

# Plumbers

## ANZSCO 3341

# Australian Capital Territory

## September 2018

### Current labour market rating: Shortage

Employers continue to have considerable difficulty recruiting plumbers in the ACT. The local demand for these workers has strengthened in recent years, while new supply through apprenticeship completions has fallen.

### Key research findings

- Applicant numbers were low in 2018 and a significant share of vacancies remained unfilled.
  - Just 31 per cent of surveyed vacancies were filled (close to an historical low).
  - This labour market has tightened significantly since 2015 when shortages were not apparent (Figure 1).
- Shortages of plumbers are common in the ACT and have been evident in eight of the past 10 years.
- Due to the difficulty experienced by employers in attracting suitable applicants, many offered additional incentives, such as a company vehicle and bonuses.
- A number of vacancies remained unfilled despite the employer attracting suitable applicants because the candidates decided to stay with their current employers.
- Around 70 per cent of applicants were regarded as unsuitable because they lacked the trade qualification required to be licensed. In addition, one quarter of qualified applicants were unsuitable, commonly because of poor quality work.

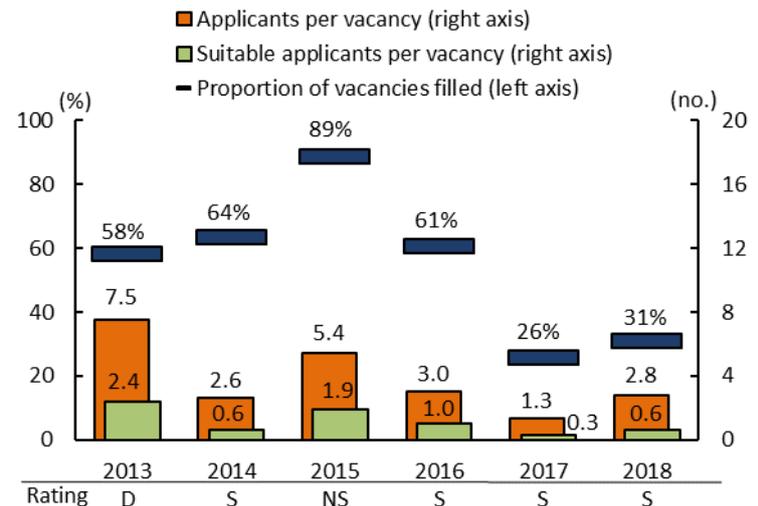
### Demand and supply trends

- The demand for plumbers in the ACT has strengthened in recent years, influenced by robust construction activity.
  - Employer comments suggest that the demand for plumbing work is solid and the number of advertised vacancies for these workers has risen strongly over the past two years.
- Plumber apprenticeship completions have fallen to historically low levels in recent years, limiting new supply to this trade. Commencements, though, have risen strongly in recent years, which may result in increased supply over the next few years (Figure 2).

### 2018 Survey Results<sup>1</sup>

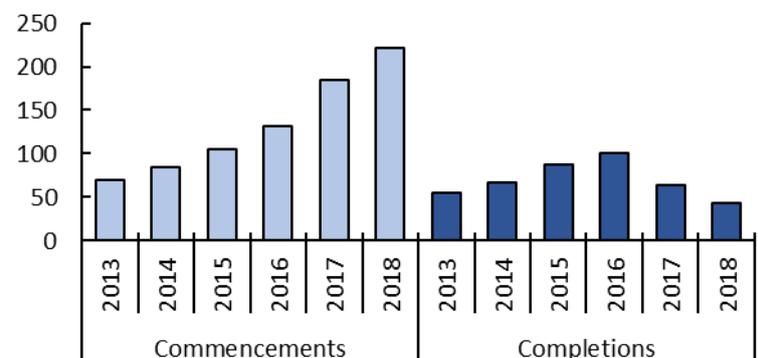


Figure 1: Survey results, Plumbers, ACT, 2013 to 2018



Key to ratings: S = Shortage; D = Recruitment difficulty; NS = No shortage

Figure 2: Apprenticeship and traineeship commencements and completions, Plumbers, ACT, 2013 to 2018 (year to March)



<sup>1</sup> The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business](#). Additional Data Sources: NCVER, Apprentices and Trainees, March 2018, estimates; Department of Jobs and Small Business, Internet Vacancy Index, August 2018; ABS 8755.0 Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary, August 2018, chain volume measures, trend