Australian Government | Jobs and Skills Australia

# REOS Recruitment Insights Report - September 2025

Jobs and Skills Australia surveys around 800 employers each month through the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS) to understand their recruitment experiences and staffing expectations.

## Key Findings

At the national level, recruitment indicators continue to reflect improving employer sentiment. The recruitment rate is continuing to trend upward, while recruitment difficulty continues a downward trend over the past year. This positive sentiment is also reflected in the long-term outlook, with more employers expecting to increase staff over the coming year.

Recent volatility in key indicators over the last few months has largely been driven by regional differences. However, the September 2025 results show similar trends across Capital Cities and Rest of State areas for most indicators - except for the recruitment rate, where differences remain.

## Recruitment Activity

In September 2025, the national recruitment rate increased by 1 percentage point to 51%. This move continues an upward trend with the national recruitment rate increasing by 6 percentage points over the past 12 months.

Half of employers in Capital Cities (50%) recruited in September 2025, a decrease of 2 percentage points from the previous month. In contrast, the recruitment rate in Rest of State areas increased by 7 percentage points to 55%.

Compared to September 2024, recruitment activity increased more sharply in Capital Cities (up 9 percentage points) than in Rest of State areas (up 4 percentage points), indicating stronger growth in metropolitan recruitment over the past year.

## Recruitment Difficulty

The recruitment difficulty rate increased by 5 percentage points in September to 45% of recruiting employers. Despite this monthly increase, the rate remains 7 percentage points lower than it was a year ago and 30 percentage points below the record high of 75% in July 2022.

In September 2025, a slightly lower proportion of recruiting employers experienced recruitment difficulty in Capital Cities (44%) compared with Rest of State areas (46%). Both experienced an increase in recruitment difficulty compared with the previous month, up 7 percentage points in Capital Cities and 1 percentage point in Rest of State areas. However, compared to September 2024, recruitment difficulty eased slightly in Capital Cities (down 1 percentage point) and more significantly in Rest of State areas (down 16 percentage points).

## Staffing Outlook: employers expecting to increase staff

In September 2025, 24% of employers expected to increase staffing numbers in the next three months, a 1 percentage point decrease from August, but 2 percentage points higher than a year earlier.

Overall, staffing outlook was slightly weaker in Capital Cities compared to Rest of State areas. A lower proportion of employers in Capital Cities (24%) were expecting to increase their staffing levels in the next three months compared with Rest of State areas (26%). Over the month, staffing outlook fell by 3 percentage points in Capital Cities while Rest of State areas experienced an increase of 4 percentage points.

## Reason for Recruiting

The primary reason for recruitment in September was staff turnover only, cited by 58% of recruiting employers. Meanwhile, 31% recruited to fill new positions only, and 11% recruited for both turnover and new roles.

## Staffing Changes Over the Last Month

In September, 12% of employers increased staff - down 3 percentage points from August. The proportion of employers who decreased staff also fell down 1 percentage point to 11%.

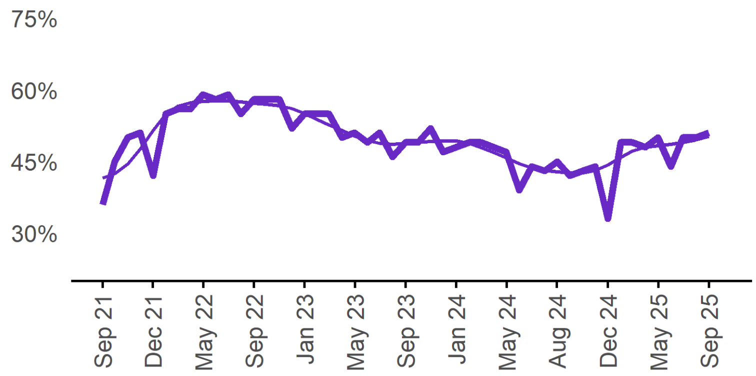
## Employers Unable to Fill Vacancies Within a Month

The proportion of employers unable to fill vacancies within a month rose by 2 percentage points to 44% in September. This figure is unchanged compared to September 2024.

# REOS national indicators [1]

## Recruitment rate

**Proportion of employers currently recruiting or who recruited in the previous month.**

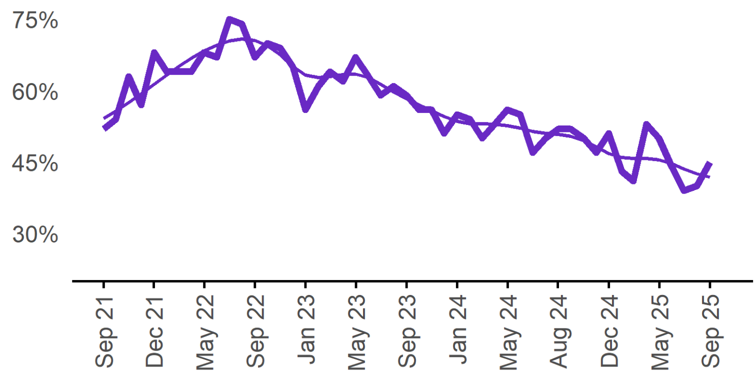



51%

**Monthly change:**
▲ 1% pt
**Annual change:**
▲ 6% pts

## Recruitment difficulty rate

**Proportion of recruiting employers who stated they had difficulty hiring staff.**

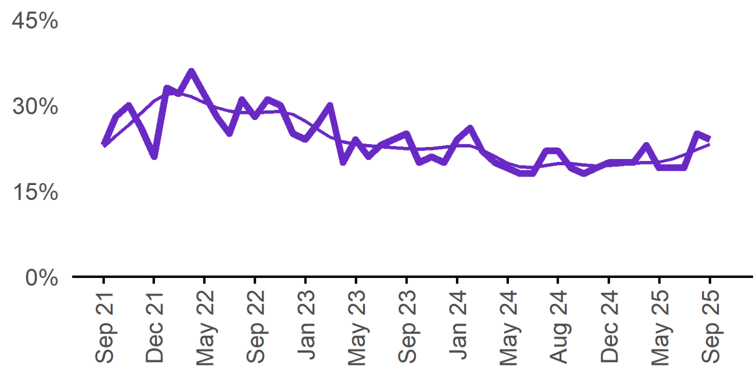



45%

**Monthly change:**
▲ 5% pts
**Annual change:**
▼ 7% pts

## Expecting to increase staff

**Proportion of employers who expected to increase staffing numbers over the next three months.**




24%

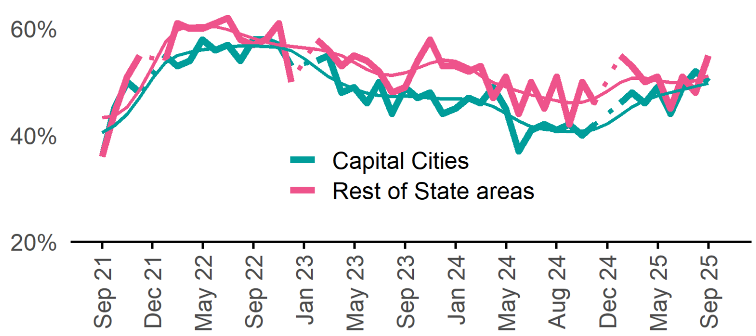
**Monthly change:**
▼ 1% pt
**Annual change:**
▲ 2% pts

[1] A Henderson smoothed line has been included in the charts to reduce month to month volatility and illustrate long term patterns. See the explanatory note for more information.

# Capital City/Rest of State areas[2]

## Recruitment rate

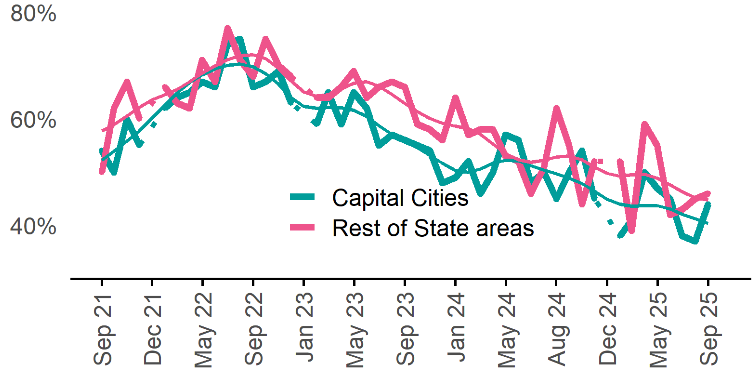
### Proportion of employers currently recruiting or who recruited in the previous month.




**Capital Cities**: **50%**
Monthly change:
▼ 2% pts
Annual change:
▲ 9% pts
**Rest of State**: **55%**
Monthly change:
▲ 7% pts
Annual change:
▲ 4% pts

## Recruitment difficulty rate

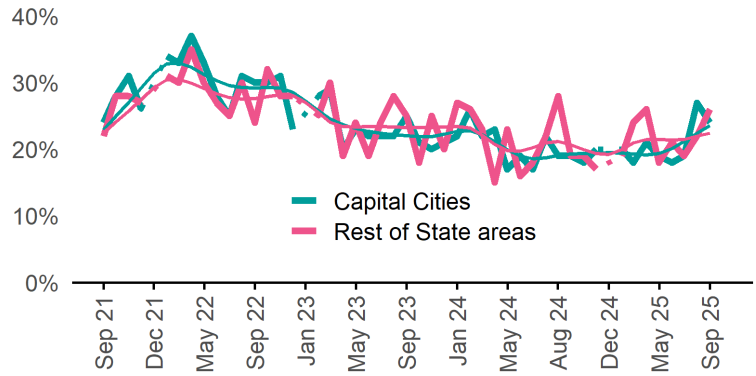
### Proportion of recruiting employers who stated they had difficulty hiring staff.




**Capital Cities**: **44%**
Monthly change:
▲ 7% pts
Annual change:
▼ 1% pt
**Rest of State**: **46%**
Monthly change:
▲ 1% pt
Annual change:
▼ 16% pts

## Staffing outlook – Expecting to increase staff

### Proportion of employers who expected to increase staffing numbers over the next three months.



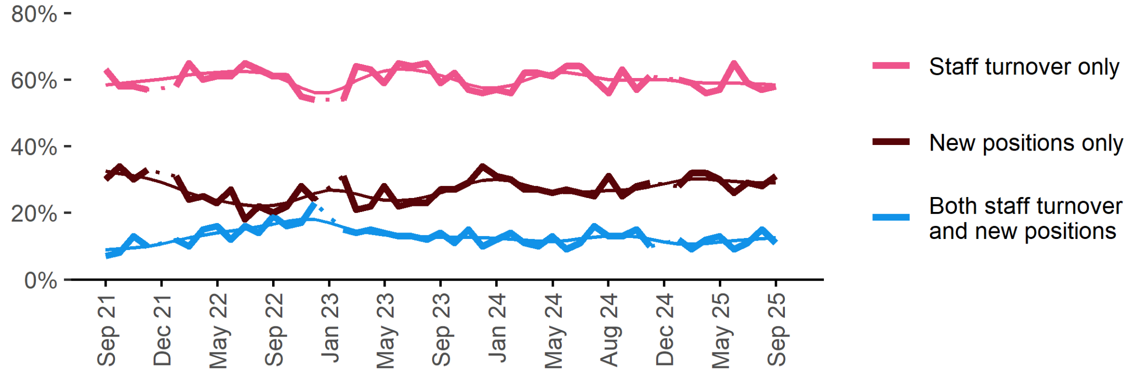

**Capital Cities**: **24%**
Monthly change:
▼ 3% pts
Annual change:
▲ 5% pts
**Rest of State**: **26%**
Monthly change:
▲ 4% pts
Annual change:
▼ 2% pts

[2] Data are not available for January in some years. Data points have been joined by a dotted line between December and February to reflect this. 'Rest of State' refers to areas outside the capital cities.

# Other recruitment indicators

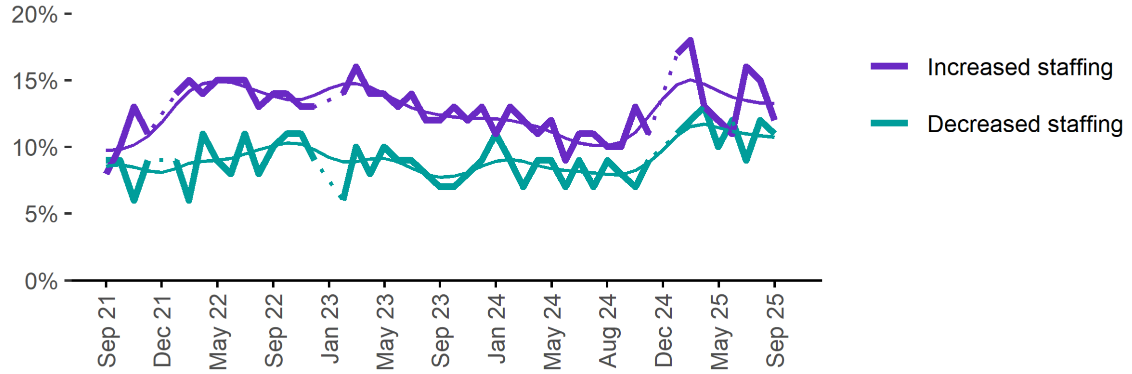
## Reason for recruiting

### Proportion of employers currently recruiting or who recruited in the previous month.



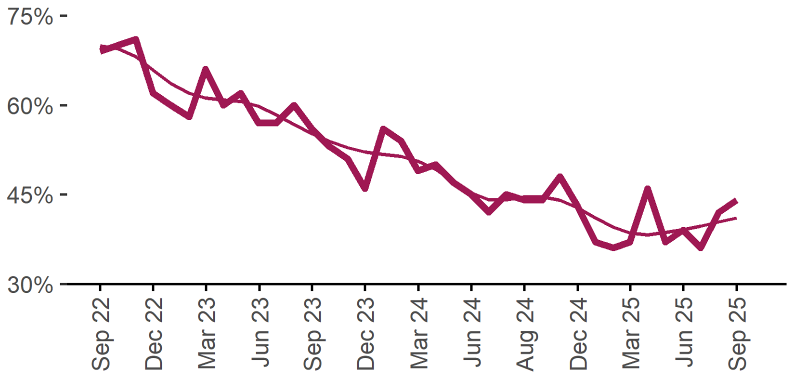

## Staffing changes over the last month

### Proportion of employers who said they increased or decreased staffing compared to the previous month.




## Employers unable to fill vacancies within a month

### Proportion of recruiting employers who were unable to fill their vacancies within a month.*




44%

**Monthly change:**
▲ 2% pts
**Annual change:**
0% pts

* Excludes employers who have been recruiting for less than a month.

## Background

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) conducts the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS), a telephone administered survey with the business owner or other person in the business responsible for recruitment. Around 800 employers are surveyed each month, with data published on the JSA website. While the data are indicative of recruitment activity, they may be subject to seasonal factors and other volatility and should therefore be used with a degree of caution. In addition, the survey is targeted towards employers with 5 or more employees and excludes many government organisations.

## Smoothed series in charts

Charts include Henderson-smoothed lines in addition to original data for most of our recruitment indicators. As the timeseries is not yet long enough for seasonal adjustment, a Henderson smoothed moving average with a 13-term filter (equating to 13 months) has been directly applied to the original series. This provides an indication of the general movement in each recruitment indicator relative to previous months. Due to using 13 months in the moving average, results for the most recent six months will be revised each month.

## Referencing this report

Data in this release should be referenced as: Jobs and Skills Australia, Recruitment Insights Report, September 2025.

## Contact us

For additional information, email REOS@jobsandskills.gov.au

# Also available from the REOS

## Data file with monthly and quarterly recruitment indicators

A REOS data file is available on the JSA website. Breakdowns by Capital City/Rest of State area, Business size, and ANZSCO Skill Level are included in the monthly results. Quarterly recruitment indicators provide detail by state, ARIA (ABS' Accessibility and Remoteness Index of Australia) as well as selected industry and occupation groups.

### Next Recruitment Insights Report release:

- October 2025 Recruitment Insights Report – 18 November 2025

## Stay up to date

JSA also releases semi-regular reports including spotlight articles, detailing aspects of the REOS that cannot be included in our monthly Recruitment Insights Report. Sign up and get the latest notifications sent straight to your inbox.

### Upcoming spotlight:

- September quarter 2025 quarterly report – 23 October 2025

### Recent spotlights:

- June quarter 2025 results – 28 August 2025
- Update – Employers' experiences with retention issues – 24 July 2025