

# FAR NORTHEAST TRAINING BOARD

## Consultation with Forestry Industries

# 2024



**FAR NORTHEAST TRAINING BOARD (FNETB)**  
your local labour market planning network

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**COMMISSION DE FORMATION DU NORD-EST (CFNE)**  
votre réseau local de planification du marché du travail



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The information presented in this report is current at the time of printing.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Far Northeast Training Board collected information from local employers in the forestry industry within the region to better understand the hiring and recruitment challenges facing those businesses.

The input collected is important to inform local employment and training planning so that programs better align with the local labour market needs, identify local strategies to help address the workforce recruitment challenges and to support local efforts to increase the availability of a skilled workforce in our Northern communities.

Between October 21 and November 25, 2024, a total of 27 forestry and logging companies from the Far Northeast Training Board (FNETB) catchment area were invited to complete the survey. Several follow-up contacts were done via email during that period to increase the number of responses.

Responses were received from 5 mills and 3 companies that supported forestry activities for a total of 8 responses representing 29% of the 27 companies contacted.

### **Highlights**

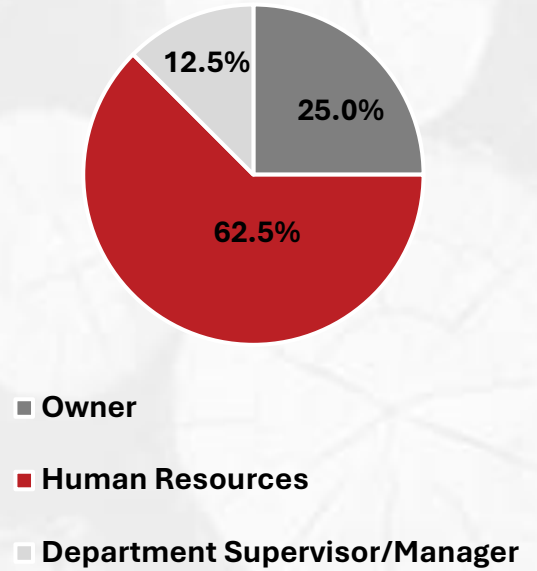
- 62.5% of the responding companies were mills, while 37.5% were companies that support forestry activities.
- Collectively, the respondents employ a total of 1,235 employees.
- Most respondents (62.5%) had 100 and more employees.
- All companies have a diverse workforce
- The 2 main reasons mentioned for separation since January 2024 were
  - employees left/quit
  - dismissal/fired
- The 2 main reasons indicated for new hires planned for 2025 were:
  - Retirements
  - Growth/expansion of our services
- Most mentioned hard to fill positions
  - Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics
  - Heavy-duty equipment mechanics
  - Industrial electricians
  - Truck drivers

## Profile of Respondents

### Respondents by main location

	#	%
Englehart	1	12.5
Hearst	3	37.5
Kirkland Lake	1	12.5
Temiskaming Shores	2	25.0
Other Region	1	12.5
Total	8	100.00

### Respondents by role



### Diversity in the workforce

Respondents were asked to indicate if any of the following groups are present in their overall workforce. (8 responses)

Under 30 years	8
30 to 54 years	8
55 or over	7
65 or over	6
Male	8
Female	8
Immigrants	5
Indigenous	8
Persons with Disabilities	3
Students	6

Since January 2024...

## SEPARATIONS

Yes	8
No	0
Uncertain	0

## Reasons for separations

Employee left/quit	7
Retired	5
Temporary Layoff	4
Permanent Layoff	1
Dismissal/Fired	6
Other	1
Students returned to school	

## HIRES

### Occupations mentioned most often – hires since January 2024 (8 respondents)

The occupations in bold were mentioned by the majority of respondents

- Administrative clerks
- Chainsaw and skidders operators
- Construction labourers and surveyors
- **Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics**
- **Heavy equipment operators**
- **Heavy-duty equipment mechanics**
- Industrial electricians
- **Labourers in wood, pulp and paper processing**
- Logging and forestry labourers
- Logging machine operators
- Lumber graders
- Payroll clerks
- Students
- **Supervisors, forest products processing**
- **Truck drivers**

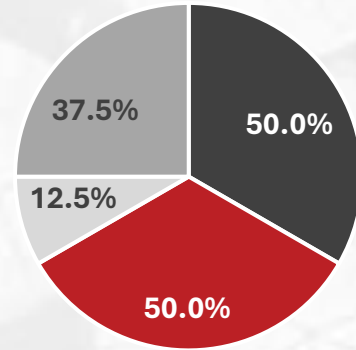


## HIRES

Yes	<b>7</b>
No	<b>0</b>
Uncertain	<b>1</b>

## Reasons for projected new hires

- Retirements
- Growth/Expansion of our services
- Restructuring of our organization
- Other



## Occupations with highest number of projected new hires in 2025 (8 respondents)

The occupations in bold were mentioned by the majority respondents

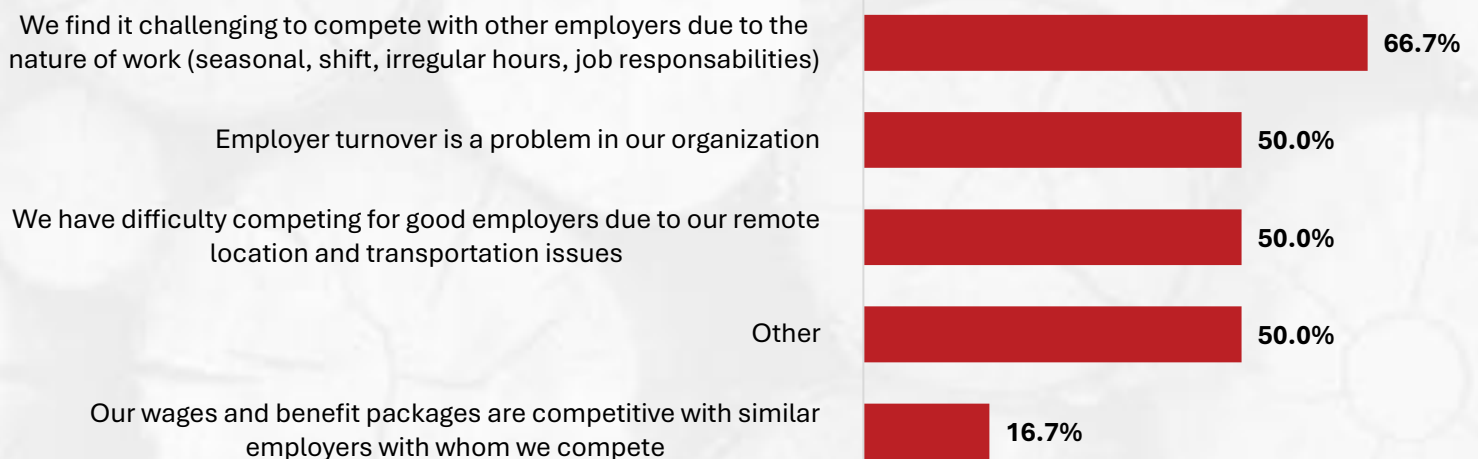
- Construction labourers and surveyors
- **Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics**
- Heavy equipment operators
- **Heavy-duty equipment mechanics**
- Industrial electricians
- **Labourers in wood, pulp and paper processing**
- Logging and forestry labourers
- Logging machine operators
- Lumber graders
- Specialists in human resources
- Students
- **Supervisors, forest products processing**
- Supervisors, logging and forestry
- **Truck drivers**

## Hard to Fill Positions

Occupations identified has hard to fill positions (6 responses)

Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	4
Heavy equipment operators	2
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4
Human resources managers	1
Industrial electricians	3
Logging and forestry labourers	1
Logging machine operators	2
Lumber graders	1
Specialists in human resources	1
Supervisors, forest products processing	1
Truck drivers	3
Welders and related machine operators	2
Other: Surveyors and labourers	

**Main challenges indicated with recruiting for hard to fill positions** (6 respondents)



*Under Other:*

- *Hard to find employees who don't mind being away from home during the week.*
- *Housing issues in the North.*



Respondents were asked how those challenges affected their organization's operations. Out of the 5 of the 8 responded:

- Negatively.
- its hard competing against mines because we can't afford the wages.
- hard to communicate with employees during office hours since they work out of town and out of cell phone service.
- our jobs take longer to finish because of the lack of employees.
- we may be able to find qualified workers, yet some do not have a place to stay in town.

## **Workforce Shortage**

**Strategies employed to address the workforce shortage** (4 responses)

- Promoting within, increase compensation (pension, benefits, etc.), looking outside of the community.
- Tried to offer a nice stable place for our employees.
- We have taken on apprentices and give the younger generation a chance to train in the field and get them certified on forestry and/or heavy machinery.
- We have hired a mechanic through an immigration program.

**Strategies that would help address the workforce shortages** (5 responses)

- More people in trades. Millwright and electrician courses available locally instead of having to go to Timmins or Sudbury.
- Unsure if anything specific would help.
- Get younger generation interested in the forestry industry.
- More training towards getting workers qualified as industrial millwright.

When asked what the **education sector** can do to support the recruitment and retention efforts, 4 employers responded:

- Have more people in the trades and train millwrights and electricians locally.
- Not let kids pass their grade (or graduate high school) without proper/basic reading and writing knowledge. Some of the people we've hired lack social skills and reading/writing skills to even fill out a basic timesheet.
- Speak with the people who work in the industry, learn about different positions.
- Have options to form new millwrights in our community.

When asked what the **community** can do to support the recruitment and retention efforts, 4 employers responded:

- More rental units. Programs around involving/introducing new members of the community in the community. The employees we bring in from out of town have a difficult time immersing themselves (or their spouses) in the community. There are fewer social options (locations) than a larger city centre.
- Hold job fairs, speak with children about the jobs that are involved in forestry.
- Create more housing possibilities to attract and retain new workers.