

<b>Precision Instrument Maker and Repairer</b>		<b>Australia</b>
ASCO Code: 4115-11	September 2007	
Labour market rating	No Shortage	
<b>Comment</b>		

### Occupational demand

Demand for precision instrument makers and repairers is difficult to assess. This is due to the many and varied specialist areas this occupation covers, which include scale technician, camera technician and scientific instrument maker. This occupation also includes meter mechanic and instrument mechanic and there appears to be considerable overlap with electronic instrument trades which makes identification of appropriate vacancies difficult.

2006 Census data show employment of precision instrument makers and repairers numbered around 1800, but employment fell significantly between 2001 and 2006. Skilled Vacancies Index figures show very few vacancies advertised for this occupation over recent years. Despite this, employers commented that the current mining and resources boom is creating strong demand for instrument technicians, particularly those with dual trade qualifications in electronics.

### Occupational supply

Figures from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship show there is little movement between Australia and overseas for this occupation, with a net total of 40 permanent and long-term arrivals who identify as precision instrument makers and repairers.

Supply from domestic training is also relatively low with National Centre for Vocational Education Research figures show during the five years to 2007, less than 10 apprenticeships were commenced or completed per year.

### Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised was undertaken for this report. Advertisements were particularly difficult to identify for this occupation and as a result the sample was relatively small. No advertisements were identified in the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory.

Nationally, slightly more than three quarters of the surveyed positions were filled within four weeks of advertising. Employers reporting receiving, on average, nearly 10 applications per vacancy, with 1.5 applicants considered to be suitable for each position. The few positions which remained unfilled were either in regional locations or required highly specialised experience, for example working with surveying instruments.

Employers contacted in New South Wales reported the lowest fill rate, with less than two thirds of vacancies being filled. Employers contacted for this survey were from a wide range of industries and did not necessarily share common experiences in recruiting. However, a small number of employers commented on recruitment difficulties being caused by many qualified tradespeople in this field seeking employment in the mining and resource sectors. Most applicants who were considered to be unsuitable lacked the specific skills required for the job.

### Labour market outlook

There is no evidence to suggest that the labour market rating will change significantly over the next six to twelve months.