Evaluation of the Employment Program of BC (EPBC)

Final Report

Prepared for:
Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

The Employment Program of BC (EPBC or the ‘Program’) is administered by the Employment and Labour Market Services Division (ELMSD) of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (the Ministry). The main objective of the Program is to help participating BC residents to achieve sustainable employment as quickly as possible.

The purpose of the EPBC evaluation is to conduct a high level assessment of how the Program is performing and provide practical insights into the success and impacts of the Program, its design and delivery, and the Program’s sustainability. The findings of the evaluation will assist with future Program development.

To assess the extent to which the EPBC has met its intended objectives and goals, the evaluation examined four major issues: relevance, program impacts, design and delivery, and efficiency and economy. Within each issue we explored specific evaluation questions, presented in the key findings below. The data collected for the evaluation was extracted and triangulated to address each question.

The evaluation employed multiple lines of evidence including a survey of 5,145 EPBC clients, interviews and surveys of 263 key informants including 22 Ministry representatives, 38 EPBC contractors and service providers, 92 Employment Service Centre (ESC) case managers and staff, 40 sub-contractors, 31 employers and employer associations, 6 other provincial and federal government representatives, 29 other stakeholders and 5 selected experts; a document review, literature review and review of program administrative data; 9 case studies; and 8 focus groups. The case studies included site visits to 6 ESCs, 5 focus groups with 26 self-served clients, surveys of 104 employers and 77 external service providers, and follow-up interviews with 9 sub-contractors.

KEY FINDINGS

The evaluation found that the Employment Program of British Columbia has made considerable progress in achieving its overall intended objectives and goals. The major achievements of the Program are as follows:

- Clients have gained confidence, skills and qualifications and many have successfully obtained employment following their participation in the EPBC.
- Most clients find the services timely, accessible and useful.
- Compared to previous employment programs, the EPBC offers more integrated and inclusive service delivery, new and enhanced access to supports, and service providers are more engaged in the continuous improvement of the Program.
- Service providers have developed promising and innovative practices in the delivery of services to improve their effectiveness and efficiency.
- The Program offers increased access to data for evidenced-based decision making and increased contractor accountability for the use of public funds.
- The Program aligns well with federal and provincial government priorities.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The challenges and issues associated with the Program are as follows:

- There has been limited uptake of job placement and long-term training services, in part due to eligibility constraints among general and BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) clients and limited success in raising awareness about the services among employers and stakeholders.
- The consistency of service delivery varies in terms of the assessment of client needs and interpretation of policy and there are some gaps in the quality of services delivered, particularly for specialized client groups.
- The fee-for-service financial model does not sufficiently support client outcome-focused service delivery since service providers are compensated for delivering services that, in some cases, may not be the most appropriate to achieve employment.
- Service provider capacity is perceived to be somewhat constrained due to increased administration and monitoring requirements.

The key findings arising from the evaluation of the Employment Program of British Columbia are as follows:

Program Relevance

*Does the Program address a demonstrable need?*

The Program addresses a demonstrable need due to persistent unemployment rates and barriers to unemployment faced by specialized population groups and a projected labour market demand for a skilled and experienced workforce. The Program aligns well with government priorities and generally complements other similar programs. Several stakeholders perceive that some gaps exist in services for specialized populations with higher needs, in particular, persons with disabilities (PWD), multi-barriered, immigrant, rural and remote, and youth clients, and in training and work experience services for BCEA and general clients.

*Is the Program responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians?*

The EPBC is responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians, particularly in determining client needs and developing action plans, which link clients to relevant services and supports. There are some challenges linking some services (job placement and training) and clients (BCEA, general, rural, multi-barriered, and PWD).

*In what manner and to what extent has the Program reached its key target groups?*

The Program has been successful in reaching unemployed British Columbians, particularly groups that face barriers to employment. From Program launch in April 2012 to September 2015, the EPBC served 211,826 clients – about one third of all unemployed British Columbians. The EPBC has been somewhat successful in engaging employers and key referral sources. ESCs have engaged in a number of collaborative projects, partnerships and activities. Some issues with respect to engagement include that contractors, stakeholders and employers lack time and resources to engage in partnerships and engagement varies by community and service provider.

*Is the Program aligned with the labour market demands and the needs of employers?*

Most employers that participated in EPBC projects and activities are satisfied with the services and stated that the support met their needs. Some challenges with respect to addressing labour market
needs include limited awareness and uptake of employer services and limited access to job placements and training due to participant eligibility restrictions.

Program Impacts

What impacts has the Program had on participating clients? How does that vary by type of client? In what manner and to what extent do the various services contribute to the achievement of the intended outcomes?

According to estimates for the first two quarters of 2015/16, 54% of EPBC clients achieved employment. The overall employment rate from Program launch in April 2012 to September 2015 is 42%, representing a total of 71,974 clients that obtained employment. The majority of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of the EPBC services. The EPBC has helped clients to improve their employment search skills, build their confidence in looking for work, and acquire relevant certifications and accreditations. Clients that participated in long-term training and job placements and clients that faced higher barriers to employment were more likely to state that the EPBC services were important in helping them to obtain their current position.

Program Design and Delivery

Are the services delivered by the Program timely, consistent, and accessible?

The services delivered by the Program are delivered in a timely manner and are fairly accessible and consistent. Some issues include eligibility constraints, variability in the assessment of needs and interpretation of policy, and transportation challenges.

Does the Program have the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services?

The EPBC has the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services. Some gaps were identified with respect to the level of proficiency with administrative systems, understanding of EPBC policies, and expertise in serving specialized populations.

To what extent do different elements of the Program, such as tools, policies, and procedures, facilitate effective delivery of services? What lessons have been learned and best practices identified?

Some aspects of the EPBC design and structure have facilitated effective service delivery, while other elements have constrained delivery. The major contributing factors include more integrated, inclusive service delivery, new and enhanced supports, promising practices developed by service providers, enhanced access to performance data and increased contractor accountability, increased engagement of service providers, and greater focus on employer and community engagement.

The main aspects of the model which have constrained delivery include less time to work with clients due to increased administration and reporting, the complex policy framework, issues with the financial model, challenges in ensuring adequate specialized expertise and support, and constraints in accessing longer-term services due to eligibility restrictions.

The fee-for-service financial model does not sufficiently support client outcome-focused service delivery. The major issue is that the financial compensation model is not directly linked to obtaining employment for clients, but instead compensates service providers for delivering services that may or may not be the most appropriate to achieve employment.
Program Efficiency and Economy

To what extent is the Program delivered efficiently and economically? What alternatives and opportunities for improvement should be considered that would achieve the intended outcomes more efficiently or effectively?

Ministry Program administrative costs related to the EPBC have declined and overall Program investment has increased over the three years since Program launch in 2012. This demonstrates that increased efficiency has been achieved over the life of the Program.

Other jurisdictions offer promising practices that could address some of the issues faced by the Employment Program of BC, particularly with respect to performance and financial contract management, access to and awareness of services, and consistency in the delivery of services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The major recommendations arising from the evaluation of the Employment Program of British Columbia are presented below. Within each recommendation, we have identified a series of options and suggested approaches to address key issues affecting the Program. Additional analysis should be undertaken to assess the feasibility and weigh the potential benefits and risks of each option.

1. Examine ways to increase the uptake of work experience placements and long-term skills training among clients with moderate to high employment readiness, for example:
   - Expanding access to specified populations of BCEA and general clients
   - Increasing referrals and promotion among EI clients
   - Increasing promotion of the Program among employers

2. Assess options to enhance service delivery for clients with low employment readiness and more complex needs, for example:
   - Introducing dedicated programming or fixed fees for some clients or services
   - Introducing outcome fees for client progress towards employment
   - Introducing mandatory formal training or certification of case managers, with curriculum which covers services to specialized populations
   - Encouraging cooperation and sharing of best practices among service providers

3. Consider placing a greater emphasis on outcomes-based funding and exploring options to reduce service delivery costs, for example:
   - Redesigning the financial compensation model with a greater emphasis on outcome fees
   - Requiring service providers to provide financial statements
   - Reducing the number of catchments
   - Reviewing the requirement to flow-through a portion of the budget to sub-contractors

4. Investigate options to simplify Program administration and reporting processes, for example:
   - Identifying ways to streamline administration, reporting and contract management
   - Introducing mandatory formal training or certification of case managers, with curriculum which covers training in case management administration systems
   - Encouraging cooperation and sharing of best practices among service providers
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<td>AEIT</td>
<td>Advanced Education, Innovation and Training</td>
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<td>AOP</td>
<td>Apprenticeship On-Line Portal</td>
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<td>ATBC</td>
<td>Assistive Technology BC</td>
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<td>BC</td>
<td>British Columbia</td>
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<td>BC Centre For Employment Excellence</td>
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<td>BI</td>
<td>Business Intelligence</td>
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<td>CAPA</td>
<td>Contract and Partnership Agent</td>
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<td>Connecting Canadians with Available Jobs</td>
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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

1. Overview of the Ministry

The Employment Program of BC (EPBC or the ‘Program’) is administered by the Employment and Labour Market Services Division (ELMSD) of the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (SDSI or the ‘Ministry’). The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation provides British Columbians in need with a system of supports to help them achieve their social and economic potential. The vision of the Ministry is to make a difference in the lives of British Columbians trying to overcome social and economic barriers by:

- Believing in their ability to realize their full potential and make meaningful contributions to their community; and
- Providing access to services to help them achieve their goals.

The Ministry provides support and assistance to unemployed and underemployed British Columbians, including persons with disabilities, and offers access to programs and services that allow them to find work, attach to the labour market, and secure their future. Key accountabilities include:

- Provision of income assistance to those in need;
- Support for community living services that help adults with developmental disabilities and their families achieve their goals such as employment and connect to their communities; and,
- Delivery of employment programming and services to unemployed and underemployed individuals, employers and communities, including employment supports for British Columbians with disabilities.

Within the Ministry, ELMSD is the main body responsible for the development, management and evaluation of a diverse array of employment programs and services. ELMSD was created in January 2009 and brought together employment services funded by the Province, and Employment Benefits and Supports Measures funded by the Government of Canada under Part II of the Employment Insurance Act.

2. Employment Program of British Columbia

The EPBC is the primary employment program available to British Columbians eligible to work in BC and who are seeking employment and labour market and community attachment. The EPBC is a single, comprehensive, one-stop, employment program launched in April 2012 which amalgamated legacy provincial employment programming and employment programs transferred to BC under the terms of the Canada-BC Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA).

The main objective of the EPBC is to help participating BC residents to achieve sustainable employment as quickly as possible. The Program targets all unemployed British Columbians. The majority of clients are expected to require only basic, self-serve services to secure employment; however, other clients need more comprehensive case management and access to more intensive services to achieve employment objectives.
The EPBC services are delivered through 84 Employment Service Centre (ESC) storefronts established in 73 catchment areas distributed across the province. The use of Catchment Areas ensures equitable access to the EPBC, and allows program delivery to be tailored to the needs of the specific geographic region. Contracted EPBC service providers assist clients with a wide range of needs, skills, education, employment experience, barriers and other circumstances and work with program clients to set and achieve realistic goals for sustainable labour market attachment. They determine the appropriate steps and services which meet the employment needs of case managed clients and outline services, activities, progress and outcomes in the client’s action plan. Service providers use the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system to record detailed client information and monitor progress. Other aspects of the EPBC include some Community Employment Partnership (CEP) services such as Labour Market Partnership (LMP) and Research and Innovation (R&I) which are delivered though the Ministry.

B. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the EPBC evaluation is to conduct a high level assessment of how the EPBC is performing, which will assist with future Program development. The evaluation provides practical insights into the success and impacts of the EPBC, the design and delivery of the Program, and the sustainability of the Program. The scope of the evaluation consists of developing a profile of the EPBC, preparing a detailed evaluation methodology, reviewing and synthesizing information from existing EPBC program files and data and collecting new data through key informant interviews, a client survey, a review of relevant literature, case studies, and focus groups.

C. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report consists of eight chapters. Following the introduction (Chapter I):

- Chapter II summarizes the evaluation methodology as well as challenges and limitations of the approach.
- Chapter III presents a detailed profile of the EPBC including its design, structure, operations, clients, services and systems.
- Chapter IV summarizes the evaluation findings with respect to the relevance of the EPBC.
- Chapter V summarizes the evaluation findings with respect to Program impacts.
- Chapter VI summarizes the evaluation findings with respect to the appropriateness and effectiveness of the design and delivery of the EPBC.
- Chapter VII summarizes the evaluation findings with respect to efficiency and economy.
- Chapter VIII outlines the major conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation.

There are three appendices attached to the document:

- Appendix I provides a detailed description of the evaluation methodology.
- Appendix II provides a detailed description of the type of services available through the EPBC.
- Appendix III provides a list of references.

Detailed results of the client survey are provided in a separate technical report.
II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

To assess the extent to which the EPBC has met its intended objectives and goals, the evaluation examined four major issues: relevance, program impacts, design and delivery, and efficiency and economy. Relevance examines whether the Program is meeting a need among key target groups, Program impacts examines the extent to which Program goals have been met, design and delivery explores the factors internal to the Program which may have contributed to or constrained the achievement of those goals, and efficiency and economy assesses the cost of achieving the Program goals, and whether there are more efficient alternatives which would result in improved results at a lower cost. Within each issue we explored specific evaluation questions, presented in the table below.

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<td>• To what extent do different elements of the Program, such as tools, policies, and procedures, facilitate effective delivery of services?</td>
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<td>Efficiency And Economy</td>
<td>• To what extent is the Program delivered efficiently and economically?</td>
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<td>• What alternatives and opportunities for improvement should be considered that would achieve the intended outcomes more efficiently or effectively?</td>
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The data collected for the evaluation was extracted and triangulated to address each of these questions. We analyzed the data obtained to develop a summary response to each evaluation question. As part of this step, we took into account the strengths and limitations of each line of inquiry to develop valid, reliable and credible conclusions. We employed a variety of data analysis techniques to rule out alternative explanations of the results and to enhance the generalizability of the results. The analysis also explored the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the EPBC as well as the specific causal linkages between the program components. Various statistical tests and methods were used to analyze the data collected through interviews, surveys, and administrative databases such as frequency tables, cross-tabulations, correlation analysis, and tests for statistical significance.
To ensure a comprehensive assessment of the EPBC, the evaluation relied on multiple lines of evidence obtained from primary and secondary sources. The following paragraphs provide a brief description of each source. A detailed description of the evaluation methodology is provided in Appendix I.

- **A literature review** was conducted to obtain information on the relevance and performance of the EPBC. The review focused on an assessment of the BC labour market, a comparison of the Program’s effectiveness and efficiency with that of similar programs in BC and other jurisdictions, including Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and Yukon, as well as other countries, such as Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, and the identification of best practices in the design and delivery of employment programs. The literature was supplemented with interviews with representatives of similar programs in other jurisdictions. A list of the literature reviewed is provided in Appendix III.

- **A review of internal and external documents** was undertaken to collect information on the relevance, performance and efficiency of the EPBC. The review examined internal documentation related to the structure, delivery, activities and performance of EPBC as well as external documentation including discussion papers, white papers, past surveys and research studies related to Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA). A list of the documents reviewed is provided in Appendix III.

- **A review of EPBC administrative and performance data** was undertaken to develop a profile of the Program’s outputs and activities and collect information on the relevance, performance and efficiency of the EPBC. The EPBC uses the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system to manage Program administrative processes. The ICM data analyzed for this evaluation included the Master Client Data (which detailed individual episodes and clients in terms of start and end dates, designation as clients receiving particular services, specialized populations status, assigned tier, and other demographic characteristics of clients, and employment and community attachment outcomes associated with client episodes), Total Program Dollars (including VSF and FSPS expenditures to date), Service Plan Goal (describes the service goals assigned to clients at the outset of an episode), ERIQ Data (client demographics, work and employment history), and Specialized Assessments (information on recipients of specialized assessments and the cost of those assessments).

- **Interviews and surveys of 263 key informants** were conducted including:
  - **Telephone interviews with 22 Ministry representatives** including Program Steering Committee members and other staff, to collect information regarding program relevance, alignment with government priorities, impacts, and cost-effectiveness of the EPBC.
  - **Telephone interviews with 38 EPBC contractors** to collect information on the activities and outcomes of the EPBC. Respondents included executive and senior management, managers, directors, and financial and quality assurance staff directly involved in EPBC programming.
  - **Telephone interviews with 6 other provincial and federal government representatives** familiar with the EPBC to collect information and feedback on the relevance of the Program and identify best practices. Respondents included executives and managers of programs that address related issues, such as community adjustment, and/or serve similar client groups, such as EI clients, persons with disabilities, and apprentices.
**EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

- **Telephone interviews with 31 leading employer associations and employers** to collect information and feedback on the relevance and performance of the Program. Respondents included 22 employers, the majority of whom had previous involvement with an EPBC contractor, and 9 professional or employer associations, most commonly identified through an online search.

- **Telephone interviews with 29 other stakeholders** involved in other employment programs to collect information and feedback on the relevance and performance of the Program. Approximately half of the stakeholders interviewed provide supports for persons with disabilities, and the other half are involved in the provision of employment, counselling and other support services for persons with disabilities, youth, Aboriginal people, persons with multiple barriers to employment, and survivors of violence. Organizations were identified through EPBC contractor referrals and an online search.

- **Telephone interviews with 5 experts** to collect information on best practices in employment programming models, career development, and services for persons with disabilities. The experts included directors, professors and researchers. Representatives were identified in collaboration with the Evaluation Steering Committee and through an online search.

- **A survey of 92 ESC case managers and staff from 28 EPBC contractor organizations** to collect information and obtain feedback on the relevance, performance and cost-effectiveness of the EPBC. The survey was administered using an online survey software, FluidSurveys, between May and August, 2015. Respondents included case management, client needs assessment, team lead, workshop delivery, and support staff such as IT, accounting, quality assurance, and performance measurement staff. Contacts were identified through EPBC contractor referrals.

- **A survey of 40 sub-contractors of 25 EPBC contractor organizations** to collect information and obtain feedback on the relevance, performance and cost-effectiveness of EPBC. The survey was administered using FluidSurveys, between May and August, 2015. Respondents included executive and senior management, managers and service delivery staff for organizations focused on areas such as self-employment programming, and supports for specialized populations including persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, survivors of violence, youth, multi-barriered individuals, and Francophone individuals. Sub-contractors were identified through referrals from EPBC contractors.

- **A survey of 5,145 EPBC clients** was undertaken to obtain information and collect feedback on the relevance and performance of the EPBC. The survey was administered using FluidSurveys, between June and October, 2015. A random sample of 50,000 EPBC clients was selected from the client population. The sample was monitored throughout the survey period to ensure a sufficient level of response and representation of clients based on client category (EI clients, BCEA clients and general), tier, region, age, gender, and membership in specialized population groups. Clients had the option to complete the survey online, by telephone, fax or email, and received up to 5 email reminders and 3 telephone calls in order to ensure a high response rate. The 5,145 clients that completed or substantially completed the survey represent a response rate of 11.8% and result in a margin of error of 1.3%, 19 times out of 20.
• **Nine case studies** were conducted to collect information and obtain feedback on the relevance, performance and cost-effectiveness of the EPBC. The case studies examined awareness of the services, promising practices in the delivery of services, the influence of the financial model, the rural or urban locale of the ESC, the use of sub-contractors and the participation of employers on service delivery, as well as the characteristics of different client groups (repeat users, those who make limited use of services and self-served clients). The case studies involved site visits to 6 ESCs, 5 focus groups with 26 self-served clients, surveys of 104 employers (58 that participated in EPBC activities and 46 that were identified through an online search) and 77 external service providers (identified through an online search) and follow-up interviews with 9 sub-contractors. ESCs were selected for site visits based on key characteristics, such as urban and rural regions, for-profit and not-for-profit, large and small budgets, one versus multiple catchments, and identified promising practices or challenges, to ensure a broad representation.

• **Eight focus groups** were conducted to validate the key findings from other lines of evidence and examine potential recommendations and alternative delivery options. Focus group topics included the design and delivery of EPBC services in rural and urban catchments; access to and quality of services for persons with disabilities, immigrant clients and Aboriginal clients; use of subcontractors; community and employer partnerships and EPBC design and delivery from the perspective of employers. The focus groups were conducted via teleconference and participants were provided with a copy of the discussion topics in advance to ensure an informed discussion.

### B. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

The following paragraphs describe some of the challenges and limitations experienced during the course of the evaluation and the strategies undertaken to address them.

• **Potential response bias.** As many key informants are involved in the Program design and delivery and clients are direct beneficiaries of the services, the findings of the surveys, interviews, focus groups and case studies may be somewhat biased. The bias could be both negative and positive since individuals with more favourable outcomes or more memorable negative experiences may be more inclined to provide detailed feedback. To reduce the effect of respondent biases, we clearly communicated the purpose of the evaluation, its design and methodology to participants; we interviewed and surveyed representatives from a variety of different groups ranging from representatives directly involved in the design and delivery of programming, such as Ministry representatives, contractors, sub-contractors, ESC case managers/staff, clients, and employers that have worked with EPBC contractors, to representatives who are less directly involved, such as employer associations, other stakeholders, and selected experts; we cross-checked responses across the different groups; we identified contextual considerations and limitations to the findings; and, wherever possible, we triangulated and validated findings with other lines of evidence.

• **Limited contact information for the client survey.** Of the 50,000 clients randomly selected to be invited to the client survey, 4,297 had neither a telephone number nor email address on file. Of the 18,650 telephone numbers called, 5,374 were no longer in service or no longer associated with the client. Of the 24,741 email invitations sent, 2,731 were returned because they were incorrect or no longer active (i.e. the email bounced back). To mitigate this constraint, we contacted clients through a variety of mechanisms using the information that was available. We provided clients with the option to complete the survey online, by telephone, fax or email, and clients received up to 5 email reminders and 3 telephone calls in order to ensure a high response rate.
• **Lack of willingness among some clients to provide detailed or personal information.** Some clients were unwilling or unable to respond to certain questions in the survey. For example, some clients did not want to provide information with respect to their current employment status or earnings. This resulted in a lower response for particular questions in the survey. To mitigate this constraint, we allowed clients to opt-out of particular questions if they did not feel comfortable answering and asked them other questions in the survey to ensure the maximum response. We also reported the total number of clients responding to each question to demonstrate the strength and frequency of the results.

• **Difficulty in attributing participation in EPBC to particular outcomes.** The employment and community attachment outcomes presented in the evaluation do not fully depict the incremental impact caused by EPBC services. It is not possible to definitively attribute these outcomes to the services without comparing the clients to a similar cohort of individuals that did not receive EPBC services, for example, by using matched pairs or other statistical analysis. To mitigate this constraint, the evaluation considers other ways of determining attribution such as client perceptions of how likely they would have obtained the position without receiving EPBC services, client satisfaction ratings with the usefulness of the services, as well as qualitative examples of how the services have impacted clients. We also examined how the outcomes for particular services varied within particular client groups and specialized populations.
III. PROFILE OF THE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

This chapter describes the Employment Program of British Columbia (EPBC) in terms of its history and background, objectives, legislative and regulatory framework, client base, services and supports, reported outcomes, budget, governance structure, and systems (Program monitoring, quality assurance, and information management). It also presents a logic model which illustrates the causal linkages between the activities, outputs and intended outcomes of the Program.

A. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Employment programs in British Columbia have evolved over time in response to shifting labour market circumstances and government priorities. Prior to the mid-1990s, the federal government held responsibility for “active labour market programs” (i.e. employment and training supports) as a complement to unemployment insurance. BC’s provincial programming evolved as a way to fill the gaps in the federal model and focused primarily on youth, literacy and unemployed individuals who did not qualify for federal assistance. In the late 1990s, BC Employment Assistance programs also started offering various employment and training services to support a greater focus on return-to-work. In 2009, the federal government devolved to BC responsibility for Employment Benefits and Support Measures under the Canada-BC LMDA. These benefits and measures were originally established in 1996 in the context of high unemployment, high public deficit, and challenges in the Employment Insurance system, and have gone unchanged since the time of devolution.

The EPBC replaced ten legacy programs and services administered by the Ministry from 2009 -2012. The old BC employment programs included programs which were funded separately through federal and provincial funds, as described below:

- Federal funding under the LMDA supported four programs which provided employment services to unemployed people, and two programs which provided funding for partnership support projects. Eligibility under some of the programs providing employment services was limited to those who are Employment Insurance (EI) clients (Active or Reachback). Services included job search assistance, employment resource centers, employment counselling and case management, including the provision of services and financial support to enable clients to access needed skills training, work experience and self-employment opportunities. The partnership programs supported projects that:
  - Provided needed work experience to EI clients and a community benefit;
  - Identified better ways of helping persons prepare for, return to, or keep employment and become productive participants in the labour force; or
  - Supported employers, employee or employer associations, community groups and communities in developing plans and strategies to improve their capacity for meeting human resource requirements and implementing labour force adjustments.

- There were four provincially funded programs: the BC Employment Program (BCEP), the Community Assistance Program (CAP), the Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD), and the Bridging Employment Program. The provincially funded programs served primarily income assistance clients, including specialized services for persons with disabilities, persistent multiple barriers, women fleeing abuse, and former sex trade workers.
The integration of these programs and services became possible with the signing of the 2008 Canada-BC LMDA. An extensive two-year consultation was conducted with staff, service providers, advocacy groups and other stakeholders to develop the design and delivery structure of the EPBC. Research was conducted to identify effective employment programming approaches in Canada and internationally. As a result of this review, the Province identified seven key components in its “Strategic Shift to the New Employment Program.”

The following table summarizes the challenges of legacy programs, identified in the BC Centre for Employment Excellence (CfEE) report: Environmental Scan of Employment Programs in BC, and the shift from the Legacy programming model to EPBC model.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legacy Programs</th>
<th>Employment Program of BC (EPBC)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs are developed and managed independently of each other making it difficult to ensure clients get services they need and resulting in inflexibility to change a client action if it is not working.</td>
<td>A single program with an array of services that can be tailored to meet the needs and eligibility of each client. Flexibility in the new model allows for service providers to be more responsive to client needs and allows the Ministry to be more responsive to the changes in the economy and demographics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized employment centers are available in particular communities only, resulting in members of specialized populations having inconsistent access to services they need depending on where they live.</td>
<td>Supplemental services must be provided to all eligible clients through every Employment Service Centre (ESC) across the province and through a variety of service mechanisms (satellite offices/outreach services) specifically designed to meet the needs of targeted populations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federally and provincially funded programs are managed independently, requiring clients to potentially navigate through multiple offices, having to retell their story multiple times.</td>
<td>A single window approach that allows clients and the public to better navigate the employment services. Clients only have to tell their story once.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple government ministries are responsible for employment and labour market services, which are developed and administered independently of each other resulting in overlaps in service and less strategic investment of funds.</td>
<td>Services are delivered in partnership with other provincial ministries, community organizations and employers. Information sharing is increased and ministries work collaboratively to consider how to strategically invest funds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 400 contracts to manage 10 employment and labour market programs which is administratively burdensome and costly.</td>
<td>Improved efficiencies in administrative processes and a single case management and financial system that supports integrated service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistency in the delivery of services across programs and across communities.</td>
<td>A single program with a more comprehensive performance management system to ensure greater consistency in service delivery models while allowing for flexibility to meet community needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance management regime differs from program to program.</td>
<td>Improved performance management processes that are client focused and consistent across the province.</td>
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B. **EPBC OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES**

1. **Objectives**

The purpose of the EPBC is to support clients in achieving sustainable employment as quickly as possible. The Program intends to achieve the following outcomes:

- Clients become more independent, through achieving and maintaining sustainable labour market attachment or, where labour market attachment is not possible at the time for clients, to assist the client in moving toward labour market attachment through community attachment;
- Clients receive services that meet their individual employment service needs and are aligned with labour market needs and opportunities; and
- Labour market services are aligned with the needs and opportunities of employers and communities.
EPBC services assist clients with a wide range of supports including needs assessment, skills, education, employment experience, and services addressing barriers and other circumstances to achieve labour market attachment and improve employment readiness.

2. Principles

The Program was designed to enable a progressive and inclusive system of service delivery, with one point of entry through Employment Services Centres (ESCs). A range of employment and labour market services and supports to clients, employers and communities are available through this one stop approach. The Program was designed according to these principles:

- **Client-Centred**: supports the client by providing services that are necessary and appropriate to support the client in improving employment readiness or attachment to the labour market as soon as possible;
- **Accessible**: equitable and inclusive access by residents throughout the province, with particular attention to specialized populations;
- **Results Focused**: enables the clients to achieve Program outcomes;
- **Accountable**: enables public accountability for all Program spending;
- **Efficient**: provides the most valuable services for clients while spending limited Program resources efficiently;
- **Fair and Transparent**: ensures payment that is fair and transparent to all clients, contractors, stakeholders, the Ministry and the public;
- **Consistent and Flexible**: is consistent across the province, yet provides the flexibility required to manage economic fluctuations, events, crises, or other factors that affect the lives of British Columbians; and,
- **Sustainable**: is financially sustainable for contractors and the Province.

C. LEGISLATIONS AND REGULATIONS

The Ministry is responsible for administering the EPBC in accordance with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements as well as all binding intergovernmental agreements. The following legislative authorities apply to the Employment Program of British Columbia:

- **Employment Insurance (EI) Act and Regulations**: The purpose of the Act is to provide legislation to support the Employment Insurance Program. Part I of the EI Act enables the provision of temporary income support (EI benefits) for unemployed individuals who meet the eligibility criteria defined by the Act. Part II of the EI Act enables provision of Employment Benefits and Support Measures, which are employment programs and services designed to help unemployed job seekers return to work. The EI Act also allows for the administration of EI Part II funded programs and services to be delegated to provinces and territories, for delivery in their respective province or territory, under a Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA). BC Employment Benefits provided under Part II of the Act include Skills Training, Self-Employment (SE), Job Creation Partnerships (JCP), Project Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT) and Wage Subsidy (WS) Work Experience Placements.

- **BC Employment and Assistance (EA) Act and Regulations** provide legislative authority for the BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) programs of the Ministry of Social Development. The BCEA programs assist British Columbians in achieving their potential by helping people move from income assistance to sustainable employment and by providing income assistance.
to those who are unable to fully participate in the workforce. BCEA clients determined by the Ministry to have Employment Obligations (EO) have job search responsibilities and employment program participation requirements. Although some BCEA clients may be assessed as temporarily having no employment obligations, for instance, a single parent with a child under the age of three, or a person with a disability or persistent multiple barriers, they may still be ready, able and motivated to become employed and to participate in the EPBC.

- **BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (EAPWD) Act and Regulations.** The BCEA programs aim to promote greater independence for people with disabilities including greater security and increased participation in the community. The BCEA programs recognize that Persons with Disabilities may require additional supports, such as higher assistance rates, supplementary assistance, and specialized employment supports in order to meet the challenges of daily living and move towards greater independence. The EAPWD Act specifically includes a definition based on a person's ability to carry out daily living activities, the recognition of mental illness as a disability, and the right to participate in the labour force (as one is able) while maintaining the disability designation.

The **Canada-BC Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)**, signed in February 2008, transferred responsibility, from Canada to BC, for EI Part II funded programs and services as per Section 63 of the EI Act. Funding for the LMDA is provided through the Employment Insurance Account, which is paid for solely through employer and employee EI contributions. The LMDA sets out specific requirements for delivery of EI Part II programs by the Province of BC. When planning revisions to employment programming funded under the LMDA, the Province of BC must submit the proposed changes to the federal government’s Department of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). ESDC undertakes a process referred to as the “test of similarity” to ensure that programs in all jurisdictions across Canada are similar in key characteristics to those of the federal Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSMs).

The **Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPDs)** give provinces and territories the flexibility to determine their own priorities and approaches to best address the needs of persons with disabilities in their jurisdictions and improve their employment status. The province is responsible for the design and delivery of employment programming in the areas of education and training, employment participation, employment opportunities, connecting employers and persons with disabilities and building knowledge. A wide range of activities are supported including employment counselling, career planning, pre-employment preparation, post-secondary education, skills training, wage subsidies, self-employment assistance, technical aids and other supports and assistance in accessing job opportunities.

EPBC service providers must undertake an initial EI eligibility check when clients seeking EPBC Case Management services indicate, in the intake forms, that they (1) have worked or established an EI claim of any type in the past 3 years, (2) have received benefits through a maternity or parental EI claim in the past 5 years, or (3) are uncertain if they have worked or established an EI claim in this time period. Employment Insurance is always the first payer of financial support for eligible clients where needed. This ensures that EPBC fees and financial supports are accurately allocated to the correct budget and that Program funds are used appropriately.

### D. EPBC CLIENTS

The EPBC operates on a “client-centered service approach” which means Program services are focused on the employment-related needs of each individual client and provided based on each client's
unique employment service needs, employment readiness, and eligibility. This section describes client eligibility requirements and the client categories defined by the Program.

1. **Broad Program Eligibility Requirements**

There are multiple layers of eligibility for participation in EPBC. To participate in any EPBC program and service, other than the self-service area, clients have to be eligible to work in Canada and meet the Program definition of unemployed or meet the criteria for exception to Program eligibility. In addition, the Program offers a wide range of services for which clients must meet specific eligibility requirements outlined in Program policies.

The specific requirements related to eligibility to work and employment status, are described below.

- **Eligibility to Work:** In order to meet basic eligibility for the Program, clients must be confirmed as legally eligible to work in British Columbia. According to federal legislation, Canadian citizens and permanent residents over the age of 16 are eligible to work in Canada.\(^1\) Under the terms of the School Act (British Columbia), a resident of British Columbia must participate in an educational program until he or she reaches the age of 16 years. Therefore, BC residents under the age of 16 are legally required to participate in the school system and not eligible to participate in the Program. A certain group of individuals (over the age of 16) who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents (i.e. with 900-series Social Insurance Numbers (SINs), but have permission to work in Canada) are also eligible to participate in the Program. These individuals include:
  - Convention refugees or protected persons;
  - Adult refugee claimants (who are yet to be approved as a refugee in Canada);
  - Individuals granted permission to work in Canada by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), who have a Work Permit (IMM 1442) that does not specify an employer or have no other restrictions that limit their ability to seek and accept work in Canada. These individuals must also have applied for permanent resident status from inside Canada and have a letter from CIC approving their application.

- **Employment Status:** Only those individuals who meet the Program definition of unemployed and are legally eligible to work in BC are eligible to participate in the Program.\(^2\) The Program defines unemployed individuals as a BC resident who is:
  - Not working or working an average of less than twenty (20) hours per week and is actively seeking full-time employment;
  - Not a full-time student;
  - Unable to work full-time because of a disability and is seeking to work more hours;
  - In receipt of a notice of imminent layoff;
  - Forced to leave his or her current occupation due to a medical reason; or
  - At significant risk of losing his or her employment because of disability.

The Program further defines employment eligibility requirements for certain groups of clients:

- **Individuals with disabilities.** The Program has made certain exceptions for individuals with disabilities, in defining their eligible status. In particular, clients with disabilities who are

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1. The Program use Social Insurance Numbers (SINs) to identify Canadian citizens and permanent residents. SINs that do not begin with the number “9” are issued to Canadian citizens and permanent residents who are legally eligible to work in Canada.
2. Any individual needing employment assistance can access self-serve services (e.g. check job board at the ESCs or use computers for job search).
employed 20 hours or more per week are eligible to participate in the Program if they are at significant risk of losing their employment or self-employment due to the impact of their disability or are seeking more hours of work to achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency. Also, full-time students with disabilities in their final year of high school or post-secondary schooling are allowed to participate in the Program if they have been determined unable to successfully make the transition to the labour market without EPBC support.

- **Full-time Students.** Full-time secondary or post-secondary students are considered outside the labour force and therefore are not considered to be unemployed. Full-time students can only access the resource area of EPBC self-serve services. Exceptions are made only for full-time students with disabilities.

- **Youth.** The Program definition of youth includes individuals aged 16 to 30 (inclusive of 30) who are not full-time students. To be eligible for services, youth must be of legal school leaving age; have left or have completed secondary or post-secondary schooling; are not planning on returning to public or post-secondary schooling; and are transitioning to the workforce.

- **Active EI Claimants receiving special EI benefits.** Individuals who are receiving temporary EI special benefits for a specific purpose (maternity, parental, sickness and compassionate care) are not normally considered unemployed for the purposes of the Program. Clients who are unemployed before starting EI special benefits or who do not have employment to which they will return may access some EPBC Services, such as employment needs assessment, case management, and Employment Support Services (ESS) workshops.

- **Clients with restrictions or considerations regarding where they can access services.** Some clients may have restrictions or safety-related considerations regarding where they can access services. These may include court ordered restrictions related to geographic areas they must avoid (e.g. "Red Zone" areas) or restrictions for safety reasons for themselves or others, for example, to protect personal safety, not being permitted to be near children, and situations where restraining orders are in place. The Program makes special consideration when arranging access to services for such clients with special needs and may make alternative service delivery arrangements.

- **Individuals who are incarcerated.** Where an EPBC service provider has a correctional facility in their catchment area, they may provide outreach services to incarcerated individuals who are near release and require employment services to obtain employment as quickly as possible upon their availability for work. Incarcerated individuals may be provided service up to six weeks before their scheduled release date. This includes individuals pending day parole, full parole, statutory release and warrant expiry.

2. **Categories of Clients**

EPBC clients can be categorized into different groups depending on whether they receive benefits and what type of benefits they receive (EI, BCEA or general clients). Clients are also categorized based on their employment readiness, ranging from high employment readiness to little employment readiness, and whether they belong to one of the specialized population groups defined by the Program. The following section describes, in more detail, the various types of clients accessing the Program.
a. **Client Categories Based on Income Benefits**

Client eligibility for particular services is determined based on whether or not they receive either EI benefits or BCEA assistance.

- **Employment Insurance (EI) Clients**: As of September 30, 2015, 35% of all clients participating in the Program to date were or had been recipients of EI Part I benefits (excluding those who receive both BCEA and EI). Clients who have worked in insurable employment in the past 52 weeks may be eligible for EI Part I benefits, based on the number of hours worked and the unemployment rate in the area which they live. EI Part I benefits are provided by the federal government through Service Canada and are based on employer and individual contributions during employment.

There are two types of EI clients:

- **Active Claimants** are individuals who are in receipt of EI Part I benefits or have established a current EI claim but are not yet receiving benefits. They are required to be available and seeking work on a full-time basis as a condition of receiving EI. The Section 25 Referral by the Ministry waives the requirement that Active EI Claimants be available for and seeking work while participating in training, self-employment, job creation partnerships and PBLMT. Active EI Claimants are required to complete bi-weekly reports to Service Canada to report any change in employment status, work, earnings and activities that might impact their entitlement to EI. Active EI Claimants must continue reporting to Service Canada when they are participating in EPBC services.

- **Reachback EI Clients** are former EI clients who established an EI benefits claim in recent years that has ended. EI clients are considered eligible as Reachback Clients under the LMDA if they had an EI claim (of any type) that was established within the past three years or received maternity or parental benefits in the last five years and are now returning to the labour market. These individuals are not receiving EI benefits currently and therefore do not have any job search obligations with Service Canada.

EI clients are eligible for various EPBC services depending on their employment readiness, which is determined during the intake process or through a formal needs assessment. EI clients who are highly employment ready may only use self-served services, while others are eligible to access more comprehensive case managed services. A client who is eligible for EI Part I benefits and has been approved to participate in an EPBC service must apply for and receive any EI Part I benefits prior to, or in conjunction with, any needed Program financial supports. Clients must formally apply for needed EPBC services including financial supports, and require a Ministry EI eligibility confirmation.

- **British Columbia Employment Assistance (BCEA) Clients**: BCEA Clients are individuals who are in receipt of BC Employment and Assistance. Through BCEA, clients may receive income assistance, disability assistance or hardship assistance. All BCEA programs are programs of last resort. The BCEA Program recognizes that people with disabilities may require additional supports, such as a higher assistance rate, supplementary assistance and employment supports in order to meet the challenges of daily living and move towards greater independence. Hardship assistance may be provided to meet the essential needs of those who are not eligible for income assistance or disability assistance. It is provided on a temporary basis and under very specific circumstances. Some applicants for BCEA are required to undertake a work search of a duration specified by the BC Service Delivery Division (SDD),
prior to their application for BCEA being considered. These individuals are categorized as ‘enquirers’. The intent of this requirement is to emphasize that income assistance is a Program of last resort, intended to be provided on a temporary basis to individuals only when, and until, they are able to support themselves. Enquirers are encouraged by the Ministry (SSD) to access EPBC self-serve services to support them in finding work to maintain their independence and self-sufficiency.

Although all BCEA clients participating in EPBC must have employment as a goal, some clients may need a longer time to achieve sustainable employment. BCEA clients are grouped into the following categories:

- **Employment Obligated (EO) BCEA clients** are BCEA clients who have a primary obligation to find employment as quickly as possible and to sustain it in order to eliminate or reduce dependence on income assistance. Employment Obligated clients may be referred to the EPBC by the Ministry or may self-refer to the Program. All EO BCEA clients who are referred by the Ministry have employment plans which stipulate the requirement that they participate in the EPBC. Self-referred EO clients who are not formally referred by the Ministry may have other types of plans, for example, a Supervised Independent Work Search (SIWS) Employment Plan. This means that they have responsibility to job search independently and may be encouraged to access the self-serve services of EPBC. Dual Employment Plan (EP) allows a client who is SIWS to directly access case managed EPBC services if needed without additional SDD approval. The employment plan is a legal document outlining the activities and expectations which income assistance recipients are required to follow in becoming employed or more employable, including the timeframe. Entering into, and complying with, an employment plan is a condition of eligibility for assistance.

- **Non-Employment Obligated (NEO) BCEA clients** are recipients who meet certain criteria detailed in the Employment and Assistance Act and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act and may be temporarily exempt from the employment obligations. These recipients are considered to have no employment obligations when accessing EPBC services. BCEA clients with Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers (PPMB) status and single parents whose youngest child has not yet reached the age of three are also commonly referred to as NEO clients. BCEA clients who are not employment obligated and who are not yet job-ready may need to work towards community attachment as a step towards increasing their employment readiness. This is used only when Labour Market Attachment is not a realistic or reasonable objective, due to a client’s current needs and circumstances, and is intended to support such clients on the continuum towards Labour Market Attachment.

- **Persons with Disabilities (PWD) designated BCEA clients** are not considered as non-employment obligated for BCEA purposes, but they are not required to look for work. BCEA PWDS are clients who have applied for and received this designation from the Ministry, under the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act, and are in receipt of income assistance from the province.

- **BCEA Clients who are also EI clients**: Some clients are classified as both BCEA clients and EI Clients. These clients may include active EI claimants who may have a low EI claim rate (and require additional support under BCEA), BCEA clients who meet the definition of EI Reachback Clients, or BCEA clients whose EI claim recently ended and have turned to BCEA for support
and shelter assistance. About 4% of all case managed clients participating in the Program to date were BCEA clients who are also EI clients.

EI clients can receive living supports (i.e., Skills Training, Self-Employment Services and Job Creation Partnerships), and other needed EPBC financial supports in the form of money (i.e., money order, cheque or direct deposit). Other clients may receive any needed supports such as in-kind (retail coupons, purchase orders, vouchers, etc.) or indirect forms of financial supports (paid by the EPBC Service Provider on behalf of a Client). Their eligibility for financial and other supports depends on whether they are Active or Reachback EI clients, as described below:

- **BCEA Clients who are Active EI** must receive EI Part I benefits first, before being provided with EPBC Financial Supports. In some cases, additional Program living supports may be provided to “top up” an Active EI Claimant’s EI Part I benefits, depending upon specific parameters for each service where living supports are an eligible type of Financial Support. In most cases, BCEA/EI clients who receive EPBC living supports (as their income support from EI Part I and/or any needed Program Financial Supports) would no longer be eligible to receive BCEA. As such, their BCEA cases would be closed while participating in a service that provides EPBC living supports.

- **BCEA Clients who are EI Reachback clients** and are determined not eligible for EI Part I benefits, will receive financial supports through the EPBC as the first payer for living supports as well as other financial supports required. Provincial income assistance (BCEA) is always the payer of last resort for EPBC Clients who are eligible for other funding sources including Program financial supports. Program financial supports to BCEA clients that are not provided as direct monetary supports do not impact on a BCEA client’s income assistance level, while directly provided financial supports do have an impact. Clients who will be receiving living, or other types of financial supports directly, need to understand their impacts on ongoing BCEA eligibility.

- **General Clients**: A general client is an unemployed individual who is neither an EI client nor a BCEA client. About 38% of all clients participating in the Program to date are general clients. They can access most EPBC services, including case management if needed, but are not eligible for some case managed services available to BCEA and EI clients only. General clients may, however, be eligible for alternative employment programming, outside of the EPBC such as Canada-BC Job Fund-supported employment services. General clients with disabilities are eligible for the same range of services and supports as BCEA PWD clients, except where services or support eligibility is specifically restricted to BCEA clients. There are restrictions as to the level of EPBC services and financial supports that general clients are eligible to access.

**b. Client Categories Based on Employment Readiness (by Tier)**

For clients who require more than self-served services to achieve employment, further assessments are undertaken to determine their employment readiness and service needs and to ensure provision of the most appropriate services. Client employment readiness characteristics are assessed largely by using employment readiness interview questionnaires (ERIQ), which assesses client labour market attachment (recent employment); employment readiness or ability to secure stable employment; skills, experience and education; and abilities, strengths and aptitudes. Case managed clients are divided into four tiers based on their employment readiness:
• Tier 1: High Employment Readiness
• Tier 2: Moderate Employment Readiness
• Tier 3: Low Employment Readiness
• Tier 4: Little to no Employment Readiness

The table below summarizes criteria used by the EPBC service delivery partners in assessing employment readiness and assigning clients to different tiers. Clients in Tier 1 have the highest employment readiness and usually need only basic case management services to obtain sustainable employment. Clients in Tier 2, 3 and 4 commonly require more comprehensive case management. While it is anticipated that all clients will have labour market attachment goals, even if these are long term goals, clients in Tier 3 and 4 may have community attachment goals as the first step towards employment. Clients who successfully achieve a community attachment outcome can return to the Program once the contractor determines that the client is at a higher level of employment readiness and ready to work towards labour market attachment.

Table 3: Client Employment Readiness Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Tiers</th>
<th>Labour Market Attachment</th>
<th>Skills / Experience/ Education</th>
<th>Abilities &amp; Strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1: High Employment Readiness: The ability to secure stable employment is evidenced (i.e. recent long term, ongoing temporary, earning wage that enables self-sufficiency).</td>
<td>- Employment within 0 to 6 months - Stable employment in the past 3 years</td>
<td>- Recent work experience with transferable, marketable skills</td>
<td>- Evidenced abilities, strengths and aptitude for immediate employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2: Moderate Employment Readiness: The ability to secure employment is evidenced but may only consist of temporary work with insufficient earning capacity for self-sufficiency. Difficulty in retaining employment.</td>
<td>- Employed within 12 months - Have held employment for at least 6 months in the past 2 years</td>
<td>- Some work experience &amp; some transferable skills</td>
<td>- Evidenced abilities, strengths and aptitude; some gaps may exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3: Low Employment Readiness: Demonstrates the potential to secure employment, unable to retain or secure stable employment.</td>
<td>- Unemployed more often than employed in the past 5 years</td>
<td>- Limited recent work experience &amp; minimal transferable skills</td>
<td>May or may not be evidenced or are limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4: Little to no Employment Readiness: Has not secured any employment for a determined long term. May have had very limited part time or employment outside Canada.</td>
<td>- Clients who have never worked or labour market attachment that is not recent - Clients with complex service needs</td>
<td>- No work experience (greater than 5 years) - Limited or no transferable skills - Have no Canadian work experience</td>
<td>Likely not evidenced - Requires the identification of skills, abilities, appropriate supports and an employment goal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Personal Employment Readiness Stages Matrix Table, July 26, 2010.

c. Other Categories of Clients

Two other categories of clients include apprentices and specialized populations, each of which is described below.

• Apprentices: An apprentice is an individual who is currently registered in an Industry Training Authority (ITA) approved apprenticeship training Program. Apprenticeship training is a form of post-secondary education that combines paid work-based training with technical training in a classroom setting. Apprentices who meet EI client eligibility requirements may be eligible for apprentice services and financial supports through the Program while participating in the
classroom technical training components of their apprenticeship training. Apprentices who already have an employer/sponsor relationship in place (or equivalent) are eligible to receive financial support from the Program only through the Apprentice On-Line Portal (AOP). Historically, approximately 80% of apprentices applying for Program financial supports will not require case management services (non-case managed apprentices). Apprentices who do not have an employer/sponsor relationship in place are treated as ‘unemployed’ and are eligible to apply for more case management and skills training (case managed apprentices). Unlike non-case managed apprentices, these clients must have their employment needs assessed and be determined as needing and suitable for Apprentice Training by an EPBC Service Provider.

- **Specialized Populations:** The Program defines certain client groups as specialized populations. These groups of clients may require alternative service delivery arrangements to access employment services, in order to meet their unique needs and increase the likelihood of outcomes being achieved. These clients may require special consideration with respect to service provision, eligibility or duration of specific types of services based on each individual Client’s unique needs and circumstances. EPBC specialized populations include:
  
  - **Aboriginal Peoples:** Individuals who self-identify as Aboriginal. This includes First Nations, Métis or Inuit individuals. First Nations includes status (registered under the Indian Act) or non-status (not registered under the Indian Act) First Nations individuals;
  - **Francophones:** Individuals who self-identify as Francophone;
  - **Immigrants:** Individuals who are not born in Canada and who have recently migrated from another country to settle in Canada. They must be legally eligible to work in British Columbia to participate in the Program;
  - **Persons with a Disability:** Individuals who self-identify as having a physical, cognitive, mental health, sensory or developmental disability which results in limitations executing tasks or actions that relate to employment;
  - **Rural and Remote populations:** Individuals who live in locations where there is no reasonable access to an ESC Storefront;
  - **Multi-barriered:** Individuals who are experiencing two or more barriers to employment that directly interfere with their ability to access, find and keep employment;
  - **Survivors of Violence and/or Abuse:** Individuals who are survivors of violence or abuse or who are former sex trade workers; and
  - **Youth:** Individuals aged 16 to 30 who are of legal school leaving age who have left or completed secondary or post-secondary schooling, and are not returning, and are transitioning to the workforce.

Clients can self-identify as belonging to one or more of the specialized population groups on an initial intake form. Case managers can identify clients through formal and specialized needs assessments, for instance, where disability is not self-identified but is apparent and by using other indicators such as birth date and postal code, among others.

**E. EPBC SERVICES AND SUPPORTS**

This section provides an overview of the EPBC Program services and supports, client eligibility for specific services, and the avenues through which clients can access services. A further description of the services and supports available to eligible British Columbians is provided in Appendix I.

**1. Categories of EPBC Services and Supports**

The EPBC offers a wide range of services and supports to eligible unemployed British Columbians looking for work. The services include the assistance and support delivered to clients for which
employment outcomes can be directly measured, such as financial services, training, and self-employment services, as well as other service provider tasks such as undertaking administration, following up with clients and making referrals.

There are over 400 service products which EPBC service providers can bundle together into a service plan based on a client’s need, job readiness and eligibility. It is important to understand the categorization of services as recorded in the service plans because it provides a comprehensive picture of the efforts and costs required to support clients in achieving employment outcomes. It is also important to understand the types of services from the client’s perspective such as supports accessed by clients which result in their labour market or community attachment. For example, a typical client seeking employment services will receive, depending on their eligibility and employment readiness, one or more of the following services: self-serve services, employment support services and job placements, financial supports, apprenticeship, training or self-employment services. The following table summarizes different ways in which EPBC services can be grouped.

### Table 4: Dimensions for Categorizing Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>EPBC Services and Supports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Delivery Provider</td>
<td>• General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Supplemental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Job Readiness</td>
<td>• Non-Case Managed Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Basic Case Managed Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Comprehensive Case Managed Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Plan Categories</td>
<td>• Self-Served (including non-case managed apprentices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Case Management Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Case Managed Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training and Short-term Orientation and Certificate (STOC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-Employment and Self-Employment Orientation and Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specialized Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Plan Services</td>
<td>• Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Job Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Customized Employment Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Unpaid Work Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wage Subsidy Work Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Job Creation Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Skills Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• STOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of Services</td>
<td>• Short Interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Long Interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Employment Partnership</td>
<td>• Job Creation Partnerships (JCP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Labour Market Partnerships (LMP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research and Innovation (R&amp;I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Based Labour Market Training (PBMLT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these categories of EPBC services and supports are described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

- **Service Delivery Provider.** Services can be categorized based on whether they are delivered directly by the contracted agency (ESC Storefront) or are sub-contracted to the third party. The services can therefore be defined as:
General Services are the services required to be provided at the storefront by the contractor and include self-serve services, case management and case managed services; and Supplemental Services are commonly services delivered through other service providers or third parties depending on the type of services, such as training, self-employment services and specialized assessments. The type of services that are sub-contracted to third parties differ across the communities or catchment areas, depending on ESC operational structures and capacities, availability of other third party providers in the community who meet specific qualifications, and expertise requirements.

As part of their funding agreements, contractors are required to deliver a certain percentage of their services through third parties.

- **Client Job Readiness.** During the intake process clients may be deemed sufficiently employment ready and able to independently achieve employment, while other clients may require, if eligible and assessed as needing, basic or comprehensive case management services. Services provided under each of these categories are described below:

  - **Non-case managed services** include self-serve services and supports provided to apprentices who have employer or sponsor relations in place. Non-case management services are provided for individuals who do not require intensive employment support services. Clients may be unsuitable for case management for a variety of reasons. These clients may not yet be at a stage of employment readiness to benefit from EPBC services, or they may be assessed as sufficiently employment ready and not in need of case management. These clients are encouraged to search for a job independently using self-serve services. Anybody seeking employment can access self-served services. The Program does not keep administrative counts of these clients because they do not require a service plan.

  - **Case management services** include any services and supports provided to clients who are identified as needing more than self-serve services alone to successfully achieve employment. Case management services involve opening and managing an EPBC Client Case File in the Integrated Case Management (ICM) system and documenting client progress and results. Case management services start with an assessment of clients’ job readiness through a preliminary needs assessment or formal needs assessment. All clients being considered for case management must complete an employment readiness interview questionnaire (ERIQ). Based on this and other assessments of job readiness, clients can receive:

    - **Basic case management services** for clients who are assessed to have high job readiness (Tier 1). These services include preliminary needs assessment (but not a formal needs assessment), and job search and job start service supports such as job search/job start financial supports, short-term occupational and certificate training (STOC), employment support services workshops, and follow-up.

    - **Comprehensive case management services** are available to clients who are assessed at the lower scale on the job readiness (Tiers 2-4) and require comprehensive case management services. The need for individual clients to receive various services and supports to achieve labour market attachment is determined through a formal needs assessment and other required assessments such as the Disability Related Employment Needs Assessment (DRENA). The assessment may determine the needs for one or a combination of case managed services such as employment supports, training, financial services, etc. Most case managed clients (96%) receive comprehensive case management services.

- **Action Plan Services:** The EPBC Client Action Plan outlines key activities, services and steps needed to support the client in achieving labour market or community attachment as quickly as is
possible. The activities and services identified in the action plan must be agreed upon and signed by both the client and case manager, which confirms their commitment to work collaboratively to achieve it. The elements of the action plan are tailored to the particular needs of each client, based on what supports are necessary and appropriate to help the individual improve his or her ability to find and maintain employment that enables labour market self-sufficiency. Each case managed client will have only one new action plan which is developed when the client first accessed EPBC services. A returning client may have their initial action plan revised and updated; only in specific circumstances (where significant changes may have occurred) may clients require a renewed action plan.

- **Longer-term and Short-term Interventions**: EPBC services and supports can be longer-term interventions, such as training programs, long term placements and self-employment services, or short-term interventions such as workshops, self-employment orientation and assessment. The Program does not formally distinguish between longer-term and short-term services, although some interventions have a set maximum duration before employment is expected to be achieved. Some services can be either longer-term or short-term depending on client needs and the time it takes them to achieve employment. For example, some longer-term services may become short interventions if a client quickly achieves employment, while some clients may re-enter the same service multiple times and become longer-term participants. The Program recently introduced ‘participation episodes’ in the ICM, which keeps track of the duration of client’s participation in each service and over time. The following table summarizes information regarding the duration and conditions of various services, as per the Program policies.

### Table 5: Duration of EPBC Support Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Longer Term</th>
<th>Shorter Term</th>
<th>Duration &amp; Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment Support Services (ESS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Group workshops are normally between 2 to 18 hours in duration; workshops may be delivered one-on-one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• No time limit to the number of times a client can participate; however, ESS topic service fee can only be billed once per client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term Orientation and Certificate (STOC) Training</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Normally 1-3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Maximum of five days or 30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Generally, specific STOC courses can be provided up to a maximum of two times per client action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Development Services</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Intensive support for clients with disabilities or significant barriers (normally clients in tier 3 or 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Client employment placement are normally expected to be achieved within a maximum period of 12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customized Employment Development Services</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Discovery and development of employment profile service will normally not exceed 12 week in duration (once per client action plan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• No limit in duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Normally only Client Tiers 3 and 4 with disabilities and/or significant employment barriers are considered for Customized Employment Development Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Work Experience Placements</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• 8 hours to a maximum of 24 hours in total when used to undertake clients assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• Normally 8 weeks in duration when used for client work experience purposes; exceptions for clients with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>• A maximum of three Unpaid Work Experience Placement fees will be paid to the EPBC service provider per client action plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP)

The Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) is an initiative delivered as part of EPBC. The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation is responsible for funding and administering the CEP fund. The fundamental purpose of CEP is to create partnerships with stakeholders to address labour market issues and encourage labour market attachment. The CEP fosters collaborative, coordinated networks of community organizations and employers across the province to increase employment opportunities for unemployed British Columbians through:

- Use of partnerships, shared information, technology and innovative practices;
- Bringing a stronger focus to the importance of communities and employer partnerships to identify partnership and innovation opportunities that promote job creation and employment;
- Supporting employers to meet human resource needs; and
- Helping communities and employers identify and respond to labour market needs.

CEP achieves these goals by supporting networks of community organizations and employers across the province to:

- Promote and simplify communication between stakeholders;
- Help the easy and quick flow of local labour market information;
- Ensure strategic, coordinated approaches to investing the necessary employment support in communities; and
- Provide opportunities for stakeholders to discuss strategies and solutions to address labour market needs.

There are four CEP funding streams, two of which involve providing services directly to clients through ESCs (JCP and PBMLT). The other two programs focus on research, innovation and human resource planning (R&I, LMP). The four CEP funding streams include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Longer Term</th>
<th>Shorter Term</th>
<th>Duration &amp; Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wage Subsidy Work Experience Placements</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Normally 24 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Maximum 78 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Average wage subsidy rate is 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Maximum wage subsidy rate is 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Creation Partnerships (JCP) Work Experience Placements</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The maximum duration of participation in a JCP work placement is 52 weeks, although the duration of most projects is approximately six months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Maximum of two JCP work experience placements per client action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>• PBLMT projects have a minimum duration of 16 weeks and a maximum duration of 52 weeks; normally client participation is a maximum of 36 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Maximum of twice per action plan on PBLMT projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment Orientation (SEO) and Assessment Services</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>• Normally 4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Each component of SEO services can be provided only once per client action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment (SE) Services</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Services are available once per client action plan and once in 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Clients have to complete SEO services first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Services</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Normally 12 months or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• No duration limitation for clients with disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Job Creation Partnerships (JCP)** provide funding to organizations to assist with local projects that provide work experience and skill enhancement opportunities to eligible job seekers to help them obtain sustainable employment.

• **Labour Market Partnerships (LMP)** provide funding to organizations to encourage, support and facilitate strategies and activities to address local labour market or human resources issues. LMP also include the Employer Sponsored Training Program, which provides eligible employers with financial assistance to support training activities for employees who would otherwise lose their jobs.

• **Research and Innovation (R&I)** provides funding to organizations to explore and/or find better ways of delivering programming to help individuals find or return to work. The BC Centre for Employment Excellence (CfEE) was created as a special initiative and is largely funded under this stream. The CfEE is described in more details in the next section.

• **Project Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT)** provides funding to organizations to assist with local projects that provide a combination of on and/or off the job employment training to eligible participants to help them obtain sustainable employment.

Applications for funding can be submitted at any time throughout the year. Proposals are assessed by Ministry staff and must align with established criteria and program policies in order to be approved for funding. The duration of projects depends upon the requirements within each funding stream and specific project circumstances.

The Ministry is responsible for administering agreements and facilitating local partnerships to best support local labour markets. The Ministry has specific regional staff dedicated to managing and facilitating the activities of CEP. The project proponents are responsible for carrying out activities as agreed in the contract, managing, monitoring and reporting to the Ministry. ESCs are engaged in PBMLT and JCP activities and are responsible for planning and monitoring, building the network, regularly sharing the information with other stakeholders, working in partnership with other stakeholders to develop innovative labour market practices, and making appropriate client referrals.

The funding priorities for the Program change periodically based on the economic and labour market conditions in the province. CEP applications in the following areas are currently prioritized: Liquid Natural Gas; Persons with Disabilities, First Nations, Youth and Social Innovation. The entire CEP component of the EPBC is undergoing a LEAN review process. This will not impact the parameters of the funding streams but will create efficiencies in the application, assessment/review and contract management processes.

The table on the following page provides a brief summary of the CEP projects, application process and participation requirements under each stream as of October 31, 2015. Since the launch of the CEP in May 2012, 195 agreements have been funded for a total investment of $22,003,576 (of those, 140 JCPs, 26 LMPs, 16 PBLMTs and 13 R&I projects). A total of 908 unemployed clients have participated in CEP.
Table 6: Review of the CEP Projects by Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>JCP</th>
<th>LMP</th>
<th>R&amp;I</th>
<th>PBLMT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Work experience and skill enhancement for individuals and local projects to address community issues and needs</td>
<td>Addressing labour market issues (imbalance) and human resource planning activities</td>
<td>Research and innovation to strengthen the understanding of the labour market and move more clients into sustainable jobs</td>
<td>Project based labour market training for individuals who need a combination of on/off the job work experience; projects to address community issues and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects funded</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of clients served</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds committed</td>
<td>$7,462,800</td>
<td>$2,173,903</td>
<td>$7,447,618</td>
<td>$4,919,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Projects</td>
<td>Projects that have community benefits and provide work experience &amp; skill enhancement opportunities for clients</td>
<td>Projects related to labour market (LM) adjustment, LM and HR research &amp; pilots, LM awareness building, sharing of LM information, building HR capacity, and addressing needs of specialized groups</td>
<td>Research studies and pilot projects or a combination of both</td>
<td>Project implementation, group training and work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Requirements</td>
<td>Should include partnership with other organizations and contributors, and activities that are distinct, incremental, and have a defined start and end date Must be a quality work experience for the client</td>
<td>Must involve partnership arrangements and the research results are public</td>
<td>Should only address untested and untried solutions to specific labour market issues or problems</td>
<td>Should include local community representatives, employers, industry reps and service providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Maximum 52 weeks (usually 26 weeks)</td>
<td>Usually 6-12 months</td>
<td>Maximum 3 years</td>
<td>Maximum 52 weeks and minimum is 16 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility</td>
<td>Not-for-profits, municipal governments, band/tribal councils, public health and educational institutions (businesses under specific circumstances)</td>
<td>Businesses, not-for-profits, municipal governments, band/tribal councils, public health, and educational institutions</td>
<td>Not-for-profits, private sector organizations, and public sector organizations</td>
<td>Businesses, not-for-profits, municipal governments, band/tribal councils, public health and educational institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPBC Service Provider Involvement</td>
<td>Screening and referring clients Case management</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>Screening and referring clients Case management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**BC Centre for Employment Excellence**

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence (CfEE) was established in September 2012, with the objective of enhancing the knowledge and development needs of the employment services sector and the employer community in BC on issues related to employment programs and practices, in order to help improve employment outcomes for all unemployed job seekers in BC. The Centre’s mission is to provide a single coordination point for employment research and innovation, tools and training.
The CfEE is funded through the LMDA, mostly under the R&I stream of CEP, with a maximum budget of $2 million over three years. In addition, a $1.5 million research fund was set up for three years to support innovative approaches to the delivery of employment services. Research projects under this fund are determined by community consultations and stakeholder engagement.

The CfEE is based in Vancouver and is set up as a division of the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, an established national non-profit, non-partisan, social policy research organization. The CfEE has two core business functions: research and development, including highlighting existing best practices and conducting original research to test new and innovative employment approaches; and practice and knowledge enhancement, achieved through sharing of research and practice information, networking and other engagement activities. Resources offered by the Centre include a website, research and development program, a system by which to share best practices throughout the sector, and the BC Employment Program Hub, a tool which helps employment advisors to identify non-Employment Program of BC publicly-funded employment programs for clients.

3. **Technology@Work Program**

The Technology@Work Program was launched in May 2015 in support of a commitment from Accessibility 2024 to invest $3 million in annual funding for assistive technologies. The purpose of the program is to support employment for people with disabilities who require assistive technology.

Technology@Work is part of the overall Employment Program of BC, and is intended to complement disability employment services available through WorkBC Centres by providing streamlined access to assistive technology for clients that have imminent work (starting within the next 3 months) or that are actively working or volunteering.

Technology@Work has received positive feedback from its clients and the disability community that this program is fulfilling a need, including:

- Providing technology solutions to individuals with disabilities to improve success at work or in volunteering;
- Promoting workplace accessibility, including educating employers; and
- Gaining a reputation as the ‘go-to’ for disability navigation supports.

4. **Service Delivery Process**

British Columbians learn about the ESCs and the employment services through:

- **Informal referrals**: clients may learn about services through the WorkBC website, word of mouth, community agencies, employers, training institutions, other service providers and self-refer to the ESCs;
- **Formal referrals**: BCEA Employment Obligated (EO) clients are formally referred to an ESC by the Ministry. Only new BCEA EO clients are formally referred to the EPBC. Other BCEA clients are encouraged to visit ESC and use self-served services or seek other assistance;
- **Program outreach**: ESCs conduct marketing and promotional activities including employment fairs, public events, developing and distributing communication products such as news releases, posters, flyers, brochures, newspapers, and classified advertising, radio and/or television advertising, interviews and other activities. In addition, they are continuously increasing awareness of the Program through engagement of external stakeholders; and
- **Initiatives in collaboration with Service Canada**: Examples include Connecting Canadians with Available Jobs (CCAJ).
Clients can access services through ESC storefronts, satellite offices, outreach, mobile services and remote means of access. All clients seeking assistance from an ESC go through initial greeting and screening process. At this point, a preliminary needs assessment may be done to determine whether the client needs case management services. During this process, clients may be determined to have high employment readiness and are encouraged to use self-served services or they may be referred to a Formal Needs Assessment (FNA). BCEA EO clients are required by the Ministry to complete an FNA. Through an FNA and other client needs assessments, the employment readiness of clients is determined, eligibility is confirmed, and needs for specialized assessment and financial support are identified. An action plan is developed at this stage which identifies specific long or short term services a client may require to achieve employment.

Apprentices who have an existing employer/sponsor relationship in place access the Program online using the Portal Apprentice Supports Online. Non-case managed apprentices are provided financial support through the system and they do not have to attend EPBC services in-person. Apprentices who do not have existing employer/sponsor relations access the Program by applying to an ITA approved Training Provider where their employment needs are assessed through a FNA and case managers are assigned.

5. Client Eligibility for Specific Services and Financial Supports

A detailed matrix outlining eligibility criteria by client type and service as well as budget allocation rules guides the delivery of EPBC services and financial supports. In more general terms, to access EPBC services, British Columbians must meet the Program definition of unemployment and legally eligible to work in BC. While self-served services are available to all individuals, case managed services and Program financial supports are only available to clients who meet specific Program eligibility criteria based on whether or not they receive income benefits (EI, BCEA), employment readiness (assigned tier) and other individual needs. Although there are numerous exceptions to the general service eligibility rules, clients in Tiers 2, 3 and 4 are eligible for most case managed service subject to their needs and characteristics. In general terms, clients are eligible for services under the following circumstances:

- All clients are eligible for PNA service except for BCEA EO clients who are SDD referred and access FNA directly.
- All clients, except for those in Tier 1, are eligible for other assessments (Formal Needs Assessment/ Action Plan Development), ongoing Case Management, Personal Counselling for Employment Readiness, Interpretation Services, ESS/ STOC (clients in Tier 1 are eligible for ESS/STOC by exception only).
- All types of clients in Tier 3 and 4 are eligible for job development and customized employment services.
- Normally, only EI clients can participate in Wage Subsidy, JCP and PBLMT services. Non-EI eligible clients may participate in JCP and PBLMT projects when their participation does not prevent EI clients from participating and up to a maximum 50% of participation rate.
- EI clients, BCEA EO, BCEA PWD and BCEA PPMB as well as general clients with disability in tiers 2, 3 and 4 are eligible for Self-Employment Orientation Assessment/Self-Employment.

Except for non-case managed apprentices, clients can receive Program financial supports under particular services they undertake and only after their eligibility is determined and need is confirmed through the financial assessment process. Services and supports that are accessible to EI and BCEA clients are funded through both LMDA and provincial funding. LMDA funding is prioritized towards serving EI clients and provincial funding is prioritized towards serving BCEA clients and specialized populations.
F. REPORTED OUTCOMES

Ultimately, all clients participating in the Program have employment as a goal. Some clients may need to form community attachment before they can seek employment. Employment rate outcomes are recorded only for clients who are no longer receiving case management services (service plans are closed with or without outcomes). Service providers are required to follow-up with Tier 1 clients after 12 weeks, and Tier 2, 3, and 4 clients after 4, 12 and 24 weeks and update the outcomes recorded in the database, before closing a service plan.

A client who is no longer receiving case management services either may have completed their case management (i.e., all items in the client’s action plan are completed) or may not have completed their case management, for instance, if the client withdrew from the services or the ESC lost contact with the client before they completed their action plan. Only those clients who have completed case management, including follow up services, have outcomes recorded in the database. The recorded outcomes may include one of the following:

- An Employment outcome is recorded if employment is confirmed at 24 weeks (12 weeks for Tier 1 clients) or if a client has completed the steps in the action plan, has previously reported employment, and additional services are not required but the case manager is unable to get in contact with the client to confirm employment.
- Community Attachment represents volunteer positions obtained by clients and is normally included in an action plan as a step towards an employment outcome rather than an outcome in itself. Community attachment may be an acceptable outcome only when significant efforts to support the client in achieving labour market attachment have been unsuccessful or when a client is assessed as not yet ready for labour market attachment.
- An Incomplete outcome is recorded for clients who have completed an action plan but have not achieved an outcome at the time of service plan closure.

G. SERVICE DELIVERY

1. Service Locations and Regional Profiles

The EPBC is delivered through contracted service providers throughout British Columbia in 73 geographic areas referred to as catchment areas. Clients, employers and communities in each catchment area are served by one primary EPBC service provider, as well as a number of partners or sub-contracted service providers. The catchment areas were determined based on demand for the services, population of the region, and geographic location. The following principles were used as guidance when determining catchment areas:

- Equitable: provide equitable access to services by all British Columbians;
- Accessible: through a variety of channels by all British Columbians;
- Flexible and scalable: must accommodate changes in client demand; and
- Economical and sustainable: implemented within the budget defined for employment services and able to be maintained over the life of the contracts.

Program services are delivered through WorkBC Employment Services Centres (ESC) within each catchment area. Forty-seven service delivery contractors were selected through an RFP process in 2011 to deliver the services at 84 ESC Storefronts located across British Columbia.
For ease of reporting, the catchment areas are grouped into five operational regions. As illustrated in the following table, the Fraser Region includes 18 catchment areas and serves mostly urban communities with high populations; 34% of all clients are from Fraser Region. The Interior Region includes 20 catchment areas, has the highest number of contractors, serves mostly small and medium rural communities, and has delivered services to 22% of Program clients.

Table 7: Profile of the Five Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>CAs</th>
<th>Contractors</th>
<th>Community Size</th>
<th>Population 2011 census</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region 1: Vancouver Island</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1  7 4 0</td>
<td>748,545</td>
<td>44,344</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 2: Vancouver Coastal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0  3 0 8</td>
<td>1,018,420</td>
<td>33,587</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 3: Fraser Region</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2  2 4 10</td>
<td>1,581,451</td>
<td>71,336</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 4: Interior Region</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10 8 2 0</td>
<td>725,946</td>
<td>46,592</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 5: North Region</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8  3 1 0</td>
<td>241,455</td>
<td>15,967</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>73</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>21 23 11 18</td>
<td>4,315,817</td>
<td>211,826</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015.

2. **Service Delivery Channels**

All ESCs have at least one storefront location that is accessible to the public. Storefronts are the primary physical location that contractors use to offer clients the full suite of Program services. Contractors also provide alternative means to access the ESC for specialized populations as appropriate for that catchment area. This may include any combination of the following channels:

- **Satellite offices**: a physical office that is separate from the storefront and offers a sub-set of the services delivered in the storefront;
- **Itinerant (mobile) services**: delivery of Program services on a regularly scheduled basis at a community location with ease of access for clients, such as a community centre;
- **Outreach services**: bringing Program services to clients at a non-ESC location; and
- **Remote access services**: delivery of Program services remotely through online, telephone channels, or other means.

Specialized populations may access services through the storefront or alternative channels. Contractors provide alternative service delivery channels to meet the demand and the needs of the specialized populations in their catchment area.

3. **Service Delivery Payment Structure**

All service delivery partners signed an initial contract with a term of five years. The contract term has recently been extended for two additional years. The Program uses a mixed payment structure in funding the service delivery partners. The table on the following page briefly describes each payment method, payment rates, and the schedule of payments.
Table 8: Payment Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Control/Rates</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fixed operating fee (FOF)</td>
<td>To compensate for operating costs related to the ESC being open and available to serve a minimum volume of clients</td>
<td>Proponents propose annual FOF within pre-determined FOF maximum</td>
<td>Paid at start of each month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable service fee (VSF)</td>
<td>To compensate for case management and case managed services provided to clients by the contractor</td>
<td>Prescribed rates Maximum fees per client</td>
<td>Invoiced at end of month, payment within 30 days of invoice receipt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial supports and purchased services (FSPS)</td>
<td>To reimburse for financial supports provided to clients to support Program participation; and to reimburse for client services purchased from independent third parties or for some services, where provided by approved service providers</td>
<td>Maximum per client per support/service (for example, living allowance, tuition)</td>
<td>Advanced at start of month based on forecasts; reconciled at end of month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome fee</td>
<td>To pay contractors for clients that achieve sustainable employment</td>
<td>Set rates based on how quickly clients achieve labor market attachment</td>
<td>Paid monthly, 13 months after outcome achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Total</td>
<td>Annual Contract Maximum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contractors are funded through four payment methods:

- **Fixed Operating Fees** (FOF) include all fixed costs for operating the ESC, which are inclusive of all delivery channels: the storefront, satellite office(s), itinerant or outreach services, and remote access services as proposed by the contractor and outlined in the RFP. Fixed costs may include lease or rent, maintenance, utilities, management team, client service representatives, basic equipment, furniture, computers, WorkSafeBC coverage including for work experience clients, manuals and supplies. Fixed costs also include all general administration, management and client service costs that may not be directly linked to the volume of clients or services provided. The contractor’s cost of establishing, developing, enhancing, maintaining, and managing relationships and linkages with the community and local employers for the purpose of providing employment and labour market services are also included. The FOF is intended to remain constant over the duration of the contract.

- **Variable Service Fees** (VSF). The VSF compensates contractors for individualized case management and case managed services provided to clients. VSFs are based on the prescribed service rates and vary by client tier and service. For example, amounts may range from $70 for filing a non-case managed apprentice application to $1,700 for Customized Employment Development support to clients in Tier 4. The contractors submit invoices for VSF monthly, with payment received 30 days after invoice receipt.

- **Financial Supports and Purchased Services** (FSPS), which includes supports provided to clients to facilitate Program participation. The contractors are responsible for providing FSPS to and on behalf of clients, as needed, to support clients in achieving outcomes and to reimburse for client services purchased from independent third parties or for some services, where provided by approved service providers. Where services are provided internally by the Contractors, and a rate is prescribed, services may be invoiced under FSPS or VSF.
Outcome Fees. Outcome fees are paid to service delivery contractors when clients achieve sustainable employment. Outcome fees are based on the average length of time that clients in each client tier take to achieve a labour market attachment outcome. The amount paid depends on the number of clients who achieved outcomes per client tier and the average length of time it took clients from each client tier to achieve the outcome. Contractors are eligible to receive outcome fees for clients who: achieved a labour market attachment outcome; sustained the labour market attachment at the 24 week follow-up period, as confirmed by the contractor; and sustained the labour market attachment and independence from the Program for 52 weeks; and received no BCEA supports at any point in time over the 52 weeks following the labour market attachment. The outcome fees are paid monthly based on outcomes achieved during the previous month of the previous calendar year, for instance, during the period between 52 – 56 weeks in the past.

H. PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

As indicated in the table below, expenditures dedicated to the EPBC from 2012/13 to 2014/15, totalled $914.1 million with $839.6 million dedicated to programming and $74.5 million dedicated to Ministry administration of the Program.

Table 9: Total EPBC Annual Expenditures (Programming and Administrative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total EPBC Programming</td>
<td>$250,320,533</td>
<td>$291,855,698</td>
<td>$297,414,673</td>
<td>$839,590,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$27,985,608</td>
<td>$25,999,042</td>
<td>$20,553,421</td>
<td>$74,538,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Programming and Administration</strong></td>
<td><strong>$278,306,141</strong></td>
<td><strong>$317,854,740</strong></td>
<td><strong>$317,968,094</strong></td>
<td><strong>$914,128,975</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ELMSD Financial Data

Total EPBC Programming expenditures increased over time from $250.3 million in 2012/13 to $297.4 million in 2014/15. The majority of the programming expenditures (74%) consisted of payments to ESC contractors. A large proportion of the remaining programming expenditures were spent on other programming such as Community and Employer Partnership programming and transfers to the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, Skills and Trade to support labour market and skills training priorities.

The Ministry administrative expenditures dedicated to the Program declined from about $28.0 million in 2012/13 to $20.6 million in 2014/15. Salaries and benefits account for a majority of the Ministry’s administrative expenditures.

I. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The EPBC governance structure was designed to ensure responsible, accountable and effective management of the Program. The structure involves two levels of governance: corporate and individual contract. Accountable to both the Deputy Minister and Minister of SDSI, the Ministry Program Steering Committee is the primary governing body, and is responsible for the strategic direction and operational management of the EPBC. The Committee makes program decisions, including those related to policy, services, service delivery, service quality and marketing.
Other governance bodies at the corporate level and the contract level perform an advisory role. In making Program decisions, the Steering Committee is guided by advice and recommendations from the other governance bodies, the members of which represent the interests of the Program’s key participants – the Ministry, its contractors and the Program’s clients. In particular, the Corporate Program Advisory Committee serves as a forum for the representatives of the Ministry, the Program’s contractors and key ELMSD staff to meet and consult on strategic issues related to the Program. The Expert Advisory Panel on Specialized Populations consists of knowledgeable individuals from across the province who have experience and expertise in employing or delivering employment services to specialized populations.

At the individual contract level, governance activities are focused on providing oversight of the Program in each of the 73 individual catchment areas. In each catchment area, ELMSD’s Operations Branch has contract management authority and the oversight function is provided by a Contract Management Committee (CMC). Each Contract Management Committee is made up of at least one ELMSD Operations Branch representative and at least one contractor representative. The Committees meet monthly to share information, monitor contract results, resolve contract management issues, discuss emerging Program practices, and coordinate efforts in responding to local labour market issues and/or opportunities. The following table provides an overview of the EPBC governing bodies.

### Table 10: Overview of EPBC Governing Bodies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Corporate</th>
<th>Contract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPSC</td>
<td>CPAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program oversight &amp;</td>
<td>• Discuss strategic issues, best practices and improvements</td>
<td>• Support delivery at contract level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operational management</td>
<td>• Examine design issues and propose solutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify service needs of the SP and advise on improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authority</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making at</td>
<td>• Advisory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corporate level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program-wide decisions</td>
<td>• Strategic advice</td>
<td>• Each contract has its own committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program management</td>
<td>• Information and advice</td>
<td>• Individual contract management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy development</td>
<td>• Recommend best practices</td>
<td>• Can propose changes to contract directly to MPSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor Program implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor service to specialized populations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advice and recommendations to Ministry and to CPAC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Staff (Ministry executive and directors)</td>
<td>• Ministry Staff (Program Steering Committee)</td>
<td>• External experts on specialized populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contractors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Report to</strong></td>
<td>• Deputy Minister and Minister</td>
<td>• MPSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meets</strong></td>
<td>• Weekly</td>
<td>• 1 to 3 times a year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Both the Ministry and contractors have certain roles and responsibilities in ensuring quality service delivery to clients. The Ministry is responsible for three key processes related to EI client participation in EPBC services:

- **Verification of EI Client Status**, for specific services requiring EI client eligibility verification. The Ministry normally only provides verification of EI Status for services where confirmation of EI
client status is specifically required by Program policy. Clients are expected to provide proof of EI client status to enable the EPBC service provider to make an initial determination of EI client status, as explained in the self-serve services section of Program policy. Ministry EI verification must be completed when the client submits a formal application for these specific services.

- **EI Section 25 Referrals**, to authorize full-time participation by an active EI claimant in specific EPBC services. In doing so, the Ministry is temporarily waiving the client’s obligation to job search, which is a condition of receiving regular EI benefits, and allowing them to continue to collect EI while participating in that service. The Ministry is delegated this authority under the terms of the LMDA. A Section 25 application is submitted to the Ministry by an EPBC service provider after EI client eligibility has been verified by the Ministry. The application is made after the client’s needs have been assessed and the service has been approved by the EPBC service provider as necessary and appropriate to the client’s needs, and before the client begins the service.

- **Authorization to Quit Employment.** In rare and exceptional circumstances, clients may receive Ministry authorization to quit their jobs to participate in EPBC services.

The Ministry is also responsible for communicating with Service Canada on matters related to eligibility of EI clients participating in EPBC services, including:

- Verifying EI client eligibility for specific services where needed with Service Canada;
- Submitting EI Section 25 Referrals for active EI Claimants approved by the Ministry for participation in Program services while receiving EI Part I benefits;
- Liaising with Service Canada regarding eligibility issues that may be impeding an EI client’s access to service;
- Monitoring pending EI eligibility decisions and taking a proactive approach to resolving issues, particularly those that may impact groups of EI clients;
- Sharing needed information regarding EI client eligibility with EPBC service providers as quickly as possible;
- Submitting monthly reports on the EPBC clients; and
- Participating in the LMDA working group chaired by Service Canada.

Other responsibilities of the Ministry with regards to Program delivery include:

- Ensuring information about Ministry policy and supporting systems are up to date, available and in working order;
- Providing information regarding changes to policy, procedures, systems and eligibility in a timely manner;
- Utilizing an established coordinated framework of controls to provide assurance that the Program is meeting its objectives and individual EPBC service providers are meeting their contract performance requirements;
- Having Ministry contract managers in place for each EPBC service provider contract to provide advice, guidance and support in relation to policy, procedures and contract requirements; and
- Providing an effective governance process that supports sharing of information and best practices between EPBC service providers, the Ministry and stakeholders to resolve issues and to create innovative solutions to issues that arise.

The SDSI Service Delivery Division (SDD) is responsible for establishing eligibility of individuals applying for BCEA and ensuring BCEA recipients meet their obligations for continued eligibility under the BC Employment and Assistance Act and the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act. In relation to the EPBC, the SDD is responsible for:
• Establishing employment plans with BCEA clients with employment obligations, articulating their responsibilities for job search and employment Program participation requirements;

• Ensuring BCEA clients understand their responsibilities and obligations related to ongoing eligibility for BCEA, complying with the terms of their employment plans;

• Working collaboratively with EPBC service providers in their catchment area and Ministry ELMSD representatives to establish methods of scheduling referred employment obligated BCEA client appointments;

• Identifying BCEA clients for referral to the EPBC;

• Referring employment obligated BCEA clients to the storefront ESC in the catchment area where the client resides, for a formal needs assessment;

• Encouraging BCEA applicants and non-referred BCEA clients who have employment as a goal and are suitable for Program participation to access EPBC self-serve services;

• Providing new employment plans, that refer employment obligated BCEA clients to the EPBC, when an EPBC service provider has identified a non-referred employment obligated BCEA client as needing and wanting to participate in case management; and

• Communicating with the EPBC service provider as required, in accordance with defined communication protocols between the SDD and EPBC service providers to support BCEA client success.

EPBC service providers are responsible for creating and maintaining the conditions to deliver all EPBC client services and to support the principles and objectives of the EPBC. EPBC service providers must:

• Have the ability, expertise and capacity to provide the full range of Program services to eligible clients who require them;

• Provide a welcoming environment for all clients, providing services in a positive, professional manner that helps clients feel supported, motivated, valued and respected;

• Ensure all clients can access equitable levels of service;

• Identify when clients may need assistance, verify the need and proactively offer employment services and supports to clients who may need them;

• Ensure the use of a “client-centred service approach” which means Program services are focused on the employment-related needs of each individual client and provided based on each client’s unique employment service needs, employment readiness and eligibility;

• Identify alternative sources of support, wherever possible, if clients do not meet Program eligibility requirements or their needs cannot be addressed through Program services;

• Ensure the key Program principle of providing only the services necessary to support a client in obtaining sustainable labour market attachment as quickly as possible is adhered to, and that clients are provided needed support and services to facilitate their success;

• Establish the eligibility of clients and deliver services in accordance with any policy, procedures, practices and guidelines established by the Ministry;

• Document and record all required information in the ICM system;

• Bill the Ministry for only services that clients receive in accordance with established Ministry fees and rates;

• Work with the ELMSD to resolve any issues that may arise in delivering Program services and administering their contracts; and

• Work with the SDD to support the participation of BCEA Clients, using agreed to communication protocols.
J. PROGRAM MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. Overview

The Ministry has developed a coordinated framework of controls to provide assurance that the Program is meeting its objectives, and individual contractors are meeting their contract performance requirements. The framework consists of six inter-related control components to:

- Monitor the progress of the Program and assess the degree to which it is achieving its objectives;
- Ensure that Program investments are incurred, accounted for and reported in accordance with central agency and Ministry policy;
- Manage Program investments within approved budget allocations;
- Verify that Program services are delivered to eligible clients in accordance with contract requirements and Program policy; and
- Verify that contractors are compensated in accordance with contract requirements.

Both ELMSD branches (Program Management and Operations) have important roles in implementing the Framework and working with contractors to support effective service delivery. The Program Management Branch is responsible for designing and maintaining the Framework, including continuously assessing and updating Framework controls as needed. Annually, the Program Management Branch assesses and reports on the effectiveness of the Framework and its implementation.

Each of the Framework’s six control components uses specific activities to achieve its control function, summarized follows:

- Quality Assurance Program which involves a review of contractor service delivery activities and facilities to support contractors in meeting contract requirements, including:
  - Business Foundation Review: an annual review of contractor facilities and security, client service resources and client flow management, documentation practices and use of ICM;
  - Client Service Monitor: a regular (2-4 times a year) review of service delivery alignment with contract and policy and service to specialized populations;
  - Service Documentation Monitor: services billed for are documented (2-4 times per year);
  - CEP monitors: ongoing financial and activity monitors (ongoing); and
  - Client surveys: client comments on service delivery and the value of services.

- External Audits includes Office of the Auditor General (OAG) Audits (annual financial audits required under the terms of the LMDA) and external reviews of contractor operations in unusual cases to address specific performance concerns.

- Contract and System Controls include ongoing communication of Program delivery requirements to contractors, ICM controls (enforcing many client and service eligibility rules), enforcing of VSF service prices and contract maximums, and maintaining contract controls through contract templates.

- Financial Management Controls, include ongoing EPBC investment controls including policies that guide EPBC client service investments; policies and tools that guide CEP project investment decisions; invoice processing controls which include qualified receiver reviews of contractor invoices; monthly scrutiny of payments by expenditure authorities; monthly monitoring contract expenditures, expenditure forecasts and contract maximums; and Program
budget controls which involves ongoing monitoring and reporting on Program expenditures, forecasts and budgets.

- Program and Contract Performance Measurement and Reporting which includes ongoing reporting and analysis of Program performance measures and results to identify and report progress, trends, risks, opportunities; regular reporting and analysis of contract performance measures and other information to assess contract results; and data quality reviews to ensure accuracy.

- Program Evaluation which includes program evaluation to assess whether the Program is meeting objectives and expectations; LMDA evaluations and assessment required under the LMDA; and Functional Area Evaluation where ELMSD functional areas review their role and contributions to the Framework, and initiate adjustments where necessary.

2. **Key Performance Measures**

A system has been developed to measure and track EPBC performance using Key Performance Measures (KPMs) for case managed clients. According to the April 1, 2015 Performance Measures Summary, the main categories of KPMs include achieving labour market attachment outcomes, maintaining labour market attachment outcomes, alignment of labour market attachment outcomes with investment, timeliness of service, and service to specialized populations. Current KPM standards by category and client type are presented in the figure below.

![Figure 1: Key Performance Measures for Case Managed Clients](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Measures for Case Managed Clients</th>
<th>KPM Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achieving Labour Market Attachment Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Percentage of Clients who Achieve Labour Market Attachment</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) All Clients</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Specialized Population Clients</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintaining Labour Market Attachment Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Percentage of Clients who are employed at the requisite follow-up period(s) after achieving Labour Market Attachment</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) All Clients</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Specialized Population Clients</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alignment of Labour Market Attachment Outcomes with Investment</strong></td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Percentage of Clients who achieve Labour Market Attachment that is aligned with Training Services within 24 weeks of completing the Training Services</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Percentage of Clients who receive Self Employment Services who:</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) achieve Labour Market Attachment after participating in the Business Launch and Implementation phase</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) maintain independence from EPBC Services and Supports at the requisite follow-up periods after receiving Self Employment Labour Market Attachment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeliness of Service</strong></td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Percentage of BCEA Employment Obligated Clients referred for Case Management who have their initial appointment schedule within 10 Business Days of their Case Management Referral Date</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Percentage of Clients in Tier 2, 3, 4 who have an Action Plan developed within 20, 30, or 40 Business Days from the start of their Formal Needs Assessment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Percentage of Clients who receive their first Service or Financial Support not later than 10 business days after the completion of their assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service to Specialized Populations</strong></td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Percentage of Case Managed Clients who are members of a Specialized Population group</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EPBC Performance Measures Summary, April 1, 2015: Version 2.2
K. EPBC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The Program uses a number of information management systems for case management, reporting and financial management systems including:

- The ICM Corporate Data Warehouse (ICM CDW) is a warehouse reporting system based on the ICM application. CDW collects and stores data from ICM and transforms the data into fields and structures designed specifically for reporting. The ICM is used for all functions related to managing a case and a client for the Program and services offered. ICM is used by the case manager (or a designated person) at the service delivery location to monitor and track performance measures for the Program and services.
- The Contract and Financial Management System (CFMS) is used to manage contracts and invoicing. The system functionality includes establishing a contract, tracking modifications, ongoing monitoring and performance monitoring, closing and reporting. EPBC Contractors use the system to review and submit their invoices to the Ministry, and to review contract and financial summary information.
- The Client Portal was designed to expand service delivery options for clients and improve client access and improve efficiencies for clients and EPBC contractors in the areas of client intake and communication through a fully integrated system that connects users directly to their case and/or case manager in ICM. The Client Portal is voluntary so not all catchments are using the system.
- The BI Portal is an analytical reporting environment that provides ELMSD and contractors with the ability to report on data collected in the operational case management (ICM), financial (CFMS), and the Client Portal (MCP) applications. The BI Portal transforms the various source data into a consolidated and standardized set of categories and reportable values, providing a single source of data for all Ministry reporting. The BI Portal includes both pre-designed reports, as well as a set of tools to allow users to design their own reporting products. The access was open to contractors in April 2014.

The Ministry uses the Corporate Accounting System (CAS) for corporate financial management. The system is designed to manage payables and expenditures, receivables and recoveries, reconciliation with the Corporate Accounting System (CAS), vendor management and reporting.

L. EPBC LOGIC MODEL

The logic model, presented in the figure on the following page, illustrates the key elements of the Program in a logical sequence, outlining the intended causal relationships between the key activities, outputs and expected immediate, intermediate and long-term program outcomes.
Figure 2: EPBC Logic Model

Program Development and Management
(The Ministry)

- Develop and update policies, regulations/procedures
- Data systems and information management
- Provide training, advice, guidance and support to contractors
- Verify eligibility and conducting EI section 25 referrals

Service Delivery
(ESCs)

- Conduct assessment, eligibility and referrals
- Develop action plan
- Case management
- Job placement
- Client referrals for JCP/PBLMT
- Deliver employment service
- Clients support and monitoring

Partnership and Collaboration
(Program Partners)

- Networking, marketing and outreach
- Update LMI

Engage and provide input and advice

Activities

- Policies, regulations, frameworks and procedures
- Program tracking and monitoring reports
- Extranet
- Program systems training materials & events

Outputs

- Improved structure, tools and processes
- More effective Program delivery
- Service providers are supported in Program delivery

Immediate Outcomes

- Increased access, consistency and flexibility of services
- Improved alignment of services with labour market demand

Intermediate Outcomes

- Improved understanding of client needs and barriers
- Increased Community Attachment
- Increased Employment Readiness (e.g. increased life and employment skills)
- Increased number of clients with relevant work experience
- Clients are more self-reliant

Long Term Outcomes

- Client skills are better aligned with LM opportunities
- Clients achieve and maintain employment or self-employment quickly
- Employers have greater access to needed workers

Sustainable Employment and Independence of British Columbians
IV. PROGRAM RELEVANCE

This chapter presents the major evaluation findings with respect to the relevance of the Program. This includes an assessment of the extent to which the EPBC addresses a demonstrable need, is responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians, reaches its key target groups, and is aligned with labour market demands and the needs of employers.

A. NEED FOR THE PROGRAM

Does the Program address a demonstrable need?

There is a continuing need for EPBC programs and services. BC’s unemployment rate has remained steady at 6% to 7% since the Program’s launch. Services are needed to assist specialized populations to overcome barriers to employment, and to help unemployed individuals to overcome difficulties matching their skills, experience, education and training with available opportunities.

BC’s unemployment rate has remained consistent between 6% and 7% since the launch of the Employment Program of BC in April 2012. Individual regions such as the Kootenay, North Coast and Nechako and Thompson Okanagan face higher unemployment rates than other regions and the provincial average, as shown in the figure below.

![Figure 3: BC Unemployment Rate over Time by Development Region](image)

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 282-0123 Labour Force Survey Estimates (annual)

There is a need to help unemployed individuals match their skills, experience, educational attainment and training with available job opportunities. Unemployed EPBC clients surveyed frequently attributed their unemployment to a lack of jobs in their field or commensurate with their experience, insufficient education or training for available jobs and inadequate work experience. Focus group and case study participants similarly reported challenges with inadequate training or skills, difficulties matching available opportunities with their skills and/or expectations, and increased competition for jobs, at least partly attributable to the increased percentage of older workers performing jobs that would previously have been filled by youth, and a surplus of labour resulting from layoffs.
The findings of the literature review, case studies, focus groups and client survey also indicate there is a significant need for services to assist specialized population groups to overcome barriers to employment. Personal, health and disability issues were the most frequently identified reasons for unemployment among surveyed clients. Focus group and case study participants also identified barriers to employment associated with personal issues such as low self-esteem and addictions, physical barriers such as disabilities, injuries, and age, and the rural and remote nature of their communities. The following paragraphs provide a more detailed description of the employment barriers facing specialized population groups identified during the evaluation:

- **Rural and remote populations.** According to the literature, rural and remote regions face barriers such as fewer employment opportunities, insufficient transportation, and a lack of employment resources, education and training. In some regions, these challenges are exacerbated by the high cost of living, scarce housing availability and high rates of social issues such as addictions, suicide and teen pregnancy, which also contribute to high unemployment and under-utilization. Case study findings indicate that changes in the economic base of an area result in skills gaps in some rural and remote communities. For example some communities have experienced a simultaneous decline in employment in the forestry and oil and gas sectors, and increased demand in health services due to the aging of the population.

- **Aboriginal people.** Aboriginal people experience lower labour force participation and employment rates, and greater under-employment as compared to non-Aboriginals. For example, in 2014, BC’s Aboriginal population’s unemployment rate was 13% (vs. 6% for all of BC), the participation rate was 67%, and the employment rate was 58%. Employment barriers identified in the literature include cultural stereotyping or racism, alienation and discomfort in the traditional workplace, lower educational attainment, a lack of work experience, training and life skills, lower proficiency in one of Canada’s official languages, increased rates of lone parenthood, greater geographic mobility, and health issues. Some Aboriginal people may also have difficulty relating previous work experience on reserve or Métis settlements to non-Aboriginal employers. During the case studies, some on-reserve First Nations clients also identified restrictions with respect to BCEA and EI supports, and other social services and supports as barriers to employment.

- **Persons with disabilities (PWD).** In 2011, the employment rate of Canadians aged 25 to 64 with disabilities was 49%, compared with 79% for Canadians without a disability. The more severe the disability, the lower the employment rate. The population affected is sizeable; in 2012, 14% of Canadians aged 15 years and older reported having some type of disability. Employment barriers identified in the literature relate primarily to a lack of knowledge, understanding and uncertainty as to what to expect when hiring a PWD, which results in an unwillingness to hire PWD and make accommodations. For example, employers wrongly assume that PWD will take longer or require more training to be productive, utilize more benefits, require more sick leave and time off, and that accommodations will be costly.

- **Immigrants.** As of November 2015, the unemployment rate of immigrants aged 15 and older who landed in BC 5 or less years earlier was 11% compared to 6% for the total population. Employment outcomes and barriers are likely to vary among different categories of immigrants, such as refugees, family class immigrants and economic class immigrants. However, general barriers include environmental challenges, such as a lack of support services and access to educational programs and training; systemic challenges, such as culturally-biased employment counselling, non-recognition of credentials, low-pay, low-skill jobs for immigrants and a lack of promotions or opportunities to build seniority; stereotypes and racial discrimination; and personal challenges, including a lack of education or Canadian work experience, no connections or networks in their field, a lack of proficiency in one of the two national languages and low self-confidence.
• **Youth.** As youth are pursuing higher educational attainment than past generations and delaying their entry to the labour market, their labour force participation is lower than the general population.\(^{21}\) The unemployment rate of Canadian youth who do participate typically tracks that of the general population, only it is consistently higher. For example, in 2012, the unemployment rate of youth ages 15 to 24 was 14% vs. the national average of 7%.\(^{22,23}\) Underutilization is also a challenge; youth who are employed are more likely to work part-time positions, temporary work and low-skilled, low paying jobs than other age cohorts. Commonly identified barriers include a lack of skills and work experience;\(^{24}\) limited employment opportunities resulting from significant competition and delayed retirement of older workers; the rise of temporary and part-time employment; and discrimination based on the perceived cost of training, risk of turnover, and an unwillingness or capacity to invest in training and supervision.\(^{25}\)

• **Survivors of violence or abuse.** According to the literature, survivors of abuse, violence and former sex-trade workers may require counselling or more specialized support services in order to overcome barriers to employment resulting from their experiences. Barriers include low self-esteem; little or no work history, particularly if their partner controlled their employment and income; challenges finding references if they were forced to leave their past employer on short notice when fleeing their abuser; a lack of Canadian work experience among newcomers who experience violence or abuse; and scheduling challenges for victims who may need to testify in court, attend hearings or meet with counsellors and lawyers.\(^{26}\)

• **Francophones.** Francophone individuals face distinct barriers which may prevent them from successfully obtaining sustainable employment. Francophones represented 1.3% of BC’s population in 2011.\(^{27}\) While overall unemployment rates for Francophones are similar to the general population,\(^{28}\) Francophone individuals with limited English language skills tend to experience higher barriers to employment. According to the literature, Francophones located in Western Canada communities may experience challenges accessing French-language services such as social, housing, legal, and health-related services.\(^{29}\) About one third of Francophones in BC are immigrants\(^{30}\) and face various environmental, systemic, and personal barriers to employment, as described earlier.

According to the BC 2024 Labour Market Outlook, new entrants, migrants and individuals changing occupations or returning to the labour force represent a vital component of a balanced labour supply. There will be a continued need for EPBC programs and services to mitigate potential skills gaps and labour shortages by assisting these and other groups to overcome barriers to employment and align their skills, training and experience with available opportunities.

The BC 2024 Labour Market Outlook reveals that labour supply and demand are both expected to grow at approximately 1.2% per year over the next ten years, resulting in a balanced labour market (see the figure on the following page).\(^{31}\) A total of 935,000 total job openings are expected, of which 640,000 (68%) will be the result of replacement demand, and 295,000 (32%) will be due to economic growth.\(^{32}\)
New labour market entrants (those seeking work for the first time) and migrants (people relocating to BC from the rest of Canada and other countries) represent important components of the labour supply. Over the ten year period, new entrants are expected to account for 45% of the new supply, while migrants are expected to account for 34%. The balance will be filled by people changing occupations or returning to the labour force after a period of absence, as shown in the figure below.

Given the identified barriers to employment for recent immigrants, youth and other groups, there will be a need for EPBC programs and services to help ensure these groups are able to overcome barriers and challenges that contribute to under-utilization, lower employment and lower labour force participation.
The need for EPBC programs and services to help unemployed job seekers align their skills, training and experience with available opportunities is also likely to increase, as future job openings will require increasingly higher levels of educational attainment and/or specialized training. As shown in the above figure, more than three-quarters of job openings projected to 2024 will require some post-secondary education. The largest share (42%) will likely be in occupations requiring college education or apprenticeship training. The second largest share will be in occupations that require a university degree and/or significant work experience, including management positions.

Evidence from the key informant interviews, the EPBC awareness survey and the survey of participating employers demonstrate that it is somewhat difficult for employers to find qualified candidates to fill job openings in their organizations (average ratings of 3.4, 3.5 and 3.0 out of 5, respectively, where 1 is not at all difficult, 3 is somewhat difficult, and 5 is very difficult). Employers from all three lines of evidence most commonly identified skilled trades, management and supervisory positions, skilled labourer positions, and technical positions such as IT, software developers and engineers as being most difficult to fill. Employers most frequently attributed these challenges to difficulties finding people with appropriate experience and competition for workers from other industries or regions. Some noted that difficulty in filling positions varies according to the type of position, location, length of employment term, requirement of multiple skills, and working conditions.

The EPBC is well aligned with provincial and federal government priorities to reduce barriers and secure employment for all, ensure access to education and skills training, and support a diverse and strong economy.

Evidence from the literature review, program documents and interviews with Ministry staff and other provincial and federal representatives demonstrate that the objectives of the Employment Program of BC are well aligned with:

- Provincial government priorities to reduce barriers to employment and encourage employment for all British Columbians, support, strengthen and diversify the provincial economy, and improve access to education and skills training. For example, Accessibility 2024 is a 10-year action plan to make BC the most accessible province in Canada for people living with disabilities. The BC Jobs Plan and BC’s Skills for Jobs Blueprint also outline the provincial government’s objectives with respect to strengthening the economy and ensuring that British Columbians have the skills required to meet industry needs. Similar themes were echoed...
in the 2015 BC Government Speech from the Throne: “…ensure British Columbians have the opportunities to benefit from economic growth. That begins with skills training and education.”

- Federal priorities to encourage employment for all Canadians, reform and strengthen the EI system, increase access to training and education, and increase employment for specialized populations including youth and Aboriginal people, and new immigrants. For example, the federal government highlighted in its 2015 Speech from the Throne: “First and foremost, the Government believes that all Canadians should have a real and fair chance to succeed.” In the mandate letter to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, the federal government indicates that the “overarching goal will be to help Canadians get the skills they need for good quality jobs” and emphasized the need to better involve immigrants and younger workers in the EI system, and increase post-secondary support for Aboriginal people.

Program documents demonstrate that the EPBC offers programs and supports tailored to nine specialized populations facing barriers to employment; provides labour market services for job seekers and employers ranging from updated labour market information to the development of industry-focused training programs; and provides education and training services to eligible clients, including underrepresented groups such as First Nations and youth.

Ministry representatives and other provincial government representatives rated the EPBC as being well aligned with provincial priorities (average ratings of 3.9 and 4.2 out of 5, respectively). Ministry representatives also rated the EPBC as well aligned with federal priorities (an average of 3.7 out of 5).

The activities and objectives of the EPBC generally complement other similar programs and services offered in BC since the other programs target specific client groups and offer complementary supports.

Evidence from the literature review, key informant interviews and EPBC awareness survey reveal a number of programs offered in BC that share similar clients, such as PWD, youth and immigrants, and provide similar or related services, such as employment and training supports. According to the literature, BC has one of the most complex systems of active labour market programs and support measures in Canada funded by multiple levels of governments. It includes programs funded and administered directly by the federal government, programs jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments but administrated by the province either through SDSI or the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training (JTST), and additional provincially-funded employment programming. Examples of other federally funded programs include the Youth Employment Strategy, the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities, and the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy. According to the Environmental Scan of Employment Programs in BC (2013) by the BC Centre for Employment Excellence, despite the devolution and integration of programs into EPBC, 54 employment programs remained available for unemployed individuals in BC.

Key informants and stakeholders who participated in the EPBC awareness survey report that the objectives of the EPBC are somewhat aligned with other programs (averages of 3.3 and 2.9 out of 5, respectively). While most key informant groups believe the EPBC is complementary towards these other programs and services, only about half of ESC case managers and other stakeholders agreed. Representatives most frequently noted that similar programs are

“We try to have regular meetings with the different organizations involved in employment outreach and supports to make sure we are not overlapping.”
- Stakeholder

3 Specialized populations identified by the EPBC include Aboriginal, Francophone, immigrants, multi-barrired, older workers, persons with disabilities, rural and remote communities, women and youth.
coordinated at senior Ministry and service delivery levels, which helps avoid duplication and overlap, and the EPBC has a broader focus than more targeted programs and services, which offer complementary funding. For example, the Canada-BC Job Fund provides targeted skills training funding for select non-EI client groups and industries.\(^43\) Program documents indicate that access to EPBC services is determined by an eligibility matrix which helps to reduce duplication by directing ineligible clients to alternative employment programs.\(^44\) Stakeholders stated that WorkBC and the EPBC complement similar programs by providing services to mainstream clients and making referrals to other programs serving specialized clients or populations. Some stakeholders indicated there is overlap in terms of general employment services offered and that the level of overlap varies by community and service provider.

Findings from the EPBC client survey demonstrate there is coordination and complementarity among the programs and services. One-quarter of clients surveyed had been referred by another program or service provider. On average, referred clients reported that the EPBC services were useful (average rating of 3.8 out of 5) and were more likely to complete action plans than non-referred clients.

**The structure and activities of the EPBC are somewhat aligned with clients’ needs. Stakeholders perceive that gaps exist in services for specialized populations with higher needs, and access to training and work experience for some types of clients.**

The findings of the client survey indicate there is a gap in the provision of training and work experience programs. Whereas approximately two thirds of EPBC clients surveyed had participated in job search workshops (65%) and visited the ESC to get help looking for a job on their own (63%), only one-third had participated in longer-term interventions such as self-employment, training, and work experience programs. Less than one-quarter of unemployed clients surveyed who did not have the education or training needed for available jobs (23% or 85) participated in a short-term training program, such as essential skills, basic computer training and short term certification, and 7% (25) participated in a long-term training program, such as a college or university program. Similarly, among unemployed clients who lacked the necessary work experience, only 9% (25) participated in a paid or unpaid job placement program and 7% (18) participated in a volunteer work experience program.

Key informants and stakeholders who participated in the EPBC awareness survey perceived the structure and activities of the EPBC to be somewhat aligned with the employment barriers faced by clients (average ratings of 3.3 and 2.9 out of 5, respectively). Key informants reported gaps in eligibility for EPBC services and restrictions due to some program rules. Some examples include that general and BCEA clients have limited eligibility to access training or wage subsidy programming and that there are the limits on the number of times contractors can receive fees for particular services. Key informants also reported varying access, quality, coordination and consistency of services across EPBC contractors. Some key informants also identified gaps and shortfalls in the amount of funding available to clients for a number of financial supports including the living away from home allowance, transportation, clothing and personal hygiene, food and dependent care, essential skills and pre-employment training.

Some key informants indicated there is inadequate support for specialized populations including PWD, multi-barri ered, rural and remote, and youth clients. Contractors, ESC case managers and staff and sub-contractors reported that the financial model does not allow for the provision of the intensive, longer-term, peer-based support due to the front-loaded payment system, the limits on times they can meet with clients, and increased time spent on administration. The one-stop-shop model where specialized population groups receive services alongside the general population was reported by some key informants to make clients uncomfortable and less likely to access services.

This perception was shared by surveyed stakeholders, who perceived the EPBC as not well-aligned with the barriers faced by unemployed clients belonging to a specialized population. One-third of
stakeholders suggested persons with disabilities require services that differentiate between the needs of individuals with mental and physical disabilities; are flexible in adapting to episodic and chronic conditions such as MS; include one-on-one services and sufficient time to accommodate those with mental health issues; and involve accessible equipment and facilities. Several indicated the EPBC should better address the needs of qualified or professional immigrants, and tailor services to immigrants’ needs. Lastly, some reported the EPBC could better serve multi-barriered clients by ensuring front-line workers have the training and experience needed to work with this population, offering more life skills training programs, better coordination with other services and supports such as affordable housing, and more personalized or one-on-one services.

Summary of Key Findings

Does the Program address a demonstrable need?

The Program addresses a demonstrable need due to persistent unemployment rates and barriers to unemployment faced by specialized population groups and a projected labour market demand for a skilled and experienced workforce. The Program aligns well with government priorities and generally complements other similar programs. Several stakeholders perceive that some gaps exist in services for specialized populations with higher needs, in particular, persons with disabilities (PWD), multi-barriered, immigrant, rural and remote, and youth clients, and in training and work experience services for BCEA and general clients.

B. RESPONSIVENESS TO TARGET GROUP NEEDS

Is the Program responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians?

The following paragraphs summarize key findings with respect to whether the EPBC is responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians, including the effectiveness of the EPBC’s case management approach in determining the needs of clients, developing appropriate action plans, and linking clients with relevant services and supports.

1. Effectiveness of Case Management Approach in Determining the Needs of Clients

Determining client needs is one of the key strengths of the EPBC’s case management approach. Effective tools have been developed to assess the needs of clients and specialized groups.

Key informants and client focus group participants perceive that the case management approach is fairly effective in determining needs (average rating of 3.6 out of 5). Several contractors noted that the assessment of client needs is one of the key strengths of the EPBC because good tools are available to assess the needs of clients. A few key informants stated that the assessment of needs across specialized groups has improved significantly since the launch of the EPBC.

Several client focus group participants noted they had accessed case management services at some point and most found it useful in addressing their needs. Participants explained that the case
manager helped them with their resume and cover letter, referred them to counselling, helped them to build their confidence and take action, and helped them to access supports, such as gas money and wage subsidy supports. As an illustration, one client who was a mature worker with limited computer skills received help learning what words to use in their resume to attract recruitment firms.

A few challenges were identified with respect to case management and needs assessment. The following reasons were most frequently identified by key informants and client focus group participants who perceived that the case management approach was less effective or useful:

- **It takes time to determine needs.** Some key informants stated case managers are expected to determine client needs and develop action plans quickly in order to generate a billing point. However, it can take time to build trust and for clients to reveal barriers.
- **Variation in the approach and quality of the needs assessments.** Some key informants and clients stated that there is no standardization in the approach to needs assessments and that the quality of the needs assessment depends on the case managers’ experience and expertise, which are not consistent across or within contractor organizations.
- **Administrative and financial requirements detract from client needs.** See the discussion on Program design and structure on pages 87 – 90 for more details.

### 2. Effectiveness of Case Management Approach in Developing Appropriate Action Plans

Most clients complete their action plan and most perceive that the plans are useful. The action plans tend to be most useful among clients with low to moderate employment readiness (Tier 2 and Tier 3).

According to an analysis of ICM data as of September 30, 2015, an average of 58% of EPBC case managed clients completed all the services in their action plan. Most clients (59%) surveyed perceived that their action plan was useful or very useful (average rating of 3.8 out of 5). Usefulness ratings were higher for different types of clients:

- Clients that completed their action plan (4.0) compared to clients that partially completed (3.6), and those who did not begin (2.3) their action plan;
- Tier 2 and 3 (3.8) compared to Tier 4 (3.6) and 1 (3.3) clients;
- EI and BCEA (3.8) compared to general (3.7) clients; and
- Aboriginal (4.0), rural (3.9), survivors of violence (3.9), immigrant (3.8), and youth (3.8) clients compared to multi-barriered (3.7), Francophone (3.7) and PWD (3.7) clients.

Key informants also indicated that the EPBC’s case management approach is fairly effective in developing appropriate action plans (average rating of 3.5 out of 5). The most frequent response of key informants who provided a higher effectiveness rating with regard to the development of action plans is that the action plans are effective tools since they allow clients to work on more than one intervention at the same time.

Some clients and key informants provided a few reasons why the action plans are less useful. The most frequently noted reasons include:

- **The plan was not tailored to the specific needs of clients and action plan templates are not user-friendly.** A few key informants stated that the action plan is designed more for EPBC data tracking rather than as a useful tool for clients.

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4 The completion rate is defined as the number of outcomes (including employment, community attachment and incomplete) as a percentage of the case managed population that are no longer actively receiving case management services.
• Clients lacked guidance and support or had negative issues with the case manager themselves and there is variation in the approach and quality of the action plans. Some key informants stated that the quality of the action plans varies depending on the experience and expertise of the case manager.

• Clients had difficulty meeting or did not meet the eligibility requirements. Some key informants stated that clients are only able to access services for which they are eligible, and these may not be the services they need.

• The plan did not lead to meaningful employment for the clients.

The most common reasons why clients do not complete their action plan are that they found employment, they are dealing with a personal or health-related issue, and that the services were not useful to them.

According to the client survey, key informant interviews, case studies and focus groups, the most frequently mentioned reasons why clients do not complete their action plan include:

• The client found employment. The client may drop-out if they secure employment and not inform the ESC. The client may need to obtain temporary employment for financial reasons.

• The client is dealing with a personal or health-related issue. The client may not complete the plan due to mental health issues, illness, addiction, homelessness, poverty, or other life crises.

• The services were not useful to them or they lost interest or motivation in the process. Clients may lose interest due to the process required to access supports. For instance, some clients are fearful of providing information to government and are reluctant to complete long application forms if they lack basic literacy skills. Some clients do not find the service useful if they are not eligible for the service they need. In some cases, clients access services only because they are required.

• Clients need additional financial support to be able to participate in the services.

• Contractors lose contact with the client. The client may move, not return phone calls, or might not have a phone or address.

3. Effectiveness of Case Management Approach in Linking Clients with Relevant Services and Supports

Most key informants agreed that the EPBC’s case management approach is fairly effective in linking clients with relevant services and supports. Some key informants identified gaps with respect to the ability to link some services and some client groups.

On average, key informants perceived that the Program’s case management approach is fairly effective in linking clients with relevant services and supports (average rating of 3.5 out of 5).

Among the key informants that provided a lower rating, the most frequently mentioned reasons included:

• There are challenges in linking services to particular client groups such as clients in rural and remote areas, general and BCEA clients that are not eligible for some services, multi-barriered clients and PWD clients. Some reasons include long wait times and limited access to specialized services in rural areas, limited capacity to support the needs of clients that require ongoing and continued support, and a lack of a strong referral system with major PWD and mental health organizations.

• There are difficulties in linking clients to particular services such as training, financial supports and wage subsidy programming. For example, the tuition cap of $7,500 limits the type of training that can be pursued. It was also noted that there is too much paper work to access...
some financial supports and insufficient financial support for transportation in rural communities.

- **The ability to link clients to services varies by contractor and case manager** since some are less experienced with some services and types of clients.
- **The financial compensation model causes contractors to focus too much on their own financial sustainability instead of linking clients with needed supports.** See the discussion on Program design and structure on pages 87 – 90 and 92 – 96 for more details.

The services appear to be well-tailored to client needs. However, the overall up-take of some longer-term services is low, in part, due to eligibility constraints.

According to an analysis of ICM data as of September 30, 2015, the relative intensity of service offerings appears to align with client needs for different client groups. Clients that faced higher barriers to employment (Tier 3 and 4, multi-barriered, PWD, survivors of violence) were more likely to receive financial supports for job search or start, training in basic and essential skills, and external referrals to other programs and agencies. For instance, 9% of Tier 4 clients were referred to an external agency compared to 3% of Tier 2 clients. Also, moderate employment readiness clients were more likely to be referred to long-term training than other client groups. Tier 2 clients represented 61% of all clients accessing long-term training.

However, the overall up-take of some longer-term services is low. Among the 211,826 clients accessing services between April 2012 and September 30, 2015, 58% participated in workshops, while only a small proportion accessed other types of services and supports such as short-term training (8%), long-term training (4%), and wage subsidy supports (1%), as shown in the table below.

### Table 11: Clients Who Have Completed an EPBC Service, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>% of Clients</th>
<th># of Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any Service</td>
<td>Any EPBC Service</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>211,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESS</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>122,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Short Term Orientation and Certificate Training</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills Training</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment</td>
<td>Self-Employment Orientation</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Employment Business Plan and Implementation</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Placement</td>
<td>Job Development</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wage Subsidy</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customized Employment</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unpaid Work Experience</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job Creation Partnership (JCP)</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT)</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients).

Eligibility tends to dictate the types of clients (EI, BCEA, general) that access services:

- EI clients were more likely than BCEA and general clients to access long-term skills training (80% of all clients accessing the service), self-employment (87%), wage subsidy supports (89%), Job Creation Partnerships (82%), and Project Based Labour Market Training (85%).
- Very few general clients accessed job placement and long-term training, particularly with respect to long-term skills training (3% of all clients accessing the service), wage subsidy (0%), unpaid work experience (1%), Job Creation Partnerships (1%), and Project Based Labour Market Training (0%).
- BCEA clients were more likely than EI and general clients to access customized employment (77%) and unpaid work experience (93%). BCEA and general clients were more likely to access job development (47% and 29% of all clients accessing the service, respectively).
- A relatively even distribution of EI, BCEA and general clients accessed workshops and short-term orientation and certificate training.
Summary of Key Findings

Is the Program responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians?

The EPBC is responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians, particularly in determining client needs and developing action plans, which link clients to relevant services and supports. There are some challenges linking some services (job placement and training) and clients (BCEA, general, rural, multi-barriered, and PWD).

C. PROGRAM REACH

In what manner and to what extent has the Program reached its key target groups?

The following paragraphs summarize the evaluation findings regarding the manner and extent to which the EPBC has reached its key target groups, particularly with respect to clients, employers, referral sources, and other partners.

1. Promotional, Marketing, and Outreach Activities

ESCs have developed a variety of innovative promotional, marketing, outreach and engagement strategies and activities to increase awareness of the EPBC services among target groups such as staff positions dedicated to marketing and community engagement and multi-catchment joint marketing activities.

Though marketing and promotion of the EPBC is shared between the Ministry and ESCs, ESCs play a key role in raising awareness and engaging stakeholders at the local community level. ESCs are contractually obligated to market EPBC services within their own community to build employer connections and report on their marketing activities in their ESC Community and Employer Partnership Plan. ESCs have developed a number of mechanisms to market the EPBC services such as targeted and engaging print and online materials, staff positions and activities dedicated to engagement, and multi-catchment joint marketing activities. Examples of frequently used ESC marketing and engagement activities identified in the document review, case studies, key informant interviews, and focus groups are described in the table below.

Table 12: Examples of Promotional, Marketing, Outreach and Engagement Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing Activity</th>
<th>Description and Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Materials</td>
<td>Materials such as newspaper, radio and video advertisements, articles, posters, and brochures with information about the services, which are engaging and attention-grabbing:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>One-page handouts which describe the main service areas</strong> such as self-serve, assessment and planning, and access programs, and provide details on the specialized populations that they serve including persons with disabilities, survivors of violence, and new immigrants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Leaflets which focus on marketing specific programs</strong>, which helps to entice clients to visit the ESC and learn more, for instance: “funding for up to $7,500 in tuition costs” and “taxis to get to work.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Handouts targeted towards employers</strong>, focused on the services the ESC can offer them, for example, a dedicated recruitment specialist, pre-screened qualified applicants, free job posting, and information and education about how to support diversity in the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Brochures in different languages</strong> such as English, French, Cantonese, Punjabi, Tagalog, German, Korean, Hungarian, Spanish, Russian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Animated commercials about WorkBC</strong> services and special programs which air at local movie theatres and on social media websites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Materials with testimonials and success stories</strong> from employers that have used the services, such as: “We recently hired 250 staff for our distribution centre and the staff at WorkBC Employment Centres were a great help in making that happen.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The leading sources of awareness of the EPBC include word of mouth, face-to-face meetings between ESCs and employers and community partners, and the WorkBC website.

The leading sources of awareness among different groups engaged during the evaluation are as follows:

- **Clients most frequently learned about WorkBC or the EPBC through word-of-mouth.** Clients most commonly reported that they became aware of the EPBC through word-of-mouth (about one third of clients surveyed and half of client focus group participants), walking by the WorkBC storefront, online through the WorkBC website, and referrals from Service Canada, the Ministry, or a community organization.

- **Stakeholders and employers became aware of the WorkBC or EPBC services through their participation in service provider, industry, or community networks.** Stakeholders and employers that participated in the EPBC awareness survey most frequently became aware of the WorkBC or EPBC services through their participation in service provider, industry or community networks (about half of respondents), the WorkBC website, and through word-of-mouth. Employers were more likely to state that the WorkBC centre approached them to make them aware of the services, while stakeholders were more likely to indicate they approached the WorkBC centre. Several stakeholders and employers explained that face-to-face meetings, and information and networking sessions are the most effective marketing and engagement activities.

- **Most key informants similarly indicated that word of mouth, the WorkBC website and social media** are leading sources of awareness. Several respondents stated that the presence and
reputation of contractors within their community goes a long way to raise awareness and build trust among community stakeholders.

The EPBC has been somewhat successful in making information available and easily accessible. A few challenges were identified with respect to the use of the WorkBC website, lack of details about the services, and complexity of the service offerings.

On average, key informants perceived that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in making information related to the Program available and easily accessible by clients (average rating of 3.4 out of 5). Stakeholders and employers who participated in the EPBC awareness survey provided slightly lower average ratings (2.8 and 3.0, respectively). Survey respondents in the Interior region provided a relatively higher average rating (4.0), while respondents in the Vancouver Coastal region provided a lower average rating (2.5). There was not much difference across stakeholders serving different client groups.

The most frequent reasons provided by representatives during interviews and case studies why the Program has been less successful in making information available and easily accessible are as follows:

- **There have been challenges with the WorkBC website.** Several key informants noted that there are challenges with the WorkBC website, particularly with respect to navigating content, using maps, and posting jobs. It was noted that the website is challenging particularly for clients with low computer literacy skills and language barriers. While JTST is the lead Ministry responsible for the WorkBC website, SDSI provides LMDA funding to support the administration of the site and provides input related to content. In January 2016, the WorkBC website underwent a major redesign to improve the navigation, access to content, browsing and search functions, among other changes.

- **Marketing materials are too generic and lack detailed information on the services available.** Some respondents stated that marketing materials could be more targeted to specific groups and provide a more detailed description of the services available. Stakeholders and employers surveyed as part of case studies similarly noted that there is a lack of available information about Program eligibility criteria and how to access programs targeting specialized populations. Based on a review of ESC websites, there is a significant level of variation in the type and level of information provided on the EPBC services.

- **The EPBC is complex and difficult to explain.** Some key informants stated that because the EPBC has multiple eligibility rules and legislation, which define the clients that are eligible for different services, this can make communication about the services confusing and misleading for clients. For instance, a client may access an ESC to obtain support for training, but later learn they are not eligible.

### 2. Uptake and Awareness of the EPBC Among Clients

#### Uptake and Reach

The EPBC served 211,826 clients between April 2012 and September 2015. Clients span a range of characteristics and are most frequently, low to moderate employment readiness and part of a specialized population group. The proportion of clients accessing services is approximately evenly divided between EI, BCEA and general clients.

As demonstrated in the following table, 211,826 individuals received EPBC services and supports, from April 2012 to September 30, 2015. Of these clients, 35% were receiving EI exclusively, 23% were...
receiving BCEA exclusively, 4% were receiving both EI and BCEA, and 38% were receiving no financial income supports (general clients).

Table 13: Number of Clients Active in the Program by Client Category and Fiscal Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Category</th>
<th>FY 2012/13</th>
<th>FY 2013/14</th>
<th>FY 2014/15</th>
<th>FY 2015/16a</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EI Only</td>
<td>30,355</td>
<td>41,387</td>
<td>38,380</td>
<td>19,125</td>
<td>73,177</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCEA Only</td>
<td>15,852</td>
<td>29,163</td>
<td>30,020</td>
<td>14,672</td>
<td>48,269</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both BCEA and EI</td>
<td>2,886</td>
<td>5,816</td>
<td>6,669</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>9,456</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Clients (Neither BCEA and EI)</td>
<td>30,461</td>
<td>44,946</td>
<td>36,765</td>
<td>18,391</td>
<td>80,924</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Clients</strong></td>
<td>79,554</td>
<td>121,312</td>
<td>111,834</td>
<td>55,386</td>
<td>211,826</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients).

The percentage of case managed EI clients who are Active Claimants is slightly higher (54%) than the percentage who are Reachback EI Clients (46%). Most case managed BCEA clients are employment obligated (57%), while 35% are Persons With Disabilities (PWD) designated and are not required to look for work, 2% are Non-Employment Obligated (NEO) Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers (PPMB) and 6% are other NEO BCEA clients.

EPBC serves a fairly even and broad mix of clients in terms of gender, age, and level of education (39% have some post-secondary trades training or degree, 35% have grade 12 or less). However, a larger proportion of clients are classified as low to moderate employment readiness (Tier 2 or 3), as demonstrated in the following table. About 70% of all clients are assigned to Tier 2 or 3. Clients assigned Tier 2 (moderate employment readiness) are most commonly EI clients (50%) while clients assigned Tier 3 (low employment readiness) are most likely to be general clients (40%) or BCEA clients (32%). Clients who are assigned Tier 4 (have little to no employment readiness) are predominantly BCEA clients (68%). General clients account for the majority (59%) of clients assigned Tier 1 (i.e. assessed to have high employment readiness).

Table 14: Total Number of Clients Who Have Participated in the Program by Tier and Client Category as of September 30, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Tiers</th>
<th>EI Only Clients</th>
<th>BCEA Only Clients</th>
<th>Both BCEA and EI</th>
<th>General Clients</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Across the Tiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Assigned Tier: Non-Case Managed</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1,278</td>
<td>2,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 0: Non-Case Managed/Self-Serve</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>19,972</td>
<td>1,794</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>10,677</td>
<td>32,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1: High Employment Readiness</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>1,443</td>
<td>1,064</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>3,837</td>
<td>6,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2: Moderate Employment Readiness</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>35,674</td>
<td>4,861</td>
<td>2,661</td>
<td>28,834</td>
<td>72,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3: Low Employment Readiness</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>15,279</td>
<td>24,599</td>
<td>5,473</td>
<td>30,823</td>
<td>76,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4: Little To No Employment Readiness</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>15,162</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>5,475</td>
<td>22,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients).

5 The numbers for fiscal year 2015/16 are incomplete and reflect client statistics from April 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015.
6 Total per fiscal year represent active clients in the given fiscal year and so do not sum to the grand total, which represents the total number of clients accessing the Program overall.
Most EPBC clients are members of a specialized population group. Specifically, 70% are part of a specialized population group, 34% are youth, and 26% are PWD, 18% are multi-barried, 14% are rural, 10% are Aboriginal, 7% are immigrant, 5% are survivors of violence or abuse, and 1% are Francophone. Individuals can belong to more than one specialized population group. For example, a multi-barried client may also be categorized as a person with a disability. On average, clients that identified as a member of a specialized population belonged to 1.8 groups.

About one third of all unemployed British Columbians have accessed EPBC services since Program launch and the proportion has increased over time, particularly among specialized population groups such as unemployed youth, immigrants, and Aboriginals.

As demonstrated in the following table, the proportion of unemployed individuals accessing services increased from 26.8% in 2012/13 to a high of 41.9% in 2013/14 and leveled off to 38.7% in 2014/15.

Penetration rates have improved for different types of clients. For example, from 2012/13 to 2014/15 penetration rates improved for EI (31% to 42%), BCEA EO (15% to 41%), immigrant (20% to 44%), Aboriginal (27% to 47%), and youth (20% to 30%) clients.

Penetration rates continue to be somewhat low for clients that experience significant barriers to employment such as BCEA PWD clients (7% accessed services in 2014/15) and BCEA PPMB clients (6% accessed services in 2014/15). However, these clients are not required to look for work and experience barriers which prevent them from working.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 15: Penetration Rates by Client Segment, 2012/13 to 2014/15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2012/13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed$^1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender – Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males$^1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females$^1$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Type – Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI$^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCEA EO$^3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCEA PWD$^4$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCEA PPMB$^5$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Population Groups – Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants (Landed in past 5 years)$^6$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal People$^7$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth (&lt;30)$^8$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

7 The population data represents the average of monthly data reported by Statistics Canada (unemployment and EI) and the BC Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (BCEA) for the given fiscal year. The EPBC client data represents active clients for an average quarter in the given fiscal year.
An increasing proportion of EPBC clients are higher barriered (Tier 4) and part of specialized population groups (particularly PWD, youth, multi-barriered).

As demonstrated in the following figures, the share of active clients who experience higher barriers to employment has increased since the launch of the EPBC in 2012. For example, the proportion of Tier 4 clients has increased from 8% in 2012/13 to 12% in 2014/15, while the proportion of Tier 2 clients has decreased from 37% in 2012/13 to 32% in 2014/15.

**Figure 7: Client Tiers as a Percentage of Clients by Fiscal Year, 2012/13 to 2014/15**

![Proportion of Clients (Active Episodes) by Tier](chart)

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients with active episodes)

The proportion of clients who are members of specialized population groups has also increased over time. For example, between 2012/13 and 2014/15 the proportion of clients who are PWD increased from 23% to 29%; the proportion of clients who are multi-barriered has increased from 15% to 20%; and the proportion of clients who are youth increased from 29% to 34%.

**Figure 8: Specialized Population Groups as a Percentage of Clients by Fiscal Year, 2012/13 to 2014/15**

![Client Type Share of Active Episodes](chart)

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients with active episodes)
Awareness Among Clients and Reasons for Not Using the Services

Though the use of the WorkBC website and social media is high and increasing, most key informants and other stakeholders perceive that the awareness of EPBC services is low in their communities and among the client groups they serve.

According to JTST, annual visits to the WorkBC.ca website have more than doubled from 4.3 million visits in 2012/13 to 9.0 million visits in 2014/15. In 2014/15 there were 4,044,579 unique users on the website, the WorkBC Facebook page had 92,360 likes, and the Twitter account had 27,482 followers. Employers are also learning about the EPBC through the WorkBC website. A total of 7,539 unique visitors viewed the employers page on the WorkBC website from April 2014 to September 2015.

Stakeholders and employers that participated in the EPBC awareness survey perceive there is a limited level of awareness of WorkBC or EPBC services in their community or among the groups they work with. Over half of stakeholders and employers surveyed described the level of awareness as very low or limited (56% or 39 out of 71). Stakeholders who believe there is limited or no awareness of WorkBC or EPBC services indicated that the level of awareness is good or adequate among mainstream clients but not among specialized populations, particularly immigrants, individuals with a mental disability, rural and remote populations, and youth. It was noted that there is a need to develop more partnerships with service delivery organizations to increase awareness of the Program. Employers who indicated awareness of WorkBC or the EPBC is low, reported that there is an insufficient level of understanding of the services offered by the Program. Key informants similarly perceived that awareness of the EPBC amongst clients is somewhat of a constraint to their accessing needed services and supports (average rating of 2.9 out of 5, where 5 is a major constraint).

The particular groups of clients most frequently identified as being the most difficult to reach are as follows:

- **Persons with disabilities (PWD).** Several key informants stated that some PWD are not aware of EPBC services and may have more barriers to accessing information available through traditional channels.
- **EI clients.** Several respondents indicated that there have been difficulties in promoting the EPBC to more employment-ready clients, particularly in receiving referrals for EI clients from some Service Canada offices. Some respondents stated that apprentices risk missing referrals, since the referral service has become more automated.
- **The general public.** Several key informants stated that the general public (clients, employers, and other service providers) are largely not aware of the types of services offered by the EPBC and that some assume it is only for BCEA or EI clients.
- **Youth.** Some key informants stated that youth have been difficult to reach, particularly youth in transition from school to the working population.
- **Multi-barriered persons,** who also may struggle with literacy or computer access.
- **Persons in rural or remote communities,** such as First Nations communities. As an illustration, a community in one catchment is only accessible by water or air and takes several hours to reach.
- **Immigrants,** who may struggle with language barriers. During the focus groups it was noted that there is limited awareness among some vulnerable groups such as new immigrants, refugees and survivors of violence. Barriers to awareness include language barriers, lack of internet access, trauma and low self-esteem to seek-out assistance.

"I think the general public is aware but specialized groups such as immigrants may be less aware as marketing is not targeted towards them specifically." - Stakeholder
Clients most frequently do not access or return to EPBC services because they do not need the services to find employment, due to health, personal or financial constraints, they are not eligible for the services they need, and because they are not willing to ask for help.

Among those clients surveyed that are currently unemployed (n=2,072), only 22% indicated that they are currently participating in some type of employment program or services delivered through WorkBC. Another 30% who were not participating at the time of the survey said that they were planning to return in the future. However, nearly half of all unemployed people that we surveyed that had used WorkBC services in the past said that, despite their lack of work, they were not currently participating in WorkBC services or programs. The leading reasons for non-participation among this target group included a perception that the services are no longer useful (noted by about 40% of clients responding), a health or personal reason, a perception that they are not eligible to participate in the services they need, and insufficient financial means for participation.

The case studies identified similar reasons why clients might not access EPBC services. Self-served clients and ESC staff noted that some clients may feel they do not need case management or they may be reluctant to ask for help. Some clients are not eligible for case management. As an example, one self-served client works part-time as a taxi driver, making very little income in a small town and he might benefit from case management but he is not eligible. Some clients are more comfortable working with a specialized service provider, such as an Aboriginal employment service provider.

3. Awareness and Engagement of Employers, Referral Sources and Other Partners

ESCs have engaged in a number of collaborative projects and activities with employers, community partners and other ESCs.

The case studies, focus groups, and key informant interviews identified a number of promising practices with respect to collaborative projects, services and outreach activities between ESCs, employers, community partners, and other ESCs. Examples and highlights are described below.

Table 16: Examples of Promising Practices in Collaboration and Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Collaboration</th>
<th>Examples of Promising Practices In Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between ESCs and Employers</td>
<td>• <strong>Engaging in training partnerships,</strong> such as developing a heavy equipment operator training program with an employer; training multi-barri ed clients for specific positions with an employer (280 people hired); working with a local college to deliver a firefighting program (12 people trained); and working with CLBC to deliver training to youth with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Creating staff positions dedicated to engagement</strong>, such as a community coordinator, job developer, community liaison worker, and wage subsidy staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Employer information sessions.</strong> One ESC liaises with local employers to host employer information sessions. The store manager for a local retailer led a session by explaining the industry, how candidates can obtain an advantage, and how to prepare for the application. The employer provided an example of working with a job developer to create a position. The session concluded with clients being invited to meet the employer and complete an application form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Automated job matching.</strong> Every job seeker that visits one ESC enters a profile on the ESC database describing their experience, credentials, and community in which they live. When an employer posts a job with the ESC, the staff use their automated job matching software to match candidates to the job posting. Since the ESC is located in an urban catchment, they can manage and match thousands of candidates looking for jobs within their system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Regional, multi-catchment job fairs.</strong> One contractor hosted a job fair on behalf of ESCs in each of the contractor’s 5 catchment areas. The job fair featured 55 major employers in the region, up from last year’s 42 employers and 800 attendees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Examples of Promising Practices In Collaboration

**Between ESCs and Community Partners**

- **Participating in community stakeholder meetings**, such as meeting with a community services committee on a monthly basis, meeting with different community stakeholders such as service providers, colleges, First Nations leaders, and chambers of commerce.
- **Engaging Ministry and other provincial partners in addressing community crises**, such as major employer closures.
- **Outreach and collaboration with local First Nations communities**. One ESC liaises with a local First Nation and has sent case managers to conduct needs assessments, develop action plans, and facilitators to deliver workshops on site. The sessions could be for two weeks in a row or one day a week for four weeks. ESC staff encourage participants to visit the ESC and inform them that they can provide financial supports for transportation. The ESC is working with about 12 Aboriginal clients through these activities.
- **Co-locating with a settlement services centre**. One ESC is co-located with a settlement services organization and this helps to build awareness among new immigrant clients of the services available within the EPBC. Anyone accessing the settlement services is also provided with information about WorkBC.

**Between ESCs in Different Catchments**

- **Regional ESC network to share promising practices**. For example, ESCs located in rural Vancouver Island catchments formed a collaborative group, which meets every 4 to 6 weeks. The group is developing a curriculum for one-on-one ESS workshops.
- **Joint marketing with other ESCs in neighbouring urban catchments**. WorkBC contractors in Vancouver and Surrey undertake joint marketing and branding in the region.
- **Use of the same sub-contractors**. A group of ESCs located in neighbouring catchments work with the same group of sub-contractors to maintain the specialist services in the community.

Referrals to EPBC contractors are mostly informal, except for the referral of BCEA EO clients from SDSI. Several community-level informal referral systems have been established, for example, with CLBC and Service Canada offices.

When asked if there are formal referral protocols between the Ministry, contractors, and other organizations, the most frequent responses provided by key informants and case study respondents are as follows:

- **There are formal referrals of BCEA Employment Obligated (EO) clients to contractors**. SDSI formally refers BCEA EO clients to EPBC contractors.
- **Several informal referral systems are in place between contractors and other service providers and employers**. For example, some employers stated that they have established systems with contractors where they will interview clients together for positions. Some contractors stated that they have established referral protocols with CLBC providers. For example, standardized referral and client information consent forms have been used in three communities to date.
- **There are no formal referrals for EI clients from Service Canada**. No formal referral systems are in place to send EI clients to EPBC contractors. Instead, Service Canada offices make the information about the Program available to EI clients and leave it to individual clients to access services. The relationship between contractors and Service Canada offices varies by community. Case studies found that relationships between ESCs and Service Canada were good in most of the communities visited, with some ESCs invited to present information directly to EI clients. However, some ESCs stated that they have faced resistance from local Service Canada offices in allowing them to present information. Referrals from Service Canada have resulted in good up-take among clients since they represent the fourth leading source of awareness among client survey participants. Self-served client focus groups also reported Service Canada as a common source of awareness. In 2015, SDSI implemented a joint BC-Canada pilot project to refer EI recipients earlier in their claim (Targeting, Referral and Feedback initiative).
The EPBC has been somewhat successful in building awareness, developing partnerships and engaging employers, referral sources and other agencies and programs. The biggest challenge is lack of contractor, stakeholder, and employer time and resources to engage in partnerships.

Stakeholders and employers surveyed as part of the EPBC awareness survey perceive that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in building awareness, developing partnerships and engaging employers, referral sources, and other agencies and programs (average ratings of 2.7 and 2.9 respectively). Key informants provided a somewhat higher average rating to the same question (3.4).

Key informants and survey respondents that indicated the EPBC has been less successful in engaging partners, employers and stakeholders provided the following reasons:

- **Contractors, stakeholders and employers lack time and resources to engage in partnerships.** Partnerships at the community level are built on trust and take time. Contractors are constrained for time under the EPBC due to the additional administrative requirements, the financial compensation structure, and the complexity of the EPBC (see the discussion on Program design and structure on pages 87 – 90 for more details). Stakeholders and employers most commonly noted that ESCs are not sufficiently engaging in outreach activities and that it is difficult to develop relationships with staff due to lack of time and staff turnover.

- **Engagement and partnership vary by contractor and community.** Some contractors are more actively engaging partners and employers than others. Some stakeholders also perceived that the EPBC model encourages contractors to deliver services in-house, which discourages partnerships.

- **Employers are not sufficiently aware of the EPBC.** If employers are not aware of the Program, they will not seek partnerships with EPBC contractors. Some key informants indicated that employers are reluctant to engage in partnerships due to the perceived level of paper work required.

“**The first two years were dedicated to getting the program running. Only recently have we been able to make strides in the community.**”
- Contractor

**Summary of Key Findings**

*In what manner and to what extent has the Program reached its key target groups?*

The Program has been successful in reaching unemployed British Columbians, particularly groups that face barriers to employment. From Program launch in April 2012 to September 2015, the EPBC served 211,826 clients – about one third of all unemployed British Columbians. The EPBC has been somewhat successful in engaging employers and key referral sources. ESCs have engaged in a number of collaborative projects, partnerships and activities. Some issues with respect to engagement include that contractors, stakeholders and employers lack time and resources to engage in partnerships and engagement varies by community and service provider.

**D. ALIGNMENT WITH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS**

*Is the Program aligned with the labour market demands and the needs of employers?*

The following paragraphs summarize key findings with respect to the alignment of the EPBC with the labour market demands and needs of employers, and consider factors such as employer satisfaction with the Program and alignment with labour market issues and needs.
1. Employer Satisfaction with the Program

Employers have participated in a variety of EPBC projects and activities such as industry specific training, skills development projects, and the use of wage subsidy supports.

Employers that responded to the employer participation survey were most commonly involved through the wage subsidy program (about 40% of respondents), a Job Creation Partnership project, and by advertising for jobs on the WorkBC website or at WorkBC locations and undertaking a Project Based Labour Market training project. The average duration of projects was 8 months. The most frequently mentioned types of projects included:

- *Industry specific training/other training*, for example, training in automotive sales, small equipment operation, power saw safety, S100 fire suppression, heavy equipment operation, office assistant training, health care training, invasive plant management, First Aid, essential and employability skills;
- *Hiring and training new employee(s)* under the wage subsidy program;
- *Hands-on skills development* in areas such as landscaping, forestry, administrative support, marketing, research, use of office software, use and archival of digital materials, and non-profit management;
- *Industry specific presentations to EPBC clients or at conferences*; and
- *Research/education projects* involving development of a policy framework/field technical work.

Examples of specific industry training, skills development and wage subsidy projects are described in the following table.

**Table 17: Examples of EPBC Projects and Activities Involving Employers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Examples of EPBC Projects and Activities Involving Employers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry Specific Training Projects</strong></td>
<td>A PBLMT project to provide automotive sales training and develop automotive sales positions. The project provided training to 35 participants over 12 months. The main objective of the project was to address labour shortages in the industry and provide dealerships with access to highly qualified and trained automotive sales staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A PBLMT project to deliver a 16-week Heavy Industrial Manufacturing Training Program designed to provide extensive training and on the job work experience for entry level positions in manufacturing. The training provided included essential skills training, life skills training, introduction to manufacturing, work readiness certifications, 4 weeks of on the job work experience, and a 2-week job placement, support and follow-up. Key partners in the project included a university, a local chamber of commerce, an industry association and the Stó:lō Nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An Office Assistant PBLMT project. The main objective of the project is to provide EI clients the opportunity to access training and credentials that will enable them to return to work. The project aims to provide training to 30 participants through two separate cohorts, the Office Administration Certificate Program and the Medical Office Skills Program, over 9 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills Development Projects</strong></td>
<td>A JCP project to build new recreational trails in the community. The project led to the creation of new partnerships and provided participants with hands-on trail-building and landscaping skills. The main objectives of the project were to develop new recreational trails in the community and build awareness of wildlife and environmental issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A JCP project to digitally preserve a First Nations community’s historical documents. The employer partnered with the First Nation community to provide resources and expertise. Two positions were created through the JCP, a trainer/supervisor position and an archival worker position. Skills gained through the project included skills in computer and software use, and creation, editing and archival of digital materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A JCP project which provided training and work experience in invasive plant management. The project provided training to 9 participants over 28 weeks. The partners involved in the project included 2 Regional Districts, 4 local governments, 4 First Nations bands, 3 Cattlemen Associations, 3 provincial agencies, and 3 local community groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Employers that participated in EPBC projects and activities are generally satisfied with the services. Employers most frequently indicated that EPBC staff were knowledgeable, supportive and responsive and that the support met their needs.

Employers that responded to the employer participation survey, on average, reported that they are very satisfied with the services provided by WorkBC, specifically the administrative support, participant referrals, administration of financial supports, and support in organizing job fairs and presentations (average rating of 4.0 out of 5). Employers who were satisfied or very satisfied with the services most frequently indicated that WorkBC staff were knowledgeable, supportive, and responsive, and the support provided met their needs. For instance, some employers noted that the staff provided support to them at no cost, identified and recruited project participants, and delivered services in an efficient and timely manner. Employers who were less satisfied with the services most commonly noted that there were funding delays or errors and long processing times or slow referral processes.

During the focus groups, employers similarly emphasized useful aspects of the Program. They noted that it is helpful to have a contact at the ESC who understands the business’ needs and can refer suitable candidates because it cuts-down on pre-screening time, particularly for small businesses. Employers also noted that supports offered through the EPBC such as job development and training partnerships are useful in meeting employer needs. Employers involved in CEP projects described different impacts the projects have had on their organization, community, and participants. As an illustration, one project enhanced the capacity of a not-for-profit organization to provide work placements. A trail-planning project strengthened cooperation between First Nations, landowners and insurance providers. Some employers noted that participants built customer service and life skills and secured full-time jobs in the same industry as their placement.

Most employers surveyed perceive the projects undertaken with the EPBC were successful or very successful, particularly in helping employers fill needed positions and helping participants find full-time or permanent employment.

According to employers responding to the employer participation survey, the main objectives of the activities were project-specific (such as to develop recreation trails in the area), to offer training, skills development or work experience opportunities to participants, and to fill a vacant position within the organization. Employers reported they were successful or very successful in achieving the objectives (average rating of 3.9 out of 5).

Employers who provided a higher rating most frequently indicated that the activities have been particularly successful in helping them fill needed positions and in helping participants return to the labour force or find permanent employment; the activities have been successful in helping participants increase their skills set, gain valuable work experience, or obtain needed accreditation or certification; and that the project will have long term benefits in the community through increased awareness, positive economic impact, and the availability of new infrastructure and/or research.

The employers whose projects involved participants reported that participants in most projects were active or recent claimants of EI benefits in the last three years. With respect to specialized groups, employers most frequently mentioned that some of the participants were Aboriginal, followed by youth,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Examples of EPBC Projects and Activities Involving Employers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wage Subsidy Projects</td>
<td>• Use of the wage subsidy program to fill positions such as a project coordinator to manage the Canadian and west coast operations of the organization; a machinist position in a manufacturing company; a bricklayers’ positions in a construction company; and administration, support and event management positions for a local chamber of commerce.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The WorkBC staff were professional. They actually cared about filling the position. We will definitely use them again.”
- Employer
persons with multiple barriers to employment, recent immigrants, rural and remote populations, PWD, survivors of violence and/or abuse, and Francophone.

Employers most frequently indicated that the projects helped participants to improve their employment readiness skills and workplace skills, gain valuable work experience or industry specific work experience, complete training and receive needed certification or accreditations, obtain sustainable employment, and increase their confidence and self-reliance.

2. **Alignment with Labour Market Issues and Needs**

On average, employers and key informants perceive that the EPBC is somewhat aligned with key labour market issues and needs and has been somewhat successful in responding to changes in the labour market and increasing employer access to a skilled workforce.

Employers that participated in the EPBC awareness survey perceive that the structure and activities of the EPBC are somewhat aligned with key labour market issues and needs (average rating of 3.0 out of 5). Key informants provided a somewhat higher average rating with respect to alignment (3.4 out of 5), while most noted that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in responding to changes in the labour market (3.0 out of 5), and in increasing employer access to a skilled workforce (3.1 out of 5).

The key informants that provided higher ratings most frequently noted that:

- **The EPBC offers flexible programming to respond to changing needs in the economy.** Several key informants provided examples of ESCs responding to major closures of retail chains, mills, and mines by collaborating with Service Canada, employers and unions to host information sessions and develop strategies to assist recently laid-off workers; and
- **Some contractors have developed good relationships with employers and have engaged employers in specific activities and programs** such as training, wage subsidies, and job fairs.

Employers that provided higher ratings also noted that the Program helps them find qualified candidates; EPBC representatives are knowledgeable and active in the business community; and there are programs available to meet their needs.

The most frequent reasons provided by key informants and employers for why they did not feel that the EPBC is well aligned with labour market and employer needs are as follows:

- **The eligibility requirements for employer programs are too restrictive.** Some key informants stated that rules regarding employer programs limit participation for some employers. For example, BCEA and general clients have limited access to wage subsidies and longer-term training.
- **Limited awareness of the Program among employers and strong relationships with employer organizations.** Some key informants stated that the EPBC has not sufficiently engaged employers and employer associations to understand their needs and promote the Program.
- **Perceived mismatch between EPBC clients and employer needs.** Some employers perceived that the EPBC targets less skilled clients, which do not match the types of candidates they require to fill positions. A few contractors noted that the EPBC does not sufficiently address skills mismatch issues, particularly with respect to facilitating training of needed skills or relocation to communities with needed skills. Some stakeholders mentioned that the EPBC does not offer sufficient job coaching and ongoing support to help placements for PWD clients to be successful.
- **Fewer clients are accessing skills training.** There are fewer clients accessing essential and occupational skills training than under previous employment programs.
Overall, BC employers have made limited use of EPBC programming. Major reasons include that they tend to recruit candidates through other means, they are not familiar with the services, and they were referred candidates that were not a good fit for their needs.

Only 4% of EPBC clients served between April 2012 and September 30, 2015 accessed any employer support, as shown in the table below. The most commonly accessed support was job development (2%), followed by wage subsidy (1%), customized employment (1%), and unpaid work experience (0.4%). Fewer than 800 clients accessed CEP supports (JCP or PBLMT) during this period.

Table 18: Use of Employer Supports Among Clients, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision of Employer Supports</th>
<th>Clients Accessing Given Support</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any EPBC Service</td>
<td>211,826</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Employer Support</td>
<td>8,982</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Development</td>
<td>4,207</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage Subsidy</td>
<td>2,648</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customized Employment</td>
<td>1,257</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Work Experience</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Creation Partnership (JCP)</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT)</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients)

To examine awareness and use of EBPC services among employers, we conducted an EPBC awareness survey of 46 BC employers and employer associations that were identified through an online search. These employers may or may not have participated in EPBC services. As part of key informant interviews, 31 employers were interviewed, some which were identified through an online search and some through referrals from ESCs.

On average, employers surveyed as part of the EPBC awareness survey and interviewed indicated that they had made limited use of the EPBC to address their labour market needs (average ratings of 2.4 and 3.1 out of 5, where 5 is to a great extent). Employers that made some use of the EPBC most frequently indicated that they had advertised positions on the WorkBC website, advertised jobs at WorkBC locations, and referred former employees to WorkBC services. Employers interviewed that used the services most frequently indicated that they hired employees that received services from the EPBC. Thirteen employers interviewed indicated they hired a total of 546 clients. The positions included front desk security workers, nurses, baristas, administrative positions, technicians, sales associates, and cleaning positions. It was noted in focus groups that employers tend to use the EPBC to recruit entry-level, front line positions, rather than more specialized or management positions.

Employers that had not used or made limited use of the services tended to indicate the following reasons:

- **Employers recruit candidates through other means.** Employers do not need to recruit candidates through EPBC because they use other services or methods to find qualified candidates, for example, other websites, services and informal mechanisms of recruitment.

- **Employers are not familiar with the services.** Several employers made limited use of the EPBC services because they are not familiar with what services are available.

Employers that had used EPBC services provided some reasons why they may be reluctant to use the services in the future such as:
Some employers were referred EPBC candidates that were not a good fit. Among the employers surveyed that participated in a project with the EPBC, the most common reason why the project was less successful was that the person hired did not meet the employment criteria or lacked the skills needed by the employer. Employers that had negative experiences with EPBC candidates noted they are reluctant to use the services again. Some employers noted that EPBC candidates often need more basic and essential skills training and job support before they are ready for placements.

Employers experience issues with respect to eligibility for supports. Several employers noted that the eligibility requirements under the JCP and PBLMT are a constraint, particularly for projects aimed at youth, since supports are available primarily to EI clients.

The process to recruit candidates takes too long, particularly for CEP projects. Many employers noted that the requirement to recruit candidates through ESCs tends to cause project delays, particularly if participants drop-out and the process needs to be restarted. One employer explained that they used to be able to advertise positions for these projects on their website and candidates would approach them directly. Under the EPBC, they have to contact each ESC in the region and describe the project and the criteria for candidates, which takes more time.

"The model is not producing the kind of candidate that employers need. They run candidates through short-term training courses that have no relevance to employer expectations and needs." - Employer

Summary of Key Findings

Is the Program aligned with the labour market demands and the needs of employers?

Most employers that participated in EPBC projects and activities are satisfied with the services and stated that the support met their needs. Some challenges with respect to addressing labour market needs include limited awareness and uptake of employer services and limited access to job placements and training due to participant eligibility restrictions.
V. PROGRAM IMPACTS

This chapter summarizes the evaluation findings with respect to Program impacts, including the manner and extent to which the various EPBC services have contributed to the achievement of the intended outcomes.

A. IMPACT ON CLIENTS

What impacts has the Program had on participating clients? How does that vary by type of client?

The following paragraphs indicate the major findings with respect to the impacts the EPBC has had on participating clients.

Clients gained a variety of skills and qualifications by participating in EPBC services particularly with respect to employment readiness skills and job-related skills and certifications.

Clients accessed a variety of supports through the EPBC which helped to improve their employability. As an illustration, clients:

- **Improved their employment readiness skills such as essential skills, resume writing, and interviewing skills, among others.** For example, 122,456 clients participated in Employment Support Service (ESS) Topics Workshops. A broad range of clients accessed workshops including general (37%), BCEA (27%), EI (30%), and both BCEA and EI clients (6%); Tier 3 (47%), Tier 2 (39%), and Tier 4 (13%) clients. A few clients (428) accessed basic and essential skills training, most of which were BCEA (71%) and Tier 3 (65%).

- **Gained work experience.** For example, 4,207 clients participated in job development, 4,159 participated in self-employment orientations 2,648 participated in wage subsidies, 1,257 participated in customized employment, 777 participated in unpaid work experience, 526 participated in Job Creation Partnerships (JCP), and 220 participated in Project Based Labour Market Training (PBLMT). EI and Tier 2 clients were more likely to participate in self-employment (87% and 71% of all clients accessing the service), wage subsidy supports (89%; 70%), JCP (82%; 56%), and PBLMT (85%; 55%). BCEA and Tier 4 clients were more likely to access customized employment (77% and 60%) and unpaid work experience (93%; 51%).

- **Gained job skills (long-term training).** A total of 8,366 clients participated in long-term occupational skills training, most of which were EI (80%) and Tier 2 clients (61%). Twenty-five percent of clients surveyed reported participating in an educational and training program since participating in the EPBC. Clients who reported accessing a formal training or an educational program were most likely to have taken a certificate program (just over one third), a health or safety program, a trade program, or adult education courses.

- **Received certificates or accreditations.** A total of 15,957 clients participated in short-term orientation and certificate training, such as First Aid and Food Safe training. A broad mix of clients accessed this type of support in terms of BCEA (38%), general (37%), EI (23%), both EI and BCEA (9%) clients as well as Tier 3 (53%), Tier 2 (31%), and Tier 4 (13%) clients. Many clients (33,464) accessed funding as non-case managed apprentices, most of which were EI clients (90%) and youth (74%).
Clients most frequently reported improving their employment search skills and confidence, and qualifications necessary to work, as a result of participating in the EPBC.

As described in the following table, clients surveyed most frequently reported that participating in EPBC programs and services helped them to increase their employment skills, helped them to feel more self-confident in their ability to find employment, and helped them to receive certification or accreditation. There was not much difference in the proportion of clients reporting different impacts by client type (EI, BCEA, general), Tier, or specialized population group.

Table 19: Client Survey Reported Impacts From Participating in EPBC Programs and Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Reported Impacts from Participating in the EPBC</th>
<th>Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#       %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Responding</td>
<td>5,145   100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I increased my employment skills (e.g. life skills, resume writing, interview skills, language skills)</td>
<td>2,332   45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more self-confident in my ability to look for work and find employment</td>
<td>2,006   39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I received certification and accreditation</td>
<td>836     16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in the employment services helped improve my economic situation</td>
<td>663     13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I gained work experience relevant to job opportunities in my communities</td>
<td>573     11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>355     7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No other impacts</td>
<td>1,322   26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>456     9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self-served client focus group participants described similar ways that the EPBC services have had a positive impact such as improving their employment readiness skills, job skills, employability and self-confidence. Some examples of impacts noted by self-served clients are provided in the table below:

Table 20: Examples of Impacts Reported During Client Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Impact</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved Employment Readiness Skills</td>
<td>• Helping a client to decide on a new career direction, by participating in a 6-week career decision making workshop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helping a construction contract worker to connect to recruiters and employers, by accessing self-serve supports (such as a printer and fax) and receiving assistance with their resume.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helping clients to prepare their resume, resulting in interviews and employment offers. Helping a client to prepare their resume and obtain part-time work with a social enterprise, using self-served services and guidance from the resource centre staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Job Skills and Certifications</td>
<td>• Helping a client to obtain funding for training, within weeks of accessing services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helping a client that relocated to BC from Alberta to obtain BC certification in their field of work (health care).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Employability</td>
<td>• Helping a client to obtain funding for work boots to start their job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helping a client in a small town with limited employment opportunities to start their own business, using self-served services and the self-employment program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Confidence and Self-Esteem</td>
<td>• Helping an Aboriginal client to receive confidential support and feel welcome, which they felt they were not able to access in their local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Helping an immigrant client to understand their skills and build their confidence in exploring a new career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Providing a client with a comfortable, welcome location to undertake their job search and feel more motivated and confident that they are moving forward.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key informants perceived that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in creating a better understanding of client needs and barriers, and increasing employment readiness and self-reliance among clients. There are some perceived gaps with respect to the Program’s ability to increase self-reliance among clients with complex needs.

On average, key informants perceived that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in creating a better understanding of client needs and barriers amongst clients and service providers (average rating of 3.1 out of 5), and increasing employment readiness (3.3) and self-reliance (3.1) among clients. Key informants that provided higher ratings most frequently noted that the Program has been successful in identifying and understanding client needs and barriers. For instance, assessment tools have been developed such as the Disability Related Needs Assessment. Key informants that provided lower ratings most frequently mentioned that the Program has been less successful in increasing self-reliance among clients with complex needs.

B. INTENDED OUTCOMES

In what manner and to what extent do the various services contribute to the achievement of the intended outcomes?

The following paragraphs summarize the key findings with respect to the manner and extent to which the various EPBC services contribute to the achievement of the intended outcomes, and consider factors such as Program success in helping unemployed British Columbians achieve sustainable employment and community attachment.

1. Employment Outcomes

According to recent estimates, 54% of EPBC clients that are no longer receiving services achieved employment. The overall employment rate from April 2012 to September 2015 is 42%, representing a total of 71,974 clients that obtained employment.

EPBC employment rates have fluctuated over time. As shown in the table on the following page, the employment rate decreased from 58% in 2012/13 to 35% in 2013/14, increased to 42% in 2014/15, then increased again to 54% in the first two quarters of 2015/16.\(^8\) The high employment rate in 2012/13 was partially due to the fact that many clients who transitioned from the legacy programs into the EPBC were closer to completion of their services. The drop in 2013/14 was reflective of a more typical client mix, and partially due to data accuracy initiatives. Part of the reason for the increase in recent years is better data tracking and follow-up.

The overall employment rate from Program launch in April 2012 to September 30, 2015 is 42% representing a total of 71,974 EPBC clients that obtained employment. Of the 173,103 episodes that are complete or in-follow up, 42% achieved employment, 1% achieved community attachment, and 16% had an incomplete outcome (i.e., completed case management but attained neither employment nor community attachment).

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\(^8\) The employment rate is defined as the number of employed persons as a percentage of the case managed population that are no longer actively receiving case management services.
Table 21: Employment Outcome Rates Reported by the Program, by Fiscal Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Outcomes Reported for Episodes Completed or in Follow-Up</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16 Q1/Q2</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>13,653</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>20,778</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Attachment</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>1,602</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9,081</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Available⁹</td>
<td>8,105</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>29,572</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Client Outcomes</td>
<td>23,679</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>59,715</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>58,256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW).

Some factors should be considered in reviewing the employment rates. For example, employment outcomes are influenced by factors external to the Program such as labour market conditions and some of the employment outcomes are not recorded since some clients could not be reached.

Of the clients that achieved employment, about three quarters were employed full-time (32 hours or more weekly) and about a quarter were employed part-time (fewer than 32 hours weekly). On average, clients took about 5 months to obtain employment and 7 months to obtain community attachment.

**On average, Key Performance Measure (KPM) standards with respect to achieving and sustaining employment are being met for most client groups, based on recent results.**

For the latest fiscal year, on average, KPM standards with respect to the percentage of clients that achieve employment are being met across Tier 1, 3, and 4 clients and specialized population groups, as shown in the table on the following page. Labour market attachment standards are not being met for Tier 2 (moderate employment readiness) clients. On average, KPM standards are being met across Tier 2-3 clients, with respect to the percentage of clients that sustain employment for a minimum of 24 weeks. Sustained employment standards (KPM 2) are not being met for Tier 1 (high employment readiness) clients.

On average, KPM standards are also being met with respect to the percentage of clients completing long-term training who achieve labour market attachment aligned with the training provided and the percentage of clients that participate in self-employment that achieve and sustain self-employment.

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⁹ Not available includes those clients that did not complete the Program or who completed the Program and were not reachable.
Table 22: Key Performance Measure Results Related to Labour Market Attachment, Based on Provincial Averages April 2015 to November 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPM</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Client Tier</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Met?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KPM 1 - Labour Market Attachment</td>
<td>Percentage of clients that achieve employment.</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Not Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of clients that achieve employment – specialized populations.</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Not Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPM 2 - Labour Market Attachment 24 Weeks</td>
<td>Percentage of clients that sustain employment for a minimum of 24 weeks.</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Not Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of clients that sustain employment for a minimum of 24 weeks – specialized populations.</td>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Not Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPM 3 - Labour Market Attachment Aligned with Training</td>
<td>Percentage of clients completing long-term training who achieve labour market attachment aligned with the training provided.</td>
<td>All Clients</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPM 4a - Self Employment Labour Market Attachment</td>
<td>Percentage of self-employment clients that achieve self-employment.</td>
<td>All Clients</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>Exceeded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPM 4b - Self Employment Labour Market Attachment 24 Weeks</td>
<td>Percentage of self-employment clients that sustain self-employment for a minimum of 24 weeks.</td>
<td>All Clients</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>Exceeded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ELMSD KPM Regional and Provincial Summary Report (November 2015)

The employment rate varied across sub-groups of case managed clients with higher employment rates among clients with moderate to high employment readiness and EI clients.

As expected, clients in Tier 1 (high employment readiness) and Tier 2 have the highest employment rates (50% as compared to 23% in Tier 4), as shown in the following table. Tier 4 clients have the lowest completion rate (48% compared to 59% overall) and Tier 2 clients are most likely to have completed case management (63%).

Table 23: Client Outcomes by Tier, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Outcomes</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
<th>Tier 4</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status of Clients No Longer Receiving Case Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community attachment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>3,468</td>
<td>35,143</td>
<td>28,645</td>
<td>4,534</td>
<td>71,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>9,429</td>
<td>13,203</td>
<td>4,412</td>
<td>27,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete case management</td>
<td>2,799</td>
<td>26,018</td>
<td>31,041</td>
<td>10,239</td>
<td>70,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,944</td>
<td>70,673</td>
<td>73,328</td>
<td>19,608</td>
<td>170,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion and Outcomes Rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion rate</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015
Similarly, EI clients have the highest employment rate (54%) as well as highest completion rate (67%) when compared to other groups. BCEA clients have the lowest employment rate (29%).

Table 24: Client Outcomes by Client Category, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Clients No Longer Receiving Case Management</th>
<th>EI Only</th>
<th>BCEA Only</th>
<th>Both EI and BCEA</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community attachment</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>27,272</td>
<td>12,799</td>
<td>3,910</td>
<td>27,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>6,708</td>
<td>9,213</td>
<td>1,771</td>
<td>10,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete case management</td>
<td>16,640</td>
<td>21,419</td>
<td>3,292</td>
<td>30,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50,705</td>
<td>43,997</td>
<td>9,033</td>
<td>69,368</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion and Outcomes Rates</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion rate</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015

Specialized populations represent the majority of case managed clients participating in the Program (about 70% of all clients). The employment rate for clients in the specialized population groups is 41%, as compared to 48% for other client types.

The services associated with the highest employment rates across different types of clients included Project-Based Labour Market Training, job development, wage subsidies and long-term skills training.

The employment rate varied depending on the nature of the service that clients received, which is a function of both the impact of the service itself on the achievement of employment as well as the characteristics of the clients participating in the particular services. Higher employment rates were achieved by clients that participated in Project Based Labour Market Training (88% employment rate), wage subsidies (82%), self-employment programming (82%), and job development (79%), as shown in the table on the following page. It should be noted that there are some limitations to this analysis since it does not present isolated impacts of particular services since individuals may have accessed a variety of different services. To mitigate this constraint, we undertook further analysis of service impacts looking at cross-tabulations of employment rates for different services by client tier and type, as presented in the paragraphs below.

Employment rates were consistently high with respect to Project Based Labour Market Training, job development, wage subsidy, and long-term skills training across different Tiers. Self-employment programming generated higher employment rates among Tier 2 (83%) and Tier 3 (80%) clients. Customized employment and unpaid work experience also tended to generate relatively high employment rates among Tier 3 (55% and 66%, respectively) and Tier 4 (57% and 56%, respectively) clients. The employment rates for most services were statistically significantly higher than the employment rates for clients that did not access the individual service.
Similarly, employment rates were high with respect to job placement services and long-term skills training across EI, BCEA and general clients, as shown in the table below. Low participation numbers among some types of clients in some services, for example, among PBLMT and JCP among BCEA and general clients, make it difficult to draw statistically significant conclusions from the data. Basic and essential skills participants tended to generate somewhat lower employment rates but this could be because these clients experience more substantial barriers and take more time to achieve employment.

**Table 25: Employment Rates by Type of Service Accessed and Client Tier**, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment:</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
<th>Tier 4</th>
<th>All clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Clients</td>
<td>27,272</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>12,799</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Based Labour Market Training</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>94%*</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>84%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage Subsidy Work Experience</td>
<td>1,298</td>
<td>83%*</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>80%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment Business Plan and Implementation</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>83%*</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>80%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Development</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>89%*</td>
<td>1,603</td>
<td>79%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Skills Training</td>
<td>2,917</td>
<td>76%*</td>
<td>1,332</td>
<td>65%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Creation Partnership</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>66%*</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>59%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Work Experience</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90%*</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>66%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-Term Orientation and Certificate Training</td>
<td>2,785</td>
<td>66%*</td>
<td>3,705</td>
<td>54%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customized Employment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>55%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Support Services / Workshops</td>
<td>23,023</td>
<td>55%*</td>
<td>20,471</td>
<td>43%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic and Essential Skills Training</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015

* Employment rates are statistically higher (p<0.05) compared to rates for similar clients that did not access the service.

**Table 26: Employment Rates by Type of Service Accessed and Client Type**, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment:</th>
<th>EI Only</th>
<th>BCEA Only</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>All Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Rate</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Clients</td>
<td>27,272</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>12,799</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Based Labour Market Training</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>92%*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage Subsidy Work Experience</td>
<td>1,658</td>
<td>84%*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment Business Plan and Implementation</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>84%*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Development</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>87%*</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>72%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Skills Training</td>
<td>3,705</td>
<td>75%*</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>48%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Creation Partnership</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>65%*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Work Experience</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>60%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-Term Orientation and Certificate Training</td>
<td>2,157</td>
<td>69%*</td>
<td>2,168</td>
<td>47%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customized Employment</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>56%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Support Services / Workshops</td>
<td>17,977</td>
<td>58%*</td>
<td>8,272</td>
<td>32%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic and Essential Skills Training</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015

* Employment rates are statistically higher (p<0.05) compared to rates for similar clients that did not access the service.

---

10 Note that Tier 1 clients were excluded from this analysis due to low client volumes in the different services and since Tier 1 clients tend not to be case managed and therefore not eligible to receive many of the services.
The literature identified that job placements are particularly effective in helping employment assistance clients to gain employment, while longer-term training tends to improve the sustainability of the employment and earnings. Some studies cautioned that training programs may not be cost-effective in assisting income assistance clients to obtain employment.

Clients surveyed that achieved employment reported average earnings of about $20 per hour for full-time positions, $15 per hour for part-time positions, and $23,000 per year in self-employment income. Clients that obtained a second position since participating in the EPBC, on average, reported that their wages increased.

According to the client survey, on average, clients reported earning $19.89 for full-time positions (32 or more hours per week) and $15.44 for part-time positions (less than 32 hours per week), in their first positions since participating in the EPBC. The average duration of positions ranged from 8 months for those that had ceased their first positions to 12 months for those that continued to be employed in their first position.

Clients that provided details on a second position since participating in the EPBC, on average, indicated that their wages increased to $20.60 per hour for full-time positions and $16.50 per hour for part-time positions.

Self-employed clients surveyed, on average, reported that they have been employed for 30 months and earned $22,727 in annual income from self-employment activities.

2. Community Attachment Outcomes

Since Program launch, 955 clients have achieved community attachment, most of which are clients that experience higher barriers to employment.

From April 2012 to September 30, 2015, a total of 955 clients achieved community attachment, representing an overall community attachment rate of 0.6%. The community attachment rate was highest among BCEA clients (1.3%), followed by EI and BCEA (0.7%), general (0.4%), and EI (0.2%) clients.

Clients that achieve community attachment tend to be clients that face higher barriers to employment. Of the 955 clients that achieved community attachment, clients most frequently are BCEA (59%), Tier 3 (46%), Tier 4 (44%), PWD (59%), multi-barriered (33%), and youth (29%) clients.

Community attachment helps clients to build their employment readiness, for example, through volunteer placements. According to the client survey, the clients indicating their current employment status is volunteering, on average, reported spending 7 hours per week volunteering and that they have been volunteering with the organization for about 2 years.

A small proportion of clients achieved employment after achieving community attachment.

From April 2012 to September 30, 2015, of the 620 clients reporting community attachment at 4 weeks, only a few achieved employment at 12 and 24 weeks (3% overall).

Employment arising from a volunteer position was relatively uncommon among the surveyed clients. Including those who described their employment status as volunteering, a total of 30% of all surveyed

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11 The community attachment rate is defined as the number of clients that achieve community attachment as a percentage of case managed population that are no longer actively receiving case management services.
clients reported that they had volunteered in their community since participating in the employment services. Just 10% of clients with recent volunteer experience reported that employment was achieved as a result of that experience.

Of those clients that indicated that volunteering led to employment, clients most frequently indicated that they were hired by the same organization with which they were volunteering, the position helped them to gain work experience and build their resume, and the position helped them to network and obtain work references.

3. Usefulness and Attribution of Services to Outcomes

Two thirds of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of the EPBC services they received. Clients were most satisfied with long-term training and job placements compared to self-served services, volunteer placements and workshops.

Most clients surveyed (63%) reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of the services received through the EPBC (average rating of 3.8 out of 5). On average, clients that received long-term training (4.3) job placements (4.2), short-term training (4.1), or support with their apprenticeship (4.1) were the most satisfied, and those that indicated they looked for a job on their own (3.8), accessed a volunteer program (3.8) and attended workshops (3.9) were less satisfied. Client satisfaction ratings were somewhat higher among particular client groups. For example, average satisfaction ratings were slightly higher among:

- EI (3.9) compared to BCEA (3.8) and general (3.7) clients;
- Tier 2 (3.9) compared to Tier 3 (3.8), Tier 4 (3.6), and Tier 1 (3.4) clients; and
- Aboriginal (4.0), rural (3.9), survivors of violence (3.9), and youth (3.9) compared to immigrant (3.8), Francophone (3.8), PWD (3.8), and multi-barriered (3.7) clients.

Most client focus group participants also found the EPBC services useful. Client focus group participants most frequently explained that the services were useful because they received assistance with their resume; they were able to access equipment and resources such as a computer, fax machine, telephone, printer, job and community resource postings, and funding for bus tickets or work boots to assist them in their job search and start; they were able to participate in workshops and events such as on-site interviews with employers; and they received motivation and support from ESC staff and other job seekers.

Clients that participated in long-term training and job placements and clients that faced higher barriers to employment were more likely to state that the EPBC services were important in helping them to obtain their current position.

Attribution ratings based on clients’ perspectives are one way of isolating the impact of EPBC services on a particular client’s success in obtaining employment or community attachment. The ratings attempt to determine attribution by examining the counterfactual: “what would have happened if the client did not receive the EPBC services?”

When asked how likely it is that they would have obtained their current employment, self-employment, or volunteer position without assistance and services they received through the EPBC, on a scale where 0% is not at all likely, 25% is unlikely, 50% is somewhat likely, 75% is likely and 100% is very likely, clients provided an average likelihood of 68%. In reviewing the results, it should be noted that there are some limitations to this approach since it is based on a client’s opinion and recollection of a
past event. For example, the client may provide a low attribution rating because they do not associate the services with the employment position and may not consider the skills they developed in accessing the services, which eventually helped them to obtain employment.

Attribution ratings varied by type of service accessed. For example, somewhat stronger average attribution ratings were provided by clients that participated in long-term training (average of 50% likelihood they would have obtained the position in the absence of services) and job placements (53%) compared to clients that participated in workshops (67%), and self-search for employment (69%). Attribution ratings were also strong among self-employed clients that participated in self-employment services (49%). Furthermore, attribution ratings were statistically significant and stronger (p<0.05) for clients that participated in any given service compared to clients that did not participate in the service.

Client attribution ratings were somewhat stronger among particular client groups. For example, average attribution ratings were slightly stronger among:

- BCEA (65%) compared to EI (67%) and general (69%) clients;
- Tier 3 (65%) and Tier 4 (65%) compared to Tier 2 (69%) and Tier 1 (80%) clients;
- Immigrant (61%), Francophone (61%), Aboriginal (63%), survivors of violence (63%), and PWD (65%), compared to rural (67%), multi-barriered (67%) and youth (69%) clients.

Clients that indicated their current employment status was volunteering with a community organization, on average, estimated there was a 73.8% chance that they would have obtained that volunteer position regardless of the services received from the EPBC. Attribution ratings were slightly stronger among Tier 3 (75%) and 4 (72%) clients than among Tier 2 (76%) clients with a volunteer position.

**The most frequently mentioned ways in which the EPBC helped clients to obtain employment included job search support, and financial and training support.**

Clients that did credit the services and programs provided by WorkBC as having had a positive effect on their obtaining employment most frequently mentioned help with their resume and interview preparation (about 40% of clients responding), followed by the financial and other support to access education and training that led to employment, active job search support including finding appropriate job postings, improved confidence and a sense that the client was supported by their case manager, other assistance such as direct referrals, placements or wage supports, and the provision of work clothing or other items necessary for work in their field.

Clients that described their current employment status as volunteering with a community organization were most likely to credit that the services supported the idea of volunteering as a valuable path, provided a direct referral or placement, or helped them with the application and interview process.

Clients that obtained self-employment most frequently noted that the EPBC helped by providing access to training and financial support, assistance building their business plan, and helped them to build confidence to start their business.

**Of those clients surveyed that reported lower levels of satisfaction, clients most frequently mentioned it was because they did not gain useful information or skills, the staff did not provide them with adequate support, and there was limited funding for training.**

Clients surveyed and participating in focus groups that were less satisfied with the EPBC services, most frequently indicated that it was because they did not gain new or useful knowledge (reported by just under one third of respondents), they did not receive adequate support from the ESC staff, and they did not have sufficient funding or training opportunities available to them. Some examples include that they were denied for funding for training or certifications required for employment, and that the amount of funding available for training was inadequate.
Key informants perceived that the Program has been somewhat successful in achieving its ultimate goal of helping unemployed British Columbians achieve sustainable employment as quickly as possible.

On average, key informants perceived that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in helping unemployed British Columbians achieve employment as quickly as possible (average rating of 3.2 out of 5) and obtain sustainable employment (i.e., form a longer-term attachment to the workforce) (3.0). Key informants most frequently commented that some specialized groups encounter difficulties obtaining employment quickly and there appears to be some confusion with respect to whether the Program focus is quick versus sustainable employment.

Key informants perceived, on average, that the EPBC has been less successful in increasing attachment to the community through volunteering (2.6), frequently noting that volunteering appears to be less of a focus of the Program and a less desirable outcome for clients since most clients would prefer paid employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Key Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What impacts has the Program had on participating clients? How does that vary by type of client? In what manner and to what extent do the various services contribute to the achievement of the intended outcomes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to estimates for the first two quarters of 2015/16, 54% of EPBC clients achieved employment. The overall employment rate from Program launch in April 2012 to September 2015 is 42%, representing a total of 71,974 clients that obtained employment. The majority of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of the EPBC services. The EPBC has helped clients to improve their employment search skills, build their confidence in looking for work, and acquire relevant certifications and accreditations. Clients that participated in long-term training and job placements and clients that faced higher barriers to employment were more likely to state that the EPBC services were important in helping them to obtain their current position.
VI. PROGRAM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

This chapter summarizes the evaluation findings with respect to the appropriateness and effectiveness of the design and delivery of the EPBC, including whether the services delivered by the Program are timely, consistent, and accessible; whether the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services are in place; and the extent to which program design facilitates effective service delivery.

A. TIMELINESS, CONSISTENCY, AND ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES

Are the services delivered by the Program timely, consistent, and accessible?

The following paragraphs provide the key findings regarding the extent to which EPBC services are timely, consistent, and accessible.

1. Extent to Which Services Are Timely

On average, the Key Performance Measure standards pertaining to timeliness of service delivery are being met or exceeded.

As mentioned earlier, the EPBC tracks Key Performance Measure (KPM) standards for various indicators, some of which pertain to the timeliness of services. On average, KPM standards which pertain to timeliness of services, including scheduling appointments, developing action plans, and delivering services or financial supports, are being met or exceeded across all Tiers. ESCs are particularly effective in developing action plans within standard timeframes.

Table 27: Key Performance Measure Results Related to Timeliness of Services, Based on Provincial Averages, April 2015 to November 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPM</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Client Tier</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Met?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KPM5 - BCEA Client Referral Times</td>
<td>Percentage of BCEA EO clients referred to case management who have their initial appointment scheduled within 10 business days of their referral date.</td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Exceeded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPM6 - Action Plan Timeliness</td>
<td>Percentage of clients in Tier 2, 3, or 4 who have an action plan developed within 20, 30, or 40 business days from the start of their formal needs assessment.</td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>80% in 20 days</td>
<td>Exceeded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>80% in 30 days</td>
<td>Exceeded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>80% in 40 days</td>
<td>Exceeded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPM7 - Service Timeliness</td>
<td>Percentage of clients who receive their first service or financial support not later than 10 business days after the completion of their assessment.</td>
<td>All Tiers</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Timeliness of services has improved over time. For example, there was a significant improvement in the timeliness of scheduling BCEA EO appointments between March 2014 and April 2015. For each indicator, there was some evidence that timeliness of services around March and April dropped slightly, likely due to end of fiscal year administration and reporting.

Most clients and key informants perceive that the services are delivered in a timely manner.

Most clients reported that they were satisfied with the timeliness of the services (74% were satisfied or very satisfied; average rating of 4.1 out of 5, where 5 is very satisfied). Clients that accessed job placements (4.4) and short-term training (4.3) were slightly more satisfied with the timeliness of the services, on average.
Most key informants agreed that services are delivered in a timely manner (average rating of 3.8 out of 5, where 5 is very successful).

The most frequently noted factors which contribute to delays include challenges in scheduling appointments due to case manager or client availability, and administrative or processing delays.

Among the clients surveyed that experienced delays in service, the most frequently noted delays included waiting for appointments (mentioned by just under one third of clients responding), limited case manager availability, and administrative or processing delays. Key informants most frequently indicated that delays are often caused by difficulties in reaching clients, difficulties clients have in coming in for their appointments, high case-loads, and the time required to determine eligibility.

2. Extent to Which Services Are Consistent

The EPBC has been fairly successful in consistently conducting an assessment of needs and assignment of tiers across case managers or staff. The process is somewhat subjective and may be influenced by the fee schedule and contractor performance standards.

On average, key informants perceived that the EPBC has been fairly successful in consistently conducting an assessment of needs and assignment of tiers across case managers or staff (average rating of 3.7 out of 5). The issues most frequently identified during key informant interviews and case studies included:

- Needs assessments and the assignment of tiers are subjective and vary depending on the interpretation, experience and expertise of the case manager. Some key informants stated that there will always be some differences in the assessment of needs and tiers since they are subjective, personal interpretations.
- There is a lack of clarity or guidelines on how to assess needs and tier clients. Some contractors and sub-contractors indicated that they have developed their own methods for determining needs, which leads to variability and different interpretations.
- It takes time to identify and assess needs. As noted earlier in this report, some key informants have stated that it takes time to build trust with clients and for them to reveal barriers and needs, which can lead to differences in how services are delivered.
- The contractor financial compensation model and eligibility matrix attach funding to specific tiers, which influenced how tiers were assigned. Some ESCs may tier based on the amount of fees associated with particular tiers or assign clients to a higher tier so it is easier to meet KPM employment rate targets (which are lower for higher tiered clients).

Key informants stated that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in providing equivalent access to services for similar clients across the province. The major factors contributing to lack of equivalent access to services are differences in access for rural versus urban areas, and differences in the interpretation and application of policy.

Key informants perceived, on average, that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in providing equivalent access to services for similar clients across the province (average rating of 3.3 out of 5). The major differences in access identified most frequently by the key informants included differences in policy interpretation and approach to delivery. For instance, contractors are taking different approaches to delivering the services and interpreting policies with respect to eligibility and interpretation can vary even among Ministry Contract and Partnership Agents (CAPAs). It was also frequently noted that different factors affect delivery in rural and remote compared to urban catchments, which were explored.
further during site visits to ESCs as part of case studies. The major findings are presented in the following table.

Table 28: Factors Impacting EPBC Service Delivery in Rural and Urban Catchments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Difficult to offer group workshops and short-term training due to low client volumes. As a result, many workshops delivered on a one-on-one basis and the ESCs are not able to generate as many fees per workshop.</td>
<td>• Multiple ESCs in the same job market make it difficult to market the Program to employers. For example, employers may have businesses located in Vancouver and Surrey. To address this issue, some ESCs undertake joint marketing of services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vulnerable to labour market shifts. Some communities have few opportunities and can take several months to find employment. Others have thriving sectors and clients rely more on self-serve services.</td>
<td>• High proportion of contract jobs in some regions such as hospitality, construction and service industries. This impacts eligibility for contract workers seeking more substantial work and employment outcomes since contract positions are not sustainable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High proportion of seasonal jobs in some regions such as oil, mining and gas, agricultural and forestry industries. This impacts eligibility for seasonal workers seeking more substantial work and employment outcomes since seasonal positions are not sustainable.</td>
<td>• Varying levels of cooperation between ESCs in neighbouring catchments. Some chose to work with the same sub-contractors, while others may have different partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited specialized services. There are limited specialist services and it is costly to fly in experts. It is also difficult to meet flow-through requirements.</td>
<td>• Higher administrative requirements due to higher client volumes and multiple sub-contractors. Client transfers cause challenges since sometimes client service fees are used up and transfers can interfere with KPMs. It is challenging to manage and forecast uptake of apprentice supports in some catchments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of training institutions. Most clients are required to relocate for training and the living away from home allowance of $175 per week is often insufficient.</td>
<td>• Multiple non-EPBC service providers with employment mandates creates confusion with respect to provider roles. For example, settlement services also offer employment assistance services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited public transportation and internet connectivity can make it difficult for clients to access services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulty in recruiting experienced case managers. ESCs are required to recruit staff from different regions and disciplines, and train inexperienced staff in case management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some clients access services several times and for long durations of time. Further analysis is required to fully understand how the Program facilitates access to services for these clients.

Clients return to services for various reasons. During case studies and focus groups, it was noted that careers tend to follow a dynamic and multi-directional path, which can cause clients to return to services at different times during their path to sustainable employment. The most frequently noted types of clients that return to services include:

- **Clients that have higher barriers to employment.** Clients that access services more frequently tend to have more complex barriers to employment such as long-term unemployment, homeless, transient, and mental health issues. Some clients will always struggle to gain employment.

- **Seasonal and contract workers.** Clients may be returning because they work in seasonal or contract industries, for instance, logging, fishing, and oil and gas. Seasonal workers tend to have more limited job search skills, and come back to access services so they can obtain their next position or find more substantial work.

- **Clients that obtained employment but lost their job.** Clients may access services again if the position did not work out and they need additional support, or if there was an economic downturn.

The proportion of repeat clients has increased since the launch of the Program, as is typical with any program. The EPBC policy provides some flexibility with respect to repeat clients. For example, client
action plans may be renewed within 52 weeks of the client’s last service if the client has experienced a significant change in needs or circumstances. Such changes could include significant changes in health or labour market conditions, the diagnosis of a previously undiagnosed mental health issue, or an improved level of employment readiness following the achievement of community attachment. When a renewed action plan is warranted, the maximum expendable fees for that client may restart at $0. The number of repeat clients has been identified as an issue and the Ministry has been working with contractors to address the issue.

3. Extent to Which Services are Accessible

Accessibility of Storefronts and Services

Clients access services from a mix of ESC storefronts, satellites, and other alternative delivery channels.

As demonstrated in the following table, of the 211,826 total clients participating in the Program, 88% have received the services at ESC storefront locations and 12% have received the services through ESC satellite offices. Clients were more likely to utilize satellite offices in the Vancouver Island region (17%) and BC Interior (14%) compared to other regions. Information on utilization of other alternative delivery channels, such as itinerant or outreach services, is not available, as the EPBC does not require service delivery partners to report such data.

Table 29: Number of Clients Using Alternative Delivery Arrangements, as of September 30, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Clients Served</th>
<th>ESC Storefront</th>
<th>Satellite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 1: Vancouver Island</td>
<td>44,344</td>
<td>36,780</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 2: Vancouver Coastal</td>
<td>33,587</td>
<td>28,872</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 3: Fraser Region</td>
<td>71,336</td>
<td>66,733</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 4: Interior Region</td>
<td>46,592</td>
<td>39,147</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 5: North Region</td>
<td>15,967</td>
<td>14,281</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>211,826</td>
<td>185,813</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015

Clients and key informants perceive that EPBC services and storefronts are largely accessible and provide a welcoming environment for clients with useful resources, equipment and staff support to help them find employment.

Most clients surveyed (84%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the location and accessibility of the EPBC services (average rating of 4.4 out of 5). Average ratings were fairly consistent across regions, rural and urban catchments, and different client groups, including PWD clients. Most client focus group participants were happy with the self-served area, ESC staff, and services they received. Several clients noted that they feel respected, welcome and comfortable accessing the services.

Site visits and case studies identified a number of ways in which ESCs have provided accessible and welcoming environments for clients. Resource centre staff provide information about the services, encouragement and some assistance to clients, with a focus on assisting clients to be more self-sufficient. For example, the staff may show a client how to attach their resume to an email. The resource staff also explain to clients how they can access in-depth case management or workshop support if they need it. In most ESCs, the self-served area provided information on training, community

“The resources are great here.”
“They talk to you when you walk through the door.”
“For a small town, they have helped a lot.”
- Client focus group participants
resources and available jobs in the area, and access to a telephone, fax machine, printer, photocopier, and computers with internet. Some ESCs featured employment ‘Success Star’ walls, with the first names of clients that obtained employment.

Most key informants agreed that accessibility is not a significant constraint to clients accessing needed services and supports (average rating of 1.9 out of 5, where 5 is a major constraint).

**Transportation challenges were the most frequently mentioned constraints with respect to accessing EPBC services.**

Among clients surveyed that were less satisfied with the location and accessibility of the EPBC services, the most frequent barrier noted related to transportation challenges (mentioned by just under half of clients responding). Some examples included a long commute, limited public transportation, and limited or expensive parking. A few clients perceived that access was constrained due to the restrictions and different services available to them at different catchments.

Similarly, key informants most commonly perceived that the main access challenges pertain to transportation issues, particularly among clients in rural and remote areas. It was noted that some contractors undertake outreach activities. For instance, some contractors hold office hours in a remote community once a week. Key informants also noted that accessibility varies by contractor and community. Some contractors have ESCs located in office buildings with limited storefront signage.

**Adequacy of Financial Supports**

The EPBC offers financial supports to assist eligible case managed clients in financial need with the cost of program participation, job search or starting work.

Financial supports are available to assist eligible case managed clients in financial need with the costs of basic expenses essential for program participation, job search or starting work. The purpose of providing financial supports is to ensure that inadequate funds or resources for basic expenses or required items are not barriers to clients in accessing or participating in needed services, undertaking job search activities, starting jobs or keeping jobs.

Prior to providing any form of financial support, an assessment of financial need is required, unless otherwise specified in Program policy. Assessing the need for financial supports is a process that includes a review of the client's household income and expenses, the associated costs required for Program participation or for employment related purposes and the client's ability to contribute to these costs. The EPBC service provider must establish that a client lacks the means and resources to cover the costs themselves, that the item or expense is essential to the client's Program participation, job search or to start a job and that it will be used for the purpose intended.

Clients can receive Program financial support for job search, job starts and Program participation/access to ESC services such as transportation, dependent care, disability supports, essential work clothing, essential work supplies, tools, personal grooming and hygiene, food for full day Program participation and licences. Clients can also receive financial support for Skills Training, Job Creation Partnerships, Self-Employment, Project Based Labour Market Training and Wage Subsidy such as living supports, transportation, dependent care, tuition, books and supplies, and living away from home.

The availability of financial supports for clients is perceived as somewhat of a constraint to access because the level of support is too low for some activities and clients with complex needs may require more in-depth supports than are available under the EPBC.
On average, key informants perceived that the availability of financial supports is somewhat of a constraint to clients accessing needed services and supports (average rating of 2.8 out of 5, where 5 is a major constraint). The most frequent gaps or issues mentioned during key informant interviews, case studies and focus groups are as follows:

- **The amount of financial support for some activities is too low.** For example, the allowance of $175 per week for living supports for clients to attend training outside of their community is insufficient and may act as a disincentive for clients in rural and remote areas, who are often required to relocate for training. BCEA clients are limited in the type and duration of training in which they can participate based on funding restrictions.

- **Clients with complex needs may require more in-depth, longer-term supports.** Some clients may require longer-term, pre-employment support and personal counselling to achieve community attachment or employment. Several respondents indicated there should be increased financial support for service providers to provide community coordination and outreach to connect clients with wraparound services such as housing, mental health services and childcare.

### Adequacy of Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria was identified as a more significant constraint to access, particularly for general and BCEA clients who have limited eligibility to access the full range of work experience and training supports.

Key informants perceived that eligibility criteria is somewhat of a constraint to clients accessing needed services and supports (average rating of 3.2 out of 5, where 5 is a major constraint). The most frequent reasons provided during key informant interviews, case studies and focus groups are as follows:

- **General clients are limited in the services and supports they can access** (mentioned by many key informants across each type of key informant group). General clients have limited access to longer-term interventions such as wage subsidy and training. This is particularly a gap for youth, individuals working in low-paying, part-time jobs, Aboriginal people and new immigrants.

- **BCEA clients are restricted in the services and supports they can access, particularly with respect to work experience placements.** BCEA clients are limited in their ability to access several longer-term interventions such as training, wage subsidy, JCP, and PBLMT, which could help them to obtain sustainable employment.

- **Eligibility is determined by federal and provincial legislation which is complex and difficult to change.** The eligibility for services and supports under the EPBC are determined by legislation, which detail specific parameters under which the funding can be spent. The policy is complex and can be challenging for case managers to navigate when addressing the needs of an individual client. Though contractors are encouraged to find flexibility within these frameworks, in some cases, clients are not eligible for the services they need due to restrictions in the legislation.

Some clients surveyed identified eligibility as a constraint causing them to not complete their action plan, not find the services useful, and choose to no longer participate in the EPBC.

At different points in the client survey, clients referred to eligibility as a constraint to access. For example, some clients that did not complete their action plan noted that it was because they were not eligible to participate in some of the services (5th most commonly mentioned reason). Some clients that perceived the EPBC services as not very useful similarly referred to difficulty meeting eligibility
requirements (4th most commonly mentioned reason). In both cases, the clients most frequently mentioning eligibility as a constraint tended to be Tier 0 or Tier 1 clients (likely non-case managed). Some clients also mentioned that they are no longer participating in the EPBC because they are not eligible to participate in the services they need (3rd most commonly mentioned reason).

Other Factors That Constrain Access

Other factors noted which may make it difficult for clients to participate in EPBC or access needed services and supports include the lack of basic life supports and insufficient understanding of the services among service providers and/or clients.

Key informants most frequently identified the following other factors that may make it difficult for clients to participate in the EPBC or access needed services and support:

- **Lack of access to basic life supports for persons with multiple barriers.** Some clients may struggle with homelessness, financial hardship, mental and physical health issues which may limit their ability to access services.
- **Lack of expertise and experience of individual case managers.** Case managers may not have experience delivering some services or addressing the needs of some clients, for example, PWD or multi-barriered clients. As a result, some case managers may lack the knowledge or experience to be able to refer clients to appropriate services or some clients may choose to not access the services due to negative word of mouth or if they feel their needs were not met.
- **Lack of understanding of the services.** Due to the Program’s complexity, potential clients may not understand what the EPBC can offer them in terms of services and supports and as a result may choose to not access the services.

### Summary of Key Findings

*Are the services delivered by the Program timely, consistent, and accessible?*

The services delivered by the Program are delivered in a timely manner and are fairly accessible and consistent. Some issues include eligibility constraints, variability in the assessment of needs and interpretation of policy, and transportation challenges.

#### B. CAPACITY AND CAPABILITIES

*Does the Program have the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services?*

The following paragraphs summarize key findings regarding whether the EPBC has the capacity and capabilities with respect to delivering the required services and consider factors such as the capacity to meet the demand for services, access to specialized expertise and services, access to training for case managers, and the recruitment and retention of case managers.

1. **Capacity to Meet Demand for Services**

Most key informants stated that EPBC service providers have the capacity needed to meet the demand for services. The most frequently noted challenge to capacity is time dedicated to administrative requirements.

Most key informants perceived that service providers have the capacity needed to meet the demand for services (80% strongly or somewhat agreed). The level of agreement was similar for contractors (82%) and ESC case managers and other staff (82%). Some specific challenges noted most frequently during
case studies and key informant interviews included:

- **The amount of time allocated to administration constrains time spent with clients.** See the discussion on Program design and structure on pages 87 – 90 for more details.
- **A lack of experience among some case managers in delivering specific services or addressing needs of specialized groups.** Some key informants stated that some case managers lack the experience and expertise necessary to meet the needs of all the clients accessing services. For instance, if a case manager is not very familiar with a service, they may be less likely to refer a client to that service.
- **Challenges in scaling up the response to meet increased demand.** The intent in the design of EPBC was for the services to be scalable in response to increased demand. Changes in variable service fees would support scaling up or scaling down in the number of staff. However, some contractors and sub-contractors noted that it is difficult to scale operations quickly since it takes time to train new staff (about 6 months to 1 year).

To address variations in demand, ESCs most commonly reallocate responsibilities within the office and cross-train staff to undertake different roles.

On average, ESCs managed about 1,000 to 1,600 active episodes per catchment per year. In 2014/15, about half of the catchments managed between 1,000 and 3,000 active cases (35 catchments), while 18 managed 100 to 500 cases, 14 managed 500 to 1,000 cases, and 6 managed over 3,000 cases per year (almost 8,000 in one catchment). ESCs tend to be busiest in April and slowest in December, as shown in the figure below.

![Figure 9: Seasonality of Case Loads: Average Number of Episode Starts per Month, by Region and Overall](source)

Contractors and ESC case managers and other staff most frequently indicated that they deal with periods of peak demand by reallocating responsibilities within the office, providing services on a less timely basis and hiring additional staff. Some other less frequently mentioned methods include reducing the time they normally would spend with a client and encouraging more clients to use self-served services.

Some promising practices used to address variations in demand were identified during the case studies, such as cross-training staff to undertake different roles and shifting staff positions to match the needs of the community. For example in one ESC located in a rural catchment, the front office receptionist also undertakes follow-up calls with clients to see if they sustained their employment and the assistant manager is also a case manager, a marketing specialist, and a workshop facilitator.
Another ESC has created specific staff roles to match the needs of the community such as a customized employment case manager and an apprenticeship and community engagement specialist.

2. Access to Specialized Expertise and Services

Clients accessed a variety of specialized assessments such as vocational psychological, medical, and neuropsychological assessments.

Of the 211,826 total clients accessing services, 6,521 clients have accessed various specialized assessments. As shown in the table below, clients most commonly accessed vocational psychological (25% of clients accessing any assessment), medical (18%), and neuropsychological vocational (18%) assessments.

Table 30: Specialized Assessments by Number of Clients and Number of Occurrences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialized Assessment</th>
<th># of Clients</th>
<th># of Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Specialized Assessments</td>
<td>6,521</td>
<td>7,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Psychological Assessment</td>
<td>1,606</td>
<td>1,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assessment Report</td>
<td>1,193</td>
<td>1,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuropsychological Vocational Assessment</td>
<td>1,179</td>
<td>1,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical/Functional Capacity Assessment</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Specialized Assessment Types</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability Assessment</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Other Specialized Assessments</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assessment</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Credentialing</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical/Functional Work Capacity Assessment</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Learning Assessment</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiological Assessment</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Simulation Assessment</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Assessment</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergonomic Assessment</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech and Language Assessment</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Corporate Data Warehouse (CDW), Extracted October 5, 2015.

Most key informants agreed that there is access to specialized expertise and services when needed. Though a number of promising practices have been developed in the delivery of specialized services, the quality of the services varies across different service providers.

Most key informants agreed (66% either strongly or somewhat agreed) that there is access to specialized expertise and services when needed. However, the opinions varied considerably by key informant group. Some promising practices related to access to specialized expertise were identified during case studies:

- **Employing a clinical counsellor as a specialized case manager.** One ESC perceived a need in their community for enhanced mental health services to help their clients obtain employment, so they employ a clinical counsellor to deliver specialized case management services. As an example, the counsellor worked with a BCEA EO client that had a thought disorder to help him over the course of 8 months to obtain disability status, an ID, a place to stay, and become more employment ready. The counsellor meets with clients bi-weekly for up to 6 months, whereas mental health services only allows monthly visits. The service is provided at a partial loss to the ESC, due to limitations in the EPBC funding model. For example, personal counselling for employment readiness is only funded for up to 10 appointments and most clients do not qualify.

- **Employing specialized case managers to work with PWD clients.** At one ESC, services for PWD clients were historically referred out to a sub-contractor but it was decided to bring the services
in-house and hire case managers with the appropriate experience and qualifications. A sub-
contractor is still retained for customized employment services. Similarly another ESC employs
a case manager specifically focused on PWD clients.

- **Providing workshops for different client types and specialized groups.** Some ESCs tailor
  workshops to different client groups, such as Fast Track workshops for Tier 2 and 3 clients who
  need help with their resume, cover letter, and interview skills; half-day workshops for youth at
  schools during career days; orientations for survivors of violence; one-on-one workshops with
  specialists for CLBC clients with disabilities; and first language workshops for new immigrants.

- **Flying-in specialized service providers into rural communities to provide specialized services.**
  One ESC sub-contracts a vocational specialist to provide customized employment once per
  month and flies the specialist in to deliver the services. The specialist works with case
  management staff to monitor and provide recommendations with respect to PWD clients. For
  instance, the case manager sends their notes about the client to the specialist for review.

The most frequent reasons provided by some key informants for why there does not exist sufficient
access to specialized services and expertise are as follows:

- **The quality of the services varies across different service providers.** Some case managers have
  limited skills and expertise in the delivery of specialized services and require more training. The
  one-stop-shop model makes it challenging for contractors to build the critical mass required to
  gain expertise in all the specialized groups and services.

- **Limited access in rural and remote communities and long wait times to access some services.**
  There are long wait times, particularly for mental health services, and fewer specialized service
  providers in rural communities.

### 3. Access to Training for Case Managers

Case managers require training in a variety of skills and areas of expertise such as EPBC
policy, computer systems, employment counselling, and serving specialized populations.

According to the literature review, training for new case managers has become particularly relevant
under the EPBC due to changes in the nature of the role of case managers and the high level of
turnover resulting in new case managers from different backgrounds entering the industry. Case
managers require training and skills in a variety of areas such as understanding complex and extensive
policies related to employment programming in BC, working with computer software systems, and
providing employment services to clients with a variety of specialized needs.

Training of ESC case managers and staff is the responsibility of contractors and many have provided
their staff with a range of training opportunities. The Ministry has also provided support and tools for
training to assist contractors in the process. For example, the Ministry provides tools to assist service
providers in training their staff on ICM and EPBC policies and has disseminated information on
promising practices in serving specialized populations at contractor meetings.

During key informant interviews, ESC case managers and other staff reported participating in a variety
of training activities on EPBC systems and programming, case management and serving specialized
populations, such as training webinars provided through the CfEE. Other examples of training
undertaken by ESC staff are provided in the table on the following page.
There is a need for more training on ICM with respect to billing and fixing errors; there is a need for more in-house educational opportunities for new staff; there is a need for further training on specialized populations, particularly regarding addictions, mental health, learning disabilities, and concurrent disabilities who also experience multiple barriers.”

- ESC case manager

Most ESC case managers and other staff have accessed training and, in general, they are satisfied with the training. Some issues were identified with respect to the need for more comprehensive ICM training and ongoing training on specialized populations.

Ninety percent (90%) of ESC case managers and other staff surveyed noted they had participated in training activities since April 2012 or since they started the position (if after April 2012). On average, case managers are satisfied with the training (average rating of 3.7 out of 5). The ESC case managers and staff explained that they were satisfied because the training was relevant to their work and the information is available if they have time to access it, and training tools such as the Extranet have improved over time.

The ESC case managers and staff who were less satisfied noted a few challenges with the training: there is a need for more training on ICM with respect to billing and fixing errors; there is a need for more in-house educational opportunities for new staff; there is a need for further training on specialized populations, particularly regarding addictions, mental health, learning disabilities, and concurrent disabilities who also experience multiple barriers.”

- ESC case manager

**Table 31: Examples of Training Undertaken by ESC Case Managers and Other Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Training</th>
<th>Examples of Training Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EPBC Systems and Programming                          | - **ICM training.** Amber Education offers training in ICM and case management services. New case managers can undertake a 3 days training workshop. The goal of this workshop is to introduce participants to (or reinforce their knowledge of) the language, structure, and function of ICM within the context and overview of the EPBC. Through this training, new case managers familiarize themselves with ICM and learn to how to create clients and cases, enter Service Plans and Benefit Plans, and generate Action Plans.  
- **Extranet.** There are a variety of training materials on EPBC policy and ICM on the Extranet such as job aids, ICM training modules, and BI client, and apprentice portal training. |
| Case Management Techniques                            | - **Career development professional conferences.** The BC Career Development Association hosts an annual career development conference. This annual conference provides a learning forum for the career development community and is the largest of its kind in Western Canada. Conference delegates represent a wide range of stakeholders in the employment services sector such as researchers, policy makers, academics, employers, practitioners, and government representatives.  
- **Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing Training.** The Canadian Training Institute provides a variety of in-service training programs. Among other programs, the institute offers a one or two day Training in Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing. Motivational Interviewing is a client-centered counselling approach developed by psychologists to treat addictions and recidivism and intended to help people make effective changes in their lives.  
- **Life Strategies Career Development Program.** Life Strategies offers professional development courses to case managers. The courses are delivered by industry experts through an e-learning management system.  
- **The Implicit Career Search workshop.** The Implicit Career Search, is an integrated approach to career decision making and development, designed to help individuals move from the traditional management based, job-dependent view of career planning to a leadership based, self-dependent approach, and encourages clients to change their perspective, and find their purpose. Case managers can receive training on how to deliver the workshop to clients. |
| Specialized Populations                                | - **Training on specialized populations.** The CIEE offers free webinars for case managers on various topics. Some recent examples include a webinar on how to use specialized assessments (September 2015) and how to support adults with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (August 2015). During the sessions, different experts are invited to speak and to give a presentation on a special topic. The webinars are a learning platform that allow multiple participants to follow the same discussion. After the session, a PDF copy of the presentation slides and/or a recording of the session are posted on the CIEE website.  
- **ESC staff have also participated in Mental Health First Aid training, and training on suicide intervention, non-violent crisis intervention, serving First Nations populations, and in providing Disability Related Needs Assessments.** |
disorders; and time constraints faced by case managers limit access to training.

Key informant opinions were somewhat mixed regarding whether the EPBC service delivery staff have sufficient access to the training that they need. The literature review and interviews identified challenges such as complex policies and programs, variable investment in training by service providers and a need for ongoing and formalized case manager training.

Just over one half (60%) of key informants somewhat or strongly agreed that service delivery staff have access to the training they need to build knowledge, understand the Program, and further develop their skills and expertise. The level of agreement was lowest for sub-contractors (43% somewhat or strongly agreed) and contractors (47%) while the highest level of agreement was expressed by ESC case managers and staff (71%) and Ministry representatives (63%).

Respondents who perceive that service delivery staff have adequate access to training most commonly reported that the Ministry has provided good training tools and supports, for instance, training at conferences, and training modules and job aids available on the Extranet. It was also noted that there is sufficient financial flexibility for contractors to train their staff since professional development is an allowable expense.

The most frequent reasons why some key informants did not feel that service delivery staff have sufficient access to training are as follows:

- **Complex and changing policies and programs.** Many contractors and ESC case managers stated that the policies underlying the EPBC are complex and difficult to interpret. Others commented that the policies frequently change and the summary tools (job aids, Extranet) are not always up to date.

- **Variable levels of expertise and skills.** Several key informants stated that there are gaps in training and expertise among some case managers. Some key informants stated that there is a need for ongoing training on various topics, particularly with respect to using the BI Portal, serving specialized populations, undertaking needs assessments, and developing action plans. The CFEE study (2013) also identified gaps in terms of computer proficiency and the use of technology and that the career development sector lacks sector-specific professional training or certification.

- **Training takes time and happens with experience.** As noted earlier, some key informants stated that training takes time (6 months to 1 year) and most staff learn on the job.

### 4. Recruitment and Retention of Case Managers

Contractors and sub-contractors are experiencing difficulties finding and retaining qualified case managers. The major challenges include finding candidates with the broad mix of skills required and retaining experienced case managers.

The contractors interviewed reported employing an average of 11 full-time equivalent (FTE) case managers (about 32% of their total employees), while sub-contractors employed an average of 5 FTE case managers (about 22% of their total employees). Of the case managers employed, about one quarter (26%) were hired in the past year.

On average, contractors and sub-contractors perceived that it was somewhat difficult to fill case manager positions (average rating of 3.7 out of 5, where 5 is very difficult). The most frequent reasons provided by contractors and sub-contractors why they are having difficulties are as follows:

- **Difficulty in retaining experienced case managers due to the changes in their role.** Some case managers are frustrated with the increased administration requirements, feel the services are
too revenue-driven, and feel they have less time to interact with clients, which is what first attracted them to the job. Some case managers have left the industry due to stress and burnout.

- **Case managers require a broad mix of skills** such as employment counselling skills, interpersonal skills, administration and IT skills, academic skills to understand complex policies, and expertise in specialized populations. Experienced and skilled candidates can be particularly difficult to find in rural catchments.

- **Increased competition for skilled case managers among contractors and sub-contractors.**

- **Undesirable employment conditions,** for example, low pay and difficult client bases in some catchments.

### Summary of Key Findings

**Does the Program have the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services?**

The EPBC has the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services. Some gaps were identified with respect to the level of proficiency with administrative systems, understanding of EPBC policies, and expertise in serving specialized populations.

### C. PROGRAM DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

**Evaluation Questions:** *To what extent do different elements of the Program, such as tools, policies, and procedures, facilitate effective delivery of services? What lessons have been learned and best practices identified?*

The following paragraphs summarize the key findings regarding the extent to which various elements of the EPBC design and structure facilitate effective delivery of services, and consider factors such as the contribution of the Program design and structure to the delivery of services; the effectiveness of the sub-contracting structures and relationships; and the impact of the financial compensation model on the delivery of services.

1. **Contribution of the Program Design and Structure to the Delivery of Services**

Some aspects of the EPBC design and structure have facilitated effective service delivery, while other elements have constrained delivery.

Key informant opinions were somewhat divided regarding how access to services has changed since the EPBC program design was introduced in 2012. Most Ministry representatives felt access has increased, while contractors and ESC case managers and other staff were divided, and most sub-contractors felt that access to services has decreased. Many key informants were similarly divided regarding whether the case management approach has become less effective or more effective under the EPBC.

The major aspects of the Program design and structure which contribute to effective service delivery identified during key informant interviews, case studies, and focus groups are as follows:

- **More integrated, inclusive service delivery in a one-stop-shop model.** As a single point of entry service, the EPBC helps to reduce confusion among job seekers with respect to where to access services. Employers also benefit from a greater concentration of clients accessing supports within a centralized program, which facilitates job matching.

  "We collapsed so many legacy programs into one which created more equity and efficiency for a broader range of clients."  
  - Ministry representative
Specialized populations can access supports as part of the general population, retain their anonymity, while accessing a menu of supports, which works well for clients that previously fell through the cracks.

- **New and enhanced access to supports.** Increased financial supports are available under the EPBC such as funding for job start and job search (work boots, bus tickets, childcare, haircuts), equipment for PWD clients, and expanded eligibility for short-term occupational and certificate training, and long-term training and wage subsidy supports through the Single Parent Employment Initiative. There is improved access to specialized services in rural and remote clients. As an illustration, customized employment can be accessed from any WorkBC centre across the province but was previously only offered by 14 centres. Specialized populations are able to access supports through the EPBC which complement services and supports they can access from other programs. Contractors are becoming more experienced and knowledgeable in delivering particular services and serving specialized groups.

- **Enhanced access to performance data and increased contractor accountability for the use of public funds.** With the introduction of the ICM and various performance measurement and tracking protocols, there is increased access to performance data under the EPBC. Most Ministry representatives, contractors, and sub-contractors agree (61% somewhat or strongly agree) that they have access to the performance data they need to effectively do their job. The different key informant groups accessed various data sources for different purposes. For example, contractors accessed the KPM reports to see how they compare to other service providers and how to adjust their services, BI portal data to monitor client outcomes and services delivered, and financial data for budget forecasting.

- **Increased engagement of service providers in improving the model.** On average, Ministry representatives and contractors perceive that the EPBC is somewhat successful in identifying key issues affecting the Program and acting upon them (average rating of 3.3 out of 5). The EPBC has engaged service providers in identifying key issues through a variety of mechanisms such as CPAC meetings, CMC meetings, and working groups. This engagement has led to major changes in the EPBC model such as changes to the EPBC financial model in 2014, changes to policy and the introduction of new programs such as the Single Parent Employment Initiative, which allows single parent BCEA EO clients to access wage subsidy and training supports and the Targeted Referral and Feedback pilot project, which aims to improve referrals of EI clients from Service Canada to WorkBC offices, enhancements to ICM, and improvements to the Extranet.

- **Greater focus on employer and community engagement than the previous model.** As noted earlier, under the EPBC, ESCs have undertaken various activities to engage employers and community partners. Contractors are required to develop Community and Employer Partnership Plans which detail what activities they intend to take to engage employers in their community. Some ESCs have developed staff positions dedicated to community and employer engagement. ESCs engage employers and partners in facilitating information sessions directly with clients, training partnerships, and hosting regional job fairs.

The most frequently identified elements which constrain service delivery included:

- **Less time to work with clients due to increased administrative, performance monitoring and governance requirements.** About two thirds of key informants agreed (60%) that the tools,
policies, and procedures needed to facilitate effective delivery of the services are in place. However, only about one third (36%) of key informants agreed that the existing design and structure of the EPBC (delivery model, contracts, financial model, governance structure, administration and management) contributes to effective delivery and supports the intent of the Program. Several contractors stated that they have had to hire new staff to address the additional administrative requirements under the EPBC and that the focus of the Program is more on data collection, meeting targets, and financial management at the expense of time which could be dedicated to building relationships with clients and partners. Some case managers indicated that they spend less time with clients than before due to data entry and client follow-up requirements. Several key informants noted that multiple layers of governance and reporting have further constrained service delivery capacity to respond to client needs.

- **Complex policy framework.** The eligibility requirements under the EPBC are complex and the introduction of tiering has further complicated eligibility. The complexity of the policy has impacted access to services because it has led to variation in the interpretation, approach and delivery method of services across different contractors. In addition, the model requires that case managers possess a broad range of skills and knowledge with respect to IT systems, case management, complex policies and legislation, and specialized populations, which has led to variable levels of expertise and proficiency in delivering the services across the province.

- **Financial model does not support client outcome-focused delivery.** Only 35% key informants agreed that the EPBC financial model (the fee and payment structure) contributes to effective delivery and supports the intent of the Program. Linking service delivery to financial compensation has led to distortions, in some instances, with regard to how clients are assessed and services are delivered. For example, in some cases, interventions such as workshops are recommended because they generate a quick return to contractors and more clients are classified as Tier 3 or 4 because these categories are associated with higher fees and lower KPM targets. Some respondents stated that these distortions may have resulted in clients not receiving accurate needs assessments, or appropriate services to address their needs, in some instances.

- **Challenges in ensuring adequate specialized expertise and support.** Though contractors are required to provide specialized services or contract the services out to a sub-contractor under the EPBC, several key informants, particularly external stakeholders, noted that there have been challenges in ensuring the adequate provision of specialized expertise and support. Part of the issue relates to expertise and experience among case managers and contractors. Part of the issue relates to the time required to work with clients, particularly those that require ongoing and in-depth support. The billing points and KPMs do not work well for some clients. For example, it can take some PWD clients 2-3 years to obtain employment and they may go through multiple placements. In addition, there have been some challenges in collaborating and coordinating with some community partners.

- **Some clients are not comfortable accessing services in a one-stop-shop.** Some clients are less willing to access services because they do not feel comfortable being grouped with other client groups. For example, employment-ready clients may be reluctant to participate in workshops catering to clients with low or limited employment readiness; at risk youth might not be comfortable accessing services in larger centres; PWD clients may not feel comfortable accessing the services without specialized assistance; Aboriginal clients may feel more comfortable accessing employment services from a First Nation employment services
organization; and survivors of violence might be reluctant to access services due to low self-esteem or fear of running into their abuser.

- **Constraints in accessing some longer-term services such as self-employment and long-term training.** The main issues preventing access to training and self-employment are that the public is not aware the funding is available and the policy and process to access the funding are too complex. There are different interpretations of the policy across different catchments. Service providers tend to take fewer risks in referring clients to training because they fear the funding will not be approved. The process to apply for training is slower since some contractors require that clients participate in other services before they are considered for training. Also, the fees, such as income supports for self-employment and tuition for training, are not sufficient. The clients with the greatest need may not be able to afford the programs because they cannot maintain their household expenses while participating in the program.

2. **Effectiveness of Sub-Contracting Structures and Arrangements**

Over 260 service providers sub-contract to ESCs with most providing services to specialized population groups or providing particular services.

According to Ministry data, as of November 2014, ESCs sub-contracted to 269 unique service provider organizations as part of a total of 537 sub-contracts. Sub-contracts were spread fairly evenly across regions, with a slightly higher proportion in the Fraser (28%) region and a lower proportion in the North region (14%). Almost half of all sub-contracts served PWD clients (47%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Contracts by Region and Specialized Population Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 3: Fraser Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 1: Vancouver Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 2: Vancouver Coastal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 4: Interior Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region 5: North Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialized Population Group</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons with a Disability</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-BARRIERED</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal People</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survivors of Violence and/or Abuse</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francophone</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural and Remote Populations</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ELMSD Catchment Information, November 2014

On average, sub-contractors held contracts with two ESCs. Some, however, held several contracts (up to 16 for one). A slightly higher proportion of sub-contractors with only one sub-contract are located in the Interior (33%) and North regions (28%) compared to the Vancouver Coastal (11%), and Fraser (8%) regions. Interestingly, about half of all EPBC contractors (25 out of 47) also sub-contract to other ESCs. There are mutual sub-contracting arrangements between 11 pairs of EPBC contractors.

Under the EPBC, ESCs are required to flow-through a minimum of 25% of their overall EPBC funding to sub-contractors. Due to local circumstances, however, some contractors have negotiated lower flow-
through rates with the Ministry. Approximate maximum flow-through budgets were calculated by multiplying the minimum flow-through percentages in different catchments by the maximum budgets in those catchments. Taking into account the fact that some service providers sub-contract to more than one ESC, the average annual maximum flow-through for sub-contractors totaled about $250,000. The maximum was $2.4 million and the minimum was about $18,000.

Sub-contractors surveyed provide a variety of different services. Many provide general services such as case management (82%), needs assessments (76%), workshops (68%), and short-term orientation and certificate training (50%). Several also provide specialized, longer-term services such as job development (61%), self-employment (61%), work experience placements (58%), training services (53%), and customized employment (47%). On average, sub-contractors estimated that 47% of their clients are referred to them from WorkBC and 25% of their clients are referred to WorkBC.

**Most contractors and sub-contractors perceive that the existing contractual structures and relationships are effective. Some challenges identified included variable relationships, the lack of direct communication with the Ministry, financial viability issues, and challenges reaching and serving clients.**

Most contractors (77%) and sub-contractors (71%) consulted as part of key informant interviews agree that the existing contractual structures and relationships between EPBC contractors and sub-contractors are effective. Similarly, most sub-contractors interviewed as part of case studies and consulted during focus groups agree that the relationships and structures work well and the fees associated with the different service are adequate.

Contractors and sub-contractors have developed a variety of sub-contracting arrangements. Examples of frequently mentioned types of sub-contracting arrangements during case studies are as follows:

- **Shared Variable Service Fee (VSF) surplus.** Under these arrangements, all the variable fees are distributed equally based on the number of VSF staff (either prime or sub) in a shared risk and shared reward system that encourages cooperation and collaboration among partners. Sub-contractors may have some staff co-located within the ESC. For example, the ESC may have some case managers working for other organizations that specialized in youth, immigrant, or PWD clients.

- **VSF based on fees generated.** For example, one sub-contractor delivering self-employment programming delivers services based on VSF fees incurred and the contractor retains a 10% administration fee. Since the sub-contractor is a large organization providing a variety of services, they can sustain operations with only a VSF flow-through.

- **Flat or hourly fee.** Some services are more suited to flat monthly fees because they do not generate a high level of VSF, such as resource centre staff, employment liaison staff, or specialized services (e.g., self-employment) in regions with low client volumes.

- **Flat fee combined with VSF fee.** For example, one sub-contractor provides training and self-employment services based on a flat and VSF fee. The staff are mobile and work from laptops and cell phones, moving from centre to centre based on need or specific days of the week. One sub-contractor provides specialized services for PWD clients and receives a small amount of fixed fees and mostly VSF fees to deliver the services.

Contractors and sub-contractors identified several promising practices with respect to sub-contracting arrangements such as:

- **Collaboration, partnership and communication** between contractors and sub-contractors, for instance, treating sub-contractors as equal partners, allowing sub-contractors to participate in governance meetings, and maintaining frequent and ongoing communication regarding clients and billings;
Financial management such as minimizing operational costs by reducing staff levels and physical infrastructure, co-locating with contractors, supplementing income by delivering different programs, placing surplus revenue aside as a contingency in case of budget pressures;

Streamlining administration responsibilities. For example, some contractors enter all the ICM data for their sub-contractors to ease the administrative burden; and

Promotion and delivery of services such as referring clients interested in self-employment to ESCs and offering videos online to explain how to access training programs and services.

Some key informants, case study and focus group representatives identified challenges with respect to the existing sub-contractual arrangements. The most frequently mentioned issues are as follows:

- Variable and forced relationships between contractors and sub-contractors. Sub-contractors noted that relationships with contractors can vary. In difficult contractual relationships, sub-contractors are forced to either accept the terms set-out by the contractors or end the relationship. Some sub-contracting structures were established only to meet the flow-through requirement.

- Lack of direct communication with the Ministry. Several sub-contractors noted that their inability to communicate with the Ministry has led to frustrations, particularly when they require clarifications on specific policies or if they are experiencing issues with the contractor.

- Financial viability issues, due to the variable service fee model and low client volumes. Some sub-contractors stated that they are underutilized by contractors due to low demand for the services and because contractors chose not to utilize their services. Financial pressure has put the viability of some sub-contractors at risk and some have closed as a result.

- Challenges providing longer-term services such as self-employment and long-term training. Sub-contractors noted issues constraining access to longer-term services under the EPBC. For instance, the self-employment program is sometimes presented as a last resort option to higher barriered clients, whereas it previously catered to more skilled clients. Some sub-contractors are not able to advertise the services or directly refer clients to services. As a result, the volume of clients accessing services has declined.

- Challenges serving specialized populations. Sub-contractors serving specialized populations noted that they have experienced challenges delivering the services under the EPBC model. A sub-contractor working with PWD clients noted that it is difficult to generate enough fees to pay for the services. For example, the costs and activities are not sufficiently covered with VSF and some services, such as customized employment and job development, have back-end billings which can take several months to realize. A sub-contractor working with new immigrants noted that there is less time to work with clients since the focus is on delivering results and targets in specific timeframes. Some sub-contractors do not have the capacity to meet the administrative requirements of the EPBC.

3. Contribution of the Financial Model

The following section presents an analysis exploring some of the issues identified with respect to the financial model, using CFMS and ICM data as well as a review of operating cost data obtained from a sample of ESCs in 10 catchments.
**Fixed Operating Fees**

The current method of providing fixed operating fees (FOF) to ESCs results in significant variations in the fees provided to service providers that handle similar volumes of clients.

FOF fees are intended to compensate contractors for fixed expenditures such as facilities, equipment, staff costs, self-serve resources, and some workshops. These fees are intended to provide contractors with a monthly guaranteed amount to support business sustainability, regardless of client volume.60

The maximum FOF budgets were developed using historical data on geographic information, the number and mix of clients, and the types of services, as well as historical estimates on the cost of services, facilities, and staff. Prior to Program launch, service providers were consulted and several expressed concerns that the FOF maximums were too low. In response, the Ministry increased the FOF maximum budgets in each catchment. In the RFP process, service providers were asked to estimate anticipated fixed costs. However, a full breakdown of the proposed fixed costs was only required if the Ministry had questions about the proposal.61 Based on a review of maximum FOF budgets and actual FOF fees, most contractors proposed the maximum allowed FOF budget.

The following chart illustrates the large variation in FOF fees paid to ESCs that handle similar volumes of clients. As an example, FOF fees paid to an ESC range from about $900,000 to about $2 million for ESCs handling between 1,100 and 1,400 cases. Another example is FOF fees ranged from about $1.6 million to about $2.5 million for ESCs handling between 2,200 and 2,500 cases. The lack of sufficient data to estimate FOF budgets has resulted in some service providers receiving considerably more FOF fees to handle similar volumes of clients than other ESCs.

Figure 10: **Fixed Operating Fees and Number of Clients Handled by Catchment, 2014/15**

12 Note that urban and rural catchments were defined using Ministry peer group definitions developed for the internal EPBC evaluation. With some exceptions, urban catchments include population per census 2011 of at least 75,000 and rural catchments include population per census 2011 of less than 75,000.
Overall, FOF fees are approximately equal to the actual fixed expenses of the sample of 10 ESCs that provided cost information.

However, the variation in FOF fees per client handled has resulted in some sample ESCs not being able to recover their actual fixed expenses from FOF fees while for other ESCs FOF fees have covered all fixed expenses as well all other operating expenses such as case management. According to the financial information provided by ESCs for 10 catchment areas, the variation in the adequacy of the FOF fees (i.e. comparison of FOF fees to actual fixed expenses) has ranged from a loss of 35% to a gain of 35%.

Program costs could be decreased by reducing the number of catchments with low client volumes because catchments with small client volumes have very high FOF fees per client.

As indicated in the following chart, the FOF fees per client handled are considerably higher (i.e., $2,000 to $9,000 FOF per client) for ESCs with less than 300 clients compared to ESCs handing more than 1,000 clients (i.e., FOF fees ranging from $500 to $1,500 per client).

**Figure 11: FOF Fees per Client by Catchment, 2014/15**

There are 17 catchments that handled less than 300 clients in 2014/15. Many of these catchments could be served by service providers in nearby areas who could centralize administrative requirements and replace some storefronts with itinerant or alternative delivery mechanisms, which would reduce overall fixed costs as well as reduce administrative requirements of the Ministry due to a smaller number of catchments to monitor.

**Variable Service Fees**

There exist significant variations in the variable service fees (VSF) per client paid to service providers handling similar volumes of clients and similar types of clients.

VSF fees are intended to cover costs related to case management and case managed services. The
fees are paid monthly and change based on monthly client volume and services provided.\textsuperscript{62}

The following chart indicates that VSF fees per client paid to ESCs varies between $1,000 and $2,000 per client for most ESCs. Some of the variation in VSF fees per client can be attributed to different mix of clients handled by the different ESCs. However, an analysis of VSF fees indicated that VSF fees per client vary considerably for ESCs with a similar client mix. As an illustration, the VSF fees generated from workshops and ongoing case management varied considerably for ESCs handling the same volume and mix of clients.

\textbf{Figure 12: VSF Fees per Client versus Total Clients, by Catchment, 2014/15}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart12.png}
\caption{VSF Fees per Client versus Total Clients, by Catchment, 2014/15}
\end{figure}

The average surplus of VSF fees (i.e., VSF fees less variable service expenses) for the sample of 10 ESCs was 16\% of the VSF fees earned. However, the surplus ranged from 2\% to 48\% for the sample of 10 ESCs that provided financial information.

For all ESCs, the VSF fees generated from three services, ESS workshops, FNA - Action Plans and Ongoing Case Management accounted for 72\% of total VSF fees generated in 2014/15.

There exists greater incentive of ESCs to maximize their revenues from these three services because they can be undertaken and billed in a relatively short period of time compared to other services such as training, self-employment, and wage subsidies. Furthermore, fees from these three services (i.e., ESS workshops, FNA - Action Plans and Ongoing Case Management) can be earned without actually finding employment for a client.

\textbf{Outcome Fees}

Outcome fees accounted for only 0.4\% of total fees earned by ESC service providers while VSF and FOF fees accounted for 54.0\% and 45.6\%, respectively, of the total fees earned by service providers in 2014/15 (excluding FSPS reimbursements).

The outcome fees are paid monthly based on sustained employment for case managed clients who achieved outcomes 52 to 56 weeks previously. The outcome fees are paid for clients who sustained...
labour market attachment at the 24 week follow-up period and did not return to receive case management or employment support services from the EPBC or BCEA supports at any point over the 52 weeks following labour market attachment. The fees generated by outcomes vary depending on the number of clients who achieve and sustain an outcome, the tier of the client, and the average length of time for clients to achieve the outcome. The fees range from $25 to $75 per client outcome.63

A major drawback of the current financial model is that most of the fees earned by service providers are not directly linked to employment outcomes. FOF fees are not directly linked to outcomes because they are intended to cover the fixed costs of the ESC. The majority of VSF fees paid are not directly linked to the desired outcome of obtaining employment for clients. As indicated previously, 72% of VSF fees were paid to service providers for the delivery of three services (i.e., ESS workshops, FNA - Action Plans and Ongoing Case Management) and these services can be earned without actually finding employment for a client.

**Total ESC Compensation**

The financial gains (fees less expenses) varied across the 10 ESCs that provided financial information.

Overall, the financial gains (fees less expenses) of the sample of 10 ESCs that provided financial information was 12% of the total fees generated from FOF, VSF and outcome fees while the financial impact ranged from a loss of 1% to a gain of 37% in 2014/15.

**D. CONTRIBUTING AND CONSTRAINING FACTORS**

This section provides key findings with respect to factors that have contributed to the Program’s success, factors that have constrained the achievement of outcomes, and Program performance in identifying, sharing, and implementing best practices.

1. **Factors that have Contributed to Program Success**

Major factors that have contributed to the success of the EPBC include the dedication and experience of service delivery management and staff, collaboration among partners, increased access to supports under the one-stop-shop model, and ongoing dialogue on key issues.

Key informants identified the following key factors that contributed to the success of the EPBC to date:

- **The dedication, experience and expertise of case managers and other EPBC service delivery management and staff.** EPBC service delivery management and staff have significant experience and expertise in delivering employment services. The local presence on the ground of the service delivery organizations has contributed to a better understanding of the needs and issues faced by different regions with respect to unemployment and underemployment. Several employers that participated in EPBC projects noted ESC staff were effective in screening and selecting good candidates for the placements. Most clients surveyed and participating in focus groups were satisfied with the services they received from the ESCs.

- **Collaboration with other partners, service providers and employers.** Partnership and engagement at the Ministry level with provincial and federal partners, and service delivery level with sub-contractors, employers and other service delivery agencies has contributed to increased awareness and coordination of services and supports for clients.

- **The one-stop-shop model and expanded access to a variety of supports.** Under the EPBC,
more communities can access services and more services are available, as discussed on pages 87 – 90. The model also offers flexibility in how services are delivered.

- *The ongoing dialogue on key issues* has facilitated the sharing of best practices and identification of key issues affecting the Program. It was noted that the Ministry has made a strong effort to engage service delivery organizations in dialogue with respect to issues and this has led to significant changes and improvements.

2. **Factors that have Constrained the Achievement of Outcomes**

Major constraining factors include the focus on administration and finances instead of client needs, eligibility constraints, variable skills among service providers, and clients’ own personal challenges.

The most frequent key informant responses regarding the factors that have constrained the achievement of intended outcomes are as follows:

- *The complexity of policies and administrative processes*, as discussed on pages 87 – 90.
- *Restrictive eligibility policies*. Not all clients can access all services due to legislation surrounding the services and supports available. This has resulted in some clients not being able to access the services they need.
- *The Program financial model does not focus sufficiently on client outcomes*, as discussed on pages 87 – 90 and 92 – 96.
- *There is variability in the knowledge, skills and experience of contractors*. Some contractors are new to delivering some services and serving some specialized population groups, which can lead to gaps in the delivery of services.
- *Clients lack needed skills or face personal barriers to employment*. Clients may face constraints to success due to their personal situation, for example, low motivation, lack of family support, addictions, low education, and language barriers. Several employers experienced challenges in finding candidates with the required skills for the job placements and projects.

3. **Identifying, Sharing and Implementing Best Practices**

Service providers have developed a number of promising practices such as leveraging EPBC programming, streamlining administration, developing customized case management and job matching systems, implementing technology to assist clients, implementing case management strategies, delivering targeted and innovative client workshops, and disseminating client satisfaction surveys.

A number of promising practices were identified during key informant interviews, case studies and focus groups, some of which have been noted in earlier sections of this report, for example, with respect to marketing, collaboration, managing changes in client demand, case manager training, and providing specialized services. Other promising practices identified included:

- *Leveraging EPBC programming and services through co-location and the delivery of complementary programming*. For example, in addition to the EPBC, one ESC delivers several other community programs. Another ESC also contracts with JTST to deliver complementary programming such as essential skills training. Several ESCs are co-located with sub-contractors and other organizations which target EPBC clients. These arrangements help to improve client access to services and reduce fixed costs associated with delivering the services.
- **Streamlining administrative costs and processes.** Several service providers have developed ways to streamline procedures and administration. For example, one ESC developed a client intake process to reduce case manager administration for new clients. Clients complete an initial intake form prior to meeting with the case manager and all the information is entered into ICM by another staff member prior to the meeting. Some ESCs have chosen to undertake all the ICM and administrative responsibilities for sub-contractors since they have more capacity and familiarity with ICM.

- **Dedicating staff positions to administration, follow-up and staff coordination.** Some ESCs have dedicated staff positions to particular administrative roles:
  - **ICM, FSPS, and quality assurance staff.** Three ESCs visited as part of case studies employed dedicated ICM and FSPS staff, such as training, wage subsidy, self-employment and JCP, and quality assurance staff. These staff help to ease the workload for case managers and ensure that the ESC billings accurately reflect the work that was undertaken. FSPS staff also have a better understanding of the policies surrounding the supports and can dedicate more time to managing the supports for clients.
  - **Employment outcome follow-up staff.** Three of the ESCs employed staff that conducted follow-up calls after clients obtained employment. Most of these staff undertook this work as part of other duties such as managing an information phone line and the reception area. These staff help to reduce the workload of case managers and help to improve the consistency and accuracy of their reported client outcomes.
  - **Staff coordinator or team lead.** Three of the ESCs visited employed dedicated team leads or staff coordinators to help manage case managers and fill-in as needed.

- **Developing a customized case management, client portal and job matching software system.** One contractor has developed a multi-faceted software system that streamlines administration, case management delivery, and performs other useful functions such as automated job matching and a client portal. The contractor uses the software system in each of their catchments and markets the software to other service providers. This software has been sold to two other contractors that serve 3 catchments. Some of the key features of the software include:
  - **Case management and administration.** Case managers use the software system instead of ICM when interacting with clients. About 70% of the data is pushed automatically into ICM (once per day over night) and 30% is entered manually by data entry staff. The interface is user-friendly and information is easily searchable. The system also allows the ESC management to track and store billing information.
  - **Client portal.** Clients register on the client portal at computers in the ESC resource centre (or in their first meeting with a case manager) and can choose from a variety of language settings. The client can access the portal from home, upload their resume, and register for a workshop. Case managers can use the portal to monitor if a client attended a workshop or job fair and to know if the client got an interview as part of the job fair.
  - **Job matching.** Each client profile describes the client’s experience, credentials, and community in which they live. When an employer posts a job with the ESC, a Job Profile Analyst uses the software to match candidates to the job posting. The Analyst will call the matched clients and tell them about the position, ask if their resume is ready, and determine if they need to learn any new skills to apply for the position.

- **Implementing technology and resources to assist clients.** For example, one ESC provides case managers with electronic signature pads to save printing and scanning time, ergonomic sit-stand desks, a vertical mouse to ease wrist pain, and computer monitor stands which can rotate so clients can see the information case managers enter into action plans. Another ESC provides “Job Loss Cycle” maps on each case manager’s desk, which help case managers to work with clients who are dealing with emotional challenges in their employment search. Another ESC
provides case managed clients access to a phone number and voicemail that they can use for up to 90 days to assist with their job search, if they do not have their own phone.

- *Implementing strategies to provide timely and effective case management services.* One ESC provides access to case managers for short (10 minute) conversations with new clients, without requiring an appointment, if they have a question about the services. Another ESC holds weekly case conference meetings to discuss client needs, similar to the way health services professionals meet to discuss particular cases.

- *Delivering targeted and innovative client workshops.* One ESC tailors workshops to different client groups such as adults and youth. Another ESC offers workshops to cater to recent immigrants, by offering some workshops in different languages and some which focus on how to market foreign skills and education in the Canadian workforce. Another ESC offers a workshop that takes a non-traditional, holistic approach to help clients decide what they want to do with their career. One rural ESC offers online self-guided learning opportunities for clients who are not able to come into the ESC.

- *Disseminating and collecting client satisfaction surveys.* Three of the ESCs visited as part of case studies provided paper client satisfaction surveys for clients who have access services. The surveys asked questions about whether the centre is welcoming and safe, staff are friendly, responsive and professional, the services were delivered in a timely manner, the services helped them to feel more ready for work, if the services helped them to obtain a job, and if they would recommend the services to a friend. The surveys also asked for other feedback and suggestions of how the services can be improved.

**Over one half of key informants agree that best practices and lessons learned are identified, shared and implemented.**

Most key informants agreed (62%) that best practices and lessons learned are identified, shared and implemented. Key informants noted that they shared best practices and lessons through a variety of mechanisms such as EPBC corporate meetings and working groups, regional contractor and sub-contractor meetings, and through online tools such as the Extranet.

A few key informants stated that there has been some resistance to sharing best practices among contractors, since they are competitors in the RFP process and some do not want to share information on efficient business processes that might provide them with a competitive advantage in securing future contracts.
Summary of Key Findings

To what extent do different elements of the Program, such as tools, policies, and procedures, facilitate effective delivery of services? What lessons have been learned and best practices identified?

Some aspects of the EPBC design and structure have facilitated effective service delivery, while other elements have constrained delivery. The major contributing factors include more integrated, inclusive service delivery, new and enhanced supports, promising practices developed by service providers, enhanced access to performance data and increased contractor accountability, increased engagement of service providers, and greater focus on employer and community engagement.

The main aspects of the model which have constrained delivery include less time to work with clients due to increased administration and reporting, the complex policy framework, issues with the financial model, challenges in ensuring adequate specialized expertise and support, and constraints in accessing longer-term services due to eligibility restrictions.

The fee-for-service financial model does not sufficiently support client outcome-focused service delivery. The major issue is that the financial compensation model is not directly linked to obtaining employment for clients, but instead compensates service providers for delivering services that may or may not be the most appropriate to achieve employment.
VII. EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMY

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Directive on the Evaluation Function (2009) defines demonstration of efficiency and economy as an “assessment of resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and progress toward expected outcomes.” In this chapter, we examine how Program costs are being minimized, while optimizing the achievement of Program outcomes (economy). We also explore the relationship between Program costs and Program outputs (operational efficiency) and outcomes (allocative efficiency). Finally, we review alternative models of service delivery and explore potential opportunities for improvement.

A. PROGRAM EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMY

To what extent is the Program delivered efficiently and economically? What alternatives and opportunities for improvement should be considered that would achieve the intended outcomes more efficiently or effectively?

1. Program Operating Costs and Expenditures

Ministry Program administrative costs related to the EPBC have declined and overall Program investment has increased over the three years since Program launch in 2012.

Various factors impact the level of program spending such as labour market conditions, the mix of clients accessing services and types of services accessed, as well as factors internal to programs such as awareness of and access to services.

As indicated in the table below, expenditures dedicated to the EPBC from 2012/13 to 2014/15, totalled $914.1 million with $839.6 million dedicated to programming and $74.5 million dedicated to Ministry administration of the Program. The total EPBC programming expenditures (i.e., ESC contract funding and other related LMDA or provincial programming expenditures) have increased from $250.3 million in 2012/13 to $297.4 million in 2014/15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total EPBC Programming</td>
<td>$250,320,533</td>
<td>$291,855,698</td>
<td>$297,414,673</td>
<td>$839,590,904</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$27,985,608</td>
<td>$25,999,042</td>
<td>$20,553,421</td>
<td>$74,538,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Programming and</strong></td>
<td><strong>$278,306,141</strong></td>
<td><strong>$317,854,740</strong></td>
<td><strong>$317,968,094</strong></td>
<td><strong>$914,128,975</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ELMSD Financial Data

Ministry Program operating costs as a percentage of total Program expenditures have declined from 10.1% in 2012/13 to 6.5% in 2014/15. This decline in Program operating costs is, in part, due to cost savings in Ministry staffing levels and infrastructure costs since the Ministry is managing fewer contracts than under the legacy programs. For example, the Ministry managed 400 contracts for 10 programs under the legacy programs compared to 73 contracts held by 47 contractors under the EPBC. This indicates that the Program is being delivered more economically over time since the Program requires fewer Ministry resources for the administration of the same or higher levels of program funding.
2. Program Efficiency

The EPBC cost an estimated $4,624 per client served and $13,615 per employment outcome from April 2012 to September 2015.

To explore the efficiency of the EPBC, we examined the relationship between program costs and program outputs (e.g., clients served) and program outcomes (e.g., employment outcomes). These estimates demonstrate some evidence of the Program’s rate of return on investment. However, in reviewing the results it should be noted that the analysis is somewhat incomplete due to some limitations. For example, employment outcomes are influenced by factors external to the Program such as labour market conditions and some of the employment outcomes are not included due to incomplete data. Also, the return on investment analysis does not consider savings to the provincial and federal governments through reduced EI and BCEA claims from clients that obtained employment.

While taking these limitations into consideration, based on an analysis of estimated EPBC Programming expenditures from April 2012 to September 2015, the EPBC cost $4,624 per client served and $13,615 per employment outcome, as demonstrated in the following table.

Table 34: Approximate EPBC Programming Cost per Client Served and Employment Outcome, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated EPBC Programming Expenditures</td>
<td>$979,522,721</td>
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<tr>
<td>Client Served</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clients Served</td>
<td>211,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Per Client Served</td>
<td>$4,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Outcomes</td>
<td>71,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Per Employment Outcome</td>
<td>$13,615</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ELMSD Finance; CDW, Extracted October 5, 2015. Note that EPBC Programming Expenditures for April 2015 to October 2015 were estimated based on one half of the average annual expenditures from the previous three years.

Expenditures per client vary significantly by client type. Higher expenditures tend to be associated with higher barriered clients (Tier 4, PWD) who require more frequent and longer-term support and EI clients who are eligible for higher cost services such as long-term training.

The average VSF (variable service delivery costs) and FSPS (funding for client supports and services) expenditures per client varies significantly depending on the type of client. The average expenditures across all client types from April 2012 to September 2015 was $1,901 per client, as shown in the table on the following page.

Higher expenditures tend to be associated with higher barriered clients. For example, the average cost per client for Tier 4 clients was $2,294 and $2,429 among PWD clients. This is expected since clients with higher barriers to employment require more in-depth and frequent assistance.

Higher expenditures are also associated with EI clients ($2,811 per client for EI only clients $3,166 for clients that are both EI and BCEA status), and triple the expenditures associated with general clients ($988). This is likely since EI clients are eligible for the most services and supports under the EPBC, which tend to have a higher cost such as long-term training, wage subsidy, JCP, PBLMT, and self-employment.
### Table 35: VSF and FSPS Expenditures Per Client, April 2012 to September 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Characteristics</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>VSF ($'000)</th>
<th>FSPS ($'000)</th>
<th>Total ($)</th>
<th>Total $ Per Client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>211,826</td>
<td>$179,898</td>
<td>$222,883</td>
<td>$402,780</td>
<td>$1,901</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 4</td>
<td>22,325</td>
<td>$9,055</td>
<td>$42,160</td>
<td>$51,215</td>
<td>$2,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>72,030</td>
<td>$89,121</td>
<td>$67,322</td>
<td>$156,443</td>
<td>$2,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>76,174</td>
<td>$56,332</td>
<td>$105,907</td>
<td>$162,239</td>
<td>$2,130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tier 0</td>
<td>32,634</td>
<td>$24,258</td>
<td>$5,761</td>
<td>$30,019</td>
<td>$920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>6,512</td>
<td>$1,031</td>
<td>$1,509</td>
<td>$2,540</td>
<td>$390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None/Unknown</td>
<td>2,151</td>
<td>$101</td>
<td>$224</td>
<td>$324</td>
<td>$151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI / BCEA Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI &amp; BCEA</td>
<td>9,456</td>
<td>$14,957</td>
<td>$14,983</td>
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<td>EI Only</td>
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<td>$138,942</td>
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<td>$205,674</td>
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<td>BCEA Only</td>
<td>48,269</td>
<td>$16,632</td>
<td>$70,615</td>
<td>$87,247</td>
<td>$1,808</td>
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<td>General</td>
<td>80,924</td>
<td>$9,367</td>
<td>$70,551</td>
<td>$79,919</td>
<td>$988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Population Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with Disability</td>
<td>55,327</td>
<td>$46,624</td>
<td>$87,743</td>
<td>$134,367</td>
<td>$2,429</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survivor of Violence or Abuse</td>
<td>10,663</td>
<td>$7,121</td>
<td>$16,914</td>
<td>$24,035</td>
<td>$2,254</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
<td>29,715</td>
<td>$35,371</td>
<td>$29,571</td>
<td>$64,943</td>
<td>$2,186</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-Barred</td>
<td>37,227</td>
<td>$23,664</td>
<td>$55,959</td>
<td>$79,624</td>
<td>$2,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Population</td>
<td>148,202</td>
<td>$117,347</td>
<td>$165,441</td>
<td>$282,788</td>
<td>$1,908</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
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<td>$6,736</td>
<td>$20,250</td>
<td>$26,985</td>
<td>$1,766</td>
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<td>Francophone</td>
<td>2,001</td>
<td>$1,238</td>
<td>$2,277</td>
<td>$3,516</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>20,819</td>
<td>$11,302</td>
<td>$24,940</td>
<td>$36,243</td>
<td>$1,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>72,254</td>
<td>$50,636</td>
<td>$62,848</td>
<td>$113,484</td>
<td>$1,571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CDW, Extracted October 5, 2015 (based on unique clients).

### 3. Perceptions of the Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness of the Program

On average, key informants stated that the financial resources of the EPBC are utilized somewhat well.

Key informants, on average, perceived that the financial resources of the EPBC are utilized somewhat well (average rating of 3.1 out of 5, where 5 is very well). Key informants identified the following factors that contribute to the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the Program:

- **Appropriate spending and extensive due diligence with respect to the financial resources.** The financial resources are well-spent in some areas and there are strong due diligence measures in place to ensure the funding is spent efficiently.
- **Integrated service delivery under the one-stop-shop model.** The services are managed by fewer contractors under the one-stop-shop model, and the EPBC model integrates multiple programs.
- **Key issues affecting the Program are identified and continuous improvements are made.** There are ongoing efforts to engage service providers in dialogue to identify key efficiency challenges and to make improvements to the Program to address these challenges.
- **A higher proportion of funding is spent on clients and services than infrastructure,** compared to the legacy programming model. There is increased access to financial supports for clients such as money for interview clothes and other job start supports.

The major challenges identified by key informants with respect to cost-effectiveness and efficiency relate to issues with the financial model:
- Administrative requirements, as discussed on pages 87 – 90.
- Complex financial model and policy. Some key informants stated that both the financial model and the policy make it challenging to administer the EPBC. For instance, there are multiple billing points, types of services, client groups, and complex eligibility rules.
- Focus on financial returns instead of client needs, as discussed on pages 87 – 90 and 92 – 96.

B. ALTERNATIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Alternative Models and Promising Practices From Other Jurisdictions

The following section presents key findings based on a review of similar employment services programs in other jurisdictions including other regions in Canada, such as Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and Yukon, as well as other countries, such as Australia, the United Kingdom (U.K.) and the United States (U.S.). A summary table comparing the design and delivery model of the EPBC with employment services in some of the other jurisdictions reviewed is provided on page 107.

The jurisdictions reviewed share many similarities and a few differences compared to BC with respect to economic, geographic, and demographic characteristics impacting their need for and ability to deliver employment services.

The circumstances impacting unemployment and employment services in BC share some similarities and some differences with the other jurisdictions reviewed, which should be considered when assessing the extent to which promising practices can be applied in BC. For example, BC is most similar to the other regions reviewed with respect to:

- The average level of income. The level of income provides an indication of the overall health of the economy and availability of labour market opportunities in the regions. The GDP per capita in BC was about $CAD 50,000 in 2014 and GDP per capita in other jurisdictions ranged from a minimum of about $CAD 40,000 in Nova Scotia to a maximum of about $CAD 70,000 in the U.K. in the same year.
- The unemployment rate. The unemployment rate provides another indicator of the availability of labour market opportunities and also the extent that individuals face barriers to employment. The unemployment rate was 6.7% in BC in December 2015 and the unemployment rates in other jurisdictions ranged from about 5.0% in the United States to 8.6% in Nova Scotia in the same period.

BC is different from other regions in some ways, such as:

- Total population and level of unemployment. The population and level of unemployment varied significantly across the different regions reviewed. While BC reported a total population of 4.7 million and unemployment of 168,000 in 2015, other regions reviewed varied, with the U.S., U.K., and Australia reporting significantly higher levels for the same time period;
- The population density. Population density can impact how employment services are delivered in different regions such as the number of service providers, economies of scale, and the level of competition. Population density in BC is relatively low (about 5 people per square km in 2015) compared to some regions such as the U.K. (267 people per square km), but similar to some regions such as Australia (3 people per square km); and
- The nature of the labour markets and industries. Each region also faces unique circumstances with respect to the nature of their labour market, for example, the major industries, demographic composition, and vulnerability to global market shifts.
There are also many similarities in the design and delivery of employment services programming in the jurisdictions reviewed, as well as some differences including:

- **Integrated employment services delivery using third party service providers.** Many of the employment programs in the regions reviewed, such as Ontario, Nova Scotia, the U.K. and Australia, deliver integrated services using third-party service providers, similar to BC. For example, Ontario delivers Employment Ontario and related services through 170 third-party services providers in 324 service delivery sites across the province. In Australia, under the Job Services Australia program (recently replaced by a new program known as Jobactive) there were around 100 non-profit and for-profit organizations, delivering 650 contracts in 116 Employment Service areas across Australia. The U.K., one of the first countries to experiment with the one-stop model for delivering public employment services and benefits, delivers the Work Programme through 18 prime contractors holding 40 contracts and a network of 800 subcontractor organizations.

- **Direct delivery of services by a mix of government and third-party service providers.** Different from the BC model, some of the jurisdictions deliver employment services through a mix of direct government and third-party service providers, such as Alberta, Manitoba, Yukon, Quebec, and the U.S. For instance, Alberta employment services are delivered by 53 provincial government operated Alberta Works Centres as well as through contracts with other partners including community groups, non-profit organizations, and post-secondary institutions. Yukon also contracts out some of its employment services and negotiates 3 year agreements with service providers. Emploi-Québec, coordinates employment services through 130 Centres Locaux d’Emploi in 17 administrative regions, and partners with 400 specialized community organizations including 110 carrefours jeunesse-emploi. In the United States, One-Stop Career Centers have existed since 1998, under the Workforce Investment Act. A Local Workforce Investment Board is responsible for the federal money allocated to the states and funds employment services at the local level. The Act provides flexibility but all One-Stop Career Centers must work with various mandated partners.

- **Service provider funding models.** While the BC model compensates third party employment service providers primarily based on a mix of fixed and variable service fees, financial models in most other regions reviewed focus on either fixed or outcomes-based funding approaches. For example, under Employment Ontario, employment service provider operating funds are provided as fixed annual budgets based on costs per client using a sliding scale depending on demographic and geographic considerations. In Alberta and Nova Scotia employment services budgets are decentralized and issued to different regions who determine the contracting and delivery model. Australia and the U.K. compensate contractors primarily based on service provider success in helping clients to achieve targeted outcomes such as sustained employment. Australia is placing an increased emphasis on outcomes-based funding with outcome fees representing an expected 60% of total fees under its new service delivery model (Jobactive), compared to 40% of total fees under the previous model.

- **The types of clients targeted by the services.** The services in the different regions tend to target a similar mix of clientele, such as EI and social assistance recipients, and other unemployed individuals, as well as clients of varying levels of employment-readiness. Similar to BC, in Ontario, labour market and employment services are available and provided to all Ontarians. Ontario also serves specialized population groups such as PWD and requires that contractors have the capacity to serve these clients. In the U.S., it is at the discretion of the state to choose the types of populations they will target, how they can access the services and the range of services available. In Australia, as in BC, job seekers’ needs are assessed according to four streams of work readiness. Australia similarly identifies particular specialized populations facing barriers to employment including young people, people experiencing homelessness,
people from diverse language backgrounds, people with mental illness, people from Indigenous backgrounds, and people with disability. The U.K.’s Work Programme is accessible at Jobcentre Plus centres and is mandated for job seekers who are receiving income support.

- **The types of services provided.** The regions offer a similar mix of employment services and supports such as case management, workshops, job placements, and funding for training. Each of the Canadian provinces reviewed offers similar programming under the devolved federal LMDA services. For example, major components of the Employment Ontario services include client service planning and coordination, resources and information, job search, job matching, placement and incentives, and job/training retention. Other programs include second career, which provides laid-off workers with funding for skills training in high-demand occupations up to $28,000. Literacy and basic skills, pre-apprenticeship training, and Job Creation Partnerships Self-employment programming was offered but was terminated in 2015. Key services funded through Career Nova Scotia Centres include information access at the resource centre services, job search services and resources, client assessment services, case management services including return-to-work action plan development, management and follow-up, career counselling, diagnostic referral, job coaching, job development, and employer engagement.

- **Performance monitoring and accountability frameworks.** Each region monitors program and service provider performance using various metrics. In Ontario, service providers must demonstrate they are meeting key performance measure targets based on three components of service delivery: effectiveness, customer service and efficiency. Job Services Australia put into place a Star Rating System to evaluate service provider performance, which employs statistical regression analysis to compare provider performance across Australia. In the U.K., service providers under the Work Programme are required, as part of their contract bids, to set out service standards such as the range and minimum level of support they would offer. Similarly, in Nova Scotia, all Careers Nova Scotia Centres must satisfy service standards and put in place internal service standards which are monitored by the service provider and provided to Employment Nova Scotia upon request.
### Table 36: Comparison of the EPBC with Employment Services in Other Jurisdictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select Regional Characteristics</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>Ontario</th>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>Nova Scotia</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population density</td>
<td>5 per square km 36</td>
<td>15.2 per square km 47</td>
<td>6.1 per square km 98</td>
<td>17.8 per square km 99</td>
<td>2.2 per square km 101</td>
<td>35 per square km 106</td>
<td>267 per square km 102</td>
<td>3 per square km 103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>6.7% (Dec 2015) 123</td>
<td>6.7% (Dec 2015) 124</td>
<td>7.8% (Dec 2015) 125</td>
<td>8.8% (Dec 2015) 126</td>
<td>5.9% (Dec 2015) 127</td>
<td>5.0% (Dec 2015) 128</td>
<td>5.4% (2015) 129</td>
<td>5.8% (Dec 2015) 130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Employment Services – Delivery Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department, Ministry, or Entity Responsible</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation</td>
<td>Ministry of Training, colleges and Universities</td>
<td>Ministère de l’Emploi et de la Solidarité Sociale</td>
<td>Department of Labour and Advance Education</td>
<td>Ministry of Jobs and the Economy</td>
<td>Local Workforce Investment Boards</td>
<td>Department for Work and Pensions</td>
<td>Department of Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Model</td>
<td>Third-party service delivery</td>
<td>Third-party service delivery</td>
<td>Mix of direct government and third-party delivery</td>
<td>Third-party service delivery</td>
<td>Mix of direct government and third-party delivery</td>
<td>Mix of direct government and third-party delivery</td>
<td>Third-party service delivery</td>
<td>Third-party service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Service Providers and Regions</td>
<td>47 contractors providing services across 73 catchments and 84 storefronts</td>
<td>170 service providers with 324 service sites 131</td>
<td>130 Centres Locaux d’Emploi in 17 regions, and 400 specialized service providers 132</td>
<td>About 50 service providers and 90 points of service 133</td>
<td>14 Employment Centres, and 130 to 150 external service providers 134</td>
<td>2,500 American Job Centres across the U.S. (June 2015) 135</td>
<td>18 prime contractors holding 40 contracts, with a network of 800 sub-contractors 136</td>
<td>100 non-profit and for-profit organizations delivering 650 contracts in 116 service areas 137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Provider Payment Model</td>
<td>Fixed and service fee</td>
<td>Fixed/ performance based</td>
<td>Fixed fee</td>
<td>Fixed fee</td>
<td>Fixed fee</td>
<td>Fixed fee</td>
<td>Outcome based</td>
<td>Outcome based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix of Clients Served</td>
<td>EI: 35% BCEA: 23% Both: 5% General: 38% Tier 1: 3% Tier 2: 34% Tier 3: 36% Tier 4: 11% (April 2012 to September 2015)</td>
<td>Information Not Available</td>
<td>EI: 62% Social assistance: 31% General: 20% 138</td>
<td>EI: 73% (Jan-Sept 2015) Income assistance: 20% for 2015 139</td>
<td>Information Not Available</td>
<td>Tier 1 (Core services): 66% Tier 2 (Core &amp; Intensive services):23% Tier 3 (job training): 11% 140</td>
<td>Jobseeker’s Allowance: 60% Employment and Support Allowance: 40% 141</td>
<td>Stream 1: 31% Stream 2: 29% Stream 3: 24% Stream 4: 14% (March 2010; stream 1 is for work-ready job seekers; stream 2-4 is for disadvantaged job seekers) 142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other jurisdictions offer promising practices that could address some of the issues faced by the Employment Program of BC, particularly with respect to performance and financial contract management, access to and awareness of services, and consistency in the delivery of services.

A number of best practices implemented by similar employment services programs in other countries were identified, some of which could be applied to the EPBC. A detailed review of the programs demonstrated that it is very difficult to develop a set of alternative design and delivery models based on similar approaches taken in other regions. The diverse needs of the target groups and demographic and labour market needs in each region makes it impossible to design a program that can address the needs in each region and differences in political and administrative entities does not allow exact comparisons between regions. Nevertheless, the review identified a number of common themes and promising practices from other regions, some of which could successfully be applied to the EPBC. These common themes and promising practices are summarized as follows, but each practice mentioned deserves a more detailed review to identify the potential for application in BC:

**Performance Management Mechanisms**

- **Outcomes-based funding models.** Under outcomes-based funding models, service providers are compensated based on the achievement of client outcomes. In Australia, under Job Services Australia employment service providers are compensated through a mix of service fees (paid in advance for each 13 weeks of service), placement fees (for placing clients in work), and outcome fees (for clients who remain in employment for a minimum of 13 weeks or in education for at least one semester). Similar to the EPBC the value of these fees varies depending on the client’s level of employment-readiness, whether the position is full or part-time, and whether the provider directly brokered the placement, among other factors. Service providers are required to provide evidence to support the outcomes such as pay slips and the government checks to see if the individual is no longer receiving employment supports. Under this model, service providers do not receive any fixed operating fees. As noted earlier, Australia is placing an increased emphasis on outcomes-based funding with outcome fees representing an expected 60% of total fees under its new service delivery model (Jobactive). The U.K.’s Work Programme similarly compensates service providers using a mix of program start fees, outcome payments and sustainment payments. For instance, after receiving a job outcome, providers can claim sustainment payments every four weeks for up to two years depending on the participant. Payments vary depending on the type of client. Under this model, payments and overall budgets are uncapped.

The major advantages of the outcomes-based funding models are as follows:

- **Cost savings in the delivery of employment services, while achieving similar outcome rates.** Research on the impacts of the Australia and U.K. models identified evidence that similar schemes resulted in costs savings. For example, the program costs declined from AUS$8,000-16,000 per employment outcome in 1991-1996 to about AUS$3,500-6,500 per employment outcome in 2005, when employment services were fully privatized under the Job Network, the predecessor to the Job Services Australia. An audit of the U.K. Work Programme similarly found that the model resulted in a £41 million (or 2%) cost savings, while achieving similar levels of performance compared to previous programs.

- **Financial incentives align with client employment outcomes.** During interviews with representatives of the Australian Department of Employment, it was noted that service providers are responsive to financial incentives. They explained that the reason they have decided to focus more on outcome fees under Jobactive is to address issues with respect to service provider manipulation of service fees. For example, some service...
providers may refer clients to particular training courses in order to generate fees, whether or not the client is an appropriate fit. They mentioned that focusing financial incentives on outcomes is vital in achieving results.

- **Allows service providers the flexibility to tailor services to client needs.** The U.K.’s Work Programme model is based, in part, on a ‘black box’ approach, which allows service providers with the freedom to design programs that will work best for their local labour market using their experience and creativity. Requirements for providers have been minimized as much as possible, allowing them to innovate and focus their resources where they believe it will do most good.  

The major challenges associated with outcomes-based funding models include:

- **Harder-to-help clients may receive less focus (‘parking and creaming’).** Both the Australian and U.K. employment services models experienced challenges with respect to some service providers focusing more on higher functioning clients, who are more likely to obtain employment and achieve outcome fees (referred to as ‘creaming’), while dedicating less time to clients with higher barriers to employment (referred to as ‘parking’). According to a recent audit of the U.K.’s Work Programme, providers estimated that they spend about 54% less on each participant in harder-to-help groups than when they bid and several noted that they do not use payment groups to help target support, and that funding for harder-to-help groups is lower than expected.

- **Complex and time consuming administration.** Issues were identified in both Australia and the U.K. with respect to the increased administrative requirements associated with the models, for example, in tracking outcomes and payments for different categories and client types. A study of Job Services Australia indicated that the approach was hindered by the increasing amount of IT tasks for staff. The study also pointed to how the IT systems provided the Department with detailed oversight of service delivery, but that the level of oversight reduced flexibility and increased the administrative burden faced by service providers. Furthermore, the complexity of the model and number of outcomes (144 outcome fee types alone), resulted in an estimated administrative cost to providers for claiming such payments at AUS$1.5 million per year.

- **Financial viability challenging for smaller, specialized, non-profit organizations.** Both the U.K. and Australian model identified challenges with respect to the viability of smaller, non-profit service providers since organizations require a minimum capacity to operate under an outcomes-based model with no guaranteed funding. Studies have noted that a criticism of these models is that they tend to favour larger organizations and that the expertise of some specialist organizations has been lost as a result of their introduction.

Aspects of the outcomes-based models could be applied to the EPBC and may help to address issues with respect to the current financial model, which does not focus on outcomes-based service delivery. However, the associated challenges should also be considered in weighing the advantages of this approach.

- **Tracking different outcomes (other than employment) in performance and outcome monitoring.** Several programs reviewed incorporate different outcomes in their performance measurement systems (including the outcomes-based funding models mentioned above). For example, Job Services Australia incorporated pathway outcomes, which recognize progress towards the achievement of sustainable employment or education through substantial part-time work. The program also tracks social outcomes for clients with higher barriers to employment. Some evidence shows that these outcomes and their associated financial incentives do influence service provider behaviour in the Australian model. For instance, service providers reported...
focusing more intensively on placing stream 3 and 4 clients. In Employment Ontario, outcomes can include employment or on a career path, in education (returned to school full-time or part-time), and in training (in full or part-time training). The EPBC model could benefit from integrating similar outcomes and mechanisms to describe impacts for clients that improve their employment readiness and community attachment, particularly for Tier 3 and 4 clients. These outcomes could also be integrated into outcome fees to ensure the harder-to-help clients continue to receive sufficient attention and focus of service providers.

- **Service provider star rating systems.** Australia implements a Start Rating System for its employment service providers with various key performance indicators in order to track and share information on the performance of individual service providers. The ratings are provided as public information and can be used by job seekers in their decision of which service provider to access for employment services support. The rating also influences contract negotiations and management of the contracts by the Department of Employment. The Star Ratings methodology uses statistical regression analysis to allow the comparison of provider performances across the country by considering various job seeker and labour market characteristics which impact most on the achievement of job outcomes. Star Ratings could help the EPBC model to focus more on client needs by empowering clients to choose from which providers to access services.

- **Use of tax, social security data records to track employment and earnings outcomes.** A study by the OECD on managing performance in public employment services (2005) identified that measures of employment outcomes and impacts should be generated from sources other than the service providers themselves to strengthen the quality and reliability of the data. It was noted that “countries should consider using tax and social security data records to track employment and earnings outcomes at a low cost, subject to arrangements to prevent access to individual-level data.” Australia’s Jobactive uses a similar approach in its quality assurance process by undertaking a data-matching process to ensure clients are no longer receiving income supports. The U.K.’s Work Programme is working towards better access to real-time revenues and customs data to strengthen outcome data quality.

- **Contract management mechanisms such as client referrals and service provider competition.** Some of the models reviewed implement various contract management mechanisms to reward high performing service providers and penalize low performers. The U.K.’s Work Programme allows at least two service providers to serve the same region in urban catchments. At the start of contracts clients are referred to each provider randomly. In subsequent years, the Department for Work and Pensions increases the share of clients that are referred to the best-performing providers and decreases referrals to the lower-performing providers. This mechanism both rewards service providers for strong performance, and helps to ensure more participants are able to benefit from the highest quality services. Having two service providers in the same region also allows for some contingency, if one provider exits the market. It was noted during interviews with representatives from the Australian Department of Employment that a similar mechanism is used in the Australian model. The challenges with the mechanism are that it is less practical in rural areas, which may only require one service provider and service providers may be less willing to cooperate in joint marketing and employer engagement. The mechanism could be applied to the EPBC model in urban catchments, such as the Lower Mainland and Victoria areas, to foster competition and allow clients to receive the best service.
Financial Management and Accountability

- **Open book accounting of service providers.** According to interviews with program representatives, employment services programs in the U.K., Ontario and Nova Scotia each require service providers to provide annual audited financial statements. The U.K.’s Work Programme has adopted open book accounting practices with its service providers which are becoming the standard for contracted employment services. The objectives of the open book accounting include to provide transparency of supplier cost bases; assess costs and profits against the provider’s initial contract bid; provide insight into the price and unit costs and impacts on profits; enable an analysis of performance, profits and investments; and to give insight into optimum delivery models. The U.K. hopes to move towards open book contract management, a more hands-on approach than simple open book accounting since the government would work in full collaboration with service providers to verify and manage contracts with direct access to provider ledgers. Under open book contract management, the government would work more closely with service providers in optimizing cost savings and gain share agreements can be built into contracts so cost savings are shared between the government and service providers. The EPBC contracts currently do not require service providers to provide the Ministry with financial statements. However, the EPBC could benefit from such mechanisms to monitor the adequacy of the Program financial model.

Client Referrals and Eligibility Mechanisms

- **Targeted EI client referrals from Service Canada.** Emploi-Québec implements a targeted identification, referral and feedback mechanism for EI claimants in partnership with Service Canada. The mechanism allows EI claimants with higher barriers to employment to be targeted early in their claim and referred to employment services organizations. Key elements of the referral scheme include: 1) proactive efforts to target EI claimants at risk of prolonged unemployment, who are referred to Emploi-Québec by Service Canada as soon as they apply for EI benefits; 2) distinguishing EI claimants who are more likely to need help from Emploi-Québec using referral criteria such as education level, hourly wage from the last position, length of unemployment, occupation of the last position, age, place of residence, presence of a disability, among other factors; 3) regulating the volume of EI claimants who can receive Emploi-Québec services. In BC, a similar pilot referral mechanism is being implemented by select EPBC service providers. If it is successful, the mechanism could have a useful application in other areas of BC.

- **Ministry management of federal and provincial funding sources.** Careers Nova Scotia uses its LaMPSS case management system to link client funding supports to different funding sources, whether the source is provincial or federal LMDA. For example, wage subsidy supports are recommended by case managers at Careers Nova Scotia Centres based on client need. The application is processed through the LaMPSS system and provincial government program officers decide whether to approve the funding and as well as determine the appropriate source of the funding. For example, if the client is EI eligible then the funding source could be federal LMDA, but if the client is not EI eligible then the provincial government could provide the funding. This way service providers do not have to worry about eligibility or LMDA or provincial budget pressures when making decisions about client supports. Their recommendation is based on client need. This mechanism could help to address issues with respect to ensuring that clients with the greatest need are best matched with services that meet their needs.
Promising Programs and Services

- Programs which offer in-depth support for harder-to-help clients. Ontario and Manitoba have developed specialized programs to assist clients that experience higher barriers to employment. For example, Ontario introduced the Youth Employment Fund to address unemployment among high-risk youth. The program provides pre-employment training and placement support as well as supports for job maintenance and job coaching.\(^\text{167}\) Manitoba has also introduced programming targeting income assistance clients who require pre-employment training and upgrading. The programming offers an incremental step towards employment since these clients may not be ready for training or employment placements. Australia also offers targeted programs such as the Remote Jobs and Communities Program\(^\text{168}\) for rural areas and Disability Employment Services\(^\text{169}\) for PWD clients. Similar programs could help to address issues faced by the EPBC with respect to gaps in specialized expertise and increasing demand for services among higher barriered clients (i.e., Tier 3, 4).

Other Promising Practices

- Mechanisms to encourage employer and partner engagement. Ontario and Australia incorporate employer and partner engagement into their service provider performance measurement mechanisms. In Ontario, 40% of a service provider’s performance is based on customer service, part of which considers employer satisfaction with the service and service coordination using indicators such as the percentage of clients who experience effective referrals.\(^\text{170}\) During interviews with representatives of the Australia Department of Employment, it was noted that Australia is also refining how it uses its Star Rating system to reflect collaboration between service providers in helping to place clients. Similar practices could be applied to the EPBC to address issues with respect to variable levels of collaboration between ESCs and local employers and community partners.

- Career development practitioner certification. The Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education plans to dedicate a portion of its employment services budget to case manager or career development practitioner certification. The certification process will be undertaken by a not-for-profit association. Under the new contract (expected to start in July 2016), all front line case management staff will need to be certified within a 2 year period.\(^\text{171}\) Similar practices could be applied to future contracts for the EPBC to address issues with respect to the variability in the experience and expertise of case management staff in employment counselling, understanding policy, serving specialized populations, and working with case management systems.

Summary of Key Findings

To what extent is the Program delivered efficiently and economically? What alternatives and opportunities for improvement should be considered that would achieve the intended outcomes more efficiently or effectively?

Ministry Program administrative costs related to the EPBC have declined and overall Program investment has increased over the three years since Program launch in 2012. This demonstrates that increased efficiency has been achieved over the life of the Program.

Other jurisdictions offer promising practices that could address some of the issues faced by the Employment Program of BC, particularly with respect to performance and financial contract management, access to and awareness of services, and consistency in the delivery of services.
VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the major conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation.

A. CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation found that the Employment Program of British Columbia has made considerable progress in achieving its overall intended objectives and goals. The major achievements of the Program are as follows:

- Clients have gained confidence, skills and qualifications and many have successfully obtained employment following their participation in the EPBC.
- Most clients find the services timely, accessible and useful.
- Compared to previous employment programs, the EPBC offers more integrated and inclusive service delivery, new and enhanced access to supports, and service providers are more engaged in the continuous improvement of the Program.
- Service providers have developed promising and innovative practices in the delivery of services to improve their effectiveness and efficiency.
- The Program offers increased access to data for evidenced-based decision making and increased contractor accountability for the use of public funds.
- The Program aligns well with federal and provincial government priorities.

The challenges and issues associated with the Program are as follows:

- There has been limited uptake of job placement and long-term training services, in part due to eligibility constraints among general and BCEA clients and limited success in raising awareness about the services among employers and stakeholders.
- The consistency of service delivery varies in terms of the assessment of client needs and interpretation of policy and there are some gaps in the quality of services delivered, particularly for specialized client groups.
- The fee-for-service financial model does not sufficiently support client outcome-focused service delivery since service providers are compensated for delivering services that, in some cases, may not be the most appropriate to achieve employment.
- Service provider capacity is perceived to be somewhat constrained due to increased administration and monitoring requirements.

The conclusions arising from the evaluation of the Employment Program of British Columbia are as follows:
Program Relevance

Does the Program address a demonstrable need?

1. There is a strong and continued need for EPBC programs and services due to steady unemployment rates at 6% to 7%, major barriers to employment faced by specialized population groups, and projected labour market demand for a skilled and experienced workforce.

There is a strong and continued need for employment services and programming in BC because unemployment has remained steady at 6% to 7% since the Program’s launch. Specialized and other population groups continue to require assistance overcoming barriers to employment, and unemployed individuals need help aligning their skills, training and experience with the requirements of available job opportunities. Future demand for the EPBC is anticipated to remain strong, as the balance of BC’s labour market supply and demand is dependent on the ability to address skills gaps and ensure the successful labour force participation and employment of specialized populations such as youth and immigrants. Stakeholders perceive that some gaps exist in services for specialized populations with higher needs such as PWD, multi-barri ered, immigrant, rural and remote, and youth clients, and training and work experience supports for BCEA and general clients.

2. The Program aligns well with provincial and federal government priorities to reduce barriers to employment, secure employment for all, promote access to education and skills training, and support a diverse and strong economy.

The main objective of the EPBC is to help participating BC residents to achieve sustainable employment as quickly as possible, through the delivery of employment services, programs and supports, with a particular focus on specialized population groups facing barriers to employment. These objectives and activities are well-aligned with BC provincial government priorities to reduce barriers to employment and encourage employment for all British Columbians, promote a diverse and strong economy, and promote access to education and skills training. The Program is also well-aligned with Canadian federal government priorities to promote employment for all Canadians, reform and strengthen the EI system, and increase access to training and education, particularly for youth, Aboriginal people and recent immigrants.

3. The activities and objectives of the EPBC generally complement other similar programs and services offered in BC since the other programs target specific client groups and offer complementary supports.

Several other programs offered in BC share similar clients and provide similar or related services as the EPBC. However, the EPBC generally complements the other programs, since the EPBC offers a range of supports to a broader client target group, while the other programs tend to focus on particular client groups and often offer complementary supports which are not available to those clients under the EPBC. The services also complement due to mutual referrals between the EPBC and other services. There is some overlap in the provision of basic information and employment services such as resume writing and interview skills training, but the level of overlap and duplication varies by community and service provider.
Is the Program responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians?

4. The EPBC is responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians, particularly in determining client needs and developing action plans, which link clients to relevant services and supports. There are some challenges linking some services (job placement and training) and clients (BCEA, general, rural, multi-barriered, and PWD).

The EPBC’s case management approach is generally effective in determining client needs. Most clients complete their action plan (about 60%), which sets out the EPBC services they will receive and activities they will complete, and most clients find the action plans useful. The most common reasons why clients do not complete their action plan are that they found employment or they are dealing with a personal or health-related issue. The EPBC’s case management approach is fairly effective in linking clients with relevant services and supports and the services appear to be well-tailored to client needs. However, the overall up-take of job placement and training services is low, in part, due to eligibility constraints. For example, only 4% of clients accessed long-term training and 1% accessed wage subsidy supports. There were also some challenges linking some client groups, such as BCEA, general, rural, multi-barriered, and PWD clients, with relevant services and supports.

In what manner and to what extent has the Program reached its key target groups?

5. The Program has been successful in reaching unemployed British Columbians, particularly groups that face barriers to employment. From Program launch in April 2012 to September 2015, the EPBC served 211,826 clients – about one third of all unemployed British Columbians.

The EPBC has been somewhat successful in making information available and easily accessible. ESCs have developed a variety of innovative promotional, marketing, outreach and engagement strategies to increase awareness of the EPBC such as staff positions dedicated to marketing and community engagement and multi-catchment joint marketing activities. The leading sources of awareness of the EPBC include word of mouth, face-to-face meetings between ESCs and employers and community partners, and the WorkBC website.

The EPBC served 211,826 clients between April 2012 and September 2015. Clients are most frequently of low to moderate employment readiness and part of a specialized population group. The proportion of unemployed British Columbians accessing EPBC services has increased since the launch of EPBC (from about 30% in 2012/13 to 40% in 2014/15). An increasing proportion of EPBC clients face substantial barriers to employment and are part of specialized population groups, particularly PWD, youth, and multi-barri ered clients.

Clients most frequently do not access or return to EPBC services because they do not need the services to find employment, they experience health, personal or financial constraints, they are not eligible for the additional services they need, or they are reluctant to ask for help. There are a few challenges with respect to the complexity of the service offerings and perceived low level of awareness of the services in some regions of BC.

6. The EPBC has been somewhat successful in engaging employers and key referral sources.

ESCs have engaged in a number of collaborative projects and activities with employers, community partners, and other ESCs. Some examples include training partnerships, job fairs, employer information sessions, job creation partnerships, outreach with First Nations organizations, co-location with other service providers, and regional ESC networks to share promising practices and lessons. Referrals to EPBC contractors are mostly informal, except SDSI referrals of BCEA
Employment Obligated clients. Several community-level informal referral systems have been established, for instance, with Service Canada and Community Living BC offices. However, in some communities the referral systems between Service Canada and the EPBC are not very well developed. Some issues with respect to engagement include limited resources and time among ESCs, stakeholders and employers to engage in partnerships and engagement varies by community and service provider.

Is the Program aligned with the labour market demands and the needs of employers?

7. Most employers that participated in EPBC projects and activities are satisfied with the services and stated that the support met their needs. Some challenges with respect to addressing labour market needs include limited awareness and uptake of employer services and limited access to job placements and training due to participant eligibility restrictions.

Among employers that have used EPBC services, most find that the Program aligns with their needs because the Program offers flexible programming to respond to the changing needs of the economy, the EPBC helps employers to find candidates, and some contractors have developed good relationships with employers and have engaged employers in specific activities and programs. Employers have been involved in a variety of EPBC projects and they are generally satisfied with the services (71% of employer participants surveyed reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by the EPBC). Most employers stated that the projects were successful in helping them to fill positions and in helping participants to improve their employment readiness and workplace skills, particularly among Aboriginal, youth and multi-barrièred participants.

Employers that have made limited use of the Program perceive that the EPBC is less aligned with key labour market issues and needs because they recruit candidates through other means, they are not familiar with the services, they were referred job candidates from EPBC that were not a good fit for their needs, and eligibility requirements limit the range of candidates that can access job placements and training.

Program Impacts

What impacts has the Program had on participating clients? How does that vary by type of client?

8. The EPBC has helped clients to improve their employment search skills, build their confidence in looking for work, and acquire relevant certifications and accreditations.

Clients gained a variety of skills and qualifications by participating in the EPBC services. Clients surveyed most frequently reported improving their employment search skills such as life skills, resume writing, interview, and language skills (reported by 45% of clients surveyed), confidence in their ability to look for work and find employment (39%), and qualifications necessary to work (16%), as a result of participating in the EPBC. Key informants perceived that the EPBC has been somewhat successful in creating a better understanding of client needs and barriers, increasing employment readiness, and increasing self-reliance among clients. There are some perceived gaps with respect to the Program’s ability to increase self-reliance among clients with complex needs.
In what manner and to what extent do the various services contribute to the achievement of the intended outcomes?

9. According to recent estimates, 54% of EPBC clients achieved employment. The overall employment rate since the launch of the EPBC is 42%.

According to estimates for the first two quarters of 2015/16, EPBC clients are achieving a 54% employment rate and most KPM standards with respect to achieving and sustaining employment are being met. The overall employment rate from April 2012 to September 2015 is 42% representing a total of 71,974 clients that have obtained employment. Employment rates were higher for EI clients (54%) compared to general (40%) and BCEA (29%) clients. Rates also varied by Tier (50% for Tiers 1 and 2; 39% for Tier 3; and 23% for Tier 4). Some factors should be considered in reviewing the employment rates. For example, employment outcomes are influenced by factors external to the Program such as labour market conditions and some of the employment outcomes are not recorded since some clients could not be reached to confirm their employment.

The services associated with the highest employment rates across different types of clients include job placement services, such as Project-Based Labour Market Training, job development, wage subsidies, and long-term skills training. Employment rates for clients that accessed these services were higher than employment rates of clients that did not access the services among Tier 2, 3, and 4 clients and the differences were statistically significant. Statistically higher rates were also identified among EI, BCEA and general clients that accessed job development and long-term skills training compared to similar clients that did not access the services. Self-employment programming generated higher employment rates among Tier 2 and 3 clients. Customized employment and unpaid work experience generated relatively high employment rates among Tier 3 and 4 clients.

Since Program launch, 955 clients have achieved community attachment, such as volunteer placements, most of which are clients that experience higher barriers to employment. A small proportion of clients achieved employment after community attachment.

10. The majority of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of the EPBC services. Clients that participated in long-term training and job placements and clients that faced higher barriers to employment were more likely to state that the EPBC services were important in helping them to obtain their current position.

Two thirds of clients surveyed (68%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of the EPBC services they received. Clients were most satisfied with long-term training and job placements compared to self-served services, volunteer placements and workshops. Clients that face higher barriers to employment, such as BCEA and Tier 3 and 4 clients, also found the services particularly useful in helping them to obtain employment. Among clients surveyed that reported lower levels of satisfaction, clients most frequently mentioned it was because they did not gain useful information or skills, the staff did not provide them with adequate support, and there was limited funding for training and certificate upgrading.
Program Design and Delivery

Are the services delivered by the Program timely, consistent, and accessible?

11. The services delivered by the Program are delivered in a timely manner and are fairly consistent and accessible. Some issues include eligibility constraints, variability in the assessment of needs and interpretation of policy, and transportation challenges.

On average, each of the Key Performance Measure standards pertaining to timeliness of service delivery are being met and most clients perceive that the services are delivered in a timely manner (74% of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied). Clients perceive that EPBC services and storefronts are largely accessible (84% of clients surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied) and provide a welcoming environment. Clients have accessed a variety of financial supports, which appear to align with their needs. Some constraints with respect to access to services include eligibility criteria, the availability of financial supports, and transportation challenges. Also, services may not be consistently delivered because the assignment of tiers to clients is somewhat subjective and may be influenced by the fee schedule and contractor performance standards, and there are different factors impacting access to services for clients in rural and urban areas.

Does the Program have the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services?

12. The EPBC has the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services. Some gaps were identified with respect to the level of proficiency with administrative systems, understanding of EPBC policies, and expertise in serving specialized populations.

Most EPBC service providers interviewed agree that they have the capacity needed to meet the demand for services (82% agreed) and there is access to specialized expertise when needed (66%). To address variations in demand, ESCs most commonly reallocate responsibilities within the office and cross-train staff to undertake different roles. Training of ESC case managers and staff is the responsibility of contractors and many have provided their staff with a range of training opportunities. The Ministry has also provided support and tools for training to assist contractors in the process. Most ESC case managers and other staff have accessed training and, in general, they are satisfied with the training (65% were satisfied or very satisfied). Some gaps were identified with respect to the level of proficiency with administrative systems, understanding of EPBC policies, and expertise in serving specialized populations. Contractors and sub-contractors are experiencing some difficulties recruiting and retaining qualified case managers.
To what extent do different elements of the Program, such as tools, policies, and procedures, facilitate effective delivery of services? What lessons have been learned and best practices identified?

13. Some aspects of the EPBC design and structure have facilitated effective service delivery, while other elements have constrained delivery.

The major aspects of the Program design and structure which contribute to or constrain effective service delivery are outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing Factors</th>
<th>Constraining Factors</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ More integrated, inclusive service delivery in a one-stop-shop model serving a broad range of clients and using innovative sub-contracting structures.</td>
<td>▪ Less time to work with clients due to increased administrative, reporting, and performance monitoring requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ New and enhanced access to supports such as improved access to customized employment for PWD clients in rural and remote communities.</td>
<td>▪ Complex policy framework due to the integration of multiple programs and client groups, and challenges in understanding and interpreting policies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Service providers have developed promising and innovative practices such as optimizing staff roles and responsibilities to facilitate service delivery.</td>
<td>▪ Financial model does not support client outcome-focused delivery since service provider financial compensation is not directly linked to obtaining employment for clients and instead links financial compensation to service delivery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Enhanced access to performance data and increased contractor accountability for the use of public funds through improved data tracking protocols and systems.</td>
<td>▪ Challenges in ensuring adequate specialized expertise and support since there is less time to work with clients with complex needs in the fee-for-service model and some clients may not be comfortable accessing services in a one-stop-shop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Increased engagement of service providers in improving the model at Ministry meetings and working groups.</td>
<td>▪ Constraints in accessing some longer-term services such as self-employment and training due to restrictive eligibility requirements.</td>
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<td>▪ Greater focus on employer and community engagement since service providers are required to prepare partnership plans.</td>
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14. The fee-for-service financial model does not sufficiently support client outcome-focused service delivery. The major issue is that the financial compensation model is not directly linked to obtaining employment for clients, but instead compensates service providers for delivering services that may or may not be the most appropriate to achieve employment.

The financial model is focused too much on compensating service providers for the delivery of specific services, for example, through the provision of variable service fees (VSF), rather than client employment outcomes. The VSF fees generated from three services, Employment Support Service Topics (workshops), Formal Needs Assessment and Action Plan Development, and Ongoing Case Management, accounted for 72% of total VSF fees generated in 2014/15. These three services can be undertaken and billed quickly without the need to verify that the clients that receive these services secure employment or community attachment. There exist significant variations in the VSF fees paid to service providers handling similar volumes and types of clients due to differences in the specific services provided and the tiering of clients. This has resulted in considerable variations in the financial returns generated from the VSF fees.
The current method of determining fixed operating fee (FOF) budgets for ESCs has resulted in large variations in the FOF fees provided to service providers that handle similar volumes of clients. Part of the issue is a lack of sufficient data on actual fixed costs incurred by ESCs, since they are not required to provide the Ministry with financial statements. This has resulted in some service providers receiving considerably more fixed fees to handle similar volumes of clients than other ESCs. The variation in FOF fees per client paid to service providers has resulted in some ESCs not being able to recover their actual fixed expenses from FOF fees while for other ESCs, FOF fees have covered all fixed expenses as well some variable expenses.

Program costs could be reduced by decreasing the number of catchments with low client volumes because the FOF fees per client handled are very high for catchments with small client volumes. The FOF fees per client handled are considerably higher (i.e., $2,000 to $9,000 FOF fees per client) for ESCs with less than 300 clients compared to ESCs handing more than 1,000 clients (i.e., FOF fees ranging from $500 to $1,500 per client). There are 17 catchments that handled less than 300 clients in 2014/15.

While the current financial model does compensate service providers for outcomes such as client employment, outcome fees accounted for only 0.4% of total fees earned by ESCs in 2014/15, while VSF and FOF fees accounted for 54.0% and 45.6%, respectively.

**Program Efficiency and Economy**

*To what extent is the Program delivered efficiently and economically? What alternatives and opportunities for improvement should be considered that would achieve the intended outcomes more efficiently or effectively?*

15. **Ministry Program**

Ministry Program administrative costs related to the EPBC have declined and overall Program investment has increased over the three years since Program launch in 2012. This demonstrates that increased efficiency has been achieved over the life of the Program.

Expenditures dedicated to the EPBC from 2012/13 to 2014/15 totalled $914.1 million with $839.6 million dedicated to programming and $74.5 million dedicated to Ministry administration of the Program (representing 8.2% of the total). EPBC programming expenditures have increased over time from $250.3 million in 2012/13 to $297.4 million in 2014/15. Ministry program administration costs as a percentage of total program expenditures have declined from 10.1% in 2012/13 to 6.5% in 2014/15, which indicates that the Program is being delivered more economically over time, since the Program requires fewer Ministry resources for the administration of the same or higher levels of program funding.

On average, the EPBC cost an estimated $4,624 per client served and $13,615 per employment outcome. These estimates demonstrate some evidence of the Program’s rate of return on investment over the first three and a half years since Program launch. Key informants, on average, perceived that the financial resources of the EPBC are utilized somewhat well.

16. **Other jurisdictions offer promising practices that could address some of the issues faced by the Employment Program of BC, particularly with respect to performance and financial contract management, access to and awareness of services, and consistency in the delivery of services.**

The employment services in other jurisdictions reviewed, including Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Yukon, Australia, U.K., and U.S., share many similarities and a few differences compared to BC with respect to economic, geographic, and demographic characteristics, as well in the design, delivery, focus and mix of clients targeted by the services. A detailed review of the
programs demonstrated that it is very difficult to develop a set of alternative design and delivery models based on similar approaches taken in other regions. Nevertheless, the review identified a number of common themes and promising practices from other regions, some of which could successfully be applied to the EPBC, such as outcomes-based funding models, tracking different outcomes other than employment rates, service provider star rating systems, the use of tax and social security data to track employment and earnings outcomes, contract management mechanisms, open book accounting of service providers, targeted EI client referrals, programs for harder-to-help clients, mechanisms to encourage employer and partner engagement, and career development practitioner certification training.

**B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The major recommendations arising from the evaluation of the Employment Program of British Columbia are presented below. Within each recommendation, we have identified a series of options and suggested approaches to address key issues affecting the Program. Additional analysis should be undertaken to assess the feasibility and weigh the potential benefits and risks of each option.

**Services for Employment Ready Clients**

1. **Examine ways to increase the uptake of work experience placements and long-term skills training among clients with moderate to high employment readiness.**

   The evaluation identified gaps with respect to the up-take of long-term training and work experience placements among EPBC clients. Not only are such services needed to meet projected BC labour market demands but the evaluation also found that the services tend to result in higher employment outcomes across different types of client groups and Tiers. The literature identified that job placements are particularly effective in helping individuals who have been unemployed for a long time to gain employment, while longer-term training tends to improve the sustainability of the employment and earnings. Potential options to address these issues are as follows:

   - **Expanding access to specified populations of BCEA and general clients.** The Ministry could examine options with respect to expanding eligibility to general and BCEA clients for work experience placements and long-term skills training, particularly those with moderate to high employment readiness. Given that general and BCEA clients represent two thirds of all EPBC clients, expanding their access to services could go a long way to improving the overall effectiveness of the Program. Some studies cautioned that training programs may not be cost-effective in assisting income assistance clients to obtain employment. The BC government continues to have conversations with the federal government to better leverage eligibility expansion to meet the needs of the BC labour market. The Ministry could consider expanding eligibility for particular groups of clients, such as youth, recent immigrants and Aboriginal clients or encourage the use of some services such as job development.

   - **Increasing referrals and promotion among EI clients.** More formalized referral systems could help to increase awareness and up-take of EPBC training and job placement services among EI clients. Consideration should be given to expanding the Targeting, Referral and Feedback pilot project with Service Canada to ESCs across BC. The Ministry could also undertake regular or annual marketing of the EPBC services to EI clients and provide more detailed descriptions of what services are available.

   - **Increasing promotion of the Program among employers.** The Ministry could increase its collaboration with industry associations and other employer organizations at a province-wide level to increase the degree of awareness and engagement of employers with the EPBC.
The major risks associated with expanding access, referrals and promotion include higher programming costs and potential inefficient use of resources.

**Services for Clients with Low Employment Readiness**

2. Assess options to enhance service delivery for clients with low employment readiness and more complex needs.

The evaluation found some gaps with respect to the consistency and depth of services for specialized population groups and clients with more complex barriers and needs. A high proportion of EPBC clients are part of a specialized client group and an increasing proportion are Tier 4 (little to no employment readiness). Stakeholders and service providers identified gaps with respect to meeting the needs of clients with more significant barriers, since they require ongoing and in-depth support. Options should be considered to enhance access to services for these clients, such as:

- **Introducing dedicated programming or fixed fees for some clients or services.** Consideration should be given to introducing dedicated programming or fixed fees to deliver services for clients that are not ready for long-term skills training or job placements. Such services could include personal counselling, advocacy and community coordination, pre-employment training and upgrading.

- **Introducing outcome fees for client progress towards employment.** Service provider outcome fees could be introduced which consider incremental outcomes towards employment readiness such as community attachment or a client ‘graduating’ from one Tier to another. A potential risk with this option is increased administrative complexity.

- **Introducing mandatory formal training or certification of case managers.** The Ministry could develop or contract out a formal Career Development Practitioner Certification training program (delivered online or in person) and require that all EPBC case managers complete the training, with curriculum which covers services to specialized populations and clients with complex barriers. A limitation of this option is that mandatory training would reduce the flexibility in how contractors train their staff.

- **Encouraging cooperation and sharing of best practices among service providers.** Mechanisms could be established to encourage service providers to share and implement best practices with respect to serving specialized clients and maximizing service provider capacity. For example, the Ministry could include service provider collaboration as a separate Key Performance Measure (KPM).

**Design and Delivery Model**

3. Consider placing a greater emphasis on outcomes-based funding and exploring options to reduce service delivery costs.

The evaluation found that the fee-for-service financial model does not sufficiently support client outcome-focused service delivery. Outcomes-based funding models used by employment programs in other jurisdictions have demonstrated a number of advantages since they align service provider financial incentives with the desired program outcomes, result in cost savings through more efficient use of resources, and give service providers more flexibility to tailor services to client needs. The evaluation also found potential opportunities for reducing overall fixed costs. Different options which could be explored to address these issues include:
• Redesigning the financial compensation model with a greater emphasis on outcome fees. The financial compensation model could be redesigned to compensate service providers for achieving employment for their clients rather than paying providers for the individual services. Potential challenges with outcomes-based funding include less focus on harder-to-help clients, more complex administration, and smaller service providers may find it more challenging to sustain operations. Some of these constraints could be mitigated by introducing dedicated programming or outcome fees for harder-to-help clients and ensuring service providers receive sufficient fixed fees to maintain minimum service levels.

• Requiring service providers to provide financial statements. The Ministry could require that annual financial statements are provided by all service providers, to ensure that the financial model is based on actual costs and adequately compensates service providers for their expenditures to deliver EPBC programming.

• Reducing the number of catchments. Some smaller catchments could be served by service providers in nearby areas, which would reduce overall fixed costs (through the provision of itinerant services in some locations and centralization of some processes) and reduce Program administration requirements of the Ministry due to a smaller number of catchments to monitor. The potential risk associated with this option is that it could reduce access.

• Reviewing the requirement to flow-through a portion of the budget to sub-contractors. The requirement to flow-through a portion of the budget should be re-examined so contractors have more flexibility to utilize delivery models which are most effective in their region. The potential risk with this option is that service providers may chose to not sub-contract to specialists and clients may receive services from staff that have less expertise.

Administration and Governance

4. Investigate options to simplify Program administration and reporting processes.

The evaluation identified constraints to service delivery capacity and time as a result of the increased administrative and governance requirements under the EPBC. To address these issues, options could be considered such as:

• Identifying ways to streamline administration, reporting and contract management. A review of existing governance, reporting, and administration mechanisms should be undertaken to determine the opportunities to reduce the level of detail and number of reports that must be completed regularly by service providers. Potential risks associated with reduced reporting could include reduced Ministry awareness of how services are being delivered.

• Introducing mandatory formal training or certification of case managers. As noted earlier, the Ministry could develop or contract out a formal Career Development Practitioner Certification training program and require that all EPBC case managers complete the training, with curriculum which covers training in case management administration systems. This could help to address issues of variable proficiency with IT systems, saving case manager time and reducing data entry errors.

• Encouraging cooperation and sharing of best practices among service providers. Mechanisms could be established to encourage service providers to share and implement best practices with respect to streamlining administrative tasks and roles to maximize service provider capacity. As noted earlier, the Ministry could include service provider collaboration as a separate KPM.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX I: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

To assess the extent to which the EPBC has met its intended objectives and goals, the evaluation examined four major issues: relevance, program impacts, design and delivery, and efficiency and economy. Relevance examines whether the Program is meeting a need among key target groups, Program impacts examines the extent to which Program goals have been met, design and delivery explores the factors internal to the Program which may have contributed to or constrained the achievement of those goals, and efficiency and economy assesses the cost of achieving the Program goals, and whether there are more efficient alternatives which would result in improved results at a lower cost. Within each issue we explored specific evaluation questions, presented in the table below.

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<tr>
<th>Evaluation Issues:</th>
<th>Evaluation Questions:</th>
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<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td>• Does the Program address a demonstrable need?</td>
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<td>• Is the Program responsive to the needs of unemployed British Columbians?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• In what manner and to what extent has the Program reached its key target groups?</td>
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<td>• Is the Program aligned with the labour market demands and the needs of employers?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Impacts</strong></td>
<td>• What impacts has the Program had on participating clients? How does that vary by type of client?</td>
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<td>• In what manner and to what extent do the various services contribute to the achievement of the intended outcomes?</td>
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<td>• What lessons have been learned and best practices identified?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Design and Delivery</strong></td>
<td>• Are the services delivered by the Program timely, consistent, and accessible?</td>
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<td>• Does the Program have the capacity and capabilities needed to deliver the required services?</td>
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<td>• To what extent do different elements of the Program, such as tools, policies, and procedures, facilitate effective delivery of services?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Efficiency And Economy</strong></td>
<td>• To what extent is the Program delivered efficiently and economically?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What alternatives and opportunities for improvement should be considered that would achieve the intended outcomes more efficiently or effectively?</td>
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The data collected for the evaluation was extracted and triangulated to address each of these questions. We analyzed the data obtained to develop a summary response to each evaluation question. As part of this step, we took into account the strengths and limitations of each line of inquiry to develop valid, reliable and credible conclusions. We employed a variety of data analysis techniques to rule out alternative explanations of the results and to enhance the generalizability of the results. The analysis also explored the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the EPBC as well as the specific causal linkages between the program components. Various statistical tests and methods were used to analyze the data collected through interviews, surveys, and administrative databases such as frequency tables, cross-tabulations, correlation analysis, and tests for statistical significance.
The evaluation employed multiple lines of evidence drawing from primary data sources including interviews and surveys of Ministry representatives, EPBC contractors and service providers, ESC case managers and staff, sub-contractors, employers and employer associations, other provincial and federal government representatives, other stakeholders and selected experts, and secondary data sources including a review of documents, literature and program data. Each data source is described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

1. Literature Review

The primary purpose of the literature review was to establish contextual information regarding the environment in which the EPBC operates, and to identify lessons learned and best practices in employment programming through research and literature on the subject and documentation of similar programs. The literature review focused on:

- Characteristics of the BC labour market and key trends since 2008, in order to provide information regarding the need for the EPBC and economic factors that may have impacted Program outcomes;
- Predecessor employment programs in BC in order to assess the impact of changes made to the programming, and to obtain comparative data regarding the activities, outcomes and efficiency of the EPBC;
- Characteristics of the target group used to develop a profile of unemployed British Columbians (including EI and BCEA clients) and to provide a basis for commenting on the reach and penetration of the EPBC;
- Journal articles, books, working papers, reports, websites, and other research related to new and innovative strategies and best practices in the design and delivery of employment programs; and
- Information on similar programs in other provinces and territories, including Ontario, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and Yukon, and international jurisdictions, including Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, was used to compare the relevance, performance and efficiency of the EPBC to similar programming. Available program descriptions, annual reports, past evaluations, and existing comparative studies of these programs were supplemented with telephone interviews with representatives of similar programs in other jurisdictions. The results were used to identify alternative models, best practices and potential opportunities for improvement that could be considered as well as to obtain data against which to compare and benchmark the outcomes and efficiency of the EPBC.

A list of the literature reviewed is provided in Appendix III.

2. Document Review

An extensive review of internal and external documents was undertaken to collect information on the relevance, performance and efficiency of the EPBC and to complement the statistical data on clients obtained through ICM. The review included relevant policies, procedures, tools, strategies, consultation files and other documents developed by the Ministry and, in some cases, by service providers such as promotional documents, communication documents, protocols, and planning documents, and others, such as research, materials, and best practices developed by CfEE. Internal documents were identified in consultation with the Evaluation Steering Committee and Ministry representatives. External documentation was identified in collaboration with the Ministry was also reviewed including discussion papers, white papers, past surveys and research studies related to Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA), the EPBC and best practices in employment programs. A list of the documents reviewed is provided in Appendix III.
3. **Review of EPBC administrative and performance data**

A review of program data was undertaken to develop a profile of the Program’s outputs and activities and collect information on the relevance, performance and efficiency of the EPBC. The EPBC uses Integrated Case Management (ICM) to manage Program administrative processes. The ICM data analyzed for this evaluation included the Master Client Data (which detailed individual episodes and clients in terms of start and end dates, designation as clients receiving particular services, specialized populations status, assigned tier, and other demographic characteristics of clients, and employment and community attachment outcomes associated with client episodes), Total Program Dollars (including VSF and FSPS expenditures to date), Service Plan Goal (describes the service goals assigned to clients at the outset of an episode), ERIQ Data (client demographics, work and employment history), and Specialized Assessments (information on recipients of specialized assessments and the cost of those assessments).

4. **Key Informant Interviews and Surveys**

A total of 263 telephone interviews and surveys were conducted with key informants between May and August, 2015 to obtain input regarding the relevance of the EPBC, achievement of expected outcomes, and cost-effectiveness of the program activities. Respondents included Ministry representatives, EPBC contractor and service provider organizations, other provincial and federal representatives, employer associations and employers, other stakeholders, selected experts, ESC representatives and sub-contractors. The following table provides the target and number of completed interviews and a brief description of the respondents interviewed and surveyed for each group.

Interview guides were developed in consultation with the Program Steering Committee. The list of contacts was developed in collaboration with the Evaluation Steering Committee, through referrals from contractors for other stakeholders and employers, and through an online search for major employer and employer associations, other stakeholders and selected experts. Representatives were sent an introductory email soliciting their participation and a copy of the interview guide. A representative from Ference and Company followed up 2 to 4 times by telephone and/or email.

Interviews and surveys were entered into the online survey software FluidSurveys. The responses were compiled and analyzed by interview question using Excel. Each key informant group was analyzed separately. Qualitative responses were coded into different categories and summarized by the number and proportion of responses per category. Quantitative responses (e.g., responses using a Likert scale) were summarized by frequency, distribution, and overall average. Major themes and key differences across key informant groups were identified and summarized by evaluation question and indicator.

**Description of Key informants Interviewed and Surveyed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Informants</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Description of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviews:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Program</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8 to 10</td>
<td>Respondents include executives, managers, Contract and Partnership Agents (CAPAs), and analysts involved in areas such as operations, finance and quality assurance, diversity and client inclusion, program management and design, and program analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Steering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Key Informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Informants</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Description of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Ministry Staff</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10 to 20</td>
<td>On average, representatives had 3 years of experience in their current role and 11 years experience in employment programming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPBC Contractors and Service Providers</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35 to 45</td>
<td>Respondents include 57 individuals from 37 contractor organizations.(^{13}) Roles included executive and senior management, managers, and directors, and a few financial and quality assurance staff. Representatives had on average 16 years of experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Provincial and Federal* Government Representatives</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Respondents include 5 other provincial government representatives and one federal government representative. Roles included managers, directors, and senior executives with organizations that focus on related issues and client groups. Representatives were somewhat familiar programming and services delivered through the EPBC, providing an average rating of 3.2, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is very familiar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading Employer Associations and Employers</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30 to 40</td>
<td>Respondents included 22 employers and 9 professional or employer associations representing industries such as tourism and hospitality, manufacturing, construction, natural resources, applied sciences, trucking and health and social services. Roles included executives or owners, directors, and human resource/recruitment managers. Representatives had an average of 10 years of experience in this role and were somewhat familiar with EPBC programming and services (an average rating of 3.1, on a scale of 1 to 5). Most were familiar due to their interactions with a local EPBC contractor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stakeholders</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30 to 50</td>
<td>Respondents included 29 stakeholder organizations involved in employment and related service delivery. About half focused on supports for persons with disabilities, and half focused on employment services, services for youth, Aboriginal people, persons with multiple barriers, and survivors of violence. Roles included directors, analysts, facilitators, and counsellors (employment and clinical). They were somewhat familiar with EPBC programming and services (an average rating of 3.9, on a scale of 1 to 5) primarily due to regular communication and collaboration with the local EPBC contractor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Experts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Respondents included 5 directors, professors, and researchers knowledgeable in employment programming models, best practices in career development, and in services for persons with disabilities. Representatives were familiar with programming and services delivered through the EPBC (an average rating of 3.6, on a scale of 1 to 5). Some have been involved in committees, have interactions with contractors or are undertaking research in areas related to employment programming.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subtotal: 131 123 to 185

### Surveys:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveys:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Description of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESC Case Managers and Other Staff</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>90 to 135</td>
<td>Respondents included 92 ESC case managers and other staff of 28 EPBC contractor organizations. Roles included case management, needs assessment, staff management, workshop delivery, and support, such as IT, accounting, quality assurance, and performance measurement staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{13}\) Thirty-eight interviews were conducted in total as one organization had interviews for two separate locations.
5. **EPBC Client Survey**

A survey of 5,145 EPBC clients was undertaken between June and November, 2015 to obtain information and collect feedback on the relevance and performance of the EPBC. To complete the survey, we selected a random sample frame of 50,000 EPBC clients from the client population. The sample frame represented the total client population in terms of gender, region, age, EI or BCEA status, tier, and membership in specialized populations.

Clients had the option to complete the survey online, by telephone, or by return mail, and were contacted by email up to 5 times, and received up to 3 telephone calls. Clients contacted by telephone had the option of providing their email address to complete the survey online, or to complete the survey over the phone or by return mail.

A total of 43,450 clients were contacted and invited to participate in the survey. The 5,145 clients that completed or substantially completed the survey represent a response rate of 11.8% and result in a margin of error of ± 1.3%, 19 times out of 20.

6. **Case Studies**

Nine case studies involving a mix of primary and secondary data sources were conducted to collect information and obtain feedback on specific areas of interest related to the relevance, performance and cost-effectiveness of the EPBC at the contractor level. The topic, purpose and data sources utilized for each case study are outlined in the following table. A description of the methodology used for each primary data source follows.

**Case Studies Purpose and Data Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Purpose of Case Study</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Efficiency of the EPBC Design at the Contractor Level</td>
<td>The purpose of the case study was to identify and describe examples of promising practices in contractor delivery.</td>
<td>Contractors, Visits to 6 ESCs, Documents and other evidence gathered during site visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Influence of the Financial Model on the Delivery of Services</td>
<td>The purpose of the case study was to examine how the financial model influences delivery, develop a profile of financial model and spending by service/activity and describe examples and the extent to which the financial model influences service delivery positively and negatively.</td>
<td>Visits to 6 ESCs, Documents and other evidence gathered during site visits, Financial and ICM data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 Examples include persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, survivors of violence, youth and multi-barriered individuals.
### Purpose of Case Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Purpose of Case Study</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Differences between Rural and Urban ESCs</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to examine differences between rural and urban ESCs (location, types of services delivered, types of clients, proportion of repeat clients, financial and organizational information) and describe examples of differences between rural and urban ESCs with respect to service delivery.</td>
<td>Visits to 6 ESCs, Program documents, Financial and ICM data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Repeat Users</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to develop a better understanding of the characteristics of clients who participated in EPBC multiple times in past two years and to develop profile of these clients in terms of client types, patterns of participation, utilization of services, reported outcomes and contributing factors.</td>
<td>Client survey results, ICM data, Visits to 6 ESCs including interviews with contractors with high number of repeat clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Clients Who Make Limited Use of the EPBC Services</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to develop a profile of clients that did not complete their action plan, describe barriers and reasons for limited use and describe the impact on outcomes.</td>
<td>Client survey results, ICM data, Visits to 6 ESCs including interviews with contractors, Key informant interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Use of Sub-contractors</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to develop profile of EPBC sub-contractor use, types of sub-contractors, types of services delivered, types of clients accessing supports, describe examples of promising practices in sub-contractor arrangements and describe examples of challenges associated with sub-contracting.</td>
<td>Program documents, Interviews with contractors and subcontractors, Visits to 6 ESCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Participation of Employers in the EPBC</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to examine employers that accessed EPBC supports (JCP, PBLMT, wage subsidy, unpaid work experience, customized employment), describe the number and how employers accessed services (region, type of service, types of clients), describe successful examples and impacts, major challenges and barriers.</td>
<td>Employer Participation Survey, Document and data review, ICM data, Key informant interviews, Visits to 6 ESCs, Interviews with contractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Perceptions and Evidence of Awareness of EPBC</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to examine employer and referral source awareness of EPBC and awareness among unemployed British Columbians.</td>
<td>Employer and Stakeholder Awareness Survey, Data proxies such as social media, and website visits, ICM data, Document review, Client survey results, Visits to 6 ESCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Self-Served Clients</td>
<td>The purpose of this case study was to better understand the characteristics of self-served clients and develop a profile of these clients in terms of client types, level of utilization of the self-served services, reasons for using the services (as opposed to case management), needs, and outcomes.</td>
<td>Client survey results, Key informant interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.1 Site Visits of Six Employment Service Centres

Site visits were made to six ESCs, which included interviews with ESC management, staff and other stakeholders, the collection and review of additional documents and data, and focus groups with self-served clients. ESCs were selected to ensure a broad representation based on the following criteria: urban and rural; for-profit and non-profit; large and small budgets; one versus several EPBC catchments under management; high numbers of repeat clients; promising practices and challenges in the delivery of EPBC, as identified by key informants. A total of 39

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15 Because they are not formally registered in the ICM, little is known about self-served clients. The Program does not regularly track the level of utilization of the self-served services or collect information about characteristics, needs, and outcomes of the clients using self-served resources.
representatives were interviewed as part of the site visits including senior management, such as executive directors, owners, presidents, and ESC staff, such as case managers, job developers, team leads, workshop facilitators, community coordinators, specialist staff, sub-contractor staff co-located with the ESC, and marketing staff.

6.2 Focus Groups with Self-Served Clients

As part of the case study of self-served clients, five focus groups were conducted with a total of 26 clients. The focus groups took place at 5 ESCs, two of which were in the Vancouver Island Region, two in the Fraser Region and one in the Interior Region. As the North Region catchment lacked a sufficient number of self-served clients for a focus group, information for this catchment was gathered through an interview with resource centre staff.

Focus group participants were recruited in collaboration with the ESCs and included a mix of self-served and case managed clients. Individual focus groups ranged from three to seven clients per session. Participants were provided a written consent form informing them of the evaluation and confidentiality protocols, and were provided with a complimentary lunch and refreshments during the session. The format of the discussion was casual and open-ended, with the consultant posing a series of guiding questions regarding the participants’ perception of the community’s awareness of the WorkBC services, their motivation for accessing the services, their satisfaction and any challenges encountered, major barriers to finding employment, and any suggestions for improvement.

6.3 Survey of Participating Employers

A survey of 58 employers who had been involved with EPBC or WorkBC was conducted to obtain feedback on the impact of the programming. The survey was administered using online survey software FluidSurveys between October and November, 2015. Employers that had participated in wage subsidy, Job Creation Partnership, or Project Based Labour Market Training projects were referred to us by the Ministry. Employers were emailed a letter of introduction outlining the purpose of the evaluation and a link to the online questionnaire. A representative of Ference and Company followed up 2 to 4 times by email or telephone. Employers had the option to complete the survey online, by telephone, fax or email. A total of 256 employers were invited to complete the survey and the response rate was 22.7%.

On average, surveyed employers were somewhat familiar with WorkBC or the EPBC programming and services (an average rating of 3.3, on a scale of 1 to 5). Most had previous involvement with the Wage Subsidy Program and Job Creation Partnership Projects, as shown in the table on the following page. Employers most commonly operated in multiple regions of BC or all of BC 31% (31%), followed by the Vancouver Island region (18%), Fraser Region (18%), Vancouver Coastal region (16%) and Interior region (15%). Only one surveyed employer was located in the North Region. Approximately half of representatives surveyed held executive level positions and the remaining half included managers, human resources professionals, directors, financial officers, and administrators. Most were small-sized companies or organizations, with 74% employing 0 to 50 employees, 33% employing 5 or less employees, and 41% employing 6 and 50 employees. A few larger employers also participated, with 4 employing over 500 employees.
6.4 EPBC Awareness Survey of Employers and Stakeholders

A survey of 77 employers and 46 stakeholder organizations was undertaken to obtain information on the awareness and perceptions of the EPBC programming and services. Two versions of the questionnaire were developed (one for employers and one for stakeholders). The survey was administered using FluidSurveys between October and November, 2015. Stakeholders were identified through an online search of service providers that worked with similar client groups as the EPBC (e.g., specialized populations) or provided similar services. Employers were identified through an online search of employers and employers associations in a variety of leading industries in BC. Regional distribution was also considered in developing the contact lists. Representatives were sent an introductory email soliciting their participation and a link to the online questionnaire. A representative from Ference and Company followed up 2 to 4 times by telephone and/or email. Survey responses were analyzed and summarized using Excel. A total of 245 employers were invited to complete the employer awareness survey and the response rate was 31.4%. A total of 232 stakeholders were invited to complete the stakeholder awareness survey and the response rate was 19.8%.

Participating stakeholders and employers were located in the Interior Region (23%), Vancouver Coastal region (22%), multiple regions of BC or all of BC (20%), Vancouver Island region (15%), North Region (11%), and Fraser Region (9%). Surveyed stakeholder organizations most commonly worked with specialized population groups including persons with a disability (62%), persons with multiple barriers to employment (62%), Aboriginal people (55%), youth (51%), survivors of violence and/or abuse (43%), rural and remote populations (39%), recent immigrants (38%), and Francophone populations (12%). Their mandate was most commonly to build strong communities, enhance quality of life, and remove barriers for members of specialized populations.

The majority (56%) of surveyed employers employed or represented employers with 10 or fewer workers, and 12% employ or represent employers who employ between 2,501 and 5,000 employees. The majority of surveyed employers were business or industry associations (57%), 39% were chambers of commerce, 7% were recruiting agencies, 7% were manufacturing companies, 7% were consulting firms, 7% were in the tourism and leisure industry, and 7% were part of a financial group.

6.5 Follow-up Interviews with Sub-Contractors

In-depth interviews were conducted with 9 sub-contractors involved in the delivery of EPBC programming. Sub-contractors provided a variety of services including self-employment programming (5), case management (3), services for PWD clients (vocational rehabilitation), services for new immigrant clients, training services, employer liaison and ICM training. On average, sub-contractors serviced 4 contractors in 5 catchments.
7. **Focus Groups**

Eight focus groups were conducted in November 2015 to validate the key findings from other lines of evidence and examine potential recommendations and alternative delivery options. Focus group participants were selected from contacts who had already provided feedback as part of other aspects of the evaluation. The focus groups were conducted via teleconference and participants were provided with a copy of the discussion topics in advance to ensure an informed discussion. The topic of each focus group and a description of the participants are provided in the following table.

**Overview of Focus Group Topics and Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Design and Delivery of EPBC Services: Rural Catchments</td>
<td>Examined key issues with respect to the design and delivery of EPBC services with a focus on rural catchments</td>
<td>A total of 7 participants including 2 Ministry representatives and 5 contractors from rural catchments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Design and Delivery of EPBC Services: Urban Catchments</td>
<td>Examined key issues with respect to the design and delivery of EPBC services with a focus on urban catchments</td>
<td>A total of 9 participants including 2 Ministry representatives, 7 contractors from urban catchments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Access to and Quality of Services for Persons With Disabilities Clients</td>
<td>Investigated access to and quality of services for persons with disabilities</td>
<td>A total of 8 participants including 2 Ministry representatives, 4 contractors and 2 other stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Access to and Quality of Services for Immigrant Clients</td>
<td>Investigated access to and quality of services for immigrant clients</td>
<td>A total of 8 participants including 1 Ministry representative, 5 contractors and 1 other stakeholder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Access to and Quality of Services for Aboriginal Clients</td>
<td>Investigated access to and quality of services for Aboriginal clients</td>
<td>A total of 11 participants including 3 Ministry representatives, 5 contractors and 3 other stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Use of Sub-contractors</td>
<td>Examined how sub-contractors are being used and opportunities for improvement in the structure</td>
<td>A total of 7 participants including 1 Ministry representative and 6 sub-contractors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Labour Market Partnership Engagement: Focus Only on CEP</td>
<td>Examined promising practices and opportunities to enhance Ministry engagement of labour market partners and employers, focusing on CEP</td>
<td>A total of 7 participants including 2 Ministry representatives and 5 employers that participated in either PBLMT or JCP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>EPBC Design and Delivery from the Perspective of Employers</td>
<td>Examined the relevance and effectiveness of the EPBC design and delivery from the perspective of employers.</td>
<td>A total of 6 participants including 1 employer association and 5 employers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX II: DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EPBC SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Services</th>
<th>Service Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Self-Served Services** | *Self-Serve Services* provide readily available access to job search tools, equipment, services and supports that clients can use independently or with minimal supports. Self-Serve Services support the key Program objective of assisting Clients to obtain Sustainable Employment as quickly as possible by providing a single point of entry to Employment and Labour Market Services and supports for Clients, employers and the communities they serve; assisting all job seekers and employers to access employment services as independently as possible and providing an initial welcome and screening to ensure individuals receive an appropriate level of service and the support they require to meet their circumstances and needs. All Self-Serve Services provide the following:  
  - A staffed resource area for using job search tools and information  
  - Job search and job start workshops  
  - Identification and referral of eligible clients to Formal and Preliminary needs assessments  
  - Job search and job start financial supports for eligible clients who need help getting started in a new job or need help looking for work. |
| **Apprentice Services** | The objective of Apprentice Services is to assist eligible clients to complete the classroom/technical components of their apprenticeship trade to achieve journeyperson status. These services are also intended to assist Apprentice Clients who do not have a sponsor or may have lost their employer sponsorship due to lay-off, to access case management services to help them establish an employer relationship. In general, apprentice services include:  
  - Administrative and other supports which range from confirming the client’s eligibility, supporting them in completing applications, reviewing and updating information in the applications, ensuring status is up to date and recoded, confirming attendance. For case managed clients service providers would monitor attendance, support the progress and record progress.  
  - Financial supports for apprentices which include confirming eligibility and administering financial supports (living supports and additional eligible expenses)  
  Services provided to non-case management apprentices are commonly provided over the telephone or online while services for case managed apprentices are commonly provided in person and are more intensive in terms of supports and monitoring. Clients seeking financial support enter into the financial agreement with the service provider who must closely monitor and support client’s training, fully documenting progress, attendance and results. |
| **Ongoing Case Management** | Support is provided to help clients to understand their employment needs and readiness for employment, to determine suitable employment objectives and to effectively support the client to work towards, achieve and maintain labour market attachment as quickly as possible. EPBC Case Management is a collaborative process between a Case Manager and a client. Case management services include:  
  - Determination of client needs through Preliminary Needs Assessment  
  - Assessment of client’s needs through Formal Need Assessment. The Contractor will conduct a Multi-Dimensional Needs Assessment (MDNA) as part of every FNA.  
  - If necessary to determine clients employment readiness, additional assessments may be administered: Internal Assessments (Career assessment, DRENA, General skills, evaluation of self-assessments, need for specialized assessments) |
**Type of Services** | **Service Description**
---|---
| | - development of employment action plan, and provision of financial supports;  
| | - follow-up and check-in at the minimum of 4, 12 and 24 weeks; and  
| | - follow-up supports and/or services are provided where needed to support clients in sustaining their program outcome.

**Employment Support Services (ESS) Group Workshops or Individual Sessions**

- Employment Support Service group-based workshops or individual sessions are intended to provide clients, based on individually assessed client’s needs, with information and support to help them prepare for job search and work, find jobs and obtain employment or work experience, maintain employment and develop find jobs and obtain and maintain Employment. ESS workshops delivered to Case Managed Clients are normally job search and employment-focused, but can also focus entirely or partially on:
  - *Employment or Employability Life Skills* can be incorporated into ESS workshops to support employment preparation and are based on the Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills website. Employability Life Skills are divided into the three areas; Basic, Teamwork Skills, and Personal Management.
  - *Essential Skills* are essentially basic skills needed for work, learning and life and adapting to change and job environment.
  - *Employment Readiness* are intended to supports clients to gain needed learning or knowledge that helps them overcome individual challenges and improve their employment readiness.

ESS group based workshop can also be delivered to non-case managed clients and clients in tier 1 but must be entirely job search and employment focused. Employment focused workshop topics are those focused specifically on job search, employment and job retention such as career planning, job search, job shadowing, cold calling, networking, interview skills, self-marketing etc.

There is no maximum limit on the number of times a Client can access an ESS Topic, based on individual Client needs; however the single ESS Topic Service Fee, effective March 30, 2014, can never be billed more than once per Client Action Plan.

**Job Placement Services**

The Program offers a variety of Placement Services designed to assist Clients who require intensive support to achieve Labour Market Attachment and/or need supported work experience to improve their ability to find and maintain Employment. Job Placement Services include job development, customized employment development services, work experience placement which include unpaid work experience, wage subsidy work experience and job creation partnership work experience placement.

- **Job Development** service is an individualized approach in creating an employment relationship between employers and clients (employees) in ways that meet the needs of both parties. It is based on an individualized assessment of the strengths, needs and interests of the client while also meeting the specific needs of the employer. Job development service components involves working with clients to develop effective job search approaches and employer networking, provide individualized approach to job marketing, meeting with employers, arranging interviews, negotiating work tasks, hours, terms and conditions of employment, documenting all progress. Finally, service providers support Clients and employers to negotiate and finalize the terms of Employment. Job Development Services provide intensive support to clients in achieving Labour Market Attachment as quickly as possible. Client employment placements are normally expected to be achieved within a maximum period of 12 weeks.
### Type of Services

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customized Employment Development Services</strong> involve creating a new job or self-employment opportunity that is customized to the individual needs, skills, abilities and contributions of a client. The services include developing an employment profile of the client’s strengths and abilities. Part of developing client’s profile may involve arranging time-limited unpaid work experience placement assessments (1 to 2 days) when required to help case manager evaluate client’s specific skills and abilities in a work situation. Based on the results of the completed Employment Profile, the EPBC service provider will assist clients in pursuing any of the following options: creation of a new job (may include an unpaid work experience placement for BCEA clients) or, in special circumstances, creation of a new Self-Employment Opportunity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Work Experience Placements include:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Unpaid Work Experience Placement</strong> is provided to eligible case managed BCEA Clients who need work experience and are unable to obtain paid employment. Clients may be placed in time-limited unpaid work experience placements with an employer, either in short duration placements for assessment and job trial purposes, or in longer duration placements for work experience and occupational exposure under certain conditions as described below. A maximum of three Unpaid Work Experience Placements per Client Action Plan are permitted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Wage Subsidy Work Experience Placements</strong> provide Financial Support to an eligible employer as incentive for the employer to hire and provide work experience and skills enhancement to an eligible EI Client who has been identified as needing work experience. Employers must meet eligibility criteria some of which include: be at the arm’s length from EPBC service provider (not affiliated), be in business for at least a year, position is normally part of the ongoing business operations, etc. Services include pre-placement promotion and marketing, applications, confirming that all requirements are met and entering into an agreement with employers and clients, and if necessary, financial supports agreement with clients, and monitoring, amending and closing out agreements. Clients are not normally expected to require more than one Wage Subsidy Work Experience Placements per Client Action Plan. In exceptional circumstances, EI Clients may be provided with a maximum of two Placements per Action Plan.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Job Creation Partnerships (JCP) Work Experience Placements</strong> provide clients with opportunities to gain needed, recent work experience that will improve their Employment Readiness, build on existing skills and increase their network of potential employers. Clients are placed in community based projects that are of a specified duration. The Ministry (ELMSD) provides project funding to local organizations that are working in partnership to benefit their community.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Project Based Labour Market Training</strong> helps clients to obtain the skills and experience they need for employment under a project based training model. Clients are placed in projects coordinated by community-based organizations. These projects offer employment training that may include basic and essential skills, specific skills as identified by local employers, on the job experience and a range of supported activities such as counseling, learning assessments, job search skills and referrals to community resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training and Short Term Orientation and Certificate (STOC)</strong> Training Services is to assist eligible Clients who lack the skills needed to achieve Sustainable Labour Market Attachment to access training that will lead to labour market self-sufficiency. The types of skills training that can be supported in the EPBC are as follows:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Basic and Essential Skills Training</strong> provides eligible Clients with support to access needed English as a Second Language skills training, and/or Academic Upgrading and/or Essential Skills Training in reading, writing, numeracy and basic computer use to achieve Labour Market Attachment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Type of Services

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<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupational Skills Training</strong> can be provided to clients who lack occupational skills that are in demand in the labour market, are suited to the Client's individual employment and financial needs and circumstances; and have been confirmed by an EPBC Service Provider as having a strong likelihood in resulting in Sustainable Employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Term Orientation and Certificate (STOC)</strong> Training provide basic entry level certification through short skills courses that are normally no more than one to three days in duration (based on approximately 5-6 hours per day of actual participation) and that must not exceed a maximum of five days or 30 hours. STOC must meet the following criteria to be supported through the EPBC: the training must lead to a certificate; is not normally offered by employers, nor is it free of charge in the community; and the training is not a specific requirement of one employer, although it can be specific to one employment industry sector (e.g. hospitality). Some examples of STOC training include: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), Emergency First Aid, Super Host, Serving It Right, Food Safe, Basic Computer Training; and Other Essential Short-Term Industry or Occupational Entry Requirement Certificate Training.</td>
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</table>

All types of training supported through the EPBC must be delivered by a qualified instructor or organization that is either a public post-secondary training institute or a private training provider that meets, or has proof of being exempted from, meeting the Private Career Training Institutions Agency (PCTIA) requirements.

### Self-Employment Orientation Services and Self-Employment

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<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
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<td><strong>SE Orientation and Assessment Services</strong> assess and confirm client suitability and Self-Employment readiness prior to acceptance into SE Services. In the SE Orientation and Assessment phase, clients learn more about what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur; consider their Self-Employment readiness, ability and commitment; and are further assessed for suitability to participate in SE services. As part of this process, clients will:</td>
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<td>o Participate in SE orientation and Assessment workshop which will help ensure that a client is making a well-informed decision regarding their suitability and readiness for self-employment and determine whether supporting a client towards self-employment is the best use of public funding;</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Receive support in developing business concept by participating in group workshops and individual support, if needed, and to complete an application for Self-Employment Services. Self-Employment committee will then assess clients’ business concepts for viability, feasibility and readiness to move forward and make final recommendations on client’s readiness for SE services.</td>
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Clients completing the Self-Employment Orientation and Assessment phase will either be accepted into SE Services or will be referred back to their Case Manager to revise their Action Plan.

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<td><strong>Self-Employment Services</strong> involve providing an eligible Client with services and support to assist them in developing, launching and implementing a business that enables the client to be self-sufficient in the labour market. The objective is to help individuals to create jobs for themselves by starting a business. Clients who participate in SE services are expected to become self-sufficient and independent through operation of their self-employment business upon completion. Entrepreneurial assistance is provided to eligible Clients while they work on developing their business plans and making their businesses succeed. Eligible Clients, who have been determined to be suitable for SE Services, may be able to receive Financial Supports while participating, based on a financial needs assessment by the EPBC Service Provider. Self-Employment Services include all of the following components:</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Business Plan Development – support clients through workshops or ongoing coaching and mentoring to research and develop their business concept into a complete, feasible and viable business plan.</td>
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| o Entrepreneurial Workshops can be provided as either group sessions or individual sessions and include, at the minimum, the following: managing business operations; financial management (e.g. budgeting, cash flow, tax tips,
**Type of Services**  
**Service Description**  
accounting, bookkeeping); human resource development (e.g. hiring, managing and developing employees); marketing and sales; and succession planning and selling a business.  
- Coaching and mentoring services provide clients with expert advice, support, guidance and feedback as needed to assist them in creating strategies for developing and launching their businesses successfully.  
- Business Launch and Implementation involves coaching and support for clients as needed in launching and implementing the business and provides any additional Entrepreneurial Workshops required by the Client.

**Special Assessments**  
Specialized Assessments are employment related assessments conducted by professionally qualified assessors. Specialized Assessments are required to determine a client's employment-related abilities, strengths, and employment service needs when they are not evident through the MDNA, client interviews, employment counseling, and other types of assessments, other resources or through existing information that may be available from the Client. Specialized Assessments may include:  
- Neuropsychological Vocational Assessment;  
- Vocational Psychological Assessment;  
- Physical/Functional Work Capacity Assessment;  
- Learning Disability Assessment;  
- Speech and Language Assessment;  
- Assistive Technology Assessment;  
- Work Simulation Assessment;  
- Audiological Assessment;  
- Ergonomic Assessment;  
- Medical Assessment Report;  
- Prior Learning Assessment;  
- Foreign Credentialing; and Other Specialized Assessment Types.

**Financial Support**  
Financial supports are available to assist eligible case managed clients in financial need with the costs of basic expenses essential for program participation, job search or starting work. The purpose of providing eligible clients in need with financial supports is to ensure that a lack of funds or resources for basic expenses or required items do not create barriers to clients in accessing or participating in needed services, undertaking job search activities, starting jobs or keeping jobs. Prior to providing any form of Financial Support, an assessment of financial need is required, unless otherwise specified in Program policy. Assessing the need for Financial Supports is a process that includes a review of the client's household income and expenses, the associated costs required for Program participation or for employment related purposes and the client's ability to contribute to these costs. The EPBC Service Provider must establish that a client lacks the means and resources to cover the costs themselves, that the item or expense is essential to the client's Program Participation, job search or in order to start a job and that it will be used for the purpose intended. Clients can receive program financial support for:  
- job search, job starts and program participation/access to ESC services (transportation, dependent care, disability supports, essential work clothing, essential work supplies, tools, personal grooming and hygiene, food for full day program participation and licences)  
- Skills Training, Job Creation Partnerships, Self-Employment, Project Based Labour Market Training and Wage Subsidy (living supports for EI Clients only) transportation, dependent care, tuition, books and supplies, living away from home, etc) necessary for clients participation
APPENDIX III: REFERENCES

5. EPBC Performance Measures Summary, April 1, 2015: Version 2.2.
Evaluation of the Employment Program of British Columbia – Final Report

APPENDICES
Information obtained during an interview with a representative from the Australia Department of Employment, December 2015.
BC Centre for Employment Excellence. 30 June 2014. Accessible Services for Specialized Populations in One-stop Employment Models: Learning from Other Jurisdictions. p. 10
APPENDICES

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Information obtained from correspondence with a representative from Careers Nova Scotia.


Information obtained during an interview with a representative from the Australia Department of Employment, December 2015.


Information obtained during an interview with a representative from the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education, December 2015.


