



Good Dollars Make Good Sense

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ACSTTO is not directly involved in the money aspects of surveying. Our mandate is to advance the status and welfare and to increase the knowledge, skill and proficiency of Certified Survey Technicians and Technologists. ACSTTO makes your technical personnel more valuable to you, it doesn't become directly involved in wage or salary arrangements.

We do conduct salary and job content surveys. Our first was in 1967, our latest in 1971. A study of these two shows that the intervening four years has altered the relative positions of technical personnel, in Government and in the private sector. This, coupled with a number of comments I've heard, mostly from Metro land surveyors, prompts me to use this page to discuss how good dollars for technical personnel makes good sense for the Ontario Land Surveyor.

A Man's Worth

The Metro surveyors tell me they would be quite happy to be told by an outside authority, even a union, what the going rate should be for the various grades of the para-professional. Deciding a man's worth is difficult. But it is something required of you as an Ontario Land Surveyor, and as an employer of technical personnel. Hopefully what follows may help you in your task.

A preliminary, and admittedly sketchy, look at the figures provided by the 1971 salary survey indicates technical people are being paid unevenly, with those working for the private operator lowest on the scale. These people have just barely received the 6% suggested by John Young's Prices and Incomes Commission during the period 1967 to 1971. Back in 1967 they got an average of just under \$100 a week in gross earnings. In 1971 the average had only gone to around \$130.

During the same period, technicians employed by government departments and agencies increased their gross income from \$100 to \$155. Back in 1967 salaries in both the governmental and private sectors were within a few percentage points of each other, less than 5% at the farthest separation. By 1971 the spread at the technician level was just under 20%. At the senior technician level, and at the technologist level the spread was 10%.

Private Sector Benefits

The best wages and fringe benefits, like company cars, turned up in returns from ACSTTO types working in the private sector — but not for O.L.S. firms.

The government types may not get top dollar, but they do receive salaries and wages more evenly distributed. And over the past four years have increased their salary by roughly 15% more than that received by their friends working in the private sector. Mostly through the efforts of unions like the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) who represent municipal employees, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) who represent federal employees, and provincial unions such as The Civil Service Association of Ontario (Inc.) C.S.A.O.

The highly trained people in ACSTTO, and the highly trained graduates of the Community Colleges, are finding the financial climate in legal land survey not to their liking. This would not be if the private surveyor applied the tariff authorized by The Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, rather than running a discount operation, in the manner of some retail stores.

Tariff Schedule

It is my opinion that the Ontario Land Surveyor who practices price-cutting to a degree that damages the status and

welfare of his organization, and the staff that make up that organization, should take a long, hard look at how he applies the tariff schedule. Intelligent application of this tariff would improve the profit picture for the O.L.S. in private practice to a point where he could pay salaries and wages at least equal to those paid by governments — and make a few extra dollars for himself in the process.

Unless the O.L.S. in private practice meets the government salary scale, he will have to settle for the lower calibre man. In surveying, as in anything else, you get what you pay for. The good money is in government, or with employers other than the O.L.S. Good people go where the good money is, all other things being equal.

Brain-Drain

The best of our people, and undoubtedly the best of those graduating from the Community Colleges, are gravitating to either government employers other than Ontario Land Surveyors. The highest paid survey technician who replied to our survey is Office Manager for a Construction firm, for example. As an organization, and as a profession wishing to up-grade your status in the professional and non-professional communities, this brain-drain into other fields of endeavour should give you pause.

Any good general will tell you battles are won by the army with the best soldiers and that an officer is only as good as the men under him. You, as the generals and other officers in the battle of land measurement, are only as good as the 'soldiers' you have working for you.

Can you afford to have a climate in which the best soldiers are joining armies other than your own?