



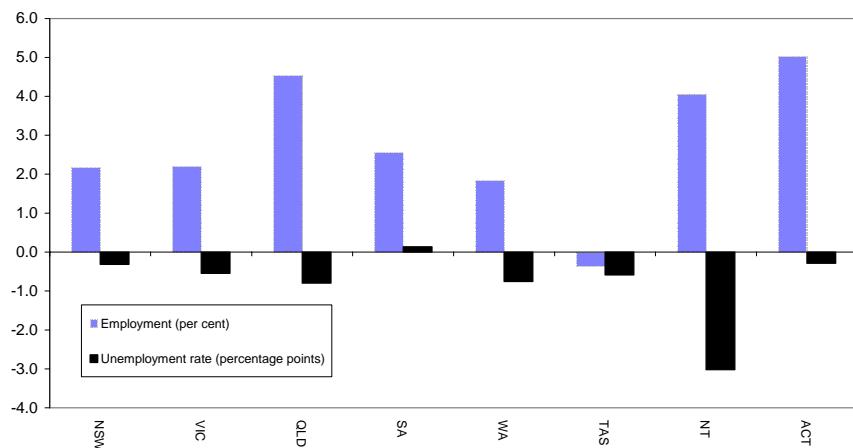
AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL LABOUR MARKETS DECEMBER QUARTER 2006

MAIN FINDINGS

State/territory labour market developments

Employment rose in all States and Territories except Tasmania over the year to the December quarter 2006. The largest increase (in percentage terms) was recorded in the ACT (up by 5.0 per cent), followed by Queensland (up by 4.5 per cent) and the Northern Territory (up by 4.0 per cent). The unemployment rate fell in all States and Territories except South Australia, where it rose by 0.1 percentage points. The largest falls over the year were recorded in the Northern Territory (down by 3.0 percentage points) and Queensland and Western Australia (both down by 0.8 percentage points).

**CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT AND THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
DECEMBER QUARTER 2005 TO DECEMBER QUARTER 2006**



Developments at the ABS Labour Force Region Level

Employment increased in almost 78 per cent of regions over the year to the December quarter 2006, while over 67 per cent of regions recorded a reduction in their unemployment rate. A number of regions have recorded strong employment growth as well as a significant reduction in their unemployment rate over the last 12 months. In particular:

- Far North Queensland recorded an 11.6 per cent increase in employment while the unemployment rate fell by 2.6 percentage points to 4.3 per cent;
- employment in South West Perth rose by 9.0 per cent while the unemployment rate fell by 1.2 percentage points to 2.9 per cent; and
- Murray-Murrumbidgee in NSW recorded an 8.9 per cent increase in employment while the unemployment rate fell by 2.8 percentage points to 3.5 per cent.

**LABOUR FORCE STATUS BY ABS LABOUR FORCE REGIONS
DECEMBER QUARTER 2006
Not Seasonally Adjusted**

| State/Region | Employed | | Unemployed | | Unemployment rate | | Employment rate (a) | | Participation rate | |
|---|-----------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | '000 | Annual change | '000 | Annual change | % | Annual change (% pts) | % | Annual change (% pts) | % | Annual change (% pts) |
| AUSTRALIA | 10 337.3 | 267.8 | 472.2 | -45.0 | 4.4 | -0.5 | 72.7 | 0.9 | 64.9 | 0.4 |
| <i>Metropolitan Australia (b)</i> | <i>6505.7</i> | <i>140.7</i> | <i>283.9</i> | <i>-17.6</i> | <i>4.2</i> | <i>-0.3</i> | <i>73.3</i> | <i>0.6</i> | <i>65.7</i> | <i>0.3</i> |
| <i>Non-metropolitan Australia (b)</i> | <i>3831.6</i> | <i>127.1</i> | <i>188.3</i> | <i>-27.5</i> | <i>4.7</i> | <i>-0.8</i> | <i>71.8</i> | <i>1.3</i> | <i>63.6</i> | <i>0.6</i> |
| New South Wales | 3330.4 | 71.1 | 169.2 | -7.9 | 4.8 | -0.3 | 71.2 | 0.8 | 63.3 | 0.5 |
| <i>Sydney</i> | <i>2178.5</i> | <i>25.4</i> | <i>98.3</i> | <i>0.2</i> | <i>4.3</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>72.4</i> | <i>0.2</i> | <i>65.2</i> | <i>0.1</i> |
| Inner Sydney and Inner Western Sydney | 265.2 | -3.9 | 9.3 | -1.8 | 3.4 | -0.6 | 74.1 | 1.0 | 66.2 | -2.0 |
| Inner Sydney | 180.3 | -5.5 | 6.2 | -2.0 | 3.3 | -0.9 | 73.8 | -0.5 | 68.7 | -3.3 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 128.6 | -4.9 | 4.3 | 1.5 | 3.3 | 1.2 | 74.5 | -1.9 | 61.9 | -2.2 |
| St George-Sutherland | 240.8 | 8.6 | 8.3 | 0.2 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 75.8 | -0.3 | 67.2 | 1.7 |
| Canterbury-Bankstown | 136.7 | 3.3 | 8.3 | -0.8 | 5.7 | -0.6 | 63.0 | -0.5 | 56.2 | 0.4 |
| Fairfield-Liverpool/ Outer South Western Sydney | 283.9 | 7.5 | 20.6 | 0.4 | 6.8 | 0.0 | 67.8 | 0.7 | 65.0 | 1.0 |
| Fairfield-Liverpool | 158.8 | 2.8 | 12.1 | -1.4 | 7.1 | -0.9 | 63.8 | 1.4 | 60.4 | -0.1 |
| Central Western Sydney | 143.6 | 4.5 | 8.1 | -0.4 | 5.3 | -0.4 | 65.8 | 0.0 | 60.7 | 1.0 |
| North Western Sydney | 295.2 | 1.9 | 16.9 | 3.0 | 5.4 | 0.9 | 69.7 | -1.1 | 66.7 | 0.4 |
| Lower Northern Sydney | 168.9 | -6.6 | 3.2 | -2.4 | 1.9 | -1.2 | 78.1 | 1.1 | 66.3 | -4.2 |
| Central Northern Sydney | 238.0 | 5.8 | 7.0 | 0.9 | 2.9 | 0.3 | 79.9 | 1.2 | 71.4 | 1.2 |
| Northern Beaches | 141.2 | 6.7 | 3.5 | -0.6 | 2.4 | -0.5 | 83.2 | 2.7 | 72.6 | 2.3 |
| Gosford-Wyong | 136.5 | 2.4 | 8.7 | 0.1 | 6.0 | -0.1 | 69.3 | -0.2 | 58.5 | 0.4 |
| <i>Balance of New South Wales</i> | <i>1151.9</i> | <i>45.7</i> | <i>70.9</i> | <i>-8.1</i> | <i>5.8</i> | <i>-0.9</i> | <i>68.8</i> | <i>2.0</i> | <i>60.2</i> | <i>1.2</i> |
| Hunter | 284.8 | 8.4 | 15.8 | -2.9 | 5.3 | -1.1 | 69.4 | 0.8 | 60.9 | 0.5 |
| Newcastle | 233.3 | -3.2 | 13.7 | -0.4 | 5.5 | -0.1 | 68.2 | -1.6 | 59.8 | -1.5 |
| Illawarra and South Eastern | 265.3 | 14.6 | 21.0 | 0.4 | 7.3 | -0.2 | 65.3 | 1.9 | 57.8 | 2.4 |
| Illawarra | 171.0 | 8.4 | 17.1 | 1.1 | 9.1 | 0.1 | 63.5 | 1.3 | 56.3 | 2.3 |
| Wollongong | 126.7 | 12.4 | 12.1 | 0.1 | 8.7 | -0.8 | 66.0 | 3.2 | 61.4 | 5.0 |
| Richmond-Tweed/ Mid-North Coast | 223.7 | 19.3 | 13.3 | -3.6 | 5.6 | -2.0 | 66.5 | 4.3 | 56.8 | 3.2 |
| Northern/ Far West-North Western/ Central West | 234.8 | -8.2 | 15.4 | 1.6 | 6.2 | 0.8 | 69.4 | -1.4 | 61.2 | -2.3 |
| Murray-Murrumbidgee | 143.3 | 11.8 | 5.3 | -3.6 | 3.5 | -2.8 | 78.2 | 6.9 | 68.8 | 3.1 |
| Victoria | 2552.0 | 54.9 | 125.2 | -12.4 | 4.7 | -0.5 | 72.4 | 0.4 | 64.5 | 0.1 |
| <i>Melbourne</i> | <i>1878.8</i> | <i>24.5</i> | <i>86.4</i> | <i>-7.0</i> | <i>4.4</i> | <i>-0.4</i> | <i>72.6</i> | <i>-0.1</i> | <i>65.0</i> | <i>-0.3</i> |
| Outer Western Melbourne | 301.1 | 2.9 | 20.2 | -0.4 | 6.3 | -0.2 | 71.2 | 0.7 | 66.5 | -0.4 |
| North Western Melbourne | 131.9 | 4.4 | 7.8 | -1.8 | 5.6 | -1.4 | 67.9 | 1.7 | 60.2 | 0.3 |
| Inner Melbourne | 165.8 | 0.6 | 6.0 | -1.2 | 3.5 | -0.7 | 77.4 | -1.2 | 72.4 | -1.2 |
| North Eastern Melbourne | 230.2 | 3.1 | 9.5 | -2.5 | 4.0 | -1.1 | 70.8 | -0.9 | 65.3 | -0.8 |
| Inner Eastern Melbourne | 316.2 | 8.0 | 13.5 | 0.0 | 4.1 | -0.1 | 74.0 | 0.1 | 63.7 | 0.7 |
| Southern Melbourne | 212.0 | -1.5 | 7.6 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 1.4 | 75.3 | -2.2 | 63.8 | -0.4 |
| Outer Eastern Melbourne | 216.6 | 10.7 | 8.0 | -3.2 | 3.6 | -1.6 | 76.8 | 3.0 | 68.2 | 1.3 |
| South Eastern Melbourne | 172.0 | -4.6 | 9.5 | 1.6 | 5.2 | 0.9 | 65.8 | -2.5 | 60.8 | -1.9 |
| Mornington Peninsula | 132.9 | 1.0 | 4.3 | -2.7 | 3.1 | -1.9 | 73.7 | 0.3 | 65.0 | -1.8 |
| <i>Balance of Victoria</i> | <i>673.2</i> | <i>30.4</i> | <i>38.8</i> | <i>-5.4</i> | <i>5.4</i> | <i>-1.0</i> | <i>71.8</i> | <i>1.9</i> | <i>63.1</i> | <i>1.3</i> |
| Barwon-Western District | 183.5 | 11.2 | 12.1 | 0.7 | 6.2 | 0.0 | 73.0 | 3.0 | 64.5 | 3.1 |
| Central Highlands-Wimmera | 94.6 | -1.9 | 6.6 | -0.2 | 6.5 | -0.1 | 70.6 | -1.2 | 61.9 | -2.2 |
| Loddon-Mallee | 139.2 | 17.8 | 8.3 | -0.3 | 5.6 | -1.0 | 74.7 | 5.7 | 67.9 | 7.1 |
| Goulburn-Ovens-Murray | 145.0 | 2.6 | 5.9 | -4.2 | 3.9 | -2.7 | 70.2 | -1.4 | 62.8 | -1.6 |
| All Gippsland | 110.8 | 0.7 | 5.8 | -1.4 | 5.0 | -1.2 | 69.7 | 2.5 | 57.3 | -1.2 |

(a) The employment rate is the proportion of the working age (15-64) population who are employed.

(b) The ABS defines metropolitan as those regions located within the state capital cities. Non-metropolitan is defined as those regions located outside the state capital cities as well as the two territories.

**LABOUR FORCE STATUS BY ABS LABOUR FORCE REGIONS
DECEMBER QUARTER 2006
Not Seasonally Adjusted**

| State/Region | Employed | | Unemployed | | Unemployment rate | | Employment Rate (a) | | Participation rate | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | '000 | Annual change | '000 | Annual change | % | Annual change (% pts) | % | Annual change (% pts) | % | Annual change (% pts) |
| Queensland | 2097.0 | 91.0 | 81.2 | -14.0 | 3.7 | -0.8 | 74.8 | 1.7 | 67.1 | 0.9 |
| Gold Coast | 250.8 | 15.6 | 10.4 | -0.3 | 4.0 | -0.4 | 74.3 | 1.0 | 66.2 | 2.5 |
| <i>Brisbane</i> | 985.9 | 50.7 | 38.4 | -3.0 | 3.7 | -0.5 | 76.1 | 2.5 | 68.9 | 1.7 |
| Brisbane City Inner Ring | 269.9 | 27.4 | 6.1 | -1.5 | 2.2 | -0.8 | 83.3 | 6.5 | 75.6 | 5.6 |
| Brisbane City Outer Ring | 296.8 | 9.4 | 9.0 | -4.0 | 2.9 | -1.4 | 74.5 | 1.9 | 65.3 | -0.3 |
| South and East Brisbane Balance | 201.5 | 11.7 | 12.5 | 2.3 | 5.9 | 0.7 | 73.6 | 2.5 | 68.9 | 3.0 |
| North and West Brisbane Balance | 217.7 | 2.1 | 10.7 | 0.2 | 4.7 | 0.0 | 72.5 | -1.2 | 66.6 | -0.9 |
| <i>Balance of Queensland</i> | 1111.0 | 40.4 | 42.8 | -11.0 | 3.7 | -1.1 | 73.8 | 1.0 | 65.6 | 0.2 |
| South and East Moreton | 239.3 | 9.3 | 9.2 | -0.8 | 3.7 | -0.5 | 74.1 | -0.2 | 65.8 | 0.8 |
| North and West Moreton | 177.6 | 12.0 | 6.5 | -3.1 | 3.5 | -1.9 | 73.8 | 3.0 | 63.1 | 1.7 |
| Wide Bay-Burnett | 107.7 | 1.2 | 4.9 | -4.7 | 4.4 | -3.9 | 63.5 | 1.4 | 53.3 | -2.9 |
| Darling Downs-South West | 132.6 | 1.5 | 4.0 | 0.6 | 2.9 | 0.4 | 74.5 | -2.9 | 66.0 | -0.6 |
| Mackay-Fitzroy-Central West | 190.3 | 0.7 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 76.2 | 0.6 | 68.4 | -1.4 |
| Northern-North West | 134.6 | 2.2 | 6.1 | -0.2 | 4.3 | -0.2 | 78.0 | 0.8 | 73.2 | -0.7 |
| Far North | 128.9 | 13.4 | 5.8 | -2.8 | 4.3 | -2.6 | 74.7 | 4.5 | 69.8 | 3.9 |
| South Australia | 762.5 | 19.0 | 39.6 | 2.1 | 4.9 | 0.1 | 72.0 | 0.8 | 63.0 | 1.1 |
| <i>Adelaide</i> | 563.2 | 13.8 | 30.6 | 1.0 | 5.2 | 0.0 | 72.0 | 0.5 | 63.0 | 1.0 |
| Northern Adelaide | 169.0 | -4.0 | 12.7 | 2.3 | 7.0 | 1.3 | 68.8 | -1.8 | 63.3 | -1.2 |
| Western Adelaide | 103.8 | 7.1 | 6.4 | 1.3 | 5.8 | 0.8 | 71.6 | 0.7 | 60.4 | 4.1 |
| Eastern Adelaide | 122.2 | 3.1 | 3.7 | -1.4 | 2.9 | -1.2 | 75.1 | 0.6 | 64.5 | 0.3 |
| Southern Adelaide | 168.3 | 7.6 | 7.8 | -1.3 | 4.4 | -0.9 | 73.5 | 2.7 | 63.5 | 1.7 |
| <i>Balance of South Australia</i> | 199.3 | 5.3 | 9.0 | 1.1 | 4.3 | 0.4 | 72.0 | 1.6 | 62.9 | 1.3 |
| Northern and Western SA | 77.3 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 0.9 | 5.1 | 0.8 | 68.8 | 1.0 | 63.1 | 3.0 |
| Southern and Eastern SA | 121.9 | 1.5 | 4.8 | 0.3 | 3.8 | 0.2 | 74.2 | 2.2 | 62.7 | 0.2 |
| Western Australia | 1079.1 | 19.5 | 34.5 | -8.0 | 3.1 | -0.8 | 75.0 | 0.3 | 67.2 | -0.6 |
| <i>Perth</i> | 799.2 | 21.0 | 24.6 | -7.3 | 3.0 | -0.9 | 75.2 | 0.7 | 67.2 | -0.2 |
| Central Metropolitan | 71.3 | -1.6 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 1.9 | 0.4 | 74.7 | -0.9 | 65.0 | -2.5 |
| East Metropolitan | 131.1 | -0.7 | 4.0 | -2.2 | 2.9 | -1.5 | 75.0 | 0.3 | 64.8 | -2.7 |
| North Metropolitan | 246.4 | 11.6 | 8.2 | -1.7 | 3.2 | -0.8 | 76.4 | 0.0 | 69.5 | 1.4 |
| South West Metropolitan | 171.5 | 14.1 | 5.1 | -1.6 | 2.9 | -1.2 | 76.5 | 4.8 | 68.7 | 3.5 |
| South East Metropolitan | 178.9 | -2.3 | 5.9 | -1.9 | 3.2 | -0.9 | 72.9 | -1.3 | 65.3 | -2.8 |
| <i>Balance of Western Australia</i> | 279.9 | -1.5 | 9.9 | -0.7 | 3.4 | -0.2 | 74.5 | -1.0 | 67.5 | -1.9 |
| Lower Western WA | 144.1 | -2.2 | 5.5 | -0.7 | 3.7 | -0.4 | 73.7 | -1.5 | 64.8 | -2.6 |
| Remainder-Balance WA | 135.9 | 0.7 | 4.4 | 0.0 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 75.3 | -0.6 | 70.6 | -1.1 |
| Tasmania | 224.0 | -0.8 | 14.4 | -1.6 | 6.1 | -0.6 | 68.1 | -0.2 | 60.5 | -1.1 |
| Greater Hobart-Southern | 112.8 | 3.2 | 6.3 | -2.2 | 5.3 | -1.9 | 69.2 | 1.3 | 61.1 | 0.0 |
| <i>Greater Hobart</i> | 100.0 | 5.3 | 5.5 | -1.5 | 5.3 | -1.7 | 71.5 | 2.8 | 63.3 | 1.8 |
| Northern | 62.0 | -2.4 | 3.6 | -0.1 | 5.5 | 0.0 | 67.3 | -2.0 | 59.1 | -2.8 |
| Mersey-Lyell | 49.1 | -1.6 | 4.5 | 0.8 | 8.4 | 1.6 | 66.7 | -1.3 | 61.0 | -1.5 |
| Northern Territory | 102.8 | 4.0 | 2.6 | -3.1 | 2.5 | -3.0 | 71.5 | 1.3 | 69.4 | -1.2 |
| Australian Capital Territory | 189.5 | 9.1 | 5.5 | -0.3 | 2.8 | -0.3 | 80.9 | 2.8 | 74.1 | 2.4 |

(a) The employment rate is the proportion of the working age (15-64) population who are employed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The regional labour market estimates presented in this brochure are three-month averages derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Monthly Labour Force Survey. These estimates are not adjusted to take account of seasonal and other variations and can exhibit irregular movements. They should therefore be used with caution.

Related information

Users may wish to refer to the DEWR *Small Area Labour Markets, Australia* publication, which is available, free of charge, at <http://www.workplace.gov.au> (in PDF format), or as a printed booklet upon request. This publication contains quarterly estimates of unemployment rates and levels for approximately 1350 Statistical Local Areas.

Next issue

The next issue of *Australian Regional Labour Markets*, for the March quarter 2007, is expected to be released in late April 2007.

Contact details

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More detailed monthly national, state and regional labour force statistics are available from the ABS. For further information on ABS labour force statistics, go to the 'Labour' theme page at the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au), or contact Craig Blair on (02) 6252 6565.