

<b>Painting Trades Worker</b>		<b>Victoria</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code:</b> 3322-11	September 2009	
<b>Labour market rating:</b>	No shortage	
<b>Comment:</b>		

### **Occupational demand**

Painting Trades Workers apply paint, varnish, wallpaper and other finishes to protect, maintain and decorate surfaces of buildings and structures. Demand for Painting Trades Workers is closely linked to the level of construction activity particularly that in the residential sector. Construction activity is determined by factors including population growth, the supply of affordable land and the general level of economic activity; the level of real interest rates is a key variable in determining the level of economic activity. Given the time lag involved for intended building activity to flow through to actual construction, the current level of demand for labour reflects past building approval and finance commitments and the short term outlook for construction trades labour can be derived from current finance commitments and building approval levels.

ABS Building approval data for Victoria for July 2009 shows that in trend terms the number of house building approvals recorded the eighth consecutive monthly increase and was the highest recorded since November 2003. This period of successive increases follows a period of eight consecutive months in which finance commitments declined month on month. Non-house building approvals for July was also the eighth consecutive monthly increase and is the highest since October 2007. Using housing finance commitments as a measure of demand shows that the trend measures of commitments by number in July was the highest since January 2008 and 27 per cent above the recent trough recorded in August 2008 which was a low point not seen since 2004.

### **Occupational supply**

The ABS 2006 Census data shows 9335 persons were employed as Painting Trades Workers, an increase of 5 per cent over the number in the 2001 Census. According to ABS data, less than half of Painting Trades Workers hold trade level qualifications. Less than half of persons employed as Painting Trades Workers hold the appropriate trade qualification (Certificate III) which suggests a high rate of informal and unqualified supply to the trade.

A relatively stable average of 123 persons have completed apprenticeships in Painting and Decorating in each of the last six years whilst net migration of Painting Trades Workers and decorators to Victoria from overseas shows 50 people settling in Victoria in 2007-08.

### **Employer and industry comments/current labour market**

The Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA) found that 89 per cent of vacancies were filled with an average of 8 suitable applicants per vacancy; both figures are comparable to the 2008 SERA results. In general, employers sought trade qualified and experienced Painting Trades Workers but most were prepared to accept non-trade qualified persons if suitable skills and experience were evident.

Overall, the survey found a high rate of successfully filled positions with an adequate number of suitable applicants per vacancy to enable sufficient choice for employers. Despite this, some employers also said that they would employ more Painting Trades Workers if they could; the survey found that there was twice as many unsuitable applicants as there was suitable applicants and the filtering process to arrive at a shortlist of suitable candidates was time consuming. Employer anecdote on the characteristics of unsuitable applicants was highly unfavourable with poor attitude and presentation and unreliability cited as typical of that cohort. Employers stated that they have plenty of work now and some have said their order books are full through to February 2010. Some employers said that, given the level of population growth rate, they fear a labour shortage in the near future.

### **Labour market outlook**

In Victoria currently there is no shortage of Painting Trades Workers and this is unlikely to change over the next 6 months.