

# National and State Skill Shortage Lists

## Australia – 2004

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The National and State Skill Shortage Lists are based on labour market intelligence undertaken by DEWR. Methodological information is provided in the [Explanatory Notes](#). The Skill Shortage Lists cover Trades, Professionals and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills. Shortages are described as being state-wide (S), regional (R) or metropolitan (M). The lists also identify recruitment difficulties (D) in situations where ‘skill shortages’ are not evident, but where some employers have experienced recruitment problems.

The Skill Shortage Lists incorporate information on specialisations in shortage in particular States. For some occupations on the National Skill Shortage List, shortages are restricted to specialist skills – see details on ‘Skill Shortage List – Professionals’ and ‘Skill Shortage List – Trades’.

Information on, and reports from, the industry-led skill shortage working groups, managed by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), is available at [www.skillsinitiative.gov.au](http://www.skillsinitiative.gov.au).

## National Skill Shortage (NSS) List – Australia 2004

### PROFESSIONALS (March 2004)

- Child Care Coordinator
- Child Care Worker
- Civil Engineer
- Accountant
- Registered Nurse
  - Accident/Emergency
  - Aged Care
  - Cardiothoracic
  - Community
  - Critical/Intensive Care
  - Indigenous Health
  - Neonatal Intensive Care
  - Neurology
  - Oncology
  - Operating Theatre
  - Paediatric
  - Palliative Care
  - Perioperative
  - Rehabilitation
  - Renal/Dialysis
  - Registered Midwife
  - Mental Health Nurse
- Enrolled Nurse
- Dentist
- Pharmacist (Hospital/Retail)
- Occupational Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Speech Pathologist
- Podiatrist
- Diagnostic Radiographer
- Radiation Therapist
- Nuclear Medicine Technologist
- Sonographer

## **ICT SKILLS – SPECIALISATIONS ONLY (October 2004)**

No National Shortages

## **TRADES (December 2004)**

*(Note that some shortages are for specialist skills only – see detailed State listing below)*

### ***Engineering Trades***

- Metal Fitter
- Metal Machinist
- Toolmaker
- Metal Fabricator
- Welder
- Sheetmetal Worker

### ***Automotive Trades***

- Motor Mechanic
- Auto Electrician
- Panel Beater
- Vehicle Painter

### ***Electrical & Electronic Trades***

- Electrician
- Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic
- Electrical Powerline Trades
- Electronic Instrument Trades
- Electronic Equipment Trades

### ***Construction Trades***

- Carpenter and Joiner
- Fibrous Plasterer
- Bricklayer
- Solid Plasterer
- Plumber
- Cabinetmaker

### ***Food Trades***

- Chef
- Cook
- Pastrycook

### ***Other Trades***

- Hairdresser
- Furniture Upholsterer

## Skill Shortage List - Professionals March 2004

ASCO	Occupation	AUST	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT
<b>CHILD CARE</b>									
1295-11	Child Care Coordinator*	N	M* R-D	S*	S	D	R	S	D
6312-11sp	Child Care Worker*	N	M R-D	S*	S	S	S	S	D
<b>ENGINEERS</b>									
2124	Civil Engineer*	N	S*	S	S*	S	S*		D
2125-11	Electrical Engineer* <sup>1</sup>		M*	S*			S*		
2125-13	Electronics Engineer <sup>1</sup>		R						
<b>ACCOUNTANTS*</b>		N	S	S*	S*	S		S*	D
<b>REGISTERED NURSES*</b>									
2323-11	<b>Registered Nurse (general)*</b>	N	S	S	S	S	S	S*	S
	Accident/Emergency	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Aged Care*	N	S	S	S	S	S	S*	S
	Cardiothoracic	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Community*	N	S		S	S	S	S*	S
	Critical/Intensive Care	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Indigenous Health*	N	*		S	S	S		S
	Neonatal Intensive Care	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Neurological	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Oncology	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	
	Operating Theatre*	N	S	S	S	S	S	S*	S
	Paediatric	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Palliative Care	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	
	Perioperative*	N	*	S	S	S	S	S	S
	Rehabilitation*	N	S	S	S	S	S	S*	S
	Renal	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
2324-11	<b>Registered Midwife</b>	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
2325-11	<b>Mental Health Nurse</b>	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	
3411	<b>Enrolled Nurse*</b>	N	S*	S	S	S	S	S	S

ASCO	Occupation	AUST	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT <sup>1</sup>
<b>HEALTH SPECIALISTS</b>									
2381	Dentist*	N	S*	R*	S		S*		S*
2382-11,15	Pharmacist (Hospital/Retail)*	N	S	S*	S	S	R		D
2383-11	Occupational Therapist*	N	S*	S*	S	D	D*	S	R
2385-11	Physiotherapist*	N	S*	S*	S	S	S*	S	S
2386-11	Speech Pathologist*	N	M	S*	S	R		S	D
2388	Podiatrist*	N*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2391-11	Diagnostic Radiographer*	N	S*		S			S	S
2391-13	Radiation Therapist	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	
2391-15	Nuclear Medicine Technologist	N	D		S		S	S	
2391-17	Sonographer	N	S		S	S	S	S	S
2399-11	Audiologist <sup>1</sup> *			S	S				S
<b>SECONDARY TEACHERS</b>									
2413-11	Secondary Teacher*		D*	*	R-D*	*	*	*	S*
	Manual Arts/Tech Studies*		D	S*	D	S	R-D*		
	Maths/Science		D		D	S		R-D	S
	Physics/Chemistry*				D		R-D*		S
	General Science*			S*	D				
	Maths*			S	D		R-D*		S
	LOTE*			S*	D	S*	R-D*		
	Home Economics*					S	R-D*		
	Information Technology			S	D				
	Special Education*						R-D*		
	Religious Education								S
	Physical Education			S					
2511	Social Worker <sup>1</sup>		R	R-D				R	R-D
2521	Lawyer <sup>1</sup> *		R-D*	R-D*	S		S	S*	

1. Not all occupations assessed in all States

\* = Shortages may be restricted to specialist skills. Occupations marked with an asterisk have qualifying comments below

N = National shortage

S = State-wide shortage

M = Shortage in metropolitan areas

R = Shortage in regional areas

R-D = Recruitment difficulties in regional areas

D = Recruitment difficulties

**Child Care Coordinator:** **NSW:** shortages are mainly for degree qualified coordinators in long day care centres. **VIC:** shortages are for qualified child care coordinators. **WA:** shortage is greatest in some regional and outer metropolitan areas.

**Child Care Worker:** **NSW:** shortages are particularly evident in long day care centres. **VIC:** shortages are for qualified child care workers.

**Civil Engineer:** **NSW:** shortages especially for senior Civil Engineers in: design; consulting engineers with a good understanding of building codes and; structural engineers with experience of high rise building services. **QLD:** shortages are particularly evident for Civil Engineers experienced in water, roads and structural engineering. **WA:** shortage particularly for civil engineers specialising mining work.

**Electrical Engineer:** **NSW:** shortages especially for Electrical Engineers with experience in building services, consulting and electrical substation or railway design. **VIC:** shortage restricted to Electrical Engineers experienced in working with high voltage. **WA:** shortage particularly for electrical engineers specialising mining work.

**Accountant:** **VIC:** shortages are restricted to accountants in internal audit, compliance and specialist taxation roles. **QLD:** shortages are especially for accountants with experience in audit and taxation. **TAS:** shortages are most apparent for accountants experienced in public practice.

**Registered Nurse:** **NSW:** indigenous health is not recognised as a separate specialisation in NSW. Separate information on perioperative nursing is not available for NSW. **TAS:** shortages for registered nurses are particularly apparent in the specialisations of operating theatre, rehabilitation, community nursing, aged care, and for positions outside Hobart.

**Enrolled Nurse:** **NSW:** shortages are especially for mothercraft, mental health and acute care.

**Dentist:** **NSW:** shortages are especially in the public sector and regional/rural areas. **WA:** shortage is greatest in rural and in public health. **NT:** shortage is greatest in public sector.

**Pharmacist:** **VIC:** shortages of pharmacists particularly acute in retail pharmacy, rural areas and hospitals. **SA:** shortage of pharmacists is particularly evident in the retail sector.

**Occupational Therapist:** **NSW:** shortages especially for Occupational Therapists in senior roles and for specialists in mental health. **VIC:** shortages of Occupational Therapists is particularly acute in aged care, paediatrics, disability/rehabilitation services and rural practice. Senior positions and those in regional and outer metropolitan regions are also particularly difficult to fill. **QLD:** shortages are for experienced Occupational Therapists in specialisations such as mental health services and aged care. **WA:** recruitment difficulties are evident in aged care facilities.

**Physiotherapist:** **NSW:** shortages are especially in the public sector. **VIC:** shortages of physiotherapists are particularly evident in aged care, women's health, working with children with disabilities, cardio-thoracic and rural areas. **QLD:** shortage is most apparent for Physiotherapists experienced in specialisations such as gerontology and for locum work. **SA:** shortages are particularly evident in the aged care and public hospital sector. **WA:** shortage is greatest for paediatric physiotherapists and for physiotherapists in rural areas.

**Podiatrist:** a national assessment was made for Podiatrist and separate state/territory ratings are not available. Shortages are considered to be widespread, and the occupation is considered to be in national shortage.

**Speech Pathologist:** **VIC:** Shortages of speech pathologists are particularly evident in paediatrics, education, disability services, for locum positions and regional and outer metropolitan areas.

**Diagnostic Radiographer:** **NSW:** Shortages especially for Diagnostic Radiographers with experience in MRT, mammography and CT.

**Secondary Teacher:** Specialist shortages only as listed. **NSW:** Recruitment difficulties are for maths/science, technical and applied studies, especially in the public sector in some locations. **QLD:** Recruitment difficulties are evident generally in remote areas, and recruitment difficulties are State-wide

for the specialist teaching areas of mathematics, science, IT, manual arts and LOTE. **WA:** Recruitment difficulties persist in some regional and remote areas of WA, particularly in inland rural, Pilbara and North West, for specialist education, home economics, design and technology, mathematics, special education, Indonesian and Japanese and physics. **NT:** Shortage of teachers is evident for non-executive teachers with the ability to teach in multiple subject areas.

**Manual Arts/Technology: VIC:** Shortages especially for auto, wood, food and metal.

**General Science: VIC:** shortage is restricted to general science teachers for years 7 to 10.

**LOTE Teachers: VIC:** Shortages especially Indonesian, Japanese, Italian and French. **SA:** Shortages especially for Asian languages.

**Social Worker: VIC:** Recruitment difficulties for social workers are restricted to some regional areas and specialist areas such as aged care and trauma counselling.

**Lawyer: NSW:** Shortages particularly for Lawyers with experience in family law. **VIC:** Recruitment difficulties for lawyers are restricted to rural practices and speciality areas of workplace relations, funds management, family law and property and finance. **QLD:** Shortages are more pronounced for lawyers experienced in the areas of property, mining or town planning. **WA:** Shortages are particularly evident for lawyers with 2- 5 years experience. **TAS:** Shortages are particularly evident in northern Tasmania and the north-west coast, and for lawyers experienced in family and criminal law.

# Skill Shortage List – Trades

December 2004

ASCO	Occupation	AUST	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT
<b>ENGINEERING TRADES</b>									
4112-11	Metal Fitter*	N	S*	S	S*	S	S*	S	S*
4112-13	Metal Machinist*	N	S*	S	S*	S	S	S	S
4113-11	Toolmaker*	N	S*	S	S	S	S	S*	na
4122-11	Metal Fabricator*	N	M-D,R*	S	S	S	S	S	S*
4122-15	Welder*	N	S*	S	S	S	S*	S	S*
4124-11	Sheetmetal Worker*	N	M-D,R*	S	S*	S	S	S	S
<b>VEHICLE TRADES</b>									
4211-11	Motor Mechanic*	N	S*	S	S	S	S*	S	S
4212-11	Auto Electrician*	N	S	S	S	S	S*	S	S
4213-11	Panel Beater*	N	S*	S	S	S	S	S	S
4214-11	Vehicle Painter	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>ELECTRICAL/ELECTRONICS</b>									
4311-11,13	Electrician*	N	S*	S	S*	S	S*	S	S
4312-11	Refrigeration and Airconditioning Mechanic*	N	S*	S	S	S	S	S	S
4313-11	Electrical Powerline Trades*	N	S*	S	S	S	S	S	S
4314	Electronic Instrument Trades*	N	S*	S	S	D	S	S	M-D,R
4315-11	Electronic Equipment Trades*	N	S*	S*		D*		S	S
4315-13	Business Machine Mechanic*		D*					S	S
<b>CONSTRUCTION TRADES</b>									
4411-11	Carpenter and Joiner*	N	Se*	M-D,R	S*	Se	S	S	S*
4412-11	Fibrous Plasterer*	N	Se*	M-D,R	na	Se	S	S	S
4414-11	Bricklayer*	N	Se*	M-D,R	S		S	S	M*
4415-11	Solid Plasterer*	N	Se	M-D,R	na	Se	S	S*	S
4431-11	Plumber*	N	Se*	S	S*	S	S*	S	S*
<b>FOOD TRADES</b>									
3322	Chef*	N	S	S*	S	R	S*	S	S
4512-11	Baker*		S*	na	na	na	na	na	na
4513-11	Cook	N	S	S*	S				S
4512-13	Pastrycook*	N	R*	S*	S	R	S	S*	D
<b>PRINTING TRADES</b>									
4911-11	Graphic Pre-press Trades				S				
4912	Printing Machinist		R		S	D			
4913-11	Binder and Finisher			D	S				
<b>WOOD TRADES</b>									
4921-11	Wood Machinist*		S*	na	na	na	na	na	na
4922-11	Cabinetmaker*	N	S*	M-D,R*	S*	S		S	S
<b>OTHER TRADES</b>									
4931-11	Hairdresser	N	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
4942-11	Furniture Upholsterer*	N	S*	S	S	S	S	S	na

<b>N</b> = National shortage	<b>S</b> = State-wide shortage
<b>M</b> = Shortage in metropolitan areas	<b>R</b> = Shortage in regional areas
<b>D</b> = Recruitment difficulties	<b>R-D</b> = Recruitment difficulties in regional areas
<b>M-D</b> = Recruitment difficulties in metropolitan areas	<b>na</b> = Not assessed
<i>e</i> = shortage easing over the next 12 months	<i>*</i> = see comments on specialisation

**Metal Fitter:** **NSW:** shortages are evident for basic trades skills but especially for hydraulics and for shut-down and maintenance work. **QLD:** Fitters who have the skills to work underground on mining equipment and who have high level skills in parts replacement for heavy earthmoving equipment are in particular shortage. **WA:** shortages are especially for heavy duty fitters. **NT:** shortages are especially evident for Metal Fitters with heavy duty and underground experience.

**Metal Machinist:** **NSW:** shortages are especially evident for Metal Machinists with experience in CNC machinery and hand-operated heavy industrial machinery. **QLD:** Metal machinists who have high level CNC machine operating skills are in particularly strong demand.

**Toolmaker:** **NSW:** shortages are particularly for Toolmakers with broad trade skills, hand-operated tooling, CNC machining, plastic injection moulding, precision jobbing. **TAS:** Toolmaker is a very small occupation in Tasmania.

**Metal Fabricator:** **NSW:** shortages are especially for Metal Fabricators with ability to work from plans, multiskilled tradespersons and those with experience in weld purging. **NT:** shortages are particularly evident for fabricators with new construction (setting and mark-out skills) and aluminium and stainless steel experience.

**Welder:** **NSW:** shortages are especially for Welders with skills in stainless steel, aluminium, TIG and MIG welding. **WA:** shortages are most evident for coded welders highly skilled in specialist procedures. **NT:** shortages are particularly for welders with TIG welding experience.

**Sheetmetal Worker:** **NSW:** shortages are especially for Sheetmetal Workers with welding skills. **QLD:** shortages are particularly evident in the manufacture of aluminium hull boats, switchboards and stainless steel fittings.

**Motor Mechanic:** **NSW:** shortages are especially for Motor Mechanics with specialist skills and experience in suspension, wheel alignment, engine reconditioning, used car dealerships and four wheel drives. **WA:** shortages are particularly evident for truck and diesel mechanics.

**Panel Beater:** **NSW:** recruitment is particularly difficult for panel beaters with skills in prestige vehicle repairs.

**Auto Electrician:** **WA:** shortages are particularly evident for auto electricians experienced in working with heavy equipment in the mining industry.

**Electrician:** **NSW:** shortages are apparent across most sectors including commercial and industrial work, domestic building maintenance, communications cabling and electrical fitting. **QLD:** Shortages are particularly acute for electrical appliance servicing and industrial electricians. **WA:** shortages are evident for electricians with cabling licences and data/communications experience.

**Refrigeration and Airconditioning Mechanic:** **NSW:** shortages are apparent across most sectors, but especially for commercial airconditioning in Sydney.

**Electrical Power Line Tradesperson:** **NSW:** shortages are evident in maintenance and new supply work in both the power generation and distribution sectors.

**Electronic Instrument Trades:** **NSW:** shortages are especially being experienced for positions requiring highly specialised experience in specified types of PLCs and control systems and positions requiring dual qualifications in electrical and instrumentation work.

**Electronic Equipment Trades:** **NSW:** shortages are mostly for repairers experienced in specific equipment makes and models. **VIC:** shortages are restricted to radio and TV repair. **SA:** shortages are restricted to radio and TV repair.

**Business Machine Mechanics:** **NSW:** isolated recruitment difficulties exist for positions requiring experience in particular business machinery makes and models.

**Communications Trades:** **NSW:** shortages are less severe for cabling technicians.

**Carpenter:** **NSW:** shortages are most apparent for new residential building, residential maintenance and formwork carpentry. **QLD:** shortage is particularly for carpenters specialising in building staircases and balustrading. **NT:** shortages are particularly evident for carpenters skilled in large scale construction projects.



**Fibrous Plasterer: NSW:** shortages include plasterboard fixing, cornice fixing and ornate plastering.

**Bricklayer: NSW:** shortages are restricted to trade-level bricklayers. **NT:** shortages are evident for bricklayers skilled in large scale construction projects.

**Solid Plaster: TAS:** solid plastering is a very small occupation in Tasmania.

**Plumber: NSW:** shortages are evident in both the commercial and residential sectors and for roof plumbers. **QLD:** Mechanical Services Plumbers are particularly hard to recruit. **WA:** shortages are especially evident for roof plumbers. **NT:** shortage is particularly apparent for plumbers skilled in the maintenance of existing domestic plumbing.

**Chef: VIC:** shortage is especially evident in Asian cuisines generally and Indian cuisine. **WA:** in metropolitan areas, the shortage is restricted to some Asian cuisines, particularly Japanese, Indian and Thai, although more general shortages are evident in regional areas.

**Baker: NSW:** shortage is mainly confined to broad trades skills, hand moulding skills and experience in specialised breads such as sourdough, gluten-free etc.

**Pastrycook: NSW:** shortage is mainly confined to broad trade skills and experience in making pastries from scratch. **VIC:** shortages are especially for skills in European and Asian pastry. **TAS:** shortages are particularly for specialist dessert chefs, specialist patisserie pastry cooks.

**Wood Machinist: NSW:** shortages are especially for CNC skills, a range of experience with panel saws, spindle moulders, also experience in solid timber, laminated wood or composite material.

**Cabinetmaker: NSW:** shortages are especially for the detailed joinery and fine furniture sector. **VIC:** shortage is of specialist furniture makers. **QLD:** shortages are most evident for Cabinetmakers skilled in high quality or meticulous and visible craftwork.

**Furniture Upholsterer: NSW:** shortages are especially for positions requiring quality re-upholstering/re-covering experience, but there is also a short supply of combination skills required for tasks like re-covering/automobile trimming and making custom built furniture for refurbishments.

**National and State ICT Skill Shortages (surveyed May 2004, released October 2004)**  
**ICT Employment Trends and Skill Shortage Survey 2004 - Powerpoint Presentation**

<b>ICT SPECIALISATION</b>	<b>AUST*</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>QLD</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>WA</b>	<b>TAS</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>NT</b>
<b>Database</b>									
DB2		D		D	D				
Oracle		D		D	D			D	D
Microsoft SQL Server		D			D			D	
Sybase SQL Server		D		D	D				
<b>General Application</b>									
<b>Development/Software Engineering</b>									
PowerBuilder		D		D	D	D			
Java		D		D				D	D
Java Script		D						D	D
C++		D		D	D				
.Net technologies		S	D	D		S		D	
Delphi		D		D	D				
Lotus Notes		S	D	D	D			D	D
Progress		S	D	D	D			D	
Powerhouse		D	D	D	D	D		D	
<b>Internet, Networking/Lan/WAN</b>									
IPX		D							
SNA		D			D				
Advanced Web Design		D							
ASP									
Xml				D					
Firewall/Internet security		S	D	D	S	D		D	
Java Security (mainly J2EE) and		D	D	D	D			D	D
<b>Office/E-mail/Groupware</b>									
Groupwise		D	D	D	D				
Lotus Notes		D	D	D	D				
CC:Mail		D			D				
Netscape		D			D				
Eudora		D							
<b>Client/Server applications</b>									
COBOL		D		D	D			D	
SAP		S	D	D	S	D		D	
PeopleSoft		S	D	D		D		D	
Siebel		S	D	D	S	S			
<b>System Software Support</b>									
Help Desk									
Data Warehousing		S	D	D	D	D			
<b>Operating Systems</b>									
Unix		D		D	D	D			
Windows									
Windows NT									
Solaris		D		D	D				
Linux		S		D		D			
HP-UX		D		D	D	D			
VMS		D		D	D	D			

	AUST*	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT
<b>Communications</b>									
Radio		D			D				
SDH		D			D				
WDM		D			D				
GSM		D			D				
CDMA		D			D				
Broadband CDMA		D			D				
Satellite design		D		D	D				
TDMA		D		D	D				
VSAT		D		D	D				
Photonics		D		D					
<b>Process &amp; Systems management</b>									
Project Management		D							D
Systems analysis		D		D					D
Broad commercial business		D							D
<b>E-Commerce (eg business/financial management/analysis/customer service)</b>									
E-commerce security (non		S	D	D	D				
<b>Security</b>									
Network Security		S		D	D	D		D	
Risk Management		S		D	D	D		D	
CISSP #		S	D	D	S	D		D	
PKI		D	D	D		D		D	
Geographical Information Systems									
GIS (eg Mapinfo)		S	D	D	D			D	
<b>Other specialisations not listed above</b>									
DS 390/MVS System Programmers						D			
Visual Basic 6						D			
IDMS					D				
ADA					D				
S = Shortage									
D = Recruitment Difficulties									
* no ICT skills in national shortage									
# Certified Information Systems Security Professional									

## National and State Skill Shortage Lists – Explanatory Notes

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is the Australian Government agency with prime portfolio responsibility for monitoring skill shortages. DEWR assesses skill shortages by a number of means including contact with employers, industry, employer and employee organisations and education and training providers. The prime focus of DEWR's agency approach is surveying employers who have recently advertised vacancies for selected skilled occupations. In assessing skill shortages, this industry and employer intelligence is considered in conjunction with statistical information on demand and supply trends for the selected occupations. Skill shortage assessments cover Trades, Professionals and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills.

DEWR, through its Labour Supply and Skills Branch and Labour Economics Offices (LEOs) in each State capital and Darwin, monitors and assesses skill shortages. Although skill shortages are monitored closely, there are may be localised or specialist shortages which are not reflected in these lists. The reasons for shortages are complex and varied, and may result from economic or demographic change, cyclical fluctuations in labour demand, emerging demands of new technology, lack of flexibility in wages and regional mismatches.

The specific occupations and skills to be included in the annual skill shortage assessment program (six monthly, in the case of ICT skills) are determined through consultations with peak industry bodies, other key stakeholders and DEWR State Offices. The program is conducted through Labour Economics Offices (LEOs) in DEWR State Offices.

There is considerable ambiguity about the term ‘skill shortages’ in industry and media discussions, and in developing guidelines for training, migration, labour market programs and regional skills analysis. The term ‘skill shortages’ is often a surrogate for more general recruitment difficulties, or skill gaps (deficiencies in the skills of existing workers). DEWR skill shortage monitoring and assessment focuses mainly on skill shortages as defined below. Shortage ratings refer to experienced workers and the labour market for new graduates may differ.

### **Skill shortages**

Skill shortages exist when employers are unable to fill or have considerable difficulty in filling vacancies for an occupation, or specialised skill needs within that occupation, at current levels of remuneration and conditions of employment, and reasonably accessible location.

Shortages are typically for specialised and experienced workers, and can coexist with relatively high unemployment overall or in the occupation. An occupation may be assessed as in shortage even though not all specialisations are in shortage. Occupations may be in shortage in particular geographical areas and not in others. Although skill shortages are monitored closely, there may be localised or specialised shortages that are not reflected in these lists.

For each State, skill shortages are rated as evident in the capital city only (M – metropolitan), in regional areas (R – other than the capital city) or statewide (S). If there are shortages in the three largest States, or in a majority of States, then the occupation is rated as being in national shortage (N). Skill shortages involve skills that require a significant period of training and/or experience to acquire.

As a result of consultation with industry, particularly peak industry bodies, DEWR has increased the focus on specialisations in shortage as well as the employability skills and personal attributes of most concern to employers. Where these skills/attributes impact upon skill shortages, details are provided in explanatory notes at the end of the relevant skill shortage list.

In the National and State skill shortage lists, especially ICT skills, the term ‘recruitment difficulties’ is used as a way of signalling a degree of skill shortage - shown as “D” in the skill shortage lists. This provides an option for recognising skills where employers are experiencing some difficulty in finding suitable workers even though a broader skill shortage is not evident.

The reasons for skill shortages are complex and varied and may result from economic or demographic change, those not completing training and qualified workers (not working in the occupation for which they are qualified and/or experienced), cyclical fluctuations in labour demand, emerging demands of new technology, lack of flexibility in wages and regional mismatches.

### **Recruitment difficulties**

Recruitment difficulties occur when employers have some difficulty in filling vacancies for an occupation. There may be an adequate supply of skilled workers, but employers are still unable to attract and recruit sufficient suitable employees.

The recruitment difficulties may be due to characteristics of the industry, occupation or employer, such as: relatively low remuneration, poor working conditions, poor image of the industry, unsatisfactory working hours, location hard to commute to, ineffective recruitment advertising and processes or organisation-specific and highly-specialised skill needs.

Skill shortages may exist outside those included in the skill shortage lists. For example, an occupation or skill, particularly where the number employed is very small, may not be identified in consultations with industry bodies and other key stakeholders, and pockets of shortage may exist in isolated locations. In addition, variations in national or regional industry activity may cause shortages not apparent at the time when skill shortage lists are being prepared. The lists do not include skill shortages involving skills that require only a very limited period of training and/or experience to acquire.

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