



Vacancy Report

May 2024

Released 12 June 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 the last substantial monthly increase occurring more than 12 months ago. 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 held steady, increasing in May 2024 (up by 0.2% or 420 job advertisements) to stand at 239,600.
 - Over the year to May 2024, online job advertisements decreased by 15.4% (or 43,600 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 five states and territories over the month. The strongest decrease was recorded in the Australian Capital Territory (down by 2.8% or 190 job advertisements) followed by New South Wales (down by 0.8% or 560).
- Over the month, advertisements increased across three Skill Level groups. The strongest increase was recorded for Skill Level 3 (commensurate with certificate IV or III) occupations (up by 2.9% or 1,100 job advertisements) followed by Skill Level 5 (commensurate with certificate I or secondary education) occupations (up by 2.1% or 520).
- Advertisements increased across six Major Occupation groups over the month. The strongest increase was for Sales Workers (up by 4.0% or 740 job advertisements) followed by Technicians and Trades Workers (up by 1.6% or 530).
- Recruitment activity was concentrated in metropolitan Australia, with 71.9% of job advertisements in May 2024 found in Australia's capital cities. Over the last twelve months, job advertisements have decreased in regional areas (down by 14.3%), however a slightly larger decrease was recorded for capital cities (down by 16.1%).
- Each month the IVI report provides a more detailed analysis of a particular labour market segment. This month's report spotlights Air Transport Professionals.

239,600

Seasonally adjusted

▲ 0.2% Monthly change

▼ 15.4% Annual change

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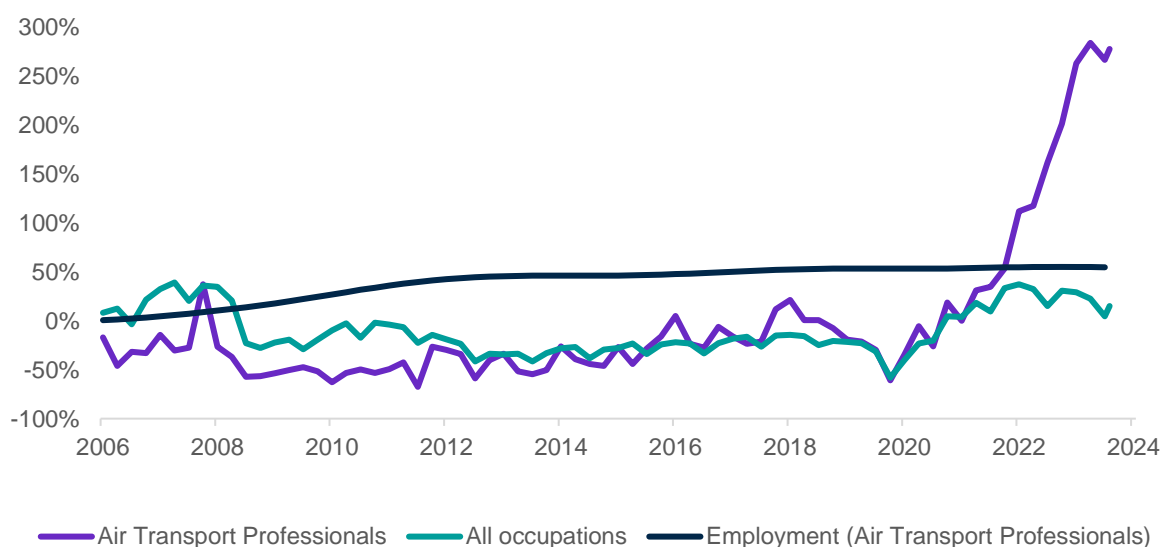
¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), '[Job Vacancies, Australia](#)', February 2024.

Please keep your seatbelts fastened, demand for Air Transport Professionals has taken off.

Since late 2023, online job advertisements for Air Transport Professionals have been hovering around the series all-time high. Several drivers of increasing demand can be identified. These largely stem from demand for Aeroplane Pilots, who constitute around two-thirds of employment in this occupation category.² The aviation sector is experiencing ongoing growth globally. Some members of this workforce are being sought to take up more remunerative opportunities internationally. Skill shortages were identified in 2023 both for Aeroplane Pilots and Flying Instructors, an occupation critical to the pipeline of new entrants. Elevated levels of demand for these occupations appears likely to be persistent. Private sector forecasts are predicting continued growth in the aviation sector alongside challenges to ongoing workforce sufficiency. The possibility of deploying automation to ease demand drivers is not considered a near-term solution and is expected to face barriers.

The recent increase in recruitment activity for Air Transport Professionals has been intense.³ Over the five years to May 2024, online job advertisements increased by 307% (or 150). In comparison, the all-occupation average increased by 40.0% over this period. This increase in demand is on a scale not previously seen for this occupation across the almost two decades covered by the Internet Vacancy Index. For example, over the decade preceding the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of online job advertisements for Air Transport Professionals went largely unchanged. While demand across all-occupations has tapered back from peak recruitment activity recorded in 2022 (down by 19.7%), online job advertisements for Air Transport Professionals have continued to increase over this period (up by 72.9%). These trends are illustrated in Figure 1, showing the growth rate in advertisements and employment for Air Transport Professionals since May 2006. It is noteworthy that Air Transport Professionals vacancies are also advertised on occupation specific websites and company websites suggesting the Internet Vacancy Index may only reflect a portion of actual vacancy numbers.

Figure 1: Growth rate in online job advertisements and employment for Air Transport Professionals from May 2006 to May 2024



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, February 2024, trend data by Jobs and Skills Australia; Jobs and Skills Australia, Internet Vacancy Index, three-month average data, May 2024

Despite the intensity of the increased recruitment activity, employment numbers for Air Transport Professionals have been generally stable, with recent quarters recording slight decreases.⁴ Over the year to February 2024, the number of working Air Transport Professionals decreased by 0.2% to just over 15,000. This is consistent with longer-term stability in employment numbers, with a 1.1% increase recorded over the five years to February 2024. Other occupations in the aviation sector, by contrast, have recorded meaningful growth in employment over this period, seemingly more in alignment with ongoing sectoral growth. For example, both the number of working Aircraft Maintenance Engineers and Travel Attendants increased over this five-year period (up by 14.1% and 10.6% respectively). Employment growth is

² ABS, 'Air Transport Professionals (OCCP) 2021' [Census of Population and Housing, TableBuilder], 2021.

³ Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA), 'Internet Vacancy Index', three-month average data, May 2024.

⁴ ABS, 'Labour Force Survey, Detailed', February 2024, trend data by Jobs and Skills Australia.

nonetheless expected for Air Transport Professionals, with recent projections forecasting a 12.1% increase in employment over the five years to May 2028, almost doubling the average growth of 6.5% expected over this period.⁵

The apparent contradiction in online job advertisement growth concurrent with stable employment numbers aligns with the introduction of occupations in this category to Jobs and Skills Australia's 2023 Skills Priority List.⁶ Aeroplane Pilots were found to be in shortage nationally, as well as in each state and territory, with Queensland having the only regional shortage.⁷ Flying Instructors were also found to be in shortage nationally for the first time in the 2023 Skills Priority List, a shortage that may be constraining the pipeline of new pilots.⁸

Recent forecasts by several private sector firms predict continuing growth in the aviation sector globally.⁹ Some aspects of these forecasts bare relevance to the challenges in the Australian market. The particularly strong growth expected for the Asia-Pacific region suggests the likelihood of increased competition for pilots close to home.¹⁰ In the North American sector, the mandatory retirement age for pilots is expected to deplete available workers meaningfully over the coming decade, with pilot shortages already present.¹¹ Experienced Australian pilots that satisfy the unusually high entry requirements for these roles in North America are already being sought with reportedly attractive conditions offered to cross the pond.¹²

In context of these workforce challenges, automation is not yet billed as a likely pressure release. New technologies are expected to facilitate improved training and scheduling in the near-term, however commentary suggests relieving pilot demand remains a long-term prospect.¹³ Resistance from customers and worker representative organisations is expected to be a formidable barrier to both development and deployment.¹⁴

The workforce challenges facing the aviation sector, as described in terms of the critical Air Transport Professionals occupation group, appear likely to persist and perhaps even intensify. The coalescence of global growth in this sector and workforce demographic change has the potential to amplify local demand pressures. Larger international labour markets have the capacity to attract experienced Australian talent to overcome their own pilot shortages. This could increase the importance of the pipeline of new workforce entrants in this highly competitive market. The Vocational Education and Training Student Loan program offers options for aspiring pilots; however, training cost is a routinely acknowledged barrier to pilot qualification.¹⁵ With the relatively long training period for these roles, Australian firms may now see long-term advantage in finding new ways to support aspiring pilots to enter the field. Should workforce challenges intensify, a secure pipeline of new workforce entrants paired with effective retention strategies would be an inimitable competitive advantage. Widening the recruitment pool to begin to redress the considerable gender imbalance among Australia's Air Transport Professionals would not go unnoticed by increasingly socially conscious customers.¹⁶ The gender imbalance is particularly pronounced among Aeroplane Pilots, with a 7.2% female share of employment, which is in line with international workforce composition.¹⁷ Effective action in this regard could put Australian firms at the forefront of the global push to increase the inclusiveness of this workforce.¹⁸

⁵ JSA, '[Victoria University Employment Projections - May 2023 to May 2033](#)', 2023.

⁶ JSA, '[2023 Skills Priority List: Key findings report](#)', 2023.

⁷ JSA, '[Skills Priority List](#)', 2023.

⁸ JSA, '[Skills Priority List](#)'.

⁹ Airbus, '[Global services forecast](#)' Airbus, 2023; Boeing, '[Pilot and technician outlook 2022-2041](#)', Boeing, 2023; CAE, '[Aviation talent forecast 2023](#)' CAE, 2023;

¹⁰ CAE, '[Aviation talent forecast 2023](#)'.

¹¹ Boeing, '[Pilot and technician outlook 2022-2041](#)'.

¹² A Thorn, '[12 US airlines now poaching Aussie pilots](#)', *Australian Aviation*, 5 December 2022.

¹³ CAPA – Centre for Aviation, '[The global pilot shortage is a challenge to the world's airlines](#)', CAPA- Centre for Aviation, 21 August 2023.

¹⁴ The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations, '[Two pilots, one priority: Elevating flight safety](#)', 5 April 2024.

¹⁵ Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, '[VET Student Loans](#)', DEWR website, n.d.; CAPA – Centre for Aviation, '[The global pilot shortage is a challenge to the world's airlines](#)'.

¹⁶ J Hackenberg, '[Brands, you need to listen to the conscious consumer of the future](#)', *Forbes*, 29 April 2021; S Atto, '[Sustainability attitudes and behaviours of Australian shoppers](#)', *Monash Lens*, 16 August 2023.

¹⁷ ABS, '[Aeroplane Pilots \(OCCP\) by Age \(AGE5P\) and Sex \(SEXP\) 2021](#)' [Census of Population and Housing, TableBuilder], 2021

¹⁸ International Civil Aviation Organisation, '[Gender Equality and ICAO](#)', ICAO website, n.d.

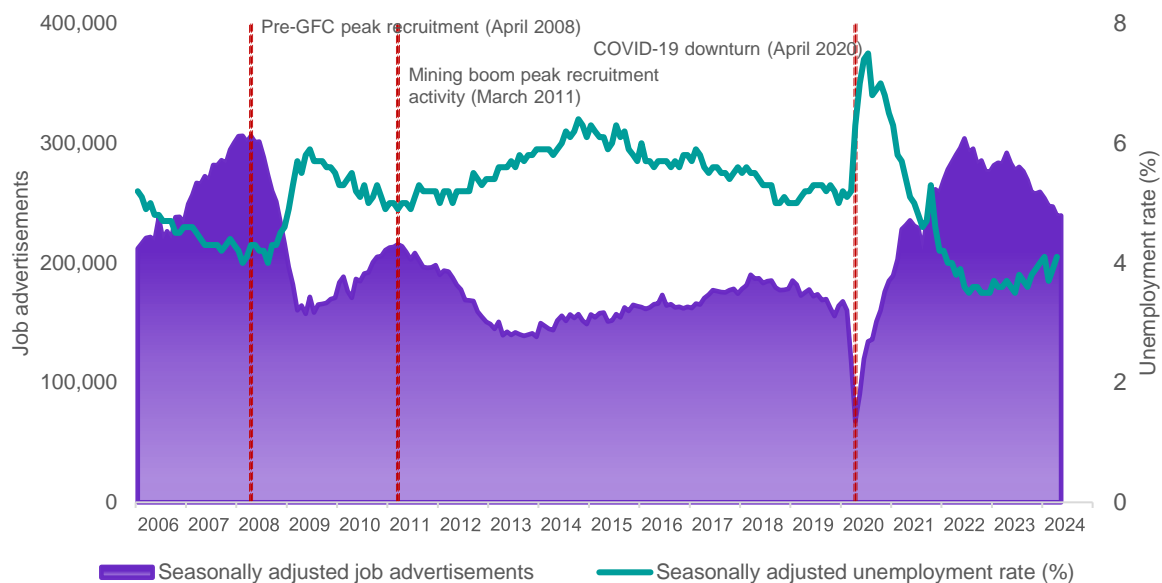
Internet Vacancy Index Summary Sheet - May 2024

	Number of job ads (no.)	Monthly change (no.)	Monthly change (%)	Annual change (no.)	Annual change (%)
Australia	239,600	420	▲ 0.2%	-43,600	▼ -15.4%
New South Wales	68,900	-560	▼ -0.8%	-16,800	▼ -19.6%
Victoria	56,800	970	▲ 1.7%	-14,900	▼ -20.8%
Queensland	55,100	-230	▼ -0.4%	-5,800	▼ -9.6%
South Australia	14,600	110	▲ 0.7%	-1,100	▼ -6.8%
Western Australia	30,200	-90	▼ -0.3%	-3,000	▼ -9.0%
Tasmania	4,400	40	▲ 1.0%	160	▲ 3.8%
Northern Territory	3,200	-20	▼ -0.8%	-140	▼ -4.2%
Australian Capital Territory	6,500	-190	▼ -2.8%	-1,500	▼ -19.1%
Managers	28,500	200	▲ 0.7%	-3,700	▼ -11.5%
Professionals	69,400	-1,400	▼ -2.0%	-15,200	▼ -18.0%
Technicians and Trades Workers	33,000	530	▲ 1.6%	-5,800	▼ -15.0%
Community and Personal Service Workers	26,400	-210	▼ -0.8%	-4,500	▼ -14.6%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	36,800	460	▲ 1.3%	-6,000	▼ -14.1%
Sales Workers	19,100	740	▲ 4.0%	-1,500	▼ -7.1%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	12,500	70	▲ 0.6%	-2,800	▼ -18.2%
Labourers	14,300	100	▲ 0.7%	-3,900	▼ -21.3%
Skill Level 1 - Bachelor degree or higher	88,500	-1,300	▼ -1.4%	-18,200	▼ -17.0%
Skill Level 2 - Advanced Diploma or Diploma	27,200	210	▲ 0.8%	-3,500	▼ -11.3%
Skill Level 3 - Certificate IV or III* (Skilled VET)	37,500	1,100	▲ 2.9%	-4,800	▼ -11.4%
Skill Level 4 - Certificate II or III	61,200	-160	▼ -0.3%	-11,800	▼ -16.1%
Skill Level 5 - Certificate I or secondary education	25,300	520	▲ 2.1%	-5,200	▼ -17.1%

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

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

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



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



The next IVI release is scheduled for 17 July 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.



Australian Government



Jobs and Skills Australia