



34%
of vacancies filled



4.8 applicants
(on average, per vacancy)



0.9 qualified applicants
(on average, per vacancy)



0.5 suitable applicants
(on average, per vacancy)



59% of qualified applicants
were unsuitable

Key research findings¹

- The Tasmanian labour market for engineering trades workers remained tight in 2018, with all surveyed engineering occupations identified as being in shortage.
 - In 2018, employers experienced greater difficulty recruiting engineering trades workers with the proportion of vacancies filled decreasing to a ten-year low of 34 per cent, well below the peak of 84 per cent in 2014 (see Figure 1).
 - Sheetmetal trades workers recorded the highest proportion of vacancies filled (40 per cent) while metal fabricators recorded the lowest with 11 per cent (see Figure 2); both were well below the 2017 results of 56 and 100 per cent, respectively.
- Employers' recruitment experiences were different around Tasmania, with employers in regional areas receiving on average more applicants per vacancy than metropolitan areas (7.0 compared to 2.2 applicants).
- There was strong competition for qualified applicants. The survey found 76 per cent of vacancies required qualifications; however, there was less than one qualified applicant per vacancy and 59 per cent of qualified applicants were unsuitable.
 - Where employers assessed applicants as unsuitable, the main reason was a lack of qualifications. Other applicants were deemed unsuitable due to a lack of experience, they were unable to demonstrate the required technical skills, failed a work trial or were not a good fit for the business.

- Where an employer was unable to fill their vacancy with a suitable applicant, a small number of employers reported compromising by appointing unqualified but experienced applicants, or apprentices and trades assistants to support their existing qualified staff

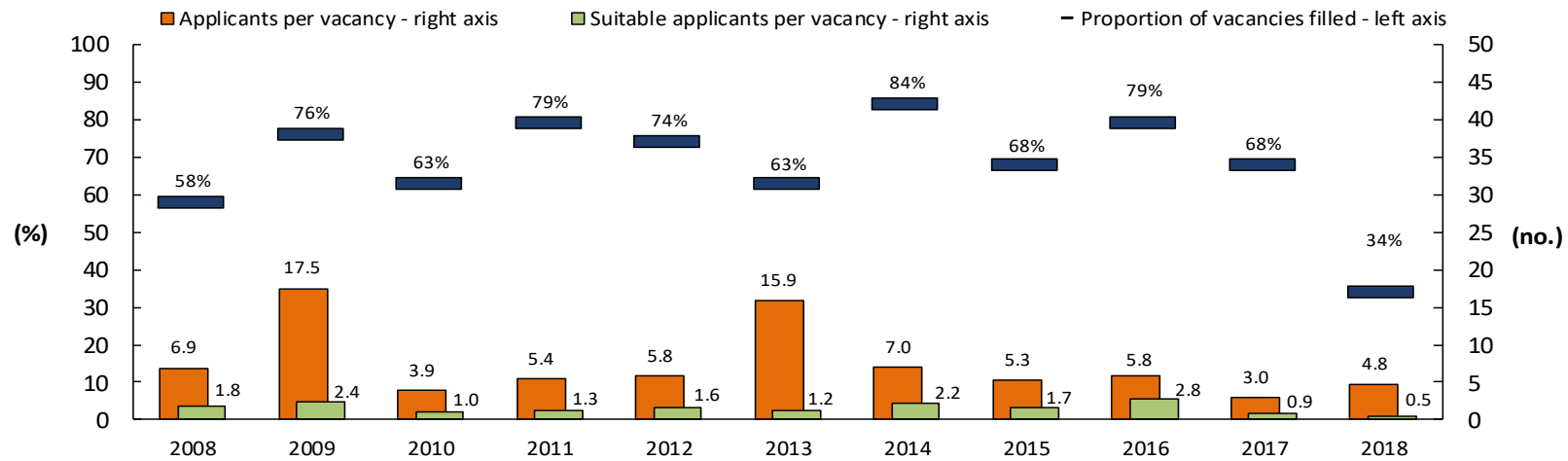
Supply and demand²

- Construction, manufacturing and mining industry activity levels influence demand for engineering trades workers. Recent activity in these industries in Tasmania is mixed but overall, indicates increased demand in the short term.
 - National Accounts data show the Tasmanian construction, mining and manufacturing industries all had positive growth during 2017-18.
 - Employment in the construction industry increased by 9.1 per cent over the year to August 2018, though decreased in the manufacturing and mining industries (9.4 per cent and 14.7 per cent, respectively).
 - Over the five years to May 2023, employment in Tasmania across all industries is projected to increase by 4.5 per cent, which includes growth in the construction (9.2 per cent), mining (1.5 per cent) and manufacturing (0.7 per cent) industries.
- Apprenticeship commencements in fabrication and mechanical engineering trades have grown strongly over the past few years, though this has not translated into higher numbers of completions. The June 2018 commencement rates were 27.1 per cent higher than June 2017, whereas completion rates were 14.9 per cent lower over the same period.

¹ The methodology for this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business](#). Visit the [skill shortages website](#) for more detailed information on each occupation in this cluster.

² Supply and demand sources – ABS, Australian National Accounts: State Accounts, 2017-18; ABS, Labour Force, August 2018, Department of Jobs and Small Business trend data; Department of Jobs and Small Business, Labour Market Information Portal, 2018 Employment Projections; National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), Apprentices and Trainees, June 2018 estimates.

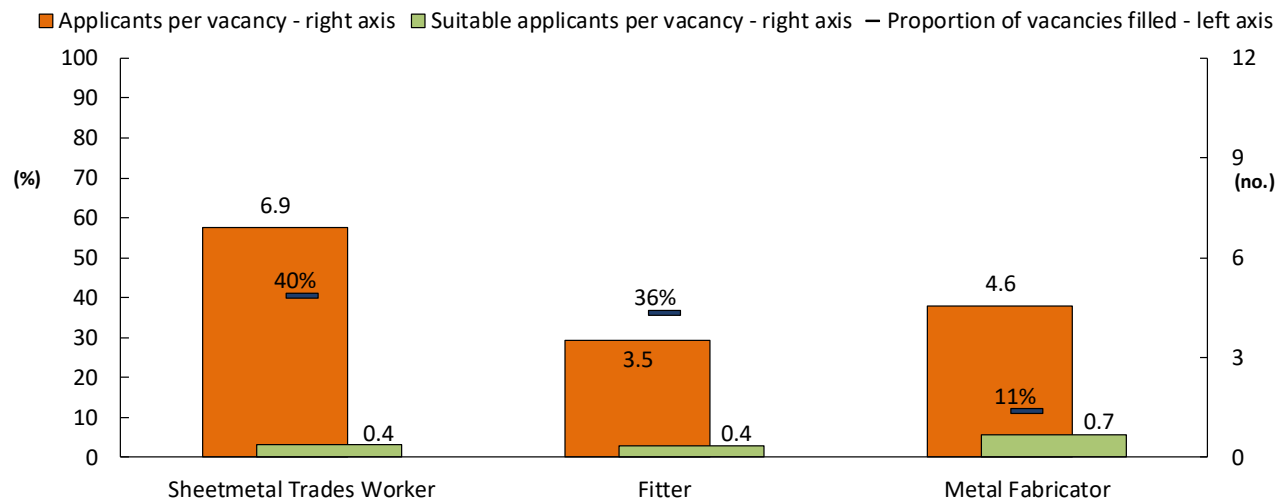
Figure 1: Tasmanian Engineering Trades, time series 2008-2018 - proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.)



Source: Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised

Note: Occupational coverage varies over time series.

Figure 2: Tasmanian Engineering Trades, 2018 - proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.)



Source: Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised