

AUSTRALIA

March 2009

3212-11 Motor Mechanic

(review)

Review rating: *No Shortage*

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who have recently advertised for motor mechanics was undertaken for this review. Almost 85 per cent of employers filled their vacancies, with over three suitable applicants per vacancy. This is an increase from less than one suitable applicant per vacancy when the occupation was last assessed in August 2008.

Many employers noted they had received the best response to their advertisements in many years, with many reporting multiple suitable applicants from which to choose. One employer was so impressed with the field of candidates that he chose to employ a greater number than initially intended. Of those applicants considered by employers to be unsuitable, many were foreign applicants with poor English language skills and a number of applicants were not qualified at all.. A small number of employers sought specialised skills and abilities and so found qualified mechanics to be unsuitable

Whilst sentiments were somewhat mixed, most employers suggested there had been little or no impact on their business as a result of the Global Financial Crisis, with a small number indicating there had been a noticeable increase in business. This was attributed to people choosing to repair and maintain their existing vehicles in preference over purchasing new cars.

Labour Market Outlook

The current labour market suggests that there is no longer a shortage of motor mechanics; fill rates and proportions of suitable applicants per vacancy show dramatic increases while March 2009 SVI data show an annual change for the automotive trades of -50.9%, indicating a drop in employer demand. Employer comments suggest there is steady consumer demand for mechanical services and that there is increasing supply of qualified applicants from apprenticeship completions and the return of qualified mechanics from the mining and construction industries.