

Job Ads Survey
July – September, 1997

Prepared for the
Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

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Introduction

This is the second in a quarterly series of reports looking at the percentage of part-time and limited-term jobs advertised in the newspapers of the three largest municipalities in northern Alberta.

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, particularly in the case of misplaced issues or different numbers of issues published in a given month (due to publishing day of weekly papers).

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

The Labour Force Statistics produced monthly by Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development include provincial figures on part-time employment, broken down by gender. An examination of these figures through 1996 and 1997 shows very little change overall from one year to the next. From month-to-month the data shows a seasonal pattern. The percentage of employees working part-time peaks at about 20 - 21% during the winter months (January, February and March), and drops to between 15 and 16% in July and August.

It is interesting to note that the gender breakdown shows an imbalance. For 1996 and 1997 the percentage of men who work part-time ranges from 6.2% in the summer to 10.7% in the winter. The analogous figures for women are 27.1% and 33.9% respectively. This gap is widening. The percentage of male employees working part-time has dropped slightly every month this year compared to 1996 while the percentage of female part-timers has increased during the same time.

Northern Alberta Findings

Part-time employment in the north appears to be more common than in Alberta as a whole. The percentage of jobs advertised in our sample newspapers that are part-time is higher than the percentage of employees in Alberta who work part-time. This is particularly true in Fort McMurray. There is however, no sign of any particular increase in the percentage of part-time jobs advertised in the north. The rise seen in each newspaper from August to September follows the seasonal pattern seen across Alberta.

Table 1, Full-time, Limited Term and Part-time Job Ads (figures as % of monthly totals).

Full-time	Limited-term	Part-time	Paper/Month
70.2%	9.9%	19.9%	Grande Prairie Herald Tribune, July
87.4%	3.3%	9.3%	GPHT, August
63.2%	7.1%	29.7%	GPHT, September
66.7%	4.1%	29.3%	Ft. McMurray Today, July
67.8%	1.7%	30.5%	Ft. McM Today, Aug
50.7%	2.9%	46.4%	Ft. McM Today, Sept
73.9%	4.3%	21.7%	Cold Lake Sun, July
75.2%	3.8%	21.0%	CL Sun, August
67.7%	6.1%	26.3%	CL Sun, September

Chart 1: Part-time Jobs, April to September, 1997.

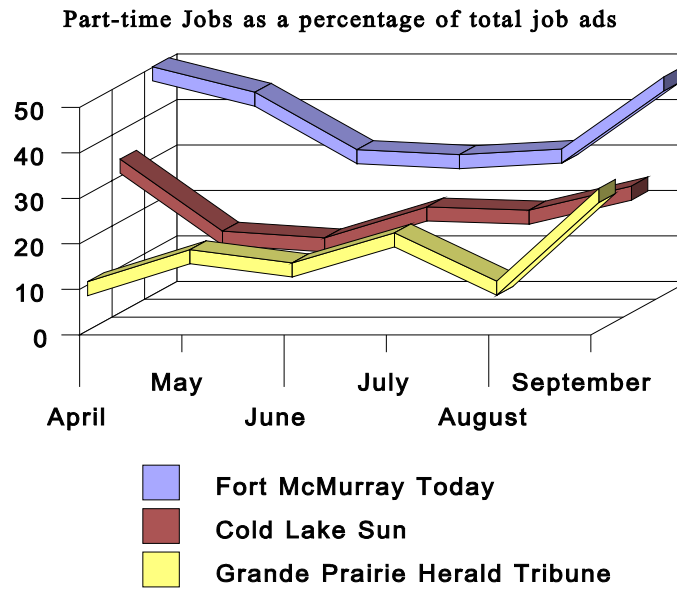


Table 2: Percentage of Ads by Occupation (3-month Totals)

Occupation	Ft. McMurray Today	Cold Lake Sun	GP Herald Tribune
Business, Finance and Administration	7.4%	5.0%	4.5%
Natural and Applied Sciences	1.7%	0.3%	0.8%
Social Sciences, Education, Religion, Government Services	3.0%	4.1%	2.4%
Medicine & Health	2.8%	1.9%	0.8%
Art & Recreation	0	0.3%	0.5%
Sales & Service	73.6%	49.2%	60.8
Trades & Transport	11.3%	34.2%	25.2%
Primary Industries	0	4.7%	4.6%
Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%

Major changes in percentage by occupation from April-May-June to July-August-September:

Ft. McMurray Today

Sales and Service ads increased from 65.4% of ads in the previous report to 73.6% in this one. Job ads for Social Sciences, Education, Religion and Government Services dropped from 6.4% to 3.0%. Other categories were fairly stable or down slightly.

Cold Lake Sun

Trades and Transport job ads showed the biggest increase, from 26.6% to 34.2%. Art and Recreational job ads dropped from 2.1% to none at all.

Grande Prairie Herald Tribune

Ads for Sales and Service jobs rose from 44.8% to 60.8% of total ads. Trades and Transport jobs dropped from 38.1% to 25.2%.

Sources

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, "Labour Force Statistics", monthly, 1996 and 1997.

Grande Prairie Herald Tribune, July 4, 18, August 1, 15, 29, September 12, 26, 1997.

Cold Lake Sun, July 1, 15, 29, August 12, 26, September 9 1997.

Fort McMurray Today, July 11, 25, August 1, 15, 29, September 12, 26 1997.