

Metal Fabricator		Victoria
ASCO Code: 4122-11	September 2007	
Labour market rating	Shortage	
Comment:		

Occupational demand

Demand for metal fabricators in Victoria is largely determined by the level of activity in the manufacturing industry, and more generally by overall economic activity. The Survey of Australian Manufacturing June 2007 discussed that growth in manufacturing activity strengthened moderately in the June quarter 2007, largely reflecting a broadening in demand, this has improved the 12 month outlook moderately for the industry, however the appreciating dollar is continuing to dampen export prospects. Manufacturing employment in Victoria for the August quarter has seen a 4.8 per cent increase from the 2006 August quarter.

Victoria's economy had relatively strong growth of 2.9 per cent over the year to December 2006 and the Australian economy grew by 3.7 per cent. DEEWR Skilled Vacancies Index data show demand for metal fabricators started to plateau in 2004 and 2005 after a steep decline, however it has once again started to decline in 2006.

Occupational supply

ABS Education and Work figures suggest around 57 per cent of employed boilermakers and welders have certificate III or certificate IV qualifications. DEEWR estimates the percentage of persons who completed a Certificate III in Engineering (Fabrication Trade, Production Systems and other related streams) was 474 persons in 2005-06, up from 383 persons in 2004-05 (Department of Immigration and Citizenship) data.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

The survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA) found that 45 per cent of vacancies were filled. The average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was 0.6 and there was an average of two unsuitable applicants per vacancy.

Employers discussed that they found it difficult to find applicants with experience. Although qualifications were the first thing employers were looking for, many applicants lacked hands on experience particularly with reading drawings and undertaking heavy duty work. Employers advertised in both newspapers and through the internet for long periods of time with vacancies remaining unfilled for significant periods, many of the positions for metal fabricators were newly created positions to meet company expansion.

Several employers had previously used the 457 visas to fill positions and discussed that they would consider this again if they were unable to fill positions. Some employers commented that qualified and experienced metal fabricators often started their own businesses or would seek positions that would pay above award rates with the shortage of qualified workers enabling this flexibility.

Labour market outlook

Strong demand for metal fabricating services in Victoria has led to a shortage, which is expected to continue over the next six months.