

Flat Glass Tradesperson	Australia
ASCO Code: 4982-11	September 2006
Labour market rating	Shortage
Comment	

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for flat glass tradespersons was undertaken for this report. The survey shows demand for skills is strong, with Labour Force Survey data closely linking glass trades with the construction industry in Australia. The occupation includes bevellers, glass embossers, glass etchers and glass silverers, but vacancies followed up were predominantly for general glaziers.

Around 30 per cent of surveyed vacancies were filled. Vacancy fill rates were fairly consistent across the states and territories, but employers in regional areas had considerably more difficulty filling vacancies than those in metropolitan areas. Less than 20 per cent of regional vacancies were filled compared with just over half of the vacancies surveyed in metropolitan areas.

Most employers received around five applicants per vacancy, but on average less than one applicant per vacancy was considered to be suitable. Most employers noted the majority of applicants were unsuitable as they did not possess the required skills and experience, with few having formal qualifications. A small number of applicants who were qualified were considered to be unsuitable due to poor attitude. Employers commented that the majority of the applicants were labourers who had, at best, limited experience working in the glass industry.

Overall, results of the 2006 survey correspond to those of the survey conducted in 2005. Although there has been a slight fall in the portion of applicants who were considered by employers to be suitable for advertised positions, the average number of suitable applicants per position remained stable.

A number of employers surveyed believed the skills required in flat glass trades have changed in the last few years. Many employers were seeking tradespersons who could also perform aluminium fabrication and who also had general building skills.

Some employers noted there is a high occurrence of glaziers and apprentices moving within the trade from one organisation to another, but they did not generally think many qualified tradespersons were leaving the occupation. A significant number of employers felt they did not have the resources to train an apprentice. A portion of employers also suggested they have difficulty retaining apprentices as apprentices often leave their employment to seek higher pay and better conditions in other industries.

Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest the labour market for flat glass tradespersons will change significantly over the next six months, although any change in the level of building activity is likely to impact on this trade as more than two-thirds of those employed in glass trades in Australia are employed in the construction industry.