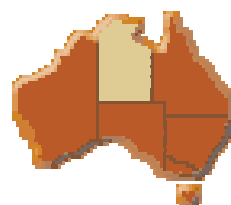
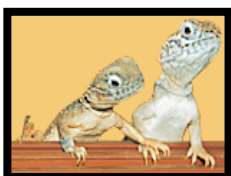




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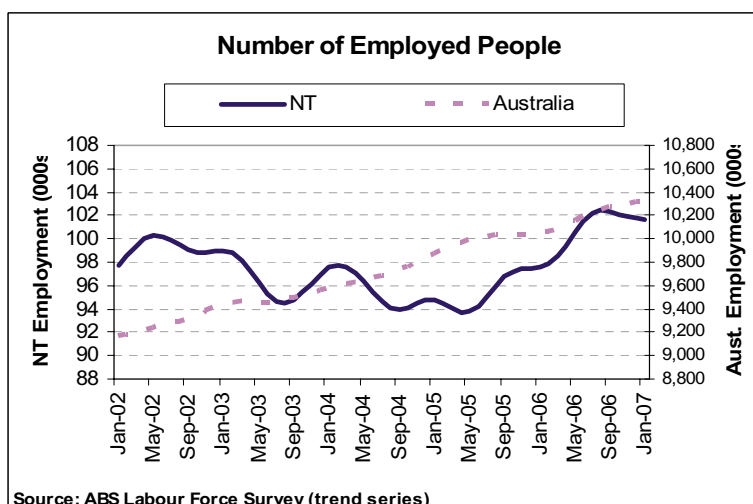
NORTHERN TERRITORY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

January 2007

According to the ABS Labour Force Survey trend series for January 2007, the Northern Territory (NT) unemployment rate declined to 2.0% (down 0.2 percentage points on the previous month which was revised downwards from 2.4%). The volatile Northern Territory rate dropped to its lowest level on record and is below the national unemployment rate which is also at a historic low (at 4.6%). In the NT, employment remained stable while unemployment decreased during the month of January (to 101,700 and 2,000 respectively). The participation rate declined by 0.3 percentage points to 68.0% with the size of the NT labour force dropping (to 103,700) while the civilian population recorded an increase. The NT labour force has had a downward trend for the past six months (losing 3,200 people over this time) and has dropped back below the peak levels of 2001 and 2002.

Although the current results indicate a period of very low unemployment they also show a declining participation rate. Other economic indicators suggest a strong demand for labour that challenge declining participation. It is important to note that the Northern Territory labour force figures are highly volatile. For example, the NT unemployment rate one year ago was the second highest in the country at 6.4% whereas now it is less than a third of that rate at 2.0% and the lowest in the country.

The Northern Territory economy is currently strong and business investment, driven by the resources boom, is now resulting in higher export earnings. State final demand has been outpacing national GDP and is forecast to continue to do so (September Access Economics forecast) each year for the next 5 years. The November Sensis Business Index for small and medium enterprises shows good performance results for NT businesses with sales, profitability and capital expenditure significantly above the national average and also shows business confidence for the next 12 months remains high. Although the ANZ job advertisements series has declined over the past quarter, it remains above 2005 levels and is an indication demand for workers in the NT remains high.



Employment Trends

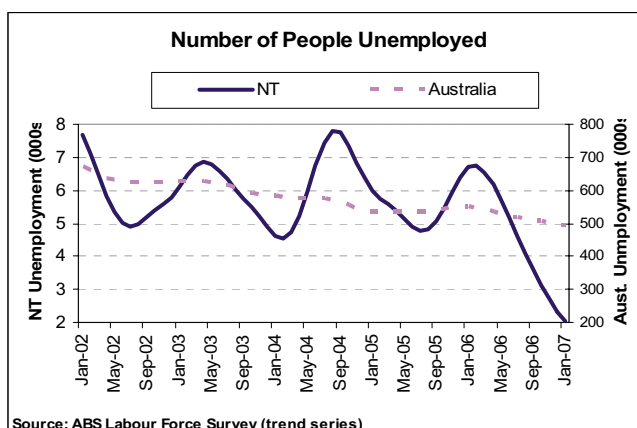
- In January there were 101,700 employed persons in the NT, an increase of 4.2% from the previous year but a further contribution to the recent downward trend.
- Male employment increased while female employment decreased in January (to 56,500 and 45,100 respectively).
- Nationally there were 10,327,900 people employed, an increase of 2.8% since January last year and growth over December.

Note: The results presented here are taken from the trend series data (not the seasonally adjusted or original data) and trend estimates for the previous 6 months are revised each month incorporating the current results.

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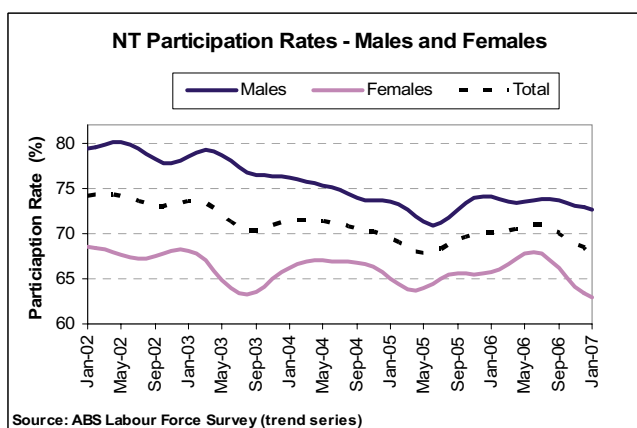
Unemployment Trends

- There were approximately 2,000 unemployed persons in the NT in January, which is a 25 year low.
- Male unemployment dropped to 1,200 in January, while female unemployment remained at 800.
- Nationally the number of unemployed people (at 494,500) decreased 0.5% over the month.
- Nationally the labour force has grown by 2.2% over the past year, while the number of people unemployed has dropped 9.9% over the same period.



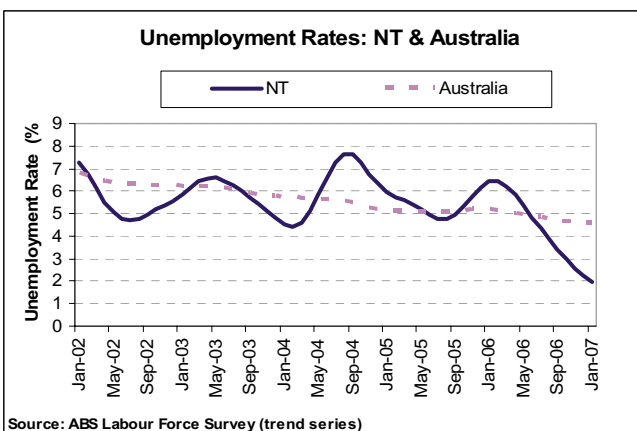
Participation Rate Trends – NT and Australia

- The NT participation rate dropped by 0.3 percentage points to 68.0% in January and is now 2.0 percentage points lower than a year ago.
- The female participation rate has decreased by 2.8 percentage points and the male participation rate has decreased by 1.4 percentage points over the past year.
- The national participation rate remained stable in January at 64.8%.



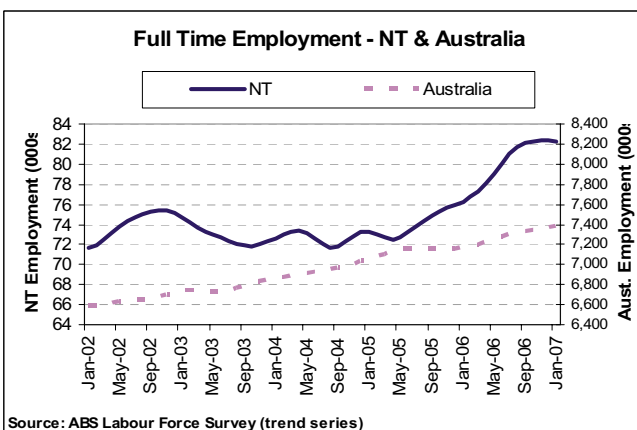
Unemployment Rate Trends – NT and Australia

- The current trend unemployment rate for the NT is 2.0%, which is 4.5 percentage points lower than the same time last year.
- The male NT trend unemployment rate was estimated to be 2.1%, which is 4.6 percentage points lower than 12 months ago.
- The female rate was estimated to be 1.7%, which is 4.3 percentage points lower than 12 months ago.
- Nationally the trend unemployment rate remained at 4.6% in January.



Full Time Employment

- There were an estimated 82,300 people in full-time employment in the NT in January, which was stable with the previous month and 7.8% growth over the year.
- Full-time employment for males increased to 48,800.
- Full-time employment for females dropped marginally to 33,500.
- Nationally, full-time employment grew by 10,500 jobs for the month and by 3.0% over the past 12 months.
- Full-time employment in the NT, at 80.9% in January, accounts for a greater proportion of total employment than nationally (71.5%).



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