



- **Employment increases to 231,300**
- **Unemployment rate falls to 4.5%**
- **Participation rate remains steady at 60.8%**

Note: All Labour Force estimates are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Labour Force Survey* and are *Trend estimates* unless otherwise stated.

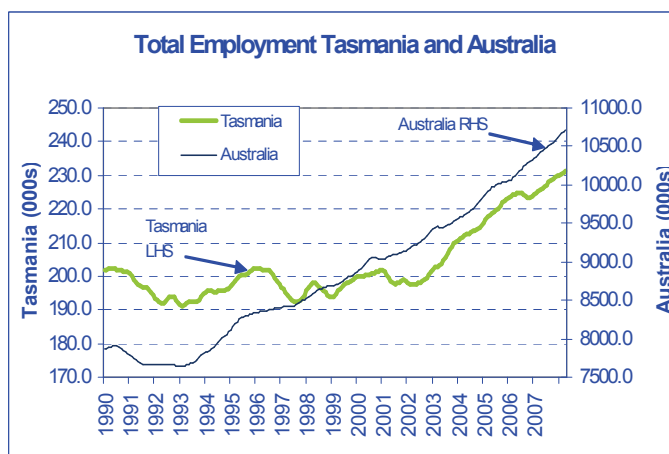
Employment

Total employment in Tasmania increased this month and is currently estimated to be 2.6% higher than it was in April last year. Total full-time employment was up by 4.0% over the year, off-setting a minor fall in part-time employment of 0.6%. There have been some signs of a softening of the Tasmanian labour market, with job vacancy series in particular starting to decline but this has yet to flow through into the labour force figures. Total male employment increased by 2.6% over the year, consisting of a 3.6% rise in full-time employment and a 2.6% fall in part-time employment. Total female employment also increased over the year, by 2.5%. Again, the major gains were in full-time employment at 4.8%, while female part-time employment increased by a more modest 0.2%.

Unemployment

The total number of unemployed Tasmanians continued to fall in April, with an estimated 11,000 Tasmanians looking for work, a

decline of 11.0% compared to April last year. The number of unemployed males in Tasmania has fallen to 4,500 which is the lowest number recorded since the current series began in February 1978. The number of unemployed females increased over the year by around 900, to 6,500. The current unemployment rate in Tasmania is estimated to be 4.5%, which is also the lowest figure recorded since February 1978. The current national unemployment rate is 4.1%, while other States recorded rates of 4.3% in NSW, 4.4% in Vic, 3.6% in Qld, 4.6% in SA, and 3.2% in WA.



Labour Force & Participation Rates

There were an estimated 242,300 people in the Tasmanian labour force in April, which indicates 1.8% growth over the year. The male labour force grew by 0.7% over the year, while the female labour force grew by 3.2%. Total participation rates in Tasmania have been stable for most of this year, but at 60.8% are currently seven percentage points above the figure recorded in April last year. Male participation has declined marginally over the year from 67.5% to 67.4%, while female participation has increased from 53.1% to 54.4%.

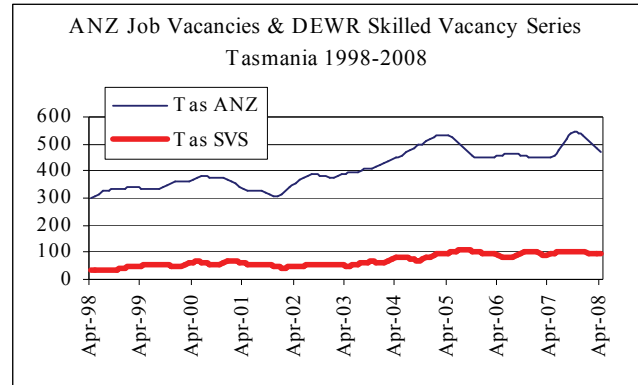
Labour Force Estimates - Tasmania (Trend data)

	Apr-2007	Mar-2008	Apr-2008
	000's	000's	000's
Employment			
Male	123.7	126.6	126.9
Female	101.9	104.1	104.4
Full-time	154.4	160.0	160.6
Part-time	71.1	70.7	70.7
Persons	225.5	230.8	231.3
Unemployment			
Male	6.7	4.8	4.5
Female	5.6	6.6	6.5
Persons	12.4	11.4	11.0
Labour Force			
Male	130.4	131.4	131.4
Female	107.5	110.8	110.9
Persons	237.9	242.2	242.3
Unemployment Rate %			
Male	5.2	3.7	3.4
Female	5.2	6.0	5.9
Persons	5.2	4.7	4.5
Full-time Teenage*	25.5	23.0	16.5
Participation Rate %			
Male	67.5	67.5	67.4
Female	53.1	54.4	54.4
Persons	60.1	60.8	60.8
*unadjusted data			

Job Vacancies

The **ANZ Bank Job Advertisement series** (trend) for Tasmania fell by 2.5% in the month of April. The series is 4.7% higher than it was in April 2007. Nationally, the series fell by 1.3% over the month, and was 7.7% lower than in April last year.

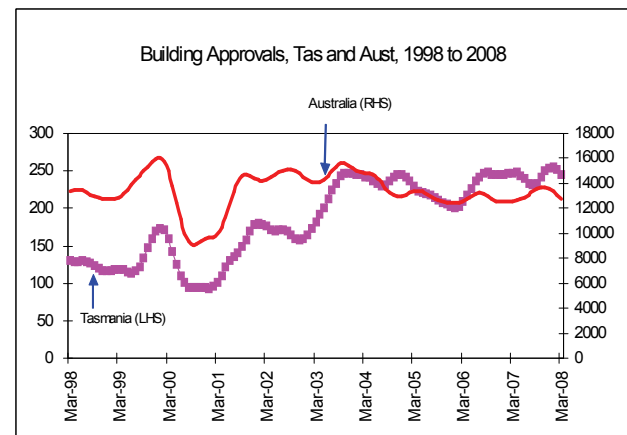
DEWR's Skilled Vacancy Survey Index (trend) for Tasmania fell by 0.9% in April and was 4.8% higher than in April 2007. Nationally, the series decreased by 0.8% over the month and was 3.9% lower than in April last year.



Other Indicators

Building Approvals in Tasmania for March were 2.4% lower than they were the previous month and 0.4% lower than in March last year. Nationally, building approvals were down 2.1% for the month and 1.8% higher than in March 2007.

Retail quarterly turnover (chain volume measure) fell by 0.1% in Tasmania in the March quarter, but increased by 3.1% over the year. This compares to a national quarterly increase of 0.9% and an annual increase of 4.4%.



Newstart & Youth Allowees

Benefit recipients (Newstart & Youth Allowances)				
	<12 months	> 12 months	Total	% > 12 months
Mar-2007	4,523	8,242	12,765	64.6%
Mar-2008	3,752	6,767	10,519	64.3%
Number difference	-771	-1,475	-2,246	
% difference	-17.0%	-17.9%	-17.6%	

UPDATE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA STATISTICAL PROFILES

Introduction

Following the release of detailed 2006 Census data the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has updated information about each local government area in Tasmania in a series of statistical profiles. These profiles are available at the following web site:

<http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/ResearchStats/LabourMarketAnalysis/LEO/Tas/LabourEconomicsOffice-TasmaniaOffice.htm#stats>

The statistics include information about the population, local industry, educational qualifications, and transport to work options, for example. There is also some information on the population and labour market of the major urban centres in each local government area, where applicable.

In addition to the statistics, there are also the results of a survey of local councils who were asked to identify what they considered to be their major industries, areas of growth, largest employers, and a range of other features of their local area. The survey results are presented entirely as the councils returned them to DEEWR and have not been interpreted or altered in any way.

Characteristics of Tasmanian local government areas

i) Population

The five most populous local government areas in Tasmania at the time of the 2006 Census were Launceston, Clarence, Hobart, Glenorchy and Kingborough. The least populous, from the lowest up, were Flinders, King Island, Tasman, Central Highlands, and Glamorgan/Spring Bay. The median age of the population in Tasmania is 39 years. The municipalities with the oldest median age were Glamorgan/Spring Bay at 49, Flinders at 48, Tasman at 47, Break O'Day at 46, and Central Highlands at 43. The youngest median ages were in Brighton at 31, and West Coast, Circular Head, Burnie, and Launceston, at 37.

ii) People born overseas, in other than main English speaking countries

People from the main English speaking countries (such as the UK, Ireland, Canada etc) have been excluded from these figures, on the basis that migrants with limited language skills are generally more likely to require support services and assistance in accessing them, than those with good English language skills. The municipalities with the largest percentage of their population from non-English speaking countries were Hobart at 11.6 per cent, Kingborough at 7.3 per cent, Glenorchy at 5.6 per cent, and King Island and West Tamar, both at 5.5 per cent. Those at the other end of the scale were Break O'Day at 1.4 per cent, Southern Midlands 1.7 per cent, and Brighton, Central Highlands and Derwent Valley, all at 2.0 per cent. The State average was 4.8 per cent.

iii) Indigenous population

At the last Census 3.5 per cent of Tasmania's population were classified as Indigenous. The municipalities with the highest percentage of their population classified as Indigenous were Flinders at 17.9 per cent, Huon Valley and Circular Head at 8.8 per cent, West Coast at 6.8 per cent, and Brighton at 6.2 per cent. Those with the smallest percentage of their population identifying as Indigenous were Hobart at 1.2 per cent, West Tamar, 1.5 per cent, Dorset 2.2 per cent, Northern Midlands at 2.3 per cent, and Meander Valley at 2.4 per cent.

iv) Unemployment rates

The unemployment rates quoted below are from the 2006 Census, and are calculated on a different basis to that in the ABS monthly labour force survey. The Census is essentially a “self-nominated” approach in that individuals themselves state whether or not they were unemployed, while the monthly labour force survey applies certain concepts and definitions to individual responses, which determines whether or not they are classified as unemployed by the ABS. However, they provide a reasonable comparative guide.

The municipalities with the highest unemployment rates at the time of the Census were George Town at 10.4 per cent, Kentish at 9.6 per cent, Tasman at 9.5 per cent, Break O’Day at 9.2 per cent and West Coast at 9.1 per cent. Those with the lowest were King Island at 1.9 per cent, Flinders at 2.8 per cent, Circular Head at 4.2 per cent, Kingborough at 4.5 per cent and Northern Midlands at 5.0 per cent. The Tasmania rate at that time was calculated at 6.5 per cent.

v) Highest levels of education

The figures in this section show what percentage of the population in each municipalities have a degree or higher level qualification. The municipalities with the highest percentage of their population having a degree or higher qualification were Hobart at 30.6 per cent, Kingborough at 20.4 per cent, Clarence at 13.1 per cent, west Tamar at 13.0 per cent, and Launceston at 12.2 per cent. Those with the lowest levels of tertiary qualifications were Brighton at 3.6 per cent, Circular Head at 4.9 per cent, Derwent Valley and George Town at 5.0 per cent, and Southern Midlands at 5.3 per cent.

vi) Highest income earners

These figures are based on the percentage of people in each local government area who were earning more than \$2,000 per week at the last Census. The municipalities with the highest percentage of top income earners were Hobart at 3.7 per cent, Flinders at 2.3 per cent, Kingborough at 1.8 per cent and West Coast at 1.7 per cent. Those with the lowest proportions or people earning \$2000 or more per week were Brighton and Glenorchy at 0.4 per cent, and Kentish, Central Highlands, Derwent Valley and Break O’Day at 0.5 per cent.

vii) Highest level of home ownership

The figures in this section refer to the percentage of people in each municipality who fully owned their home at the last section. People with mortgages who have not yet paid off their homes are not included in these figures. The highest levels of ownership were in Tasman at 54.2 per cent, Break O’Day at 52.1 per cent, Glamorgan/Spring Bay at 50.6 per cent, and West Coast at 48.3 per cent. Those with the lowest levels of outright home ownership were Brighton at 21.7 per cent, Launceston at 33.1 per cent, Hobart at 33.6 per cent, Glenorchy at 35.0 per cent, and Circular Head at 35.1 per cent.

Summary

More details about the above statistics and a wide range of other information are available at the web address quoted in the introduction. For any queries regarding any of this data please contact Chris Fallon on (03) 6222 9832.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN APRIL 2008

- April 1st** Launceston's multi million dollar Glenara Lakes facility opened a new \$2.4 million dementia unit. The 17 bed dementia unit was opened by the new Federal Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliot. This brings the entire facility to a capacity of 89 residents requiring various levels of care. *(Examiner)*
- April 3rd** Gunns have been given approval from the Commonwealth to begin earthworks at the site of their proposed pulp mill. An independent site supervisor will ensure that the Environmental Information Management Plan is complied with. *(Examiner)*
- Tasmania is closer to launching a new aquaculture industry with a successful breeding program involving Striped Trumpeter. The announcement comes after decades of research and millions of dollars worth of investment. *(ABC News Online)*
- April 9th** The future of Hartz mineral water is under speculation as it was placed into controllership last week. Debts of over \$2 million are said to be the reason. *(Mercury)*
- Tasmania is still on target for a record grape harvest for wine production. The industry expects a first time yield in excess of 8000 tonnes. *(Mercury)*
- The \$72 million FEA (Forest Enterprises Australia) Bell Bay sawmill started production 14 months after the project was announced. The plant employs 100 people and is primarily processing sustainable growth plantation timbers. The mill successfully won the tender from former Auspine last year to process 290 000 tonnes per annum. *(Mercury)*
- April 10th** The first stage of the \$35 million Gasworks redevelopment in Launceston was on track for completion within weeks. Centrelink is due to move into the premises in the middle of the year. The entire works are to be completed by the end of 2009. *(Examiner)*
- April 14th** James Nelson weaving mill has reopened after closing last December with 40 job losses. The State Govt helped with a \$250,000 grant and the mill now employs 24 and is looking to put on more employees. *(ABC News Online)*
- April 17th** Pumphouse Point Tourism development at Lake St. Clair has been approved ten years after initial development interest. A restaurant and lodge are being proposed. *(ABC News Online)*
- April 18th** There has been a \$200 million spend on unit development in the North of the state since 2002. People are readily spending between \$450 - \$600,000 for a centrally located apartment. *(Examiner)*

- April 18th** The Tasmanian Government has moved to secure the brand name of financially troubled soft drink producer, Hartz Mineral Water. *(ABC News Online)*
- April 19th** More than 550 skilled migrants became permanent additions to Tasmania's population last financial year and they represented 49.2% of the state's total immigration gain. This does not include the 580 migrants on 457 work visas. Most foreign workers went into the computing and accounting sectors. Other top occupations were nursing, electrical trades and mechanical specialists. By August last year, overseas born workers made up 11.1% of Tasmania's workforce. *(Mercury)*
- April 20th** For the first time in fifty years a mining company is building housing on the west coast. Metals X is building an expandable 100 room complex worth \$8 million in order to attract a workforce and avoid the private housing market. It is said to be a great sign of confidence in the local mining industry. *(Sunday Tasmanian)*
- April 21st** Tourism is booming as traditional peak periods from October to February are overflowing into March and April. Accommodation operators are having to turn visitors away. Tasmania's assets of fine food and wine, heritage and nature continue to draw tourists to the state. *(Mercury)*
- Joe White Maltings (Tasmania's premium malt maker) is set to increase capacity from 5000 to 7000 tonne per annum. Upgrades will directly impact barley growers in Tasmania. *(farmonline.com.au)*
- April 23rd** Eighty new jobs have been created by the opening of a new PFD Food Services Pty Ltd warehouse at Connector Park in the north of the State. PFD trades in frozen and fresh foods, dry groceries and paper cleaning products to the food services industry. *(Examiner)*
- April 26th** Incat says that production will be slowed if it cannot fill positions for experienced trades people. Incat is willing to source experienced labour from overseas if they can find it. *(Mercury)*
- April 30th** Due to drought and lack of milk production, King Island Dairy has stopped production of desserts, yoghurt and cream. Manufacturing of these products has ceased for a period of 6-8 weeks and is set to resume by mid May. *(ABC News Online)*