



ANZSCO 3513-11 Chefs

Northern Territory December 2016

Current labour market rating

Shortage

Previous labour market rating (December 2015)

Shortage

Comments

The Northern Territory continues to experience a shortage of chefs. The most recent research shows there were not sufficient numbers of suitably qualified applicants with the skill sets and experience to fill vacancies.

Survey results

- The Department of Employment surveyed employers who had recently advertised for chefs and supplemented the survey through cold canvassing employers in the industry who had not advertised in this survey period.
- The 2016 survey shows an increase in the filling of chef vacancies in the Northern Territory, with 61 per cent of vacancies filled, compared to 57 per cent in 2015.
- Overall, vacancies for this occupation attracted higher numbers of applicants, averaging 6.6 applicants per vacancy compared to 5.2 in 2015.
- The number of qualified applicants per vacancy was higher than reported in 2015 (4.7 compared to 3.7), but the number of suitable applicants was virtually unchanged over the year at around one per vacancy.
- Metropolitan employers filled 63 percent of their vacancies from an average of four qualified applicants per vacancy.
- In contrast, regional employers filled 50 per cent of vacancies surveyed from an average of 10 qualified applicants per vacancy. However, these figures were affected by a small number of regional employers who received a high response from qualified applicants.
 - Regional employers considered a majority of applicants to be unsuitable. On average, 0.5 applicants per regional vacancy were considered suitable, which represents a decrease from 1.6 in the 2015 survey.

Unsuitable applicants

- The main reason employers considered applicants unsuitable was that they lacked the specific skills sets and experience they sought, for example, sous chef experience

Demand and supply trends

- In the Northern Territory, the highest employing industry for chefs is accommodation and food services (75.6 per cent), with the arts and recreation industry employing 7.7 per cent.¹

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census Data, Northern Territory occupation data

- Employment in the accommodation and food services industry was flat over the year to August 2016. However, Department of Employment projections show employment growth of 9.8 per cent for this industry over the five years to November 2020.²
- The Department's Internet Vacancy Index data for the Northern Territory shows that online vacancies for chefs peaked in December 2015 and have fallen steadily since then.³
- Formal training for this trade is usually through an apprenticeship incorporating a certificate III or higher qualification in commercial cookery.
- Apprenticeship data for cooks and chefs in the Northern Territory show:
 - Commencements were fairly stable over the seven years to March 2016, averaging 36 per annum. This is down from an average of 56 per annum in the previous four years.
 - Completions averaged under 10 per annum in the two years to March 2016 which are the lowest figures in the past 11 years.⁴
- Temporary skilled migration is a significant source of supply compared with apprenticeship completions with the number of 457 visas granted to chefs for work in the Northern Territory ranging from 14 to 20 a year in the five years ending 2015-16.⁵
- Chefs have been identified by Northern Territory Government industry and economic modelling as a high priority occupation in the Northern Territory, as listed on the 2016 Northern Territory Skilled Occupation Priority List.⁶

Other indicators and issues

- Employers highlighted the quality of training, high turnover and the demanding nature of the occupation as key issues in this trade.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force Data by State Industry (August 2016); and Australian Government Labour Market Information Portal "Regional Projections – interactive tool"

³ Department of Employment Internet Vacancy Index, November 2016, 12 Month moving average

⁴ National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Apprentices and Trainees, public tables - Apprentices and trainees commencement and completions, year ending March 2016. All quoted data refer to the four quarters ending March each year.

⁵ Department of Immigration and Border Protection, March 2015, Pivot Tables

⁶ Northern Territory Government Website: <https://www.nt.gov.au/employ/for-employers-in-nt/hard-to-fill-jobs-in-the-nt>