



Labour Market Conditions in the Central Victoria Priority Employment Area

Labour market conditions in the Central Victoria Priority Employment Area (PEA) are mixed.



- The unemployment rate decreased slightly, falling by 0.1 percentage point in the 12 months to December 2013¹ to stand at 5.8 per cent, below the rate for Victoria (6.4 per cent).²
- While the unemployment rate in the area is lower than the state average, the participation rate is also lower (61.2 per cent compared with 64.8 per cent).³ Of particular note is the very low participation rate (47.8 per cent) in the Central Goldfields Local Government Area.

There are structural changes occurring across industries impacting on employment demand.

- Following strong growth in recent years, Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest employing industry, accounting for 15 per cent of total employment.³
- The Retail Trade and Manufacturing industries are also major employers, despite a decline in Manufacturing.

What employers are telling us?⁴

Despite the unemployment rate decreasing slightly, the survey results suggest that there has been a slight weakening in recruitment conditions since the region was last surveyed in 2012.

- Employers reported that their demand for labour has decreased (14 vacancies for every 100 staff compared with 16 vacancies in 2012).
- In line with the decreasing demand for labour, a smaller proportion of vacancies remained unfilled. Furthermore, the proportion of employers experiencing recruitment difficulties has decreased.

Key Indicators	Central Victoria PEA			
	November 2013	November 2012	September 2011	May 2010
Vacancies unfilled	3.2%	6.9%	9.4%	6.7%
Employers who experienced difficulty	43%	53%	59%	53%
Employers who increased staff	19%	20%	25%	21%

- Despite the softening in labour market conditions, there are positive signs for future recruitment with nearly half (47 per cent) of employers expecting to recruit in the 12 months following the survey. Of the major industries, employers in the Construction, Health Care and Social Assistance and Manufacturing industries most commonly expected staff numbers to increase.

Where are the opportunities?

- The Health Care and Social Assistance industry is experiencing strong growth, with employers commonly recruiting for occupations such as Child Carers, Welfare Support Workers and Registered Nurses.
- Employers continue to experience difficulties filling vacancies for many Technicians and Trades occupations, such as Chefs, Structural Steel and Welding Trades Workers and Motor Mechanics.
- Employers commonly expected to recruit for a number of lower skilled or entry level occupations following the survey, including Sales Assistants, Waiters, Checkout Operators and Office Cashiers, Bar Attendants and Baristas, and Kitchenhands.

¹ Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Markets data, December 2013.

² ABS Labour Force, (Seasonally Adjusted), January 2014.

³ ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011.

⁴ The report is based on a Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences of 415 employers undertaken by the Labour Market Research and Analysis Branch in November 2013.