



## Labour Market Conditions in Goldfields/Esperance

Mining directly employs almost one in four workers in the Goldfields/Esperance Employment Service Area<sup>1</sup> and local labour market opportunities are highly dependent on the performance of this sector. Despite a significant weakening in recruitment conditions associated with the recent slowdown in the Mining sector across regional Western Australia<sup>2</sup>, overall labour market conditions in Goldfields/Esperance remain stronger than in many other regions across the country.

- While the unemployment rate in the region doubled from 2.6 per cent to 5.2 per cent in the year to December 2013<sup>3</sup>, it remains lower than the current rate for Australia (5.8 per cent).<sup>4</sup>
- Internet vacancies in the Goldfields and Southern WA region have declined by 30 per cent in the past year.<sup>5</sup>



### What employers are telling us<sup>6</sup>

Recruitment conditions have eased significantly in Goldfields/Esperance since the last survey in November 2010.

- The proportion of employers who recruited in the 12 months prior to the survey (39 per cent) had decreased significantly since November 2010 (72 per cent). Annual recruitment (19 vacancies per 100 staff) had also decreased since the region was last surveyed (26 vacancies per 100 staff), although it remains higher than the rate for all regions surveyed (16 vacancies per 100 staff).
- Only 7 per cent of surveyed employers increased staff numbers in the previous year while 33 per cent reduced staff numbers.
- The competition for vacancies (8.4 applicants per vacancy) had increased since the region was last surveyed (5.2 applicants). There has been a corresponding decrease in the unfilled vacancy rate (2.5 per cent) compared with 2010 (9.9 per cent).
- Many employers reported a degree of uncertainty about their recruitment outlook with only 28 per cent of employers expecting to recruit and 8 per cent of employers expecting to decrease staff numbers in the next year.

	February 2014	November 2010	All regions surveyed
Annual vacancies per 100 staff	19	26	16
Unfilled vacancy rate (most recent recruitment round)	2.5%	9.9%	3.7%
Applicants per vacancy (most recent recruitment round)	8.4	5.2	10.6
% of employers expecting to recruit in the next 12 months	28%	54%	38%

### Where are the opportunities?

- The survey results highlight the many employment opportunities likely to become available, particularly in industries in which there is high turnover, such as Accommodation and Food Services and Retail Trade. Specifically, over the next 12 months, employers expect to frequently recruit for Waiters, Bar Attendants and Baristas, Housekeepers, Receptionists, Sales Assistants, Truck Drivers and Checkout Operators and Office Cashiers.
- Almost half of the recruiting employers (47 per cent) used informal methods only to recruit staff (e.g. word of mouth, or hiring a job seeker who approached them directly). Accordingly, job seekers who can tap into the local informal recruitment market will have access to many more employment opportunities and significantly improve their employment prospects.

<sup>1</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2011

<sup>2</sup> ABS, Labour Force Survey, May 2014 (4 quarter average of original data). After an extended period of employment growth in the regional Western Australian Mining industry, there was a substantial decrease in employment in the 12 months to February 2014 (4000 people)

<sup>3</sup> Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Markets, December quarter 2013

<sup>4</sup> ABS, Labour Force Survey, May 2014 (Seasonally adjusted data)

<sup>5</sup> Department of Employment, Internet Vacancies Report, March 2014

<sup>6</sup> Based on a Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences of 289 employers undertaken by the Labour Market Research and Analysis Branch in February 2014