

“Trades training can learn from Aussies”

VICTORIA — Canada could learn a lot from Australia when it comes to trades training, according to a Victoria-based human resources consultant. In Canada, where education is a provincial responsibility, apprenticeship training varies widely from region to region, both in access and quality.

“There are so many rules and rigidities inherent in Canada’s trade system that it is very difficult for many...to participate in the closed system of apprenticeship,” says **KERRY JOTHEN**, CEO of Human Capital Strategies.

Jothens, who consults to the CHBA-Victoria, pointed to reforms in Australia’s apprentice program as a good example of how things could be improved.

He notes that Australia’s apprenticeship participation rate is 2.5 per cent of the workforce, “almost twice the number in Canada and with only 60 per cent of our population.”

Jochen explains that Australia increased the participation of young people, particularly women, added many new occupations to apprentice training, and made it easier for young people and employers to access training programs.

The Australian national systems contract with 35 private organizations to deliver apprenticeship support services through 300 sites, and the entire program is administered within a national qualifications program, Jochen says. 