



Vacancy Report

January 2024

Released 14 February 2024

Internet Vacancy Index Key Points

This month's report shows the period of record growth in advertisements following the COVID-19 pandemic may be ending, with vacancy numbers having decreased in seven of the past nine months. Despite this, vacancy numbers remain at record levels, with around two-thirds more advertisements in the labour market presently than compared with the monthly average for 2019.

- Online job advertisements at the national level decreased in January 2024 (down by 2.0% or 5,200 job advertisements) to stand at 254,500.
 - Over the year to November 2023, online job advertisements decreased by 9.7% (or 27,400 job advertisements). Vacancy numbers, though, are at high levels historically, with current declines coming from a near series peak recorded in June 2022.
 - This downward trend is present in other demand indicators, with the ABS *Job Vacancies, Australia* series showing a 14.4% decrease in advertisements over the year to November 2023.
- Recruitment activity declined in five states over the month, with the strongest decreases recorded in New South Wales (down by 4.6% or 3,500) and Western Australia (down by 3.0% or 980).
 - Tasmania bucked the trend, increasing by 7.8% (or 340 job advertisements), with other increases recorded in the Northern Territory (up by 5.8% or 190) and the Australian Capital Territory (up by 1.7% or 120).
- Over the month, advertisements decreased slightly across four of the five Skill Level groups, with the growth recorded for Skill Level 5 (commensurate with certificate I or secondary education) occupations (up by 1.8% or 480 vacancies).
- Labourers was the only Major Occupation group to record an increase in vacancies in January 2024 (up by 1.7% or 260 advertisements). The strongest decrease was for Technicians and Trades Workers vacancies (down by 4.7% or 1,700).
- Recruitment activity was concentrated in metropolitan Australia, with 70.7% of job advertisements in January 2024 found in Australia's capital cities. Over the last 12 months, job advertisements have decreased slightly in regional areas (down by 5.8%), whereas a larger decrease was recorded for capital cities (down by 12.3%).
- Each month the IVI report provides a more detailed analysis of a particular labour market segment. This month's report spotlights demand for Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons.

254,500

Seasonally adjusted

▼ **2.0%** Monthly change

▼ **9.7%** Annual change

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The Hard Sell: Why Demand For Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons Isn't Creating More Jobs

Internet vacancies for Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons are at historically high levels. Over the five years to December 2023, advertisements for this occupation increased by 66% (compared to growth for all occupations averaging 43% over this period). Despite the number of job ads slowing in the past year, in December 2023 there were around 850 vacancies advertised for this occupation across Australia.

Demand for these workers' services is also exceptionally strong, with 2023 breaking the record for new vehicle sales. Over the past year, a total of 1,216,780 vehicles were delivered. The previous highest sales result was achieved in 2017 with 1,189,116 vehicles sold.¹

The strong growth in new vehicle sales is underpinned by a snapback in spending following the COVID-19 pandemic where, despite weakening household disposable income, consumers have the means to spend after accumulative savings between 2020 and 2022.² Furthermore, Australia is experiencing a 300,000 vehicle structural undersupply resulting in around half of all car buyers purchasing vehicles which are on the back order list.³ With consumer interest well exceeding supply for new vehicles, demand for Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons and their services may continue over the medium term.

Despite the relatively high number of vacant positions and record demand for car sales, employment for this occupation has remained reasonably stable. In November 2023, there were approximately 36,000 Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons employed across Australia. Employment remained unchanged over the year and has shown no substantial change over the past five years, with the number of workers employed since November 2018 increasing by about 1.0% (or 400 workers). Limited employment growth is also projected, with the Victoria University Employment Projections suggesting Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salesperson will grow by 2.6% over the five years from May 2023 to May 2028 (below the projected 6.5% total growth anticipated across all occupations).⁴

In the Australian Bureau of Statistics' occupation classification, there are two specialisations which comprise Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons: Motor Vehicle or Caravan Salesperson and Motor Vehicle Parts Interpreter/Automotive Parts Salesperson.⁵ Both are assessed annually as part of Jobs and Skills Australia's Skills Priority List. In 2023, both occupations were not in shortage nationally.

While growth is slow, the Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons workforce appears to be remarkably resistant, with employment numbers appearing to be largely unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, no skill shortages were identified in either 2021 or 2022.

While the nature of the role may be changing, there remains a strong demand for these workers. A career as a Motor Vehicle and Parts Salesperson can represent an entryway for people looking to enter the automotive sector with many roles not requiring post-school qualifications and opportunities for part-time work.⁶ Those looking to do so, though, would be well served if they had a background or experience in sales and marketing, business operations and financial activities or customer service.⁷

Increased vacancy numbers, without a noticeable change in employment numbers is very unusual. The data is representative of an enthusiastic period of growth where car sales are at a record high and employers are keenly aware of increased demand for their services and products. The increased vacancy numbers could reflect employers attempts to maximise profits (through an increase of sales staff) during this boom period. However, the stable employment figures could reflect the changing role and requirements of this occupation and the structural changes apparent in this labour market. The automotive sales sector is expected to face challenges in the coming months with cost-of-living pressures and increased interest rates negatively impacting the market.⁸ Vacancy numbers may decline over the coming months as these factors exert greater influence on this sector and Jobs and Skills Australia looks forward to working with our partners to draw definitive conclusions within this labour market.

¹ Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, [Australia breaks all-time new vehicle sales in 2023](#), 4 January 2024.

² IBISWorld, [Motor Vehicle Parts Retailing in Australia - Market Size, Industry Analysis, Trends and Forecasts \(2023-2028\)](#), August 2023.

³ Evans, Simon, "[No discounts in sight for new car buyers](#)", Australian Financial Review, 27 August 2023.

⁴ Jobs and Skills Australia, [Victoria University Employment Projections](#), 2023. Please note, the employment projections are based on the macroeconomic and labour market outlook provided by the Commonwealth Treasury.

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Unit Group 6213 Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons](#), 22 November 2022.

⁶ Jobs and Skills Australia, [ANZSCO 6213 Motor Vehicle and Vehicle Parts Salespersons](#), 31 January 2024.

⁷ Jobs and Skills Australia, [Australian Skills Classification](#), December 2023.

⁸ Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, [Australia breaks all-time new vehicle sales in 2023](#), 4 January 2024.

Internet Vacancy Index Summary Sheet - January 2024

	Number of job ads (no.)	Monthly change (no.)	Monthly change (%)	Annual change (no.)	Annual change (%)
Australia	254,500	-5,200	▼ -2.0%	-27,400	▼ -9.7%
New South Wales	74,400	-3,500	▼ -4.6%	-14,000	▼ -15.9%
Victoria	60,200	-1,100	▼ -1.8%	-11,100	▼ -15.6%
Queensland	57,400	-240	▼ -0.4%	-2,800	▼ -4.6%
South Australia	15,200	-30	▼ -0.2%	-90	▼ -0.6%
Western Australia	31,500	-980	▼ -3.0%	-20	▼ -0.1%
Tasmania	4,700	340	▲ 7.8%	830	▲ 21.5%
Northern Territory	3,500	190	▲ 5.8%	420	▲ 13.8%
Australian Capital Territory	7,000	120	▲ 1.7%	-940	▼ -11.9%

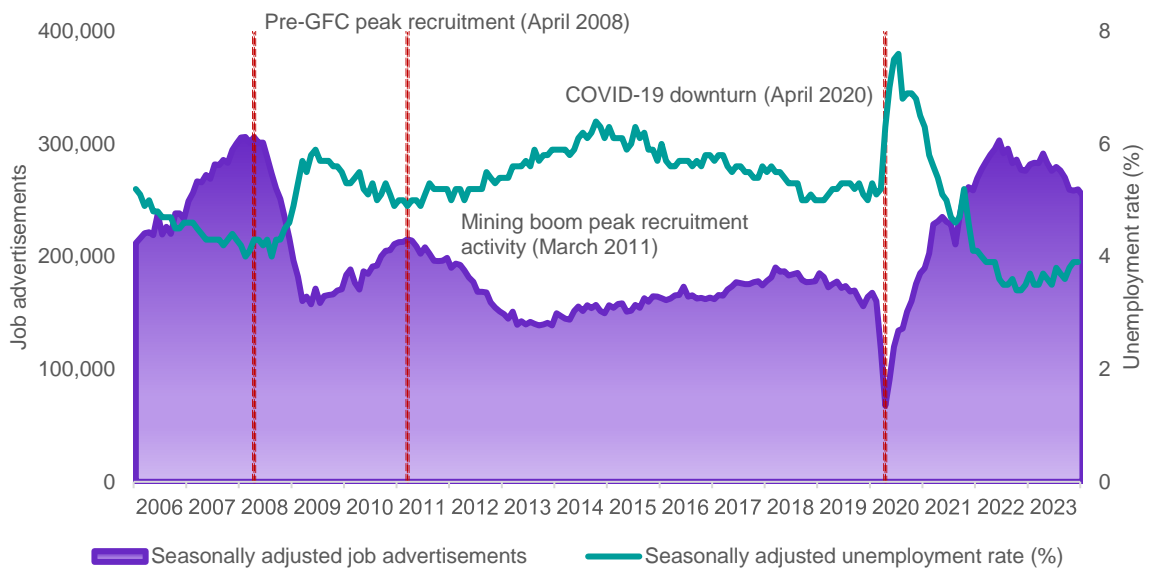
Managers	28,700	-500	▼ -1.7%	-2,300	▼ -7.4%
Professionals	76,100	-1,600	▼ -2.1%	-4,700	▼ -5.8%
Technicians and Trades Workers	34,500	-1,700	▼ -4.7%	-3,500	▼ -9.1%
Community and Personal Service Workers	28,900	-340	▼ -1.2%	-2,700	▼ -8.4%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	38,700	30	▲ 0.1%	-4,900	▼ -11.3%
Sales Workers	19,100	20	▲ 0.1%	-2,000	▼ -9.3%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	13,200	-580	▼ -4.2%	-2,200	▼ -14.0%
Labourers	15,600	260	▲ 1.7%	-5,000	▼ -24.3%

Skill Level 1 - Bachelor degree or higher	95,400	-2,200	▼ -2.3%	-6,700	▼ -6.6%
Skill Level 2 - Advanced Diploma or Diploma	27,600	-840	▼ -3.0%	-2,800	▼ -9.1%
Skill Level 3 - Certificate IV or III* (Skilled VET)	38,400	-1,400	▼ -3.5%	-2,500	▼ -6.1%
Skill Level 4 - Certificate II or III	66,100	-750	▼ -1.1%	-8,400	▼ -11.3%
Skill Level 5 - Certificate I or secondary education	27,000	480	▲ 1.8%	-6,900	▼ -20.4%

*Includes at least two years of on-the-job training.

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, January 2024, seasonally adjusted data.

Figure 1: Job advertisements and unemployment rate, January 2006 to January 2024



The next IVI release is scheduled for 20 March 2024. The IVI is published on the JSA website at jobsandskills.gov.au/work/internet-vacancy-index.

The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) is a monthly data series measuring online job advertisements, compiled by Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA). The IVI counts job advertisements newly lodged on the SEEK, CareerOne and Workforce Australia online job boards. Commencing in 2006, the IVI is the longest continuous time series for vacancy data in Australia. JSA research indicates the proportion of all vacancies covered by IVI has increased from 38% in 2016 to 60% in 2022. More detail on the IVI is available at jobsandskills.gov.au/work/internet-vacancy-index.



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