

Glazier	New South Wales
ANZSCO Code: 3331-11	September 2009
Labour market rating:	Shortage
Comment: <i>Shortages are evident in Sydney and a number of regional areas.</i>	

Occupational demand

Census data shows employment of glaziers in NSW grew by just under two per cent a year between 2001 and 2006. More recently, demand for the trade flowing from new building work has been subdued, with building activity falling by eight per cent in 2008-09 after growing by only one per cent the previous year. Demand for the occupation, however, has been supported to some extent by continuing repair, maintenance and renovation work. A number of employers also reported a recent improvement in activity, particularly in areas such as schools which have benefitted from increased government expenditure on infrastructure.

Occupational supply

Apprenticeship completions in the trade have been fairly stable over the past six years, averaging 36 persons a year. The training rate for the occupation (apprenticeship completions as a percentage of employed glaziers) is 1.8 per cent per annum, based on estimated employment of 2100. While this is considerably below the average of 3.0 per cent for all trades, a number of regional employers stated they put their trainee glaziers through shopfitting apprenticeships due to the lack of a TAFE glazing trade course in regional NSW and this would supplement training to some extent. Official immigration data show net overseas immigration added an average of only four persons a year to supply in the five years to 2007-08.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A DEEWR survey of employers who had recently advertised for glaziers found 69 per cent of vacancies were filled within four weeks of advertising, which was lower than the success rate of 88 per cent in 2008. The response to recent advertisements varied somewhat. About a quarter of those surveyed filled their vacancies with relative ease and were able to select the best of several suitable applicants after only one round of advertising. One prominent regional employer recruited more glaziers than the company had originally intended due to the number of good tradespeople who applied. About half of those surveyed, however, were unable to fill their vacancies or had considerable difficulty in doing so. Employers reported the majority of applicants were not qualified or experienced glaziers or only had experience in a limited area, such as constructing glass and aluminium furniture or installing glass shower screens. In several cases, employers reported they trialled a number of people (with or without a relevant trade certificate) but the applicants failed to demonstrate adequate trade skills. While some of these employers were eventually able to engage a suitable tradesperson after several rounds of advertising, in other cases positions remained unfilled at the time of the survey. Unfilled positions were distributed across a number of suburbs of Sydney and regional locations. Several employers in regional NSW reported they received no applicants from qualified glaziers living locally but were able to fill vacancies from tradespeople relocating from towns further inland.

Labour market outlook

The Construction Forecasting Council is forecasting a modest recovery in building activity in 2009-10 which should help improve demand for the trade. DEEWR projections indicate the supply of glaziers from apprentice completions will increase to about 50 per annum over the next two years, although the training rate would still be below for the trades as a whole. Shortages of more experienced glaziers, proficient in a broad range of trade skills, are therefore likely to persist over the short term.