



Labour Market Conditions in the Southern Wide Bay-Burnett region

Labour market conditions in the Southern Wide Bay-Burnett (SWBB) region are subdued and have softened over the last year.

- The unemployment rate across the region increased from 7.8 per cent to 8.6 per cent over the year to December 2013, well above that of the State (6.3 per cent).¹
- The participation rate (65.5 per cent) is significantly lower than the rate for Queensland (77.2 per cent).²
- Significant structural changes have occurred across the region over the last decade.³
 - Employment in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing decreased by 32 per cent in the ten years between 2001 and 2011.
 - By contrast, employment in Health Care and Social Assistance increased by 68 per cent between 2001 and 2011, and is now the largest employing industry in the region.



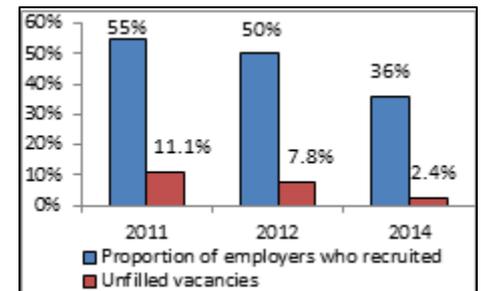
Region	Unemployment Rate (SALM, December 2013)	Participation Rate* (Census 2011)	Year 12 completion (Census 2011, 25 to 34 years old)	Proportion of WAP* receiving income support
SWBB region	8.6%	65.5%	54.3%	31%
Queensland	6.3% ⁴	77.2%	74.0%	18%

*Working age population

What employers are telling us

The survey results show that recruitment activity is low and has softened considerably since the region was last surveyed in 2012.⁵

- The proportion of employers who recruited prior to the survey (36 per cent) has decreased significantly since 2012 (50 per cent), suggesting labour demand is low.
- A smaller proportion of vacancies remained unfilled (2.4 per cent) compared with the previous survey (7.8 per cent).
- While the competition for vacancies (7.8 applicants per vacancy) is lower than all regions surveyed (10.6), the competition for jobs that were advertised formally was very high at almost 20 applicants per vacancy.



Only 20 per cent of employers expected to recruit in the year following the survey, with only 11 per cent expecting to increase staff, the lowest proportion for any region surveyed in the last 12 months.

Region	% Recruited	Unfilled vacancies (Past 12 months)	Applicants per vacancy (most recent recruitment)	% Will recruit
SWBB region 2014	36%	2.4%	7.8	20%
All regions surveyed (12 months to March 2014)	60%	4.1%	10.6	38%

Where are the opportunities?

Despite the overall softness in the labour market, opportunities exist in industries where recruitment activity was relatively strong, including Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services, with employers expecting to recruit for occupations such as Sales Assistants (General), General Clerks, Chefs and Registered Nurses.

¹ The Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Market data, December quarter 2013; ABS Labour Force (Seasonally Adjusted), April 2014.

² ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, adult population, place of enumeration.

³ Ibid.

⁴ ABS Labour Force (Seasonally Adjusted), April 2014.

⁵ This report is based on a Survey of Employers Recruitment Experiences of 290 employers undertaken in March 2014. The region was also surveyed in November 2012 and September 2011.