TOURISM LABOUR MARKET DEMAND

ANALYSIS FOR THE SEA-TO-SKY REGION

Prepared for the
Sea-to-Sky Tourism Human Resources Strategy
Steering Committee

by

Ruth Emery
Canbritic Consultants Ltd.

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REPORT ON FINDINGS

Highlights

- The current shortfall of workers for the tourism labour market in Whistler is conservatively estimated at 3,500. This number does not fully account for the major seasonal differences and could well be higher for the peak season. The actual number of workers required to make up this shortfall would be significantly higher than 3,500 because of part-time, part-year and seasonal jobs.
- Currently many people living in the Squamish-Lillooet area work in Whistler so the 3,500 is a measure of shortage that is beyond the current workforce capacity of the whole Squamish-Lillooet area. The 3,500 plus some additional demand for the peak season has typically been filled by recruitment of workers from elsewhere, in BC, Canada and overseas.
- Growth in the four key tourism related industries of accommodation, food and beverage services, recreation and retail trade, is expected to add an additional 2,500 jobs in tourism related activity over the ten years to 2015.
- While the majority of the new jobs are expected to be in Whistler, the growth rate for tourism jobs in the surrounding area is projected as being slightly higher than for Whistler itself.
- Population growth in the Squamish-Lillooet area, already a little higher than for BC, is expected to see this trend continue. However this population growth will barely take care of tourism sector growth in centres such as Pemberton and Squamish, leaving little to augment the labour supply for Whistler. Population growth in Whistler itself is expected to be more limited and will not supply much additional labour supply.
- Overall, the current 3,500+ shortfall of tourism workers is expected to continue throughout the forecast period and may increase.
- The age of workers in many of the large tourism occupations is very young and there is no retirement issue, but Whistler tourism operators do rely on recruiting young persons from elsewhere. The demographic shifts taking place in BC and in other places that have been providing workers to Whistler are such that the population is aging and there are fewer young persons available for recruitment. This issue is compounded by the major efforts being made by other industrial sectors to recruit young persons to replace their aging workforces.
- The particular nature of seasonal peaks in the Whistler tourism market, with a major emphasis on winter, also makes it difficult to recruit students. While many tourism operations across BC use students as part of the seasonal workforce it is typically in the summer when students are on vacation. In the winter months the majority of students in BC and Canada are in full-time education.
- Turnover in tourism jobs in Whistler is around 100 percent annually. This reflects both seasonality and mobility of temporary workers.
- The Squamish-Lillooet Aboriginal population does have a younger population and the unemployment rate is far higher than for the overall labour force while representation in tourism jobs is lower. There is some potential to increase the labour supply here, but the Aboriginal population is small and cannot be expected to address a significant share of the shortfall in workers.
- With a continuing shortfall, additional growth and smaller youth population the difficulty in obtaining workers is expected to increase.

Tourism Sector and Industry Employment Trends and Demand for Workers

Tourism activity spans several industry sectors so the tourism workforce does not have a completely tight industry definition, although clearly it is linked with the various industries that provide service to tourists. In addition the understanding of who a tourist is can vary, adding even more complexity to identifying the overall workforce.

At a BC level overall tourism employment is calculated by taking various shares of industry (defined by the standard industry definitions) employment and is linked to the contribution to GDP.

BC Stats analysis shows that for British Columbia direct tourism employment amounted to close to 118,000 in 2004 (the latest data available) comprised of:

- Accommodation and Food Services providing 57,000 direct tourism jobs, out of a total employment of about 175,000 in those industries.
- Retail Trade providing 21,000 direct tourism jobs out of an industry total of 250,000.
- Transportation providing 29,000 direct tourism jobs from a sector total of 112,000.
- Other industries providing 11,000 to 12,000 additional tourism jobs.

This approach for British Columbia is not appropriate for the Sea-to-Sky area and especially for Whistler. Whistler dominates the tourism activity of the area and has an economy that is completely dependent on tourism activity. Across the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District we see an economy that has many local people working at Whistler resorts and which is also moving towards supplying services directly to tourists. Therefore this analysis diverges from this BC definition to concentrate on the key tourism related industries that provide the majority of tourism employment in the area. For this analysis, all employment in the following key tourism linked industries has been considered as important in assessing labour demand and imbalances:

Accommodation Services
Food and Beverage Services
Amusement and Recreation Industries
Retail Trade.

There is a major difference in the Whistler economy and labour market and the rest of the regional district. The analysis on tourism employment and demand for workers therefore covers ***Whistler*** and the rest of the Squamish-Lillooet regional district (***Squamish Lillooet excluding Whistler***) separately.

Note: The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District measures do include Lillooet, which is beyond the usual Sea-to-Sky corridor description and generally beyond the linkage of labour market activity to Whistler. However data availability precludes the exclusion of Lillooet. The amount of tourism activity in Lillooet is relatively limited and as long as the reader just keeps this in mind, the employment and especially employment trends developed here will provide a good guide to activity in the Sea-to-Sky area.

An attempt to establish employment patterns from the known labour market data for these areas e.g. Census material, did not generate a reasonable or useful picture of tourism activity and employment. Therefore this analysis takes a very different approach. Industry employment for the Whistler and Squamish-Lillooet, excluding Whistler, areas, have been developed from other measures of business activity such as number of rooms, room revenue and visitor measures. The analysis uses comparisons with overall British Columbia data along with some comparisons to GVRD and Capital Regional District measures of basic tourism activity. The thinking behind this approach is that tourism activity drives accommodation services and, even considering differences in room rates, it is reasonable to consider as a comparison what level of employment occurs in other locations to meet tourist demands. In addition other tourism demand, such as for food and beverage services and retail trade, is also closely linked to accommodation once population has been factored in. The other sector of amusement and recreation is also meshed with the use of accommodation services as well as being defined by the type and availability of recreation activity.

Once the base employment estimates for 2001 were developed, further similar material on rooms and revenue, along with other local visitor information, was used to develop an estimate of employment for these industries for 2005. Other material such as economic development plans for Whistler, Squamish and elsewhere in the regional district, was than brought into the analysis to develop employment projections for 2010 and 2015. These employment projections and trends were also developed in the wider context of BC wide analyses on tourism demand; especially in terms of 2010 Olympics impact studies.

Statistics Canada 2001 Census material for the Squamish-Lillooet and Whistler areas along with BC wide Census material was used to construct occupation employment coefficients for these industries. This allows the analysis to further focus on the key occupations involved in providing tourism services.

Employment in the Key Tourism Related Industries.

The demands placed on the tourism industries in the Whistler and Squamish-Lillooet area leads to a calculation of overall employment for the four key industries being explored as important to tourism in the Sea-to-Sky area. The employment levels derived here are not quite the same as an annual average, although not far off as the model developed for this analysis has linked employment to the BC annual average data from the Labour Force Survey. Any difference from a strict annual average measure comes because the model used overall activity measures, which in the case of Whistler are significantly affected by a spike in winter tourism over a relatively short period of time followed by a somewhat different type of summer season. These employment levels are considered as providing a generally good measure of annual activity and employment. Some further seasonal differences also will need to be considered in order to gauge employment demand and imbalances during the shorter peak tourism period.

Information at a BC wide level indicates that employment levels in tourism industries increased only a little from 2001 to 2005. The accommodation industry showed a drop in employment from 2001 to 2003, with a slight up tick after that. Food and beverage services demand and employment has seen increases, much of which can be attributed to better economic conditions for the BC population. Retail trade had increases, again largely due to better economic conditions in BC. The amusement, recreation and performing arts industries all showed increases but, with smaller numbers, do show more variability year to year.

The BC picture has carried through to the Sea-to-Sky area and especially to Whistler. The various demand measures of local activity, visitor beds and revenue, show declining accommodation demand through from 2001 to 2005. This is especially the situation for the lucrative winter season, with summer season activity, after a decline in 2003, showing some gains through 2005. Other tourism industries will also have been affected but will also have been providing services to an increased local population. In addition some increase in accommodation capacity in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, outside Whistler, will have tempered the declines for the whole area.

Developing projections of the workforce to 2010 and then through to 2015 for the Sea-to-Sky area has two components. One is linked directly to visits and spending that is expected to come from the 2010 Olympic Games. The other component, although not completely independent of the Olympic impacts, looks more at how longer term trends are likely to play out over the forecast period.

This sense of two aspects to the tourism drivers is particularly important when assessing potential growth in the Sea-to-Sky area. Over the long term, this tourism area has outperformed the BC tourism market in terms of visitor growth, visitor quality (spending levels and length of stay) and the area has been establishing a wider span of tourism activities through the year than is seen in many other areas in the province.

In terms of the direct impact from the 2010 Olympics, Whistler and the surrounding Sea-to-Sky area will also have a disproportionate benefit, compared to elsewhere in British Columbia. Pre-Olympics visits from athletes can be expected to add considerably to the visitor numbers from 2008. Media interest and visits will also increase from 2008. In addition, because of the nature of the developments for the Olympics (in terms of expansion and upgrading of facilities) as well as the potential from publicity, there should be a considerable longer term indirect benefit carrying through after the 2010 Olympics well into 2015.

At the same time there is likely to be some displacement of existing or regular visitor traffic to Whistler, especially as other resorts market their new skiing capacity. Depending on how costs rise in the Whistler area in response to Olympics related demand, the displacement could be quite high.

In addition to the impacts on the winter sports season, the long-term tourism trends also include developments to expand activities in the summer and to add to the mix of recreation products. This is likely to be the faster growing aspect for the tourism sector across the Sea-to-Sky area.

The basis for projections of tourism activity for the Sea-to-Sky area includes both a subjective assessment of potential developments as well as an effort to establish a quantifiable relationship with overall British Columbia tourism developments.

We have the potential of an Olympic boost and the wider long-term growth for key tourism industries in British Columbia. Current projections for British Columbia tourism and the stated strategy for a sizeable growth in tourism over the decade may be affected by aspects such as dollar value, fuel costs and the passport requirements being placed on United States residents. Despite these factors, over the long-term the tourism sector is still expected to grow, especially as it diversifies in terms of tourism offerings.

Overlaying this trend, there is a potential of the Sea-to-Sky area maintaining or even providing an increasing share of provincial tourism capacity, activity and employment. In addition, both Whistler and Squamish have well structured economic strategies aimed at further developing tourism activity for the Sea to Sky area. The result of these various strands is:

- For the accommodation industry, recovery in Whistler to 2001 levels by 2007/08, some capacity growth in Squamish and Pemberton. There should be solid gains from 2008 into 2010 and then employment growth slightly ahead of the British Columbia average through to 2015.
- For the food and beverage services industry, the pattern is seen as a continued growth partly linked to stronger visitor numbers and expenditures and partly linked to continuing population and economy growth. Again the result will be a growth rate that is slightly above the average for British Columbia.
- For the recreation industry, there continues to be potential for expansion into more summer activity as well as further winter recreation. The Sea to Sky area is positioned to have employment growth similar to the British Columbia picture.
- Retail Trade in the Sea-to-Sky highway area is expected to increase partly with recovery and expansion of tourism activity but also with an increased population.

While both Whistler and the surrounding Sea-to Sky area of Squamish-Lillooet are expected to see employment gains in the tourism sector, we also need to be aware that Whistler has already experienced significant tourism employment growth over a decade and is a far more mature tourism economy. Room for further expansion of winter season activities and, especially, accommodation and services, is more limited in Whistler. Diversification to summer and shoulder season promotion and activity is expected to see higher growth rates, but because of the maturity of the Whistler tourism economy and the weight of winter activity, the overall impact will be for a slightly lower annual growth in Whistler than in the surrounding area.

Pemberton, while currently a small tourism economy, has the potential for more rapid expansion, especially in accommodation, which will potentially serve Whistler visitors. Summer activity is also expected to increase in Pemberton. Mining developments will bring in some additional users of accommodation and food services. While this is not usually described as tourism, anyone traveling on business becomes part of the overall tourism measure.

Squamish is also positioning itself for additional tourism developments. Once more the tourism base is smaller than in Whistler, leading to a somewhat higher growth rate for tourism related industries and employment.

The following table provides the demand-driven estimates of employment for 2001 and 2005 along with projections to 2010 and 2015. The projections, based on the above discussion of tourism growth factors, are fairly conservative but they provide a perspective on what can be seen as a highly do-able growth in the four tourism related industries in the Sea-to-Sky tourism area. As noted, because of the major difference in the Whistler and Squamish-Lillooet excluding Whistler labour markets, estimates have been developed for both these areas.

As already noted, these employment estimates are very different from the 2001 Census measures of labour force and employment. It is important to keep in mind that they are not based on how many workers live in Whistler or Squamish-Lillooet ***but are an estimate of how many workers would typically be required to provide the quantity and level of services to tourists*** visiting and using Whistler and other Squamish-Lillooet tourism activities and facilities.

Whistler - Estimated Employment in Key Tourism Related Industries

	Accommodation Services	Food & Beverage Services	Amusement & Recreation	Retail Trade
2001 calculated	3150	2750	1240	1010
2005 calculated	2835	2888	1333	1010
Change from 2001	-10%	5%	8%	0%
Projected 2010	3189	3176	1533	1162
Change from 2005	13%	10%	15%	15%
Projected 2015	3413	3494	1686	1249
Change from 2010	7%	10%	10%	8%

Squamish-Lillooet, excluding Whistler
Estimated Employment in Key Tourism Related Industries

	Accommodation Services	Food & Beverage Services	Amusement & Recreation	Retail Trade
2001 calculated	350	425	390	1195
2005 calculated	410	468	429	1338
Change from 2001	17%	10%	10%	12%
Projected 2010	492	536	515	1539
Change from 2005	20%	15%	20%	15%
Projected 2015	539	603	579	1693
Change from 2010	10%	13%	13%	10%

Source: Calculations for project, based on demand, activity levels and comparisons with BC & other regions

Key Tourism Occupations –Current Employment and Future Requirements

The material developed on employment in the key tourism occupations for this analysis is specific to the four industries identified as important for tourism. This means that it does not reach out beyond these industries to other industries that might employ people in the same occupations. In fact this has a minimal impact for the vast majority of occupations on our key occupation list.

In many of these key occupations the four industries employ virtually all persons who are involved in the occupation. For example occupations such as cooks, food and beverage servers, accommodation and food serve managers, are almost all employed in either the accommodation service industry or in the food and beverages services industry.

It is only a few occupations where there is any number employed in other industry sectors and even for these few occupations the four industries employ a sizeable proportion of the workers. The occupations affected are:

- Program leaders and instructors, which include all sports and recreation instructors, are employed in the key tourism industries but also by governments and education.
- Tour and recreational guides are also used in transportation and other industries. While those employed in transportation, especially in scenic sightseeing are clearly involved in tourism, they have not been included directly as the numbers are small.
- Cleaners, is another rather generally defined occupation with wide use across the economy. Once more, it is possible that cleaners could be recruited from other industries but this is not likely as cleaners in the other user industries, (health care, resource, manufacturing etc) are usually performing different tasks, may be involved in different unions and are often on higher pay rates.

In addition to the key tourism occupations, there is a wide range of other occupations involved in the tourism industries. These occupations include senior management, administrative occupations, accountants, trades etc. These occupations, while included in the total of all occupations number for the four industries, are not identified separately. However the selected key occupations do comprise the majority of employment in the tourism sector. The selected occupations involved in the accommodation and food and beverage services sectors comprise from 80 to 90 percent of all employment in these two industries. For recreation and retail trade the proportion is about a half.

Occupation employment has been calculated by applying specially developed occupation by industry coefficients. The occupation by industry coefficients are a measure of the employment share that an individual occupation has within each industry. By using these occupation shares along with industry employment projections we can estimate employment and employment changes in each occupation at an industry level. To obtain the wider reading of occupation employment and demand across the four tourism industries, the individual occupation estimates for each industry have been totaled

As with the industry employment estimates and projections, different analyses have been completed for Whistler and for the Squamish-Lillooet, excluding Whistler, area.

While the overall population and labour market is larger in the Squamish-Lillooet area surrounding Whistler, than it is in Whistler, the result of the analysis clearly shows the dominance of the Sea-to-Sky area's tourism economy by Whistler. Occupational employment in almost all the key tourism occupations is significantly higher in Whistler or is concentrated in Whistler.

Whistler Employment in Key Tourism Occupations & the Key Four Tourism Industries
2001 & 2005 estimates, with projections for 2010 and 2015

	2001	2005	2010	2015	2005 to 2015 Additional Requirements	2005 to 2015 Average Annual Growth
All occupations in Accommodation, Food & Beverage, Recreation & Retail Trade Industries	8150	8066	9060	9841	**1776**	**2.2%**
Restaurant and food service managers (A221)	597	622	686	753	**131**	**2.1%**
Accommodation service managers (A222)	409	371	418	448	**76**	**2.1%**
Program leaders & instructors in recreation & sport (F154)	308	309	352	383	**75**	**2.4%**
Food service supervisors (G012)	117	116	129	140	**24**	**2.1%**
Executive housekeepers (G013)	63	57	64	69	**12**	**2.0%**
Retail salespersons and sales clerks (G211)	629	632	724	781	**148**	**2.3%**
Cashiers (G311)	78	81	91	100	**19**	**2.4%**
Chefs (G411)	185	178	199	215	**37**	**2.1%**
Cooks (G412)	546	557	616	674	**118**	**2.1%**
Maîtres d'hôtel and hosts (G511)	91	92	102	111	**19**	**2.1%**
Bartenders (G512)	217	217	240	262	**45**	**2.1%**
Food and beverage servers (G513)	864	872	966	1055	**183**	**2.1%**
Hotel front desk clerks (G715)	347	312	351	375	**64**	**2.0%**
Tour and travel guides (G721)	24	24	28	30	**6**	**2.5%**
Outdoor sport and recreational guides (G722)	55	55	63	69	**14**	**2.5%**
Operators & attendants in amusement, recreation & sport (G73)	135	137	156	170	**34**	**2.5%**
Other attendants in accommodation and travel (G732)	52	47	53	57	**10**	**2.1%**
Cleaners (G93)	852	782	881	946	**164**	**2.1%**
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers & related (G961)	639	663	732	803	**140**	**2.1%**
Total Selected Key Occupations	6208	6123	6850	7442	**1319**	**2.2%**

Note: These key occupations amount to 85% to 90% of accommodation and food services employment.
For retail trade the share is less; retail trade also has a sizeable number of managers.
Other occupations employed in tourism industries include various administrative areas, and some trades.

Source: Calculated industry employment estimates and derived occupational co-efficients from 2001 Census data.

Squamish-Lillooet District, excluding Whistler:
Employment in Key Tourism Occupations & Four Key Tourism Industries
2001 & 2005 estimates, with projections for 2010 and 2015

	2001	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**2005 to 2015**	
					Additional Requirements	**Average Annual Growth**
All occupations in Accommodation, Food & Beverage, Recreation & Retail Trade Industries	2360	2645	3081	3413	768	2.9%
Restaurant and food service managers (A221)	80	89	103	116	27	3.0%
Accommodation service managers (A222)	71	82	99	109	26	3.2%
Program leaders & instructors in recreation & sport (F154)	79	87	104	116	29	3.3%
Food service supervisors (G012)	15	17	19	22	5	3.0%
Executive housekeepers (G013)	4	5	6	6	1	3.1%
Retail salespersons and sales clerks (G211)	312	349	402	443	94	2.7%
Cashiers (G311)	251	280	325	359	79	2.8%
Chefs (G411)	31	34	40	45	11	3.1%
Cooks (G412)	105	117	136	152	35	3.0%
Maîtres d'hôtel and hosts (G511)	15	17	20	22	5	3.0%
Bartenders (G512)	24	28	33	36	8	3.0%
Food and beverage servers (G513)	118	132	153	171	39	2.9%
Hotel front desk clerks (G715)	38	44	53	58	14	3.1%
Tour and travel guides (G721)	1	1	1	1	0	0.0%
Outdoor sport and recreational guides (G722)	2	3	3	3	1	3.1%
Operators & attendants in amusement, recreation & sport (G73)	2	3	3	4	1	3.3%
Other attendants in accommodation and travel (G732)	6	7	8	9	2	3.1%
Cleaners (G93)	108	126	150	164	39	3.1%
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers & related (G961)	137	152	175	196	44	2.9%
Total Selected Key Occupations	1400	1571	1832	2032	460	2.9%

Note: These key occupations amount to 85% to 90% of accommodation and food services employment.
For retail trade the share is less; retail trade also has a sizeable number of managers.
Other occupations employed in tourism industries include various administrative areas, and some trades.
Source: Calculated industry employment estimates and derived occupational coefficients from 2001 Census data.

Supply of Workers & Labour Market Imbalances

The latest firm measure of who is available to work in the tourism jobs in the Whistler and wider Squamish-Lillooet area is still that provided by the 2001 Census. Special data acquired for this study provides measures of the labour force by occupation and by industry for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District as well as for Whistler.

The supply of workers used in this analysis matches the industry context developed for the employment estimates. These supply measures considers the labour force by occupation in the tourism fields as the sum of those identified as being in the specific occupation and working in one of the four industries within our set of key industries. What we have here is a measure of the resident workforce that can be considered the immediate supply available to work in the key occupations.

This information on labour supply in 2001, when set against the calculated (modeled) estimate of employment for 2001, shows a striking picture of Whistler as having a major deficit of workers for tourism jobs. This situation is also reflected in wider measures from the unemployment rate patterns that show minimal unemployment in Whistler even at the lowest point of economic and tourism activity (May).

The Table for Whistler compares the calculated employment estimate for 2001 with the resident workforce in that year. The employment numbers are significantly higher than the resident workforce (those actually living in Whistler and captured by the Census in May 2001). At the same time the employment estimates for the Squamish-Lillooet area, excluding Whistler, shows the opposite picture. The employment calculated in the four tourism industries and the key tourism occupations for the Squamish-Lillooet area, excluding Whistler, is lower than size of the resident workforce in that geographic area.

It would be reasonable to expect that many in Squamish-Lillooet, outside of Whistler, and especially those identifying their occupation and industry of work as tourism jobs actually work in Whistler. This would especially be the case for persons living in Pemberton and Squamish and within the Sea-to-Sky area. Of course, we do not know that all workers in these fields who are resident in Whistler actually work in Whistler, or that all those resident in the Squamish-Lillooet area will first fill Squamish-Lillooet jobs before working in Whistler. But local knowledge, from employers and the community, clearly describes how many people live in the wider area but work in Whistler.

Because of the interconnectedness of the labour markets, the Table for Whistler goes one step further and includes the surplus labour force from the rest of Squamish-Lillooet as a further workforce for Whistler, on top of the resident labour force. At this stage we have the information to move to assessing the final imbalance in the Whistler labour market for these tourism industries and tourism occupations. The final result of this gathering of numbers together very clearly points out that there was, in 2001, a major shortfall of workers for Whistler's tourism sector.

Whistler - Employment, Labour Supply and Imbalances					
	Estimated Employment in 2001	**Resident Workforce (Census)**	**Req'ts beyond Whistler Labour Force**	**Workers from Squamish/ Lilloooet**	**Imbalance (basic shortage in year)**
All occupations in Accomodation, Food & Beverage, Recreation & Retail Trade Industries	8150	3360	4790	1345	**-3445**
Restaurant and food service managers(A221)	597	260	337	0	**-337**
Accommodation service managers (A222)	409	140	269	24	**-246**
Program leaders & instructors in recreation & sport (F154)	308	160	148	6	**-141**
Food service supervisors (G012)	117	35	82	5	**-77**
Executive housekeepers (G013)	63	25	38	6	**-32**
Retail salespersons and sales clerks (G211)	629	310	319	28	**-291**
Cashiers (G311)	78	25	53	54	**1**
Chefs (G411)	185	180	5	19	**14**
Cooks (G412)	546	150	396	45	**-351**
Maîtres d'hôtel and hosts (G511)	91	30	61	10	**-51**
Bartenders (G512)	217	80	137	61	**-77**
Food and beverage servers (G513)	864	365	499	62	**-437**
Hotel front desk clerks (G715)	347	125	222	102	**-119**
Tour and travel guides (G721)	24	15	9	24	**15**
Outdoor sport and recreational guides (G722)	55	35	20	58	**38**
Operators & attendants in amusement, recreation & sport (G73)	135	75	60	28	**-32**
Other attendants in accommodation and travel (G732)	52	30	22	4	**-18**
Cleaners (G93)	852	215	637	427	**-211**
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers & related (G961)	639	135	504	143	**-361**
Total Selected Key Occupations	6208	2390	3818	1105	**-2713**

Squamish-Lillooet excluding Whistler; Employment vs Workforce in 2001			
	Estimated Employment in 2001	**Resident Workforce (Census)**	**Surplus - Available Labour Force**
All occupations in Accomodation, Food & Beverage, Recreation & Retail Trade Industries	2360	3705	**1345**
Restaurant and food service managers(A221)	80	80	**0**
Accommodation service managers (A222)	71	95	**24**
Program leaders & instructors in recreation & sport (F154)	79	85	**6**
Food service supervisors (G012)	15	20	**5**
Executive housekeepers (G013)	4	10	**6**
Retail salespersons and sales clerks (G211)	312	340	**28**
Cashiers (G311)	251	305	**54**
Chefs (G411)	31	50	**19**
Cooks (G412)	105	150	**45**
Maîtres d'hôtel and hosts (G511)	15	25	**10**
Bartenders (G512)	24	85	**61**
Food and beverage servers (G513)	118	180	**62**
Hotel front desk clerks (G715)	38	140	**102**
Tour and travel guides (G721)	1	25	**24**
Outdoor sport and recreational guides (G722)	2	60	**58**
Operators & attendants in amusement, recreation & sport (G73)	2	30	**28**
Other attendants in accommodation and travel (G732)	6	10	**4**
Cleaners (G93)	108	535	**427**
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers & related (G961)	137	280	**143**

Overall, Whistler required minimum of 3,500 workers beyond the numbers available in the resident workforce to conduct its normal tourism business in 2001. This is even the case once the available surplus workforce in the surrounding Squamish-Lillooet area is factored in.

As already noted there will also be seasonal requirements above these numbers. While there is no direct measure of how demand for different occupations varies during the year, it is certain that some specific skill areas are more in demand during the winter sports season and others during the summer season. Skilled workers in recreation services, tour operations, and attractions/resort operations will typically work extensively during the season when their skills are particularly in demand. Therefore for some of the key occupations, seasonal patterns will add to the imbalances identified here. In addition some of the occupational imbalance identified here will be for persons to work for periods of the year, rather than for year round work, simply because the demand for tourism services, especially in this area, lead to this type of demand. For example, ski instructors will generally only have employment (as ski instructors) during the winter season and more will be needed for the peak months. The annual numbers for the program leaders and instructors shortfall perhaps should be doubled, or even more, to account for the seasonal demand.

While this model does provide calculations of employment, supply and shortfalls by occupation, we need to realize that jobs may vary, include other skill areas and that workers might also be identifying themselves, for the Census, in a particular field of work while they have actually worked in other jobs. Hence the occupation measures should be taken as a guide to the magnitude of the shortages for Whistler, rather than as absolute. The 3, 00 number, along with an added seasonal requirement, is a sound overall measure. The occupation shortages point out where the largest shortages are most likely to exist.

While this material does apply to 2001, it is very likely that a similar situation is seen in the workforce at the current time. Employment in tourism industries and occupations has only changed minimally in Whistler since 2001. For the rest of the Squamish-Lillooet area there has been some, but limited, employment gains in the tourism sector since 2001. While there has also been some population growth in the area, especially in the wider Squamish-Lillooet area, the numbers that are seen in this population growth have not been anywhere near the numbers which would be required to dramatically change the availability of workers for the tourism sector.

These measures and the resulting imbalance in workers for the tourism industries and occupations can therefore be taken as a good snapshot, not only of the overall situation in 2001 but also of the current labour market.

The imbalances and shortages, described here are conservative but reasonable as a general picture of the labour market situation in the year for Whistler. However they just provide a starting level to the issue of shortages in some occupations. These numbers, while accounting for the worker requirements for an annual measure, do not fully reflect the major seasonal shifts in the Whistler demand for labour. ***What we can say confidently***

is that there is an overall, annual shortfall of workers for the tourism sector in Whistler and during the height of the winter season, the shortfall of workers will be even higher.

Projecting employment trends and occupational demand only covers part of the issues relating to assessing occupation requirements in the tourism sector in general and particularly for tourism occupations in an area such as the Whistler and Sea to Sky area. A resort area such as Whistler has significant shifts in service lines, market take up and visitor traffic and preferences that must be supported by the workforce. While over time, the trends and growth patterns establish the annual requirements (as reflected in these employment estimates and projections) the nature of the offerings in the resort means that there is a considerable amount of visitor activity for a relatively limited period of time during the year and different needs for the summer season.

A final reflection on the demand picture is that while the number of new jobs (from new developments and growth) amounts to approximately 2,500 over the decade to 2015, requiring a minimum of an added 2,500 workers, there is already a shortfall of 3,500 workers.

Turnover is also a significant aspect of any tourism operation. Seasonal work, especially in the summer, has historically attracted young workers who often do not pursue a long-term career in the sector. For Whistler, turnover is a particularly large component of workforce requirements. Reports on turnover from local operations suggest that over the course of a year it would not be unusual to have a turnover rate of 100 percent or more with some lines of operation and occupational areas experiencing 150 percent turnover. The nature of the work, dividing the year into different seasons, that requires different workers and different skill sets, is one aspect leading to higher turnover. Another aspect leading to more turnover is the more general one of a young workforce that moves and changes jobs.

But the major aspect for Whistler is that in order to fill jobs, recruitment brings workers to the area, from elsewhere either in the province, from across Canada and from overseas. These workers, also often young, are not moving permanently intending to live in the area but are merely coming for a period of work. This acts to further increase turnover.

Outlook - Demand, Imbalances, and Labour Market Issues

The primary issue in assessing future labour supply for the Whistler and Squamish-Lillooet area is of course the already sizeable shortfall of workers, compared to those who reside in the area. It will not be possible to recruit sufficient workers from the local labour market over the next ten years to establish a balance in the numbers.

The area population is expected to increase more rapidly than for BC as a whole, with the Pemberton area especially drawing in movers. However this population increase will fuel the workforce for other industry sectors as well as tourism. Tourism activity is also expected to increase in Squamish-Lillooet, outside of Whistler, and this will add to the demand for workers across the area. There will only be a limited labour supply that can be drawn from population growth to act as a source of workers for Whistler itself.

Other demographic change will have a significant impact on the availability of workers for the tourism sector. The issue for tourism is somewhat different than for many other industries that are dealing with an aging workforce and the potential of substantial retirement numbers. For tourism, the workforce is typically young and therefore retirement is not a potential problem. What is a problem is that the smaller proportion of young adults in the general population is now being recruited by many other industries as well as being encouraged to enter universities and colleges. The pool of young workers available, in the Squamish-Lillooet area as well as in British Columbia, for short term jobs is getting smaller, proportionately as well as absolutely.

Whistler has historically recruited outside of the area for many jobs Young workers have come under the working visitor program to work at Whistler and this has provided some of the extra labour input needed over the past several years. Some workers have been recruited for special positions such as ski instructors through employment visas as part of a world-wide pattern of using ski instructors in different locations when the season requires them. In addition Whistler has been recruiting for many positions across Canada over the years. However a declining youth population in British Columbia, elsewhere in Canada and indeed in many countries means that the source of term workers from these traditional source countries is becoming more limited.

While jobs at Whistler may have their attraction for young workers, turnover is very high. Not only is this reported as an issue by firms but the nature of the young worker, the nature of the job and the lack of affordable housing tends to keep the work commitment to relatively small time periods, hence increasing the turnover aspect.

While earnings for the resident workforce in the key tourism occupations are higher than the BC average for the same occupations, earnings are still generally below those seen in many other sectors and occupations. Information on work patterns, again for those resident in Whistler or elsewhere in the Squamish-Lillooet area, indicates that most people worked full time, unlike many tourism jobs in other BC communities. However even this cannot compete with work in many other industries. Many of the industries now looking to recruit young workers in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada, such as mining, oil & gas, and construction are offering higher pay rates as well as permanent and full time work. While they are often looking for skilled workers, many of these industries do offer entry jobs at higher pay rates than those generally seen in the tourism jobs. This pay difference has been the case for many years. What is different now is that these industries are actively recruiting, compared to being in lay-off mode as they were until a year ago.

The situation in terms of attracting temporary, or even permanent workers from elsewhere in Canada will not get better. The 2010 Olympics may attract young workers because of the appeal of working and being part of the Olympic experience. After that time the situation will revert to the underlying issues of a reducing youth population and hence a reduced available workforce across Canada and other countries, which have historically been a source of workers. This will result in increasing problems in attracting workers to Whistler.

The Local Aboriginal Workforce

The Aboriginal population is one that generally has a larger proportion of youth in the population in British Columbia and across Canada. As such, this is seen as a source of additional workers for many industries, including tourism. In addition, in many instances the Aboriginal population often has far higher unemployment rates than the overall population as well as being under-represented in many job areas.

In the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District, the main Aboriginal populations are at Squamish, Mount Currie and then, at Lillooet. For the regional district as a whole, out of a total population that amounted to 32,925 in 2001, 3,695, or 11 percent of the overall population were identified as Aboriginal in the Census. This compares with the Aboriginal share of the BC population of just over 4 percent.

Information from the Census on the main Aboriginal communities of Mount Currie, Squamish and Lillooet is fairly limited but age information for the populations shows the Mount Currie median age as just over 20 years of age, with a little over 60 percent of the population over 15 years of age. For Squamish the picture is different with the median age of the Aboriginal population 34 years of age and with close to 80 percent of the population aged 15 or older.

Close to 30 percent of the Aboriginal population in the total regional district was under the age of 15 with a further 15 percent aged 15 to 24 years. This compares with the age distribution of the overall regional population (Aboriginal and other) at about 20 percent under 15 years and a further almost 15 percent in the 15 to 24 age group. It is the proportion of the Aboriginal population that is under 15 in 2001 that will be driving the numbers of new workers available to the labour market during the coming 10 years.

Special data from the Census provides some information on the participation of Aboriginal people in the Squamish-Lillooet workforce. Of the 2,600 persons over the age of 15, (the working age population) almost 66 percent were active in the labour market, This compares well with the BC Aboriginal participation rate in 2001, of 63 percent, but is far lower than the 77 percent of the overall Squamish-Lillooet population who were active in the labour market.

Aboriginal peoples experience far higher unemployment than the overall population across BC. In the Squamish Lillooet area the overall unemployment rate for the overall labour force (all occupations and all industries) was 7.9 percent in 2001. The Aboriginal labour force in the area was reported as having an unemployment rate of 20.7 percent in that year.

The industry and occupation labour force information for the Squamish-Lillooet regional district indicates that while the Aboriginal population makes up close to 8 percent of the total workforce, they comprise a little under 5 percent of the workforce in the tourism industries. In addition, Aboriginal people in the area are represented in only a few of the key occupations. The largest occupations for the Aboriginal workforce in the tourism occupations are cashiers, cooks and to a far smaller extent some of the food and beverage service occupations, attendants and retail sales clerks. The numbers are too small to be reported in any other of the key occupations. Since this is the whole regional district, it is also highly likely that some of the jobs that these people fill are located closer to the Aboriginal communities and are not involved directly in the Whistler tourism sector.

This data, while limited, does point out that there is some additional capacity in the Aboriginal population to be recruited into the tourism sector. It also emphasizes that this capacity is fairly limited and certainly cannot meet to any meaningful extent the labour shortfall seen in the Whistler tourism labour market.

References and Information Sources:

Room Revenue Data, collected and issued by BC Stats
Tourism Sector Monitor, BC Stats
For more details see:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/tourism.asp

P.E.O.P.L.E. the population projections model prepared by BC Stats.
Squamish –Lillooet Regional District Community Profile and Census profile.
For further information look on the BC Stats website at:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/

2010 Olympic Economic Impact studies. For further information see the BC Government, Ministry of Economic Development site:
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Tourism Indicators from Tourism British Columbia
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Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.
Community profiles at:
http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/CP01/Index.cfm?Lang=E
Aboriginal community profiles at:
http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01ab/PlaceSearchForm1.cfm

In addition several tables were extracted from the 2001 Census database. Special Census tabulations were also acquired.

Very useful local tourism information was provided by:

Whistler, especially:
Whistler 2010, Moving Toward a Sustainable Future, Economic Strategy Reports
and
Tourism Whistler, including visitor statistics

Squamish Chamber and Economic Development office on:
Squamish Tourism Investment Attraction Strategy Report.
Squamish Trade, Investment and Marketing Strategy Report

Members of the Sea-to-Sky Tourism Human Resources Strategy Steering Committee.