

<b>Painting Trades Worker</b>	<b>New South Wales</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code:</b> 3322-11	September 2009
<b>Labour market rating:</b>	Recruitment difficulty (regional)
<b>Comment:</b> <i>Recruitment difficulties are evident in some regional towns.</i>	

### **Occupational demand**

Census data indicate employment of Painting Trades Workers was flat between 2001 and 2006. Since then, demand for this trade has been adversely affected by weak building activity, with the real value of building work done in New South Wales (NSW) falling by eight per cent in 2008-09 after growing by only one per cent the previous year. Industry contacts, however, reported a recent improvement in the demand for painters, due in part to increased Australian government and NSW government expenditure on education, public housing and other infrastructure.

### **Occupational supply**

There were 126 apprenticeship completions in the trade in 2008-09, which was slightly above the 115 completions in 2007-08 but close to the average of 128 per annum over the previous five years. The annual training rate for the occupation (apprenticeship completions as a percentage of employed painters) is 1.1 per cent, based on a DEEWR employment estimate of 11 300. While this is well below the average of 3.0 per cent for all trades, informal on-the-job training is very common in the trade and significantly augments supply. DEEWR estimates wastage from the occupation was 2.6 per cent a year from 2001 to 2006, which indicates supply from formal training is insufficient to offset wastage. Net immigration of painters to NSW from overseas has increased in recent years, averaging 32 per annum in the three years to 2007-08 after three years of net losses. Census data show NSW lost about 300 Painting Trades Workers interstate from 2001 to 2006.

### **Employer and industry comments/current labour market**

A DEEWR survey of employers who had recently advertised for Painting Trades Workers found 87 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks of advertising, which was similar to the success rate of 88 per cent in November 2008. In general, employers based in Sydney were able to fill vacancies with little difficulty on a wage or sub-contract basis in the domestic and commercial sectors of the industry. Sydney vacancies generally elicited a large response, with over half attracting 50 or more applicants. Employers reported the majority of applicants were not trade qualified or failed a trial or did not have their own ABN or contractor's licence or driver's licence when these were requirements for the position. Nevertheless, there was an average of two suitable applicants per vacancy and a majority of employers were able to choose the best of several good applicants. In some cases, employers were willing to consider third or fourth year apprentices but the number of suitable experienced tradespersons who applied made this unnecessary. Recruitment difficulties were more evident in regional NSW. While all the regional vacancies surveyed attracted applications from qualified and experienced tradespersons, in some cases there were not sufficient suitable applicants to meet the needs of employers with multiple vacancies or the employer was not able to reach an agreement on remuneration and working conditions with the suitable applicants. Recruitment difficulties were most evident in smaller regional centres with a number of vacancies remaining unfilled or only being filled after several months of repeated advertising.

### **Labour market outlook**

The Construction Forecasting Council expects only a modest recovery in building activity in 2009-10, although it expects further strong growth in the less labour-intensive engineering construction sector. As a result, demand for Painting Trades Workers is likely to grow only moderately over the short term. However, the training rate for the occupation is expected to remain well below the average for the trades as a whole over the next two years and shortages of Painting Trades Workers with broad trade skills may develop when the building industry moves into a sustained recovery.