

In the News

Atlantic Region



JANUARY 2026

A monthly summary of labour market news for the Atlantic Region

Highlights

(News published January 1st -31st, 2026)

- The Department of National Defence (DND) began construction of its warship test facility in Eastern Passage last November.
- The Doak Road area of Fredericton is set to go before city council as part of a plan to develop the 148-hectare area to become a new neighbourhood for up to 7,000 residents by 2046.
- Jazz Aviation, which operates flights for Air Canada Express, is closing its Halifax flight attendant base at Halifax Stanfield International Airport on March 1.
- Ship repair company, Newdock (St. John's), is exploring a \$300M expansion to modernize its facilities to take on bigger vessels.
- The federal government will spend \$10M on a proposed Stratford wellness centre, which has an expected cost of \$67M for the first phase of the project.

Industry Updates

Newfoundland and Labrador

Clean Grid Atlantic and Pattern Energy are proposing a \$16B subsea and overland transmission network, powered by windmills, to connect the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, with a final investment decision expected in 12-18 months.

Genoa Design International, a Mount Pearl-based digital design and 3D modeling firm, has been sold to Nova Scotia-based Membertou First Nation and Horizon Naval Engineering. The partnership aims to prioritize expansion within the marine sector.

Ship repair company, Newdock (St. John's), is exploring a \$300M expansion to modernize its facilities to take on bigger vessels. If approved, the two-year expansion project could double its workforce, adding 220 trades workers and staff and management positions.

The number of retired teachers working as substitutes in N.L. schools has soared in the last decade with about 1,700 substitutes currently on the list for NL Schools, about 600 of whom are retirees. That compares to only 61 retiree substitutes 10 years ago. The lack of substitute teachers is felt most acutely in rural areas but is still impacting urban centres.

Prince Edward Island

The federal government will spend \$10M on a proposed Stratford wellness centre, which has an expected cost of \$67M for the first phase of the project. Work is being finalized, but plans are to have a rink, indoor turf field and a youth centre.

The Town of Three Rivers states that 2025 was a strong year with a total of 220 projects approved, worth over \$60M in estimated construction value. Residential growth accounted for 78% of the applications, but the area has also seen industrial expansion.

The federal and P.E.I. governments will spend nearly \$4M to help P.E.I.'s Atlantic Beef Products produce halal meats. There has been growing demand for meat processed according to Muslim law. The investment will allow for upgrades at the plant.

Nova Scotia

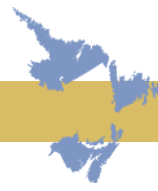
N.S. is on track to meet its green energy goal of 80% renewable energy by 2030 through a combination of onshore wind farms, solar farms, energy batteries and other small projects. Five new onshore wind farms are set to be completed by the end of 2026, and another four on track to be finished by the end of 2028.



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Emploi et
Développement social Canada

Canada



An additional 110 beds at Shannex's transitional care site in West Bedford will begin to take on patients in April. Construction cost is slated to come in at \$114M.

A new tariff-quota deal between Canada and China to temporarily suspend 25% tariffs on Canadian lobster and crab is being received positively in N.S., where the value of live lobster exports to China total approximately \$430-450M annually. The dollar value of exports has decreased by an estimated 25-30% since the tariffs were originally introduced.

The new Cape Breton Business Innovation Centre is now open in Sydney, bringing together key supports to helping entrepreneurs start, grow and scale their businesses. The N.S. Government announced \$775k over 3 years while the Government of Canada is contributing \$405K to Ignite Atlantic and \$153.7K to Volta toward programming and operations.

New Brunswick

The N.B. government is contributing \$6M toward completion of a \$36M modern recreation and community complex in Rothesay. The complex will incorporate the Rothesay Arena, which is being renovated.

A new trade deal with China will see the elimination of the 25% tariff on Canadian lobster and crab. N.B. exported \$72.9M of lobster to China in 2023, which dropped to \$36.2M in 2024. The U.S. bought \$844.7M of N.B. lobster in 2024.

The Doak Road area of Fredericton is set to go before city council as part of a plan to develop the 148-hectare area to become a new neighbourhood for up to 7,000 residents by 2046. The plan includes diverse housing types, as well as commercial components.

Port Saint John has completed \$247M in infrastructure upgrades, such as new cranes, an additional berth, a deepened and widened channel, and improved storage and transportation capabilities. The port will soon have a \$80M huge cold-storage facility as well.

Job Creation

In preparation for the May 2026 census, Statistics Canada plans to hire 32,000 workers. Enumerators will earn \$25.87 per hour to collect data, while crew leaders will be compensated \$31.32 per hour to supervise workers.

Newfoundland and Labrador

The new Gander Community Health Centre, a family care and mental health and addictions facility, is expected to open later in January. Most of the roughly 50 staff members were recruited locally, but positions including a nurse practitioner and a family physician, are still being actively recruited.

North Atlantic (based in St. John's) plans to develop a 45-turbine wind farm and hydrogen plant in the Sunnyside/Come by Chance area. The plans would create about 1,200 jobs during the construction phase, which would cost about \$1.75B. Final

decisions on the proposed project are expected by the last quarter of 2026.

RCMP in Newfoundland and Labrador hired 52 new officers in 2025, in part due to changes in their recruitment and hiring processes.

N.L.'s Department of Transportation has reported challenges recruiting snowplow operators, particularly in the eastern region. Overall, the province has received 180 applications to fill 50 new positions, with 44 moving through the screening process.

Prince Edward Island

The New Brunswick-based brewery and bar, Holy Whale, has taken over the former Upstreet Craft Brewing site in Charlottetown. Renovations are underway and Holy Whale is expecting to open in a month or two.

Nova Scotia

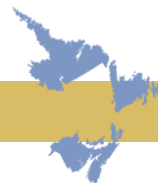
The Department of National Defence (DND) began construction of its warship test facility in Eastern Passage last November. The project is being overseen by Dartmouth-based PCL Construction. DND expects this work will support about 200 jobs until the end of construction (2028).

Layoffs

Newfoundland and Labrador

Memorial University has announced plans to sell off its U.K. campus, the Geo Centre, the Signal Hill campus, and the printing services building. Harlow Campus will see 7 employees laid off in late August when that campus closes.





Loblaws Companies Ltd. announced it will close the Dominion grocery store in St. John's on May 8. The Memorial Stadium location employs around 100 unionized workers with Unifor. The decision came from an evaluation of its store network, with the company now focussed on bolstering Dominion locations in Cabot Square and Blackmarsh Road.

Memorial University is reducing its executive team of vice-presidents from seven to three positions with provost and vice-president (academic), vice-president (finance and administration) and vice-president (research and innovation) remaining.

Nova Scotia

Jazz Aviation, which operates flights for Air Canada Express, is closing its Halifax flight attendant base at Halifax Stanfield International Airport on March 1. Jazz Aviation's headquarters, operations centre and heavy maintenance facility in Halifax are not affected by the base closure and there are no indication this will result in fewer routes out of Halifax.

Agriculture Agri-Food Canada has confirmed 665 positions will be cut across the country. As part of those cuts, the Nappan Research Farm (Cumberland County) has been given a notice of closure. The facility, which employs 10-15 people, plays an important role in supporting Atlantic Canadian beef and forage industries through research.

Software company Ubisoft has closed its Halifax studio, resulting in 71 layoffs. Ubisoft said the closure is to make the company more efficient and to cut costs. There are no longer employment options for game developers in the province, as Microsoft also closed its Alpha Dog studio (Halifax) in 2024.

New Brunswick

Tops Pizza and Restaurant on Union Street in Saint John has stated that it will close its doors in February. A spokesperson stated that the decision was made to realign their business strategy in the current market environment.

Economic Reports

Restaurants Canada

Restaurants Canada reports that about 41% of Canadian restaurants are losing money or just breaking even. Factors include inflation, rising costs, labour shortages, and less dining out. With food prices expected to rise by 4-6% and higher minimum wages, 2026 could also be difficult.

Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada reports that P.E.I. potato production was down in 2025, after the Island experienced a record drought last summer. The yield from P.E.I. fields was about 18% less on average, while potato prices have also dropped, resulting in lower revenue.

International Monetary Fund

A new report from the International Monetary Fund says if Canada eliminated provincial trade barriers, it could increase its real GDP by about 7%. The report says that smaller provinces would gain the most, with P.E.I. potentially seeing a 40% jump in its GDP.

Prepared by: Business Intelligence and Labour Market and Analysis, Service Canada - Atlantic Region

For further information, please contact us at: ATL-LMI-IMT-GD@servicecanada.gc.ca

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Employment and Social Development Canada, 2026

