



Australian Government



Jobs and Skills Australia

Vacancy Report

April 2024

Released 15 May 2024

Internet Vacancy Index Key Points

This month's report shows the period of record growth in advertisements following the COVID-19 pandemic is ending, with vacancy numbers having decreased in ten of the past twelve months. Despite this, vacancy numbers remain at elevated levels, with around 40% more advertisements in the labour market presently than compared with the monthly average for 2019.

- Online job advertisements at the national level decreased in April 2024 (down by 3.2% or 7,800 job advertisements) to stand at 239,400.
 - Over the year to April 2024, online job advertisements decreased by 18.1% (or 52,800 job advertisements). Vacancy numbers, though, are at high levels historically.
 - This downward trend is present in other demand indicators, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Job Vacancies, Australia* series showing a 17.7% decrease in advertisements over the year to February 2024.¹
- Recruitment activity decreased across all states and territories over the month. The strongest decrease was recorded in Tasmania (down by 4.7% or 220 job advertisements) followed by Victoria (down by 4.1% or 2,400) and New South Wales (down by 4.0% or 2,900).
- Over the month, advertisements decreased across all Skill Level groups. The strongest decrease was recorded for Skill Level 5 (commensurate with certificate I or secondary education) occupations (down by 5.4% or 1,400 job advertisements) followed by Skill Level 4 (commensurate with certificate II or III) occupations (down by 4.8% or 3,100).
- Advertisements decreased across all Major Occupation groups over the month. The strongest decrease was for Machinery Operators and Drivers (down by 5.4% or 710 job advertisements) followed by Labourers (down by 5.3% or 790). The weakest decrease was recorded for Professionals (down by 0.8% or 590)
- Recruitment activity was concentrated in metropolitan Australia, with 71.8% of job advertisements in April 2024 found in Australia's capital cities. Over the last 12 months, job advertisements have decreased in regional areas (down by 11.4%), however a slightly larger decrease was recorded for capital cities (down by 14.6%).
- Each month the IVI report provides a more detailed analysis of a particular labour market segment. This month's report spotlights Environmental Scientists.

239,400

Seasonally adjusted

▼ **3.2%** Monthly change

▼ **18.1%** Annual change

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Over the year to April 2024, online job advertisements decreased by 18.1% (or 52,800 job advertisements).

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), '[Job Vacancies, Australia](#)', February 2024.

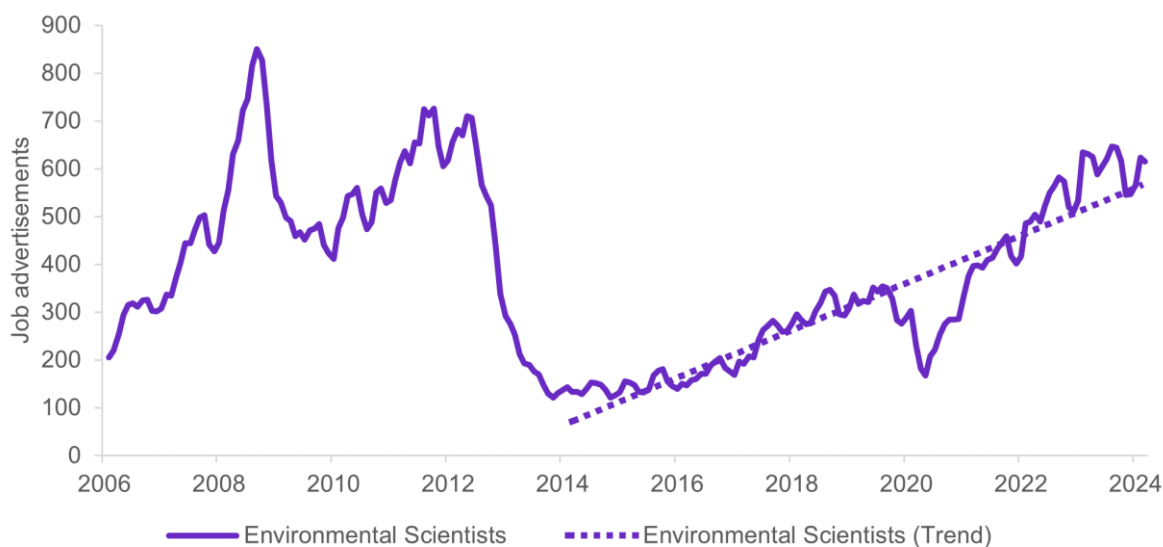
“More than a job”: Transforming climate-concern into critical careers.

The coinciding of the April Vacancy Report release and [National Careers Week](#) (NCW) encouraged the spotlight considering Environmental Scientists; an occupation group embodying the theme of NCW 2024 “Career. It’s more than a job”. The insipient and long-term challenges of climate change are of increasing concern. This is particularly felt by young Australians, and their peers internationally, due to the perceived likelihood of direct personal consequences and their limited agency in current decision-making and action.² Growing numbers of young Australians are transforming eco-anxiety into critical careers, seeking qualifications and careers as Environmental Scientists. Indicators suggest the labour market is ready to welcome these contributions. Importantly, forward-looking research suggests this expertise will play a crucial role in major shifts such as the clean energy transition. The diverse skillsets required across the specialisations in this occupation category, including Conservation Officer, Environmental Consultant, Environmental Research Scientist and Park Ranger mean there is a range of opportunities for those passionate about building a sustainable future for Australia.³

Previously, internet vacancy numbers for Environmental Scientists have been subject to abrupt fluctuations, with sharp increases and declines evident around the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2008 and the mining boom.⁴ The current long-term growth trend in internet vacancies for Environmental Scientists, interrupted briefly by the COVID-19 downturn, appears to be on a more stable upward trajectory. These trends are illustrated in Figure 1.

Current demand levels are quickly approaching those last recorded during the mining boom. While still some way from reaching the series high monthly count recorded prior to the GFC (850 job advertisements in October 2008), the 620 job advertisements recorded in April 2024 comes after around a decade of consistent growth. Over the 10 years to April 2024, internet vacancies seeking Environmental Scientists increased by 361% (or 480), far more than the 72.8% increase in vacancies across all occupations over this period. Perhaps unsurprisingly, growth in demand for Environmental Scientists has been strong in both capital cities and regional Australia. The extent of the growth differential across these jurisdictions is perhaps surprising. The 504% increase in internet vacancies recorded over the last decade in regional Australia almost doubles the rate of growth recorded in capital cities over this period.⁵ The current trend of consistent growth shows a distinct pattern from prior fluctuations and, if driven by systemic changes to the role of environmental considerations in public and private sector operations, is unlikely to be curtailed in the abrupt fashion seen previously.

Figure 1: Online job advertisements for Environmental Scientists, March 2006 to April 2024



Source: Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, 3-month average data, April 2024.

Employment among Environmental Scientists has also been increasing, showing a relatively strong positive linear trend over the last decade.⁶ Over the 10 years to February 2024, employment numbers increased by 45.6% to just over 31,000

² C Hickman, E Marks, P Pihkala, S Clayton, RE Lewandowski, EE Mayall, B Wray, C Mellor and L van Susteren, ‘Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey’, *Lancet Planet Health*, 2021, 5(12):863-873. doi:10.1016/S2542-5196(21)00278-3.

³ Responses to the ABS Census of Population and Housing 2021 show the share of employment is relatively evenly distributed across these four specialisations with around one-quarter attributable to each Conservation Officer, Environmental Consultant and Environmental Research Scientist. Park Ranger accounts for around 15% of employment in this category with the remainder shared across ‘not elsewhere classified’ and ‘not further described’ categories.

⁴ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), ‘Internet Vacancy Index’, 3-month average data, April 2024.

⁵ JSA, ‘Internet Vacancy Index’, unpublished 3-month average data, April 2024.

⁶ ABS, ‘Labour Force, Australia, Detailed’, February 2024, trend data by Jobs and Skills Australia; ABS, ‘Labour Force, Australia’, February 2024.

(compared with 24.0% growth in employment for all occupations). More recent softening of economic conditions has not dampened this growth trend, with employment increasing by 4.1% over the last year alone (compared with 2.7% growth in employment for all occupations). Employment projections for this occupation forecast a growth of 7.7% over the five years to May 2028, slightly exceeding the average growth of 6.5% expected over this period.⁷

These indicators suggest a robust labour market for Environmental Scientists now and moving forward. The number of graduates from relevant tertiary education courses suggests the supply of passionate talent is well-fortified. Since 2011, the number of Australians whose highest non-school qualification were in Environmental Studies has increased in each successive Census. By the 2016 Census, the number of Australians with these qualifications increased by 20.2%. A further 25.5% increase was recorded between 2016 and 2021, with almost 53,000 Australians holding non-school qualifications in Environmental Studies.⁸

Jobs and Skills Australia's capacity study on the workforce needs for Australia's transition to a clean energy economy '[The Clean Energy Generation: workforce needs for a net zero economy](#)' highlighted the critical role expected for Environmental Scientists. This study indicates Environmental Scientists will be required across different segments of the clean energy transition. This includes energy generation and supply, enabling through professional and scientific services supporting different aspects of implementation and construction, and contributing to managing the carbon lifecycle. Importantly, unlike some other Professional occupations identified as critical to the clean energy transition, modelling suggested a likely shortfall of Environmental Scientists to meet future demand.

Environmental Scientists appear to be playing an increasingly important role in the Australian economy, a role likely to grow further as efforts to meet the challenges of climate change intensify. The growing number of Australians holding qualifications in this area suggests more and more people are finding intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to embark on the many years of study typically required to enter this field. Notably, unlike some other STEM disciplines, employment among Environmental Scientists is balanced across genders, with the younger cohorts tipping towards increasing female employment.⁹ In context of the critical role these experts will play in shaping Australia's sustainable future and the barriers to achieving this goal, the foundation of the career choice as 'more than a job' seems an excellent example to highlight during National Careers Week.

⁷ JSA, '[Victoria University Employment Projections - May 2023 to May 2033](#)', 2023.

⁸ ABS, '[Environmental Studies qualification holders \(QALFP\) 2011, 2016 and 2021](#)' [Census of Population and Housing, TableBuilder], 2011, 2016 and 2021.

⁹ ABS, '[Environmental Scientists \(OCCP\) by Sex \(SEXP\) and Age \(AGE5P\) 2021](#)' [Census of Population and Housing, TableBuilder], 2021.

Internet Vacancy Index Summary Sheet - April 2024

	Number of job ads (no.)	Monthly change (no.)	Monthly change (%)	Annual change (no.)	Annual change (%)
Australia	239,400	-7,800	▼ -3.2%	-52,800	▼ -18.1%
New South Wales	69,800	-2,900	▼ -4.0%	-18,300	▼ -20.8%
Victoria	55,800	-2,400	▼ -4.1%	-19,300	▼ -25.7%
Queensland	55,500	-1,200	▼ -2.0%	-7,600	▼ -12.0%
South Australia	14,300	-350	▼ -2.4%	-2,100	▼ -12.6%
Western Australia	30,400	-390	▼ -1.3%	-4,200	▼ -12.2%
Tasmania	4,400	-220	▼ -4.7%	10	▲ 0.2%
Northern Territory	3,300	-50	▼ -1.4%	130	▲ 4.2%
Australian Capital Territory	6,700	-20	▼ -0.4%	-1,100	▼ -14.4%

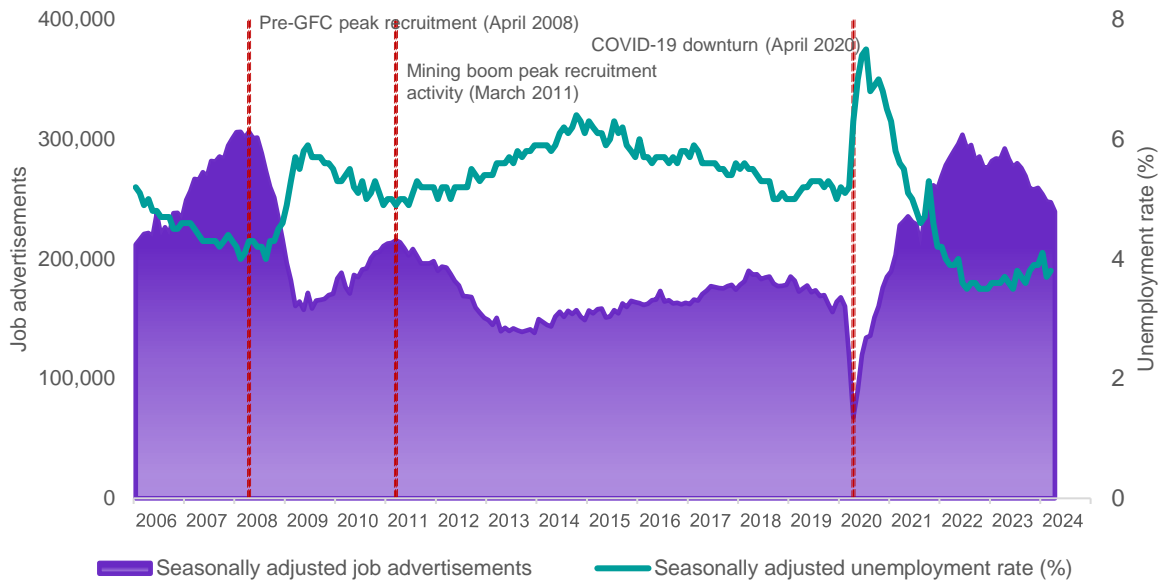
Managers	28,300	-470	▼ -1.6%	-4,700	▼ -14.2%
Professionals	71,300	-590	▼ -0.8%	-15,400	▼ -17.7%
Technicians and Trades Workers	32,400	-1,200	▼ -3.7%	-7,400	▼ -18.6%
Community and Personal Service Workers	26,700	-1,000	▼ -3.7%	-5,700	▼ -17.5%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	36,300	-1,900	▼ -4.9%	-8,300	▼ -18.6%
Sales Workers	18,300	-770	▼ -4.0%	-3,300	▼ -15.4%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	12,400	-710	▼ -5.4%	-3,100	▼ -19.8%
Labourers	14,200	-790	▼ -5.3%	-5,000	▼ -26.1%

Skill Level 1 - Bachelor degree or higher	90,300	-1,000	▼ -1.1%	-18,900	▼ -17.3%
Skill Level 2 - Advanced Diploma or Diploma	27,000	-830	▼ -3.0%	-4,600	▼ -14.7%
Skill Level 3 - Certificate IV or III* (Skilled VET)	36,200	-1,100	▼ -2.9%	-7,200	▼ -16.5%
Skill Level 4 - Certificate II or III	61,400	-3,100	▼ -4.8%	-14,100	▼ -18.7%
Skill Level 5 - Certificate I or secondary education	24,700	-1,400	▼ -5.4%	-7,900	▼ -24.1%

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

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

Figure 2: Job advertisements and unemployment rate, January 2006 to April 2024



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, March 2024, seasonally adjusted data; Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, April 2024, seasonally adjusted data.



The next IVI release is scheduled for 12 June 2024. The IVI is published on the JSA website at jobsandskills.gov.au/data/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 2023. More detail on the IVI is available at jobsandskills.gov.au/data/internet-vacancy-index.



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