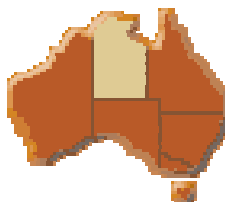
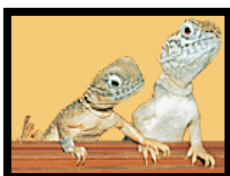




Australian Government

Department of Employment and
Workplace Relations

**NT
LABOUR
ECONOMICS
OFFICE**



3rd Floor
80 Mitchell St
GPO Box 385
Darwin NT 0801
Tel: (08) 8936
5008
Fax: (08) 8936
5020

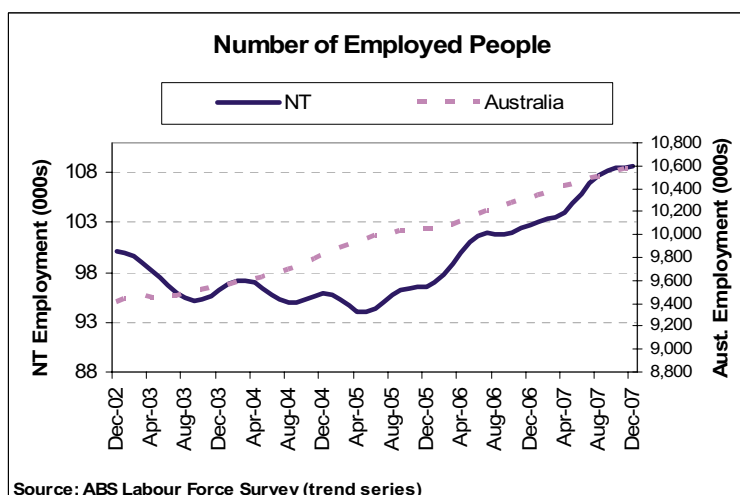
NORTHERN TERRITORY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

December 2007

According to the ABS Labour Force Survey trend series for December 2007, the Northern Territory (NT) unemployment rate increased to 5.3 per cent (up 0.1 percentage points on the previous month which was revised downwards from 5.4 per cent). The typically volatile Northern Territory rate has increased from a low of 2.9 per cent in 2006 and is currently above the national unemployment rate which remained stable at 4.4 per cent. The size of the NT labour force grew strongly throughout 2007 and reached 114 700 in December. After a downward trend in the second half of 2006, the NT participation rate increased every month in 2007 and reached 73.6 per cent in December. The increase in participation, combined with an increase in the civil population, has resulted in a labour force nearly 9000 people larger than 12 months ago.

It is important to note that the Northern Territory labour force figures are highly volatile. Any interpretation of short term fluctuations are problematic due to the high standard errors relative to the size of the estimates. Rather, longer term trends should be considered. Other economic indicators suggest a strong demand for labour and a market where skilled labour is in short supply.

Growth in the NT's gross state product (GSP) is forecast to outpace national gross domestic product (GDP) growth each year for the next 5 years (September Access Economics forecast). However, a significant slowdown is predicted for 2007/08 with NT GSP growth forecast to drop from 7.2 to 3.7 per cent (ANZ States and Territories Economic Update – October 2007). The November Sensis Business Index for small and medium enterprises shows high business confidence for the next 12 months and an employment growth indicator that's the highest in Australia. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey (Q4/07) also supports a strong employment outlook for the NT with the strongest outlook along side Western Australia. Advertised vacancies in the NT (ANZ Job Ad Series) have grown strongly throughout 2007 and are now double 2003 levels.



Employment Trends

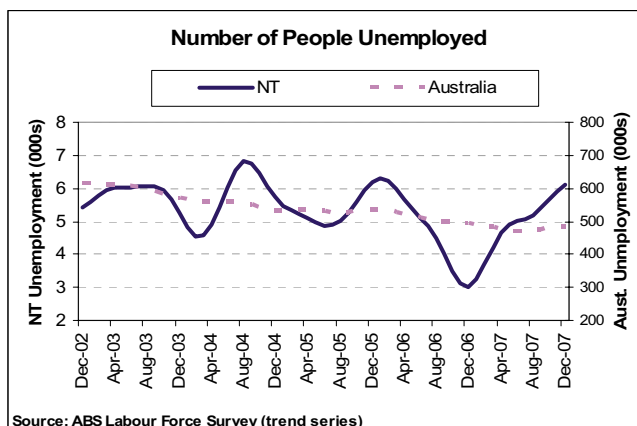
- In December there were 108 600 employed persons in the NT, an amount stable with the record level reached the previous month and an increase of 5.7% from the previous year.
- Male employment decreased to 59 600, while female employment increased to 49 000 in December.
- Nationally there were 10 588 500 people employed, an increase of 2.6% since December last year and growth over the previous month.

Note: The results presented here are taken from the trend series data (not the seasonally adjusted or original data) and trend estimates for the previous 6 months are revised each month incorporating the current results.

Disclaimer: This report may contain material of a speculative nature and therefore should be used with some caution. The Commonwealth, its officers or agents disclaim any responsibility for any loss howsoever caused whether due to negligence or otherwise arising from the use of this report.

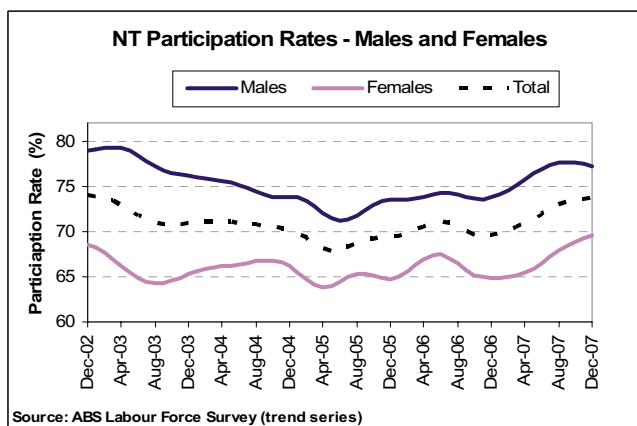
Unemployment Trends

- There were approximately 6100 unemployed persons in the NT in December.
- Male unemployment increased to 3200 in December, while female unemployment increased to 2900.
- Nationally the number of unemployed people (at 483 100) increased 0.5% over the month.
- Nationally the labour force has grown by 2.4% over the past year, while the number of people unemployed has dropped 2.1% over the same period.



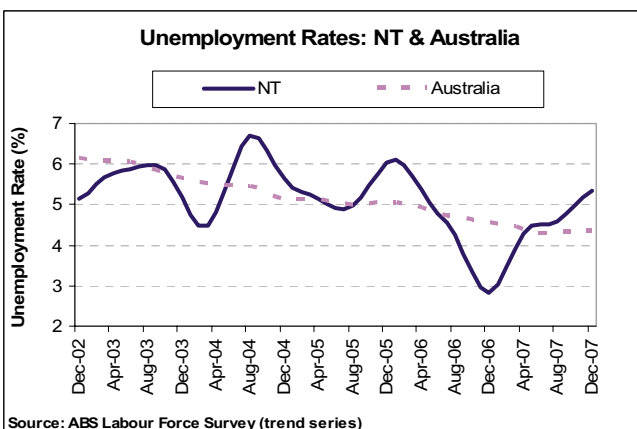
Participation Rate Trends – NT and Australia

- The NT participation rate increased to 73.6% in December, the highest level in over four years.
- The male participation rate has increased by 3.5 percentage points, while the female participation rate has increased by 4.8 percentage points over the past year.
- The national participation rate remained stable at 65.2% in December.



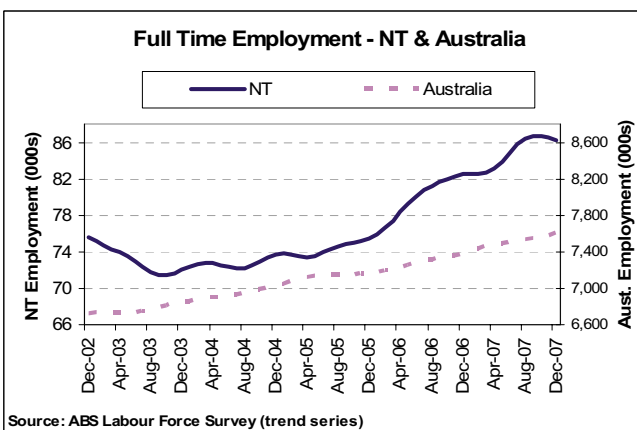
Unemployment Rate Trends – NT and Australia

- The current trend unemployment rate for the NT is 5.3%, which is 2.5 percentage points higher than the same time last year.
- The male NT trend unemployment rate was estimated to be 5.1%, which is 1.8 percentage point higher than 12 months ago.
- The female rate was estimated to be 5.6%, which is 3.3 percent points higher than 12 months ago.
- Nationally the trend unemployment rate remained stable at 4.4% in December.



Full Time Employment

- The number of people in full-time employment in the NT declined compared to the previous month, however grew by 4.4% in the 12 months to December, reaching 86 200.
- Full-time employment for males decreased to 51 900 and full-time employment for females decreased to 34 300.
- Nationally, full-time employment grew by 15 800 jobs for the month and by 3.0% over the past 12 months.
- Full-time employment in the NT, at 79.4% in December, accounts for a greater proportion of total employment than nationally (71.8%).



Note: The results presented here are taken from the trend series data (not the seasonally adjusted or original data) and trend estimates for the previous 6 months are revised each month incorporating the current results.

Disclaimer: This report may contain material of a speculative nature and therefore should be used with some caution. The Commonwealth, its officers or agents disclaim any responsibility for any loss howsoever caused whether due to negligence or otherwise arising from the use of this report.