

Baker	Tasmania
ANZSCO Code: 3511-11	October 2009
Labour market rating:	Recruitment difficulty
Comment: <i>Smaller hot bread shops and plant Bakeries report shortages, while the larger supermarket chains suggest they are having few difficulties in recruiting staff.</i>	

Occupational demand

According to ABS Census data, the number of Bakers in Tasmania grew from 371 in 2001 to 423 in 2006, an increase of 14 per cent. The majority of Bakers in Tasmania are employed in the manufacturing industry (52.7 per cent), while 39.9 per cent were employed in retail trade. There are three main areas of work for Bakers in Tasmania. There are Bakers who work in manufacturing plants where bread is mass produced. Also Bakers work in the larger supermarket chains producing baked goods and rolls, and there are smaller hot bread shops and franchises where bread, bread products, cakes and pastries are both baked and sold on the premises. All of these different environments can also be divided into those who make their own dough, and those who buy pre-mixed dough. Generally, the larger supermarkets buy in pre-mixed doughs, and do not make bread products on the premises. Smaller hot bread shops and plant bakeries usually require skills in making doughs as well as bread products.

Occupational supply

Supply to the occupation is generally through the traditional apprenticeship system, with off-the-job training undertaken at the Skills Institute (formerly TAFE Tasmania). There are a number of course options available including specialisations in plant baking, retail baking, cake and pastry baking (specifically for specialist pastry cooks), and combined baking, with is the latter two courses combined. Overall numbers in baking courses have increased steadily in recent years, and the 79 commencements and 169 apprentices in training in 2008-09 were at the highest levels since the current statistical series began in 1995. Only a small number of Bakers and Pastry cooks arrived in the State between 2001 and 2006, with the largest number of 13 arriving from New South Wales

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

Only around 66 per cent of vacancies for Bakers were filled in the lead up to this report, and some employers advised they had taken on people with on-the-job experience who weren't qualified, as they did not received any applications from qualified Bakers. The larger supermarket chains seem to have slightly less difficulty than the smaller hot bread shops in recruiting qualified staff. Retention of people within the trade was a very commonly cited reason for why recruitment difficulties exist. With commencing times of between 1 am and 3 am, employers reported large numbers of people tended to leave the trade after around five years due to the unsocial hours. However, given numbers of apprentice Bakers in training have increased by nearly 70 per cent over the last five years, this may go some way to off-setting the high exit rate from the industry.

Labour market outlook

At present employers are reporting they are having difficulty recruiting qualified Bakers, although the larger supermarket chains appear to be having fewer difficulties. This is likely to continue for the next 12 months at least, although there are some prospects of recruitment difficulties easing given the recent increases in apprentice numbers.