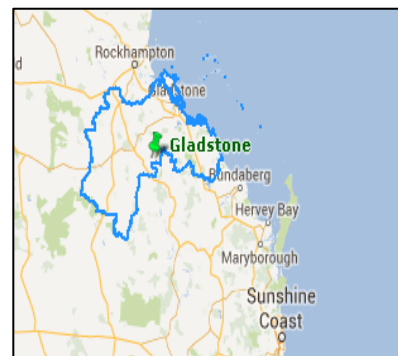




Labour Market Conditions in Gladstone

A number of major liquefied natural gas projects in the Gladstone Employment Service Area (ESA) underpinned strong employment growth over the five years to 2011. However, while the labour market remains relatively strong, conditions are moderating as the construction phase of key projects approaches completion.

- Employment grew by 17 per cent (5,100 jobs) over the five years to 2011, almost double the national growth rate over the same period (9 per cent).¹
- There has been a 1.1 percentage point increase in the unemployment rate to 4.6 per cent over the year to September 2013.
 - There are also some pockets of disadvantage in the region, such as the Miriam Vale Statistical Local Area where the unemployment rate is 8.0 per cent.²



What employers are telling us³

The widespread staff retention and skill shortage problems identified in the department's 2011 survey of the region have eased.

- Less than half (48 per cent) of recruiting employers reported that recruitment was difficult, down significantly from 2011 (70 per cent).
 - Average applicant numbers per vacancy had increased to 6.3 in 2013 from 3.8 in the previous survey.
 - The unfilled vacancy rate was 6.4 per cent, significantly lower than the rate in 2011 (16.9 per cent).
 - One in five employers indicated that staff retention was a problem compared with one in three in the 2011 survey.
- While recruitment activity remains stronger than in many other regions, it is expected to moderate in the next year.

- The proportion of employers expecting to recruit (40 per cent) and increase staff numbers (17 per cent) in the next year was significantly less than in the 2011 survey (64 per cent and 41 per cent respectively).

Employers continued to report a high level of difficulty recruiting for Technicians and Trades Workers and Community and Personal Service Workers.

- The unfilled vacancy rates for Technicians and Trades Workers (28.6 per cent) and Community and Personal Service Workers (18.4 per cent) were well above the rate for all occupation groups (6.4 per cent).
- Employers recruiting for Technicians and Trades Workers most commonly cited the technical skill requirements and higher wages offered by larger businesses as the main reasons for recruitment difficulty.

Region	Recruitment Rate	% of vacancies unfilled	% experienced recruitment difficulty	% Will Recruit
Gladstone ESA 2013	25	6.4	48%	40%
Gladstone ESA 2011	26	16.9	70%	64%

Where are the opportunities?

- Recruitment conditions in the Gladstone ESA are still relatively strong and many employers intend to recruit for a range of occupations in the next 12 months. Some of the most commonly mentioned occupations include Sales Assistants, Kitchenhands, Checkout Operators and Office Cashiers, Waiters, Motor Mechanics, Child Carers, Truck Drivers, Metal Fitters and Machinists, and General Clerks.
- The very high unfilled vacancy rate for Technicians and Trades Workers demonstrates the opportunities for job seekers in the area with the requisite skills and qualifications. There may also be opportunities for job seekers to take up apprenticeships in these occupations.

¹ ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2011.

² Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Markets, September 2013.

³ This report is based on a Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences of 363 employers undertaken by the Labour Market Research and Analysis Branch in October 2013.