Report 114

Employee Training In Northern Alberta

Prepared for the Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

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Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

Introduction:

Corporate training has the potential to become a lucrative source of income for public colleges. Most public colleges have come to realize that they have the foundation infrastructure to offer facilities, resources and content expertise to employers within their catchment areas. In an effort to attain contracts for corporate training many public colleges now have separate divisions that specialize in offering such services to employers. The benefit to the college frequently equates to off-setting operational costs, being able to invest in capital resources, and capping tuition fees for their public credit programs.

Northern Alberta is a resource rich region. Corporations from a variety of industries such as oil, gas, forestry, and agriculture have invested in the development of these resources and the labor force within the region. Most of these employers provide training to their employees. All too often however, the contract for this training is awarded to providers from outside the northern region. The following report has two 2 key purposes: 1) to identify the employee training needs of the employers within the northern region, and 2) to identify who is providing this training. The research project was conducted on behalf of the Labor Market Information Clearinghouse – Northern Alberta Development Council. The Labor Market Information Clearinghouse is supported through a partnership of four public colleges in Northern Alberta. These colleges are Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, Northern Lakes College, and Portage College. The information collected is intended to provide the partner colleges with linkages to corporate training markets.

Methodology:

An *Employee Training Survey* (see Appendix) was designed and distributed to 307 companies and institutions that spanned across the catchment areas of the four partner colleges. Respondents were informed that they would not be identified in the report unless they requested to be contacted by the respective partner college. Information was collected through a combination of email, fax, and telephone interviews. Participants were selected to reflect diversity across employers (see Appendix for distribution list).

Survey Demographics:

<u>Figure 1</u> presents the breakdown of the total number of surveys distributed across the four catchment areas of the partner colleges and the total number of respondents from each of the catchment areas.

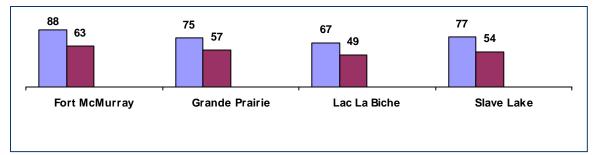


Figure 1: Total number of surveys distributed (N = 307) and total number of respondents across the four catchment areas of the partner colleges (n = 223).

Two hundred and twenty three (223) employers responded to the survey, representing a response rate of 73%. Figure 2 presents a breakdown of the 223 returned surveys categorized by employer type. Aboriginal Service includes tribal councils. Private Service includes medical, legal, financial services, and real estate services. Public Service includes school boards, hospitals, and municipal governments. Industry includes oil, gas, and forestry companies. Large industry is defined as more than 50 employees.

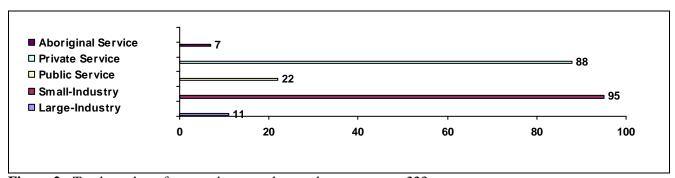
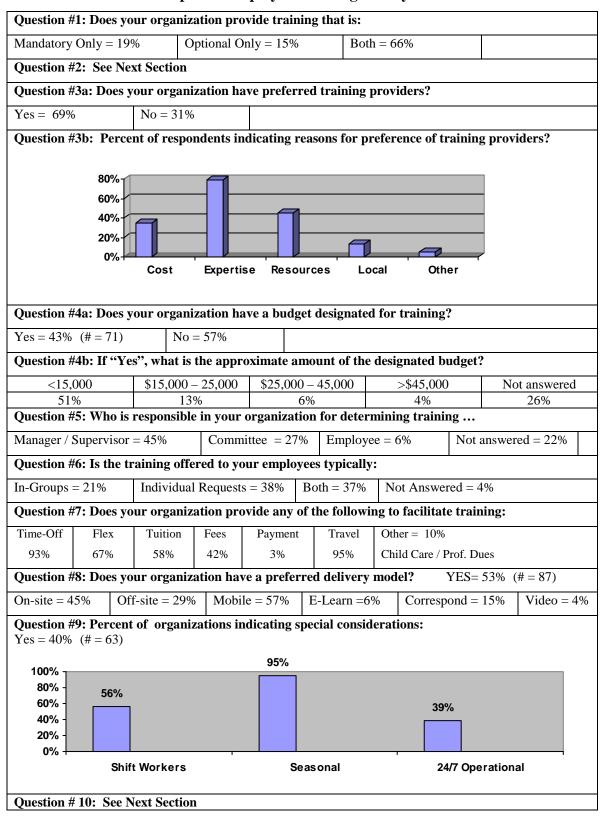


Figure 2: Total number of returned surveys by employer type; n = 223.

Of the 223 responses received 28 employers elected the option to decline to complete the survey and 31 employers indicated they did not provide training to employees. Extracting the returned surveys that: 1) declined to complete and/or 2) indicated no training provided, resulted in a total of 164 completed *Employee Training Surveys*.

Findings:

Completed Employee Training Surveys = 164



Survey Question #2:

Responses to Question #2 of the *Employee Training Survey* were widely varied. This doesn't come as a surprise considering the participants reflected a wide range of employer types. Reviewing the information collected resulted in five major themes as noted below.

2a) Please provide a list of the training topics typically provided by your organization.

a) Professional Certifications / Refreshers

Required by industry that must be delivered by industry person and/or professional association; (eg... CGA, Journeyman, Social Worker, Lawyer).

b) Safety Tickets

First Aid, TDG, WHIMIS, HS2 Alive, Confined Spaces

c) Technical - job-specific

Propane usage, boom truck, curriculum development, alarm installation, locksmithing, pressure valves, ATV driving,

d) Software Applications

Especially industry specific software used by the legal and health services.

e) Leadership, supervisory, management skills.

Of the 164 surveys completed 54 respondents indicated offering this topic to employees (33%).

2b) Has your organization identified a need for new or enhanced skills for employees? Yes = 77 of 164 (47%)

If "Yes", please list training / topics. Most frequently occurring responses:

Leadership = 42%, Customer Services = 31%%, Supervisory Skills = 29%,

Legal Issues = 18%, Assessment / Conflict Skills = 16%

Survey Question #3:

3a) Preferred Training Providers - Most frequently occurring responses:

Professional Associations (eg ...medical, legal, financial)

Local College (computer software, safety, part-time courses)

NAIT / SAIT - Apprenticeship

PITS

Alberta Government (eg ..Learning, Community Development, Health and Wellness, Municipal Affairs)

North Island College – mobile units from Vancouver

Pacific Institute – Leadership, Management, and Personal Lifestyle skills

Human Development Consultants – Job focused training kits for the oil & gas industry

Corporate Coaching & Training Services – mentor training, supervisory skills

Product Training Provided by companies, (eg ... mechanical, installation)...

3b) If the above training is not currently provided by one of the partner colleges, would your organization consider requesting the above training through your partner college?

If "Yes", would you like for this information to be forwarded to your partner college?

Organization Name	Contact Person	Industry	Catchment Area
High Prairie School Division #48	Laura Poloz	Education	Slave Lake
Complete Insurance	Lawrence Hewlett	Financial	Grande Prairie
Tolko Industries	Butch Eden	Forestry	Slave Lake
Remote Wireline	Mike	Oil & Gas	Slave Lake
High Prairie Vet Clinic	Dr. Sheryll Hudye	Medical	Slave Lake
Lac La Biche Regional Economic Development	Kal Polturak	Private Service	Lac La Biche
Thickwood Dental	Lyanne Connors	Medical	Fort McMurray
PLS Security	Mike Hallett	Locksmiths	Fort McMurray

10) Would you be willing to permit your partner college to review your survey? *

* Employee Training Surveys available through NADC – Labor Market Information Clearinghouse

Organization Name	Catchment Area		
High Prairie School Division #48	Slave Lake		
Complete Insurance	Grande Prairie		
Tolko Industries	Slave Lake		
Remote Wireline	Slave Lake		
High Prairie Vet Clinic	Slave Lake		
Lac La Biche Regional Economic Development	Lac La Biche		
Thickwood Dental	Fort McMurray		
PLS Security	Fort McMurray		
Morrison Medical Clinic	Fort McMurray		
First Alert Locating Ltd.	Grande Prairie		
Suncor Energy	Fort mcMurray		

Analysis:

A review of the information collected from the *Employee Training Surveys* shows some surprising results. First, relative to the response rates by employer type (Figure 2) the majority of the information collected came from private services (eg ... medical, dental, financial, veterinary) and small industry (eg .. plumbing & heating, electrical, surveyors). This high response rate may reflect a higher than average need in these groups for employee training that is often not met due to the difficulties of organizing such training on-site for a small number of employees. Not surprisingly these two groups also showed a higher response rate for using professional associations and an individual training model.

Secondly, the majority of declines to participate came from public services and large industry. The most common comment received from the public services was that they were not permitted to participate in unapproved surveys due to FOIP concerns. Four of the large industries that declined to participate indicated that the company had in-house training departments and/or experts and was not seeking third party trainers.

The third unexpected outcome from the information collected pertains to the most frequently noted reason given for preferring a training provider. As shown in the graph of Question #3b:

Percent of respondents indicating reasons for preference of training providers. — "Cost" received a substantially lower rating as compared to "Expertise" in selecting a training provider. The partner colleges may want to reflect upon this point. It is the researcher's opinion that even though the partner colleges can provide facilities and resources at a cheap rate they are not necessarily seen as the content "experts" by industry. Employers have preference for trainers who "work" in the industry or are seen as the "experts" relative to the training requested.

The fourth and final point drawn from the information collected is the low number of respondents that wanted to discuss training options with their partner college. The most common training use noted of the local college by respondents was for basic computer software and safety courses. The vast majority of respondents did not view their local college as the preferred choice for "expert", or "industry specialty" training.

Recommendations:

Assuming the partner colleges are not content with offering largely computer and safety training through their corporate training divisions, it is recommended by the researcher that the colleges create new strategies to tap into the potential markets within their catchment areas.

- 1) Do not market your Corporate Training Division as content experts. This is negative marketing as industry / employers already know that you are not the experts for the majority of the training they are seeking.
- 2) Emphasize your strengths of classroom space, audio/video equipment, residence options, training labs/shops, and flexibility of schedules. The biggest factor a college has going for it relative to a private training company is that the college has access to a huge amount of infrastructure and resources.
- 3) Partner with professional associations to become the designate location for training, certification exams, and /or test invigilating.
- 4) Partner with professional associations and private consultants to endorse their training in your area. For example, offering a *Certificate of Completion* through the Corporate Training Division would not only increase the offerings the college could market but could also enhance the credibility and marketing potential of a private trainer.
- 5) If you are going to market in-house training programs to employers ensure you recruit a facilitator that is viewed as an "expert" by the industry. This may cost more in the short term but will create dividends with regards to increasing credibility and repeat contracts.
- 6) The untapped market is in the small business sector (services and industry). These are the companies that fall through the cracks that larger corporate trainers overlook; yet they are the largest combined employers within the northern region.
- 7) Coordination of employee training is a value-added service that the colleges could expand. As most companies indicated they do not have a designated training coordinator, this service could be offered as a "one phone call service" to the college representative that would organize the training requested.

APPENDIX

Employee Training Survey

The following survey is being distributed on behalf of the Northern Alberta Development Council - Labor Market Information Clearinghouse. The Labor Market Information Clearinghouse is supported through a partnership of 4 public colleges. These partner colleges are Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, Northern Lakes College, and Portage College.

The purpose of this survey is twofold:

- 1) to ensure the partner college within your region is aware of your training needs;
- 2) to assist you in accessing training services through your partner college.

The information collected through this survey will be summarized and forwarded to the partner colleges through the Labor Market Information Clearinghouse. No individual respondent will be identified within the report.

Does your organization agree to participate in this survey? Agree___ Pecline___*

If your organization agrees to participate in this survey, please complete the following	information.
Organization Name: Location:	
Industry / Service:	
Public or Private: Number of Employees:	
Training Coordinator / Organization Contact	
Does your organization provide training to employees?	
Yes Please continue to complete survey.	
No* Thank-you for your feedback. Would you like your partner college to contact y training opportunities available? Yes	•

* If your organization declines to participate or does not provide training to employees, please return first page only.

Researcher – Joan Aylward Heffernan July 2004

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2) Please provid	le a list of	the training to	pics typically p	orovided l	by your organization.	
#1			#2			
#3			#4			
#5			#6	#6		
	e list trainir	ag / topics:			Yes No	
If "Yes", please	indicate th	-			eason(s) for your preference.	
		Prefe	erred Training	Provider	(s)	
Training Provider #1 Topic:	Cost	Expertise	Resources	Local	Other?	
Training Provider #2 Topic:	Cost	Expertise	Resources	Local	Other?	
Training Provider #3 Topic:	Cost	Expertise	Resources	Local	Other?	
organization co	nsider req	uesting the ab	ove training th	rough you	tner colleges, would your ur partner college? It partner college? Yes No	

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4) Does your organization have a budget designated for training? Yes No
If "Yes", what is the approximate amount of the designated budget? \$
5) Who is responsible in your organization for determining what training is required and when it will be delivered?
6) Is the training offered to your employees typically:
In groups By individual requests A combination of both
7) Does your organization provide any of the following to facilitate training:
(Please check all that apply)
Time-off Flexible schedules Tuitions Conference Fees
Payment for Training Travel Expenses Other?
8) Does your organization have a preferred delivery model for training? Yes No
If "Yes", please check all that apply.
On-site Off-site Mobile Units E-Learning Correspondence Video-conference
Other?
9) Does your organization have any of the following special considerations:
Shift Workers Seasonal 24 / 7 Operational Other?:
10) Would you be willing to permit your partner college to review your survey? Yes No

Thank-you for your input!

Fort McMurray Area

- 1. Air Mikisew Ltd
- 2. Alberta Permit Pro
- AL-CON Steel
- 4. ALCOR Management Ltd
- 5. Athabasca Tribal Council
- 6. Avatar North Construction
- 7. B & K Refrigeration Air Condit
- 8. Babco Electric & Engineering Ltd.
- 9. Bartan Machine & Welding
- 10. BC Bearing Engineers Ltd.
- 11. Best Canadian Motor Inns
- 12. BGE Service & Supply Ltd
- 13. Birchwood Autobody
- 14. Borealis Fabrication
- 15. Boser Vision Care
- 16. Bottern, Susan Law Office
- 17. Bredon Electrical Systems Ltd
- 18. Bridgeport Inn
- 19. Canadian Helicopters Ltd
- 20. Car-Ber Testing Alberta Inc
- 21. Casman Construction
- 22. Century 21 Dynamic Realty
- 23. Cessco Fabrication and Engineering
- 24. Chemco Electrical Contractors
- 25. Clearwater Welding and Fabrication
- 26. Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union4. PLS Security
- 27. Consun Contracting
- 28. Convergent Technologies
- 29. Cumulative Environmental Management
- 30. DB Kidd Transport Services
- 31. Demers Contracting Services
- 32. Dynacare Kasper Medical Laboratories
- 33. E Construction Ltd
- 34. EMCO Waterworks Ltd
- 35. Esso-D Erskine Petroleum Ltd
- 36. Fort McMurray Real Estate Board
- 37. FM No. 468 First Nation
- 38. Fort McMurray Today
- 39. FM CJOK
- 40. Fort McMurray Chamber of Comm
- 41. FM Regional Business Development
- 42. Northern Lights School Division
- 43. GIW / KSB Mining Group
- 44. Global Heat Transfer Ltd.
- 45. Golosky Trucking & Contracting
- 46. Gorsalitz Law Office
- 47. Gregg Distributors

- 48. Harold Smith Travel Ltd
- 49. High North Foods Wholesale
- 50. Hopper, M DR. Optometrist
- 51. Jacobs Catalytic Ltd
- 52. Japan Canada Oil Sands Ltd.
- 53. KYX-98 FM
- 54. Lemax Machine & Welding
- 55. Liam Construction
- 56. Manchester Chivers Insurance
- 57. Morrison Medical Clinic
- 58. McKenzie Welding and Fabrication
- 59. McMurray Aviation
- 60. McMurray Glass
- 61. McMurray Imperial Enterprises
- 62. McMurray Resources Research
- 63. Metro Gordy Trucking Ltd.
- 64. Mortage Centre/ Sky Financial
- 65. MSI Energy Services Ltd
- 66. National Oilwell Canada Ltd
- 67. Neegan Development Corporation
- 68. Nistawoyou Friendship Centre
- 69. Noremac Industrial Coatings
- 70. North Star Ford Sales
- 71. Northstar Energy Corporation
- 72. Oil Sands Industrial Lodge
- 73. Pastew Place Detox Centre
- - 75. PW Medical Clinic
 - 76. REmax Fort McMurray
 - 77. Shell Canada Ltd
 - 78. Shumka Craig & Moore Adjusters
 - 79. Sparkman Transportation
 - 80. Suncor Energy
 - 81. Syncrude
 - 82. Thickwood Dental Center
 - 83. Travel Lodge
 - 84. Usher Canada Ltd
 - 85. Westburne Industrial
 - 86. Westwood Physical Therapy
 - 87. WFG Securities of Canada
 - 88. Willis Canada

Grande Prairie Area

- 1. A-1 CATS
- 2. A-1 Crane and Bridge Rentals
- 3. A-1 License and Registry
- 4. ADDAC Regional
- 5. Advantage Relocation Systems
- 6. Alberta Lands Inc.
- 7. Alberta Motor Association

- 8. Alberta SPCA
- 9. Albrico Services Ltd
- 10. Albright Regrigeration
- 11. All Clean Fluid and Filtration
- 12. All West Surveys Ltd
- 13. Alpine Pumpjack Services
- 14. AMEC Drafting
- 15. ARON Services Ltd
- 16. Artesian Realty and Insurance
- 17. Artic Welding
- 18. Artisitc Advertising Ltd.
- 19. Babco Oilfield Hauling Ltd
- 20. Baldwin Appraisals
- 21. Baron Oilfield Supply Ltd.
- 22. Unified Valve Ltd.
- 23. Westland Oilfield Services
- 24. Beairsto Stewart Weir Engineer
- 25. Beaver Drilling
- 26. Bel MK Engineering Ltd
- 27. Beltone Hearing Center
- 28. BER-MAC Electrical Instrument
- 29. Best Western Grande Prairie
- 30. Big Country FM Radio
- 31. Brandl VE Construction
- 32. Builders Electric Company Ltd.
- 33. Canadian Helicopters
- 34. Canadian Natural Resources
- 35. CANFOR
- 36. Canstar Environmental Services
- 37. Carter Lock and Horrigan Law
- 38. CEDA Reactor Ltd
- 39. Cenalta Plumbing and Heating
- 40. Central Alberta Finance
- 41. CFRN-TV
- 42. City of Grande Prairie
- 43. Competition Wireline Services
- 44. Complete Insurance Services
- 45. Conn-Track Distributors
- 46. Country Pump Out Ltd
- 47. Craig Powell CA
- 48. Cunningham Brothers Drilling
- 49. Dawdy, Graham Optometrist
- 50. Dust Master
- Firemaster Oilfield Services
- 52. First Alert Locating Ltd
- 53. FMC Technologies Canada
- 54. Grande Prairie Golf and Country Club

- 55. Grande Prairie Health and Home
- 56. Grande Prairie Inn
- 57. HL Powell Trucking
- 58. IGA Northside
- 59. Inspectrum Testing Inc.
- 60. Kakwa Employmnet Center
- 61. Kodiak Construction
- 62. Mistahia Health Region
- 63. Neudorf Trencing Ltd.
- 64. Northern Doors
- 65. Northgate Electical
- 66. Orbit Hydraulics
- 67. Outdoor Images
- 68. Peace Wapiti School Board
- 69. Pembina Pipeline
- 70. Prism Glass and Paint
- 71. Quality Hotel
- 72. RECO Trenching
- 73. Risley Steel Services
- 74. Team Pipeline Ltd.
- 75. The Co-operators

Lac La Biche Area

- 1. Adrian Hope Silver Birch
- 2. Albersun Pipe Lines
- 3. Cadieux Brothers Transport
- 4. Cadieux Oilfield Services
- 5. Calnash Trucking Ltd
- 6. Cen.21 Lakeland Real Estate
- 7. Choi's Tags
- 8. Chwedoruk rucking
- 9. Collins Trucking
- 10. Cresent IDA Drugs
- 11. Dymen Holdings
- 12. EDCON Power Tong Services
- 13. Fountain Tire
- 14. Fyith, Annace Dentist
- 15. Gardiner Karbani Audy CA
- 16. Holzman, P. Dentist
- 17. JDR Business Services
- 18. Lac La Biche Economic Development
- 19. La Biche Inn
- 20. Lac La Biche IGA
- 21. Lac la Biche Glass and Mirror
- 22. Lac la Biche EMS
- 23. Lac La Biche Post
- 24. Lac La Biche Registry
- 25. Lac La Biche Stationers Ltd

- 26. Lac La Biche Tank Trucks
- 27. Lakeland Denture Clinic
- 28. Lakeland County
- 29. Lakeland Oilfield Services
- 30. Lindsay Medical Clinic
- 31. M & J CATS LTD.
- 32. Marczak's Auto Repair
- 33. NEC Contractors
- 34. Oasis Sales and Service
- 35. OK Industries
- 36. OPSCO Energy Industries
- 37. Paul Light Electic Ltd.
- 38. Pelican Hotel
- 39. Petro- Canada Bulk
- 40. Regional Community Development
- 41. RELY-ON
- 42. REmax Lac La Biche
- 43. Royal LaPage
- 44. Rustler Trucking
- 45. RYL, Walter CA
- 46. S & M CATS Ltd
- 47. Sanjel Corporation
- 48. Select Energy Systems
- 49. Signmasters
- 50. Stephane's Mobile Repair Ltd
- 51. Stewart Sales and Rentals
- 52. Sunset Autoworks
- 53. Swamp CATS Ltd.
- 54. Syntech Enerflex
- 55. Talisman Energy
- 56. Tarrabain Chrysler
- 57. Ted's Automotive
- 58. The Print Shop
- 59. Tigger's Truck Parts and Rigging
- 60. Town of Lac La Biche
- 61. Trans West Insurance
- 62. Trans-Canada Pipelines
- 63. Twintel Communications
- 64. U-KAAN Travel
- 65. West & Associates Insurance
- 66. WM J. Cadzow Health Centre
- 67. Zero Tolerance Valve Inc.

Slave Lake Area

- 1. A& G Grant Construction
- 2. Aardvark Auto Center
- 3. AB Eben Distributors
- 4. Alpine Pumpjack Services
- 5. Ay-Flo Oil Ltd

- 6. BearTrax Pumpjack Services
- 7. Big Stone Cree Nation
- 8. Beaver First Nation
- 9. CCS Energy Services
- 10. Central Plumbing & Heating
- 11. Century 21 Northern Realty
- 12. CKWA Radio
- 13. Concord Well Servicing
- 14. Dene Tha' First Nation
- 15. D Janzen Holdings
- 16. Delta Helicopters
- 17. Deuce Disposal
- 18. Direct Current
- 19. D'Lanne Electro Controls
- 20. EMES Electric
- 21. Everall Construction
- 22. First Windsheild & Glass
- 23. High Prairie Medical Clinic
- 24. Grizzly Electric and Instrumentation
- 25. High Prairie School District # 48
- 26. High Prairie Veterinary Service
- 27. HI-Mark Oilfeild Services
- 28. Imperial Distributors
- 29. JAG Instrument Services
- 30. Kallanpally Dental Clinic
- 31. Lakeside Leader
- 32. Lokken, Philip Lawyer
- 33. Lubicon Lake Indian Nation
- 34. Loon River First Nation
- 35. Little Red River Cree Nation
- 36. Lesser Slave Lake Regional Tribal
- 37. MD of Lesser Slave River
- 38. Motormania Parts & Services
- 39. Nelson Lumber
- 40. Native Counseling Services
- 41. Northland School Division
- 42. North Point Plumbing & Heating
- 43. Northwest Inn
- 44. North Peace Tribal Council
- 45. Remax Realty Slave Lake
- 46. Remote Helicopters
- 47. Remote Wireline Services
- 48. Rent-a-Wreck
- 49. Rocky Mountain Energy Services
- 50. Ruecker & Ruecker CGA
- 51. Sawridge Band
- 52. Sanjel Corporation
- 53. Scope Printing and Publishing

- 54. Select Filtration Systems
- 55. SL Ford Sales
- 56. Slave Lake Communications
- 57. Slave Lake Eye Care
- 58. Slave Lake Hot Shot Services
- 59. Slave Lake Pulp Corporation
- 60. Slave Lake Realty
- 61. Slave Lake Registries
- 62. Slave Lake Specialities
- 63. Sniper Satellite and Com.
- 64. Specialities Valve Inc.
- 65. Spilak's Tank Truck Service
- 66. Spruce Land Developments LTD
- 67. Stan's Trucking
- 68. Star Oil & Gas
- 69. Strugeon Lake Cree Nation
- 70. Sucker Creek First Nation
- 71. Swan River First Nation
- 72. Tolko High Prairie
- 73. Town of Slave Lake
- 74. Woodland Cree
- 75. Western Cree Tribal Council
- 76. Tribal Chiefs Child & Family
- 77. Tall Cree First Nation