



Painting Trades Worker

ANZSCO 3332-11

New South Wales
September 2018

Current labour market rating: Shortage

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Shortage

Comments

There is a shortage of painting trades workers in metropolitan and regional NSW. Generally, employers were not able to fill vacancies in metropolitan and regional NSW. There has been a shortage of painting trades workers in NSW since 2013, noting a regional shortage only in 2014.

Survey results¹

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for painting trades workers in the following areas: private and public sectors involving commercial and residential construction and maintenance.

Employer Requirements

- In general, employers sought the following in applicants:
 - Experience in painting with at least three or more years of experience.
 - Specific industry experience, for instance, some employers required applicants to have experience in maintenance painting or specific domestic experience rather than construction experience.
 - Technical skills, with some employers conducting a trial to determine if applicants were suitable.
 - Good communication and presentation skills, particularly in applicants working in domestic maintenance of existing homes.
 - Understanding and awareness of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) regulations.
 - Less than half of the employers surveyed required qualified painting trade workers.

Vacancies filled

- Across NSW, 52 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period compared with 56 per cent in 2017.
- Vacancies arose either through staff turnover or an increase in demand for business.
- Some employers described a high turnover in this trade with employers describing that applicants were increasingly unreliable, for instance, some missing start dates or being hard to contact.

Applicants per vacancy

- Across NSW, there was an average of 9.9 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.9 applicants were considered suitable by employers.
- By comparison, in 2017 there was an average of 2.4 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.6 applicants were considered suitable by employers.

¹ The methodology for this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business](#).

- The higher average number of applicants this year is due to three metropolitan employers who received a high number of applicants. Some employers suggested the increase in the number of applicants maybe due to the recent completion of construction projects.

Metropolitan and regional results

- In metropolitan regions, there was an average of 13.3 applicants per vacancy and 8 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
 - Employers in metropolitan areas were able to fill 47 per cent of vacancies.
- In regional areas, there was an average of 4.2 applicants per vacancy and 19 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
 - Employers in regional areas were able to fill 60 per cent of vacancies.
- On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted seven applicants with qualifications compared to 2.8 applicants with qualifications per vacancy in regional areas.

Unsuitable applicants

- The reasons given by employers on why an applicant was considered unsuitable include:
 - Lack of industry specific work experience.
 - Insufficient length of work experience, for instance not having five years of painting experience.
 - Lack of employability and reliability for instance, failing to turn up to an interview or missing start dates.
 - Not possessing the communication and other soft skills sought by employers, such as customer skills.
 - Poor quality applications and not addressing the selection criteria.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for painters is generally influenced by the level of activity in the engineering and construction industry.
 - The total, inflation adjusted, value of building work done in NSW grew by 6.8 per cent in the year to September 2018, with growth stronger than the Australian average of 4.5 per cent. This was the sixth consecutive year where growth in NSW has been above the national average.²
 - The value of residential work increased by 6.1 per cent over the year to September 2018, which followed five years of annual growth in excess of 10 per cent. The growth in the value of work done for the construction of new houses (8.1 per cent) was higher than for new other residential work (6.6 per cent). For the previous five years, the growth in the latter had been higher.³
 - The value of non-residential building work increased by 8.3 per cent in the year to September 2018. This followed a fall of 5.7 per cent in the previous year.⁴
 - The value of engineering construction increased by 20.4 per cent in the year to September 2018. This followed a rise of 17.9 per cent in the previous year.⁵

² ABS, *Construction Work Done, Preliminary*, September 2018 (8755.0), chain volume measures, original.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

- The Australian PCI (state data are not available) had a modest expansion in September 2018 with a 12 month average of 53.7. Within all sub-sectors of the Australian PCI, the 12-month average, had readings above 50 apart from apartments recording a contraction at 46.2. This indicates a slowing down and cooling of apartment building activity. An Australian Performance of Construction Index (PCI) reading above 50 indicates that construction activity is generally expanding and below 50, declining. The distance from 50 indicates the strength of increase or decline.⁶
 - Engineering construction and Commercial construction had the strongest average annual activity growth at 57 and 55.1 respectively, driving industry growth with a strong expansion of major infrastructure projects.⁷
- Over the year to September 2018, the number of vacancies advertised on the internet for painting trades workers in NSW have declined by 12 per cent.⁸
- Entry into these trades is commonly through the completion of a Certificate III in Painting and Decorating.⁹
 - National Centre for Vocational Education Research data shows completions (limited to the certificate III level) for this course in the year to March 2018 (around 130) was similar to the average for the previous five years (around 125).¹⁰
 - The number of commencements in this course has increased consecutively for six years with commencements of about 365 for the year ended March 2018. Commencements increased nearly 55 per cent over the five years to March 2018, averaging around 300 per annum over this period.¹¹
- The number of temporary resident (skilled) visas granted for painting trades workers (individual data is not available) averaged around 60 per annum over the five years ending 2017-18.¹²
 - Please note, on 18 April 2017, the Government announced that the Temporary Work (Skilled) visa (subclass 457 visa) was abolished and replaced with the completely new Temporary Skill Shortage visa in March 2018 to address the genuine skill shortages.¹³

⁶ Ai Group, *Performance of Construction Index September 2018*, 5 October 2018, <https://www.aigroup.com.au/policy-and-research/mediacentre/releases/PCI-September-2018/> (accessed 4 December 2018).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Department of Jobs and Small Business, *Internet Vacancy Index*, October 2018, 12 month moving average.

⁹ NCVER, *Apprentices and Trainees*, March 2018, estimates (limited to certificate III qualifications).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Department of Home Affairs, *Temporary Work (Skilled) visa programme*, <https://data.gov.au/dataset/visa-temporary-work-skilled> (accessed 4 December 2018).

¹³ More information can be found here <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/work/457-abolition-replacement>.