

<b>Solid Plasterer</b>		<b>Victoria</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code: 3332-12</b>	September 2009	
<b>Labour market rating:</b>	Shortage	
<b>Comment:</b>		

### **Occupational demand**

ABS Census 2006 data indicates there were 1219 people employed as Solid Plasterers in Victoria. Solid Plasterers apply decorative and protective coverings of plaster, cement and similar materials to the interiors and exteriors of structures. Demand for Solid Plasterers in Victoria is largely determined by the level of activity in the construction industry. Activity in the construction industry is reliant upon the state of the economy, interest rates and demand generated by population growth. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) building activity trend estimate data for the March quarter 2009 indicate the total value of building work done in Victoria (residential and non-residential) rose by 1.7 per cent, and has risen for 12 quarters. Construction Forecast Council indicates residential building activity in 2009-10 is expected to increase by approximately five per cent from 2008-09. In contrast, non-residential building activity is forecast to decline by about 18 per cent over the same period.

### **Occupational supply**

ABS 2006 Census data indicates that in Victoria 37 per cent of Solid Plasterers hold a Certificate III or above, suggesting a significant informal supply to the trade. DEEWR estimates 10 people completed a Certificate III in General Construction (Solid Plastering) or in Solid Plastering in 2008-09, on par with the average since 2001-02. Net immigration to Victoria has declined over the last three years and there was a small net loss of 6 Solid Plasterers from Victoria in 2007-08.

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

The DEEWR Survey of Employers who had Recently Advertised (SERA) for Solid Plasterers found that on average approximately 57 per cent of vacancies in Victoria were filled, compared with the success rate of 47 per cent in 2008. On average, there was less than one suitable applicant per vacancy. Most contacts did not require applicants to have qualifications necessarily, but were seeking people who were experienced and skilled to trade level in rendering and whiteset work and had a professional attitude. Employers seeking plasterers with mould work skills for period building restorations/refurbishments had particular difficulty filling vacancies, while vacancies for renderers appeared to be easier to fill – suggesting two distinct labour markets. Overall, contacts believed there was a shortage of Solid Plasterers and indicated applicants were deemed unsuitable as they did not have the appropriate skills or experience and/or a good work ethic. Some respondents indicated that unlike Europe, Australia does not have a rendering tradition, so finding people locally with the appropriate skills can be difficult. Consequently some employers had recruited people from overseas. Some contacts suggested that changes to construction materials have led to an increased need for rendering, while lessening the need for mould work skills. Most employers were in favour of licensing the trade, indicating some people set up business as plasterers without the appropriate skills and/or qualifications. Often these businesses are offered contracts because they provide the lowest quote, but their work is frequently sub-standard, giving the trade a bad reputation. Most respondents stated that demand for their services had remained steady over the past six months, and they did not expect it to change in the short term

### **Labour market outlook**

There was no evidence that the current shortage in this occupation is likely to ease over the next six months.