



JOB VACANCIES, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 1989

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**MAIN FEATURES
JOB VACANCIES, AUSTRALIA**



The estimated number of job vacancies in Australia at 17 February 1989 was 72,500, an increase of 5,800 vac-

ancies since November 1988 and an increase of 10,700 vacancies since February 1988. For the third quarter in succession, vacancies at the national level were the highest since the series commenced in November 1983.

In the three months to February 1989, private sector vacancies increased by 12.3 per cent to 53,000, whereas public sector vacancies showed little change. Estimates for the States and Territories increased overall, except New South Wales, South Australia and Northern Territory which showed decreases. The decrease in South Australia of 800 vacancies and the fall in the job vacancy rate (from 0.74 to 0.52) were statistically significant.

Community services recorded the only statistically significant quarterly movement in job vacancies at the industry level, with an increase of 4,100 to 17,300 vacancies in February 1989.

NOTES

This publication contains estimates of the number of job vacancies based on information obtained from a sample survey of employers.

Explanatory notes are published at the back of this publication.

**TABLE 1. JOB VACANCIES(a): INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA
(*000)**

Industry	1987		1988			1989	Standard error(b)
	20 Nov.	19 Feb.	20 May	19 Aug.	18 Nov.	17 Feb.	
Manufacturing	10.0	14.9	16.1	13.3	15.1	14.4	1.3
Basic and fabricated metal products, other machinery and equipment, transport equipment	4.4	6.4	5.0	6.5	6.9	6.4	0.7
Other manufacturing	5.6	8.5	*11.0	6.8	8.2	7.9	1.1
Non-manufacturing—							
Electricity, gas and water	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.1
Wholesale and retail trade	12.3	11.8	8.8	13.1	15.5	16.1	2.5
Transport and storage; Communication	1.6	*2.8	1.4	1.8	2.0	*2.3	0.7
Public administration and defence(c)	3.8	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.3	4.7	0.6
Community services	12.6	13.1	12.2	14.9	13.2	17.3	1.7
Other(d)	11.5	14.0	14.8	17.5	15.8	17.0	2.4
Total all industries	52.2	61.8	58.5	65.8	66.7	72.5	4.2

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 3 to 6. (b) Applicable to latest estimates of level and quarterly movements. See paragraphs 8 to 13. (c) Excludes permanent defence forces. (d) Includes Mining, Construction, Finance, property and business services and Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 2. TOTAL JOB VACANCIES(a): PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS, STATES AND TERRITORIES ('000)

Reference date	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
PRIVATE SECTOR									
1987— 20 November	16.5	8.3	2.6	2.3	4.8	*0.5	*0.5	*0.8	36.3
1988— 19 February	17.6	13.2	4.6	2.9	*4.4	*0.6	*0.5	*0.4	44.2
20 May	15.3	15.0	4.7	*2.5	*3.6	*0.2	0.4	*0.5	42.1
19 August	22.4	14.3	5.4	2.3	3.2	0.2	*0.5	*0.6	48.9
18 November	18.3	15.0	5.7	2.6	*3.7	0.5	*0.8	*0.7	47.2
1989— 17 February	18.4	16.6	*7.3	2.0	6.3	0.8	0.4	*1.0	53.0
Standard error(b)	2.5	2.0	1.9	0.3	1.4	0.2	0.1	0.4	4.1
PUBLIC SECTOR									
1987— 20 November	7.2	3.0	1.6	0.5	1.3	0.5	0.4	1.3	15.9
1988— 19 February	7.8	*3.1	1.9	0.6	*1.7	0.5	0.4	1.6	17.6
20 May	6.7	*3.6	1.9	0.6	1.3	0.5	0.3	1.5	16.3
19 August	7.5	3.8	1.8	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.3	1.5	16.9
18 November	8.5	4.6	2.4	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.4	1.6	19.4
1989— 17 February	8.1	4.5	2.7	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.5	1.5	19.5
Standard error(b)	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	—	0.1	0.1	0.9
PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS									
1987— 20 November	23.7	11.3	4.2	2.8	6.1	1.0	0.9	2.1	52.2
1988— 19 February	25.4	16.3	6.5	3.5	6.1	*1.0	0.9	2.0	61.8
20 May	22.0	18.6	6.6	3.1	4.8	0.7	0.7	1.9	58.5
19 August	29.9	18.1	7.2	2.7	4.3	0.7	0.8	2.1	65.8
18 November	26.8	19.5	8.0	3.3	4.6	1.0	1.2	2.3	66.7
1989— 17 February	26.6	21.2	10.0	2.5	7.4	1.3	1.0	2.5	72.5
Standard error(b)	2.6	2.1	2.0	0.3	1.4	0.2	0.1	0.4	4.2

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 3 to 6. (b) Applicable to latest estimates of level and quarterly movements. See paragraphs 8 to 13.

TABLE 3. JOB VACANCY RATES(a), STATES AND TERRITORIES (per cent)

Reference date	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia
1987— 20 November	1.19	0.79	0.53	0.60	1.22	0.73	1.99	1.76	0.95
1988— 19 February	1.26	1.09	0.79	0.77	1.18	*0.75	1.82	1.70	1.10
20 May	1.00	1.22	0.83	0.69	0.94	0.50	1.35	1.44	*1.01
19 August	1.43	1.16	0.83	0.60	0.85	0.49	1.57	1.62	1.13
18 November	1.22	1.19	0.93	0.74	0.97	0.68	2.12	1.65	1.12
1989— 17 February	1.21	1.34	1.20	0.52	1.52	0.91	1.74	1.94	1.23
Standard error(b)	0.12	0.13	0.23	0.06	0.28	0.14	0.23	0.26	0.07

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 3 to 6. (b) Applicable to latest estimates of level and quarterly movements. See paragraphs 8 to 13.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Scope of the survey

1. All vacancies (as defined in paragraph 4) for wage and salary earners are represented in the survey, except those:

- (a) in the Australian permanent defence forces;
- (b) in enterprises primarily engaged in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting;
- (c) in private households employing staff;
- (d) in overseas embassies, consulates, etc.;
- (e) located outside Australia.

Survey design

2. A sample of approximately 3,800 employers is selected from the ABS register of businesses to ensure adequate State and industry representation. The sample is updated each quarter to take account of new businesses, those which have ceased operation and structural changes such as takeovers and mergers. The statistical unit for the survey comprises all activities of an enterprise in a particular State or Territory. Each statistical unit is classified to an industry which reflects the predominant activity of the enterprise in the State or Territory. In a small number of cases where an enterprise has significant employment in more than one industry, a separate statistical unit is created for each industry. The statistical units are stratified by State, industry and size of employment and a simple random sample is selected from each stratum.

Definitions

3. *Reference date* for the survey is the third Friday of the middle month of the quarter. The reference date for the current survey is 17 February 1989.

4. A *job vacancy* is a job available for immediate filling on the survey date and for which recruitment action had been taken. Recruitment action includes efforts to fill vacancies by advertising, by factory notices, by notifying public or private employment agencies or trade unions and by contacting, interviewing or selecting applicants already registered with the enterprise or organisation. Excluded are jobs available only to persons already employed by the enterprise or organisation. This point is particularly relevant to the Australian Public Service and the Public Services of each of the States and the Northern Territory.

Excluded are vacancies:

- (a) of less than one day's duration;
- (b) to be filled by persons already hired, or by promotion or transfer of existing employees;
- (c) to be filled by employees returning from paid or unpaid leave or after industrial dispute(s);
- (d) not available for immediate filling on the survey date;
- (e) not available within the particular State or Territory to which the return relates;
- (f) for work to be carried out under contract;
- (g) for which no effort is being made to fill the position.

5. The *job vacancy rate* is calculated by expressing the number of job vacancies as a percentage of the number of employees plus vacancies.

6. *Sector*. Public sector includes all local government authorities and government departments, agencies and authorities created by, or reporting to the Commonwealth and State Parliaments. All remaining employees are classified as private sector.

Historical series

7. The series was introduced in November 1983 when it replaced the job vacancies series based principally on information from payroll tax returns. Estimates contained in this publication are not strictly comparable with those obtained prior to November 1983.

Reliability of estimates

8. As the estimates in this publication are based on information relating to a sample of employers rather than a full enumeration, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the information had been obtained from all employers. This difference, called *sampling error*, should not be confused with inaccuracy that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Such inaccuracy is referred to as *non-sampling error* and may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or sample. Efforts have been made to reduce non-sampling error by careful design of questionnaires, detailed checking of returns and quality control of processing.

9. The sampling error associated with any estimate can be estimated from the sample results. One measure of sampling error is given by the *standard error* which indicates the degree to which an estimate may vary from the value that would have been obtained from a full enumeration (the 'true' figure). There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate differs from the true value by less than one standard error, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

10. An example of the use of a standard error is as follows. If the estimated number of job vacancies was 55,000 with a standard error of 3,000, then there would be about two chances in three that a full enumeration would have given a figure in the range 52,000 to 58,000 and about nineteen chances in twenty that it would be in the range 49,000 to 61,000.

11. An example of the use of a standard error for a quarterly change estimate is as follows. If the estimated standard error for a quarterly change estimate of job vacancies was 500 and the change between two quarters was 3,000, then there would be about two chances in three that a full enumeration would have given a quarterly change estimate in the range 2,500 to 3,500 and about nineteen chances in twenty that it would be in the range 2,000 to 4,000.

12. Quarterly movements in estimates of job vacancies are considered to be statistically significant where they exceed two standard errors.

13. Another measure of the sampling error is the relative standard error, which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate. Estimates with a relative standard error of 25 per cent or more, denoted

with an asterisk in this publication, are subject to sampling variability generally considered to be too high for most practical purposes.

Industry classification

14. Industry is classified according to the *Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) 1983 Edition, Volume 1 — The Classification (1201.0)*.

Seasonal factors

15. Job vacancy figures at different dates may be affected by seasonal influences. Publication of seasonally adjusted figures will not be possible until results of surveys for several years are available.

Related publications

16. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available on request:

Information Paper: New Statistical Series: Employment, Average Weekly Earnings, Job Vacancies and Overtime (6256.0)

Overtime, Australia (6330.0) — issued quarterly

Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia (6302.0) — issued quarterly

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0) — issued quarterly.

17. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia (1101.0)*. The

ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice (1105.0)* which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Unpublished statistics

18. In some cases, the ABS can also make available information which is not published. This information may be made available in one or more of the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, data tape, computer printout or clerically-extracted tabulation. Generally, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. Inquiries should be made to the officer whose name appears in the *Phone Inquiries* section of the Inquiries box at the front of this publication, or to Information Services in the nearest ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- nil or rounded to zero
- * subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes (see paragraph 13)
- r revised since previous issue.

19. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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