



Painting Trades Worker

ANZSCO 3322-11

South Australia
September 2018

Current labour market rating: **Shortage**

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Shortage

Comments

Labour market conditions for painting trades workers continued to be of concern and there appears to be shortages of qualified painters across several sectors. Most surveyed employers attracted low numbers of suitable applicants and many vacancy positions were unable to be filled within four weeks of advertising.

Survey results¹

- A survey of employers who had recently advertised for painters found that 44 per cent of the vacancies were filled within four weeks. This proportion is lower than those employers surveyed in 2017 where 55 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks.
- Employers were surveyed across several sectors including commercial, residential building and construction companies.
- Employers attracted an average of 15.7 applicants per vacancy compared to 8.1 applicants per vacancy in 2017, however many of these applicants were not qualified or had little or no experience as a painter.
- The average of suitable applicants per vacancy have remained the same as last year's results. Employers surveyed identified an average of 1.4 suitable applicants per vacancy in both 2017 and 2018.
- In regional areas, employers disclosed that they gained employees through personal contacts and did not advertise rather gained applicants through their networks or word of mouth. Several regional employers said that they were sole traders and only employed staff when the job required.
- Given the low ratio of suitable applicants per vacancy and low proportion of vacancies filled the labour market for painting trades workers is rated as being in shortage.

Unsuitable applicants

- Employers attracted an average of 6.4 qualified applicants per vacancy of which 41 per cent overall were qualified.
- The proportion of qualified applicants that were unsuitable was 59 per cent and an average of 36 per cent of employers had unfilled vacancies.
- All advertised vacancies required trade qualified applicants or applicants with experience commensurate with a trade qualification.
- Many applicants lacked basic skills in being able to do the role or lacked experience in the occupation. Some applicants lived interstate and relocation was a concern for the employer. Some applicants that were deemed qualified failed to present for the interview or trial. Others failed to finish the trial early or lacked the soft skills to do the role. Employers in the domestic sector valued painters with customer service and communication skills.

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

Demand and supply trends

- According to ABS 2016 Census data there are approximately 2700 Painting Trade Workers in South Australia, of those 90.2 per cent in the construction industry.
- Of those, 1200 are employees and 1500 are self-employed. Of those employed 81.5 per cent resided in metropolitan areas and 18.5 per cent in the rest of the state.²
- Overall, the construction sector in South Australia appeared strong despite some recent indicators of steady activity.
 - The total value of building work done in South Australia improved in the year to March 2018 compared with the previous 12-month period and is above the five-year average.³
 - The value of building work commenced in South Australia is above the five-year average as at March 2018, this is a 19.2 per cent increase compared with the previous 12 months.⁴
 - The value of South Australian residential building approvals increased slightly in the year to May 2018,⁵ which provided an indication of future demand, the number of building approvals remain well above the five-year average.⁶
- The value of building work yet to be done has increased by 39 per cent from March 2017 to March 2018.⁷
- A major source of supply to the trade has been new graduates who have completed a contract of training in painting and decorating.
- According to NCVER an average of 27 students completed a Certificate 111 in painting and decoration to year ending March 18 in comparison to 35 students who completed the certificate to year ending March 2016.
- Over a longer term, completion numbers have fluctuated, making the 2018 completion numbers lower than the five-year average of 34 for painting trades.
- Completion rates for apprentices in the painting trades have continued to decrease and remain below the 10-year average of 39.⁸

² Census of Population and Housing 2016, Place of Usual Residence

³ ABS, Building Activity, Australia, Cat. No. 8752.0, Table 16, estimates based on four quarter totals

⁴ ABS, Building Activity, Australia, Cat. No. 8752.0, Table 44, estimates based on four quarter totals

⁵ ABS, Building Approvals, Australia, Cat. No. 8731.0

⁶ ABS, Building Approvals, Australia, Cat. No. 8731.0, Table 33, estimates based on 12 month totals

⁷ ABS, Building Activity, Australia, Cat. No. 8752.0, Table 50, estimates based on four quarter totals

⁸ NCVER, VOCSTATS