

<b>Aircraft Pilot</b> A more detailed report on this labour market is available at <a href="http://workplace.gov.au - Aircraft Pilots">workplace.gov.au - Aircraft Pilots</a>	<b>Australia</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 2541-11	May 2007
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Recruitment Difficulty
<b>Comment</b> <i>Difficulties exist for pilots with specialist skills and experience.</i>	

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

A survey of employers who recently advertised for aircraft pilots was conducted for this report. Surveyed vacancies included both fixed-wing and helicopter pilot positions. About one third of surveys were cold canvassed as an insufficient number of advertised vacancies were identified in the survey period.

About one quarter of the surveyed employers were seeking helicopter pilots and almost 65 per cent of vacancies overall were filled. There were more than eight applications for each advertised vacancy. However, only about 22 per cent of applicants were considered by employers to be suitable and many employers noted they received large numbers of applications from young pilots who had inadequate flying hours or experience. Other reasons employers considered applicants to be unsuitable included lack of relevant skills for a particular type of aircraft or, in the case of some helicopter tourism businesses, the difficulty of finding someone with a capacity to play a dual role as a pilot and tour guide. Some employers noted they were forced to lower their entry requirements to fill positions and thereafter train successful candidates internally.

There were significant variations in employers' experiences securing suitably skilled pilots across specialisations, with employers of helicopter pilots recording a much higher fill rate (94 per cent for helicopter pilots compared with 60 per cent for fixed-wing pilots). However, many of these employers noted the main method of recruitment for helicopter pilots is word-of-mouth, networking and personal contact rather than through more formal recruitment methods such as advertising. At the same time, some employers of helicopter pilots noted it is becoming increasingly difficult to find experienced pilots due to the ageing workforce and the lure of overseas employment opportunities, which have led to the loss of some pilots to overseas based employment.

Many employers observed that demand for experienced pilots with the required number of hours has been increasing over the last few years as a result of the growth in low-cost commercial airlines. With the expansion of this sector and expected increase in competition from foreign carriers, employers of small and medium sized aviation companies expressed concern over their capacity to compete for pilots as the larger carriers continued to recruit significant numbers of experienced pilots. However, while there appear to be a large number of applicants for positions with large airlines, employer contacts suggest some larger carriers have also found difficulty recruiting pilots with the skill sets they are seeking. Media reports in May 2007 also suggest large airlines see value to the creation of pilot training businesses to raise revenue and ensure a good supply of pilots for their operations.

### **Labour market outlook**

Employer contacts suggest the labour market for pilots may tighten over the next few years as new airlines enter the Australian industry but it is unlikely significant shortages will emerge over the next six months.