

**Q. Describe Newfoundland Power’s Power Line Technician (“PLT”) apprenticeship program, including any education requirements before applying. Other than the apprenticeship program, does Newfoundland Power provide specific training for PLTs for substation work, relays, cable splicing, etc.?**

A. Newfoundland Power has an active apprenticeship program hiring 46 apprentice power line technicians since 2011. To be hired, an apprentice must complete a nine month pre-employment power line technician course at a local college as well as successfully complete a formal screening and interview process.<sup>1</sup> Once hired, the apprentice must register with the Provincial Government, Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Apprenticeship and Trades Certification Division.<sup>2</sup>

The apprenticeship program itself consists of a combination of on-the-job training and school training as the apprentice’s progress through 4 levels, or blocks.<sup>3</sup> Block 1 apprentices work as a single group under the guidance of a Training Foreperson completing line construction on de-energized circuits. This block is an application of the skills learned in the nine month pre-employment course and learning Newfoundland Power design and construction standards, work methods, procedures and policies. Following block 1, the apprentices return to school for eight weeks to complete block 2 school training.

Block 2 apprentices can work with low voltage circuits and are assigned to service crews under the guidance of a Journeyperson Powerline Technician (“PLT”) for several months. The apprentices then return to school to complete eight weeks of block 3 school training. This is the initial stage of learning to work with high voltage.

Following block 3 training, the apprentices receive rubber glove training and are issued their rubber gloves. They are assigned as a third person on a line truck gaining experience working at high voltage. As block 3 apprentices, they are directly supervised by a Journeyperson PLT. After several months, the apprentices become block 4 apprentices and have graduated to working high voltage with only indirect supervision.

At the end of their block 4 on-the-job training, the apprentice must meet all requirements and have all required tasks signed off in their apprenticeship logbooks. They return to school for their final eight weeks of block 4 school training. At the end of block 4 training, they must write and pass the Red Seal exam to become Journeyperson Power Line Technicians.

<sup>1</sup> Currently College of the North Atlantic or Dietrac Community College offer the nine month pre-employment powerline technician course in Newfoundland.

<sup>2</sup> This division is responsible for implementation of policies approved by the Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board (“PACB”) under the authority of the Apprenticeship and Certification Act.

<sup>3</sup> Most apprentices are hired as block 1. However, some are hired at higher blocks based on forecasted PLT requirements in future years.

1 In addition to the pre-employment course, school training and on-the-job training  
2 required as part of the apprenticeship program, Newfoundland Power provides additional  
3 specialized training throughout the program, such as:  
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- 5 • Chain Saw Training
- 6 • Aerial Device Training
- 7 • Fall Protection Training
- 8 • Emergency Preparedness Training
- 9 • Rubber Glove Training
- 10 • Underground Utilities Training
- 11 • 138kV Hot Stick Training
- 12 • Risk Management & Job Safety Planning Code Training
- 13 • Worker Protection Code Training
- 14 • Grounding & Bonding Code Training
- 15

16 Specific training for substation work, including cable splicing and switch maintenance, is  
17 provided through on-the-job training with experienced journeyman PLTs as part of the  
18 apprenticeship program. Work associated with relays is typically completed by electrical  
19 technologists and electrical maintenance staff.