

Roof Tiler		New South Wales
ANZSCO Code: 3333-11	September 2009	
Labour market rating:	No shortage	
Comment: <i>No significant shortage was evident for this trade.</i>		

Occupational demand

Census data indicates employment of Roof Tilers in NSW fell by 5.5 per cent per annum between 2001 and 2006. Since then, demand for this trade has been adversely affected by weak building activity, with the real value of building work done in NSW falling by eight per cent in 2008-09 after growing by only one per cent the previous year. The consensus of employers contacted for this report was demand for the occupation remained patchy.

Occupational supply

Supply to the trade from apprenticeship completions averaged 35 persons a year in the three years to 2008-09, which was about ten per cent below the average for the previous three years. The annual formal training rate (apprenticeship completions as a percentage of employed Roof Tilers) is 2.1 per cent, which is below the rate of 3.0 per cent for the trades as a whole. Based on Census data, DEEWR estimates wastage from the occupation from 2001 to 2006 was 8.4 per cent a year, which is well above the average of 3.8 per cent for the trades as a whole. Official immigration data show supply to the trade from net overseas immigration has been fairly stable at about 20 per annum over the five years to 2007-08. However, Census data shows supply from overseas immigration from 2001 to 2006 was more than offset by a net loss of Roof Tilers interstate.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A DEEWR survey of employers of roof slaters and tilers found 86 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks of advertising, which was an improvement on the success rate of 81 per cent in 2008. The consensus of employers was the prolonged slump in residential activity had adversely affected the trade with less available work, greater competition among contractors and a fall in contracting rates. Several employers reported an increase in Roof Tilers approaching them for work and a number were able to recruit additional workers from unsolicited approaches. Those employers who did advertise attracted an average of six applicants per vacancy of which an average of two per vacancy were considered suitable. A majority filled their vacancies with little difficulty on a wage or sub-contract basis across various sectors of the industry, including new residential building and general renovations and repair. Some employers were able to establish a list of suitable tilers who they could draw on in future if required while others were able to fill vacancies for tradespersons with slating experience, which is usually considered more specialised and difficult to fill. A minority of employers filled their vacancies less easily, having to advertise more than once or trial a number of applicants before finding a suitable tradesperson. However, only a small number of vacancies remained unfilled at the time of the survey, and these were all for employers seeking tilers with a contractor's licence in order to supplement their workforce, sometimes on a casual basis. Nevertheless, other employers seeking licensed tilers were able to fill their vacancies and there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate a shortage of licensed Roof Tilers.

Labour market outlook

The Construction Forecasting Council expects a modest recovery in building activity in 2009-10 and, as a result, demand for Roof Tilers is likely to grow moderately over the short term. DEEWR projections show apprenticeship completions are likely to fall slightly over the next two years which implies the training rate will remain low relative to other trades. Although no general shortage in the occupation is expected over the next 12 months, given the low training rate recruitment difficulties for experienced Roof Tilers with broad trade skills may emerge as building activity strengthens.