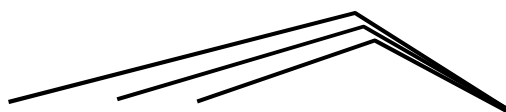


**Job Ads Survey  
January to March, 1998**

Prepared for the  
Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

April, 1998



**Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse**

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## **Job Ads Survey - January Through March, 1998**

### **Introduction**

Part-time and limited-term employment is widely assumed to be on the increase in Canada and abroad. In order to test the truth of this in northern Alberta this series of reports tracks the jobs advertised in the newspapers of the three largest municipalities in the region. We look at the percentage of jobs that are part-time or limited-term, broken down by the type of employment (i.e. Natural and Applied Sciences, Sales and Service). These percentages are recorded monthly and are compared with total part-time employment province-wide. This is the fourth in this quarterly series of reports.

### **Methodology**

The Clearinghouse monitors job ads in the Grande Prairie Herald Tribune, the Cold Lake Sun and Fort McMurray Today. The Sun is a weekly paper and is reviewed every second week. The other two are daily papers and are reviewed every second Friday as that day's paper includes the "Careers" section. The ads recorded are found in the Classified ads, in "Careers" sections and special advertising features such as the Bowes Publisher's "Best Buy Classifieds". The job ads are totalled for each month and reported every three months.

The numbers recorded are of jobs advertised rather than of advertisements. Where more than one position is listed in the same ad, each position is counted separately. Unspecified plural ads (such as "drivers wanted") are counted as two positions. Restaurants advertising for "general help" or "all positions" are counted as two full-time permanent positions and two part-time positions. Job ads that do not include full- or part-time designations or time limitations are treated as full-time, permanent positions. Many ads are repeated for several weeks and/or appear in more than one newspaper. For the sake of consistency, each ad is counted each time it appears. Ads for positions in which the primary work location is outside of the Clearinghouse region are not counted.

Employment categories are determined according to the National Occupational Classification's list of skill types. This list emphasizes skills rather than industries. For example, a job as a pipe-fitter for an oil company would be listed under Trades and Transport, not Primary Industry.

Reports of the survey refer to percentages of total ads rather than raw numbers. This allows for easier comparison of papers from communities of different sizes.

### **Limitations**

The data collected in this survey will give an indication of broad trends. It should be recognized however, that the jobs advertised in northern newspapers represent a small percentage of the jobs

available in the region. One estimate suggests that 85% of job openings do not appear in newspapers. Many government jobs, for example, are advertised in internal bulletins only.

### Provincial Trends

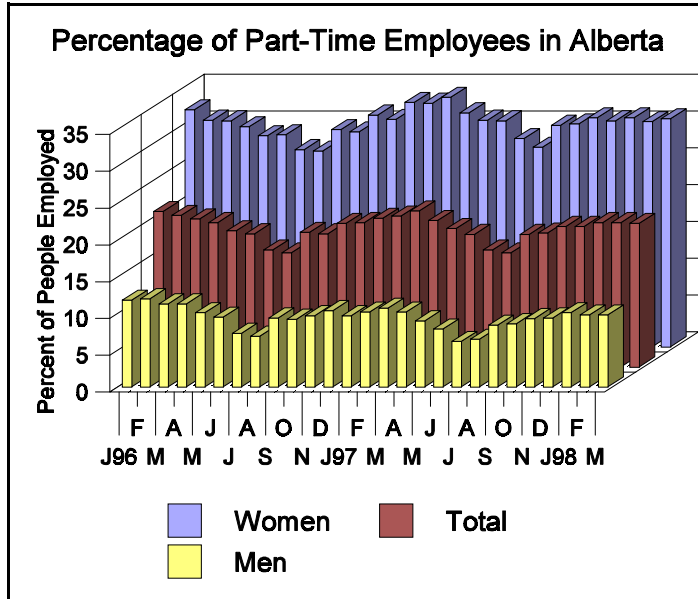


Figure 1: Part-time Employment in Alberta.

Figure 1 uses data from Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development’s Labour Force Statistics. It shows the percentage of employees in Alberta who work less than 40 hours per week, broken down by gender. The figures for the first quarter of 1998 appear more stable than those for the first quarters of either of the past two years. According to AECD, “Of the 44 000 positions created (in Alberta) in 1997, 37 000, or 84% were full-time, while part-time employment accounted for

the remaining 7 000 or 16%.” (“An Overview of Alberta’s Labour Market Performance in 1997” January, 1998)

### Northern Alberta Findings

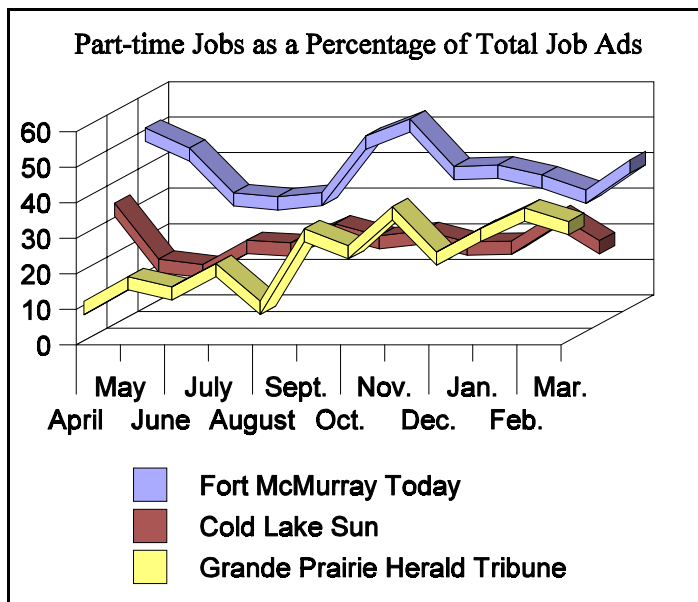


Figure 2: Part-time Jobs Advertised in Northern Alberta

The picture here is less stable than the provincial employment figures for the first three months of 1998. Also, while the percentages of part-time ads in Cold Lake and Fort McMurray are close to where they were a year ago, part-time ad percentages have increased significantly in Grande Prairie. At the same time, the percentage of ads for Sales & Service jobs in that city has grown steadily (see Figure 3 on p.4).

Table 1: Full-time, Limited Term and Part-time Job Ads (as percentage of monthly totals)

Full-time	Limited-term	Part-time	Paper/Month
69.2%	1.0%	29.8%	Grande Prairie <u>Herald Tribune</u> , January
63.9%	0.6%	35.5%	GPHT, February
59.4%	8.9%	31.7%	GPHT, March
64.0%	0.5%	35.4%	Ft. McMurray <u>Today</u> , January
68.8%	0%	31.2%	Ft. McM <u>Today</u> , February
58.2%	2.1%	39.7%	Ft. McM <u>Today</u> , March.
72.3%	6.2%	21.5%	Cold Lake <u>Sun</u> , January
66.2%	1.6%	29.2%	CL <u>Sun</u> , February
78.4%	0%	21.6%	CL <u>Sun</u> , March

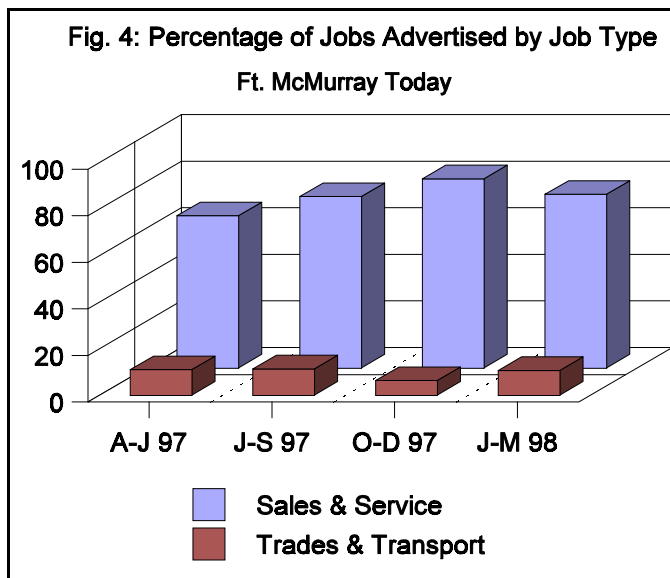
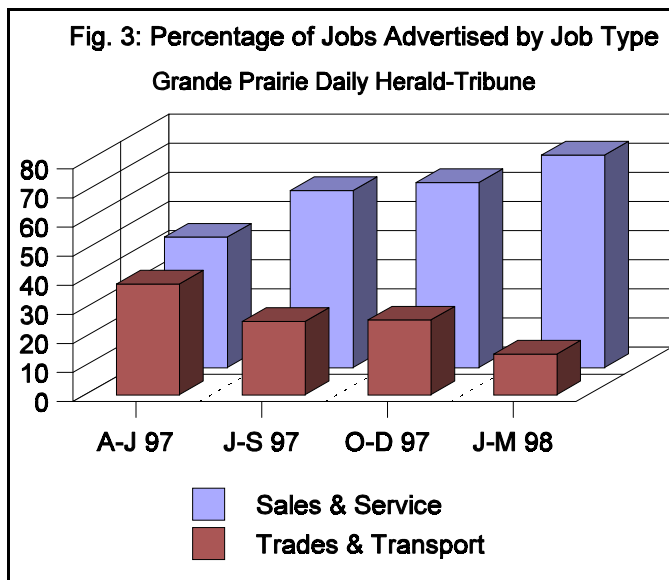
Table 2: Percentage of Job Ads by Occupation (3-month totals). Previous report totals are in parentheses.

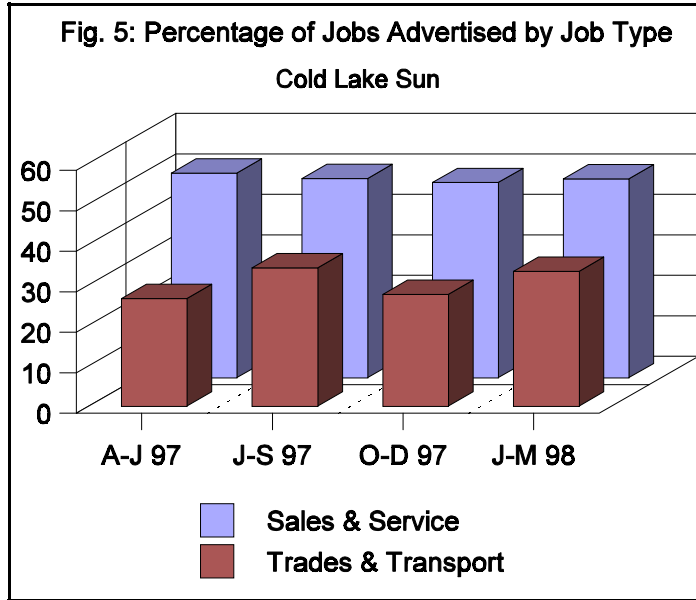
Occupation	Ft. McMurray <u>Today</u>	Cold Lake <u>Sun</u>	GP <u>Herald Tribune</u>
Business, Finance and Administration	5.5% (6.7%)	7.9% (5.3%)	4.4% (3.9%)
Natural and Applied Sciences	3.7% (1.2%)	1.8% (2.6%)	1.0% (1.2%)
Social Sciences, Education, Religion, Government Services	2.9% (1.2%)	5.5% (9.2%)	2.1% (1.1%)
Medicine & Health	1.0% (1.4%)	1.2% (3.9%)	1.9% (0.4%)
Art & Recreation	0% (1.6%)	0% (0.9%)	0% (0.3%)
Sales & Service	74.6% (81.2%)	49.1% (48.2%)	73.0% (63.6%)
Trades & Transport	10.6% (6.3%)	33.3% (27.6%)	14% (25.7%)
Primary Industries	0% (0.2%)	1.2% (2.2%)	3.6% (3.7%)
Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	0% (0.2%)	0% (0%)	0% (0%)

By far the most commonly advertised jobs are in Sales & Service and Trades & Transport. The following charts show the percentage of total job ads represented by these two categories. In Fort

McMurray and Grande Prairie the numbers of job ads in either of these groups appears to relate inversely to that of the other. For example, increases in Sales & Service job ads in Grande Prairie are coincident with decreases in the percentage of Trades & Transport Job ads. The most likely explanation for this lies in the surges in retail construction seen there recently; once the stores are built construction activity drops and demand for retail staff increases. This relationship does not hold true in Cold Lake where there is a closer balance between the numbers of Sales & Service and Trades & Transport jobs advertised.

Figures 3, 4 and 5: Percentages of Sales & Service and Trades & Transport Jobs Advertised





## Changes and Trends

### *Fort McMurray Today*

The most significant percentage declines in terms of occupations advertised for were in Business, Finance & Administration and Sales & Service. Increases this quarter were in Natural and Applied Sciences, Social Sciences, etc. and in Trades and Transport. The percentages of both part-time and limited-term positions increased from January to March in spite of a drop in February.

### *Cold Lake Sun*

The shares of job ads for most occupations dropped from the previous quarter, with a small increase in Sales & Service and larger gains for Business, Finance & Administration and Trades & Transport. From January to March limited term job ads declined, while part-time job ads climbed in February only to drop back to almost their earlier levels in March.

### *Grande Prairie Herald Tribune*

Large increases over the previous report were seen in the proportions of ads for Medicine & Health and Sales & Service. The biggest decline was in the percentage of Trades & Transport ads. From January to March limited-term positions gained mostly at the expense of full-time ads.

## Sources

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, "An Overview of Alberta's Labour Market Performance in 1997", Information & Policy Services Division, January, 1998.

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Grande Prairie Herald Tribune, January 16, 30, February 13, 27, March 6, 20, 1998.

Cold Lake Sun, January 13, 27, February 3, 24, March 3, 31, 1998.

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