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| Painting Trades Worker | Queensland |
| ANZSCO Code: 3322-11 | September 2009 |
| Labour market rating: | Shortage |
| Comment: | |

Occupational demand

Painting Trades Workers apply paint, varnish, wall paper and other finishes to protect, maintain and decorate interior and exterior surfaces of residential, commercial and industrial buildings. Demand for painting services is highly influenced by the volume of building activity as well as business and consumer spending on renovations to existing buildings in both the residential and non-residential construction sectors. Although residential and private sector building activity slowed in the wake of the recent economic downturn, the total volume of construction work done in Queensland continued to strengthen over the year to June 2009, growing by a solid 6.9 per cent. For the most part, this growth was supported by expanding capital works projects including the refurbishment or development of new hospitals, schools, state and defence housing and public amenities projects, all of which helped to sustain demand for Painting Trades Workers.

Occupational supply

Entry to this trade is via the completion of a 36 month apprenticeship in *Painting and Decorating*. However, in Queensland if an individual or company wants to carry out work valued over \$1100 they must also hold the correct licence as determined by the Building Services Authority. To acquire a licence, qualified tradespersons need to complete an approved managerial course. Department of Education and Training data indicate steady growth in apprenticeship numbers for this trade with commencements increasing from 526 in 2004 to 765 in 2008. Over the last three years, the number of apprentices completing their training has averaged around 40 per cent, and if this trend continues, it is anticipated that approximately 208 newly qualified Painting Trades Workers will enter the labour market at the end of 2009. Arrivals and departures data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship indicate that the number of Painting Trades Workers migrating to Queensland has been falling since 2004. Even so, overseas migration may still be a moderate source of supply to this trade as there was a net gain of 91 self-identified Painting Trades Workers to the state in 2007-08.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

This year, 67 per cent of vacancies for Painting Trades Workers were filled within four weeks of advertising with regional employers reporting acute difficulties recruiting suitably skilled applicants. Most employers reported a stronger than expected response, but they considered only one in four candidates as suitable. In the majority of cases, applicants were deemed unsuitable because they did not possess trade qualifications or the prescribed licence, industry specific skills or experience or their own work tools and means of transport. Some candidates failed to demonstrate an acceptable work history while others sought remuneration beyond the capacity of the employing business. A small number of respondents reported they had difficulty attracting suitable apprentices into the trade while others reported great difficulties retaining apprentices once they had completed their training. Many of these respondents stated that this has become a major disincentive for employers indenturing apprentices in the future. Some contacts consider the competency assessment standards for the 'recognition of prior learning' are inadequate and a major contributor to reducing standards within the industry.

Labour market outlook

It is anticipated that demand for Painting Trades Workers will increase as ABS data show that the value of construction work still in the pipeline in the June quarter 2009 was 18.2 per cent higher than it was in June 2008. At the same time, residential building activity appears to be recovering from weak growth over 2008 and is indicated by building approvals increasing for the fifth consecutive month to be 8.3 per cent higher in July, compared to their low point in February 2009. Although the number of apprentices entering this trade is growing, wastage from training remains high and overseas contributions to supply are declining. It is therefore anticipated that the current shortage of painting trade workers in Queensland will continue over the coming year.