

Fitter	Western Australia
ASCO Code: 4112-11	September 2007
Labour market rating	Shortage
Comment	

Occupational demand

Labour Force Survey data suggest that the number of employed fitters has been fairly flat in the 12 months to September 2007 and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) Skilled Vacancies Index shows that the number of newspaper vacancies for the trade has been fairly stable over the past two years. There is strong demand for various types of fitters in mining, power plants, civil engineering, transport, factories and in many projects involving large and heavy machinery.

Occupational supply

State Government training figures show that there has been an increase in completions of apprenticeships in metal and mechanical fitting over the last few years. In 2005, a total of 266 apprenticeships were completed; in 2006 there were 331 completions.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

Some employers described the current situation as a worker's market with skilled fitters attending only the interviews for the best jobs. A major employer said that internet ads attract many applicants from overseas countries. Many employers also suggested that experience and demonstrated skill in an industry may be more important than trade qualifications. Employers have reported that other tradespersons, such as motor mechanics, can also make a successful crossover to the higher paid work of fitting.

Some contacts suggested it can be difficult to recruit fitters who have police clearances to work on Defence contracts where security clearances are required. Large mining and mining supply companies report they have significant vacancies for heavy duty fitters. These roles involve working on the large mining trucks, loaders and drills.

A number of metropolitan employers believe there is a shortage of skilled workers because so many have been attracted to high income roles in mining. Some suggest many fitters are transient, with workers looking around for the best incomes.

Labour market outlook

The high level of activity in the resources sector is affecting all metal and mechanical tradespersons and is expected to continue for some time.