

<b>Metal Machinist (First Class)</b>		<b>Tasmania</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 4112-13	September 2007	
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage	
<b>Comment</b>		
<p><i>In Tasmania, for training purposes the trade is known as engineering - mechanical trade. It is more commonly known as fitting and turning, or fitting and machining. Machinists tend to be a smaller specialisation within the trade, and those positions are more difficult to fill as the duties are generally less varied than mechanical fitting, according to industry sources.</i></p>		

### **Occupational demand**

Between 1996 and 2001, the number of metal machinists in Tasmania fell by 13.5 per cent to 115, according to Census data. However, there are likely to be at least some people who undertake metal machining who have been recorded as fitters, given that the trade in Tasmania includes both mechanical fitting and metal machining. Since 2001 Australian Bureau of Statistics labour force data indicates that the number of fitters and machinists has averaged around 2800 over the last five years, compared to 1,674 at the 2001 Census. No separate data for machinists are available. This growth is consistent with the general economic upturn the State has experienced over the last six years or so, with total employment in Tasmania increasing by 14.6 per cent between 2002 and 2007. In Tasmania most metal fabrication and engineering trades are employed in the manufacturing industry at about 64 per cent, with construction the next largest at 6.6 per cent. Total employment in this industry has been declining over a long period of time, but industry sources suggest that demand for higher skilled people at the trade and above level is still strong, and expected to remain so. There is also an increasing trend of tradespeople generally, working for labour hire companies, who are classified as working in the property and business services sector as a result, even though they may be hired out to work in the manufacturing or construction industries.

### **Occupational supply**

The number of fitters and turners in training in Tasmania has increased for each of the last four years, and the current number of 262 is the highest number recorded since the present series began in 1995. Although the number of commencements fell slightly in 2006-07, over the last two years they were still at their highest since the current series began.

### **Employer and industry comments/current labour market**

Only 14 per cent of vacancies for machinists that had been recently advertised had been filled by employers. In addition, they received on average, less than one suitable applicant per vacancy. All of the employers contacted expressed the view that there were shortages of fitters and turners in Tasmania, as the number of tradespeople being produced by vocational training systems has not kept pace with the demand created by the upturn in the economy. Awareness of skilled migration programs was higher than it has been in previous years, with some employers currently in the process of recruiting from overseas, and one having recently recruited two metal machinists through this process. Several employers also commented on the poor quality of responses to their advertisements, in that many applicants had no experience or qualifications in the field.

### **Labour market outlook**

Shortages of machinists are likely to continue for at least the next 6 to 12 months, as despite a significant increase in the numbers of apprentices being trained, demand is still outstripping supply.