



Airconditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic ANZSCO 3421-11

New South Wales

September 2018

Current labour market rating: Shortage

Previous labour market rating (September 2017): Shortage

Comments

There is a shortage of airconditioning and refrigeration mechanics in metropolitan and regional NSW. Employers were generally not able to fill vacancies in metropolitan and regional NSW.

Survey results¹

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for airconditioning and refrigeration mechanics in the following areas: residential, commercial and industrial settings undertaking installation, repair and maintenance.

Employer Requirements

- In general, employers sought the following in applicants:
 - Qualifications.
 - ARCTick Licence.
 - Relevant and practical work experience, such as experience working in commercial refrigeration.
 - A high level of organisational and time management skills including the capacity to work independently and as part of a team.
 - Customer service and communication skills.
 - Current driver's licence.

Vacancies filled

- Across NSW, 44 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period compared with 43 per cent in September 2017.
- Vacancies remained unfilled due to no applicants or no suitable applicants.
- Some employers stated that retention is an issue, with apprentices leaving for more money once they are qualified.

Applicants per vacancy

- Across NSW, there was an average of 3.8 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](#).

- By comparison, in 2017 there was an average of 3.1 applicants per vacancy of whom an average of 0.4 applicants were considered suitable by employers.

Metropolitan and regional results

- In metropolitan regions, there was an average of 2.0 applicants per vacancy and 10 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
 - Employers in metropolitan areas were able to fill 22 per cent of vacancies.
- In regional areas, there was an average of 6.1 applicants per vacancy and 18 per cent were considered suitable by employers.
 - Employers in regional areas were able to fill 71 per cent of vacancies.
 - While 71 per cent of vacancies were filled in regional NSW this figure has been inflated by an employer who filled multiple vacancies and is not indicative of employers in regional areas. When this employer's data is removed, 50 per cent of the vacancies in regional NSW were filled.
- On average, metropolitan vacancies attracted 0.6 applicants with qualifications compared to 2.6 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.
 - A lack of experience in specialist areas, such as domestic refrigeration.
 - Insufficient work experience in the industry.
 - Not possessing the soft skills sought by the employer, such as the ability to work autonomously.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for the occupation has been boosted by strong building 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.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
- Over the year to March 2018, there were around 290 completions of airconditioning and refrigeration mechanics apprentices. This was higher than the average of around 270 over the previous five years.⁵

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

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ NCVET, *Apprentices and Trainees*, March 2018, estimates (limited to certificate III).

- There were around 770 commencements over the year to March 2018. This represented an increase of around 47 per cent compared to the average number of commencements recorded over the five years to March 2017.⁶

⁶ Ibid.