



News Release

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OVER HALF OF APPRENTICES DON'T COMPLETE TRAINING: AUDITOR GENERAL

(TORONTO) Fewer than half of participants in provincial apprenticeship programs ever complete their training, in part because the government works harder to register new people into programs than it does to help them successfully finish their training, Auditor General Jim McCarter says in his *2008 Annual Report*, released today.

“These non-completion rates are just too high,” McCarter said, adding that spending on apprenticeship programs has increased 25% since 2002. “The province needs to find out why this situation exists, and it needs to take steps to remedy it so we can prepare people to meet the demand for skilled labour in Ontario.”

These concerns were identified in a value-for-money audit of selected training programs that get a total of \$412 million a year from the Employment and Training Division of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

The Ministry provided \$227 million in grants to unemployed individuals to help them learn new skills or start their own businesses. However, the Ministry had little information on the results being achieved. “In essence, it’s not clear what bang the government got for its buck,” said McCarter.

The Report also observed that:

- The Ministry “did not have effective strategies to increase registrations in high-demand skilled trades,” and registration in a number of these trades had “only very small increases” or had even declined in the last two years.
- Even though its own policy is to link how much funding it gives to literacy agencies helping unemployed adults to the agencies’ performance, the Ministry continues to fund underperforming agencies at the same levels it always has.

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