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Briefs

Apprenticeship Training - Failed Experiment

Problems in our skills training and apprenticeship programs are a distinctly made-in-BC problem. It's the legacy of 16 years of the BC Liberals mismanaging the system. Training for skilled trades was deregulated. Comprehensive training programs were chopped into modules. Hours of mandatory classroom learning and on-the-job practical work experience for apprentices were cut to the lowest levels in Canada.

And the requirement, called compulsory certification, that work in complex and dangerous fields like electrical, refrigeration, crane operation and plumbing be performed by a trained, certified journey person was dropped.

Overall, training became narrow and shallow. It created a workforce that lacks the depth and breadth of skills to meet current needs. Critically, while registrations in trades training and apprenticeship programs have increased, overall apprenticeship completion rates declined compared to a decade ago and relative to other provinces.

We believe the changes and their impact on health and safety training (or lack thereof) contribute to B.C.’s record as the most dangerous place for on-the-job-injuries in Canada.

Find out more about the Liberals' failings in the following analysis prepared by the BC Federation of Labour and its affiliates.