

Press Release
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BC Tourism Industry Releases Wage and Benefits Study

Vancouver, BC. A **2004 British Columbia Tourism Industry Compensation Study** that gives a current review of wage, salary, and benefits has been released by **go2**, BC's tourism human resources organization, and **HayGroup**. The valuable findings will help the tourism industry tackle worker shortages by positioning itself as an industry of choice.

The most notable finding is that the average hourly wage for a full time frontline worker, including Front Desk Agent, Housekeeping Room Attendant, Concierge, Counter Attendant, Cook, Bartender, Server, and Retail Sales Clerk covers a broad range, but on average within this sample is 50% higher than the current minimum wage and stands at \$12.36. Factoring in gratuities adds between \$20.00 and \$290.00 dollars a week, which in some cases means that the average hourly rate will be double the minimum wage. In addition, 58% of companies surveyed provide extended health care to front-line employees and 57% provide dental care.

A second key finding is that some executive level positions found in larger organizations carry an annual salary in the range of \$80,000 to \$120,000.

Arlene Keis, **go2's** Chief Executive Officer believes this survey helps the industry dispel the myth that all tourism related jobs are entry level and pay only minimum rates.

"As more data is collected we should be able to use this information to ensure tourism remains competitive in an ever-tightening labour market and to implement recruitment strategies based on fact rather than assumption," she said.

"Initial findings indicate that the pay may not be as low as a lot of people think, including many industry insiders. The results demonstrate there are career progressions within the industry and healthy financial rewards that go along with the progressions."

The first of its kind in nearly a decade, the 2004 Compensation Study targets tourism businesses in Victoria, the Thompson / Okanagan, Whistler, and the Lower Mainland and examines 22 benchmark positions in food and beverage, accommodations, outdoor adventure and recreation, and attractions. It has been endorsed by key industry associations including the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association, BC & Yukon Hotels' Association, Vancouver Attractions, and

Tourism British Columbia. The study represents an initial step into a comprehensive review and will be expanded in the coming year.

B.C. tourism currently ranks as one of the province's largest economic sectors in terms of employment and revenue, contributing \$9.3 billion to the 2002 economy and employing 112,000 people directly and 267,000 indirectly. A projected 84,000 new workers are needed by 2012, including 34,000 related to the 2010 Olympics. Tourism faces critical worker shortages due in part to stiff competition by other industries, an unacceptably high turnover rate, and the perception that jobs are entry-level and low paying."

go2 was formed in 2003 by the BC tourism industry to address challenges in attracting employees and retaining its workforce in order to support industry growth. The Compensation Study was completed by HayGroup, one of Canada's leading professional services firms specializing in people and performance, in collaboration with **go2**.

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Editor's Note:

Key Observations of the 2004 British Columbia Tourism Industry Compensation Study:

A full time food and beverage server earns, on average, \$10.30 per hour but also receives between \$135.00 and \$450.00 in gratuities for each week worked.

For common jobs across business sectors, e.g. cooks and servers, the Accommodations sector tends to pay higher than other sectors.

When comparing compensation levels with regard to employment status, the data show that full-time positions in general are the highest paid, followed by part-time, then seasonal for hourly positions.