

Community Worker		Australia
ASCO Code: 2512-13	July 2007	
Labour market rating	No shortage	
Comment		

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who advertised for community workers was undertaken for this report. This occupation is defined in the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations as a professional occupation which 'facilitates community development initiatives and collective solutions within a community to address issues, needs and problems'. Managers and coordinators of community programs were included in the survey in line with the ABS definition and a significant number of surveyed vacancies used titles such as community coordinator and coordinator, community development officer. Vacancies surveyed were primarily within non government health and community services organisations in the areas of youth, disability services, aged care, indigenous health, women's health and accommodation services.

Overall, employers filled about three quarters of surveyed vacancies. While most employers filled their advertised vacancies, many received a relatively small number of applications and around ten per cent of employers did not consider any applicants to be suitable for advertised vacancies. Employers in Victoria, Queensland and the ACT filled all their vacancies and employers in South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and the Northern Territory filled about two-thirds of their vacancies. Employers in New South Wales had the most difficulty recruiting.

Employers received an average of seven applications per vacancy surveyed, with around two applicants per vacancy considered by employers to be suitable for their advertised positions. Applicants who were considered by employers to be unsuitable usually did not have experience in community work, or did not have specific or specialised experience employers were seeking. A number of employers also noted applicants lacked required qualifications. In general, vacancies in regional areas were more difficult to fill than those in metropolitan areas.

A common reaction from employers across the country and specifically in regional areas was that recruiting in their industry is made difficult by the relatively low wages they can offer to potential candidates in comparison with remuneration offered for positions within the public sector. Employers suggested this has resulted in relatively high turnover in the industry.

Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest the labour market for community workers will change significantly over the next six months.