



September 3, 1997

Ms. Marcia Braundy
Vice President
Kootenay WITT
RR 1
Winlay British Columbia
V0G 2J0

Dear Ms. Braundy:

Thank you for your May 9 letter and attached correspondence addressed to the Honourable Paul Ramsey, the Honourable John Cashore and Margaret Arthur. I apologize for the delay in my response.

I assure you the training needs of equity group members will be represented and addressed under the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC).

I sincerely share your views that the industry training and apprenticeship system must reflect the diversity of the workforce and that it be consistent with broader social policy and equity objectives. To this end, my government is planning to propose the following measures to ensure that equity and diversity remain central and ongoing considerations under the new ITAC, including:

- that under-represented groups be formally identified within ITAC's legislated mandate;
- that an Equity Committee be established under ITAC;
- that ITAC's business plan include measurable goals and objectives respecting equity and diversity, and that ITAC be held accountable for these goals and objectives through the annual reporting process; and
- that ITAC develop strategies to increase the proportion of under-represented groups among its staff.

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Given its broad mandate and stakeholder base, ITAC will be in a position to move forward on many of those initiatives as recommended by the former Provincial Apprenticeship Board. This would include the development of a long-term plan to shift attitudes and behaviours with respect to equity and diversity in apprenticeship; the development of an integrated strategy to expand apprenticeship opportunities for under-represented groups in both the public and private sectors; and the development of an industry training and apprenticeship staffing strategy that reflects the diversity and reality of B.C.'s labour force.

My government recognizes that industry in B.C. will lag if our training systems do not engage the future workforce. Demographic trends clearly indicate that industry cannot continue to rely on traditional sources of labour to meet future demands. This is why it is in the broader public interest that industry and apprenticeship stakeholders accelerate the process of attracting new entrants that reflect the diversity of B.C.'s population.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns and those of the women in Trades and Technology Association to my attention.

Sincerely,

Glen Clark
Premier

pc: The Honourable Paul Ramsey
Minister of Education, Skills and Training

The Honourable John Cashore
Minister of Labour

Margaret Arthur
Deputy Minister of Labour