



- **Employment increased marginally to 240,600**
- **Unemployment rate remained steady at 3.9%**
- **Participation rate remained steady at 62.4%**

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

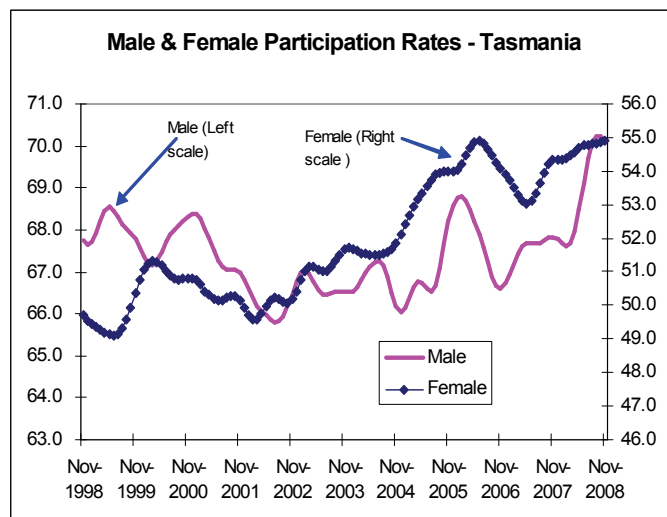
Employment

Total employment continued to rise this month in Tasmania, although the monthly rise was very small. It remains 4.8% higher than it was in November last year. Full-time employment was 5.3% higher in November, than in the same month last year, while part-time employment grew by 5.2% over the year. Growth in total employment has slowed considerably over the last three months, and may be an indication that the effect of the global financial crisis may be starting to impact locally. Total male employment increased by 6.1% over the last 12 months. This increase was made up of a 5.1% increase in full-time employment, and an 11.1% increase in part-time employment. Total female employment has grown by 3.4% since last November, made up of a 5.8% increase in full-time employment and a 2.5% increase in part-time employment.

Unemployment

The total number of unemployed Tasmanians in November was estimated to be

9,800, which was 22.1% lower than the number recorded in November last year. Male unemployment fell by 24.3% to approximately 4,600, while female unemployment fell by 19.9% to an estimated 5,300. Tasmania's unemployment rate remained steady at 3.9% in November, down from the 5.2% recorded in November last year. Nationally, the



unemployment rate stood at 4.3%. In other States and Territories, it was 5.1% in Vic 4.4%, in Qld 3.7%, in SA 5.4%, in WA 2.6%, in the NT 3.8% and in the ACT 2.5%

Labour Force & Participation Rates

Tasmania's participation rate remained steady at 62.4% in November, which was a 1.5 percentage point increase on that recorded in November last year, but still below the national rate of 65.1%. The size of the labour force in Tasmania currently stands at 250,400, and increased by 3.4% on last November's figure. The male labour force increased by 4.5% over the year, while the female labour force grew by 2.0%.

Labour Force Estimates - Tasmania (Trend data)

	Nov-2007	Oct-2008	Nov-2008
	000's	000's	000's
Employment			
Male	125.6	133.3	133.2
Female	103.9	107.1	107.4
Full-time	157.5	166.0	165.9
Part-time	72.0	74.4	74.7
Persons	229.5	240.4	240.6
Unemployment			
Male	6.1	4.5	4.6
Female	6.6	5.4	5.3
Persons	12.6	9.9	9.8
Labour Force			
Male	131.7	137.8	137.7
Female	110.4	112.4	112.7
Persons	242.1	250.3	250.4
Unemployment Rate %			
Male	4.6	3.3	3.3
Female	5.9	4.8	4.7
Persons	5.2	3.9	3.9
Full-time Teenage*	30.0	20.5	21.5
Participation Rate %			
Male	67.8	70.2	70.1
Female	54.3	54.8	54.9
Persons	60.9	62.4	62.4
*unadjusted data			

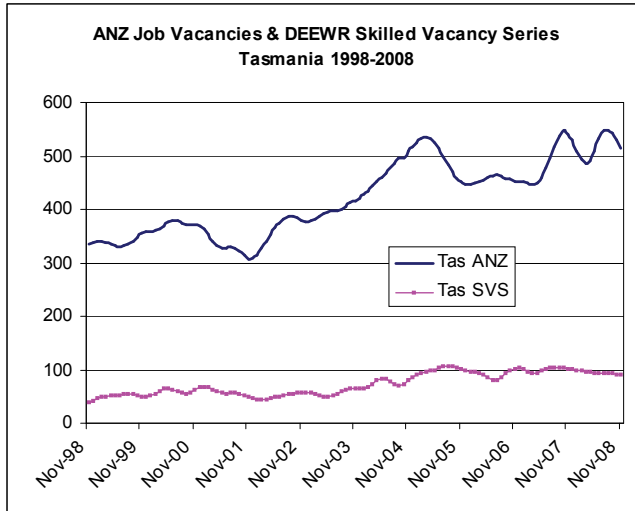
Job Vacancies

The ANZ Bank Job Advertisement series

(trend) for Tasmania decreased by 2.8% in the month of November. The series was 4.9% below that recorded in November last year. Nationally, the series fell by 4.6% over the month, and by 36.9% over the year.

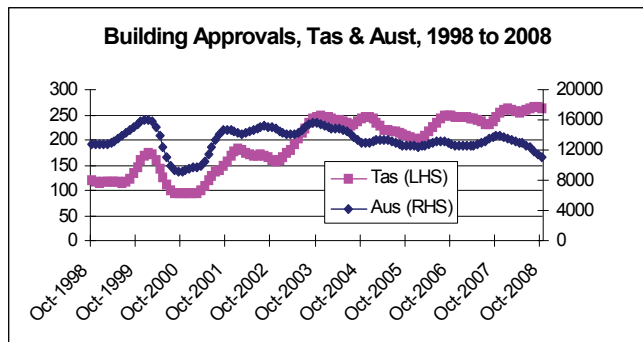
DEEWR's Skilled Vacancy Survey Index

(trend) for Tasmania fell by 1.3% over the month of November and by 11.4% over the year. Nationally, the series decreased by 4.8% over the month and by 29.1% over the year.



Other Indicators

Building approvals in Tasmania fell by 1.5% in October but were 6.5% higher than the same time last year. Nationally, building approvals were down 3.8% for the month and down by 20.9% over the year.



Retail quarterly turnover (chain volume measure) increased by 1.4% in Tasmania in the September quarter, and by 3.4% over the year. This compares to a national quarterly fall of 0.1% for the September quarter and an annual increase of 1.0%.

Newstart & Youth Allowees

Benefit recipients (Newstart & Youth Allowances)				
	<12 months	> 12 months	Total	% > 12 months
Oct-2007	4,053	7,308	11,361	64.3%
Oct-2008	4,147	5,795	9,942	58.3%
Number difference	94	-1,513	-1,419	
% difference	2.3%	-20.7%	-12.5%	

REGIONAL PROFILE - NORTH-WEST TASMANIA (MERSEY-LYELL)

Introduction

The following article is a continuation of a three part series started last month on labour market developments in each of Tasmania's three regions over the last five years. The data is drawn primarily from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) monthly labour force survey, and three month averages have been used in an attempt to smooth the volatility of the data. The main point of the article will be to compare the performance of the labour market in the north-west of the State to that of Tasmania as a whole. The five years to September 2008 will be the period discussed, so that comparison can be made across all three articles.

Employment

The following graph shows employment growth in Tasmania compared to that for the northern region.



Total employment in the north-west of the State grew by 22.0 per cent, compared to 15.8 per cent for the State as a whole. Employment for males in the north-west increased by 17.7 per cent over the last five years, slightly above employment for males in the whole State, which grew by 15.0 per cent. Female employment grew by 28.2 per cent in the north-west, compared to growth of 13.2 per cent state-wide over the last five years. Growth in full and part time employment also grew at a greater rate in the north-west of the State than for the State as a whole. Part-time jobs in the north-west grew by 25.5 per cent, compared to the State average of 17.2 per cent, while full-time jobs in the north-west grew by 20.6 per cent, compared to 15.1 per cent for Tasmania. Part of the reason for the increased percentage growth in the north-west is likely to be that the north-west experienced more severe downturns in employment in the 1990s than the rest of the State. The improvements are therefore coming from a lower base than the rest of the State. The north-west region increased its share of the State's total employment over the last five years from 20.6 per cent to 21.7 per cent.

Unemployment

Total unemployment in the north-west fell by 17.5 per cent, from approximately 4,000 people to around 3,300 between September 2003 and 2008. Over the same period unemployment fell by 35.2 per cent for the whole of Tasmania. Male unemployment fell by 51.5 per cent for the north-west and by 54.3 per cent for Tasmania. Female unemployment increased by 26.9 per cent in the north-west, but fell by 5.8 per cent for the whole State. The unemployment rate in the north-west in September 2003 was 8.6 per cent, but by September 2008, it had fallen to 6.0 per cent. Over the same period the unemployment rate for Tasmania fell from 7.2 per cent to 4.2 per cent.

In September 2003, 25.0 per cent of the State's unemployed people lived in the north-west, but by September 2008, the regions share of the State's unemployment had increased to 31.8 per cent, suggesting that unemployment fell more rapidly in other parts of the State, than in the north-west.

Labour Force and Participation Rates

The labour force is defined as the number of people in work and the number of people actively looking and available for work. In north-west Tasmania, the labour force grew by 8,600 people, or 18.6 per cent over the five years to September 2008. Over the same period the Tasmanian labour force grew by 26,900, or 12.1 per cent. The female labour force in the north-west grew by 28.1 per cent, compared to 11.9 per cent growth in the male labour force. The labour force for Tasmania grew by 12.0 per cent for females and 12.2 per cent for males, over the same period. In September 2003, 20.9 per cent of the State's labour force lived in the north-west, but by September 2008, this share had increased to 22.1 per cent.

The participation rate is the labour force expressed as a percentage of the total civilian population over the age of 15. In the north-west region, the participation rate increased from 54.8 per cent to 61.7 per cent over the last five years. The State's participation rate increased from 58.4 per cent to 62.2 per cent over the same period. Most of the movement in participation rates has been among females, where rates increased from 44.2 per cent to 54.0 per cent, while male participation increased from 65.7 per cent to 69.7 per cent over the last five years. The improvement in participation rates for the whole of the State has been much more even between males and females. Male participation rates for Tasmania increased from 66.2 per cent to 70.3 per cent, while female participation rates increased from 50.9 per cent to 54.4 per cent over the last five years.

Summary

- Employment growth in the north-west over the last five years has been proportionally higher, compared to the State average. Part of the reason for this is that job growth is coming from a lower base than the rest of the State, due to a more severe downturn in the region in the mid to late 1990s;
- The unemployment rate in the north-west fell by 2.6 percentage points compared to 3.0 percentage points for the State as a whole;
- Labour force participation in the north-west increased by 6.9 percentage points, compared to 3.8 percentage points for the whole State.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN NOVEMBER 2008

- Nov 6th The Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council, Doug Parkinson has officially launched the CSIRO Tasmanian ICT Centre located at Battery Point in Hobart. The Centre is funded through a \$30 million Intelligent Island partnership with the CSIRO. The Intelligent Island program is funded through the Australian Government and managed by the State Government, with the aim of contributing to the development of an internationally competitive ICT sector in Tasmania. Mr Parkinson said that Intelligent Island's \$18 million Market Access Partnership grants program (MAPP) has already funded 32 projects for Tasmania since its inception in 2006, and in the last financial year generated \$7.1 million of additional revenue to the state and created 105 full and part-time jobs. (www.media.tas.gov.au)
- Nov 6th The Minister for Tourism, Michelle O'Byrne, officially launched the Northern Heritage Interpretation Plan in Westbury in the state's north. The plan was developed by the Meander Valley Council and the local community, with project management support being provided by Tourism Tasmania. The aim of the project is to encourage sustainable tourism outcomes for the area between Launceston and Westbury by providing guidance for new visitor experiences based on the area's rich heritage assets. (www.development.tas.gov.au)
- Nov 10th Aurora Energy and Basslink today signed a contract under which they will each deliver nationally competitive broadband services to Tasmania. Basslink and Aurora said they expected the cable to be operational early in 2009, with commercial services expected to commence in the first half of the year after a substantial implementation program over the next few months. The joint agreement will mean Basslink and Aurora will compete with Telstra and with each other in providing wholesale capacity between Melbourne and Tasmania's main population centres. (www.zdnet.com.au/news)
- Nov 14th A new 13-story tower has been proposed for Hobart in the State's south. The development, by Melbourne's Riverlea Australia, proposes consolidation of nine lots for an office tower development on Liverpool and Murray Streets. Project partners include Cox Architects and Planners of Melbourne and Heffernan, Button Voss Architects of Hobart. The development would maintain the look of the existing street fronts and include parking for 65 cars. The plans are yet to be considered by the Hobart City Council. (*The Mercury*)
- Nov 14th Tasmania agribusinesses performed the best in Australia for the September quarter. The Westpac and Charles Sturt University Agribusiness Index quarterly snapshot shows improved performance by Tasmanian agricultural businesses, but a dramatic drop in confidence across most of the state. Confidence plummeted in the south with only 58 per cent of agribusinesses feeling hopeful for the coming year. Agribusinesses in the Northern division are the most confident at 83 per cent. Mersey-Lyell covering the state's west and north west regions reported the larg-

est drop in confidence, down from 94 per cent in the June quarter to 75 per cent in the September quarter. (*Tasmanian Country*)

- Nov 15th The Minister for Energy and Resources, David Llewellyn, announced today that he intends to grant three mining exploration licences in north-west, western and northern Tasmania. The first licence application by Shree Minerals is over 47 square kilometres and is near Rebecca Creek, six kilometres north-east of Temma, in north-west Tasmania. The second licence application by Venture Minerals Ltd is over six square kilometres in the Wilson River area five kilometres south-west of Mt Ramsay in Western Tasmania. The third licence application by Proto Resources and Investments Pty Ltd is over 44 square kilometres in the Dazzler Range area west of Beaconsfield in northern Tasmania. The total proposed expenditure for the first two years of the licences is \$190,700. The Minister also said that he intends to grant Cala Resources Pty Ltd a retention licence for two years for a gold resource over one square kilometre of the abandoned New Golden Gate mine near Mathinna in north-east Tasmania. (www.media.tas.gov.au)
- Nov 26th A planned \$125 million upgrade of Rosebery zinc mine in Tasmania's west is on hold as its owner, Oz Minerals, slashes costs. Major spending plans have been delayed in a bid to ride out the global economic crisis and a fall in commodity prices. The number of contractors employed at the Rosebery zinc mine and the Avebury nickel project near Zeehan, also run by Oz minerals is expected to be cut significantly. (*The Mercury*)
- Nov 26th Australia's biggest salmon producer, Tassal has invested \$18.5 million in a new salmon hatchery. The hatchery which is being built at Ranelagh in the Huon Valley, south of Hobart, will be the biggest of its kind in Australia and second biggest in the world. The facility is part of Tassal's plan to double production by 2015. It is expected to start operating in April 2009. (*The Mercury*)
- Nov 26th Gunns limited has announced it has reached agreement to sell \$175.2 million dollars worth of softwood to the US firm GMO Renewable Resources. The 33,000ha of plantation, formerly owned by Auspine which Gunns took over in February 2008, is in South Australia and Victoria. Company secretary, Wayne Chapman said the money would be used to repay Gunns debt – which at June 30 was \$1.04 billion. (*The Mercury*)
- Nov 27th Tasmanian Advanced Minerals, a Wynyard-based silica miner and processor, has shed more than 20 direct and contractor jobs in response to falling demand. The company's managing director, Chris Stuart, has said that they are still mining but will wind back (output) by more than 50%. Tasmanian Minerals Council executive director Terry Long was not expecting major mine closures in Tasmania, but said there may be more job losses. "I don't expect to see any significant operations close, but I'm less certain about employment" Mr Long said. (*The Advocate*)
- Nov 28th The Peppers group have taken over management of the York Cove development in George Town in Tasmania's north after apartments built on the former George Town ferry site failed to sell to private buyers. Plans are progressing for an \$8 million hotel on the waterfront and the apartments will be incorporated into the so-called York Cove Tamar Valley resort complex. (*The Examiner*)

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