



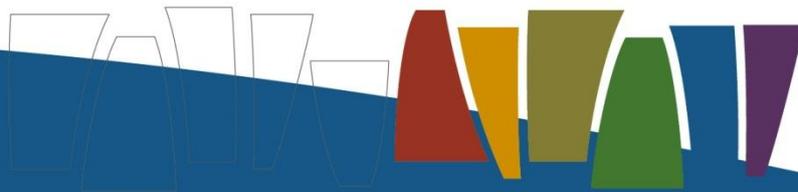
Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences

Wyong Local Government Area

September 2012





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This report was prepared by the Labour Market Research and Analysis Branch and is based on research conducted by the Branch.

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The Wyong Local Government Area

The Wyong Local Government Area (LGA) is one of the 10 LGAs identified in the 2011-2012 Budget to receive funding for measures to address disadvantage through the *Better Futures Local Solutions* initiative.

There were 94,720 people of working age (15-64 years) in the Wyong LGA as of 2011.¹ Growth in the adult population was 9 per cent over the 5 years to 2011, higher than New South Wales (7 per cent) but the same as Australia (9 per cent).²

Unemployment in the LGA increased marginally in the 12 months to September 2012 from 7.5 per cent to 7.8 per cent, substantially higher than NSW (5.1 per cent) and the Central Coast Hunter Priority Employment Area (PEA) (5.3 per cent).³

Labour market conditions in the LGA have been consistently weaker than those across NSW and the broader Central Coast-Hunter Priority Employment Area (PEA).⁴ Since September 2008, the unemployment rate has been, on average, 2.7 percentage points higher than the national rate, peaking at 9.1 per cent in December 2009.

Educational attainment in the Wyong LGA is low with only 54 per cent of 25-34 year olds having completed Year 12 (compared with 75 per cent for both NSW and Australia).² Some 25 per cent of the working age population in the LGA is in receipt of an income support payment, well above the average state and national figure (both 17 per cent).

At the time of the 2011 Census, the main employing industries in the LGA were Retail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, Construction and Manufacturing.²

In September 2012, the department conducted a *Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences* in the Wyong Local Government Area (LGA), as part of a survey of the Central Coast-Hunter Priority Employment Area (PEA). Overall, 456 employers were surveyed in the Central Coast-Hunter PEA, of whom 152 were located in the Wyong LGA.

Key Findings

Labour market conditions in the Wyong Local Government Area (LGA) are relatively soft with a high unemployment rate, low recruitment rate, more competition for vacancies and less difficulty recruiting when compared with all regions surveyed in the year to September 2012.

- Encouragingly, employers' recruitment expectations for the year following the survey were generally positive.

¹ ABS Estimated Resident Population, 2011

² ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011

³ DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets, September 2012

⁴ The Central Coast-Hunter PEA comprises the Cessnock, Gosford, Great Lakes, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle, Port Stephens and Wyong LGAs.

Recruitment activity is subdued, consistent with a softer labour market

The survey results show that the number of vacancies per 100 staff (10) was substantially lower compared with all regions surveyed (18), despite 79 per cent of employers recruiting in the year preceding the survey.

Consistent with a softer labour market, a lower proportion of employers experienced recruitment difficulty in the year preceding the survey (44 per cent) compared with more than half of employers for all regions surveyed.

Table 1: Recruitment experiences in the 12 months preceding the survey

Key Indicators	Wyong LGA September 2012	Central Coast Hunter PEA September 2012	All Regions Surveyed 12 Months to September 2012
Proportion of employers who recruited	79%	77%	63%
Vacancies per 100 staff	10	14	18
Proportion of recruiting employers who experienced difficulty	44%	47%	53%

Consistent with a softer labour market, the supply of labour was high, with strong competition for vacancies and fewer employers having difficulty filling their vacancies

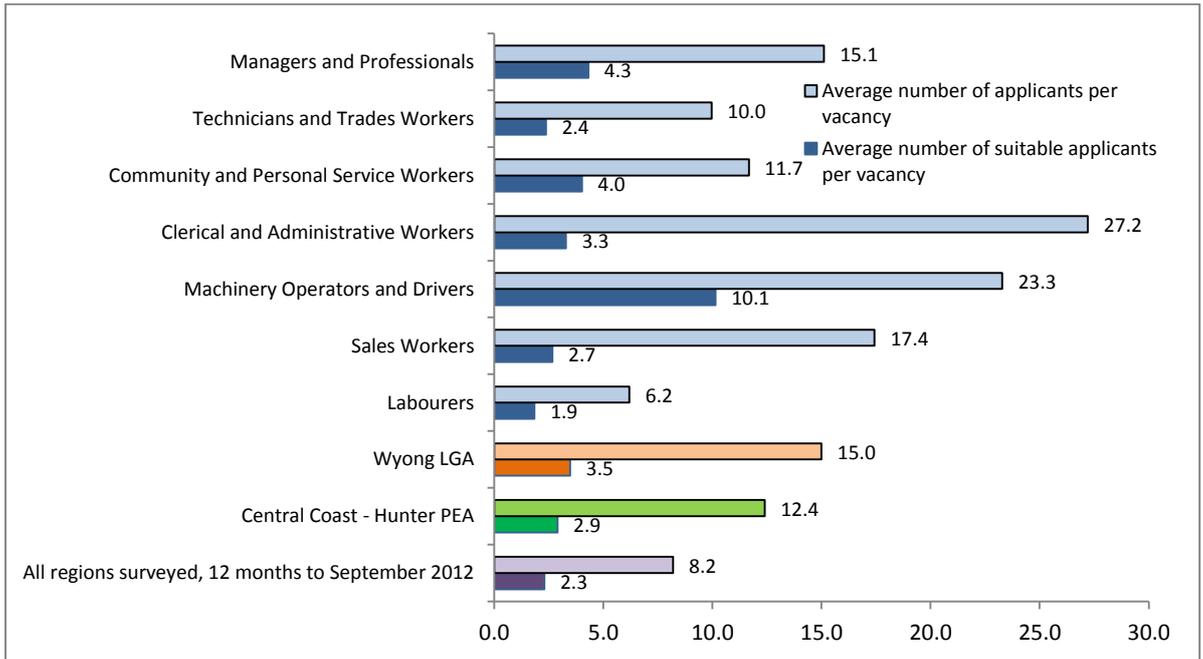
There was a high average number of applicants per vacancy (15.0) in employers' most recent recruitment round, compared with around 8 in all regions surveyed.

An average of 3.5 applicants were considered suitable, suggesting that employers have more choice due to the high number of applicants (Figure 1).

A low proportion of employers (24 per cent) had difficulty filling vacancies in their most recent recruitment round.

- These findings reflect softness in the labour market with employers having a greater field of applicants from which to choose and less need to fill vacancies with applicants without the required skills or experience.

Figure 1: Competition for vacancies by occupation



The Future

Despite the current labour market softness in the Wyong LGA, employers' recruitment expectations for the year following the survey were generally positive, in line with the broader Central Coast-Hunter PEA.

- A large proportion of employers (61 per cent) expected to recruit in the year following the survey, compared with less than half for all regions surveyed.
- A high proportion of employers expected to increase staff numbers (34 per cent).
- While the proportion of employers expecting to recruit and increase staff numbers is encouraging, less than one quarter of employers expect to have difficulty filling vacancies (compared to 43 per cent across all regions surveyed). This suggests that there will continue to be a good supply of applicants for most vacancies across the region.

Table 3: Future recruitment expectations

Key Indicators	Wyong LGA September 2012	Central Coast Hunter PEA September 2012	All Regions Surveyed 12 Months to September 2012
Expected to recruit	61%	62%	47%
Expected to increase staff numbers	34%	34%	25%
Expected future difficulty	23%	34%	43%

Where are the jobs?

Despite the high average number of applicants for each vacancy, opportunities still exist for job seekers across various skill levels.

- Employers reported a number of skilled occupations as difficult to fill, including Technicians and Trades Workers (Structural Steel and Welding Workers and Motor Mechanics) and Community and Personal Service Workers (Early Childhood (Pre-Primary School) Teachers), Registered Nurses and Vocational Education Teachers.
 - Additionally, competition for Technician and Trades Worker and Community and Personal Service Worker vacancies was relatively low.
- The survey results also suggest opportunities exist in medium and lower skilled occupations such as General Clerks, Sales Assistants (General), Child Carers and Real Estate Sales Agents in the year following the survey.
- In view of the strong competition for vacancies and the low levels of expected future recruitment difficulty job seekers also need to consider employment opportunities outside the LGA.
 - The survey results indicate that a number of lower skilled occupations from the broader Priority Employment Area including, Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers, Truck Drivers, Aged and Disabled Care Workers, Kitchenhands and Bar Attendants and Baristas, are difficult to fill.

More Information

- Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences - www.deewr.gov.au/regionalreports
- Labour Market Information Portal - www.deewr.gov.au/lmip
- Skill Shortages - www.deewr.gov.au/skillshortages
- Australian Jobs 2012 - www.deewr.gov.au/AustralianJobs
- Job Outlook - www.joboutlook.gov.au
- SkillsInfo - www.skillsinfo.gov.au
- Aussie Jobs - www.deewr.gov.au/news/aussie-jobs-publication

