



- **Employment increased to 230,400**
- **Unemployment rate fell to 5.1%**
- **Participation rate remained steady at 61.0%**

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

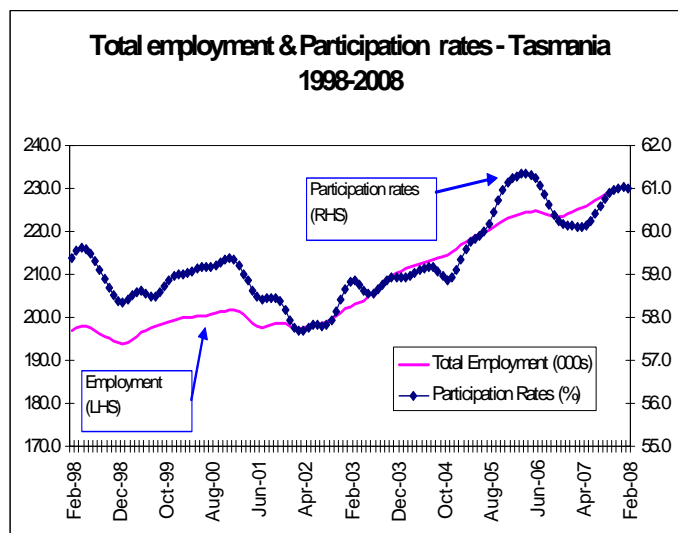
Employment

The total number of employed people in Tasmania continues to rise in February, and was 2.6% higher than it was in February last year. Full-time employment grew by 3.6%, while part-time employment increased by 0.5%. Total female employment has increased by 1.7% since last February. This increase is made up of a 1.5% rise in full-time employment and a 1.8% rise in part-time employment. Total male employment grew by 3.4% over the year, an increase that was made up entirely of growth in full-time work. In fact male part-time work declined by 2.9% over the year, but this was off-set by 4.7% growth in full-time work.

Unemployment

The total number of unemployed Tasmanians was estimated to be 12,500 in February, which is a 3.8% fall on the 13,000 recorded in February last year. The number of unemployed was made up of approximately 6,900 females, and 5,600 males. The number of unemployed females increased

by 1,300 over the year, but this was more than off-set by a fall in male unemployment of around 1,800. The total unemployment rate for Tasmania in February was 5.1%, compared to 5.5% in February last year. In other States, the unemployment rate was 4.4% in NSW and Vic, 3.5% in Qld, 4.6% in SA, and 3.1% in WA. The current national unemployment rate is 4.1%, down from 4.5% in February last year.



Labour Force & Participation Rates

There were an estimated 242,900 Tasmanians either in work, or looking for work in February. This was an increase of 2.3% in the labour force a year earlier. The female labour force increased by 2.7% while the male labour force grew by 1.9%. The participation rate in February was estimated to be 61.0% which is unchanged over the last four months. It is however an improvement on the 60.1% recorded in February 2007. The current national participation rate is 65.2%, which is up from the 64.9% recorded a year earlier.

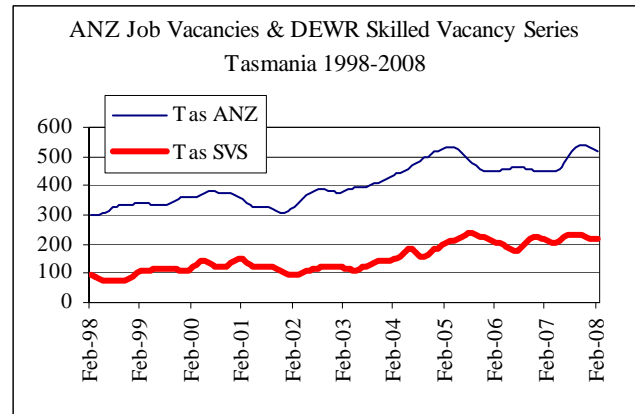
Labour Force Estimates - Tasmania (Trend data)

	Feb-2007	Jan-2008	Feb-2008
	000's	000's	000's
Employment			
Male	122.0	126.1	126.2
Female	102.5	104.2	104.2
Full-time	154.2	159.1	159.7
Part-time	70.4	71.1	70.7
Persons	224.6	230.2	230.4
Unemployment			
Male	7.3	5.8	5.6
Female	5.6	6.8	6.9
Persons	13.0	12.6	12.5
Labour Force			
Male	129.4	131.9	131.8
Female	108.1	111.0	111.1
Persons	237.5	242.8	242.9
Unemployment Rate %			
Male	5.7	4.4	4.2
Female	5.2	6.1	6.2
Persons	5.5	5.2	5.1
Full-time Teenage*	20.0	23.9	16.6
Participation Rate %			
Male	67.0	67.8	67.7
Female	53.5	54.5	54.6
Persons	60.1	61.0	61.0
*unadjusted data			

Job Vacancies

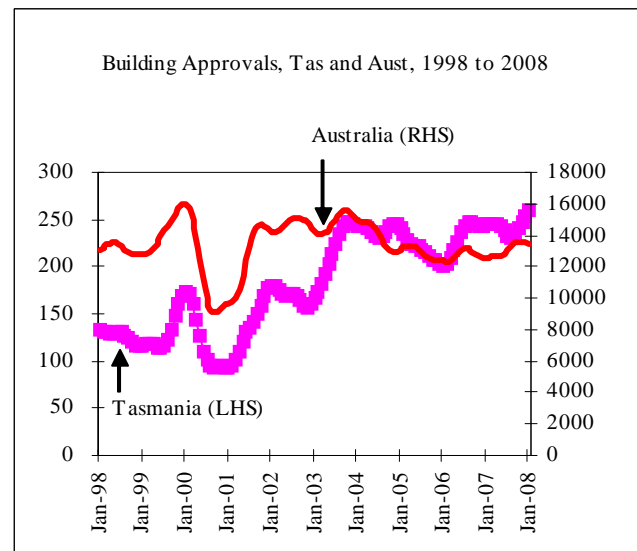
The **ANZ Bank Job Advertisement series** (trend) for Tasmania fell by 1.7% in February. The series is 14.9% higher than it was in February last year. Nationally, the series fell by 0.3% over the month, and was 2.2% lower than in February 2007.

DEWR's Skilled Vacancy Survey Index (trend) for Tasmania decreased by 0.5% in February but was 4.0% higher than in February last year. Nationally, the series decreased by 2.2% over the month and was 6.4% lower than February last year.



Other Indicators

Building Approvals in Tasmania for January were 2.8% higher than they were last month and 6.1% higher than in January last year. Nationally, building approvals were 0.6% lower than last month and 7.1% higher than in January 2007.



Newstart & Youth Allowees

Benefit recipients (Newstart & Youth Allowances)				
	<12 months	> 12 months	Total	% > 12 months
Jan-2007	4,894	8,992	13,886	64.8%
Jan-2008	4,192	7,555	11,747	64.3%
Number difference	-702	-1,437	-2,139	
% difference	-14.3%	-16.0%	-15.4%	

OCCUPATIONS IN TASMANIA 2001-2006

Introduction

The following article looks at movements in occupations between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) uses particular methods to classify occupations in groups according to similar activities and skill levels. A new method of classifying occupations was introduced for the 2006 Census, however for this article the old system, called the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) will be used, for ease of comparison between 2001 and 2006 data.

A) Broad occupational groups

The following table shows how much broad occupational groups have grown or declined in relation to the total for all occupations.

	2001	2006	No. Chge	% Chge
<i>Managers and Administrators</i>	16010	16928	918	5.7%
<i>Professionals</i>	30858	35236	4378	14.2%
<i>Associate Professionals</i>	21415	24312	2897	13.5%
<i>Tradespersons and Related Workers</i>	22902	25867	2965	12.9%
<i>Advanced Clerical and Service Workers</i>	5232	4816	-416	-8.0%
<i>Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers</i>	30587	36052	5465	17.9%
<i>Intermediate Production and Transport Workers</i>	16523	18146	1623	9.8%
<i>Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers</i>	18324	20556	2232	12.2%
<i>Labourers and Related Workers</i>	17900	19529	1629	9.1%
<i>Not Stated/Inadequately described</i>	3810	3,024	-786	-20.6%
TOTAL ALL OCCUPATIONS	18356	204466	20905	11.4%

The areas where there appears to have the most significant growth are intermediate clerical, sales and service workers, professionals, associate professionals, and tradespersons. It will be useful to look at these areas in more detail to see where the major areas of growth have been.

B) More detailed occupational groups

Within the group intermediate clerical sales and service workers, almost 60 per cent of growth was in intermediate clerical workers. Some of the occupations within this group that had the largest growth were general clerks, who increased by 32.1 per cent, and other intermediate clerical workers who increased by 45 per cent. The largest single occupation in this latter group was inquiry clerks, which increased by 59.4 per cent or 941. This increase is most likely due to the increase in call centre workers, who would have been classified as inquiry clerks under the ASCO coding system.

There have been several areas of growth in professional occupational groups including science, building and engineering professionals which increased by 16.6 per cent. The main growth in this area was among building and engineering professionals, driven by the increase in construction activity since around 2001. Also business and information professionals have increased significantly, a group which includes accountants, up 16.1 per cent, human resource professionals, up 22.0 per cent, which includes personnel officers, training officers and industrial relations specialists. Health professionals increased by 14.2 per cent, including an 11.3 per cent increase in nurse practitioners, an 18.3 per cent increase in

medical practitioners, and a 19.9 per cent increase in miscellaneous health professionals such as physiotherapists, pharmacists, and medical imaging professionals, for example.

The largest areas of growth among associate professionals, was among business and administration associate professionals. The largest single occupation in this group was real estate associate professional, which increased by 40.0 per cent, and again this increase is linked to the rapid expansion of the property market and construction generally, between 2001 and 2006. Other areas of significant growth among associate professionals were restaurant and catering managers, up by 17.0 per cent, chefs, up by 24.6 per cent, ambulance officers and paramedics, up by 53.5 per cent, and safety inspectors, up by 27.2 per cent.

The final occupational group to be discussed in this article, is the trades. As perhaps could be expected the largest increases among tradespeople have been in the construction trades, given the significant increases in construction activity that occurred in Tasmania between 2001 and 2006. For example, bricklayers increased by 27.4 per cent, carpenters and joiners increased by 30.1 per cent, and plumbers increased by 31.1 per cent. Plasterers also increased by 52.8 per cent. The electrical and electronic trades also increased by 20.9 per cent, largely because of their role in new construction. However, electrical distribution tradespeople also increased by 39.5 per cent due to their roles in establishing infrastructure in new subdivisions. Food tradespersons experienced a 9.4 per cent increase, largely as a result of a 26.8 per cent growth in cooks. Metal and engineering trades experienced modest growth of 3.5 per cent, while automotive trades grew by 4.6 per cent.

There were also some areas of decline in the trades. For example printing trades declined by 18.1 per cent due primarily to changes in technology used in the printing industry, and meat tradespersons declined by 1.5 per cent due to their increasing concentration in the major supermarkets. Textile, clothing and related trades also declined by 22.1 per cent, due primarily to tariff reform and the increasing inability of Australian companies to compete with cheaper imported textiles and footwear.

It is generally accepted that the size of an occupation is a reasonable indication of demand for that occupation. The growth in the size of the construction trades for example corresponds with significant increases in demand for those skills due to increases in construction activity. One of the effects of an increase in demand is that it often results in skill shortages. Unfortunately increases in demand often occur faster than employers' capacities to respond to those increases by, for example taking on more apprentices. There are also constraints in terms of the time it takes to produce skilled people, particularly when it comes to the health professionals for example. This article has attempted to highlight some of the areas of the most significant occupational growth, and by extension, the areas where skill shortages are most likely to occur.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN FEBRUARY 2008

- 2nd Feb A development application for a \$7 million resort at Pumphouse Point on the southern end of Lake St Clair in central Tasmania has been lodged with the Central Highlands Council. The development which is being undertaken by tourism entrepreneur Simon Currant will include six family lodges and 11 rooms to complement the historic and scenic beauty of the 10 hectare site. (*The Mercury*)
- 4th Feb Tasmanian exports continue to outperform national exports. Australian Bureau Statistics (ABS) figures released today show the value of overseas merchandise exports from Tasmania grew by 13.1 per cent to \$3.75 billion in the year to December 2007 compared to the previous year - the national growth in the same period was 2.6 per cent. (*Department of Economic Development News - www.development.tas.gov.au*)
- 13th Feb The planned expansion of a Centrelink call centre in Launceston has been scrapped. It had been expected that some 150 new jobs would be made available, which would have provided employment opportunities for some of the 250 Telstra call centre workers who lost their jobs in July last year. (*The Mercury*)
- 14th Feb The Direct Factory Outlet (DFO) development at Hobart Airport is back on track after a previous decision by the developers, Austexx, not to go ahead with the project following a restriction on size imposed by the previous Federal Government. The \$50-60 million development has received approval from the Clarence Council and construction is expected to commence in the coming weeks. (*The Mercury*)
- 20th Feb Tasmania's first specialty biodiesel plant has been approved, to start operating as early as July. The Macquarie Oil Company will spend half a million dollars on a specially designed facility in Cressy, in Tasmania's Northern Midlands. The plant will produce more than five million litres of fuel each year for the transport and marine industries. (*ABC Rural - www.abc.net.au*)
- 22nd Feb Hydro Tasmania has won a \$25 million contract to supply and build six mini-hydro plants for Melbourne Water. Exeter-based engineering firm Tyco Tamar, located in the North of Tasmania, will supply the mechanical, electrical and control equipment for the project. (*news - International Water Power & Dam Construction*)
- 22nd Feb Tasmania is experiencing a bumper cruise ship season with 47 visits at ports around the state, 26 of those in Hobart. Three ships berthed simultaneously in Hobart this week carrying 8000 passengers and crew. Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO Damon Thomas said the visit would most likely inject several million dollars into the state's economy. (*The Mercury*)
- 22nd Feb The Premier, Paul Lennon, has announced a number of tourism projects will share almost \$1 million in funding under the State Government's \$16 million Tourism Promotion Plan (TPP). Projects include the following:

- \$106,000 for the development of a floating pontoon at Triabunna wharf on the state's east coast;
- \$175,000 for the creation of UnZ00 - a special Tasmanian Devil experience at the Tasmanian Devil Conservation Park at Taranna, south east of Hobart;
- \$56,000 for the development of interpretation for a mining heritage trail to complement the Tin Dragon Trail Cottages on the North-East Touring Route between Launceston and St Helens;
- \$150,000 for the expansion of facilities and an information centre at The Cherry Shed near Latrobe, south of Devonport;
- \$167,000 for a new multi-purpose interpretation centre at Lavender House at Rowella; and
- \$80,000 for the restoration of seven fruit pickers' huts dating from 1934 and 1943 at Hartzview Vineyard in the state's south. (*Department of Economic Development News - : www.development.tas.gov.au*)

- 25th Feb A \$22 million project in the North-East Tasmanian mining town of Rossarden is due to be finalised by the end of this year. The Craggy Peaks development has gradually been built over 4 years by a Melbourne-based businessman on land in the foothills of Ben Lomond. Stage one opened last year with four cabins, a refurbished clubhouse café and an upgraded nine-hole Ben Lomond golf course. Stage two, involving another 11 cabins will be complete by November 2008. Stage three – accommodation for 200 people, conference facilities and an Olympic length indoor, heated pool, cinema and another nine holes – received Resource Planning and Development Commission approval last week. (*The Examiner*)
- 27th Feb TPI Enterprises, a small Tasmania-based biotech company, has officially launched the operation of its opium poppy processing plant at Cressy, near Launceston. The first shipment of an estimated annual production of 60 tonnes of morphine is due to be made before midyear. TPI managing director Jarrod Ritchie, has said that TPI had booked \$100 million worth of orders that would allow considerable expansion of poppy production in Tasmania, the only Australian state where the crop is allowed to be grown. (*The Age*)
- 28th Feb The Premier, Paul Lennon, has officially opened a \$72 million investment in a new Northern Tasmanian sawmilling operation that he says is expected to create at least 100 direct new jobs. The premier has said "FEA will employ about 100 people directly on site and contractors on site will employ another 20. "And, of course, the jobs that flow from supplying and maintaining the mill and its workers will add an estimated 200 extra jobs in the area". The new FEA sawmill sits on the 85-hectare former Carter, Holt Harvey fibreboard plant site at Bell Bay and will produce FEA's new Bass Pine range of softwood timber products, with multiple uses for building, construction and joinery. (*Department of Economic Development News - www.development.tas.gov.au*)

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