

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Panel Beater | | Australia |
| ASCO Code: 4213-11 | July 2006 | |
| Labour market rating | Shortage | |
| Comment | | |

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for panel beaters was undertaken for this report. About a quarter (26 per cent) of the advertised vacancies were filled within 4 weeks of advertising.

Most employers reported difficulty recruiting skilled and qualified panel beaters, although employers in South Australia, Western Australia, Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory had the most difficulty, and vacancies in regional and rural areas were harder to fill than those in metropolitan areas.

Most vacancies attracted small applicant numbers, but more than 70 per cent of applicants were considered by employers to be suitable for their vacancies. Overall, there was one suitable candidate per vacancy. Applicants who were considered unsuitable were either unqualified, or tradespeople who lacked recent relevant experience or particular specialist skills. A number of employers had vacancies which remained unfilled despite receiving applications from suitably qualified panel beaters. In most cases these vacancies were unfilled because applicants were unwilling to work for the offered wages or in a particular location.

The main reason suggested by employers for the difficulty recruiting panel beaters was the relatively low wages offered for the type of work and skills required, and the low number of apprentices entering the trade. Although most employers interviewed employ apprentices; employers suggested that apprentices often do not finish their apprenticeship or they leave the trade soon after completing their apprenticeship due to the relatively poor wages. Employers in Queensland and Western Australia commented that they could not compete with wages offered to tradespeople by the mining and resource industry.

Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest the labour market for panel beaters will change significantly over the next six months and shortages are expected to persist.