

Apparel Cutter		Australia
ASCO Code: 4941-17	December 2006	
Labour market rating	Recruitment Difficulty	
Comment		

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for apparel cutters was undertaken for this report. Few advertised vacancies for trade-level apparel cutters were identified in the survey period and employers in some states were cold canvassed.

Approximately half of the employers contacted had difficulty filling vacancies for apparel cutters. Most of these employers have vacancies which remain unfilled as suitable applicants were unable to work the hours sought by employers, or there were mismatches in the locations of suitable applicants and employers advertising for skills. A small number of employers were seeking specialised skills.

Around thirty per cent of the vacancies surveyed were successfully filled. Employers in New South Wales reported a lower vacancy fill rate than other areas of Australia and a higher portion of employers in this state experienced difficulty filling vacancies for this occupation. As few advertised vacancies were located in Western Australia a number of employers in this state were canvassed for this report. While some of these employers believed they would have difficulty filling vacancies for apparel cutters, a high portion of these employers have not recruited in recent years and suggest they are unlikely to recruit in the foreseeable future.

Employers received an average of three applicants and two suitable applicants per vacancy. Employers in New South Wales and Queensland typically reported lower numbers of suitable applicants per vacancy. Approximately half of the employers contacted noted unsuitable applicants did not have the experience which they were seeking. A small number of employers believed applicants were unsuitable as they lacked the speed and physical strength these employers were seeking. Approximately half of employers who had vacancies which remained unfilled received interest from suitable applicants, however were unable to successfully complete recruitment. As previously noted, this often resulted from mismatches in the location of employers seeking skills and suitable applicants or as suitable applicants were unable to work the hours sought by employers.

The results of the survey appear to indicate employers are having some difficulty filling job vacancies for apparel cutters. This difficulty, however, does not appear to result from a shortage of apparel cutters, rather from locational issues, a mismatch between the hours offered by employers and those sought by applicants and specialist requirements.

A number of employers noted wastage as an issue in this industry. Some employers also believed training numbers have been insufficient to meet demand for these skills.

Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest there will be significant change in the level of supply or demand for skills in this occupation over the next six months.