



# Electrician (General) ANZSCO 3411-11

New South Wales  
September 2018

**Current labour market rating:** Shortage

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Shortage

## Comments

There is a shortage of electrician (general) in metropolitan and regional NSW. Employers were generally not able to fill vacancies in metropolitan and regional NSW.

## Survey results<sup>1</sup>

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for electrician in the following areas: residential, commercial, industrial, roads and transport systems involving service, maintenance and manufacturing.

## Employer Requirements

- In general, employers sought the following in applicants:
  - Qualification.
  - NSW Electrical licence.
  - OH&S White Card.
  - Experience in the relevant area such as commercial fit out.
  - Current driver's licence.
  - Good communication skills.

## Vacancies filled

- Across NSW, 21 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period compared with 58 per cent in September 2017.
- Generally, vacancies remained unfilled due to no applicants or no suitable applicants.

## Applicants per vacancy

- Across NSW, there was an average of 4.9 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.5 applicants were considered suitable by employers.
- By comparison, in 2017 there was an average of 6.5 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.7 applicants were considered suitable by employers.

## Metropolitan and regional results

- In metropolitan regions, there was an average of 3.7 applicants per vacancy and 8 per cent were considered suitable by employers.

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

- Employers in metropolitan areas were able to fill 21 per cent of vacancies.
- In regional areas, there was an average of 9.2 applicants per vacancy and 13 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
  - Employers in regional areas were able to fill 20 per cent of vacancies.
- On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted 3.2 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:
  - A lack of relevant qualifications or licences.
  - A lack of experience in specialist areas, such as working in underground mining.
  - Applicants work preferences not suitable with position requirements such as, remuneration with applicants expecting higher wages than offered.
  - Not possessing the soft skills sought by the employer, such as good communication skills.
  - Lack of employability and reliability, such as being hard to contact, not attending the interview or poor work history.

### Demand and supply trends

- Demand for electricians has been boosted by strong construction activity over the past few years.
  - 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.<sup>2</sup>
  - 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.<sup>3</sup>
  - 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.<sup>4</sup>
  - 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.<sup>5</sup>
- For the 11 months to May 2018, raw coal production in NSW was 1.9 per cent lower than for the same period in the previous year.<sup>6</sup> However, coal mining production employment in August 2018 was 2.7 per cent higher than year earlier.<sup>7</sup>
- Over the year to March 2018, there were around 1250 completions of electrician apprentices. This was below the average number of completions recorded over the five years to March 2017 of around 1540.<sup>8</sup>

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

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Coal Services, *NSW coal industry statistics – May 2018*, <https://www.coalservices.com.au/mining/news-and-events/industry-newsletters/may-2018-nsw-coal-industry-statistics/> (accessed 7 December 2018)

<sup>7</sup> Coal Services, *NSW Coal Industry: Production Employment Report – August 2018*

<sup>8</sup> NCVET, *Apprentices and Trainees*, March 2018, estimates (limited to certificate III).

- In contrast, there were around 3500 commencements over the year to March 2018. This was well above the average of around 2380 per annum recorded over the five years to March 2017.<sup>9</sup>
- 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. 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.<sup>10</sup>
- Engineering construction and Commercial construction had the strongest activity growth at 57 and 55.1 respectively, driving industry growth with a strong expansion of major infrastructure projects.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> 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).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.