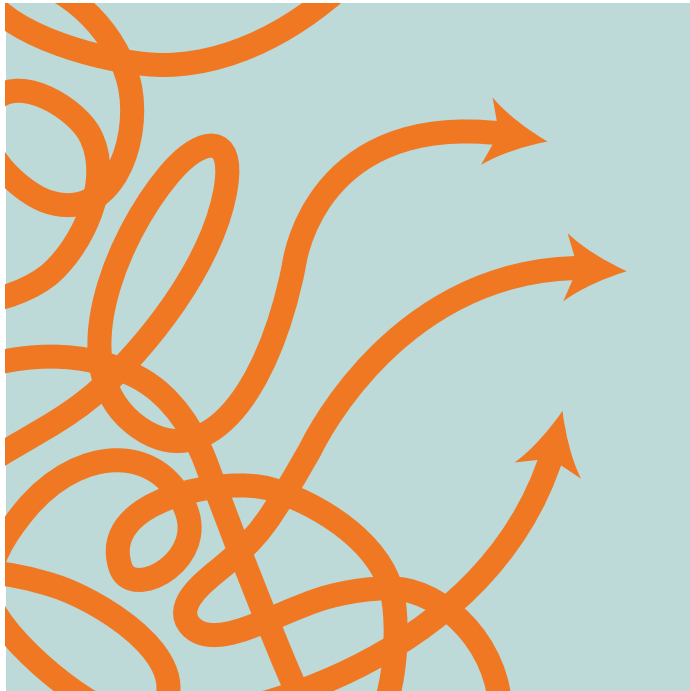




Bruce Grey Simcoe

# TOURISM WORKFORCE STUDY

REGIONAL TOURISM  
ORGANIZATION 7

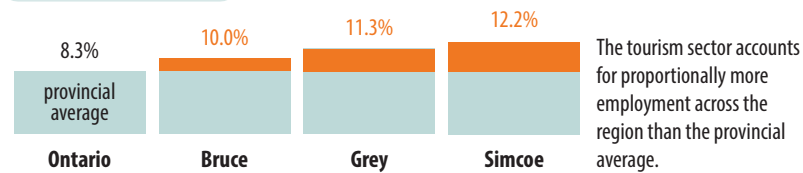


Between August 14 and October 8, 2012, a total of 274 tourism sector employers (RTO 7 together with RTO 4) provided responses to an on-line survey. When asked to identify priority workforce initiatives, employers chose the following top 5 from a list of 26 »

## Summary of the BruceGreySimcoe Tourism Workforce Study

The following study — a joint 2012/13 undertaking with RTO7, RTO4 and local Workforce Planning Boards — was undertaken to assess tourism workforce needs and inform the development of a long-term strategy for a tourism industry labour market plan.

Proportion of jobs in tourism



### Priority workforce initiatives:

- 1 Provide customer service training and improve soft skills, such as interpersonal communications.
- 2 Familiarize individuals with workplace expectations like attendance, punctuality and taking direction through basic pre-employment programs.
- 3 Seek funding to supplement employer investment in workplace training.
- 4 Make high school students and new entrants into the workforce aware of career opportunities in the hospitality, tourism and recreation sectors.
- 5 Create work experience programs for community college students.

## Findings:

The nature of the tourism industry (seasonal, lower pay, evening and weekend work) creates many challenges for employers looking for quality employees. We conducted a study to discover some of the issues employers face with working in tourism. Listed here are important findings from over 30 interviews with employers, educators and employment service providers.

## Issues

Customer service training is by far the greatest workforce challenge for employers. Cost is an issue associated with this.

Employers are often faced with choosing between the under-qualified (who need more training and supervision) and the over-qualified (who are likely to leave if they find a more suitable job).

The tourism sector has more employees with lower competencies in the essential skills.

Human resource skills are not always a strong suit among tourism sector employers.

Employers are often skeptical about recruiting appropriate staff through employment services.

Some employers raised concerns about the work attitudes of younger job candidates.

Employers are wary of training because of the cost and have apprehensions about the value of training.

Employers are wary of investing in their staff because of high turnover.

Transportation to work can be a barrier for employees, especially in resort areas.

The tourism sector does not have a strong track record when it comes to devising collaborative solutions to common workforce issues.

Employers feel not enough is being done to familiarize the labour force about careers in tourism.

## Recommendations

**Work with employers to identify barriers and develop strategy together.** Increase employer awareness about the strong case for business training.

**Employers could host co-op placements and work experience programs.** A one window approach may improve matching and guidance for better experience.

**Better preparation for individuals currently out of the workforce.** More intensive programs from employment services. Employers can help shape programs to direct expectations.

**Better screening by employment agencies.** Employers should seek better referrals from employment services. Use more detailed expectations for job postings and more feedback from employers.

**Create links with high schools.** Familiarize high school students with basic skills and job expectations. Raise awareness about career opportunities in tourism. Target high schools that have high skills majors in hospitality and tourism. Offer co-ops, placements and internships. Learning by doing is best.

**Career advancement/employee engagement.** Strengthen employee engagement and commitment to the job, which will lead to the employee 'going the extra mile' — an important part of customer service. Lay out a pathway to aid job retention. Make career advancement a series of training steps connected to job advancement.

**Coordination with local transportation.** Tourism employers could become more engaged in local efforts to address transportation challenges.

**Advocacy with employers.** Rather than separate initiatives on different challenges, the first priority should be working with employers to gain critical mass of support on workforce issues.

**Raising appeal of tourism jobs.** Utilize destination advertising to highlight the appeal of being part of a quality workforce.

These recommendations emerged from an analysis of the data, the survey results and the input from key informant interviews, and from deliberations with the steering committee guiding this project.

## Additional Improvements

### Temporary foreign worker program.

Most employers who use foreign temporary workers feel it is a last resort, although they do appreciate the work ethic of most of these workers. This option will be harder to rely upon, with recent announcements in federal budget and the controversy sparked by revelations involving RBC.

### Survey directed at residents.

Surveying residents, especially youth, could identify further options for connecting with and attracting job candidates.

# Every year, tourists flow into our area.

8.5 million annual tourist visits

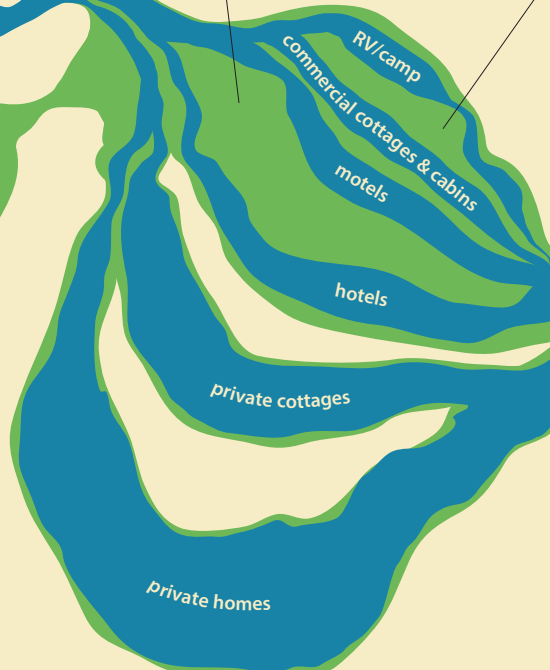


## Jobs are fed by the influx of tourists.

28,020 employed residents  
26,430 jobs

**3,235 jobs**

89% of these facilities employ 20 or less.



**505 jobs**

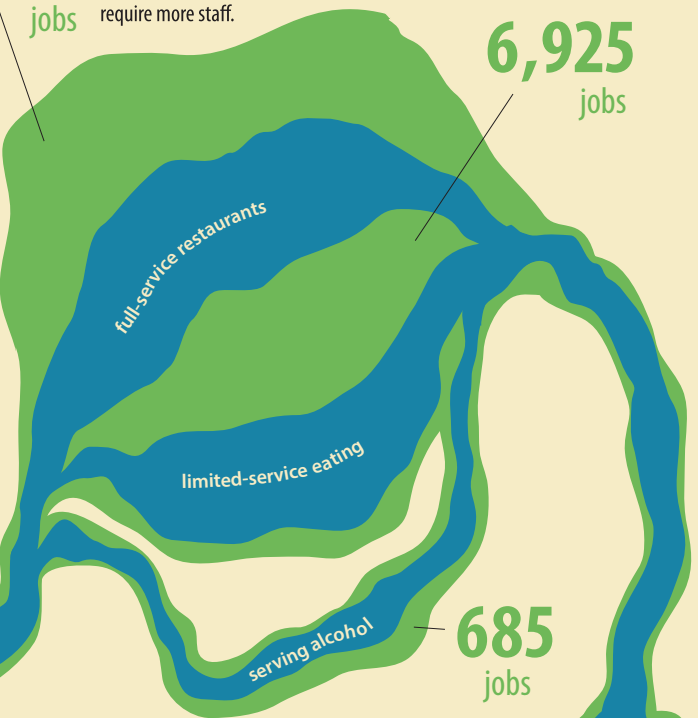
**6,575 jobs**

Places like marinas, golf courses and facilities, hunting and fishing services, racetracks and fitness and recreation centres make up the majority of these employers.

Private homes and cottages don't create many jobs in accommodation, but the flow of tourists creates lots of jobs in other tourism sectors.

**7,120 jobs**

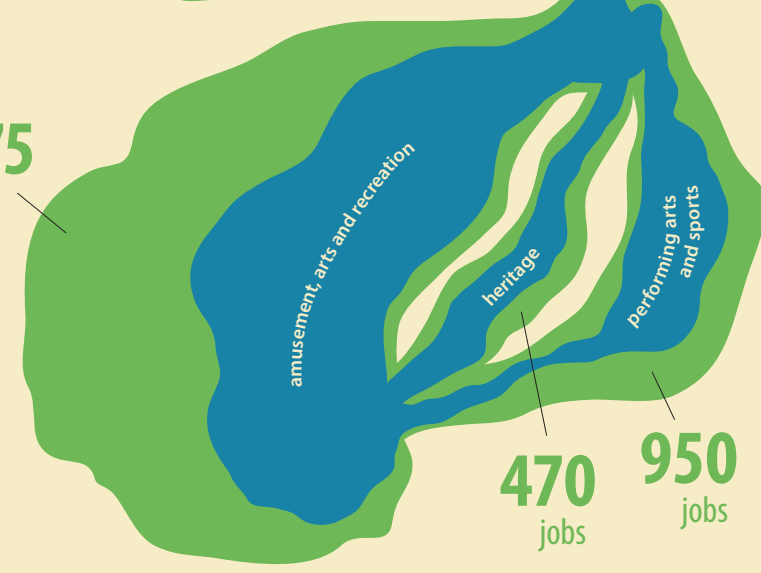
Full-service restaurants are more numerous than limited-service, and usually require more staff.



**6,925 jobs**

**685 jobs**

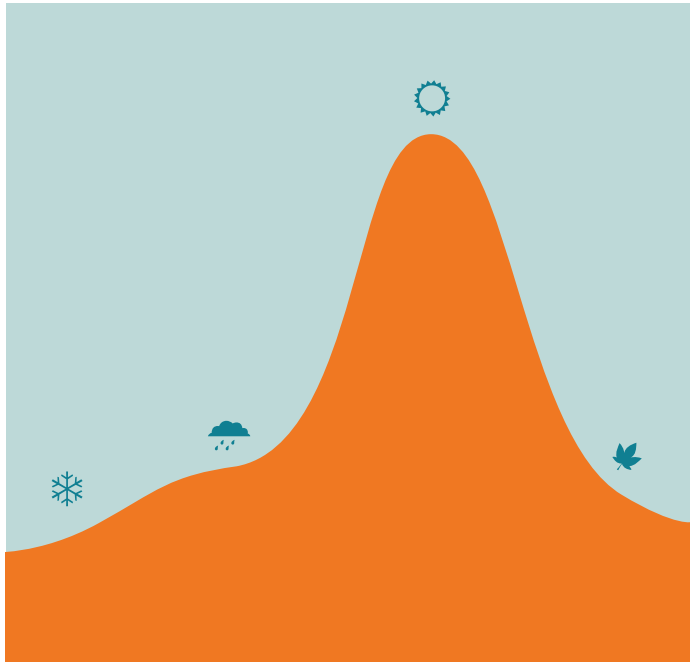
**6,575 jobs**



**470 jobs**

**950 jobs**

## Tourism workforce statistics



The tourism industry depends on tourists for business: tourists create the demand for tourist services, and the number of tourists determines the number of tourism establishments and employees working in those enterprises.

Data on tourism activity tell us how many visitors there are, what they do when they visit, and where they stay. This is the foundation for understanding the local tourism industry and the demand for workers in the tourism sector.

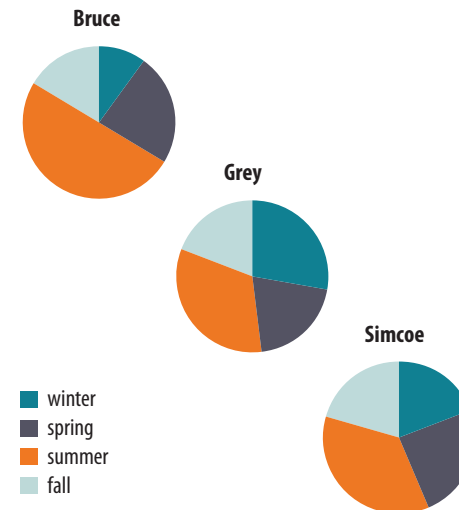
## We get an average of 9 million visits per year.

Annual visits › 2006–2010

	<b>Bruce</b>	<b>Grey</b>	<b>Simcoe</b>
2006	1,456,279	1,571,771	5,127,218
2007	1,381,911	1,870,379	5,730,274
2008	1,230,961	1,846,651	6,276,619
2009	1,396,091	1,528,744	6,373,245
2010	1,485,240	1,297,706	6,760,219
<b>average</b>	<b>1,390,096</b>	<b>1,623,050</b>	<b>6,053,515</b>

Tourism here is a highly seasonal activity, which can create great variations in demand for tourism businesses, which in turn requires a greater reliance on seasonal workers. Bruce has by far the most seasonal tourism industry (very high summer peak), while Grey and Simcoe have a slightly more balanced spread of visitors.

Visits by season › 2006–2010



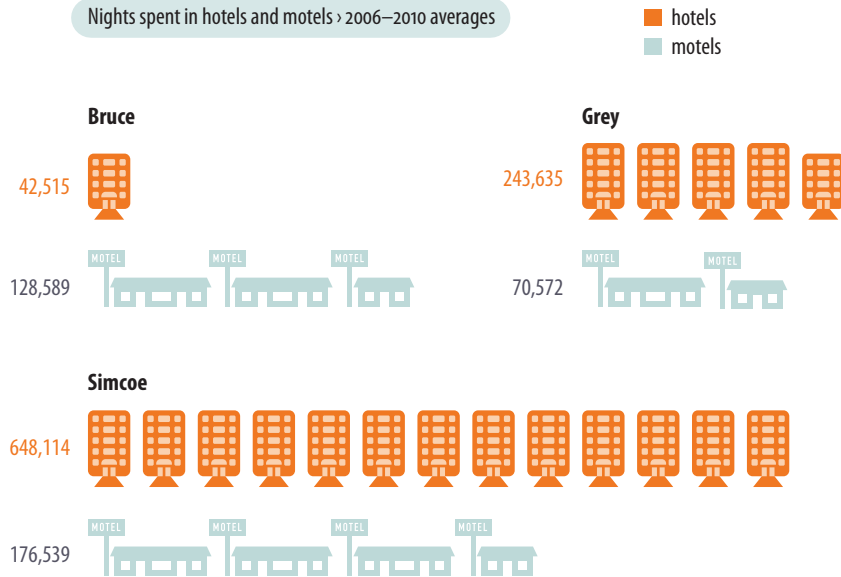
Seasonality has a significant impact on the tourism workforce. Variation in the number of person-visits from one season to the next requires a greater reliance on seasonal workers. Workers looking for year-round work will be less likely to be attracted to these seasonal jobs, except perhaps as a stop-gap when unemployed. Each year employers need to recruit a new batch of workers, who may or may not return the following season. These workers may have less invested in their work because it is short-term, and employers may be less inclined to provide much training, knowing these employees will likely soon be gone.

# 10.2 million overnight visits each year: commercial facilities handle 3.1 million visits, while private homes and cottages host 7.1 million visits.

Overnight visitor stays > 2006–2010 averages

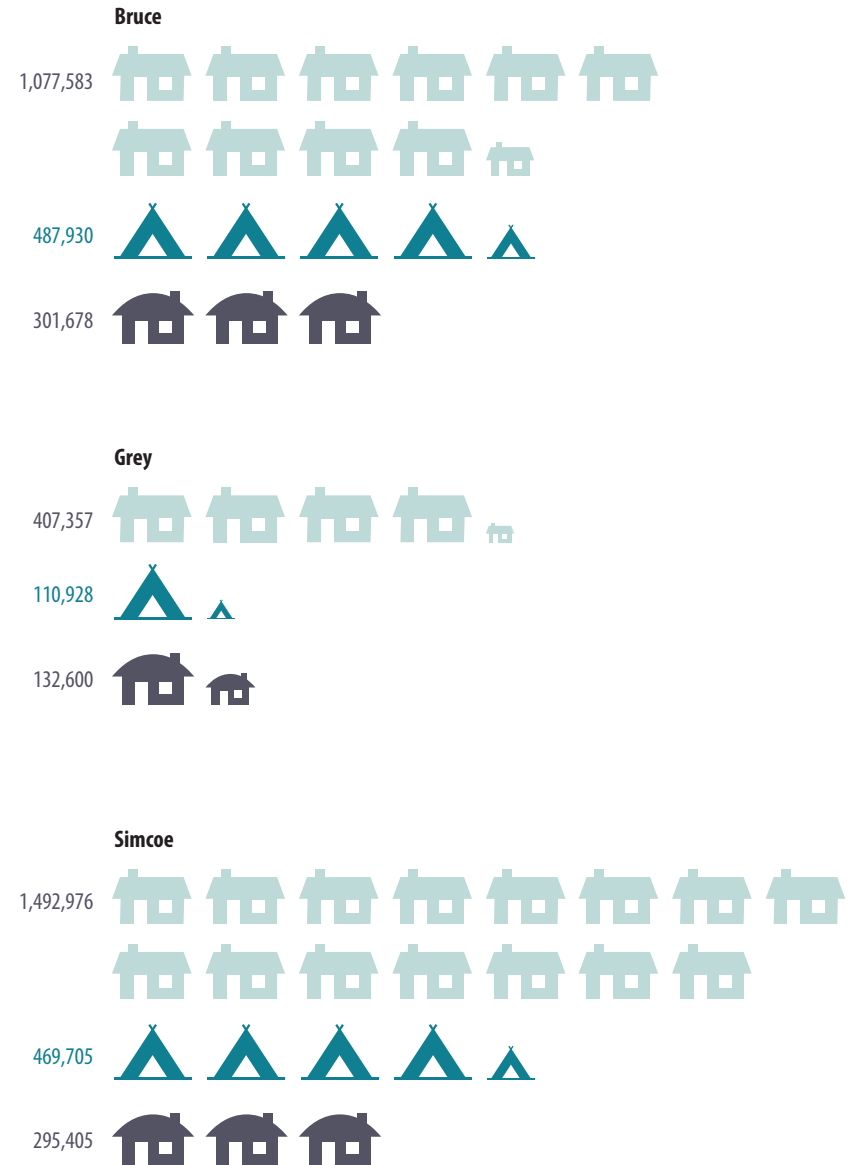
	Bruce	Grey	Simcoe
hotels	42,515	243,635	648,114
motels	128,589	70,572	176,539
commercial cottages/cabins	301,678	132,600	295,405
RV/camping facilities	487,930	110,928	469,705
private homes	720,344	796,860	2,651,299
private cottages	1,077,583	407,357	1,492,976

Nights spent in hotels and motels > 2006–2010 averages

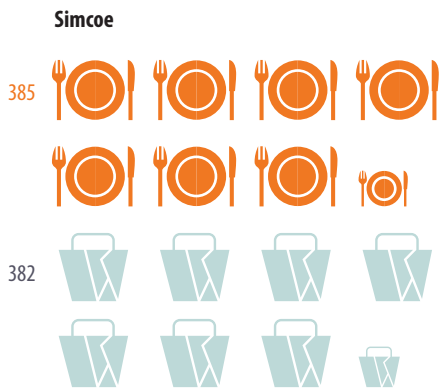
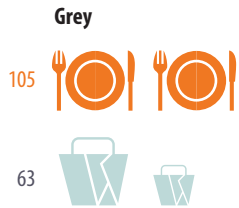
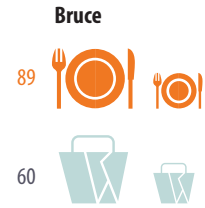


Nights spent in commercial cottages and cabins, camping and RV facilities, and private cottages > 2006–2010 averages

- private cottages
- camping/RV facilities
- commercial cottages/cabins



# Over half of all tourism businesses are found in the food and beverage sector.



## Full and limited service eating > 2010

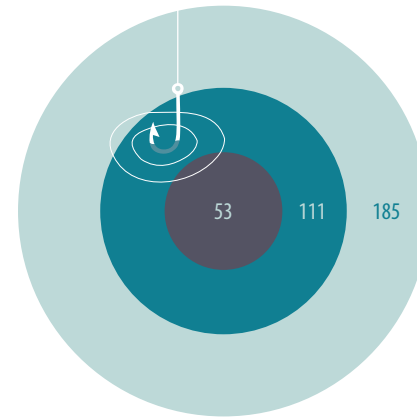
Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places make up a little over half of all the business establishments in the tourism sector, and a significant portion of employment in tourism.

- full-service restaurants
- limited-service eating places

# Selected facts and figures > 2010

## Accommodation service employers > 2010

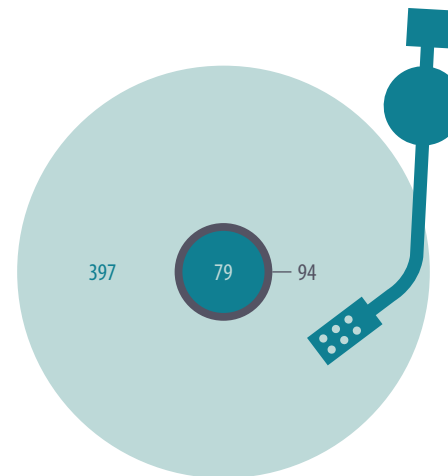
Includes: hotels, motor hotels, resorts, motels, casino hotels, bed & breakfast, housekeeping cottages & cabins, all other traveller accommodation, RV parks & campgrounds, hunting & fishing camps, recreational (except hunting and fishing) & vacation camps.



- Bruce
- Grey
- Simcoe

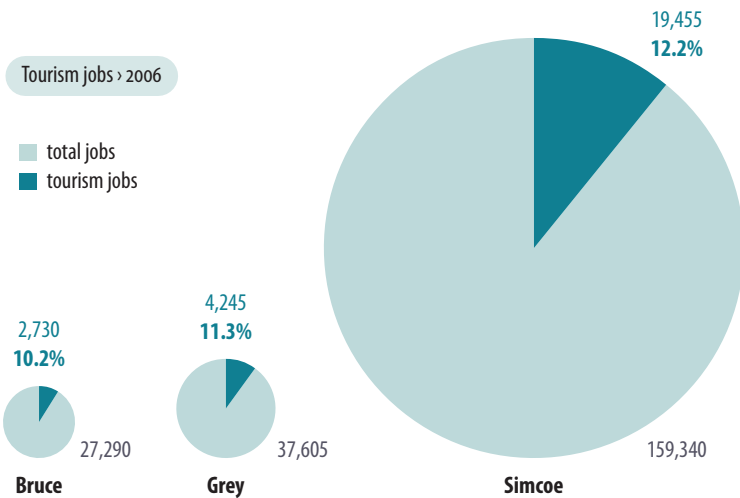
## Total arts, entertainment and recreation facilities > 2010

For more detailed breakdowns, download the full report at: [www.rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Tourism-Workforce-Project](http://www.rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Tourism-Workforce-Project)



- Bruce
- Grey
- Simcoe

# The BruceGreySimcoe tourism industry employs over 26,000 people, accounting for 10% of the region's workforce.



Residents employed in tourism (selected occupations) > 2006

	Bruce	Grey	Simcoe
food counter attendants & kitchen helpers	520	785	4110
food & beverage servers	400	505	2250
cooks	405	370	1790
restaurant & food service managers	185	195	1440
cashiers	65	60	810
program instructors in recreation	95	145	615
light duty cleaners	65	110	840
chefs	80	85	350
bartenders	55	75	505
food service supervisors	35	40	440
casino occupations	20	45	1300
landscaping labourers	125	200	590
accommodation service managers	180	90	310
maitres d'hôtel & hosts	0	80	255
retail salespersons & sales clerks	55	45	420

## Next Steps

Regional Tourism Organization 7 thanks stakeholders and operators who participated in this study, which has provided a strong foundation for strategic planning to address our region's tourism workforce needs and opportunities.

Starting in 2013, RTO7's initial focus will be on the priority opportunity recommendations identified by the study.

Support of a strong and sustainable tourism workforce is integral to RTO7's mission: to work collaboratively to enrich BruceGreySimcoe's diverse tourism experiences and to build, sustain and grow visitation, investment and visitor spending.

The complete study report and recommendations (Zizys, 2013) can be accessed on the RTO7 web site at: [www.rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Tourism-Workforce-Project](http://www.rto7.ca/Public/Resources/Tourism-Workforce-Project)



**Regional Tourism  
Organization 7**

P.O. Box 973  
Thornbury, ON  
N0H 2P0  
(705) 888-8728  
[www.rto7.ca](http://www.rto7.ca)