



AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL LABOUR MARKETS

DECEMBER QUARTER 2003

MAIN FINDINGS

State/Territory labour market developments

All States recorded a rise in employment over the year to the December quarter 2003. The largest increase (in percentage terms) was recorded in Tasmania (up by 4.6 per cent), followed by Queensland (up by 4.4 per cent) and New South Wales and South Australia (both up by 2.0 per cent). Over the year to the December quarter 2003, the unemployment rate fell in the Northern Territory as well as all States except South Australia.

CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, DECEMBER QUARTER 2002 TO DECEMBER QUARTER 2003



Developments at the ABS Labour Market Region Level

Employment increased in 68 per cent of regions over the year to the December quarter 2003 while in just under three-quarters of regions there was a reduction in the unemployment rate. A number of regions have recorded strong employment growth as well as a significant reduction in their unemployment rate over the last 12 months. In particular:

- the Gippsland region in Victoria recorded a 12.1 per cent increase in employment while the unemployment rate fell by 1.2 percentage points to 5.5 per cent;
- employment in Newcastle increased by 11.2 per cent while the unemployment rate fell by 1.1 percentage points to 6.4 per cent; and
- Inner Brisbane recorded a 10.8 per cent increase in employment while the unemployment rate fell by 1.5 percentage points to 4.1 per cent.

**LABOUR FORCE STATUS BY ABS LABOUR FORCE REGIONS
DECEMBER QUARTER 2003
Not Seasonally Adjusted**

State/Region	Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Participation rate	
	'000	Annual change	'000	Annual change	%	Annual change % pts	%	Annual change % pts
AUSTRALIA	9682.3	214.7	556.2	-34.0	5.4	-0.4	63.9	0.0
<i>Metropolitan Australia*</i>	<i>6169.5</i>	<i>112.9</i>	<i>342.7</i>	<i>-8.9</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>-0.2</i>	<i>64.6</i>	<i>-0.2</i>
<i>Non-metropolitan Australia*</i>	<i>3512.8</i>	<i>101.8</i>	<i>213.5</i>	<i>-25.1</i>	<i>5.7</i>	<i>-0.8</i>	<i>62.7</i>	<i>0.2</i>
New South Wales	3200.5	62.3	176.9	-11.9	5.2	-0.4	63.0	0.1
<i>Sydney</i>	<i>2125.2</i>	<i>25.0</i>	<i>104.2</i>	<i>-4.2</i>	<i>4.7</i>	<i>-0.2</i>	<i>64.7</i>	<i>-0.4</i>
Inner Sydney and Inner Western Sydney	266.0	13.6	12.9	4.1	4.6	1.2	67.5	-0.7
Inner Sydney	182.0	18.5	7.2	1.0	3.8	0.2	69.9	0.0
Eastern Suburbs	102.0	-17.6	3.7	-3.0	3.5	-1.8	60.8	-4.0
St George-Sutherland	239.7	7.1	8.2	-0.8	3.3	-0.4	67.2	0.5
Canterbury-Bankstown	136.3	-0.3	11.3	1.4	7.7	0.9	56.3	0.3
Fairfield-Liverpool/ Outer South Western Sydney	285.9	3.4	20.0	-0.5	6.5	-0.2	64.0	0.3
Fairfield-Liverpool	166.5	2.4	10.4	-4.3	5.9	-2.4	62.4	2.6
Central Western Sydney	135.8	10.9	5.9	-1.4	4.1	-1.3	60.6	4.0
North Western Sydney	298.7	1.3	18.1	3.7	5.7	1.1	68.2	-0.6
Lower Northern Sydney	155.2	2.9	6.8	-0.3	4.2	-0.3	67.2	-0.3
Central Northern Sydney	229.5	1.9	5.8	-2.1	2.5	-0.9	67.1	-0.9
Northern Beaches	132.1	-6.0	2.7	0.1	2.0	0.1	71.5	-1.1
Gosford-Wyong	144.1	7.7	8.8	-5.3	5.8	-3.6	57.1	-2.7
<i>Balance of New South Wales</i>	<i>1075.3</i>	<i>37.3</i>	<i>72.7</i>	<i>-7.7</i>	<i>6.3</i>	<i>-0.9</i>	<i>59.9</i>	<i>1.0</i>
Hunter	273.7	28.1	19.2	0.3	6.6	-0.6	59.4	3.0
Newcastle	235.0	23.7	16.1	-0.9	6.4	-1.1	60.5	2.5
Illawarra and South Eastern	243.8	-30.7	20.3	-1.4	7.7	0.4	57.8	-2.2
Illawarra	154.1	-20.9	15.0	-2.7	8.8	-0.3	56.0	-2.6
Wollongong	107.5	-16.9	11.4	-3.0	9.6	-0.8	59.0	-1.1
Richmond-Tweed/ Mid-North Coast	196.6	12.3	14.7	-2.6	7.0	-1.6	56.9	0.3
Northern/ Far West-North Western/ Central West	214.2	17.2	12.1	-2.2	5.3	-1.4	61.4	2.7
Murray-Murrumbidgee	147.0	10.4	6.4	-1.8	4.2	-1.5	67.9	1.6
Victoria	2428.1	36.3	132.3	-6.9	5.2	-0.3	63.5	-0.4
<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>1813.6</i>	<i>27.8</i>	<i>98.6</i>	<i>-3.9</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>-0.3</i>	<i>64.2</i>	<i>-0.5</i>
Outer Western Melbourne	290.3	17.1	22.7	1.4	7.2	0.0	64.3	2.1
North Western Melbourne	128.0	1.2	7.7	-0.5	5.6	-0.4	60.7	-0.6
Inner Melbourne	152.3	8.4	7.3	-2.0	4.5	-1.5	71.6	1.3
North Eastern Melbourne	217.4	16.0	12.9	0.5	5.6	-0.2	63.3	-1.0
Inner Eastern Melbourne	290.3	-14.7	13.9	1.9	4.6	0.8	62.8	-1.3
Southern Melbourne	213.3	10.1	8.6	1.6	3.9	0.5	63.7	0.2
Outer Eastern Melbourne	217.2	-16.9	6.9	-5.8	3.1	-2.1	70.6	1.3
South Eastern Melbourne	184.4	-5.4	12.1	-0.7	6.2	-0.2	63.5	-3.6
Mornington Peninsula	120.2	12.0	6.6	-0.2	5.2	-0.7	57.9	-3.0
<i>Balance of Victoria</i>	<i>614.6</i>	<i>8.5</i>	<i>33.7</i>	<i>-3.1</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>-0.5</i>	<i>61.3</i>	<i>-0.3</i>
Barwon-Western District	151.3	-15.9	7.6	-2.7	4.8	-1.0	57.4	-4.3
Central Highlands-Wimmera	94.8	3.9	6.4	1.3	6.3	1.0	63.9	4.3
Loddon-Mallee	127.4	11.3	7.5	0.4	5.6	-0.2	61.6	-1.6
Goulburn-Ovens-Murray	136.1	-2.1	6.1	-1.5	4.3	-0.9	63.9	-1.0
All Gippsland	105.0	11.4	6.1	-0.6	5.5	-1.2	61.4	3.9

* The ABS defines metropolitan as those regions located within the State capital cities. Non-metropolitan is defined as those regions located outside the State capital cities as well as the two Territories.

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State/Region	Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Participation rate	
	'000	Annual change	'000	Annual change	%	Annual change % pts	%	Annual change % pts
Queensland	1863.4	77.7	113.9	-15.3	5.8	-1.0	65.2	0.1
Gold Coast	219.1	-1.1	14.9	2.5	6.4	1.0	64.1	-0.4
<i>Brisbane</i>	880.2	33.2	51.8	-6.0	5.6	-0.8	66.6	-0.1
Brisbane City Inner Ring	219.4	21.4	9.3	-2.4	4.1	-1.5	67.9	0.3
Brisbane City Outer Ring	261.6	-13.4	14.1	-0.7	5.1	0.0	65.7	-1.1
South and East Brisbane Balance	189.0	26.3	15.4	1.5	7.6	-0.3	68.7	3.2
North and West Brisbane Balance	210.2	-1.1	13.0	-4.5	5.8	-1.8	64.6	-2.2
<i>Balance of Queensland</i>	983.2	44.5	62.0	-9.3	5.9	-1.1	64.0	0.2
South and East Moreton	210.7	3.2	13.2	1.0	5.9	0.3	65.2	1.3
North and West Moreton	157.5	5.3	11.2	-1.7	6.6	-1.2	58.8	-1.5
Wide Bay-Burnett	85.9	-3.3	9.1	-7.1	9.6	-5.8	50.8	-4.7
Darling Downs-South West	123.9	7.2	6.5	0.4	5.0	0.0	67.7	4.4
Mackay-Fitzroy-Central West#	175.3	..	10.9	..	5.9	..	68.9	..
Northern-North West#	119.7	..	6.0	..	4.8	..	70.7	..
Far North	110.2	6.5	5.1	-1.0	4.4	-1.1	66.2	0.9
South Australia	716.4	14.1	47.2	3.6	6.2	0.3	61.7	0.8
<i>Adelaide</i>	527.3	5.1	37.6	5.0	6.7	0.8	61.4	0.4
Northern Adelaide	162.0	-2.0	15.7	3.0	8.8	1.7	62.6	0.1
Western Adelaide	94.0	-1.4	8.1	1.9	8.0	1.8	55.8	-1.5
Eastern Adelaide	109.2	-2.2	5.3	-0.3	4.7	-0.1	61.8	0.0
Southern Adelaide	162.1	10.7	8.5	0.4	5.0	-0.1	63.6	2.5
<i>Balance of South Australia</i>	189.0	9.0	9.6	-1.4	4.8	-0.9	62.8	2.0
Northern and Western SA	65.5	-0.5	5.5	0.1	7.7	0.2	58.4	0.8
Southern and Eastern SA	123.5	9.6	4.1	-1.5	3.2	-1.4	65.5	2.6
Western Australia	991.1	18.2	59.2	0.2	5.6	-0.1	66.5	-0.3
<i>Perth</i>	734.0	18.0	44.5	1.0	5.7	0.0	66.1	0.2
Central Metropolitan	68.4	8.6	4.2	0.8	5.8	0.4	66.9	2.6
East Metropolitan	122.0	12.2	7.2	1.1	5.6	0.3	66.1	0.6
North Metropolitan	220.0	-8.8	12.8	-1.0	5.5	-0.2	67.2	-0.7
South West Metropolitan	155.5	6.8	9.2	0.4	5.6	0.0	63.8	0.0
South East Metropolitan	168.0	-0.9	11.0	-0.2	6.1	-0.1	66.8	0.5
<i>Balance of Western Australia</i>	257.1	0.3	14.8	-0.8	5.4	-0.3	67.3	-1.6
Lower Western WA	137.9	13.7	9.5	0.2	6.4	-0.5	63.7	-1.0
Remainder-Balance WA	119.1	-13.4	5.3	-1.0	4.2	-0.3	72.2	-1.4
Tasmania	210.4	9.2	15.3	-3.1	6.8	-1.6	59.2	0.6
Greater Hobart-Southern	102.0	4.5	6.6	-1.3	6.1	-1.5	59.2	0.1
<i>Greater Hobart</i>	89.2	3.9	6.0	-0.8	6.3	-1.1	59.8	0.8
Northern	61.8	2.6	5.6	0.2	8.3	-0.1	61.2	2.4
Mersey-Lyell	46.6	2.1	3.2	-1.9	6.4	-3.9	56.7	-0.5
Northern Territory	97.1	-2.8	4.9	-0.5	4.8	-0.3	71.7	-2.3
Australian Capital Territory	175.3	-0.3	6.4	-0.1	3.5	0.0	72.1	-1.1

Changes to ABS Labour Force Region boundaries in November 2002 have impacted on the data presented here to the extent that a series break exists for these region

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The regional labour market estimates presented in this brochure are three monthly averages derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Monthly Labour Force Survey. These estimates are not adjusted to take account of seasonal and other variations and can exhibit irregular movements. They should therefore be used with caution.

Changes in geography

In November 2002, the boundaries for two regions in Queensland (Mackay-Fitzroy-Central West and Northern-North West) were changed by the ABS in order to maintain consistency with the Australian Standard Geographical Classification and in response to user requirements. These changes have resulted in a series break for these regions. For this reason, annual change estimates have not been presented.

Related information

Users may wish to refer to the DEWR *Small Area Labour Markets, Australia* publication which is available at <http://www.workplace.gov.au> or free of charge upon request. This publication contains quarterly estimates of unemployment rates and levels for approximately 1,300 Statistical Local Areas.

Next issue

The next issue of *Australian Regional Labour Markets*, for the March quarter 2004, is expected to be distributed in late April 2004.

Contact details

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