

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS.

CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

(Prepared for the Information of the Capital Issues Advisory Board).

1. **Employment:** The estimated average number of wage and salary earners in employment in the Commonwealth in 1938-39 was 2,126,000, and in April 1941, 2,264,000, an increase of 138,000 or 6.5 per cent. Enlistments are not included in the figures. Since approximately 90% of enlistments (i.e. 202,000) are of men in the wage or salary earning group, the total increase in all employment (including Defence Services as well as civil employment) from 1938-39 to April, 1941, can be estimated at approximately 340,000 or 16.0% of the numbers employed in 1938-39.

It is not accurately known how many militia in camp are included in the employment total. But it is estimated that probably one half of the 48,000 wage earners in militia camps are not included in the above figures. If these be added the total increase in employment is in the vicinity of 364,000. This increase in employment includes some former unemployed, some "natural increase" in working population, some "delayed retirements" or return of retired workers to active work and, apparently, some considerable "attraction" of self employed men, women and girls into wage earning employment.

The following table shows the estimated change in total employment from 1938-39 to April, 1941:-

Estimated Number of Wage or Salary Earners in Employment.

State	1938-39	April 1941	Increase (+) or Decrease (-)	
			No.	%
New South Wales ..	846,500	906,600	+60,100	+7.1
Victoria ..	612,100	669,700	+57,600	+9.4
Queensland ..	257,700	252,100	- 5,600	-2.2(a)
South Australia ..	186,900	212,500	+25,600	+13.7
Western Australia ..	160,300	154,200	- 6,100	- 3.8
Tasmania ..	62,500	68,700	+ 6,200	+ 9.9
TOTAL:	2,126,000	2,263,800	+137,800	+6.5

(The above numbers are in general exclusive of enlisted defence forces and militia in short term training.)

(a) Seasonal influences affect the percentage for this State.

During the period from August, 1939 to April, 1941, there was a net increase of 138,000 in total employment. Direct governmental employment for munitions (i.e. Munition factories and annexes, Aircraft factories and some ship-building yards) accounted for about 37,000 of this net increase in employment. Defence contracts undertaken by private industry are not included in this figure. Total factory employment during the period August, 1939 to April, 1941 increased from 546,000 to 644,700, i.e. by 98,700. Direct governmental employment on munitions (excluding private defence contractors) accounted roughly for 37,000 of this increase. It is not possible at present to measure currently the movement of factory employment by individual industries for Australia as a whole, but some indication of changes may be obtained by examining the details in New South Wales where manufacturing employment is shown currently in the industrial classes.

The net increase of 34,000 from August, 1939 to April, 1941 in manufacturing for New South Wales was accounted for mainly by the heavy net increases in the metal working, engineering and textile industries. Smaller increases were shown for the food and drink, chemicals, skins and leather, clothing, wood-working, rubber and other miscellaneous fields, and slight decreases in non-metal mine products, paper and printing, and heat, light and power.

2. Registered Unemployed: These are useful as indicating the trend in individual States in numbers who look to the State for some form of aid in getting work or in sustenance. The systems of registration are not uniform, therefore, comparisons between States should be made with reserve. The proportion of unregistered to registered unemployed apparently differs substantially as between States and varies from time to time.

The total registered unemployed fell from 114,593 in August, 1939 to 51,803 in April, 1941, i.e. by 62,790. There was a substantial decrease in every State. Registrations decreased in New South Wales from 52,851 to 20,408, i.e. by 32,443; Victoria, from 21,938 to 3,595, i.e. by 18,343; Queensland, from 22,406 to 21,780, i.e. by 626; South Australia, from 8,859 to 2,670, i.e. by 6,189; Western Australia (the figures for which may contain some duplication) from 6,170 to 2,950, i.e. by 3,220; and Tasmania, from 2,369 to about 400, i.e. by about 1,969. Queensland registrations reflect some seasonal unemployment in the rural industries. Since February, however, the registrations in that State have decreased by about 7,500 and further decreases may be expected as seasonal activity increases during the coming months.

3. Age of the Registered Unemployed.

(i) New South Wales:

Metropolitan Area. Registered Adult Males Unemployed (a).

Date	Age Group						Total
	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 years and over	Other	
31.10.40	2,511	3,683	3,986	4,832	2,040	33	17,085
30.11.40	2,235	3,431	3,799	4,666	2,007	35	16,173
31.12.40	2,062	3,297	3,654	4,533	1,950	36	15,532
31. 1.41	2,131	3,380	3,682	4,568	1,985	38	15,784
28. 2.41	1,936	3,126	3,459	4,465	1,931	36	14,933
31. 3.41	1,675	2,757	3,238	4,217	1,795	41	13,723
30. 4.41	1,390	2,299	2,809	3,779	1,576	38	11,891

(a) Married men under 21 are included as adults.

(ii) Victoria:

Metropolitan Area. Registered Unemployed Males.

Date	Age Group						Total
	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 years and over	Other	
20. 7.40	558	1,038	1,144	1,388	802	28	4,958
31. 8.40	402	830	1,007	1,279	711	15	4,244
28. 9.40	325	749	955	1,208	657	12	3,906
31.10.40	214	558	868	1,096	602	9	3,347
30.11.40	147	370	676	1,007	549	5	2,754
31.12.40	146	320	629	957	566	2	2,620
31. 1.41	115	313	608	934	556	4	2,530
28. 2.41	78	229	521	834	498	2	2,162
31. 3.41	60	143	421	713	498	2	1,837
30. 4.41	37	136	386	631	492	-	1,682

(iii) Queensland

Metropolitan Area. Registered Unemployed Males.

Date	Age Group						Total
	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 years and over	Other	
31. 3.41	1,535	1,285	1,316	1,078	458	595	6,267
30. 4.41	1,298	1,082	1,074	880	375	501	5,210

Canberra, A.C.T.

4th June, 1941.