



## Construction Industry Round Table

## Economic News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

### 6/03/2016 – Employment News for May Seems Strange

Employment figures from the Department of Labor for May were a “puzzlement” (or, a good example of how the government counts such things) showing job growth *crashing* to a dismal increase of only 38,000 during the month (this was significantly BELOW the generally accepted estimate that it takes approximately 130-150,000 new jobs per month, just to absorb the expanding workforce). The *non-seasonally* adjusted unemployment figure for construction improved to 5.2 percent [1.5 basis points (percent points), below a year ago May 2015, when it stood at 6.7%]. Construction employment again rose over prior month levels as the spring construction season took hold across the country.

Meanwhile, in a bazaar turn of events, the overall unemployment rate had a sizeable drop of 0.3 to only 4.7 percent (which amounts to 7.4 million “unemployed persons” as the government counts). However, the improved unemployment picture appears to be *entirely* the result of a large reduction in the “labor force participation” rate, which deteriorated to 62.6 percent with 484,000 people “dropping out of the workforce.” (This level again flirts with historic lows set back in the 1970’s when women made-up less of the “outside the home” workforce. At the end of the recession [June ‘09] this rate stood at a healthier 65.7%). The “employed-population ratio” remained constant at 59.7%.

You can view the current and historical **Workforce Statistics** charts [here](#).