

Glazier	South Australia
ANZSCO Code: 3331-11	July 2009
Labour market rating:	Shortage
Comment:	

Occupational demand

Demand for glaziers is closely linked to conditions in the building and construction industry. Apart from a modest downturn in late 2006 and early 2007, South Australian building activity has grown consistently for much of the past decade. ABS data shows that the total value of building work done (in trend terms) increased for eight consecutive quarters to the March quarter 2009 (the latest data available). However, the rate of growth in building activity has eased in the three most recent quarters following a broader slowdown in the Australian economy due to the global financial crisis. Consequently, demand for some building tradespersons has declined. DEEWR's Skilled Vacancies Index data show a significant fall in the number of newspaper advertisements for glaziers in the twelve months to July, albeit from a relatively low base.

Occupational supply

Historically, many glaziers enter the occupation via on-the-job training rather than undertaking a full apprenticeship. ABS 2006 Census data shows that only 49 per cent of glaziers possessed Certificate III level qualifications or higher. Training commencements have improved in recent years, although annual apprenticeship completions are low compared to most other building trades. In 2008 there were 14 completions, which was 75 per cent higher than the average for the previous five years, and the highest level since at least 1995. DEEWR projections suggest that supply from apprenticeship training will remain fairly stable over the short-term.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for glaziers found that 40 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks, compared to a fill rate of 45 per cent obtained from a similar survey in 2008. There were slightly more applicants per vacancy this year, but the average number of suitable applicants per vacancy declined from 0.7 to 0.6. Unsuccessful applicants were rejected mainly because they lacked the required level of skill and/or experience. Employers noted that business conditions had improved compared to earlier in the year, when a number of glaziers had been retrenched as a result of slowing activity levels and uncertainty surrounding future order books. However, demand for products – especially large manufactured aluminium-framed windows – had picked-up, due in part to stimulus measures associated with the Federal Government's Building the Education Revolution infrastructure program. Another employer indicated that they had a large contract which was likely to support higher levels of activity in the near future. Some employers were either in the process of advertising for additional glaziers or had lodged vacancies in the week or two prior to being surveyed by DEEWR. Overall, weakness in demand conditions appears to be improving and feedback from employers suggests that skill shortages for this occupation persist.

Labour market outlook

Forward indicators of building activity – building approvals data (trend) – show a significant decline in the value of new projects approved for construction in South Australia in the year to June 2009, with particular weakness in non-residential building approvals. At the same time, the Australian Government has implemented a number of fiscal stimulus measures intended to support building and construction work going forward. Supply from apprenticeship completions has improved, but remains low in absolute terms. On balance, the labour market for glaziers is not expected to change significantly over the short-term and shortages are likely to persist.