

<b>Baker</b>	<b>Western Australia</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code:</b> 3511-11	August 2009
<b>Labour market rating:</b>	Metropolitan – Recruitment difficulty, Regional – Shortage
<b>Comment:</b> <i>Regional areas are finding it increasingly difficult to attract suitable qualified and skilled Bakers as many opt to work for larger chains and factories based in the Perth metropolitan area. Many rely on the smaller locally sourced labour markets.</i>	

### **Occupational demand**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census data indicated in Western Australia (WA), 51 per cent of Bakers work in the industry division of manufacturing while retail trade accounts for another 38 per cent. The ABS has identified the majority of Bakers in WA are employed within the specific industry classifications of non-factory Bakeries, followed by supermarkets and to a lesser extent, factory Bakeries. ABS data shows the number of Bakers in WA has increased between 2001 and 2006 by nine per cent to 1234. The ABS Labour Force Survey shows the number of Bakers and pastry cooks (in combination) working in WA had reached approximately 2000 by May 2009. The DEEWR Skilled Vacancy Count of newspaper advertisements shows the number of vacancies for Bakers had remained fairly steady from late 2007 until early 2009. Since then there has been a decline to about a third of previous vacancy numbers in line with the general economic downturn.

### **Occupational supply**

Formal supply is by way of apprenticeships in baking which involves completion of TAFE study at the Certificate III level. The apprenticeships available are titled Baking (combined pastry cooking and breadmaking) and Breadmaking. The apprenticeship completions in the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 totaled 52. Previous years' completions were 66 in 2007-08 and 57 in 2006-07. ABS 2006 Census data shows 47 per cent of Bakers completed a certificate III or above. Many have no formal qualifications and 23 per cent have completed year ten or below. Overseas migration has provided a net gain of 87 Bakers and Pastry cooks to WA (only combined data available) in 2007-08, while in 2006-07 overseas migration provided a net gain of 46.

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

A DEEWR survey of employers who had recently advertised for Bakers showed 73 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks of advertising. There were eight applicants per vacancy of whom over two per vacancy were considered by employers to be suitable. Employers reported the main reasons applicants were not suitable was they did not have appropriate experience or lacked a trade qualification. Employers who operated traditional bread shops indicated they had difficulty in finding applicants who had specialised skills in making breads and pastries or were willing to start early in the morning. The consensus of employers surveyed was there is a growing division in skills required for Bakers who work in factories and supermarkets, compared to Bakers who work for smaller traditional bakeries. Supermarket bakeries usually do not have the early starts and employees are not exposed to the specialised skills learned from working with a wider array of products. Employers also noted recently there were a large number of unqualified applicants seeking any form of work available. Bakers in regional areas have reported it is becoming increasingly difficult to find staff as few people are willing to move away from the Perth metropolitan area. Regional employers indicated they are hiring from the Eastern States or poaching staff from their competition with the offer of higher salaries to fill vacancies.

### **Labour market outlook**

There is no shortage of Bakers in the metropolitan region although there is recruitment difficulty for employers who operate traditional bakeries. Shortage in regional areas is likely to continue for the short to long term. With the population continuing to increase in WA, employment for Bakers is expected to remain steady in the long term.