

## **Site C Dam Will Require Technology Talent Alerts ASTTBC**

The announcement by Premier Clark that the Site C Dam will proceed is viewed by business and industry as a good news story, adding significant capacity to BC's energy resources. Business leaders have also noted one of the big challenges going forward will be the availability of skilled workers.

"ASTTBC will support the initiative by working with Government to ensure the availability of technology talent and the appropriate utilization of the skills of the practitioners working on the project," said ASTTBC CEO John Leech. "Given the current technical skills shortages in BC, especially in rural areas of the province, it is essential that BC post-secondary colleges and BCIT increase graduate numbers in two year technology programs, notably civil engineering, electrical engineering and environmental technology." Leech suggested that the proposed civil engineering technology program at the College of New Caledonia should be funded immediately and delivered in collaboration with Northern Lights Community College to achieve the most effective delivery and engage many of the key northern communities. The ASTTBC CEO also suggested a delivery model involving Northwest Community College given the need for civil engineering technologists for LNG projects.

"BC has seen no growth in two year engineering technology programs in over a decade", stressed Leech. "Labour Market Information points to the need for additional technical talent to meet current demands. With the addition of Site C and with anticipated LNG projects, it is time to make a significant investment in engineering technology programming in BC." Leech suggested that a modest annual investment of \$5 million will provide the foundation for a few select new or expanded programs throughout BC, and he urged government to guide the development of new technology programming as a priority.

The Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC is a self-governing professional, association of over 10,000 engineering and applied science technologists, technicians and technical specialists. Over the last decade ASTTBC has, in addition to its professional regulatory role, also taken a lead role in promoting technology education and careers.

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