

3424-14 Telecommunications Technician
(review)

Review rating: *unable to rate*

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

The results of this review are complex and in light of the small vacancy numbers and contradictions in figures the research is inadequate to clearly identify what is occurring in this labour market. A survey of employers who had recently advertised for telecommunications technicians was conducted for this review and a number of employers were cold canvassed due to limited vacancies being identified during the survey period. No vacancies were identified in VIC, WA, TAS or the NT.

By comparison with the results of research undertaken in mid 2008, the fill rate in 2009 is higher (53 per cent compared with 38 percent) but the number of applicants per vacancy and the number of suitable applicants per vacancy are both lower. There is nothing in the current research which suggests the global recession has had a significant impact on this labour market, but given the small number of vacancies it is hard reach any authoritative conclusions.

One quarter of contacts indicated they have slow activity levels or have put recruitment on hold due to current economic conditions but almost as many suggest they are recruiting due to business growth. There was some, albeit limited, evidence that employers are being approached by technicians seeking employment while other employers received little response to their advertising.

Many employers noted this is a rapidly changing occupation with advances in Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) and other Internet and Communication Technology (ICT). There is evidence of telecommunications providers cutting technicians in the ACT and NSW. A few employers stated some mature age technicians are not up to date with changes in technology and this made it difficult to employ them. The occupation appears to be becoming more reliant on ICT skills and less on electronic hardware skills. Employers suggest it is now possible for one technician to maintain several communications systems at once without having to travel. A few employers suggested that demand for telecommunication services and consequently for these skills will increase with the Governments National Broadband Network.

Labour Market Outlook

The labour market for this occupation may ease in the coming six months, but in the longer term perhaps contrary impacts may result from the National Broadband Network and continuing ICT advances.