



## An Outline of Employment at Harbourside Commercial Park



Rob Jessome, CET  
General Supervisor  
NS Lands  
December 15, 2009

# Summary

Current employment numbers presented within this report are accurate at the time of writing, plus or minus 10%. The employers on site feel that they are at steady state with some indicating considerable growth. The fourteen employers have 136 fulltime positions at the former SYSCO property. An additional twenty workers worked anywhere between 12 to 35 weeks over the past year. Coupled with the employment at the International piers and the many projects through the Sydney Tar Pond Agency it is quite apparent that work from this core area has a significant impact on the local economy.

That there are currently 14 employers and 136 fulltime positions on this site is a great testament to the available infrastructure and the appeal of the location has on business entrepreneurs from differing sectors. While Nova Scotia Lands are remediating, and preparing land for future use, Harbourside Commercial Park is already busy entertaining prospective tenants, land and building purchases. We are now at full capacity for available office space. We have current business operators phasing in expansion on the site, there are no buildings available due to the demand, we do have building lots available, on the new site infrastructure.

We have a tenant planning a charity fundraiser at our new outdoor recreation facility. The spring, 2010 opening of this all new facility with soccer field, walking track, basketball and tennis court is highly anticipated by many currently working here at Harbourside Commercial Park. Several community sporting groups are also eager to add Harbourside to their list of venues.

Currently there are 29 former steelworkers working fulltime at Harbourside with another 14 who have worked part time or on seasonal employment. There are many other steelworkers working through outside contractors either on or near (Tar Ponds) the Park. The familiarity among steelworkers at different employers is one of the many reasons that networking and relationships work so well among the many businesses here.

# Introduction

This report is meant to serve as a brief synopsis of employment on the former SYSCO site. As the Steel plant officially shutdown in 2001, demolition and remediation appeared to be leaving behind a barren void in the city. Significant growth and promise has risen and continues to evolve. This report does not delve into the fiscal effects of the employment on the site but rather as a baseline for the amount and types of business currently in operation, and the level of employment.

In the wake of the completion of demolition to the physical structures from a century of steelmaking at the former Sydney Steel Corporation site, Harbourside Commercial Park Inc. (HCPI) commenced operations, April 1, 2007. Nova Scotia Lands have continued with remediation efforts on the affected SYSCO properties. In the few short years since Harbourside has been in existence a transformation has taken place on the former Sydney Steel site. In speaking to various proprietors, managers and employees at the businesses now operating at HCPI there is an optimism where the economy has been to its' low point of the recession, it is deduced, and their business' has continued and even seen improvement, that the future is vibrant at HCPI.

**This report does not take into consideration the Sydney Tar Pond Agency staff at the former SYSCO administration building (a HCPI property). The work at the Tar Pond Cleanup is a large entity unto its' own not factored here. Also not factored is the offsite administrative support services of the various companies here at HCPI, nor the trucking contractors who are constant on the site, most notably through CBRM Solid Waste Transfer, and Portside Aggregate Ltd. The contractors working for HCPI for landscaping, roads, the multipurpose outdoor sport complex and infrastructure are not factored, nor the contractors working on behalf of NS Lands involved in remedial or construction work, as well as the major Grand Lake water utility construction contract for Sydney Utilities Ltd, is also not part of the exercise here. Each fulltime position at HCP has an impact of 1 to 2 jobs either offsite or associated through contractors and services. This report wishes only to illustrate the daily workforces who make their way to Harbourside each workday.**

## In Business at Harbourside Commercial Park, 2009

### **NS Lands**

Through the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Harbourside Commercial Park, and Sydney Utilities Ltd. is managed by a staff of nine at the Harbourside Place offices, with an office in Halifax. The park is located adjacent to downtown Sydney, with extensive infrastructure present. Currently NS Lands is remediating and redeveloping the remainder of the former Sydney Steel Plant property. In addition, NS Lands is responsible for other properties throughout the Province. NS Lands personnel may be found in Sydney Mines, Sydney River, Grand Lake area, Catalone, Pictou, New Glasgow, Grand Narrows or other parts of the Province.

### **Protocase**

Protocase manufacture custom sheet metal electronic enclosures, mounting hardware, and miscellaneous components. Starting from the clients design, and build them in 2-3 days, with no minimum order requirements. Products are built from the clients choice of aluminum, steel, stainless, or galvanized, and are fully finished, including fasteners, hardware, welding, powdercoating, and silkscreen. Protocase currently have 40 employees working at their brand new state of the art facility, with very realistic expectations for growth, this is an excellent example of Cape Breton expertise being availed of globally.

### **CBRM Waste Transfer Station**

The Solid Waste Department oversees Solid Waste Management in CBRM. The department is responsible for collecting, managing, processing, and the proper disposal and or shipment of solid waste generated by the residential sector. The department is responsible for the receiving, managing, processing, and proper disposal or shipment of solid waste generated by the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional sectors. The CBRM Waste Transfer employs 8 fulltime staff.

## **Portside Aggregate Limited**

Portside Aggregates offers a variety of slag aggregate resources located on the former SYSCO property, including blast furnace slag, open hearth slag and electric arc furnace slag. At one time slag aggregate was seasonal, however Portside has been supplying clients year round and has shipped product to the United States as well. Portside employs 9 fulltime staff with an additional staff of up to 4 extra employees for the busy road building season.

## **Safety Check**

Safety Check Inspections Ltd. provides occupational health and safety services to businesses and organizations throughout Atlantic Canada. Occupational safety training, task/project management, and the implementation of company safety programs are a few of their services. The staff of 12 here at Harbourside stays busy locally, throughout the Province, and provide their expertise to other Provinces as well.

## **All-tech**

ALL-TECH Environmental Services Limited is an Atlantic Canada owned and operated company with branch offices throughout all four provinces, with educational and field experience in a wide range of environmental and health and safety matters. The All-Tech office at Harbourside has a staff of 6, with 15 field technicians.

## **Millcreek**

Millcreek Environmental Services provides clients with used oil management, waste water treatment, industrial cleaning, and 24 hr. emergency response services. Vacuum trucks, mobile wash units, and dust control trucks are an important part of their infrastructure. Millcreek operates licensed, modern, waste oil recycling facility and a water treatment facility. They are a licensed waste oil trucking company and are 100% locally owned with a fulltime staff of 8 to 10 employees.

## **ACSI**

ACSI is an employee owned and operated security firm. The 11 owner/employees worked for Sydney Steel Corp. At its' time of closing these employees decided to put their skills and training to work as a private security company.

## **Atship Services Ltd.**

From a base in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Atship Services Ltd. continuously offers top quality service to each of their clients, representing 26% of all the cargo tonnage moving through the Port of Halifax, making Atship the largest Marine Agency company in terms of cargo tonnage in the port. They have expanded from the Halifax base to other ports in the region including Sheet Harbour, Port Hawkesbury, Sydney and Auld's Cove, and attend to vessels in New Brunswick and Newfoundland as well. Atship have 2 shipping agents operating out of HCP.

## **Provincial Energy Venture**

Provincial Energy Ventures (PEV) operates the Atlantic Canada Bulk Terminal, located on the site at the mouth of Sydney Harbour, the terminal provides efficient transfer of commodities to consumers in North America and Europe. While the Port within itself can be a very busy site PEV's General Manager maintains offices at Harbourside Place.

## **Offshore Technical Services / HarbourTech Services Inc**

Offshore Technical Services (OTS) is a Canadian energy services company. OTS is a growing provider of technical and professional services to companies in the oil and gas sector. OTS currently has contracts to supply management and technical services in the area of Engineering, Instrumentation, Electrical as well as Operations to projects in Alberta, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. HarbourTech is locally owned and operated with its main office located in Harbourside Commercial Park. They provide a wide range of construction services such as Project Management, Heavy Equipment, Trades & Technical Personnel, and Labour. OTS/HarbourTech have an office complement of 8 at their Harbourside Place offices, with a further 3 fulltime and up to 8 seasonal/casual employees on the site.

## **HAZCO Environmental and Decommissioning Services**

HAZCO is a leading remediation contractor specializing in the segregation, handling, and treatment of contaminated soils, water and hazardous wastes. HAZCO's professional staff, multiple office locations, waste transfer stations, industrial landfills and equipment complements their project experience in Canada, the United States and select international locations. HAZCO have a core staff of 8 working out of Harbourside Place.

## **Beaver Marine / MB2 Construction**

MB2 Excavating and Construction Limited is a new and innovative company established in 2004 and is located in Membertou, Nova Scotia. Beaver Marine out of Halifax has been serving Atlantic Canada in Wharf and Bridge Construction, Dredging, Pile Driving, Tugs, Workboats, Barges & Cranes and more. The two Nova Scotia companies have jointly won a multi-million-dollar contract to help with the ongoing cleanup of the Sydney tar ponds and coke ovens site. The office for this venture administering to an exhaustive fiscal and engineering workload maintains a staff of 7 at Harbourside Place.

## **SLR Consulting**

SLR is a leading International environmental consultancy with offices throughout the UK, Canada, and the United States. SLR provides environmental sciences and engineering expertise and high-value advisory services through a network of 18 strategically located offices in Canada. SLR has an office at Harbourside Place with 3 staff.

## **And more happening**

Harbourside Commercial Park also has an independent operator of a mechanical services operation specializing in Fire equipment vehicles, and another independent operator of warehousing. Harbourside Leasing remains busy engaging a number of interested parties who want to bring their own brand to this site, and we have every reason to expect growth over the next year and subsequent years to come.

# **Of Community and Steelworkers**

As the operations of Sydney Steel ceased many in the industry moved on to other industrial opportunities, entirely new segments in the workplace or used their professional training and skills in other sectors. Many from the workforce were eligible for pension at closure. Of the remaining 222 severed employees there were 145 who worked at least some time in the demolition and remediation phase. Working on the site now are 26 former steelworkers with up to another 14 employed through seasonal work. Other steelworkers are seen working with contractors, labour unions, and other companies from time to time on the former SYSCO site. The Sydney Tar Pond Agency has 2 employees from the severed SYSCO plant directly employed while others are working with contractors on related projects.

The closure of Sydney Steel was difficult for this community, however the very same site is moving forward with true Cape Breton fortitude and entrepreneurial ingenuity. The renewal has been rapid with hope and expectations of further development, right on the same location that this multi-cultured, multi-talented, success driven community was built.

Some of the former steelworkers using their training from SYSCO operations, with training in remediation, coupled with the training and skills acquired with current employment have been able to export their skills to other locations. With HAZCO, for instance, the employees are considered part of the overall familial company which can be seen all over Canada.

The following table shows the current employment figures for Harbourside Commercial Park, minus the large number of contractors, truckers, as well the operations at abutting neighbours; Logistics International Piers and the bevy of work associated with the Sydney Tar Pond Clean-up.

Company	Fulltime Staff	Additional staff Seasonal/peak	Number of former Steelworkers fulltime	Number of former Steelworkers seasonal
Protocase	40		1	
CBRM Solid Waste Transfer	8			
Portside Aggregate	9	4	4	4
Safety Check	12			
Millcreek	8	2	1	
All-Tech	6		2 (field techs)	
ACSI	11		11	
Atship	2			
Provincial Energy Venture	1			
OTS/HarbourTech	11	8	3	8
HAZCO	8	4	4	2
MB2/Beaver Marine	7			
SLR Consulting	2	1		
NS Lands	9	1	3	
Independent Business	2			

<b>Total</b>	<b>136 Fulltime</b>	<b>20 Seasonal</b>	<b>29 Former SYSCO 21% of total</b>	<b>14 Former SYSCO 70% of total</b>
--------------	-------------------------	------------------------	---	---