

AUSTRALIA'S EASTERN EMPLOYMENT HUBS DECLINE AS REGIONAL STATES CATCH UP

ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey Q3 2017

AUSTRALIA (EMBARGOED UNTIL 13 JUNE 2017): According to the latest ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, Australian employers report fair hiring prospects overall for the upcoming quarter. Of the 1,501 public and private employers surveyed, 10 per cent anticipate an increase in staffing levels over the July to September timeframe, while the majority (83 per cent) said they expect no changes to their current workforce.

The resulting national Net Employment Outlook (NEO)¹ is +9%, remaining unchanged both quarter-over-quarter and year-over-year.

Australia's Eastern employment hubs are proving to be overshadowed by growth in other states, with hiring plans improving in four of the eight regions when compared with the third quarter of 2016. Hiring prospects have increased by two percentage points in South Australia and Tasmania, and by five percentage points in Northern Territory.

Western Australia employers are anticipating their strongest labour market in three years, reporting a considerable increase of 13 percentage points compared to last year at this time. This, combined with a year-over-year growth of six percentage points in the Mining & Construction sector, could signal a new wave of growth in Western Australia's hiring prospects after experiencing declines in employment following the end of the mining boom.

However, hiring prospects also weaken year-over-year in four regions, most notably by four percentage points in Queensland and by three percentage points in both New South Wales and ACT. The results indicate a shrinking gap in employment growth rates between Australia's regional capital cities, leading to a shift away from Sydney and Melbourne as the perceived leaders in business growth opportunities.

"While Sydney and Melbourne remain among Australia's most populated cities, it is interesting to see the rate at which they are growing in comparison to the recent labour market growth in Western Australia. Though the mining boom may be over, the emergence of technology, new business models and more agile ways of working are starting to level the competition for talent among employers across the country," commented Jamie Butterworth, General Manager, ManpowerGroup Solutions Australia and New Zealand.

Meanwhile, another shift is seen in the move away from small business employment towards enterprise employment. When compared with this time one year ago, hiring prospects improve by three and two percentage points for Medium and Large-size employers, respectively. Yet Small employers report a decrease of four percentage points and the Outlook for Micro employers is two percentage points weaker. These findings show that Australia, historically renowned for SME's, appears to be making a shift to big business.

¹ The Net Employment Outlook is calculated by subtracting the percentage of employers anticipating a decrease in hiring activity from the percentage of employers anticipating an increase in employment. Seasonal adjustment is then applied to the data.

“There is a significant appetite and projection among enterprises to grow in this upcoming quarter, potentially reflecting interest in local expansion, mergers and acquisitions. More large businesses are also exploring the introduction of new departments and talent pools to address the need for new skills, such as digital, product development and customer experience management. As hiring plans continue to accelerate among businesses of this scale, there is an opportunity here for global enterprises to highlight Australia as a market for growth,” explained Mr Butterworth.

Other key findings from the report include:

- Job seekers in the Finance, Insurance and Real Estate sector can expect a fair hiring climate in the third quarter of 2017. Hiring intentions remain relatively stable when compared with the previous quarter but decline by eight percentage points year-over-year.
- The steady hiring pace is expected to continue in the Services industry, with employers reporting the strongest outlook of all seven sectors (+13%).
- The most cautious hiring plans are reported in the Public Administration & Education sector, where the outlook stands at +5%.
- When compared with the second quarter of 2017, employers report a decline of five percentage points in the Transportation & Utilities sector, while the Outlook is two percentage points weaker in the Manufacturing sector.

“Overall, Australian employers continue to report moderate hiring plans for the upcoming quarter. Despite there being no change in the overall rate of growth compared to the second quarter of 2017, employers in all seven industry sectors and all eight regions are expecting to grow staffing levels. This demonstrates that although there may be a trend towards more cautious hiring strategies, Australian employment prospects remain stable,” said Mr Butterworth.

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To learn more, download the latest ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey [here](#).

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