Australian Government

Jobs and Skills Australia

Skills Shortage Quarterly

September 2023

Contents

September quarter 2023 results

The Skills Shortage Quarterly report offers analysis on occupations that have the potential to be in shortage or are experiencing shortage pressures. The analysis is based on Jobs and Skills Australia's Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised (SERA). The percentage of advertised vacancies filled by occupation (fill rate) is a valuable proxy for identifying occupations that may be in shortage. More background on this metric, including other metrics used in the report and their definitions are provided in Explanatory Notes.

Fill rates are rising but still remain low

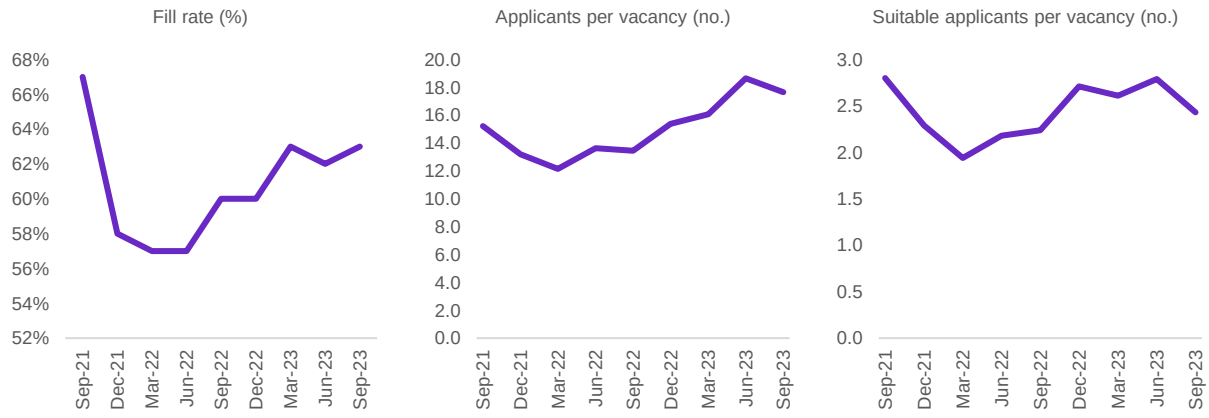
The fill rate for occupations increased slightly, by about 1 percentage point, to 63% over the September 2023 quarter (Table 1). The rate has been generally increasing since June 2022 and is now equivalent to the March quarter 2023, noting it is still lower than the peak of 67% recorded in the September 2021 quarter. Moreover, based on an average per vacancy basis, the average number of applicants, qualified applicants, and suitable applicants decreased in the current quarter (Figure 1 and Table 1).

Table 1: National snapshot

	Fill rate (%)	Applicants per vacancy (no.)	Qualified applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitable applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitability gap (no.)
September 2023 quarter	**62.7%**	**17.7**	**5.9**	**2.4**	**3.4**
Change since June 2023 quarter	↑ 0.6% pts	↓ 1.0	↓ 0.9	↓ 0.4	↓ 0.5

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA).

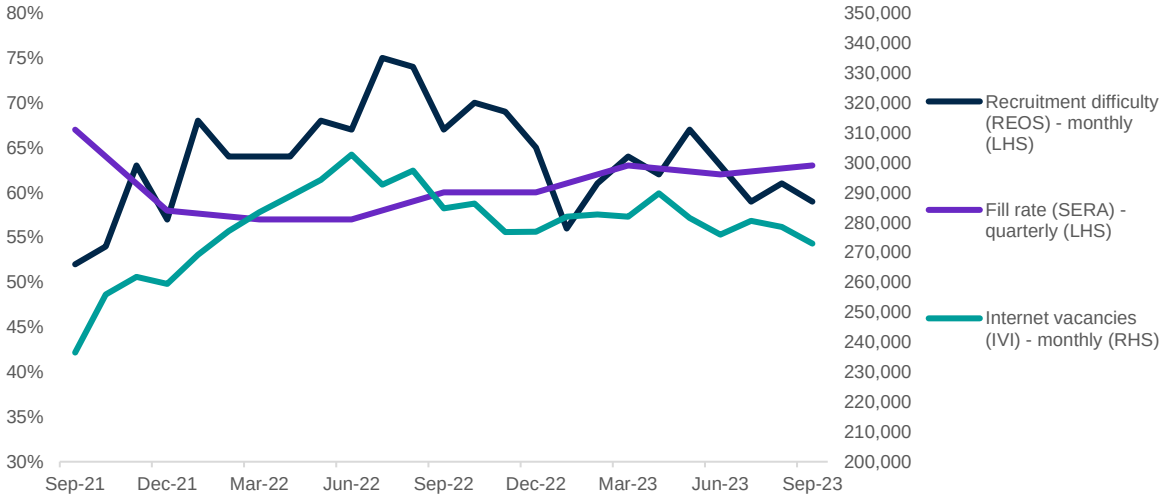
Figure 1: Quarterly trends since September quarter 2021



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA).

There are signs labour market conditions are softening. The number of internet vacancies as measured by JSA's *Internet Vacancy Index* (IVI) and the recruitment difficulty rate from JSA's *Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey* (REOS) both eased in September 2023 and are lower than a year ago (Figure 2). The latest data reported by the ABS also showed a slight uptick in the unemployment rate to 3.7%. At the national level, the easing conditions have not yet fully materialised in employer fill rates and may suggest that difficulty filling vacancies continues.

Figure 2: Fill rate (%), recruitment difficulty (%) and internet vacancies (no.)



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia: Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA); Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS); and Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) (seasonally adjusted).

Fill rates increased in most states and territories, except in Victoria and Western Australia, where the fill rates fell by 2 and 11 percentage points, respectively. The largest increases were observed in Tasmania and Northern Territory, where the fill rates both increased by 12 percentage points (see Appendix Table 1).

By Skill Level, changes in fill rates were mixed. Fill rates for Skill Level 1 and 2 occupations decreased, while it increased for Skill Level 3 and 4 occupations (see Appendix Table 1).

Fill rates for Skill Level 1 and 3 occupations remain particularly low at 62% and 48%, respectively. The low fill rates for these occupations may indicate that skill shortage pressures remain. For these skill level occupations, the results are consistent with the outcomes of the 2023 SPL, in which 47% of Skill Level 3 occupations were in shortage and 42% of Skill Level 1 occupations were in shortage.

In the September quarter 2023, fill rates for both metropolitan and regional areas (see definitions in the Explanatory Notes) increased modestly by one percentage point to 66% and 57% respectively, noting that metropolitan area fill rates remain well above the fill rates in regional areas.

- The average difference in fill rates between the two areas has widened over time from an average of 2 percentage points in 2022 to 7 percentage points in 2023, indicating skill shortage pressures in regional areas have become more pronounced.
- This is supported by data from the REOS, which shows the average difference in recruitment difficulty between Capital Cities and the Rest of State areas has increased from an average of 2 percentage points in 2022 to 6 percentage points in 2023.

The gap between qualified and suitable applicants

In the September 2023 quarter, across Australia, the suitability gap was 3.4 in the current quarter, slightly lower than the 3.9 recorded in the June 2023 quarter. A suitability gap above zero, generally, indicates that qualifications alone are not sufficient to meet employer needs.

Except in unique circumstances, a suitability gap is unlikely to be zero given the level of on–the–job–learning that takes place in the labour market. Therefore, the existence of a gap may not be meaningful in isolation. Movements in the gap and its magnitude provide more useful insights. For example, a large or widening suitability gap including persistently high gaps, may signal that the labour market is relatively weak, and/or employers have a greater ability to be more discerning in their assessment of applicants. Further, a persistently high suitability gap for an occupation may signal a need for increasing the supply of applicants with the appropriate levels of education and training.

State and territory

In the September quarter 2023, large states like New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia all had a suitability gap above 3.0, while the suitability gap for Western Australia was lower, at 2.3 (see more details in the Appendix Table 1). Note that the Northern Territory had the widest suitability gap in the quarter, at 9.4. This is due to a sharp increase in the number of qualified applicants per vacancy from the last quarter, while the number of suitable applicants per vacancy was relatively stable. In Tasmania, the suitability gap declined to close to zero (-0.1) from 2.6 in the June quarter. Noting the smaller sample size for Tasmania, this could be driven by the following:[1]

- Tasmanian employers needing to be less scrutinising of applicants due to – on average – having a smaller pool of qualified applicants to select candidates from than in other jurisdictions.
- Surveyed employers in Tasmanian may have had a greater share of occupations for which work experience matters more than qualifications.[2]

Skill Level

In the current quarter, Skill Level 1 occupations had the widest suitability gap of 5.4 while Skill Level 3 occupations had the lowest suitability gap of 0.7. Refer to Appendix Table 1 for details on the other skill level occupations.

With a low fill rate of 48% for Skill Level 3 occupations, the very low suitability gap indicates ongoing challenges that employers are facing with filling vacant positions. Employers may therefore be less discerning when assessing applicants and/or placing greater weight on relevant work experience over qualifications.

The persistent large suitability gap for Skill Level 1 occupations may be due to megatrends shaping the economy.[3] Technology–driven changes in business processes and the net zero transformation of the economy could be raising employer demand for high qualifications and cumulative work experience. In addition, the ageing of the population continues to see increased demand in the health-based occupations.

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[1] Sample sizes for the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania and the Northern Territory are often under 100 contacts compared to other states.

[2] For example, a record shows one vacancy advertised, and filled, for the job of 362313 Sports Turf Trade Worker in Tasmania in September 2023. No qualification or experience was required. 74 people applied for the job, including internal applicants from the business or organisation, with 1 applicant qualified but 30 accounted as suitable for the vacancy.

[3] For detailed discussion about the megatrends that are shaping the economy and workforce, please refer to *Annual Jobs and Skills Report 2023 – Towards a National Jobs and Skills Roadmap*.

Regions

At 4.5, the suitability gap is much larger in metropolitan areas than in regional areas, at 1.4. The gap declined by the same amount in both locations over the quarter. The large difference between the locations is a product of the much larger pool of applicants in metropolitan areas (with 21.8 applicants on average per vacancy), compared with 9.5 applicants per vacancy in regional areas.

Professionals snapshot

The fill rate, the number of applicants per vacancy, and the number of qualified applicants per vacancy all fell in the September quarter 2023 for occupations in Professionals major group (Table 2). The suitability gap was 5.3, decreasing from 5.7 in the previous quarter. Occupations within the Professionals group tend to have a large gap, due to employers seeking both highly qualified, skilled, and experienced workers.

Table 2: Professionals snapshot

	Fill rate (%)	Applicants per vacancy (no.)	Qualified applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitable applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitability gap (no.)
September 2023 quarter	**60.3%**	**18.6**	**7.6**	**2.3**	**5.3**
Change since June 2023 quarter	↓ 2.9% pts	↓ 0.8	↓ 0.8	↓ 0.4	↓ 0.4

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA).

Regions

The fill rate for Professionals was significantly lower in regional areas (48%) than in metropolitan areas (66%). The fill rate decreased by 3 percentage points in metropolitan areas and 5 percentage points in regional areas.

Metropolitan employers can be much more discerning of who they deem suitable as they have a much larger pool to select from. As a result, the suitability gap was wider in metropolitan areas (6.4) than regional areas (2.8). However, the larger suitability gap in metropolitan areas could also be due to the greater share of high skilled Professionals occupations in metropolitan locations than in regions. For other occupation groups, the distribution of occupations between metropolitan and regional areas is more balanced.

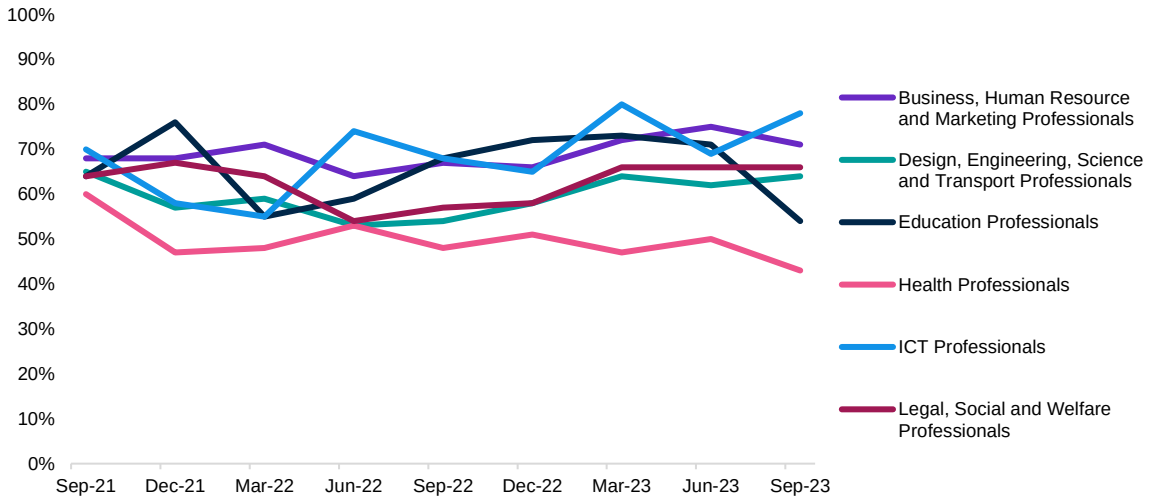
Sub–major groups

The fill rate for health and education related occupations significantly decreased this quarter. The fill rates in Business, Human Resource and Marketing and Legal, Social and Welfare occupation groups have remained stable, at above 70% and 66% respectively, since March 2023 quarter (Figure 3).

Fill rates increased by 9 percentage points for the ICT Professionals group, to 78%. As migrant workers represent a large share of the ICT Professionals workforce, increases in net overseas migration could be contributing to the higher fill rate, which has averaged at 76% since March 2023 quarter. This may also explain the rise in the suitability gap for the ICT

Professionals (up by 2.4 this quarter), as a boost in the supply of workers via migration may be allowing employers to be more selective when recruiting.

Figure 3: Quarterly fill rate (%) of Professional sub-major groups, 2021 to 2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA).

The suitability gap was largest for the ICT, and Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals. The gap was above 9 for both occupation groups and has remained high over time. The magnitude of the suitability gap for ICT and Design, Engineering, Science and Transport occupations may signify that the acquisition of skills occur to a greater extent through on–the–job–learning. This is reinforced by the fact that these occupations have relatively higher average years of relevant labour market experience required from applicants (above 3.5 years) than other occupations.

Technicians and Trades Workers snapshot

The Technicians and Trades Workers major occupation group experienced a 1 percentage point increase in the fill rate (Table 3). At 47% the fill rate for this broad group is the lowest, compared to Professionals and Community and Personal Service Workers, which have rates around 60%.

With the number of applicants per vacancy declining, the low fill rate indicates that employers are facing significant challenges finding suitably skilled workers to fill vacancies. The results indicate that skill shortage pressures persist for Technicians and Trades Workers occupations. As these occupations mostly require VET and/or apprenticeship qualifications, improving VET and apprenticeship completions could help to alleviate the shortage pressures within this occupation group.

Table 3: Technicians and Trade Workers snapshot

	Fill rate (%)	Applicants per vacancy (no.)	Qualified applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitable applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitability gap (no.)
September 2023 quarter	**47.2%**	**12.7**	**2.8**	**1.5**	**1.3**
Change since June 2023 quarter	↑ 1.0% pts	↓ 1.1	↓ 1.2	↓ 0.2	↓ 1.0

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA).

Regions

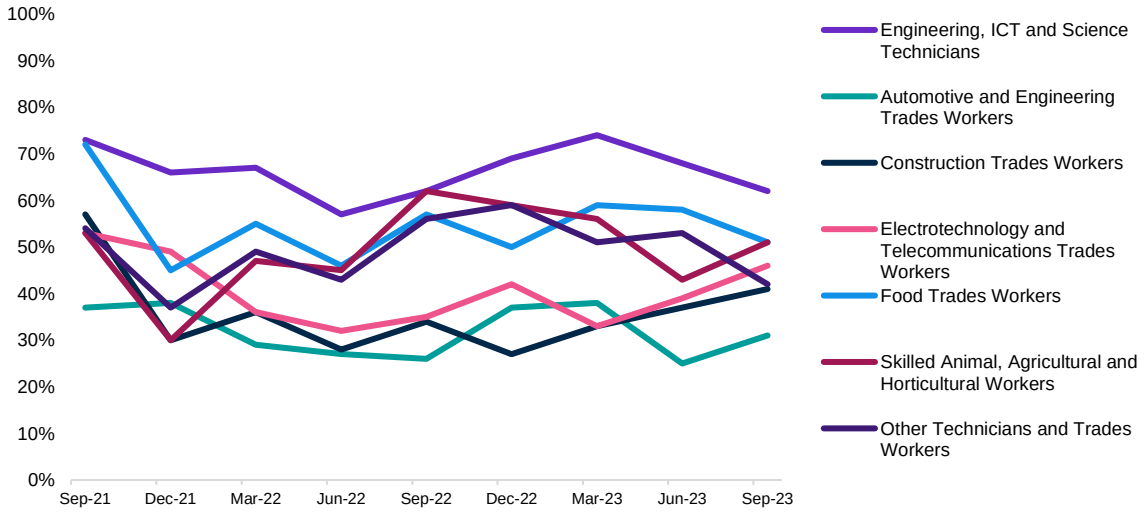
The fill rate for Technicians and Trades Workers increased slightly, by 1 percentage point. But at 48% for metropolitan areas and 45% for regional areas, both were comparatively very low. While metropolitan areas had a higher number of total applicants per vacancy, the number of qualified and suitable applicants per vacancy were similar across both areas. The suitability gap in both locations was not dissimilar, at 1.7 and 0.6 respectively.

Sub-major groups

Fill rates for Other Technicians and Trades Workers, Food Trades, and Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians fell sharply over the quarter, but increased for others (Figure 4).

Other than Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians, averaging 68% since March 2023 quarter, the fill rates remained low for the other occupations. Specifically, fill rates were lowest for Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers (31%) and Construction Trades Workers (41%), indicating skill shortage pressures were most acute for these occupations.

Figure 4: Quarterly fill rate (%) of Technicians and Trade Workers sub-major groups, 2021 to 2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA)

Compared to Professionals, Technicians and Trades Workers occupations tend to have low suitability gaps. As mentioned previously, this could be due to more employers in this major group valuing experience over qualifications.

On the other hand, Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians had a higher suitability gap, of 4.2 and exceeded the other Technician and Trades Workers sub–major occupations, which had suitability gaps below one. For this occupation group, the gap has averaged over 4 each quarter in the last three years, and employers' experience requirements of applicants for this occupation group were also extensive at almost 3 years. Similar to Design, Engineering, Science and Transport and ICT Professionals, skills acquisition through on–the–job–learning may also play a key role for Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians.

Community and Personal Service Workers snapshot

The fill rate for Community and Personal Service Workers in the September 2023 quarter fell by approximately 2 percentage points. The number of applicants, qualified applicants, and suitable applicants per vacancy also fell in the quarter for this occupation group (Table 5).

Table 5: Community and Personal Service Workers snapshot

	Fill rate (%)	Applicants per vacancy (no.)	Qualified applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitable applicants per vacancy (no.)	Suitability gap (no.)
September 2023 quarter	**66.1%**	**13.1**	**3.5**	**2.6**	**0.9**
Change since June 2023 quarter	↓ 2.3% pts	↓ 1.1	↓ 0.9	↓ 0.3	↓ 0.6

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA).

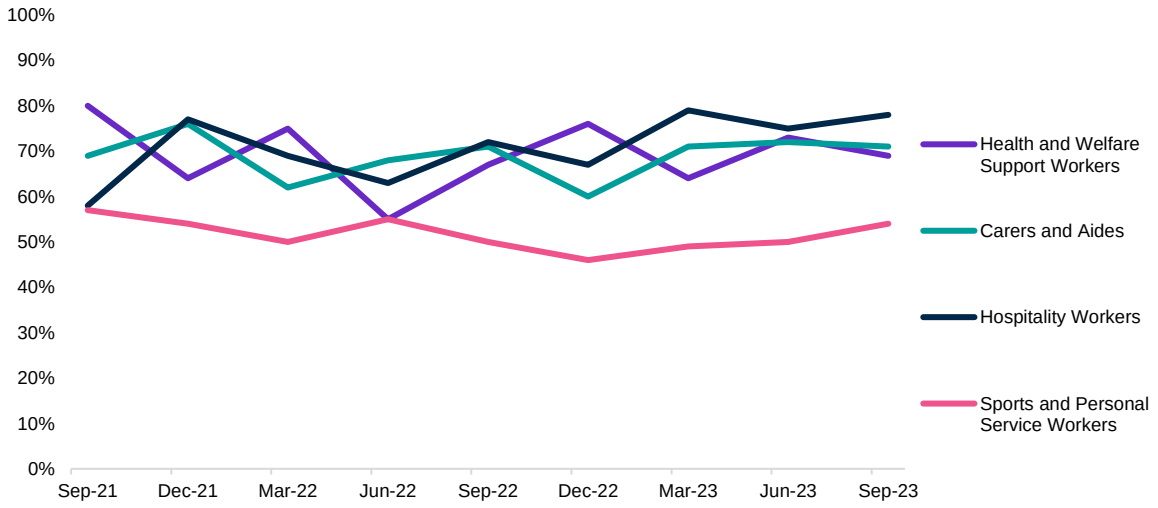
Regions

The fill rate for Community and Personal Service Workers fell more in regional areas but was still higher than that in metropolitan areas (69% compared to 64%). The total number of applicants per vacancy fell in regional areas (4.0) in the September quarter, while it increased in metropolitan areas (1.9).

Sub-major groups

The fill rates for the Sports and Personal Service group increased by 4 percentage points to 54%, while the fill rate for the Hospitality group rose by 3 percentage points to 78% (Figure 5). For the former occupation, fill rates have been consistently low since the occupation was included in the survey in the June quarter 2021. This sub–major group includes a diverse set of occupations such as Beauty Therapists, Fitness Instructors, and Sports Coaches, Instructors and Officials. The fill rates for Carers and Aides and Health and Welfare Support groups declined by 1 and 4 percentage points respectively, to around 70%.

Figure 5: Quarterly fill rate (%) of Community and Personal Service Workers sub-major group, 2021 to 2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA)

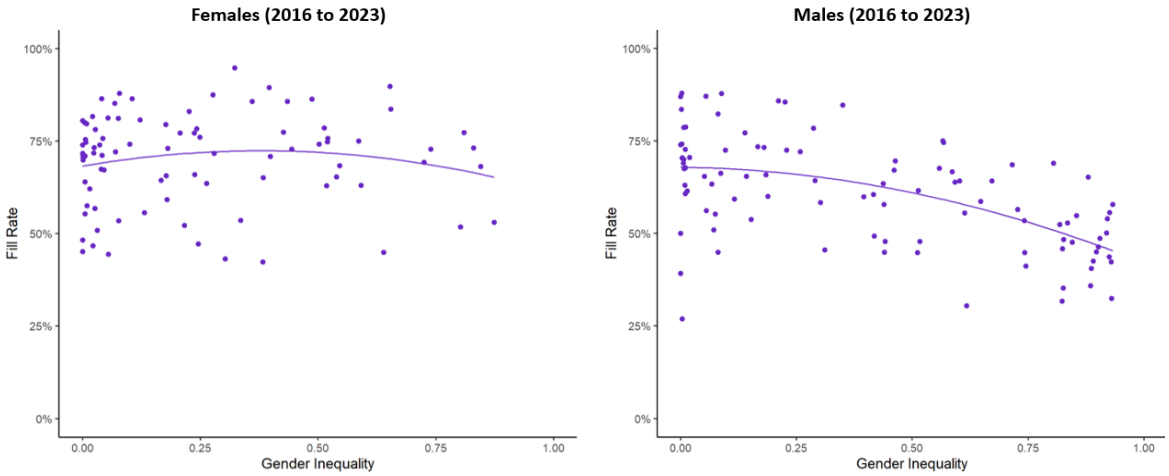
Spotlight piece: is gender inequality impacting fill rates?

This section expands on the gender analysis featured in the 2023 SPL Key Findings Report by examining whether gender inequality is contributing to employer difficulty in filling job vacancies.[4]

Occupations are categorised into female or male dominated occupations if the gender share of employment of either is more than 50%. The gender inequality metric takes the value of 0 when an occupation has a perfect gender balance, and 1 when an occupation is fully occupied by either female or male workers.[5,6]

From 2016 to 2023, in female dominated occupations, the relationship between fill rates and gender inequality is weak and not statistically significant (Figure 6). Therefore, the likelihood of a female dominated occupation being in shortage due to gender inequality is likely to be low. In contrast, there is a much clearer statistically significant downward trend for male dominated occupations: the higher the gender inequality with dominance of male workers in an occupation, the lower the fill rate.

Figure 6: Gender inequality (%) and fill rate (%) in female and male dominated occupations, 2016–2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Surveys of Employers who have recently advertised (SERA); Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2016 and 2021.

This is particularly true when looking at fill rates by sub–major occupation groups (Figure 7). In this figure, each box plot represents a range of fill rate values for each occupation group. The colour range (light to dark purple) represents gender inequality: the darker the colour the more gender skewed an occupation is.

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[4] The analysis uses SERA fill rates at the 4-digit ANZSCO level from September 2006 to June 2023, and Census data over each of the 5-year Census periods from 2006 to 2021 to determine the gender splits. The gender splits are used for the years after each census year until the next Census is available. For example, the gender split for the years 2006 to 2010 uses the 2006 Census, 2011 to 2015 using the 2011 Census and so on. The SERA data is aggregated over each of the 5-year period.

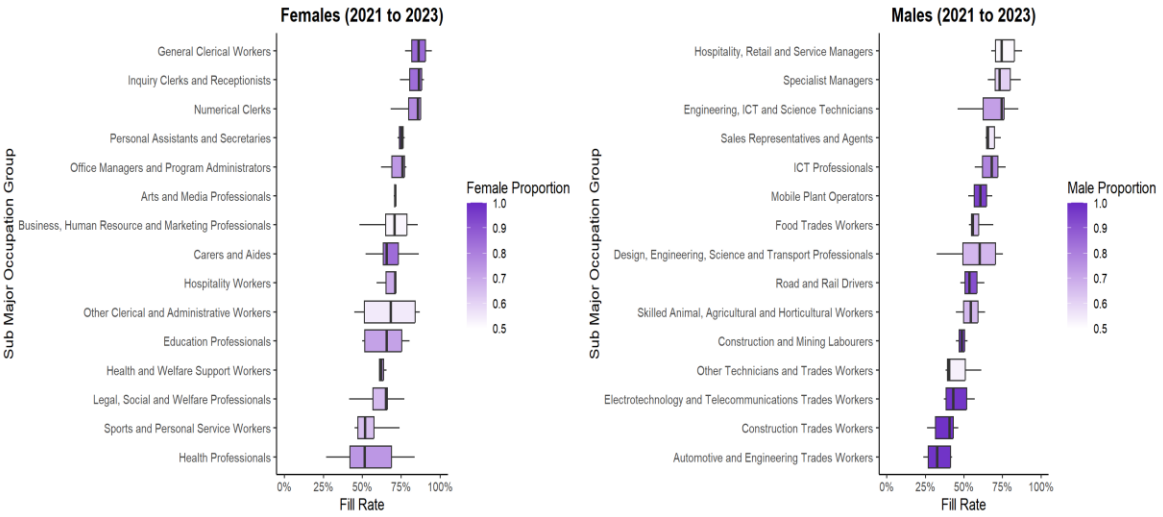
[5] The inequality metric is measured by one minus entropy. Entropy is a concept commonly associated with a state or disorder, randomness, or uncertainty. Taking each gender as a distinct state, entropy returns the value of 1 for a 50-50 split (perfect disorder) between males and females but 0 for a 100-0 split (perfectly ordered) for either males or females. To get the required form, 1 minus entropy is taken. It functions like a Gini index but is more sensitive to higher proportions on either end.

[6] The formula for gender inequality is: $Gender\ Inequality = 1 + male\ proportion * log_2(male\ proportion) + female\ proportion * log_2(female\ proportion)$. Using a logarithm with base 2 results in the required functional form.

Male dominated sub–major occupation groups tend to have a lower fill rate, indicating that it is more likely to be in a skills shortage. This link is weaker for female dominated sub–major occupations. For instance, highly female dominated General Clerical Workers, Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists and Numerical Clerks have high fill rates at more than 75%, while Carers and Aides, which are also dominated by females, have lower fill rates at around 50%.

For male dominated occupations, those with above 90% male workers such as Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers, Construction Trades Workers, and Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trade Workers, have the lowest fill rate ranges. This result indicates that these occupations have a high chance of being in shortage. The 2023 SPL also showed that occupations in these sub–majors tended to be in shortage.

Figure 7: Fill rate (%) in female (lhs) and male dominated (rhs) occupations, by sub–major group, 2021 to 2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Surveys of Employers who have recently advertised (SERA); Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2021.
Note: The width of the box represents the 1st and 3rd quartiles of fill rates for each sub–major group. The central line represents the median or middle value, and the colour of the box (from light to dark purple) represents the gender shares of the workforce for that sub–major occupation. The darker the box the more gender skewed towards female (left hand side) or male (right hand side). The lines to either side of the box represent the minimum and maximum values of fill rates for occupations with that the sub-major group.

Improving the flow of women into male dominated occupations is a complex proposition, requiring changes to societal norms, workplace culture and conditions as well effectively encouraging more women to pursue trade–based VET qualifications. Given the weaker link between fill rates and gender inequality among female dominated occupations, the analysis suggests a set of solutions pertaining to general worker (either male or female) attraction and retention to alleviating skill shortage pressures.

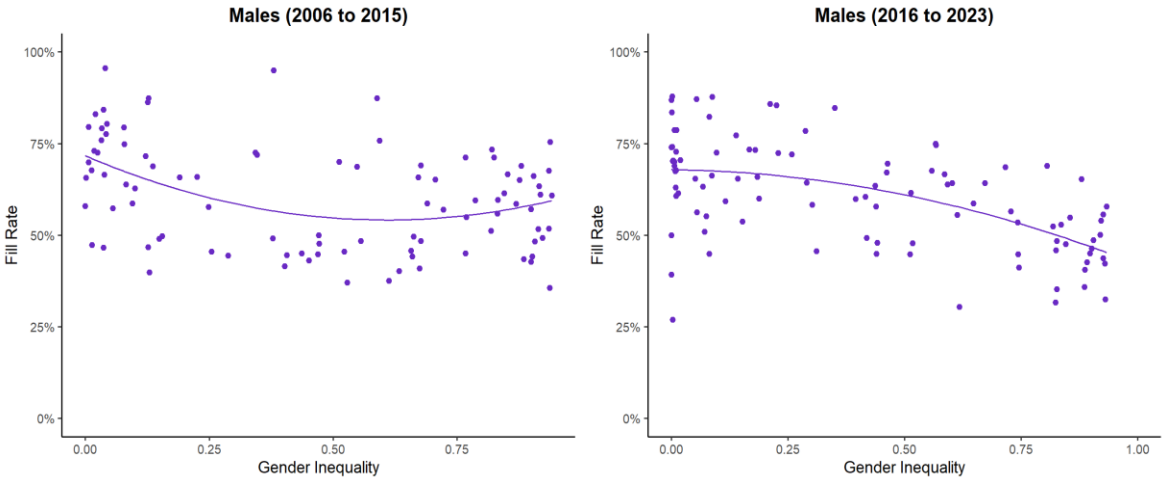
Fill rates between 2006 to 2023

The relationship between gender inequality and fill rates in male dominated occupations has changed over time. During the 2006 and 2011 census period, the relationship at high levels of inequality is positive and statistically significant (Figure 8). This could be attributable to the impact of the mining boom and large skilled migration over that time.

While the mining industry employs a wide variety of low and high skilled occupations, occupations are generally heavily skewed towards males. During the boom, high wage growth supported rapid growth in employment in the industry. In turn, fill rates rose. During this period, skilled migration also increased and peaked around 2016, assisting employers to fill vacancies. It is possible these developments masked the true relationship between

gender inequality and fill rates among male dominated occupations, which reverted back to their true (negative) relationship once the mining boom ended and skilled migration started easing.

Figure 8: Fill rate and gender inequality in male dominated occupations in 2006–2015 versus 2016–2023



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Surveys of Employers who have recently advertised (SERA); Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021.

Appendix

Appendix Table 2: September 2023 quarter data

Category	Fill rate (%)		Applicants per vacancy		Qualified applicants per vacancy		Suitable applicants per vacancy		Suitability gap	
	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change
Overall	**62.7%**	**+0.6% pts**	**17.7**	**-1.0**	**5.9**	**-0.9**	**2.4**	**-0.4**	**3.4**	**-0.5**
States and territories										
New South Wales	61.5%	+3.1% pts	15.0	-4.6	5.4	-2.0	2.5	-0.5	3.0	-1.5
Victoria	57.8%	-2.5% pts	19.2	+1.0	6.5	-0.4	2.3	-0.3	4.2	-0.1
Queensland	62.9%	+3.0% pts	17.7	+2.7	5.5	+0.1	2.5	+0.1	3.0	0.0
South Australia	68.8%	+2.8% pts	16.7	-5.8	6.1	-1.8	1.8	-1.2	4.3	-0.7
Western Australia	61.1%	-11.0% pts	15.1	-3.9	4.1	-1.5	1.8	-1.3	2.3	-0.1
Tasmania*	70.1%	+12.3% pts	18.7	+6.4	2.1	-2.1	2.2	+0.6	-0.1	-2.7
Northern Territory*	62.7%	+11.7% pts	17.8	+5.2	11.2	+9.3	1.9	+0.1	9.4	+9.2
Australian Capital Territory*	60.8%	+0.6% pts	13.5	+3.6	3.2	+0.1	2.2	+0.1	1.0	0.0

Category	Fill rate (%)		Applicants per vacancy		Qualified applicants per vacancy		Suitable applicants per vacancy		Suitability gap	
	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change
Skill level[7]										
Skill Level 1	62.5%	-2.7% pts	19.8	-1.8	7.9	-1.4	2.5	-0.5	5.4	-1.0
Skill Level 2	70.7%	-0.9% pts	18.9	-3.4	5.3	-1.3	2.6	-0.7	2.7	-0.6
Skill Level 3	48.4%	+1.5% pts	10.6	-0.6	2.3	-0.9	1.7	+0.2	0.7	-1.0
Skill Level 4	71.7%	+4.1% pts	20.2	+1.0	6.5	+0.5	3.0	-0.8	3.5	+1.3
Occupations – select categories[8]										
Professionals	60.3%	-2.9% pts	18.6	-0.8	7.6	-0.8	2.3	-0.4	5.3	-0.4
Business, Human Resource and Marketing	70.8%	-4.2% pts	23.5	-2.5	9.4	-0.5	2.9	-0.9	6.5	+0.4
Design, Engineering, Science and Transport	64.1%	+2.3% pts	24.6	-1.7	11.9	-0.9	2.6	-0.6	9.4	-0.3
Education	54.4%	-17.0% pts	5.1	-4.5	2.8	-2.8	1.2	-1.0	1.6	-1.8
Health	43.5%	-6.5% pts	5.1	-1.4	2.2	-1.7	1.1	-0.7	1.1	-1.0
ICT	78.2%	+8.8% pts	48.7	+8.7	17.8	+3.8	5.2	+1.4	12.7	+2.4

[7] Skill level categories are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).
[8] Sub-occupations are based on the 2-digit ANZSCO level and only includes those with a large enough sample size over the quarter.

Category	Fill rate (%)		Applicants per vacancy		Qualified applicants per vacancy		Suitable applicants per vacancy		Suitability gap	
	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change
Legal, Social and Welfare	66.1%	+0.2% pts	9.6	-0.4	4.0	-0.2	1.8	-0.2	2.2	0.0
Technicians and Trades Workers	47.2%	+1.0% pts	12.7	-1.1	2.8	-1.2	1.5	-0.2	1.3	-1.0
Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians	62.3%	-5.4% pts	26.2	+0.1	7.1	-1.8	2.9	-0.5	4.2	-1.3
Automotive and Engineering Trades	31.5%	+7.0% pts	8.9	+1.3	1.8	-1.2	1.1	+0.3	0.7	-1.6
Construction	41.3%	+4.3% pts	7.2	-1.8	1.4	-0.3	0.9	+0.0	0.5	-0.3
Electrotechnology and Telecomm. Trades	46.4%	+7.3% pts	9.1	+1.0	1.8	-1.1	1.4	-0.2	0.5	-1.0
Food Trades	51.4%	-7.1% pts	11.7	+0.5	1.7	-2.6	1.3	-0.8	0.4	-1.8
Skilled Animal, Agricultural and Horticultural	50.8%	+7.6% pts	11.2	-1.2	2.0	+0.2	1.7	+0.4	0.2	-0.2
Other Technicians and Trades Workers	42.4%	-10.7% pts	4.4	-9.7	0.9	-0.9	0.7	-0.7	0.2	-0.2

Category	Fill rate (%)		Applicants per vacancy		Qualified applicants per vacancy		Suitable applicants per vacancy		Suitability gap	
	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change
Community and Personal Service Workers	66.1%	-2.3% pts	13.1	-1.1	3.5	-0.9	2.6	-0.3	0.9	-0.6
Health and Welfare Support	68.9%	-4.2% pts	9.1	-4.5	3.2	-1.7	2.0	-0.7	1.2	-1.1
Carers and Aides	70.7%	-1.7% pts	12.3	+3.5	2.5	-0.7	1.6	-0.6	0.9	0.0
Hospitality	78.4%	+3.4% pts	31.5	+1.6	8.2	-1.9	6.3	+0.5	1.9	-2.3
Sports and Personal Service	53.5%	+3.0% pts	8.6	-1.3	2.0	-0.9	1.3	-0.2	0.7	-0.7
Metro/regional										
Metro	65.6%	+1.1% pts	21.8	+0.3	7.4	-0.5	2.91	-0.1	4.5	-0.4
Regional	56.9%	+0.5% pts	9.51	-1.9	2.9	-0.9	1.5	-0.6	1.4	-0.4
Metro/regional – broad occupation groups										
Professionals										
Metro	65.6%	-2.9% pts	22.9	+1.0	9.2	-0.4	2.8	-0.2	6.4	-0.2
Regional	47.6%	-5.0% pts	8.3	-3.2	4.0	-0.9	1.2	-0.8	2.8	-0.1
Technicians and Trades Workers										
Metro	48.4%	+1.3% pts	15.1	-0.9	3.4	-1.3	1.7	-0.2	1.7	-1.0
Regional	44.7%	+0.5% pts	8.0	-0.8	1.8	-1.0	1.2	-0.1	0.6	-0.8

Category	Fill rate (%)		Applicants per vacancy		Qualified applicants per vacancy		Suitable applicants per vacancy		Suitability gap	
	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change	Sep-2023 quarter	Quarterly change
Community and Personal Service Workers										
Metro	64.1%	-1.3% pts	17.9	+1.9	4.6	-0.8	3.54	+0.3	1.1	-1.1
Regional	68.6%	-5.2% pts	6.87	-4.0	2.01	-0.9	1.35	-0.9	0.7	0.0

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA), September 2023 quarter.

Explanatory Notes

The Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised (SERA) is designed for the specific purpose of assessing occupational shortages for skilled occupations and provides a direct measure of the employer experience when recruiting. The survey receives around 2,000 responses each quarter from employers who have advertised vacancies online. Only those occupations with a sufficient quarterly sample size are included for analysis in this report to ensure data changes are more reflective of labour market developments.

The survey covers occupations, as defined by Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, generally requiring a university degree, trade apprenticeship or Certificate III or Certificate IV. As a result, the survey outcomes are reflective of occupations requiring post-school education and training.

The fill rate is used as a proxy for identifying occupations that may be in shortage: lower fill rates generally imply greater employer difficulties filling vacant positions. In contrast, higher fill rates suggest fewer challenges and in general, imply a lower likelihood of shortage.

Additional metrics collected in SERA include applicants on a per vacancy basis; the average number of total applicants; qualified applicants; suitable applicants; and the average years of labour market experience sought by employers (for definitions, refer to the following section). Movements in these variables add context to changes in fill rates over time.

Data found in Skilled Shortage Quarterly is not an indicator of occupations appearing on the 2023 Skills Priority List (SPL).

Caution should be exercised when interpreting data for Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory given lower sample sizes.

Definitions of metrics

The fill rate is the percentage of vacancies employers advertised that were filled. The metric is calculated by dividing the number of filled vacancies by total advertised vacancies.

The average number of applicants per vacancy is calculated as the sum of the number of applicants divided by the sum of advertised vacancies.

The average number of qualified applicants per vacancy is calculated as the sum of the number of qualified applicants divided by the sum of advertised vacancies. Qualified applicants are the applicants who are assessed by employers as meeting the required qualification criteria of an advertised vacancy.

The average number of suitable applicants per vacancy is calculated as the sum of the number of suitable applicants divided by the sum of advertised vacancies. Suitable applicants are those who are deemed by employers to be suitable for the job advertised.

The average years of labour market experience sought by employer is the average number of years that employers require applicants to have spent in relevant occupations and is calculated as the mean of the years required per employer.

Metropolitan area refers to Capital City, while **Regional area** refers to Rest of State locations. Capital City and Rest of State areas are defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 1 – Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2016.

Suitability gap is the difference between the average number of qualified applicants per vacancy and the average number of suitable applicants per vacancy. A suitability gap

greater than zero would mean that there are fewer suitable applicants than qualified applicants.

For more information, contact SkillsPriorityList@jobsandskills.gov.au.

Please refer to Skills Shortages Analysis | Jobs and Skills Australia for the 2023 SPL key findings reports, stakeholder submission snapshot, methodology paper and data.