

Baker	South Australia
ANZSCO Code: 3511-11	September 2009
Labour market rating:	Shortage
Comment:	

Occupational demand

According to the 2006 ABS Census, there were around 1360 employed Bakers in South Australia and around 54 per cent were employed in the manufacturing industry, particularly in Bakery products manufacturing. A further 38 per cent were employed in retail trade and five per cent in wholesale trade. Employment in the Bakery product manufacturing industry has expanded over recent years. A broad indicator of demand for Bakers is the value of turnover among food retailers. Over the twelve months to June 2009, total South Australian expenditure on food increased 2.6 per cent (in seasonally adjusted terms). Over a similar period, ABS Labour Force Survey data showed the number of employed Bakers and Pastrycooks (combined) increased. In recent years, there has been a rising number of franchise Bakery outlets and this has had a positive impact on demand for Bakers, especially within the Adelaide metropolitan area. Most employers reported the economic downturn had not impacted significantly on their businesses. Several contacts believed staple foods are “recession-proof.” Nonetheless, DEEWR’s skilled vacancies index (SVI) revealed the number of newspaper advertisements for Bakers fell by 40 per cent in 2008-09.

Occupational supply

During the period 2004 to 2006, there was an average of 23 persons per annum commencing a contract of training in ‘baking.’ Since then, the number of commencements increased to 35 in 2007 and 51 in 2008, the highest number since 2002. However, the number of training completions is considerably lower than the number of corresponding commencements due to an average attrition rate of around 60 per cent. There were 14 trainee completions in 2008, to be followed by a possible eleven completions this year. However, a larger number is likely for 2010. In 2006, around 55 per cent of the workforce lacked trade-level qualifications, indicating supply from informal sources is high. Net migration represents a negligible source of supply to the workforce.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A DEEWR Survey of Employers who had Recently Advertised (SERA) for Bakers showed the percentage of vacancies filled within four weeks was 27 per cent, this represents a substantial decrease from the fill rate of 83 per cent recorded a year ago. On average, there were 13.7 applicants per vacancy, compared to only 1.8 in 2008, and 0.5 suitable applicants per vacancy, compared to a ratio of 1.2 in 2008. Unsuitable applicants were rejected for a variety of reasons, including lack of relevant work experience, inadequate or no qualifications, unsatisfactory work histories, deficient English skills, or poor attitude displayed during trial work placements or at interview. Experience and competence were rated as more important than trade qualifications. Some franchise Bakeries were prepared to up-skill workers who could demonstrate aptitude and the “right attitude”. Despite the lower entry level for some positions, employers still reported recruitment difficulties. Employers also indicated difficulties in retaining staff due to frequent night shift and/or early morning starts. Overall, the low vacancy fill rate supports a current labour market rating of ‘shortage’.

Labour market outlook

In relation to demand, on-going population growth will provide support for the expansion of food products and services. With regards to occupational supply, it is expected the formal supply of skilled labour will increase in 2010, and may increase further in 2011. However, high occupational wastage is likely to continue and so the current shortage of experienced Bakers is not anticipated to change over the next twelve months.