey | Conducted by Statistics Canada for Human Resources Development Canada, Strategic Evaluation and Monitoring | Initially interviewed individuals who had a job interruption during one of the two reference periods: (1) Jan. 29-Mar. 11, 1995; or (2) Apr. 23-June 3, 1995 | Conducted twice in 1995 and a re-designed survey (Changes in Employment Survey) was completed in 1996 | No information linkages to the LFS |
| EI Coverage Survey (EICS) | Conducted by Statistics Canada for Human Resources Development Canada | Surveys of roughly 14,720 unemployed individuals (as defined by the Labour Force Survey) and other individuals who, given their recent status in the labour market, could potentially be eligible for Employment Insurance | 1997 to present. Conducted in four cycles each year, in April, July, November and January | The sample is a subset of the target population for the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and can therefore be linked to LFS data |

| TABLE 5: SURVEYS OVERVIEW AND LINKAGES | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| | Survey Sponsor | Survey Frame | Frequency and Timing | Information Linkages to the LFS |
| The Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA) | Statistics Canada | Sample of roughly 25,720 households drawn from the LFS sample | 1995 | The sample is a subset of the target population for the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and can therefore be linked to LFS data |

2.2.2.2. Estimates Summarized in de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent show that the measurement of seasonality at the worker level is based on surveys, most notably the Labour Force Survey:

“One of the more traditional methods for identifying seasonal workers is to use survey instruments that ask workers about the nature of their employment. One common survey that provides a measure of self-identified seasonal workers, the Labour Force Survey (LFS), is a monthly household survey that provides information on individuals who are employed, unemployed, and out of the labour force. To estimate the extent of seasonal work in Canada, the LFS includes two questions about a respondent's current job by which seasonal workers can be identified:

- 1. Is your job permanent, or is there some way that it is not permanent (e.g. seasonal, temporary, term, casual)?*
- 2. In what way is your job not permanent (seasonal job, temporary, casual, other)? (Answered only if respondent answered that the job was not permanent in the previous question.)” (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 7)*

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent point out that estimates of seasonality based on surveys reflect the respondents' perceptions of the seasonal nature of their work. Respondents may incorrectly report that their jobs were seasonal when they, in fact, were not or vice versa.

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent examined data from the LFS for 2000 and drew the following conclusions:

“According to the LFS, 5.1 per cent of all paid workers in July 2000 reported that their main job was seasonal. Since young workers have a greater tendency to work in nonpermanent positions, the incidence of seasonal work is much higher among workers under 25 years of age, with 14.6 per cent reporting their current job is seasonal in nature, compared with 2.8 per cent of workers 25 years and older.” (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 7)

The authors compared the degree of seasonality estimated from responses to questions in the LFS to estimates based on the seasonal amplitude measure using LFS data for 2000. They found that the two methods produced consistent estimates.

The de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent article also identified a number of special surveys that covered the topic of seasonal work including:

- The New Brunswick Seasonal Workers Survey (SWS) conducted for the Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), New Brunswick Region, in early 1997. The purpose of this survey was to better understand the socio-economic situation of seasonal workers in New Brunswick. The survey was based on a sample of 5,014 New Brunswick households. It asked household members about all jobs held in 1996. Key findings of the survey were that 20.1% of all workers in New Brunswick had at least one seasonal job during 1996 and that men were more likely than women to be seasonal workers. (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 8)
- The Survey on the Repeat Use of Employment Insurance (SRUEI) (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 9). The SRUEI was a special survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 1998. The SRUEI was a nationally representative survey, and its target population was a sample of all claimants who made an EI claim and received at least \$1 in regular EI benefits in 1996. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents who were classified as frequent EI claimants¹⁶ described their main job in 1997 as seasonal.

¹⁶ Frequent claimants are respondents who claimed and received EI Benefits in at least three of five years from 1992 to 1996.

By contrast, 24.1% of respondents who were not classified as frequent claimants described their jobs in 1997 as seasonal. As with the SWS, males were more likely than females to describe their jobs as seasonal.

- The Canadian Out of Employment Panel (COEP) (for a discussion of the COEP see de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 10). The COEP was conducted three times under sponsorship by HRDC. Its primary purpose was to evaluate the impact of various EI reforms on individual EI claimants. The COEP survey sample was based on a stratified random sample of Records of Employment (ROE) over a series of quarters. The sample covered only workers who left jobs and were eligible for EI benefits. Workers included in the sample were asked whether “seasonal factors” were responsible for their job loss and whether “seasonal” was a characteristic that described their job. The survey showed that 15.5% of workers experienced a job loss due to seasonal reasons over the 1995 to 1997 period.
- The EI Coverage Survey (EICS) (for a discussion of the EICS see de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 11). The EICS is a supplementary survey to the LFS that was conducted four times per year since 1997. Unlike the LFS, the EICS surveys the unemployed and those who are not in the labour force, with the condition that they have worked in the past two years. In addition to covering the unemployed, the EICS has the advantage of collecting information on unemployed individuals’ use of EI benefits. The EICS estimated that 18.3% of all unemployed workers reported their last job was seasonal and among these seasonal workers, 60.8% reported receiving EI benefits since becoming unemployed.

2.2.2.3. Estimates by Pélusse

The paper by Pélusse referenced above contains estimates of the proportion of seasonal to total paid jobs by province in Canada in 1995. The estimates are based on The Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA), sponsored by Statistics Canada. This survey was conducted in November 1995 as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey. It used the LFS questions on seasonality to estimate the number and proportion of seasonal workers in the labour force.

The Pérusse paper shows that seasonality varies not only by occupation and industry but also by region and according to urban-rural mix. The estimates are presented in Table 6 (based on Pérusse, p. 41, Table 1).

| TABLE 6: SEASONAL JOBS AS A % OF PAID JOBS, 1995 | |
|--|--------|
| Canada | 1.6% |
| - CMA (urban) | - 1.0% |
| - Non-CMA (rural) | - 2.9% |
| Atlantic provinces | 5.3% |
| Quebec | 1.9% |
| Prairies | 1.5% |
| Ontario | 1.1% |

Source: Pérusse, p. 41, Table 1.

Table 6 shows that 1.6% of jobs in Canada as a whole were seasonal in 1995 and that the rate of seasonality varied from 1.1% in Ontario to 5.3% in Atlantic Canada. The rate of seasonality in Atlantic Canada was over three times that in Canada as a whole. Table 6 also shows that the rate of seasonality in rural (non-CMA) Canada was about three times that in urban Canada (CMAs).¹⁷

¹⁷ CMA stands for Census Metropolitan Area.

2.2.2.4. Estimates by the Strategic Policy Division of Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)

A 2001 article prepared by the Strategic Policy Division of Human Resources Skills Development Canada¹⁸ (HRSDC) in November 2001 presents estimates of seasonality based on a survey of individuals who were recipients of Employment Insurance (EI) between 1995 and 1997.¹⁹ The survey asked EI recipients if seasonal was the characteristic that best described the job they held prior to receiving EI. Table 2 of the article summarizes the degree of seasonality by province and industry according to the survey. It is presented here as Table 7.

| TABLE 7: SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT BY PROVINCE AND INDUSTRY | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| | % Seasonal by Province | | % Seasonal by Industry |
| Prince Edward Island | 42.4% | Agriculture | 59.0% |
| New Brunswick | 31.1% | Primary | 45.2% |
| Newfoundland | 31.0% | Construction | 29.1% |
| Nova Scotia | 25.7% | Transportation | 21.6% |
| Saskatchewan | 17.1% | Utilities | 18.3% |
| Quebec | 17.0% | Public Administration | 16.6% |
| Manitoba | 15.8% | Government Services | 14.8% |
| Alberta | 13.0% | Business Services | 13.5% |
| British Columbia | 12.2% | Manufacturing | 11.6% |
| Ontario | 11.4% | Education | 9.5% |
| | | Trade | 7.4% |
| | | Communications | 4.8% |
| | | Finance Insurance and Real Estate | 3.7% |

Source: EI Evaluation, p. 3, Table 2.

¹⁸ Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) was formerly known as Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC).

¹⁹ This is the COEP survey sponsored by Evaluation and Data Development, Strategic Policy, HRSDC.

In interpreting Table 7 it is important to remember that seasonality likely is significantly higher for EI recipients than for the workforce as a whole. The table does show, however, that the Atlantic provinces has a greater degree of seasonality than the rest of Canada as do the Agriculture, Primary and Construction industries.

2.2.2.5. Analysis Data by de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent based on the SLID

The report by de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent included an extensive analysis of data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 14). A primary focus of this analysis was to examine the relationship between seasonality and EI use among workers.

The SLID interviews individuals twice a year for a period of six years and captures both respondents' work and EI use patterns over time. It identifies seasonal workers based on their employment patterns over several years and can link the seasonal employment patterns of long-term seasonal workers with EI use. Long-term seasonal workers were defined in de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent as those who had at least three paid-job spells that ended within the same three-month "off-season" over the five-year period 1993 to 1998. The report groups long-term seasonal workers by the number of times they relied on EI following their seasonal jobs spells. Four groups of workers were identified in the de Raaf et al report: (1) workers who did not receive EI following any seasonal job spell, (2) workers who received EI once following a seasonal job spell, (3) workers who received EI twice following a seasonal job spell and (4) workers who received EI three times following a seasonal job spell.

Using the above methodology, de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent estimated that 4.4% of workers in the SLID sample were classified as being seasonal over the 1993 to 1998 period. It estimated that approximately 61% of the job spells of workers included in the survey from 1993 to 1998 ended with the receipt of EI benefits. This estimate reinforces findings from the EICS which showed that approximately 61% of unemployed seasonal workers included in the survey from 1997 to 1999 received EI benefits.

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent concluded that the use of EI by seasonal workers is related to their local job opportunities as well as the EI eligibility rules for their region. The EI program has variable entry requirements that fluctuate according to local labour market conditions, meaning a seasonal worker living in a region with lower unemployment rates will not only be required to have more hours of work to qualify for EI, but will also receive fewer weeks of benefits for a given amount of work than seasonal workers living in high unemployment regions.

The authors found that nearly half of seasonal workers who never claimed EI lived in low unemployment regions while over two-thirds of workers with three years of receipt lived in regions with unemployment rates of 9% or higher. The authors concluded that this finding reflected regional differences in terms of both the availability of off-season work and the generosity of the EI program.

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent found that the change in 1996 from a weeks-based system to an hours-based system for determining eligibility may have had a positive impact on the eligibility and entitlement of EI claimants. The switch to an hours-based system was made in part to address concerns that a large and growing proportion of the employed workforce was not eligible for EI benefits should these workers become unemployed. However, it also meant weeks worked by seasonal workers — who tend to work more hours per week — would be insured to a greater extent under the new regime, allowing many seasonal workers to qualify sooner for benefits due to their working schedules.

For information on eligibility rules and regional and other aspects of the Employment Insurance system, please see:

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/program/ei.shtml.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF SEASONAL WORKERS

A number of reports reviewed for this study include some findings on the characteristics of seasonal workers. For example, the Pêrusse study discussed above shows the regional and rural/urban distribution of seasonal jobholders. Two reports published in the Perspectives on Labour and Income produced by Statistics Canada use SLID and LFS data to provide a comprehensive documentation of the characteristics of seasonal workers. These reports are:

- “Seasonal Employment and Reliance on Employment Insurance: Evidence from the SLID”, prepared by de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent in June 2003; and
- “Earnings of Temporary Versus Permanent Employees”, prepared by Diane Galarneau in January 2005.

The findings of these studies are summarized in this section of the report.

3.1. Findings of de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent

De Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent describe the value of their analysis of SLID data as follows:

“This study provides a multi-faceted picture of seasonal workers and their reliance on EI benefits by first identifying workers through their employment patterns and then determining the extent to which their layoffs led to EI claims. By categorizing seasonal workers in this manner, the extent of seasonal work in Canada and the contribution it makes to frequent use of EI is more fully captured. It also allows for a comparison of the characteristics and circumstances of seasonal workers according to their reliance on EI, providing a much richer picture of the diversity of seasonal workers in Canada.” (de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, p. 26)

Key findings in de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent are (see de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent, pp. 19-22):

- Long-term seasonal workers face significant barriers in transitioning from one job to another after job loss.

- Long-term seasonal workers are more likely to be older, male, less educated, living in regions with high unemployment rates, living with a partner, and residing in the Atlantic Provinces or Québec.
- The gender and age composition of long-term seasonal workers, when disaggregated according to their EI usage, shows that workers who never received EI benefits or received EI only once are nearly evenly divided between men and women while men comprise over two-thirds of seasonal workers who claimed EI two or three times.
- Seasonal workers who relied on EI the most frequently tend to be older than other types of EI users. Among workers who received EI following each of their three seasonal job spells, the percentage of claimants who were 40 years and older is nearly double that of those who never claimed or claimed only once.
- The majority of long-term seasonal workers did not graduate from post-secondary education. Those who claimed EI after each of their three seasonal jobs were much less likely to have graduated from post-secondary education.
- Long-term seasonal workers who rely on EI the most intensively are more likely to live in Atlantic Canada and Québec where unemployment rates tend to be higher, and seasonal work is more integral to the economy.
- A significant population of seasonal workers exists in Ontario and the Western Provinces. The majority of workers who claim EI in two or fewer years live in these provinces. However, either due to stricter regional EI eligibility requirements or a greater availability of off-season work, the end of a seasonal spell of employment for these workers does not necessarily lead to a claim for EI benefits.
- The majority of seasonal workers lived with a partner and this share became even larger as the intensity of reliance on EI benefits increased. However, this does not mean the seasonal workers claiming EI more frequently are better off financially. Although only slight variations exist in the distributions of family income among the four types of EI users, seasonal workers with one or no EI claims associated with their seasonal employment spells were more likely to be in the highest family income category (\$60,000 plus), even though they were less likely to be living in

households where there was potentially another adult income earner. Workers with the two or three claims were more likely to be in the lowest income category (under \$35,000).

- Seasonal workers who claim EI only once, compared with other seasonal workers, have greater flexibility in their decision to claim EI, and this is likely due to better work opportunities available to them.
- Seasonal workers continue to comprise a large and growing proportion of EI beneficiaries.
- Seasonal claims do not decline in periods of strong economic growth.
- The de Raaf et al findings dispel the myth that all seasonal workers are frequent EI claimants. These findings show that while a majority of seasonal workers do rely on EI on a regular basis, a significant proportion never rely on EI following any of their seasonal job spells.
- De Raaf et al conclude that seasonality is ubiquitous in Canada. In their words, seasonal employment:

“... can be found across Canada in every industry and occupation, making it more difficult to identify seasonal workers using traditional methods.” (p. 26)

The findings of de Raaf et al were presented in Table 5 (p. 21) of their report which is summarized here in Table 8.

| TABLE 8: DEMOGRAPHICS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SEASONAL WORKERS, 1993–98²⁰ | |
|--|---|
| | Percentage of All Seasonal Workers |
| Age | |
| Under 30 years | 37.1% |
| 30 to 39 years | 32.3% |
| 40 years and older | 30.6% |
| Gender | |
| Male | 63.7% |
| Female | 36.3% |
| Education | |
| High school or less | 59.8% |
| More than high school | 40.2% |
| Regional Unemployment Rate | |
| 7% or less | 28.8% |
| Over 7% to 9% | 20.3% |
| Over 9% | 50.9% |
| Marital Status | |
| Without Partner | 30.4% |
| With Partner | 69.6% |
| Region | |
| Atlantic and Québec | 47.6% |
| Ontario and West | 52.4% |
| Family Income | |
| Under \$35,000 | 34.8% |
| Between \$35,000 and \$60,000 | 37.9% |
| \$60,000 and over | 27.4% |

Source: de Raaf et al, Table 5, p. 21.

²⁰ Family status and the number of children were not reported in Table 5 of de Raaf et al.

3.2. Findings of Galarneau

The analysis of Galarneau is based on the LFS. Key findings are:

- Seasonal employees accounted for 2.9% of total employees in 1997 and 2003.
- Seasonal workers in Canada earned an average of \$14.41 per hour in 2003 or 28% less than permanent workers. Seasonal male workers earned an average of \$15.88 per hour or 27% less than male permanent workers. Seasonal female workers earned an average of \$11.14 per hour in 2003 or 38% less than permanent female workers.
- Seasonal workers in the public sector earned an average of \$15.32 per hour in 2003 or 36% less than permanent workers in the public sector. Seasonal workers in the private sector earned an average of \$14.29 per hour in 2003 or 24% less than permanent workers in the private sector.
- More than two-thirds of seasonal workers were men compared to approximately 50% of permanent employees.
- The age profile of seasonal and permanent employees was roughly similar.
- Atlantic Canada had a large percentage of seasonal workers compared to permanent workers while Ontario had a small percentage of seasonal workers compared to permanent workers.
- The percentage of seasonal workers with less than a high school education (29.3%) was roughly three times the percentage of permanent workers (10.4%). The percentage of seasonal workers with a university education (8.2%) was roughly one-third the percentage of permanent workers (23.4%).
- The percentage of seasonal workers that were unionized (26.4%) was somewhat less than the percentage of permanent workers that were unionized (35.5%).
- A much higher percentage of seasonal workers (37.2%) than permanent workers (7.2%) had six months or less of seniority in their job.

- A higher percentage of seasonal workers (53.9%) than permanent workers (30%) worked for a company with less than 20 employees.
- The percentage of seasonal workers who lived in rural areas (43.4%) was over twice that of permanent workers (21.4%).

These points are supported by Table 4 of the Galarneau report which is reproduced here as Table 9.

| TABLE 9: PROFILE OF PERMANENT AND SEASONAL WORKERS | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| | Permanent | Seasonal |
| Total Employees ('000) | 8,738 | 185.6 |
| Gender | % | % |
| Men | 51.4 | 69.0 |
| Women | 48.6 | 31.0 |
| Age Profile | | |
| 25-34 | 30.9 | 33.8 |
| 35-44 | 37.0 | 36.3 |
| 45-54 | 32.1 | 29.8 |
| Province | | |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 1.3 | 7.1 |
| Prince Edward Island | 0.4 | 1.9 |
| Nova Scotia | 2.7 | 7.3 |
| New Brunswick | 2.2 | 6.9 |
| Québec | 23.7 | 25.8 |
| Ontario | 41.0 | 22.7 |
| Manitoba | 3.5 | 2.9 |
| Saskatchewan | 2.8 | 3.2 |
| Alberta | 10.4 | 9.0 |
| British Columbia | 12.1 | 13.2 |

| TABLE 9: PROFILE OF PERMANENT AND SEASONAL WORKERS | | |
|--|-----------|----------|
| | Permanent | Seasonal |
| Education | % | % |
| Less than high school | 10.4 | 29.3 |
| High school diploma | 20.6 | 22.1 |
| Postsecondary, partial or complete | 45.6 | 40.4 |
| University degree | 23.4 | 8.2 |
| Employment Type | | |
| Full-time | 90.2 | 86.7 |
| Part-time | 9.8 | 13.4 |
| Unionized | 35.5 | 26.4 |
| Non-unionized | 64.5 | 73.6 |
| Seniority (months) | | |
| 1 to 3 | 3.3 | 22.2 |
| 4 to 6 | 3.9 | 15.0 |
| 7 to 9 | 3.5 | 5.5 |
| 10 to 12 | 3.0 | 3.3 |
| 13 to 24 | 9.8 | 12.8 |
| More than 24 | 76.5 | 41.1 |
| Workplace Size | | |
| Less than 20 employees | 30.0 | 53.9 |
| 20 to 99 | 32.1 | 28.4 |
| 100 to 500 | 23.6 | 13.0 |
| More than 500 | 14.4 | 4.7 |
| Rural/Urban Status | | |
| Rural | 21.4 | 43.4 |
| Urban | 78.6 | 56.7 |

Source: Galarneau, Table 4, p. 10.

Galarneau linked the profile of seasonal workers to their earnings as follows:

“Their low levels of education, their concentration in small workplaces, their low levels of seniority, as well as their low unionization rate compared with permanent workers could serve to widen their earnings gap.” (Galarneau, p. 10)

The Galarneau article provides data on the breakdown of the permanent and seasonal workforce across Canada in 2003 by broad occupational and industry group and skill level. The data are reproduced in Table 10.

TABLE 10: JOB CHARACTERISTICS OF PERMANENT AND SEASONAL EMPLOYEES, CANADA, 2003

| | Men | | Women | |
|--|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|
| | Permanent | Seasonal | Permanent | Seasonal |
| Total ('000) | 4,489.2 % | 128.1 % | 4,248.4 % | 57.6 % |
| Occupational Skill Level | | | | |
| Managerial | 10.1 | 1.3 | 6.8 | 1.9 |
| Professional | 15.2 | 1.4 | 21.1 | 3.4 |
| College or Apprenticeship | 37.7 | 34.1 | 27.9 | 24.1 |
| Secondary or less | 37.0 | 63.2 | 44.2 | 70.6 |
| Occupation | | | | |
| Managerial | 10.0 | 1.2 | 6.8 | F |
| Business, Finance and Administration | 11.0 | 1.9 | 31.7 | 11.8 |
| Natural and Applied Sciences and Related | 11.8 | 4.8 | 3.9 | 3.1 |
| Health | 1.6 | F | 11.3 | F |
| Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion | 5.1 | F | 10.8 | F |
| Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport | 1.5 | 2.0 | 2.0 | F |
| Sales and Service | 17.3 | 8.8 | 25.4 | 42.7 |
| Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators | 25.5 | 48.9 | 1.7 | 8.9 |
| Occupations Unique to Primary Industry | 2.3 | 23.7 | 0.4 | 12.7 |
| Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities | 13.8 | 8.0 | 6.0 | 13.5 |
| Industry | | | | |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Mining and Oil and Gas | 3.7 | 20.2 | 1.1 | 13.4 |
| Utilities | 1.8 | F | 0.5 | F |
| Construction | 7.4 | 31.7 | 1.2 | 3.3 |
| Manufacturing | 26.4 | 10.7 | 11.4 | 15.6 |
| Trade | 14.3 | 4.4 | 14.2 | 10.6 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 7.4 | 7.4 | 3.0 | 5.9 |
| Information, Culture, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation | 3.9 | 7.5 | 4.0 | 9.5 |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing | 4.6 | F | 9.1 | F |
| Professional, Scientific and Business, Building and Other Support | 5.5 | 1.5 | 5.7 | F |
| Education | 2.8 | 5.6 | 3.1 | 3.6 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 4.9 | 1.2 | 10.0 | 7.8 |
| Accommodation and Food | 3.6 | F | 20.6 | 4.3 |
| Other Services | 3.4 | 3.3 | 5.9 | 15.8 |
| Public Administration | 3.3 | 1.2 | 3.5 | F |
| | 6.9 | 3.4 | 6.6 | 4.5 |

Source: Galarneau, Table 5, p. 13.

Table 10 shows that a very low proportion of both men and women with managerial and professional skills were seasonal employees. It also shows that the majority of both men and women who were seasonal employees had secondary or less skills and the proportion of seasonal employees at this skill level was much higher than the proportion of permanent employees at this skill level.

Galarneau drew the following conclusions from the data in Table 10.

“Virtually no professionals worked as seasonal employees. However, 1 in 5 men in seasonal employment were specialized workers, mostly in construction. Close to 1 in 4 were in primary-sector occupations, most often related to fishing, agriculture (and nurseries) and forestry. One in 10 seasonal workers drove trucks or buses. In summary, nearly two-thirds of these men were employed in construction, primary industries, or manufacturing.

The positions held by women were largely unskilled. Women were highly concentrated in sales and services (43%), where they worked as sales clerks, cashiers and cooks, for example. A high percentage also worked in processing, manufacturing and utilities occupations (14%) or those related to the primary sector (13%). Manufacturing (16%), accommodation and food services (16%), the primary industries (13%) and trade (11%) employed a substantial percentage of these women. This concentration by occupation and industry should tend to expand the earnings gap, more so for women than for men.

Given that primary industries tend to dominate seasonal employment to some extent, a higher percentage of workers holding this type of employment lived in rural areas compared with permanent workers (43% versus 21%) and in the Atlantic provinces (23% compared with 7%).” (Galarneau, pp. 10-12)

Galarneau calculated the average hourly earnings gap of male seasonal workers compared to permanent employees. She found an hourly earnings gap of 28% between permanent male workers and their seasonal counterparts but the gap narrowed to 18% after factoring in the hours worked by both groups of workers and the earnings of their spouses. As stated by Galarneau (p. 16):

“Male seasonal workers showed smaller gaps than initially (from -28% to -18%), primarily because of more hours worked (6% more than permanent employees) and, to a lesser extent, the contribution of spousal earnings. The negative effect of their low education level and their concentration in small workplaces and in the Atlantic provinces is therefore partially offset by their long hours of work and their family situation. A substantial average gap of -18% nonetheless persists for the 85,000 male seasonal workers (in couples).”

The hourly earnings gap between of female permanent and seasonal workers was 39% but the gap narrowed to 14% after factoring in the hours worked by both groups of workers and the earnings of their spouses.

4. HOUSING ISSUES FACED BY SEASONAL WORKERS

4.1. Introduction

As noted in our proposal for this project, there is a scarcity of contemporary literature dealing directly the subject of housing for seasonal workers. However, there is a fair amount of historical information – particularly about agriculture, forestry and fishing – that sheds some light on the housing issues of seasonal workers. Much of this illumination occurs indirectly – housing is frequently peripheral to the main thesis being examined. However, a close reading of published sources dealing with individual seasonal industries, migrant workers or frontier development has yielded some valuable insights. In that regard, both academic literature and popular works were reviewed.

The Internet was also used extensively to update information from published sources and to canvass for new developments. Various government publications and announcements were examined as well. A complete list of documents and publications consulted as well as websites is included along with the bibliography.

Canadian housing literature available from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) provided background useful to considering issues that will affect the housing conditions facing seasonal workers. These documents, while not dealing directly with housing issues facing seasonal workers, provided information and analysis useful for putting the issue in context. The documents deal with:

- Rural Housing;
- Northern and Remote Area Housing;
- Housing in Boom Towns or ‘Instant Towns’;
- Long Distance Commuting;
- Homelessness; and
- Housing and the Changing Nature of Work.

The next section of the report will review findings on the above topics before going on to an industry-by-industry survey of relevant material.

4.2. Review of Related Housing Studies

4.2.1. Rural Housing

There has been considerable discussion of the housing needs of rural dwellers by, among others, CMHC and Statistics Canada through the Canadian Rural Partnership. Given that many seasonal workers have low incomes and live in rural areas, David Bruce's "Housing Needs of Low-Income People Living in Rural Areas," sheds light on housing issues that may have an impact on seasonal workers. The report counted working poor families, some youth and young adults, and some Aboriginal persons in the "universe" of low-income persons in rural Canada. Working poor families were among the larger components of the low-income universe, particularly in communities where the service sector, tourism and primary industries are the major employers.

The report is based on literature and statistical reviews and case studies of 12 rural communities and small towns. From the reviews we learn that compared with urban areas there is less rental housing in rural areas, and more of the rural housing stock is older and in need of major repairs. The report noted that the availability of rental housing is largely defined by four issues:

- The economic context, relating to jobs and income;
- Distance of the community from a large urban centre, which relates to access to services, jobs and incomes;
- Population size, which relates to market functioning and construction sector capacity; and
- Size of the seniors' population.

The Bruce report shows that while urban households with sufficient incomes can resolve housing crises, financial resources may not bring results in rural areas where supply is limited.

4.2.2. Northern and Remote Area Housing

The findings of the rural housing study overlap somewhat with an earlier CMHC study on housing in northern and remote communities (Institute of Urban Studies). The study was undertaken to assess the appropriateness of the Core Housing Need model for measuring housing needs in the North. For the purposes of the study, the North included the Extreme North and the Far North, mainly territory north of the 60th parallel, and the Middle North. The latter stretches from Newfoundland to the Yukon Territory and includes large parts of all provinces from Québec west.

The Middle North is characterized by a dual economy – a resource economy and an Aboriginal economy – and a range of housing issues that differ from those in the South including:

- Climate makes housing more expensive to build and operate;
- Costs are increased by the absence of local building materials;
- The small population and scattered nature of settlement, combined with higher costs, reduce the viability of the private market which in turn reduces housing options;
- The fact that many indigenous people do not benefit from the resource economy means that “there is a marginalized sector of society that faces difficult housing circumstances”;
- Overall, the evidence suggests that the level of housing need is considerably higher in northern and remote areas;
- In terms of Core Housing Need, affordability is less of a problem than adequacy and suitability. This is likely due to factors such as a high level of subsidized housing which reduces affordability problems and a lack of municipal infrastructure which means that many homes do not have indoor water or plumbing or adequate sewage disposal or adequate fire protection; and
- Suitability problems are generally more common because housing units are often smaller and family units larger than in the South.

4.2.3. Housing in Boom Towns or “Instant Towns”

Historically, boom towns or instant towns have been seen as resource industry communities, ranging from transient camps for labourers to permanent communities with populations up to 25,000. There is a good deal of literature on instant towns (Halseth/Sullivan, Lucas, CEIAC) but little of it looks specifically at the housing needs of seasonal workers. In the United States, the Housing Assistance Council has published studies that have some relevance to the issue at hand. One such report examined the impact of rapid economic growth on four diverse U.S. rural communities. It found that the boom left behind a group of renters – usually with low-paying service industry jobs – for whom rising property values just mean higher rents and living costs. Low-income homeowners who are unable to afford major repairs may become trapped in sub-standards homes. In addition, many rural communities find that there is little interest by private developers in building affordable rental housing.

The literature from both Canada and the U.S. suggests that the availability of affordable rental housing is an issue – both in newly-established resource towns and in established communities which experience rapid economic growth.

4.2.4. Long Distance Commuting

Long Distance Commuting (LDC) has been replacing the single-industry or resource town as a means of providing labour to remote work places. LDC...

“ ... sees accommodation and food provided for employees at or near the work site, and schedules established whereby the workers spend a fixed number of days there followed by a number at home.” (Shrimpton and Storey, p. vii)

The period at the work site may be as short as a few days or as long as a dozen weeks; the commute, largely or wholly paid for by the employer, may involve a bus ride of a hundred or so kilometres or flights several thousands kilometres long.

In some cases, such as in Northern Ontario, workers may commute by car every few days from nearby towns. Long Distance Commuting was first used in North America by the offshore oil and gas industry, but was subsequently adopted by onshore industries, including mining, forestry and hydro development. The offshore trawler fishery,

*“ ... which has always exhibited some of the characteristics of the (LCD) system, has now adopted a truly LDC pattern for factory-freezer trawlers.”
(Shrimpton and Storey, p. vii)*

Shrimpton and Storey studied three “fly-in mines”, one in Saskatchewan and two in the Northwest Territories. Their report to Labour Canada contained 28 recommendations, several of which related directly to accommodation, including:

- Single workers should be provided with single room accommodations and larger units should be available to couples;
- Work and non-work environments should be differentiated as much as possible;
- Companies should provide a range of recreation opportunities;
- Communication costs should be subsidized so that regular contact can be maintained between home and work locations;
- Aspects of camp life should be addressed in collective agreements; and
- The opportunity for site visits should be available on a regular basis for the family and friends of LDC workers.

4.2.5. Homelessness

As one writer has observed, the emergence of homelessness as a social issue in Canada in the 1980s harked back to the time of the tramps and hobos of the 1930s, riding the rails in search of casual and seasonal work. (O'Reilly-Fleming) It is therefore somewhat surprising that current literature on the problem of homelessness rarely delves into the role, if any, that seasonal employment plays in homelessness. For example, a literature review conducted on behalf of the National Homelessness Secretariat (NHS) did not include seasonal workers as one of its demographic groups or seasonal

employment as one of the specific issues related to homelessness. (CCSD) The current National Research Program being conducted by NHS does not appear to include any research focussed specifically on seasonal labour and homelessness.

Nevertheless, studies often cite as a main cause of homelessness the poverty brought about by changes in the labour market and a more restrictive Employment Insurance program. Reports have also found both statistical and anecdotal indications that the 1930s-style seasonal worker, travelling about in search of employment, may also be among the modern day homeless person. The Mayor's Homelessness Action Task Force surveyed hostel users in Toronto from 1988 to 1996, recording their reasons for shelter use. The Task Force reported that 30.4% of hostel users gave "new arrival to Toronto" as the reason for using a hostel, while another 30.9% fell into "transient/other/unknown". The Toronto studies also reported that 47% of hostel users came from outside that city. (Golden)

A Calgary study from 2002 found that 50.2% of hostel dwellers were employed, up slightly from 45% of respondents to a similar survey in 1997. (CHF, p. 60) Many were in shelters because they could not afford the high rents.

"When Alberta males migrate to Calgary, they usually do so for economic reasons, including hoping to find work...the primary reasons provided by ...respondents for not having a permanent home were factors associated with high rents." (CHF, p. 11)

When researchers elsewhere interviewed the homeless, they also found individuals who came from declining small towns and rural areas seeking jobs and better opportunities in the city. A 26-year-old male hostel dweller from "Canada's East Coast" told a Toronto researcher:

"There was no work back home and it's hard to get a place to get started. They just don't give you enough money, really. Everywhere you go they want first and last...They want you to get a place first before you can get some work and you can't get work without a permanent address 'cause they wanna be able to phone you to verify where you live." (O'Reilly-Fleming, p. 127)

In Halifax, a youth from Newfoundland told a similar story:

"I decided to leave the town because there is nothing to look forward to there but a (coffee shop) job for the rest of your life. The lumber industry will be there for a short period of time but even that will not last... There is no reason we have to be homeless in this country. I can't get a job, can't get assistance, I can't get a shelter. I don't get how the system works. I am not interested in drugs. I am passing out résumés all the time. I am looking daily." (Halifax Regional Municipality, p. 40)

As a rule, researchers did not probe further into the circumstances surrounding the subject's separation from job or community. Time did not permit a complete review by the consultants of the fairly voluminous literature on homelessness or a second look at existing survey data to determine the extent to seasonal employment plays a role in homelessness.

4.2.6. Housing and the Changing Nature of Work

A report by Ekos for CMHC, published in 1998, examined the impact of changes in the labour market on the housing market. Changes included the rise in "non-standard work arrangements," a definition which encompassed seasonal employment (along with self-employment, contractual work, part-time employment and teleworking). Although the report did not look specifically at seasonal employment, it suggested a number of implications of a rise in the incidence of non-traditional employment (Ekos, p. 20) including:

- Uneven income flow, making it more difficult to get a mortgage;
- A reduced need to live near work; and
- A greater need for mobility and a reduced desire to be "tied down" by home ownership.

The report suggested that while changes in the labour market have some impact on housing:

"... the principle manner in which the labour market influences the housing market comes down to the fundamental ability to afford a home, a capacity that is influenced by flow and level of income." (Ekos, p. 49)

The growth in “vulnerable workers”²¹ brought about by the rise in non-standard work is having a negative impact on the incomes of many Canadians. As part of the non-standard workforce, workers in seasonal industries will face many of the same issues identified in the Ekos report.

4.2.7. Summing up the Significance of Related Housing Studies

All of the study areas identified in Section 4.2.1 to 4.2.6 relate indirectly to the housing issues of seasonal workers. Many workers included in each topic work on a seasonal basis so the information and analysis presented in these sections applies to them as well to other workers who work on a permanent basis. While the findings of these sections cannot be attributed exclusively to seasonal workers they are relevant to this group.

4.3. Housing Issues by Seasonal Industry Sector

4.3.1. Agriculture

The housing conditions facing migrant seasonal agricultural workers in the United States have long attracted the interest of scholars and social commentators (e.g., Hahamovich, Hathaway, Higbie) and even network television (the documentary film “Harvest of Shame”). Marion Hathaway described the housing available to migrant workers and their families in the Pacific Northwest in the 1920s and 1930s. It ranged from adequate to non-existent. Facilities included: campgrounds; one-room auto-cabin camps, “berry sheds” from two to 20 units, provided free-of-charge by fruit growers; or tents and shelters erected in open spaces, often without sanitary facilities. The U.S. government’s Children’s Bureau, summarized the situation as follows:

“Still only too often the living arrangements for migratory workers are the veriest makeshifts, violating every standard of decency as well as comfort.”
(Hathaway, pp. 143-4)

In Canada, less attention has been paid to the matter historically, although some have maintained that conditions in this country were as bad as the

²¹ “Vulnerable workers are workers who find it difficult to access work that provides a decent income and working conditions that meet societal norms.” (Maxwell, p. i)

United States. One example cited in the 1970s concerned the housing available for French-Canadian migrants working in Southern Ontario. It was said to consist of:

“ ... a shack 20 feet by 25 feet with no washing facilities, tattered mattresses on the floor and a fly-infested outhouse nearby shared by four men and two women.” (Mitchell, p. 29)

Neither the U.S. nor Canada has mandated that employers provide housing to seasonal farmworkers. In both countries employer-provided housing is mandatory only for migrant farmworkers participating in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers (SAW) Program in Canada or the H-2A program in the U.S.

The Canadian SAW Program has operated to bring temporary workers from the Caribbean since 1966 and from Mexico since 1974. It accounts for only a small percentage of the farm labour force in Canada, but because it is a regulated program, more is known about it than about the rest of the seasonal farm labour force.

In 2002, Canada's SAW program brought 19,000 workers to this country, (MacLellan, Mares, p. 15) with about 10,600 of those from Mexico (Igartua, p. 6). The majority of SAW Program participants go to the province of Ontario, although farmers from all other provinces except Newfoundland also hire them, with Québec and British Columbia among the last to take part. Farmers must provide migrant workers with free housing (including meals or cooking facilities) and guarantee them a minimum of 240 hours work over six weeks at or above prevailing minimum wage rates.

A key element of the SAW Program is that workers have great difficulty in changing employers, a feature that renders them “captive labour,” available whenever the crop is ready to be picked. This is seen as critical to the program's success and makes it a structural necessity for Ontario agriculture. (Basok, p. 19)

Housing has been an important issue under the SAW Program almost from its inception. A 1973 report by the Federal Department of Manpower and Immigration, leading up to the decision to expand the program to include

Mexican workers, told of living conditions endured by a group of Mexican Mennonites brought to Ontario by a labour contractor. It reported *“a scene of almost indescribable squalor in a ramshackle building”* inhabited by nine workers. Expansion of the SAW Program to include workers from Mexico was designed to ensure, among other things, improved accommodation for farm migrant labourers. Despite that, there have been complaints over the years from the media, union officials and academic researchers about the quality of housing provided by some farmers. One explanation for this is that annual housing inspections are at the behest of the employer, not the health inspectors. (Basok) As pointed out in a submission from the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, most inspections occur before the workers arrive so inspectors would be unaware that housing designed to accommodate six to eight may end up housing as many as 25. (UFCW)

Canada’s North-South Institute (Gibb) studied the SAW Program as a *“model of best practices and migrant worker participation in the benefits of economic globalisation”* and in 2006 issued a report identifying the program’s strengths and weaknesses and recommending areas for improvement. The report detailed a number of complaints, including: overcrowding, lack of indoor plumbing, lack of privacy, fridges not big enough and closets too small. It also reported several good practices, including farm owners who provide workers with their own bedroom, Spanish-language satellite television or meeting places where workers can gather for social or sports events. The North-South review recommended several changes: (Gibb, p. 15)

- Fewer workers housed in smaller units;
- A private bedroom for each worker;
- Indoor plumbing;
- A separate social space away from eating and sleeping areas;
- More frequent inspections; and
- Updated housing guidelines.

The North-South Institute Report also focussed attention on the efforts of local churches, community groups and unions to support the participants in the SAW Program.

When employers do provide housing for workers outside of the two temporary worker programs discussed above, it must meet certain standards. In the U.S. these are established by the federal government under the Occupational Safety and Health Act and the Migrant and Seasonal Workers Protection Act (MSAWPA), passed by Congress in 1983. MSAWPA protects both migrant and seasonal agricultural workers, with the distinction between the two resting on whether the worker is required to be absent overnight from his or her permanent residence. MSAWPA requires that any person who owns or controls housing used by migrant agricultural workers must assure it meets safety and health standards, and it requires agricultural employers who provide housing to post the terms and conditions of occupancy.

Where employer-provided farmworker housing exists in Canada, it is regulated by the Provinces and covered by the same legislation and regulations applied to industrial camps in general.²² The regulations address such matters as water quality, waste disposal, washing facilities, ventilation and construction. The provincial regulations are of varying vintage – Nova Scotia's were enacted in 1942; the most recent updating was in New Brunswick in 1991. The regulations also mandate a range of different construction standards, province to province. (CLC, p. 15) None, however, come anywhere close to the standards suggested in the North-South Institute Report.

It needs to be emphasized that the standards discussed so far apply only to employer-provided housing, where it exists. No estimates can be found for Canada of the housing needs of seasonal farm labourers as a whole. In the U.S. it has been reported by NAWS that only 21% of the 2.5 million

²² Industrial Camps Health Regulation, British Columbia Regulation 427/83; Work Camps Regulation, Alberta Regulations 251/85; Camps in Unorganized Territory Regulation, Ontario, 1990 Reg. 55; Regulation Respecting Sanitary Conditions in Industrial Camps, Revised Regulations of Québec, 1981; Occupational Health and Safety Act, New Brunswick Regulation 91-191, Part II; Regulations Respecting Industrial and Construction Camps, Regulations of Nova Scotia 1942. (cited by CLC, p. 22).

farmworkers live in housing supplied by their employer; 58% live in rental housing outside the farm and 19% live in housing owned by themselves or a family member. Since about 44% of U.S. farmworkers are classed as migrants, it would appear that even most members of this group do not have access to employer-provided housing. (Rural Voices, Summer 2005)

In contrast to Canada, there are U.S. government programs targeted towards farmworker housing. The Housing Act of 1949 makes provision under Sections 514 and 516 for farm labour housing loans and grants. The program is administered by the Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Service. Loans and grants are not given to individual farmworkers but to farmers or farmers' associations, associations of farmworkers or to other non-profit organizations. Since the program's inception in 1962 it spent almost \$1 billion to create 34,903 units and rehabilitate thousands more. (HAC/ND) This falls well short of demand. The most recent data on farmworker housing demand, from the late 1970s, estimated that 756,196 units were needed. In 1995, request under the Rural Housing Service program totalled more than \$200 million to provide over 4,100 units, but only 550 were funded. (HAC, p. 1997)

A second, smaller program within the Department of Labour, the National Farmworker Jobs Program, funds non-profit organizations to put together the financing packages necessary to activate Section 514/616 projects. In addition several state governments have assistance programs that include financial aid to improve labour camps or to help establish migrant service centres, as well as tax credits and low interest loans. California's Farmworker Housing Grant Program, established in 1970, provides matching funds to cooperative or non-profit agencies to build housing for farmworkers. (HAC 1998) Finally, the issue of farmworker housing has a champion in the Housing Assistance Council, a non-profit corporation founded in 1971, that provides technical housing services, loans, program and policy assistance, research and communications.

Similar programs, focused on the Southern Alberta sugar beet industry, existed in Canada for about 20 years before being phased out in the mid-1980s. Under the Federal-Provincial Agricultural Manpower Agreement farmers were provided with grants and loans to build hostels for the mainly Aboriginal migrant labour force. The hostels provided hot and cold water,

showers, gas heat and electricity, and each one had a dormitory, central dining room and washing unit. (Laliberte, Satzewich, p. 76) Five such joint hostels were built between 1966 and 1968, when the program was modified to include grants to farmers of up to \$150 per worker to upgrade housing on individual farms. By 1974, grants were increased to \$500 per worker, to a maximum of \$4,000 per farmer, and under the Priority Employment Program (PEP), government paid the wages of carpenters who carried out the repairs. The grants were terminated in 1977 and PEP continued until 1983 when it was terminated by the government departments responsible for the program:

“ ... because the demand had decreased and because they were committed to reducing expenditures.” (Laliberte, Satzewich, p. 77)

Housing assistance programs and bilateral programs such as the SAW are limited to farmworkers and on-farm processing. Such programs do not cover the increasing numbers of foreign workers coming in on temporary work permits for employment in meat packing plants. There has been at least one case in Alberta where efforts by the employer to construct housing for employees were opposed by nearby residents. (Bruce, p. 37)

4.3.2. Construction

Primitive housing conditions in railway construction work camps a century ago are described in considerable detail in Bradwin. More recent conditions are described in McCutcheon, Storey and Shrimpton and Storey and Hamilton. McCutcheon described housing and living conditions at Hydro Québec’s James Bay project in the late 1970s as idyllic, at least for some of the 20,000 workers involved.

“At the work sites, most slept two to a room in 12-room dormitory trailers...There were post offices, bars, banks, television, leisure centres, gymnasias, weight-lifting rooms, bowling alleys, swimming pools, ping pong, photography studios, arenas for hockey in winter, tennis in summer, cinemas.”(McCutcheon, p. 26)

The issue of housing for seasonal construction workers has been emerging recently in the context of labour shortages. Under the rules of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program for the construction industry, there is provision for employers to provide suitable accommodation “if necessary.”

In addition, the construction industry is giving consideration to the nature of accommodations available to migrant nationals working on projects such as the oil sands. This follows the publication in 2005 of the study “Working Mobile” by the Construction Sector Council. The study reported that personal expenses incurred on the job site and at home could become a barrier to workers’ willingness to work mobile. The study also reported negative views about the quality of life in construction camps – in particular the lack of privacy and personal space. However, cost ruled out alternative accommodations. (CSC)

Alberta’s Construction Workforce Development Forecasting Committee, in a report released in 2005, notes the difficulty in convincing sufficient numbers of construction workers to travel to Alberta to work and suggests that contingency plans may be required – including importing temporary foreign workers and implementing “innovative techniques”, some of which would be related to the provision of accommodations, to attract and retain Canadian workers on Alberta projects in remote areas. (CWDFC, p. 20)

4.3.3. Oil and Gas

The availability of affordable housing for seasonal and transient construction workers is becoming particularly acute in the oil and gas industry, particularly around Fort McMurray, Alberta. Most construction workers on oil sands development projects can be accommodated in camps near Fort McMurray, but the high cost and limited availability of rental housing in the city leaves them few alternatives to camp life. In addition, the housing squeeze in Fort McMurray is having other impacts:

- The developer of the Horizon heavy oil upgrader is reported to be considering the possibility of flying in staff to operate the plant when it is completed in two years; and
- City council is considering allowing a temporary work camp in the downtown area to facilitate construction of a new recreation centre.

4.3.4. Fishing

The housing needs of fishers often depend on the type of fishery in which they are engaged. On the East Coast, the fishery is conventionally divided

into inshore, nearshore and offshore operations. (MacDonald) Inshore and nearshore fishermen typically live in fishing villages. The houses in one such village, Nipper's Harbour, on Newfoundland's Notre Dame Bay, were described as:

"... warm, orderly and utilitarian...usually two story buildings of simple design, frame construction entirely of wood, and ordinarily painted white." (Philbrook, p. 34)

"The houses are on a foundation of wooden poles or 'shores' resting on bedrock, and occasionally must be replaced. Because of their wooden construction, the houses have life span, and a number of them show their age." (Philbrook, p. 49)

Although inshore and nearshore fishermen often travel great distances to fish, their circumstances differ from those of the offshore fishermen. Depending on the length of the trip, inshore or nearshore fishers may sleep on the boat. The concept of "shareman" exists in the inshore fishery, involving men who would join a fishing trip but contribute only labour, not contributing gear or to the cost of the excursion. Sharemen would receive a half share, plus room and board. (Sinclair, p. 44) Peter Sinclair described accommodation aboard a typical 50-65-foot dragger, with three or four-person crews, such as operate in the Newfoundland fishery:

"Sleeping quarters for the crew are placed forward below the main deck. On some boats the skipper has a separate bunk on the upper level where we find a galley equipped with refrigerator and oil stove. Besides its use for cooking, the stove provides vital warmth in the winter fishery." (Sinclair, p. 85)

The East Coast offshore fishery is conducted by company-owned trawlers operating from larger ports. On the Pacific Coast, where salmon was long the dominant species, factory trawlers were not an efficient way to catch salmon and as a result fishing was mainly left to small, inshore vessels. East Coast trawlermen are hired on a trip-by-trip basis, with trips usually lasting 10 days. Since the 1970s, most trawlermen have been unionized and have seen improvements in living conditions aboard ships to go along with industrialization, modernization of equipment and unionization of the workforce. In her research on the offshore fishery in Nova Scotia, Marion Binkley found improvements in living conditions between the 1960s and the 1990s aboard scallopers and fish trawlers.

"We use to go fourteen, sixteen, seventeen days," recalled one interviewee, a deckhand. "A lot times you used to run out of water. You wasn't allowed to wash. You'd stand in the hold and take the old ice water and melt it, cook with it, and drink it.... We went out one trip with twenty-one fellows aboard...You'd sleep in one fellow's bunk during his watch, then when you was on watch, the other fellow slept in your bunk. But I don't think that you see that today. That would be into the '60s and the '70s." (Binkley, p. 141)

Internationally, the International Labour Organization has proposed a comprehensive standard to govern conditions of work in the fishing sector. The standard includes living conditions aboard offshore fishing vessels. Our literature review did not turn up any evidence of issues concerning living conditions aboard modern day offshore vessels involving Canadian crews.

4.3.5. Fish Processing

"Canning camps" housing seasonal workers employed in processing fish or agricultural products, were once prominent on the landscape, particularly in British Columbia and the U.S. In the latter decades of the 19th century British Columbia canneries employed Chinese workers brought in under labour contractors. Although Chinese workers remained the core of the labour force, by 1900 Aboriginals, including entire families, were being employed by the canneries. According to Alicja Muszynski (p. 60), in the B.C. canning camps of the late 19th century, racial distinctions in job assignments were reinforced in the arrangements for company housing. Managers, bookkeepers, tradesmen or foremen, usually of European descent, had the best housing. Native families lived either in row houses or, where land was available, in cheap houses in a small village. The Chinese lived in bunkhouses, often with ten or more men to a room, with inadequate toilet and washing facilities. Segregated housing was reported to be in use as late as 1978. (Muszynski, p. 65)

There is also evidence of the existence of cookhouse-dormitory facilities to accommodate the mainly female workforce employed by lobster canneries on the west coast of Newfoundland in the late 1800s. (Sinclair, p. 35) However, until recent years, the dominant model on the East Coast remained that of the small fish plant located in a fishing community and worked mainly by the wives of fishers. Despite the consolidation of processing facilities on both coasts (and the closure of fish plants in many coastal communities) the majority of fish plant workers are still drawn from

the local community. According to the National Seafood Sector Council, in both 1996 and 2001, about 25% of workers moved to take jobs in the industry. (NSSC)

One group that moved to find employment in fish processing was from Notre Dame Bay in Newfoundland. (Foster, Marshall) Beginning in 1991, families from the area moved to Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick, to work in a plant facing a labour shortage. Members of the first group arranged their own accommodations, but after the plant owner – Connors Brothers – went on an expanded recruiting drive in Newfoundland in the late 1990s, the company took upon itself the task of supplying housing. The company developed a trailer park about three kilometres from the fish plant on land leased from the plant manager. The plant manager also took responsibility for getting water to the site and building showers and laundry facilities. Called the Comfort Cove Trailer Park, after the Newfoundland community where most came from, the park has drawn criticism as a hindrance to the integration of the newcomers into the community. Not all of the new arrivals lived in the park however. A few have purchased homes, and others rent houses or trailers elsewhere on the Island, giving rise to complaints that they are pushing up rents. By 2001, 15 families were staying year-round in Grand Manan. (Foster, Marshall)

4.3.6. Forestry

From a historical perspective, living conditions in lumber camps in many parts of Canada are described in the literature. (Mullen, Bradwin, Hathaway, Marchak 1983) Mullen wrote an oral history of living conditions in the camps of the Mersey Paper Company in Queen's County Nova Scotia, which began operations in 1929. According to one interviewee, the opportunity to live in a woods camp was seen as a boon by some. Loggers received about \$1 a cord, but paid 60 cents a day for board, leaving them with little to show for their labour.

"The men would go into the woods for nothing, just for their tobacco and their board. It meant one less mouth to feed." (Mullen, p. 47)

Once in the woods, the workers lived – for up to four months at a stretch²³ – in conditions described as “god-awful.” Accommodation often consisted of a combined bunkhouse or cookhouse under the same roof, filled with the stench of dirty, drying clothes. Mattresses were made of boughs or loose straw and blankets consisted of felt that came from the mill. (Mullen, p. 49)

Conditions improved in the Mersey camps in British Columbia during and after World War II. (p. 58) British Columbia, it appears, followed the lead of the United States. There, prodded by rising labour militancy in the men-only camps, logging operators as far back as the 1920s tried to encourage the migration of family groups to the logging camps by introducing portable homes and schools. (Hathaway, p. 13)

Ian Radford, in his history of logging in Northern Ontario, has suggested that even though some progress was made in improving living conditions in the camps in the 1920s, this momentum was brought to a halt by the Depression. During World War II living conditions in the camps had so deteriorated that when consideration was being given to using prisoners of war as a source of labour in the woods, the industry had to look at the need to upgrade housing facilities. (Radforth, p. 105)

“Overwhelmingly, in the period before 1950, Ontario bush workers ate, slept and spent their leisure hours in crude log dining halls and bunkhouses...virtually all camps were dingy and lacked convenient bathing, toilet and laundry facilities...the great majority built before 1950 used candles and kerosene lanterns.” (Radforth, pp. 89-92)

According to Radforth, a combination of union pressure and labour shortages after 1950 encouraged employers to provide better facilities. In Ontario, one major change came somewhat earlier. As the result of a successful strike in 1946, the Lumber and Saw Mill Workers Union forced the elimination of double-decker bunks and their replacement with single cots. In terms of camp design, employers abandoned log buildings and portable camps, and for a time replaced them with large pre-fabricated buildings made of panels that could be dismantled and re-used. When

²³ Depending on the condition of access roads, some loggers were able to return home on Saturday night and return to the woods Sunday afternoon. (Mullen, p. 82).

companies found moving the panel camps too costly, they started to build large central camps for up to 350 men who would be bussed daily to their work sites along the growing network of logging access roads. By the 1970s, logging camps resembled trailer parks, complete with TV antennas and recreation centres.

In a throwback to the 1920s-initiatives mentioned by Hathaway, some companies in the 1950s built forest communities, erecting small homes and renting to employees and their families. But these experiments were overtaken by the commuting trend, made possible by the continuing of all-weather logging roads. For example, by 1976, 61% of Ontario's pulpwood operations were run by employees who commuted daily from their homes in nearby towns. (Radforth, p. 173) Because many of these nearby towns lacked the amenities of urban centres, logging companies began to offer air transport into the camps from those larger communities.

The camps in which those commuters stayed were, by the late 1970s, a vast improvement over 30 years earlier. In one Northern Ontario camp, the agreement between the company and union required that each employee have his or her own room complete with bed, closet, desk, carpets on the floor, textured ceiling and sliding windows. In addition:

" ... in a roofed courtyard the company had built recreation facilities where employees could play horse-shoes, darts and ping-pong year-round. And the company had plans to construct volleyball and basketball courts." (Radforth, p. 174)

Camps are still widely used by the forest industry but living conditions in the camps do not appear to be an issue. Unfortunately, definitive information on the number of logging camps was not available in the Literature Review. Some are run by large integrated forestry companies, others by logging contractors. Most provinces have regulations setting minimum standards for temporary accommodations such as bunkhouses. (CLC, p. 15) For example, British Columbia's "Industrial Camps Health Regulations" apply to lumber camps, mining camps, sawmills, railway construction camps, canneries "and other similar places where labour is employed." The regulations govern siting, sanitary facilities, waste disposal, water quality, handling of water supply, construction of buildings, space requirements in sleeping areas, washing, bathing and laundry

facilities. Inspections are the responsibility of the health ministry, which has the power to close any camp considered a health hazard. However, as Radforth has argued, strong unions within the logging industry have also had a major impact in ensuring adequate living conditions in lumber camps. This could become less of a factor as more camps become the responsibility of logging contractors, many of whom are non-union.

4.3.7. Tourism

There are indications of problems with housing availability and affordability for tourism industry workers. The issue – identified by organizations such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Government of France, the Seattle Alliance for Good Jobs and Housing for Everyone (SAGE) and the Village of Whistler, B.C. – is that low wages in the tourism industry are exacerbated by higher-than-normal housing costs in resort areas. The result is that many tourism workers cannot afford to live in the communities in which they work.

The Municipality of Whistler is dealing with the problem through a lower tax on year-round residents, support for construction of employee housing and tax breaks for hotels and businesses that provide employee housing. (LEAD) Resort communities in parts of the U.S. have also used zoning, land purchases and agreements with developers to provide affordable housing for tourism workers. For example, in the Colorado ski resort of Vail, most seasonal workers live in company-owned housing and permanent employees can get down payment assistance from the company to buy a home. (Goodno) In addition, the French government announced a plan in 2000 to improve the working and living conditions of seasonal workers in the tourism industry, including construction of housing units and adapting housing assistance to fit employment mobility. (eiiroloine)

A potential issue facing the tourism industry in Canada is the housing of foreign workers. The industry maintains that over the next decade it may be unable to fill as many as 300,000 positions and will therefore need to attract foreign workers. (CTHRC) Several approaches are being explored – including Foreign Credentials Recognition, working with Provincial Nominee Programs or using the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. Under the latter, the usual requirement that employers pay travel costs and

facilitate accommodation for foreign workers may be beyond the capacity of small operators who make up 43% of tourism businesses. (CIRL, p. 26)

4.3.8. Film Production

Initial investigation finds no evidence of housing issues for the film production industry or workers in film production. This may be because on average, workers in the Canadian motion picture and video industry earned \$31,511 in 2000, similar to the average earnings of the workforce at large. (Ekos/Audley) This would mitigate affordability issues that face many other seasonal workers. In addition, the industry's revenues and labour force are highly concentrated in three large urban centres – Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. This may reduce the need for seasonal film workers to travel to work. It appears that when film crews, directors or actors do travel, accommodation is the responsibility of the film companies. In addition, when film companies go on location, crews, extras and other personnel are frequently hired locally to take advantage of labour-based tax credit programs. (NSFDC)

Housing may be more of an issue in the broader cultural sector, which includes film production, as well as live performing arts, writing and publishing, sound recording and music, visual arts and crafts, and heritage. (CHRC) As a whole, cultural occupations have below average levels of remuneration and higher levels of part-time employment and self-employment – the latter at a rate three times higher than the labour force as a whole. This “precariousness of employment” (CHRC) that marks a career in many parts of the cultural sector is reflected in the establishment of the non-profit Performing Arts Lodges of Canada, which operates in five cities across the country to provide housing and care for older performers and others associated with the performing arts. (PALS)

4.3.9. Hunting and Trapping

There are a number of historical sources dealing with the housing conditions experienced by Aboriginal hunters and trappers. Unfortunately, information on Non-Aboriginal hunters and trappers do not exist. As the number of persons employed as hunters and trappers has declined, so apparently has information on their housing needs. No information on the

housing needs of Aboriginal hunters and trappers was obtained from publications included in the Literature Review.

Henricksen described the practices of Naskapi hunters in Labrador who traditionally spent summers engaged in inshore fishing from their homes in Davis Inlet. The Naskapi spent the winter hunting caribou in the Labrador interior and living in tents made from flimsy cotton duck. Paulus Maggo, an Inuit from Nain on the Labrador Coast, recalls living in an igloo during a hunting trip in about 1925. (Maggo, p. 75) But in more modern times:

“ ... people return on the same day from caribou hunting by snowmobile, travelling that we may have taken four or five days to reach.” (Maggo, p. 98)

In summer, the Inuit fished and hunted seals, living in tent villages set up along the coast. Unlike the Naskapi, Inuit tents were made from hides or canvas. Seal netting also took place along the coast, often involving permanent camps. Nowadays, however, there are few if any hunting, trapping or fishing camps because:

“ ... there is very little or no fish to catch, no animals to hunt, seals are not in demand...” (Maggo, p. 166)

4.3.10. Mining

Mining is not strictly a seasonal industry. However, there is a lot of literature on the development of miners' housing which reflects the evolution from work camp, to company town to LDC that tends to characterize the housing issue for seasonal industries as a whole.

During the early stages of mining in the 19th and early 20th century, as with other resource industries, housing consisted of little more than “sleep camps” (CEIAC) or thrown-together settlements like Dawson City, Cobalt or Porcupine. (Stelter/Artibise) Beginning around World War I, mining companies started to plan and build permanent communities. Some developments, like the Town of Buchans, NL, built in 1927 around a copper-zinc deposit, became notorious for the degree of control exercised by the company. According to one account, this contributed to labour unrest.

"Had the miners been allowed to build their own homes and establish a sense of permanence in Buchans, they might have felt the drawbacks of isolation less intensely. Unfortunately, the company adopted a 'no private dwellings' policy that forced men to live either in badly maintained company houses or, more often, in vermin-infested bunkhouses." (Martin, p. 6)

By the 1950s, in an effort to reduce the turnover of workers:

"... planners worked to create stability and a sense of permanence by using town planning designs which were almost identical to those used by suburbs in urban Canada." (CEIAC, p. 36)

As noted above, there is extensive literature dealing with the strengths and weaknesses of planned company towns. Perhaps the greatest weakness of such towns was that their existence was guaranteed only as long as the ore body lasted. After a number of remote mining communities shut down in the 1970s and 1980s, mining companies and governments switched their focus to Long Distance Commuting. Tumbler Ridge in British Columbia, initiated in 1976, was the last mining community to be built in Canada. (Ritter) Every new mining project undertaken since this time has involved transporting or flying workers to the mine site. The approach saves the company money – putting up miners in barracks is cheaper than building a full community. It also saves governments the cost of schools, hospitals and other infrastructure. As for the miners and their families, they find the fly in/fly out routine "reasonably satisfactory." (Ritter, p. 13)

4.3.11. Issues, Actions and Outcomes

The following table summarizes the housing issues, actions and outcomes by industry sector resulting from the literature review.

| TABLE 11: ISSUES, ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES | | |
|---|--|--|
| Issue | Actions | Outcomes |
| Housing for migrant workers from other countries has historically been inadequate. | Employer provided housing is mandatory for migrant farmworkers in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAW). Employer provided housing is not mandated for non-farm foreign migrant workers. | Significant benefits for foreign migrant farmworkers although there is room for improvement according to Canada's North-South Institute. Non-farm foreign migrant workers are not covered by legislation making it mandatory for employers to provide housing. |
| Housing conditions for domestic migrant farmworkers has historically been inadequate. | Employer provided housing is not mandatory for domestic migrant farmworkers. Where employer-provided housing exists in Canada, it is regulated by the Provinces under legislation and regulations that address such matters as water quality, waste disposal, washing facilities, ventilation and construction | Provincial legislation and regulations vary but none of the provinces have legislation that meet the standards suggested by the North-South Institute. |
| The provision of housing for domestic migrant non-farmworkers is left up to employers. If housing is provided, it is subject to Provincial regulations on industrial camps. | Strong unions in some sectors have resulted in improvements in housing and accommodations. Labour shortages in many industries are resulting in improved accommodations as a method of attracting workers. | Housing and accommodations for domestic migrant workers varies from sector to sector, and often from employer to employer. The situation has improved in recent years but significant inadequacies still exist. |

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Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters

<http://www.ccpfh-ccpp.org>

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Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council

<http://www.cthrc.ca/>

Cultural Human Resources Council

<http://www.culturalhrc.ca>

Environmental Careers Council of Canada

<http://www.eco.ca>

Mining Industry Training and Adjustment Council

<http://www.mitac.ca>

Petroleum Human Resources Council

<http://www.petrohrsc.ca>

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Aboriginal Pipeline Group

www.mackenziegasproject.com/WhoWeAre/APG/APGhtm

Alberta Source

<http://www.albheritage.ca>

Athabasca Regional Issues Working Group

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Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce

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Housing Assistance Council

<http://www.ruralhome.org>

HRSDC Caribbean and Mexican Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP)

<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/on/epb/agri/overview.shtml>

Imperial Oil

www.imperialoil.ca

International Labour Organization

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english>

Justicia4migrant workers

<http://www.justicia4migrantworkers.org/press.htm>

Knowledgeplex

<http://www.knowledgeplex.org>

Migration Dialogue

<http://migration.ucdavis.edu>

National Farmworkers Service Centre

<http://www.nfwschousing.org>

National Homelessness Initiative

<http://homlessness.gc.ca/initiative>

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

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<http://www.carh.org>

U.S. Department of Labour

<http://www.doleta.gov>

U.S. National Rural Housing Coalition

<http://www.nrhweb.org>

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<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/th>

Zinabad!

<http://www.vcn.bc.ca>

APPENDIX B:
HOUSING ISSUES OF
SEASONAL WORKERS IN CANADA

DATA COLLECTION REPORT
APRIL 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the definitive source of data to measure seasonality in the Canadian workforce. The LFS asks workers if their job is permanent or seasonal and allows for the calculation of seasonal jobs as a proportion of total employment.

The data provided by the LFS needs to be supplemented to capture all of the required information for two reasons:

1. Because the LFS is based on a relatively small sample, reliable data are not available on a disaggregated basis. The most obvious example of this problem is that LFS data are presented on broad industry and occupational groups rather than on specific industry sectors and sub-sectors and specific occupations. For example, LFS data on seasonable employment available on CANSIM are presented for the industry group Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas whereas data on each sector of this group would provide greater insights and precision in the measurement of seasonality by industry sector.
2. Data on important characteristics of seasonal workers such as education levels, mobility patterns and income levels are not available from the LFS.

1.2. Other Sources of Information

The limitations of the LFS in relation to the requirements of this study make it necessary to supplement this data source with data from the Survey of Labour Income and Dynamics (SLID). SLID is comprised of a sample of roughly 17,000 households drawn from the LFS sample and is conducted bi-annually on an on-going basis. It is a valuable source of information as it tracks labour market and income data, as well as data on educational activity and family relationships, of survey respondents over time. Results from a custom run of SLID for 2004 are presented in Section 3.

Several other data sources were reviewed to determine if data on seasonal workers and the housing issues faced by these workers were available. Two sources, the Survey of Household Spending and the 2001 Census, received special attention. Unfortunately, neither of these sources contained data on seasonal workers and were therefore not useful in this study.

2. THE LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) includes data that measure seasonality in the Canadian workforce. Two specific LFS data sets are used in this report: LFS data for 2003 to 2005 from CANSIM and LFS data for 2005 from the Labour Force Historical Review. Findings from the examination of these data are provided here.

2.1. LFS data for 2003 to 2005 from CANSIM

LFS data on total employment and seasonal jobs by industry for the period 1997 to 2005 were downloaded from Statistics Canada's CANSIM website. LFS data for the period 2003 to 2005 were analyzed and compared to analyses of LFS data by other authors as summarized in the Literature Review completed for this report. An overview of this analysis is contained in this Section.

Annual data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show the number of total employees and seasonal jobs by industry group in Canada for the period 2003 to 2005. The annual data represent averages of monthly data for each year.²⁴ They can be used to estimate the percentage of seasonal jobs in each industry group identified in the LFS. Estimates for period 2003 to 2005 are presented in Table 1. Industries with a significant proportion of seasonal jobs are shown at the top of the table.

²⁴ It is important to remember that the annual data are averages of monthly data collected by the Labour Force Survey. The use of monthly averages does not account for the variability by month within a given year. This variability could be examined by analyzing monthly LFS data which also are available on Statistics Canada's CANSIM website.

| TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE OF SEASONAL JOBS TO TOTAL EMPLOYEES, CANADA, 2003-2005 AVERAGE | |
|---|-------------|
| Total Employees, All Industries | 3.0% |
| Agriculture | 23.3% |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 11.7% |
| Construction | 10.4% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 8.9% |
| Business, Building and Other Support Services | 4.4% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 4.2% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 3.1% |
| Public Administration | 2.3% |
| Manufacturing | 1.9% |
| Trade | 1.7% |
| Educational Services | 1.6% |
| Utilities | 1.5% |
| Other Services | 1.5% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 1.2% |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing | 0.6% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 0.5% |

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Table 282-0080.

The ranking of industry groups by degree of seasonality in Table 1 is consistent with those made by Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey²⁵ and Sharpe and Smith.²⁶ There are a few minor differences that are worth noting. The degree of seasonality in Agriculture relative to other industries is much higher in the above table than in Guillemette, L'Italien and Grey and Sharpe and Smith while the degree of seasonality estimated for Education Services is lower. Despite these differences, there is unanimity on which industries experience the greatest degree of seasonality.

²⁵ See: Guillemette, Roger; L'Italien, Francis and Grey, Alex, "Seasonality of Labour Markets, Comparison of Canada, the U.S. and the Provinces", Applied Research Branch, Strategic Policy, Human Resources Development Canada, November 2000.

²⁶ See: Sharpe, Andrew and Smith, Jeremy, "Labour Market Seasonality in Canada: Trends and Policy Implications", Centre for the Study of Living Standards, CSLS Research Report Number 2005-01, February 2005.

2.2. LFS data for 2005 from the Labour Force Historical Review

LFS data for 2005 from the Labour Force Historical Review provide information on the regional, age and gender profile of seasonal workers and total employees by industry group as defined in the LFS. Highly seasonal industries are: Agriculture; Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas; Construction; Information, Culture and Recreation; Business, Building and Other Support Services; Accommodation and Food Services; Transportation and Warehousing; and Public Administration.

2.2.1. Age Profile of Seasonal Workers

The 2005 LFS data provide interesting insights into the age profile of seasonal jobholders compared to total employees in a given industry and total employees in all industries.

For all industries in Canada, 17% of total employees were in the 15-24 year old age group in 2005 compared to 36% in the 25-44 age group and 47% in the 45+ age group. The age profile of seasonal jobholders in all industries was much different with 43% in the 15-24 year old age group. The LFS data show clearly that for all industries in Canada young people made up a much higher percentage of the seasonal workforce than the overall workforce.

The proportion of the seasonal workforce accounted for by young people varied significantly by industry sector. This variation is illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF SEASONAL WORKERS IN THE 15-24 AGE GROUP BY INDUSTRY, CANADA, 2005

| | |
|---|------------|
| All Industries | 43% |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing | 65% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 61% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 60% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 58% |
| Trade | 58% |
| Public Administration | 58% |
| Other Services | 46% |
| Business, Building and Other Support Services | 46% |
| Educational Services | 42% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 41% |
| Agriculture | 37% |
| Manufacturing | 34% |
| Construction | 26% |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 24% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 18% |
| Utilities | 0% |

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

Table 2 shows that the age profile of seasonal workers in three sectors: (1) Transportation and Warehousing, (2) Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas and (3) Construction was significantly different from that in the other sectors. While young people accounted for a disproportionately large share of the seasonal workforce in most sectors, this was not the case for the seasonal workforce for the three sectors identified in the previous sentence. Seasonal workers in these sectors were older than those in the other highly seasonal industries depicted in the exhibit.

This finding is significant for the examination of housing needs and issues for the seasonal workforce. The housing needs and issues for young people would be significantly different than those for older workers. Industry sectors where young people make up a high proportion of seasonal workers would experience different housing issues than those where seasonal workers were older.

2.2.2. Gender Profile of Seasonal Workers

The 2005 LFS estimated that approximately 49% of total employees in all industries in Canada were male and 51% were female. For seasonal workers, 64% were male while 36% were female, that is, a higher proportion of men than women were seasonal workers in 2005.

The percentage of female seasonal jobholders, by industry group as estimated in the LFS, is depicted in Table 3.

| TABLE 3: SEASONAL JOBHOLDERS BY GENDER, BY INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 2005 (000S AND PER CENT) | | | |
|--|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Males | Females | % Females |
| Total Seasonal Employees | 274 | 154 | 36% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 2 | 7 | 79% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 14 | 26 | 65% |
| Educational Services | 7 | 11 | 61% |
| Trade | 19 | 22 | 54% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 5 | 5 | 51% |
| Public Administration | 10 | 9 | 47% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 29 | 25 | 46% |
| Agriculture | 20 | 12 | 38% |
| Other Services | 5 | 3 | 36% |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing | 4 | 2 | 35% |
| Manufacturing | 30 | 16 | 34% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 15 | 6 | 26% |
| Business, Building and Other Support Services | 18 | 5 | 21% |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 26 | 2 | 9% |
| Construction | 68 | 3 | 5% |
| Utilities | 2 | 0 | 0% |

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

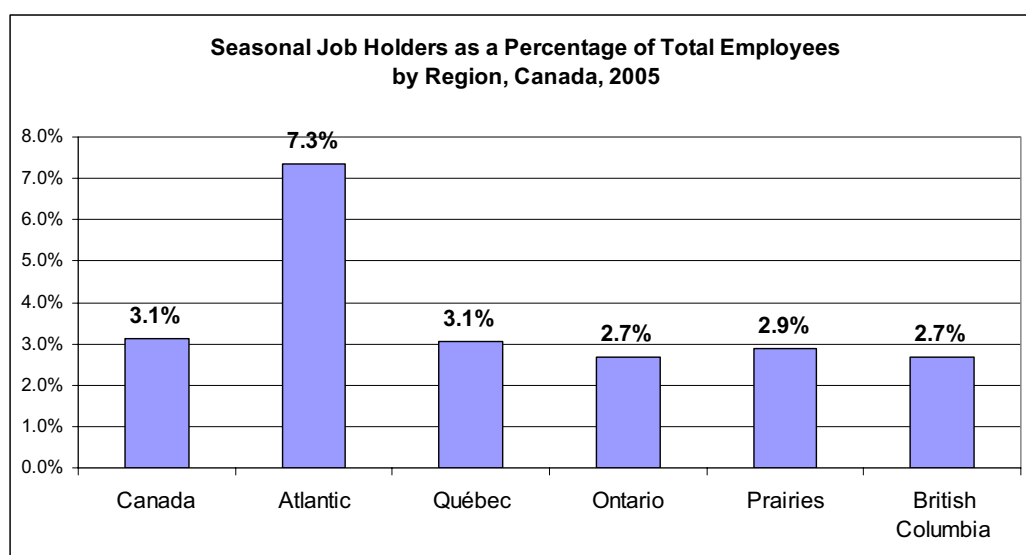
Table 3 shows that while females accounted for just over one-third of seasonal workers overall, they accounted for the majority of seasonal jobholders in a number of industry groups, notably Health Care and Social

Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services and Educational Services. However, they accounted for a small minority of seasonal jobholders in highly seasonal industries such as Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas and Construction.

2.2.3. Regional Profile of Seasonal Workers

Figure 1 presents data from the 2005 LFS on seasonal employment as a percentage of total employment by region.

Figure 1



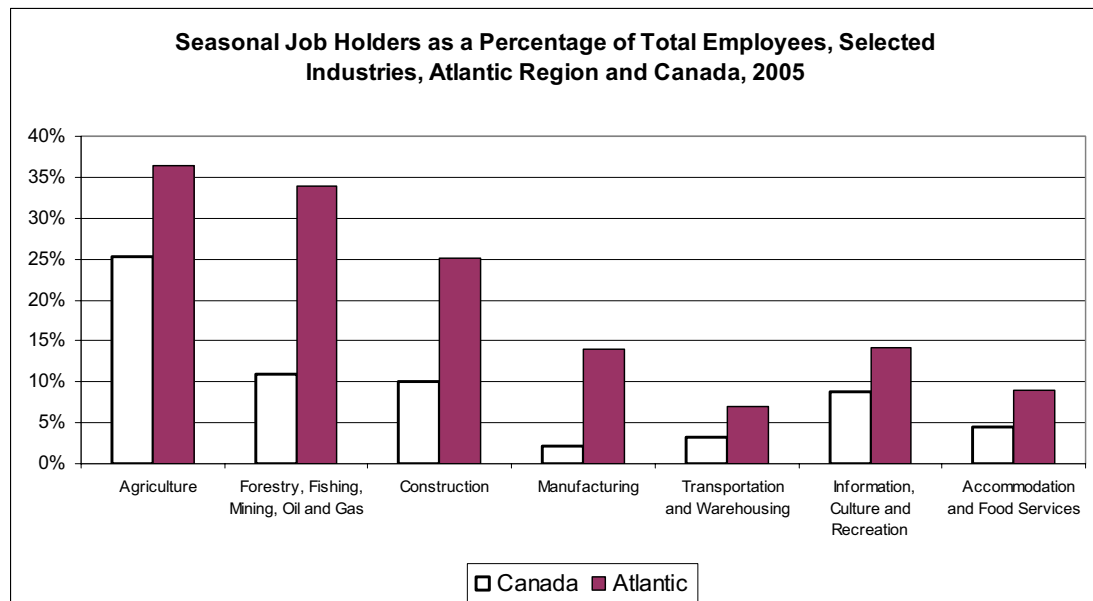
Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

Figure 1 shows that the seasonal workforce as a proportion of total employees in Atlantic Canada was about 2.4 times that for the nation as a whole.

The relatively high percentage of seasonal workers in Atlantic Canada and the low proportion in Ontario and British Columbia could result from variations in the mix of industries in each region or variations in the proportion of seasonal workers in each industry sector by region. The LFS data indicate that the mix of industries is not the primary factor that explains differences in the degree of seasonality between the Atlantic region and the rest of the country. The proportion of the workforce accounted for by seasonal workers in the Atlantic region was much higher than for

Canada as a whole for virtually all industries. Figure 2 illustrates this point for selected industries.

Figure 2



Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review.

Variations in mix of total employment by industry did account for some of the variations in the degree of seasonality. For example, the highly seasonal Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas sector accounted for a relatively high percentage of total employees in both the Atlantic and Prairie regions compared to Québec and Ontario. By contrast, the relatively less seasonal Manufacturing industry accounted for a significantly higher proportion of the workforce in Québec and Ontario than in the rest of Canada.

3. THE SURVEY OF LABOUR INCOME AND DYNAMICS (SLID)

A custom run of the SLID data on seasonal workers for 2004 was completed by Statistics Canada. The results of this run are presented in this section of the report. The SLID data show the distribution of seasonal workers by industry and occupational group and present data on the characteristics and demographics of seasonal workers.²⁷

3.1. Distribution of Seasonal Workers by Industry

The percentage of seasonal to all workers for industries where reliable data exist is presented in Table 4.²⁸

²⁷ In interpreting the analysis in this section it is important to remember that the SLID data estimates that there were roughly 590,000 seasonal workers in Canada out of a labour force of 12.4 million. The number of seasonal workers in many occupations is low resulting in a low level of confidence for SLID estimates for these occupations.

²⁸ The 2004 SLID data on the number of seasonal workers are too unreliable to be published for the following industries: Utilities (NAICS 2211 to 2213), Wholesale Trade (NAICS 4111 to 4191), Finance and Insurance (NAICS 5211 to 5269), Real Estate and Leasing (NAICS 5311 to 5331) and Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 6211 to 6244).

Suppression rules, or data reliability cutoffs, used by Statistics Canada are currently established based on the sample size that underlies the estimate. In general, a sample size of 25 observations is required for the estimate to be published. Depending on the type of estimate, this rule can vary slightly. These rules help protect the confidentiality of survey respondents and ensure the reliability of estimates. See:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/75F0011XIE/2006001/methodology.htm#suppression>

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF SEASONAL TO ALL WORKERS BY INDUSTRY, CANADA, 2004

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Fishing, Hunting and Trapping (NAICS 1141 to 1142) | 66.7% |
| Forestry and Logging with Support Activities (NAICS 1131 to 1133, | 35.8% |
| Agriculture (NAICS 1100 to 1129, 1151 to 1152) | 29.5% |
| Construction (NAICS 2311 to 2329) | 14.8% |
| Information, Culture and Recreation (NAICS 5111 to 5142, 7111 to 7139) | 14.1% |
| Management, Administrative and Other Support (NAICS 5511 to 5629) | 8.2% |
| Accommodation and Food Services (NAICS 7211 to 7224) | 6.5% |
| Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction (NAICS 2100 to 2131) | 5.4% |
| Transportation and Warehousing (NAICS 4811 to 4931) | 4.9% |
| Public Administration (NAICS 9110 to 9191) | 3.3% |
| Manufacturing (NAICS 31 to 33) | 3.0% |
| Retail Trade (NAICS 4411 to 4543) | 2.7% |
| Other Services (NAICS 8111 to 8141) | 2.4% |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (NAICS 5411 to 5419) | 1.9% |
| Educational Services (NAICS 6111 to 6117) | 1.5% |
| All Industries | 4.8% |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

3.2. Distribution of Seasonal Workers by Occupation

The 2004 SLID data on the number of seasonal workers are too unreliable to be published for the following occupations: Management occupations and Health occupations. The percentage of seasonal to all workers in a given occupational group for occupations where reliable data exist is presented in Table 5.

| TABLE 5: PERCENTAGE OF SEASONAL TO ALL WORKERS BY OCCUPATION, CANADA, 2004 | |
|---|-------------|
| Occupations unique to primary industry | 34.6% |
| Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport | 14.2% |
| Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations | 8.4% |
| Sales and service occupations | 4.6% |
| Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities | 4.6% |
| Natural and applied sciences and related occupations | 2.0% |
| Business, finance and administrative occupations | 1.6% |
| Occupations in social science, education, government service and | 1.5% |
| All Occupations | 4.8% |

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

3.3. Distribution of Seasonal Workers by Industry and Occupation

Data from the LFS on the distribution of seasonal workers by industry are not available. The custom run of the SLID data provided by Statistics Canada provides some insights in the distribution of seasonal occupations across the various industries in Canada. This distribution is summarized in Table 6. Once again, it is necessary to caution the reader about the reliability of the results in Table 6, especially for industry/occupational combinations with very small numbers.

The following industries are not included in Table 6 because the data are too unreliable to be published: (1) Utilities, (2) Wholesale Trade, (3) Finance and Insurance, (4) Real Estate and Leasing and (5) Health Care and Social Assistance. In addition, the following occupations are not included in Table 6 because data by industry are too unreliable to be published: (1) Business, Finance and Administrative occupations, (2) Natural and Applied Sciences and Related occupations, (3) Health occupations and (4) occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion.

**TABLE 6: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY,
CANADA, 2004, (000s)**

| | All Occupations | Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport | Sales and Service Occupations | Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations | Occupations Unique to Primary Industry | Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities |
|--|--------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| All Industries | 589 | 49 | 152 | 146 | 123 | 42 |
| Agriculture | 46 | 0 | F | F | 40 | 0 |
| Forestry and Logging | 24 | 0 | F | F | 19 | 0 |
| Fishing, Hunting and Trapping | 14 | 0 | 0 | F | 13 | F |
| Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction | 9 | 0 | 0 | F | F | 0 |
| Construction | 101 | 0 | F | 96 | F | 0 |
| Manufacturing | 54 | 0 | F | F | F | 39 |
| Retail Trade | 42 | 0 | 35 | F | 0 | 0 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 27 | 0 | F | 19 | 0 | F |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 13 | F | 0 | F | F | 0 |
| Management, Administrative and Other Support | 40 | F | F | F | 26 | F |
| Educational Services | 12 | F | F | F | F | 0 |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | 89 | 27 | 37 | F | 10 | 0 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 61 | F | 47 | 0 | F | 0 |
| Other Services | 10 | F | F | F | F | F |
| Public Administration | 26 | F | F | F | F | 0 |

Note: F means too unreliable to be published.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

The five occupational groups included in Table 6 accounted for 87% of all seasonal workers in Canada in 2004. The significance of these seasonal workers to the workforce of the various industry groups in the Canadian economy is as follows:

- Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport accounted for 30% of the seasonal workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry group.
- Sales and Service occupations accounted for 83% of seasonal workers in Retail Trade, 42% in the industry group Information, Culture and Recreation and 77% of the seasonal workers in the Accommodation and Food Services industry group.
- Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related occupations accounted for 95% of the seasonal workers in the Construction industry and 70% of seasonal workers in the Transportation and Warehousing industry.
- Occupations Unique to Primary Industry accounted for 87% of seasonal workers in Agriculture, 79% of seasonal workers in Forestry and Logging, 93% of seasonal workers in Fishing, Hunting and Trapping, 65% of seasonal workers in the industry group Management, Administrative and Other Support and 11% of seasonal workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry group.
- Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities accounted for 72% of seasonal workers in Manufacturing.

While Table 6 provides valuable insights into the occupational breakdown of the industries that make up the Canadian economy, the insights are limited by the high degree of occupational aggregation. Each occupational grouping included in Table 6 contains numerous individual occupations and the table provides no information on which of these occupations contributes the greatest number of seasonal workers. The following bullets show some of the occupations included in each of the five occupational groupings shown in Table 6. The list is presented for illustrative purposes only and does not include all the occupations in each occupational group.

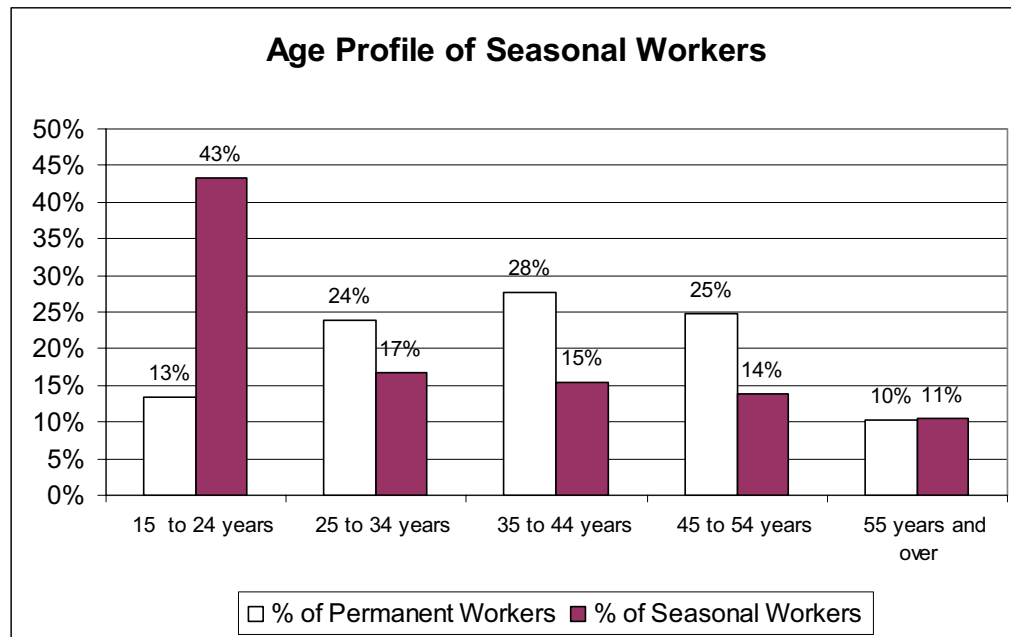
- Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport include: Librarians, Journalists, Producers and Directors in the Performing Arts, Musicians, Dancers, Actors and Comedians, Film and Video Camera Operators, Theatre and Fashion Designers and Athletes, Coaches and Sports Officials.
- Sales and Service Occupations include a wide range of occupations including Insurance Agents and Brokers, Cashiers, Cooks, Bartenders, Tour and Travel Guides, Childcare and Home Support Workers, Service Station Attendants and Janitors.
- Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related occupations include a large number of individual trades workers such as Carpenters, Bricklayers, Plumbers and Electricians as well as Machinists, Mechanics, Heavy Equipment Operators, Truck and Bus Drivers, Longshore Workers and Trades Helpers and Labourers.
- Occupations Unique to Primary Industry are comprised of a wide variety of occupations including: Farmers and Farm Managers, General Farm Workers, Nursery and Greenhouse Workers, Miners, Oil and Gas Well Drillers, Chainsaw and Skidder Operators, Silviculture and Forestry Workers, Fishing Vessel Skippers, Fishing Vessel Deckhands, Trappers and Hunters, Harvesting Labourers and Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers.
- Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities include: Papermaking and Coating Control Operators, Mineral and Metal Processing Machine Operators, Chemical Plant and Plastics Processing Machine Operators, Sawmill and Pulp Mill Machine Operators, Sewing Machine Operators, Fish Plant Workers, Printing Machine Operators, Motor Vehicle Assemblers, Inspectors and Testers and Labourers in a wide variety of manufacturing related occupations.

The SLID data provide valuable insights into the occupational groups that are highly seasonal within each industry in Canada. The insights are limited, however, by the large number of occupations included in each of the occupational groups used in the SLID data. This data source cannot be used to document seasonality by occupation or at an industry sub-sector level.

3.4. Age Distribution of Seasonal Workers

The age profile of permanent and seasonal workers in 2004 is depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3



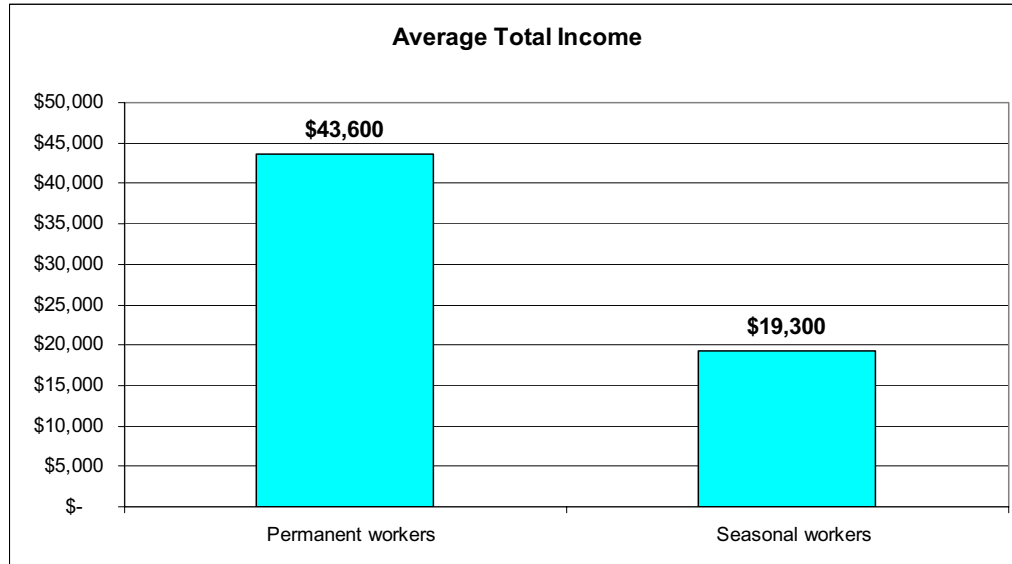
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Figure 3 shows that the proportion of seasonal workers who were under 25 was over three times that of permanent workers.

3.5. Incomes of Seasonal Workers

The average total income of permanent and seasonal workers in 2004 is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Figure 4 shows that permanent workers earned over twice the total income of seasonal workers in 2004. The SLID data also show that the average hourly earnings of permanent workers was \$20.30 compared to \$13 per hour for seasonal workers.

3.6. Skill Levels of Seasonal Workers by Occupation

Table 7 shows the proportion of workers by occupation and skill level based on the SLID data. Four skill levels are presented in Table 7:²⁹

- Professional – Professional occupations usually require university education.
- Technical – Technical occupations usually require a college education or apprenticeship training.
- Intermediate – Intermediate occupations usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training.
- Unskilled – Unskilled occupations usually receive on-the-job training.

²⁹ Skill designations were provided by Statistics Canada based on a matrix matching occupations and skill levels provided by Service Canada (see: the National Occupational Classification Matrix, Human Resources Development Canada, 2001).

TABLE 7: SKILL LEVEL OF SEASONAL WORKERS BY OCCUPATION, CANADA, 2004

| | % of Permanent Workers | % of Seasonal Workers |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Business, Finance and Administrative Occupations | | |
| - Professional | 15% | F |
| - Technical | 32% | 42% |
| - Intermediate | 54% | 53% |
| Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations | | |
| - Professional | 52% | F |
| - Technical | 48% | 83% |
| Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport | | |
| - Professional | 39% | F |
| - Technical | 61% | 92% |
| Sales and Service Occupations | | |
| - Technical | 25% | 13% |
| - Intermediate | 37% | 33% |
| - Unskilled | 38% | 53% |
| Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations | | |
| - Technical | 58% | 42% |
| - Intermediate | 36% | 40% |
| - Unskilled | 7% | 18% |
| Occupations Unique to Primary Industry | | |
| - Technical | 36% | F |
| - Intermediate | 39% | 44% |
| - Unskilled | 26% | 41% |
| Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities | | |
| - Technical | 14% | F |
| - Intermediate | 68% | 57% |
| - Unskilled | 18% | 40% |

Note: F – Too unreliable to be published.

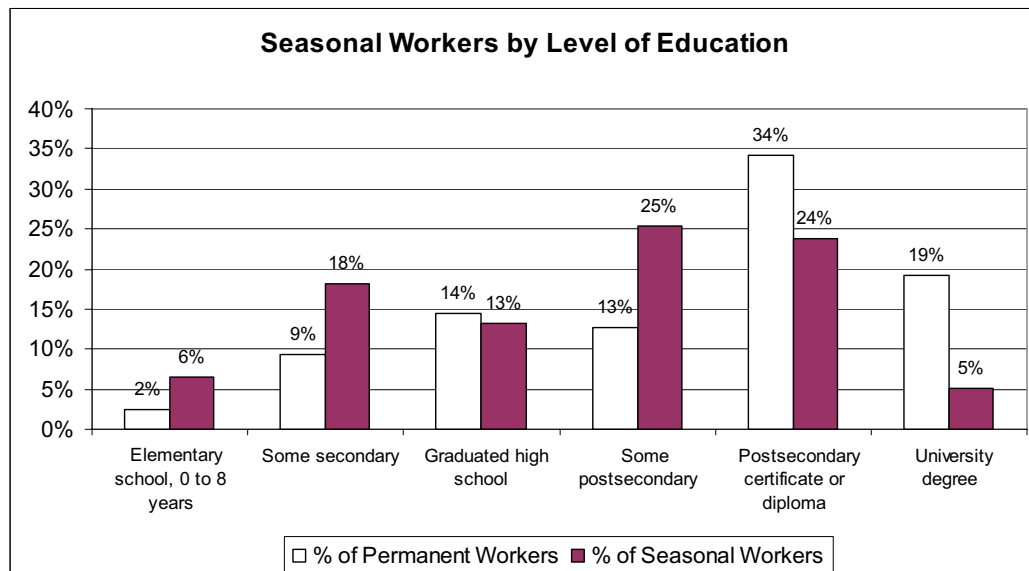
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Although the analysis of skill levels is limited by small numbers of workers in each occupation, Table 7 does show that the skill level of seasonal workers is lower than that of permanent workers for all occupations included in Table 7.

3.7. Education Levels of Seasonal Workers by Occupation

The proportion of permanent and seasonal workers by education level in 2004 is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

Figure 5 shows that seasonal workers have lower education levels than permanent workers. The proportion of seasonal workers with less than a high school education was over twice that of permanent workers. Over one-half of permanent workers had a postsecondary certificate or a university degree compared to approximately 30% of seasonal workers.

3.8. Employment and Unemployment of Permanent and Seasonal Workers

3.8.1. Use of Employment Insurance by Permanent and Seasonal Workers

The SLID data indicate that seasonal workers were unemployed for an average of six weeks in 2004 while permanent workers were unemployed for two weeks on average.³⁰ Approximately 13% of permanent workers drew Employment Insurance in 2004 compared to 42% of seasonal workers. The average earnings from Employment Insurance were \$4,700 for permanent workers and \$6,000 for seasonal workers.

3.8.2. Job Tenure and Number of Employers

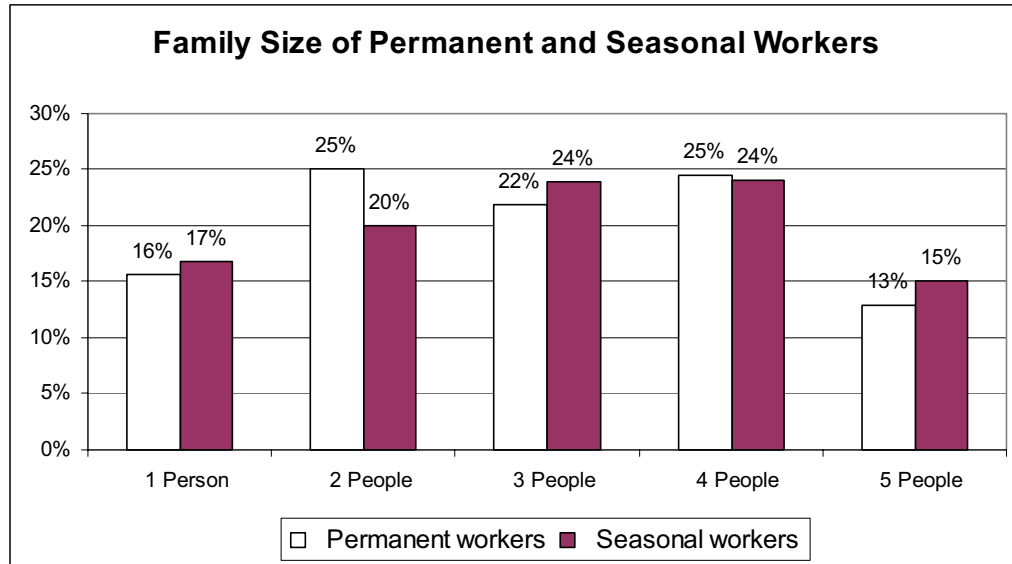
Approximately 81% of permanent workers worked for one employer in 2004 compared to 62% of seasonal workers. Permanent workers worked an average of 89 months in their current job compared to 24 months for seasonal workers.

³⁰ This may be due to employees in smaller companies using EI for an “unofficial” vacation.

3.9. Family Size of Permanent and Seasonal Workers

Figure 6 shows that there was little variation in family size between permanent and seasonal workers in 2004.

Figure 6



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Custom Tabulation.

4. CONCLUSION

The contract Terms of Reference (TOR) for this project specifies the data to be collected (Phase 2) and analysis to be conducted on the data (Phase 3). The TOR states that the data and analysis should include seasonal workers and the housing issues faced by these workers. Unfortunately, no data exist on the housing issues described in Phases 2 and 3 and this aspect of the study could not be addressed in this report. In anticipation of this reality interviews with representatives of Sector Councils were completed in attempt to collect information on the housing issues of seasonal workers in the various industry sectors in Canada.

The TOR directs that the following data and analysis of seasonal workers be included in this report:

- Characteristics of seasonal workers such as age, gender, household composition (single, married, families, etc.), education levels, etc.;
- Annual incomes of seasonal workers, use of EI (frequency, duration), other benefits, etc.;
- Characteristics of seasonal industries such as annual duration of work, work intensity, skill level required, training/re-training requirements, etc.;
- Income measures used for seasonal workers such as income averaging, retention/return incentives, benefits, etc. including their implementation, effectiveness, availability; and
- The nature and magnitude of income issues faced by seasonal workers in relation to annual income levels and use of EI with a focus on duration and frequency of use, but also as related to financial security, labour mobility, skills transferability, etc.

Data on many of these issues were available from the LFS and SLID. The reader should be aware that the Literature Review Report completed for this study contains information and analysis of seasonal workers completed in other reports. The findings of the Literature Review Report add significantly to those in this report on all topics notably the use of EI

(frequency, duration) and income issues faced by seasonal workers. The conclusions of this report on each of the items listed in the above bullets are as follows:

Age – Young people (under 25) were over-represented in the seasonal workforce and account for almost one-half of seasonal workers.

Gender – A higher proportion of men than women are seasonal workers.

Household Composition – There is little variation in family size between permanent and seasonal workers.

Education Levels – Seasonal workers have lower education levels than permanent workers.

Annual Incomes – Permanent workers earn over twice the total incomes of seasonal workers.

Use of Employment Insurance (EI) – Seasonal workers experience relatively long periods of unemployment and three times as many draw EI as permanent workers.

Annual Duration of Work – Permanent workers remain in jobs for a much longer period of time than seasonal workers.

Work Intensity – No data were available on this issue.

Skill Levels and Training – Skill levels of seasonal workers are lower than those of permanent workers for all occupations included in the analysis of the SLID data. These data suggest that training is required to improve the skills of the seasonal workforce.

Two of these items may have a particularly important impact on the housing issues faced by seasonal workers. The fact that a relatively high proportion of workers are young and earn relatively low incomes may influence the availability, affordability and adequacy of housing for the seasonal workforce.

APPENDIX C: HOUSING ISSUES OF SEASONAL WORKERS IN CANADA

INTERVIEW REPORT APRIL 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Sample

Sector Councils are organizations that bring together representatives from business, labour, education, and other professional groups to analyze and address sector-wide human resource issues in 29 sectors in Canada.³¹ The consultants attempted to complete interviews with representatives of Sector Councils in industry sectors where Sector Councils exist.³² These industry sectors correspond to industry groupings defined in the Labour Force Survey (LFS).³³

The exclusion of sectors without Sector Councils could reduce the degree to which the interviews represent seasonality and issues associated with seasonality across all industries in Canada. The authors of this study believe that any misrepresentation will be minimal because the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports completed for this study show that the industries identified in footnote 2 have a very low incidence of seasonality.³⁴

³¹ Sectors correspond to industries or components of industries.

³² Sector Councils do not exist in the following industry sectors: Utilities; Trade; Finance, Insurance and Real Estate; Education and Other Public Services.

³³ The industry groupings in the LFS are a variation of the groupings identified in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS 2002). For the industry groupings used in NAICS 2002, see: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Standard/naics/2002/naics02-index.htm>. There are some differences in the industry groupings used in the LFS and those included in NAICS 2002 as presented in the Statistics Canada website referenced in this footnote. For example, NAICS 2002 has the following industry sectors: Information and Cultural Industries (NAICS 51) and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (NAICS 71) whereas the LFS includes the industry sector Information, Culture and Recreation which is a hybrid of the NAICS sectors.

³⁴ See, for example, the estimates contained in Table 2 of the Literature Review Report that summarized findings from Table 3 of Sharpe, Andrew and Smith, Jeremy, "Labour Market Seasonality in Canada: Trends and Policy Implications", Centre for the Study of Living Standards, CSLS Research Report Number 2005-01, February 2005.

Table 1 presents the organizations interviewed in each LFS industry sector in which Sector Councils exist.

| TABLE 1: ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED | |
|---|---|
| Sector | Organization |
| Agriculture | The Canadian Horticultural Council |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council Petroleum Human Resources Council Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada Canadian Silviculture Association Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters |
| Construction | Construction Sector Council Canadian Home Builders' Association |
| Information, Culture and Recreation ³⁵ | Cultural Human Resources Council Software Human Resource Council |
| Accommodation and Food Services | Hotel Association of Canada Yukon Tourism Education Council Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council Tourism Industry Association of Canada |
| Transportation and Warehousing | Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada Canadian Trucking Human Resources Sector Council |
| Public Administration | Canadian Police Sector Council |
| Manufacturing | National Seafood Sector Council Wood Manufacturing Council |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | Biotechnology Human Resources Council |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | Child Care Human Resources Sector Council |

Not all Sector Councils contacted by the consultants completed interviews. The Agriculture Sector Council declined the interview request noting that they were not fully operational and did not have anyone who was knowledgeable on the issues. In lieu, the Agriculture Sector Council

³⁵ Some components of the tourism industry are included in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry. Examples include museums, amusement parks and ski hills. Despite this reality, interviews with Sector Council and Tourist Associations are listed under the Accommodation and Food Services in Table 1.

suggested contacting the Canadian Horticultural Council. The Forest Products Association of Canada declined to be interviewed for the same reason but referred the consultants to the Forest Products Employment Research Council (FPERC). The FPERC also referred to the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada and the Canadian Silviculture Association which represents a sub-sector of the forestry industry known to have a high level of seasonality. The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum did not respond to the consultants' request for an interview despite numerous attempts. The same situation occurred with the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada.

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) did not respond to the survey but rather suggested contacting the 11 provincial/territorial Tourism Education Councils. Of the 11, two completed interviews, three responded that they do not have any information on the topic and the remaining six did not respond to numerous e-mails and phone calls.

1.2. Overview of the Questions

The interview guide poses questions concerning the extent of the seasonal workforce in each sector, housing issues faced by the seasonal workforce and employer actions taken to deal with the housing issues. The interview guide is contained in Appendix 1. Section 2 summarizes the answers to each question included in the interview guide.

2. TABULATION OF RESPONSES BY QUESTION

2.1. Seasonality by Industry Sector

2.1.1. Please identify the specific sectors of your industry which experience the highest degree of seasonality.

The following industry sectors and sub-sectors were seasonal according to interviews conducted for this study:

- Horticulture edible crops (fruits & vegetables) – these crops are labour intensive, time sensitive and perishable by nature.
- On-shore/on-land oil and gas exploration, especially when ice road (winter access) construction is required.
- Logging activity, particularly the harvesting phase of logging.
- Silviculture activities in forestry (tree planting, thinning, brushing, spacing, fertilizing and pruning) – these activities were noted as the “... *most seasonal sub-sector*” of forestry by a key informant of the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada. A representative of the Canadian Silviculture Association indicated that 80% of tree planting activity occurs between April and October.
- All fish harvesting, notably the salmon and herring fisheries on the Pacific Coast which last for only a few days.
- Residential construction and small commercial projects. Representatives of the Construction Sector Council (CSC) interviewed for this study indicated that activity in these sectors: “... *does not stop but slows down during the winter months.*” These representatives, and those from the Canadian Home Builders’ Association (CHBA), indicated that seasonality is limited and decreasing in these sectors. As noted by the CHBA representative:

“More and more these sectors are becoming year-round. The only slow down comes at Christmas and under severe winter conditions.”

The representatives of both the CSC and CHBA interviewed for this study indicated that many sectors of the construction industry are using

new technology and construction methods to reduce winter-induced slowdowns and seasonality is decreasing as a result.

- Landscaping/paving which cannot take place during the winter months.
- The accommodation, food and beverage and hospitality sectors of the tourism and travel industry, notably hotel resorts.
- The transportation (airlines, railways, ferries and car rentals) sector of the tourism and travel industry, notably tour and charter companies.
- Operation of school buses.
- Adventure and recreational tourism such as ski hills and resorts, fresh water angling and golf courses.
- Festivals, events and attractions such as museums in the tourism industry. It was noted that museums experienced relatively strong demand during summer and Christmas holidays.
- Truck driving in specific industries such as forestry, agriculture and construction.
- Fish plants.

Some interesting aspects of the responses are:

1. It is interesting to compare the industry sectors identified as highly seasonal in the interviews with those identified in the Literature Review³⁶ and Data Collection³⁷ Reports completed for this report. The industry sectors identified in the interviews are more specific than the broad industry sectors identified in the literature. For example, the interviews identify Residential Construction as highly seasonal while the Literature Review Report identifies the broader industry classification Construction.

³⁶ See: PRAXIS Research & Consulting Inc., Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada – Literature Review Report, April 2007.

³⁷ See: PRAXIS Research & Consulting Inc., Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada – Data Collection Report, April 2007.

All of the studies reviewed in the Literature Review concluded that the following industry sectors were the most seasonal: Agriculture; Construction; and Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas.³⁸ Other sectors with a significant degree of seasonality were Education Services; Information, Culture and Recreation; Business, Building and Other Support Services; and Accommodation and Food Services.

Similarly, the most highly seasonal industry sectors according to Labour Force Survey (LFS) data covering the period 2003 to 2005 were: Agriculture; Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas; Construction; Information, Culture and Recreation; Business, Building and Other Support Services; Accommodation and Food Services; and Transportation and Warehousing.³⁹ Data from the 2004 Survey of Labour Income and Dynamics (SLID) supports the findings of the 2003 to 2005 LFS data regarding the degree of seasonality of industry sectors in Canada.

The interviews present a very similar picture of seasonality by industry sector as that painted by LFS and SLID data as reported in the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports. Seven of 14 industry sub-sectors identified as highly seasonal by survey respondents were in the Agriculture, Construction, Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas sectors which were ranked among the most highly seasonal industry sectors in the LFS and SLID data. Two respondents identified sub-sectors of the Information, Culture and Recreation industry as highly seasonal while sub-sectors of the Accommodation and Food Services; Transportation and Warehousing; Education and Manufacturing industries were ranked as highly seasonal by individual respondents.

The interviews highlight the limitations of using the LFS and SLID to document seasonality by industry sector in Canada. Data reliability concerns limit the ability of either survey to document seasonality for individual sub-sectors within broad industry sectors. For this reason,

³⁸ See, for example, Table 2 on page 8 of the Literature Review for the estimates of Sharpe and Smith.

³⁹ See, for example, Table 1 on page 4 of the Data Collection Report.

the LFS and SLID may show that a given industry sector is not highly seasonal but not provide evidence of high degrees of seasonality for specific sub-sectors within these industry sectors. For example, the interviews indicate that seafood processing is highly seasonal despite the fact that the Manufacturing industry which contains seafood processing does not exhibit a significant degree of seasonality. Another example is that the interviews indicate that some sub-sectors of the Transportation and Warehousing industry that support the tourism sector are highly seasonal although Transportation and Warehousing industry as a whole is not highly seasonal.

2. A number of industry representatives interviewed for this study indicated that seasonality in their sector or sub-sector was non-existent or negligible. These were:
 - a. The Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council
 - b. The Cultural Human Resources Council
 - c. The Software Human Resource Council
 - d. Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada
 - e. The Canadian Police Sector Council
 - f. The Wood Manufacturing Council
 - g. Biotechnology Human Resources Council

These Sector Councils represent sub-sectors of the industry sectors reported in the LFS and SLID. Data on the seasonality of these specific sub-sectors are not available from these data sources. Table 2 shows the data on seasonality that are available at an industry sector level from SLID.

TABLE 2: SEASONALITY OF INDUSTRY SECTORS IN CASES WHERE INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS INDICATED NEGLIGIBLE OR NON-EXISTENT SEASONALITY

| Organization | Sector | Percentage of Seasonal to All Workers by Industry, Canada, SLID, 2004 | Rank out of 15 Industry Sectors |
|--|--|--|--|
| Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council | Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | 35.8% | 2 |
| Cultural Human Resources Council | Information, Culture and Recreation | 14.1% | 5 |
| Software Human Resource Council | Information, Culture and Recreation | 1.9% | 14 |
| Canadian Police Sector Council | Public Administration | 3.3% | 10 |
| Wood Manufacturing Council | Manufacturing | 3.0% | 11 |

Source: PRAXIS, Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers In Canada, Data Collection Report, July, 2006, Table 2, p. 11.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to use the SLID data to confirm or refute the assertion of respondents that their industry sectors or sub-sectors experienced a negligible degree of seasonality. For example, Table 2 shows that the Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas sector experienced the second highest level of seasonality of all industries in Canada. The representative of the Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council appeared to contradict the SLID data by asserting that there was minimal seasonality in the Mining industry. In reality, it is possible that the Mining industry is not seasonal despite the fact that the industry group which contains the Mining industry is highly seasonal.

3. Interviews with representatives of the Silviculture, fishing, seafood processing and forestry sectors indicated that workers in these sectors are highly reliant on Employment Insurance (EI). For example, the key informant from the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada indicates that there is a high degree of reliance on Employment Insurance by Silviculture workers:

“A lot of people only work long enough (20 to 25 weeks) to be eligible for EI and then do not work the rest of the year.”

These comments reinforce findings in the Literature Review that a high proportion of seasonal workers draw EI. As stated in that report:

“Using the above methodology, de Raaf, Kapsalis and Vincent estimated that 4.4% of workers in the SLID sample were classified as being seasonal over the 1993-1998 period. It estimated that approximately 61% of the job spells of workers included in the survey from 1993-1998 ended with the receipt of EI benefits. This estimate reinforces findings from the EICS (EI Coverage Survey) which showed that approximately 61% of unemployed seasonal workers included in the survey from 1997 to 1999 received EI benefits.”⁴⁰

The 2004 SLID data analyzed in the Data Collection Report⁴¹ indicate that 42% of seasonal workers drew EI in 2004 compared to 13% of permanent workers. These data provide further support that seasonal workers rely on EI more than the permanent workforce.

⁴⁰ PRAXIS Research & Consulting Inc., Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada – Literature Review Report, April 2007, p. 18.

⁴¹ PRAXIS Research & Consulting Inc., Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada, Data Collection Report, April 2007, p. 22.

2.2. Occupations which Experience the Greatest Degree of Seasonality

2.2.1. Please identify specific occupations in your industry which experience the highest degree of seasonality.

The answers of respondents to the question posed in 2.2.1 are provided in Table 3.

| TABLE 3: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR AND ORGANIZATION | | |
|---|--|--|
| Sector | Organization | Seasonal Occupations |
| Agriculture | The Canadian Horticultural Council | Planting, maintenance and hand harvesting jobs pertaining to fruits and vegetables |
| Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas | Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council | Truck drivers, construction tradespeople |
| | Petroleum Human Resources Council | Well site services and drilling occupations, Technologists/technicians, Pipeline construction occupations and geophysics seismic workers |
| | Forest Products Employment Research Council | No information provided |
| | Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada | Planters - silviculture operators. Planting is generally done by students. |
| | Canadian Silviculture Association | Tree planters, thinners, brushers, spacers, fertilizers and pruners – a high proportion of this work is done by students |
| | Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters | Crew members, owner-operators |

TABLE 3: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR AND ORGANIZATION

| Sector | Organization | Seasonal Occupations |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Construction | Construction Sector Council | Occupations on exterior components of houses and buildings including framing, foundations and roofing |
| | Canadian Home Builders' Association | Occupations associated with landscaping and paving |
| Information, Culture and Recreation | Cultural Human Resources Council | Actors, musicians, dancers and live performing artists |
| | Software Human Resource Council | No occupations listed |
| Accommodation and Food Services | Hotel Association of Canada | Housekeepers and food servers |
| | Yukon Tourism Education Council | Front desk agents, housekeeping room attendants, guest service attendants, B&B owner-operators, hunting/fishing guides, ski lift operators, golf course staff, food and beverage servers |
| | Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council | Adventure/Recreation: hunting and fishing guides, tour guides, any position at golf clubs, parks staff (regional, provincial, and national parks); Accommodations: housekeeping, front desk staff, etc. (resorts); food and beverage: servers, cooks, etc. (resorts) |
| | Tourism Industry Association of Canada | Front-line service providers, including food and beverage servers, desk clerks, sales agents at point of purchase sites, visitor reception centre staff |

| TABLE 3: SEASONAL OCCUPATIONS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR AND ORGANIZATION | | |
|---|--|---|
| Sector | Organization | Seasonal Occupations |
| Transportation and Warehousing | Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada | No occupations listed |
| | Canadian Trucking Human Resources Sector Council | Truck drivers |
| Public Administration | Canadian Police Sector Council | Clerical/technical |
| Manufacturing | National Seafood Sector Council | Fish plant production workers |
| | Wood Manufacturing Council | No occupations listed |
| Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | Biotechnology Human Resources Council | No occupations listed |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | Child Care Human Resources Sector Council | Front-line practitioners who look after school age children |

Source: Personal Interviews completed by PRAXIS

Four organizations did not identify any seasonal occupations in their sector: (1) the Software Human Resource Council, (2) the Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada, (3) the Wood Manufacturing Council and (4) the Biotechnology Human Resources Council. For the most part these organizations correspond to those that indicated that seasonality in their industry sector or sub-sector was non-existent or negligible.

Three organizations indicated that seasonality in their industry sector or sub-sector was non-existent or negligible but did identify specific occupations in their sector or sub-sector that were highly seasonal. These are: (1) the Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council (Truck Drivers), (2) the Cultural Human Resources Council (Actors, Musicians, Dancers and Live Performing Artists) and (3) the Canadian Police Sector Council (Clerical/Technical). In the case of the Mining and Canadian Police Sector Councils the respondents felt that the seasonality of the occupations identified was negligible in relation to the overall workforce in these industry sectors. In the case of the Cultural Human Resources Sector Council the respondent felt that the demand for work varied by project

rather than on a seasonal basis although they did point out that demand was greatest during the summer and Christmas holiday seasons.

The Literature Review Report completed for this project estimated seasonality for broad occupational groups^{42,43} based on the LFS. Table 4 of that report showed that seasonality was greatest for Primary Occupations followed by occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport and Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators. Interviewees identified a large number of occupations in these occupational groups as being highly seasonal but they also listed a significant number of occupations in other occupational groups that were not identified in Table 4 of the Literature Review Report as being highly seasonal. For example, respondents listed a large number of sales and service occupations as being highly seasonal although Table 4 indicates that seasonality for the Sales and Service occupational group as a whole had below average seasonality. As was the case with the analysis of seasonality by industry, the LFS is only capable of documenting seasonality for large groups due to data reliability. It is not capable of identifying seasonality in specific industry sub-sectors or occupations.

Table 3 in the Data Collection Report completed for this project also provides estimates of seasonality by occupation based on 2004 SLID data.⁴⁴ As was the case for Table 4 of Literature Review Report, seasonality in Table 3 of the Data Collection Report is measured only for large occupational groups. The ranking of seasonality for these groups is roughly the same as found in Table 4 of the Literature Review Report. The same comment applies – the SLID data cannot be used to identify specific sub-sectors and occupations that are seasonal due to data reliability concerns.

⁴² These groups were classified according to the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 1991 system.

⁴³ See: PRAXIS Research & Consulting Inc., Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada – Literature Review Report, April 2007, Table 4, p. 10.

⁴⁴ PRAXIS Research & Consulting Inc., Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers in Canada, Data Collection Report, April 2007, Table 3, p. 7.

2.3. Seasonality by Region

2.3.1. Is there a significant difference in the degree of seasonality in your industry by region across the country? If yes, describe this pattern and the reasons behind it.

The responses to the question on regional differences in seasonality are presented in Table 4.

| TABLE 4: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SEASONALITY | | | |
|---|-----|----|---|
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| The Canadian Horticultural Council | ✓ | | The degree of seasonality is dependent on the crop in relation to region. |
| Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council | ✓ | | Far northern regions more likely to need ice roads; activity stops in the summer. |
| Petroleum Human Resources Council | ✓ | | Seasonality is greatest in northern areas where on-shore/on-land exploration takes place and road access is a major issue. Most northern areas have to wait until winter to build ice roads as access to drilling and exploration sites. At other times of the year the area is too boggy to access. Winter (4 th quarter of the year) is the busiest followed by the 1 st quarter of the year. |
| Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada | ✓ | | In forestry, seasonality is dictated by access to the land which in turn is determined by the weather. Southern areas have access to the land for greater proportions of the year. For example, Southern Ontario has a longer forestry season than Northern Ontario. |
| Canadian Silviculture Association | ✓ | | Seasonality in Silviculture depends on the terrain. The season is short in the Northern Interior and longer on the East Coast reaching 6 to 8 months in Newfoundland. |

TABLE 4: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SEASONALITY

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|---|----|---|
| Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters | ✓ | | Seasonality in fisheries is determined by resource availability and management strategies. Seasons vary greatly from one region of the country to another. While fisheries in most regions occur in the spring, summer and fall, freshwater fisheries occur in the winter months. |
| Construction Sector Council | ✓ | | Seasonality is a function of the weather conditions in various parts of the country. For example, BC has a mild climate and seasonality is relatively low whereas it is more significant in Northern Canada. |
| Canadian Home Builders' Association | ✓ | | Seasonality is minimal in Southern Canada but more significant in the North. |
| Cultural Human Resources Council | | ✓ | The highest concentration of workers is the urban centres but there are no real differences in demand by region. |
| Software Human Resource Council | Not applicable because the sector is not seasonal | | |
| Hotel Association of Canada | ✓ | | Alberta, Ontario and Québec are most seasonal. |
| Yukon Tourism Education Council | ✓ | | The tourist season is approximately 100 days long in the Yukon Territory. |
| Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council | ✓ | | Areas within the province of Saskatchewan that depend on adventure tourism such as hunting and fishing are most seasonal. |
| Tourism Industry Association of Canada | | ✓ | 40% of tourist volume is concentrated in the summer months in Canada but there is no real variation by region. |
| Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada | Not applicable because the sector is not seasonal | | |
| Canadian Trucking Human Resources Sector Council | ✓ | | Areas and provinces such as BC and Atlantic Canada that rely most on industries such as fisheries, agriculture and construction experience the greatest degree of seasonality. |

| TABLE 4: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SEASONALITY | | | |
|--|---|----|---|
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| Canadian Police Sector Council | | ✓ | No comments provided |
| National Seafood Sector Council | ✓ | | Seasonality by province and region depends on the timing of the fisheries. |
| Wood Manufacturing Council | | ✓ | Not aware of variations in seasonality by region. |
| Biotechnology Human Resources Council | Not applicable because the sector is not seasonal | | |
| Child Care Human Resources Sector Council | | ✓ | Seasonality generally does not vary by region. Demand for childcare workers is a function of the number of school age children and parents who work during school holidays. |

Source: Personal Interviews completed by PRAXIS.

Table 4 shows that 13 respondents indicated that seasonality varied by region in their industry sector, five indicated it did not and three felt that the question did not apply to their sector because it was not seasonal.

All industry sectors in Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Mining, Oil and Gas, and Construction indicated that seasonality varied by region. Factors that influenced seasonality included the weather, the timing of crops, resource availability and the management of fisheries. The influence of the weather on the degree of seasonality was greatest in northern areas of Canada in Forestry, Mining, Oil and Gas, and Construction. It is interesting to note that there is no common pattern for the variations in seasonality by region across the country. For Mining, Oil and Gas and, even for some inland fisheries, activity is greatest in the winter months and lowest in the summer. For Agriculture, Construction, Forestry and most Fisheries activity is greatest in the summer but depends on unique factors such as the timing of a given crop or the availability of a specific species of fish. These factors can vary significantly within a province as well as across the country.

There was some difference of opinion among respondents as to the regional variability of seasonality within the tourism industry. Obviously this variation depends on weather conditions across the country and sports,

attractions and activities that are weather dependent. Clearly, however, regional differences exist due the influence of the weather on activities and attractions that draw tourist such as fishing, hunting, skiing and sightseeing. Once again, differences in seasonality may be experienced at a local level depending on the degree to which localities depend on these activities and attractions.

The interviews indicate that seasonality by occupation will vary across the country in relation to the differences in seasonality documented for the industry sectors in Table 4. The variation can be understood by examining the seasonal occupations by industry sector summarized in Table 3. It is important to understand that seasonal variation that depends on unique factors such as crop timing and resource availability can vary not only at a provincial or regional level but at a local level. For example, seasonality associated with fish harvesting is much different in the southern part of Nova Scotia than in the northern part of the province.

Differences in the weather across the country are an important cause of the level of economic activity in the various sectors of the Canadian economy. Once again, however, these differences are not straightforward and vary significantly from industry to industry. Harsh weather limits fishing, agriculture, forestry and construction activities that can be undertaken, but supports economic activity in many industries in Northern Canada including Mining, Oil and Gas by allowing for easy transportation over ice roads.

Respondents representing the Cultural Human Resources Council and Child Care Human Resources Sector Council did not feel that their sectors experienced regional differences in seasonality. The reason for this is that seasonality in these sectors were a function of institutional factors such as holidays and the timing of school terms that are, for the most part, common across the country.

The Literature Review showed that:

“... 1.6% of jobs in Canada as a whole were seasonal in 1995 and that the rate of seasonality varied from 1.1% in Ontario to 5.3% in Atlantic Canada. The rate of seasonality in Atlantic Canada was over

three times that in Canada as a whole. The data also show that the rate of seasonality in rural (non-CMA) Canada was about three times that in urban Canada (CMAs)".⁴⁵

A 2001 article prepared by the Strategic Policy Division of Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) in November 2001 presented estimates of seasonality based on a survey of individuals who were recipients of Employment Insurance (EI) between 1995 and 1997.⁴⁶ The data show clearly that the Atlantic provinces have a greater degree of seasonality than the rest of Canada.

In the Data Collection Report prepared for this project, Figure 3 shows that

"... the proportion of the total workforce accounted for by seasonal job holders was much higher in Atlantic Canada than in the rest of the country. Ontario had a lower proportion of seasonal workers while the proportions in the other regions of the country roughly mirrored the Canadian total."⁴⁷

The Data Collection Report went on to make the following comment on the reasons for the seasonal differences:

"The LFS data indicate that the mix of industries is not the primary factor that explains differences in the degree of seasonality between the Atlantic region and the rest of the country. The proportion of the workforce accounted for by seasonal workers in the Atlantic region was much higher than for Canada as a whole for virtually all industries."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Table 6, p. 16, of the Literature Review prepared for this project. Source Document: Pélusé, Dominique, "Regional Disparities and Nonpermanent Employment", Perspectives on Labour and Income, Winter 1997, Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 75-001-XPE. Based on "The Survey of Work Arrangements" (SWA), sponsored by Human Resources Skills Development Canada, November 1995.

⁴⁶ Table 7, p. 17, of the Literature Review prepared for this project. Source Document: Pélusé, November 1995.

⁴⁷ Figure 3, p. 8, of the Data Collection Report prepared for this project. Based on Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2003.

⁴⁸ Data Collection Report, pp. 8-9.

2.4. Characteristics of Seasonal Workers

2.4.1. What are the characteristics of seasonal workers in your industry including age, gender, education, income levels, annual duration of work, training/certification, skill levels, mobility, household composition (single, married, families, etc.), use of EI (frequency, duration), immigrant versus domestic workers?

The interviews indicate that there are three broad groups of seasonal workers: (1) young people, notably students, (2) workers in traditional seasonal industries and (3) migrants. Table 5 shows the interviews that fell into each of these groups.

| TABLE 5: SEASONAL WORKER GROUPS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Industry Sector | Young People, Especially Students | Older Workers in Traditional Sectors | Migrants |
| Tourism | ✓ | | |
| Silviculture | ✓ | | |
| Child Care | ✓ | | |
| Oil and Gas | ✓ | | |
| Fish Harvesting | | ✓ | |
| Seafood Processing | | ✓ | |
| Construction | | ✓ | |
| Agriculture | | | ✓ |

Source: Personal Interviews completed by PRAXIS.

As noted in the answer to Question 2.1.1, a number of representatives of Sector Councils or industry organizations interviewed for this study indicated that seasonality in their industry sector or sub-sector was non-existent or negligible. These were the Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council, Cultural Human Resources Council, Software Human Resource Council, Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada, Canadian Police Sector Council, Wood Manufacturing Council and Biotechnology Human Resources Council. These Sector Councils did not provide information on the seasonality of their workforce.

The demographics and characteristics of each of the three groups identified in Table 5 varied widely. Young seasonal workers often were highly mobile students who were single and relatively highly educated. They often earned reasonably high wages or made reasonable incomes from piece work (Silviculture) and tips (Tourism). The exception is child care workers who earned low incomes. In some sectors, such as Oil and Gas, the young workers were not students and had lower education levels. Young workers in the Silviculture and Oil and Gas sectors were mostly male while those in the Child Care sector were mostly female. Dependence on Employment Insurance (EI) to supplement incomes varied by region, most young workers from the Atlantic used EI to supplement their incomes while workers from Central and Western Canada did not. Table 6 summarizes the demographics and characteristics of industry sectors where seasonal workers were mostly young people.

| TABLE 6: DEMOGRAPHICS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG SEASONAL WORKERS | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | Tourism | Silviculture | Child Care | Oil and Gas |
| Students | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Single | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Highly Educated | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| High Earnings | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Highly Mobile | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Reliance on EI | Varies by Region | Varies by Region | No | No |
| Gender | 60/40 female/male | 80/20 male/female | Mostly female | Mostly male |

Source: Personal Interviews completed by PRAXIS.

The second group of seasonal workers is older people working in traditional industries, including Fish Harvesting, Seafood Processing and Construction. The interviewees for the Fish Harvesting and Seafood Processing sectors indicated that work was highly seasonal in their sectors while interviewees in the Construction sector indicated seasonality existed in their sector but was decreasing. The interviewees did not provide information on the demographics and characteristics of seasonal workers in these industry sectors but referred the researchers to previous studies and websites for information on the workforce in general. Follow-up research revealed that most of the information on demographics and characteristics

contained in the studies and websites was based on the 2001 Census. For this reason, Table 7 contains some key demographic indicators for the Fish Harvesting, Seafood Processing and Construction industries based on the 2001 Census.

| TABLE 7: DEMOGRAPHICS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER SEASONAL WORKERS | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| | All Industries in Canada | Fish Harvesting | Seafood Processing | Construction |
| Unemployment Rate, 2001 | 6% | 29% | 26% | 10% |
| Average Weeks Worked per Year (2000) | 43 | 23 | 26 | 41 |
| Non-Movers ⁴⁹ | 54% | 77% | 73% | 56% |
| Average Age | 39 | 41 | 40 | 40 |
| Percentage of Immigrants | 20% | 4% | 8% | 17% |
| Percentage of Workforce with Less than High School | 21% | 55% | 54% | 30% |
| Average Employment Income (2000) | \$32,123 | \$25,333 | \$15,389 | \$32,769 |
| Gender | 51/49 female/male | 16/84 female/male | 51/49 female/male | 12/88 female/male |

Source: 2001 Census.

Table 7 shows that workers in Fish Harvesting and Seafood Processing experienced high unemployment rates, were poorly educated and earned incomes well below the Canadian average. A relatively high proportion of workers in these industries were non-movers and a very low proportion of immigrants participated in these industries. Most workers in Fish Harvesting were male while approximately the same proportions of males and females worked in Seafood Processing. Workers in these industries were slightly older than for all industries in Canada.

⁴⁹ Non-movers are persons who, on the 2001 Census Day, were living at the same address as the one at which they resided five years earlier.

The demographic profile of workers in the Construction industry was close to that for workers in all industries in Canada for most items in Table 7. Education levels for Construction workers were slightly below those for workers in all industries in Canada and the Construction industry had a much higher proportion of males in its workforce.

The key informant interview with the Canadian Horticultural Council indicates that a high percentage of seasonal workers in edible horticultural crops in Ontario are migrant workers from Mexico and the Caribbean employed under the Mexico/Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP), a federal program.

Seasonal workers under this program are: 99% male, between ages 25-40, work an average of 20 weeks in Canada, have a grade school or no education, earn average incomes in Canada of \$10,000 and 80% are married. All workers are trained on-the-job and have low skill levels. Approximately 80% of migrant workers are requested back to the same employer year after year. EI is used only for parental leave and occasional sick benefits.

2.5. Housing Issues of Seasonal Workers and their Causes

- 2.5.1. Please identify and discuss housing issues faced by seasonal workers in your industry (prompt for availability, adequacy and affordability of housing). Do these issues vary by region or for workers in rural versus urban areas?
- 2.5.2. Please identify the causes of the housing issues identified above (e.g., low incomes, lack of housing supply, high housing demand in peak periods, etc.).

Issues 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 are dealt with together. The issues are highly related and interviewees often answered them as one question. Six respondents indicated that these questions were not applicable to their industry. An additional five respondents felt that there were no specific housing issues associated with their industry. The answers of the remaining respondents fell into the categories presented below.

The discussion of housing issues and their causes for seasonal workers is presented using the following categories: (1) traditional industries, (2) the construction and the oil and gas industries, (3) industries employing young seasonal workers and (4) housing issues related to affordability. Because workers in each of these categories are in very different situations, the housing issues resulting from seasonal work and their causes will differ appreciably.

2.5.2.1. Traditional Industries

No major issues emerged with respect to workers in the Fish Harvesting and Seafood Processing sectors. For the most part workers in these industries work and live in the same community and have done so for many years. In the Fish Harvesting sector, accommodation is provided by vessel captains to their crew in cases where vessels remain at sea over night. Workers in the Seafood Processing sector generally live in the same community where they work and do not require housing. Recently, shortages of labour in the Seafood Processing sector have led to importing workers from other provinces and other countries, such as Russia. The interview for the Seafood Processing sector indicated that there was no employer or government housing support provided to workers moving from one province to another to process seafood but did not know of support available to workers coming from other countries to process seafood.

2.5.2.2. Construction and the Oil and Gas Industries

Representatives of the Construction Sector Council and the Canadian Home Builders' Association indicated that the affordability and adequacy of housing was a significant issue for construction workers who temporarily move to work in Western Canada, particularly Alberta. The demand for housing by workers in the Oil and Gas industries, and in industries supporting Oil and Gas activity, has increased rental costs and decreased the availability of both short and long term housing. The Sector Councils indicated that there was limited housing available for workers and the municipal infrastructure of Fort McMurray was not adequate to support the number of workers who had migrated to the area.

The representatives cited instances where high costs forced workers to “bunk together” to save money. These housing issues apply to all workers, not seasonal workers specifically. They nonetheless apply to seasonal workers in the Construction and Oil and Gas industries because these workers are often at a disadvantage in terms of housing relative to permanent workers.

The representative of the Petroleum Human Resources Council felt seasonal workers in areas with high levels of oil and gas exploration and production were faced with a limited availability of housing. The key informant indicated that the housing shortage affected all workers but would be more of a problem for seasonal workers. The representative felt that development planning for housing by municipal and provincial governments in Western Canada, particularly Fort McMurray, has not been able to keep up with the large inflow of workers. Employers set up camps for employees and some employees commute to Fort McMurray from Edmonton or Calgary.

The problem of adequate, affordable housing is especially serious in communities such as Fort McMurray which is experiencing rapid growth in the Oil and Gas sector. These issues apply to both permanent and seasonal workers in Fort McMurray but would be especially problematic for the seasonal workforce. The interviewees indicated that housing arrangements are part of the contract between the employer and employee and the responsibility for providing and paying for housing would vary on a case by case basis.

2.5.2.3. Industries Employing Young Seasonal Workers

A number of industry sectors including Tourism, Silviculture, Child Care and Oil and Gas employ significant numbers of young seasonal workers. Different housing issues exist in each of these sectors.

The representative of the Child Care sector indicated that this sector employed a significant number of young workers although there also were significant numbers of older workers in the sector. Housing was not a significant issue in this sector because most Child Care workers work in their own community. The representative was aware of summer camps where counsellors who are primarily young workers are provided with

housing by the employer. The only possible issue raised by the representative related to the adequacy of accommodations in cases where parents provided housing to live-in nannies or babysitters but these issues would arise on a case by case basis and generalizations were impossible.

Representatives of four Tourism organizations, two national and two provincial, were interviewed. All interviewees agreed that there were significant numbers of young workers in the sector. However, they had significantly different views on housing issues facing seasonal workers in the Tourism sector. One of the national organizations, the Hotel Association of Canada, indicated that there were no major housing issues as the labour force is provided with housing.

The other national organization to be interviewed, Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), stated that providing housing for seasonal workers is a big problem out West. The representative of TIAC indicated that workers are sometimes forced to live in campers and trailers during the tourist season because they cannot afford rental housing. The shortage of housing occurs because of the temporary increase in the demand for housing resulting from a high level of tourist activity. For example, in Dawson Creek, Yukon the population swells from 800 in the winter to 5,000 in the summer months.

The representative of the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council agreed that there was a seasonal shortage of housing available for workers in the Tourism sector in the summer months. Waskesiu, in the Prince Albert National Park, is an area that experiences a significant seasonal shortage of housing. The adequacy of housing available to seasonal workers varied and the availability of housing was a greater factor than cost.

The representative of the Yukon Tourism Education Council interviewed for the study stated that accommodations in hotels and trailer parks often was not available for seasonal tourism workers because they were in demand by tourists. Seasonal workers in the Yukon sometimes have to live in a tent while working on a seasonal basis and the biggest housing issue faced by seasonal workers is the high rental cost plus the low vacancy rate for housing.

2.5.2.4. Housing Issues Related to Affordability

Housing affordability is the biggest concern of workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation sector according to the Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC). Businesses in this sector include those in Motion Picture and Video Production, Sound Recording Studios and Television Broadcasting. Income levels for workers in these businesses are quite low; in fact they often are at poverty levels. Low income workers find it difficult to get housing. This trend is consistent across Canada with no real regional or urban/rural differences. The availability and adequacy of housing are less of a concern than the ability of workers to afford housing that is available.

An interview conducted with the Yukon Tourism Education Council indicates that the biggest housing issue faced by seasonal workers in that area is the high rental cost plus the low vacancy rate for housing. These issues vary by region. For example, in some small communities the RV parks and hotels are fully utilized by the tourists with no room to house staff. It does not benefit an employer economically to house their staff in their properties if it is taking away space from paying customers.

The Yukon Tourism Education Council indicated that there is a severe housing shortage in both rural and urban areas of the North with many workers having to tent for the six months when they are working in a remote location.

The cause of the housing affordability problems in the North goes back to the high cost of living in the North as compared to the wage of an industry worker.

2.6. Changes in Housing Issues

2.6.1. Has there been a change in the housing issues associated with seasonal work in recent years? If yes, describe the changes and the possible causes. What changes do you foresee in upcoming years?

Eleven of the 18 Sector Councils who responded to the survey felt that this question was not applicable to their sector or did not have any information on the issue. Three Sector Councils felt that there will not be any significant changes in the future. The Petroleum Human Resources Council felt that there would be more fly in/fly out arrangements due to the tight labour market in Alberta while the Construction Sector Council (CSC) felt that there would be more incentives to move to Alberta.

The Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) has made a case to the Standing Committee on Finance of the federal government to act on the issue of low incomes of workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry. In particular, the CHRC has asked for the introduction of income averaging over a five-year period. The federal government has not responded to the request.

In the Yukon, there has been a "freeze" on opening up any more development properties for new housing projects so there will not be any significant new housing available. This problem likely will decrease the availability and affordability of housing in the future.

2.7. Measures to Address Housing Issues and Their Effectiveness

2.7.1. What measures are currently used by employers and/or employees to address any housing issues faced by seasonal workers?

Twelve of 18 respondents felt that this issue was not applicable to them or did not know how to answer it. Five of six respondents who answered the question indicated that employers were increasingly covering accommodations costs although the share covered by employers and employees varied by case.

Employers in the Oil and Gas industry have begun to take responsibility for providing housing for workers as a way to attract workers. For example, a strategy has been devised to deal with the problem of rapid growth of the Oil and Gas industry in the Fort McMurray area (“Wood Buffalo Strategy”). Employers, together with municipalities, are working on the issue but the solutions are not obvious.

The representative of the Petroleum Human Resources Sector Council summed up the discussion of housing problems faced by permanent and seasonal workers in Western Canada where the Oil and Gas sector is booming by identifying strategies used by employers to deal with the housing shortage faced by their workers:

“Employers also have begun to set up camps for employees. The camps include aqua trailers with recreational facilities and well-equipped accommodations. There are no municipal health and safety standards for these camps but companies are competing for labour and they are therefore above standard facilities.”

The representative of the Petroleum Human Resources Council also made the following comment on efforts being used to resolve the housing crisis in Fort McMurray:

“In the Fort McMurray area, companies are looking to be more flexible on how employees choose to work. There are more fly in/fly out arrangements offered to employees. Some employers cover the cost of getting to work, provide housing allowances, offer signing bonuses, subsidize mortgage payments, and even outright buy a house and though the worker does not own the house they live in the house while employed with the company. But these arrangements are company specific and cannot be generalized.”

The cost of accommodation is a concern for workers in the Hotel industry although the cost is generally subsidized by employers with employees paying for a portion of the costs. The Hotel Association of Canada indicates that cost-sharing arrangements depend on location, labour markets and other factors. There are some cases where employees pay for all of the accommodation provided by the employer.

In resort areas, the labour force is provided with housing which can be cost shared between the employer and employees. Housing ranges from dormitories to single family dwellings depending on the position and pay scale of the employee. All those who work in the resort (except local residents) would be provided with accommodation.

2.8. Effectiveness of Measures

2.8.1. How effective are these measures and what problems limit their effectiveness? What are the barriers and limitations faced by employers in addressing housing issues faced by seasonal workers?

Only one Sector Council commented on the effectiveness of measures being taken to address housing issues and this was the Petroleum Human Resources Council speaking of the Fort McMurray situation as follows:

“The major barrier faced by employers is the magnitude of the problem due to the significant growth in demand for labour. Companies are starting to take more ownership of these issues. They are working with municipalities and governments to address the housing issues. It is the job of government to provide services - but a tax base is needed. The time line for oil and gas development is at most 10 years. It would not make sense to build a lot of infrastructure and then not be able to sustain it in the future. As a result, there is a need for flexible solutions.”

2.9. Temporary Workers

2.9.1. Please describe the operation of the Temporary Worker Program (TWP) in your industry. What responsibilities do employers have related to accommodations under TWP? Is there any documentation on the impact of TWP on the accommodations provided to seasonal workers in your industry?

Ten of the 18 respondents said that the Temporary Worker Program (TWP) was not applicable to their industry or did not have enough information to answer the question. Two respondents indicated that the program was in the process of being introduced in their industry. These respondents did not have any information on the implication of the program for accommodations for temporary workers.

Six respondents indicated that the TWP had been used in their industry. The Petroleum Human Resources Council indicated that the TWP is used in the oil and gas industry and that temporary workers are offered the same incentives/income/benefits as domestic workers due to the competitive nature of the labour market. The Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) indicated that, over the last five years, 350 temporary workers have participated in the Construction Recruitment External Worker Services (CREWS) program. The CHBA was not sure about housing arrangements and felt that they probably varied by employer. The CREWS website (<http://www.constructionworkers.ca/apply/terms.htm>) contains the following statement about accommodations:

"Where required, accommodation is supplied to assist workers in the initial arrival stage. Employers may recover accommodation costs through payroll deductions."

The Hotel Association of Canada indicated that employers are responsible for providing lodging for the 400 to 500 foreign workers working in resorts in that industry. No other respondents knew about the responsibilities and practices related to workers employed under the TWP in their industry.

2.10. Income Measures to Retain Seasonal Workers

2.10.1. What income measures are used by employers to retain seasonal workers such as income averaging, retention/return incentives, benefits, etc. including their implementation and effectiveness?

None of the employers were aware of income measures to attract or retain seasonal workers. As noted in Section 2.7 the CHRC has asked for the introduction of income averaging over a five-year period in the Information, Culture and Recreation sector. Several respondents noted that increasingly competitive labour markets have led employers to offer higher wages and other incentives but that these measures were not specific to seasonal workers.

2.11. Long Distance Commuting

2.11.1. Long distance commuting is a phenomenon that has reportedly been increasing in recent years. Do you think that long distance commuting has been increasing in your industry?

Twelve of the 18 respondents indicated that long distance commuting did not occur in their industry or was not a significant issue. Long distance commuting is significant and is increasing in the Oil, Gas and Mining sectors of the economy. It also is an increasingly important phenomenon for workers involved in the construction aspects of these industries.

The Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council indicated that in the past the sector created towns close to remote area mines. Now workers fly in and fly out, leaving their families behind. The usual practice is for workers to fly in to work for two weeks and then fly out to spend two weeks with their families. The Sector Council noted that:

"When working, employees live at the work site with meals, accommodation, and transportation provided by the employer."

The Petroleum Human Resources Council indicated that long distance commuting is significant in the oil and gas industry and will continue

because it is a very attractive approach as it reduces the need to construct infrastructure such as schools and eliminates the issues associated with developing a temporary community.

2.11.2. Are there significant housing issues associated with long distance commuting? Please describe these issues and their significance.

The only significant housing issues associated with long distance commuting were for the Oil, Gas and Mining industries. The Mining Industry Human Resources Sector Council stated that employers need to entice workers to fly in and fly out by offering incentives including accommodations, meals as well as access to health clubs and games rooms in some cases. These incentives increase the costs of employers but the cost increases are offset by the fact that employers do not have to provide housing and social infrastructure.

The Petroleum Human Resources Council indicated that long distance commuters are reliant on hotels and camps for accommodations for fixed time periods. They indicated that commuters put a strain on short-term housing in destination communities and that many people rent basement apartments or individuals rooms from homeowners. The cost of accommodations for long distance commuters was often subsidized by employers but that the degree of subsidization varies from one employer to another.

3. CONCLUSION

The following conclusions have been drawn from the Sector Council interviews.

- a. Industry sectors identified as highly seasonal in the interviews match those reported in the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports.
- b. Seasonality has decreased and is expected to continue to decrease in some key industries notably the Construction and Oil and Gas industries.
- c. Occupations identified as being highly seasonal by respondents to the interviews match those reported in the Literature Review and Data Collection Reports.
- d. Areas with harsh climates, notably Northern Canada, were most seasonal. Seasonality also resulted from resource availability for industries such as fisheries. Resource availability in the fisheries varied by season across the country.
- e. Most Sector Councils did not keep data on seasonal workers as a separate group. The two Sector Councils with information specific to seasonal workers indicated that seasonal workers were younger and less educated than the overall labour force.
- f. Seven of 18 Sector Council respondents identified instances where there were housing issues associated with seasonal industries. Most of these respondents identified housing issues associated with the influx of workers into communities where the Oil and Gas industry has grown significantly in recent years. Fort McMurray, Alberta was singled out by a number of respondents as a community where the availability and affordability of housing was creating problems for workers moving to the community to work in the Oil and Gas sector. The respondents indicated that employers were increasingly taking responsibility for accommodating their workers and were working

with municipalities and governments to address the problem. Respondents indicated that the large influx of workers in a short period of time posed a huge challenge to the housing efforts of employers and governments.

A number of respondents also pointed out that the affordability of housing was a significant problem for seasonal workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry and efforts were underway to address this problem. The availability, affordability and adequacy of housing also were issues for seasonal workers at Hotels and Resorts despite employer efforts to provide accommodations for their workers.

- g. The tight labour market in Alberta, the influx of workers from other areas and regulatory constraints on building houses were mentioned as primary causes of the housing problems in areas of Alberta such as Fort McMurray where oil and gas exploration and extraction had increased rapidly.

Low incomes were the cause of housing affordability problems experienced by workers in the Information, Culture and Recreation sector.

The cause of the housing affordability problems in the North is a discrepancy between the high cost of living in the North compared to the wages of seasonal workers. This discrepancy also results in problems with the adequacy and availability of housing.

- h. Key changes related to housing of seasonal workers identified by respondents were:
 - i. More fly in and fly out arrangements for workers in the Oil and Gas and Mining industries. Fewer workers permanently locate in communities adjacent to their worksites choosing instead to take up temporary accommodations in the community. More analysis of this strategy will be provided below in the discussion of long distance commuting.

- ii. Income averaging for employees in the Information, Culture and Recreation industry is being sought by the Cultural Human Resources Sector Council.
- iii. Respondents from the Yukon indicated that a freeze on developing new housing projects would hinder the availability, adequacy and affordability of housing in the Territory.
- iv. As noted above, respondents to the interviews indicated that employers were taking increased responsibility for providing and paying for housing, particularly employers in the Oil and Gas sector. The approach to this issue varies by employer making it impossible to provide an overall picture of this situation.
- i. Employers utilizing the Temporary Worker Program provide accommodations to seasonal workers according to the provisions of this program. The Petroleum Human Resources Sector Council indicated that all workers in the Oil and Gas industry were offered the same incentives and benefits due to the competitive nature of the labour market in this industry.
- j. The interviews indicate that long distance commuting is becoming the norm in some industries such as Oil and Gas and Mining. This practice decreases the need for long-term housing and municipal infrastructure. However, the practice puts a strain on short-term housing in affected communities and can have negative implications for the adequacy and affordability of housing for seasonal workers.

APPENDIX 1: SECTOR COUNCIL INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Please identify the specific sectors of your industry which experience the highest degree of seasonality.
2. Please identify specific occupations in your industry which experience the highest degree of seasonality.
3. Is there a significant difference in the degree of seasonality in your industry by region across the country? If yes, describe this pattern and the reasons behind it.
4. What are the characteristics of seasonal workers in your industry including age, gender, education, income levels, annual duration of work, training/certification, skill levels, mobility, household composition (single, married, families, etc.), use of EI (frequency, duration), immigrant versus domestic workers?
5. Please identify and discuss housing issues faced by seasonal workers in your industry (prompt for availability, adequacy and affordability of housing). Do these issues vary by region or for workers in rural versus urban areas?
6. Please identify the causes of the housing issues identified in 5. above (e.g., low incomes, lack of housing supply, high housing demand in peak periods, etc.).
7. Has there been a change in the housing issues associated with seasonal work in recent years? If yes, describe the changes and the possible causes. What changes do you foresee in upcoming years?
8. What measures are currently used by employers and/or employees to address any housing issues faced by seasonal workers? Check for whether or not employers cover all or part of the cost of accommodations.
9. How effective are these measures and what problems limit their effectiveness? What are the barriers and limitations faced by employers in addressing housing issues faced by seasonal workers?

10. Please describe the operation of the Temporary Worker Program (TWP) in your industry. What responsibilities do employers have related to accommodations under TWP? Is there any documentation on the impact of TWP on the accommodations provided to seasonal workers in your industry?
11. What income measures are used by employers to retain seasonal workers such as income averaging, retention/return incentives, benefits, etc. including their implementation and effectiveness?
12. Long distance commuting is a phenomenon that has reportedly been increasing in recent years.
 - a. Do you think that this long distance commuting has been increasing in your industry?
 - b. Are there significant housing issues associated with long distance commuting? Please describe these issues and their significance.