

Stonemason

ANZSCO 3311-12

Australia
September 2018

Current labour market rating: Shortage

Shortages of stonemasons persist across Australia, with shortages having been recorded almost continuously since 2005. Surveyed employers had difficulty recruiting stonemasons and, even with nearly half of those surveyed prepared to compromise and hire experienced but unqualified tradespeople, two thirds of vacancies remained unfilled.

Key research findings

- Consistent with past research findings, most surveyed vacancies were unfilled in 2018. Shortages have now been present for six consecutive years (Figure 1).
- Around 45 per cent of employers were prepared to hire an unqualified but experienced stonemason. Many said they were compromising due to a lack of qualified stonemasons in the labour market.
 - This is consistent with 2016 Census data which indicated 46 per cent of stonemasons do not hold post-school qualifications.
- Applicants were considered to be unsuitable if they lacked the level of experience required, failed a trade test or (for those employers who required it) did not have formal qualifications.
- Around one third of employers indicated they were considering skilled migration to fill their vacant positions.
- Half of the employers who had unfilled vacancies stated they would need to limit the amount of work they take on moving forward.

Demand and supply

- Stonemasons work primarily in Manufacturing and Construction, with the main driver of demand being building construction activity.
- Supporting the demand for these workers, building activity in Australia remains historically high, with the value of building work done in Australia increasing for the past seven consecutive months.
 - Residential construction was the primary driver of growth, increasing by around seven per cent over the year to September 2018.

2018 Survey Results¹

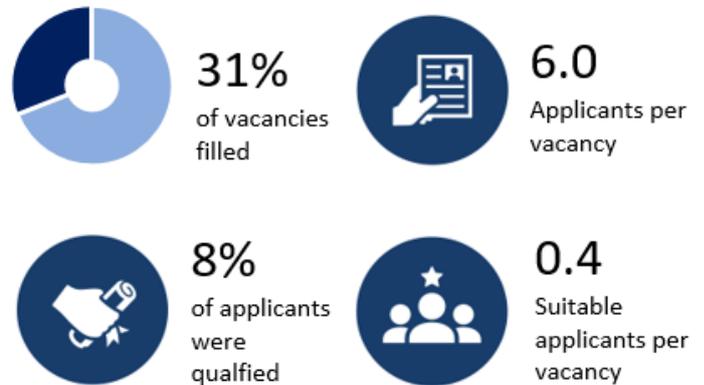
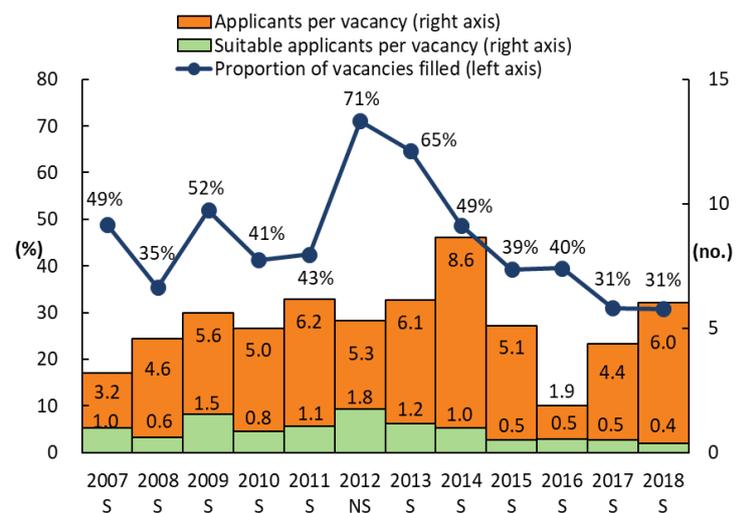


Figure 1: Survey results, Stonemason, 2007 to 2018



Key to ratings: S = Shortage; NS = No shortage

- The supply of stonemasons, however, remains subdued. Apprenticeship numbers remain low, affected by training not being available in all states and territories.
 - Over the five years to March 2018, stonemasonry apprenticeships averaged around 145 commencements and 65 completions per annum.

Outlook

- Potentially constraining the demand for these workers, building approvals fell by 12.9 per cent over the year to September 2018, and have now decreased for 11 consecutive months.

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

Additional Data Sources: ABS, Building Approvals, September 2018, trend; ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016; ABS, Construction Work Done, September 2018, chain volume measures, trend; NCVET, Apprentices and Trainees, March 2018, estimates (limited to Certificate III).