

April 2022  
Recruitment activity<sup>1</sup>

**56%**

Change since March 2022:

► 0% pts

April 2022  
Recruitment difficulty rate

**64%**

Change since March 2022:

► 0% pts

April 2022  
Expect to increase staff

**36%**

Change since March 2022:

▲ 4% pts

## Key findings from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS)

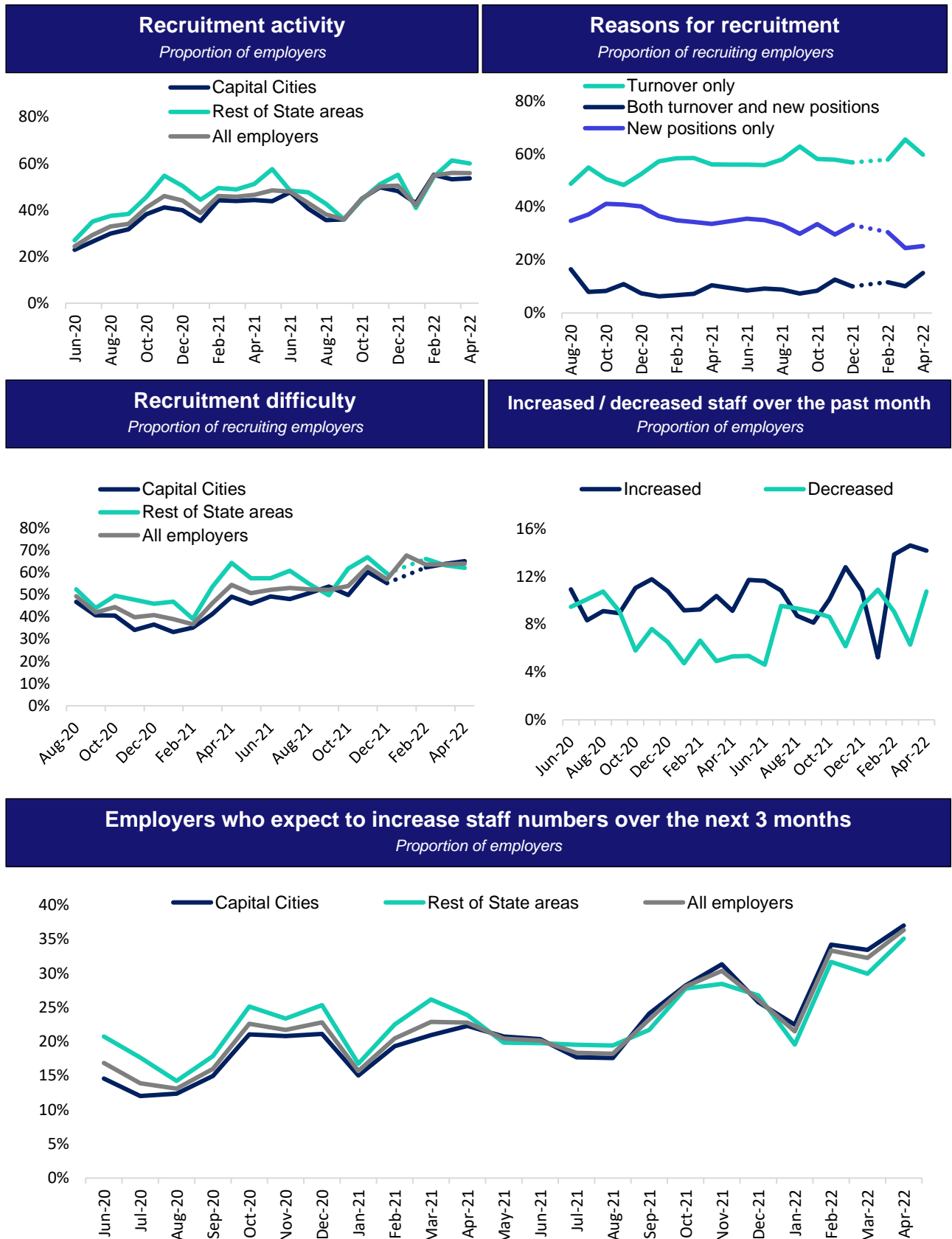
- Recruitment activity remains at an equal-record high in April 2022, while recruitment difficulty also remains high, at the same level as the previous two months. The proportion of employers expecting to increase staff has reached a new peak of 36%.
  - These results are broadly consistent with recent strong growth in online job advertisements<sup>2</sup> and low unemployment, currently at 4%<sup>3</sup>.
- Some 56% of employers were recruiting in April 2022, the same as last month and the equal-highest proportion since the series began in June 2020.
  - The recruitment rate in Capital Cities (54%) was lower than in Rest of State areas (60%). There was little change in these rates from last month, with the rate in Capital Cities increasing by 1 percentage point, and the rate in Rest of State areas decreasing by 1 percentage point.
  - Recruitment due to turnover was common in April 2022, with 60% of recruiting employers recruiting due to turnover only, and a further 15% recruiting due to both turnover and new positions.
- Recruitment difficulty is at 64% of recruiting employers (representing 36% of all employers) for the third month running. The difficulty rate was slightly higher in Capital Cities (65%) than in Rest of State areas (62%).
- In April 2022, 14% of employers increased staffing levels over the past month. In Rest of State areas, a record high 19% of employers increased staffing levels over the past month, with 11% of employers in Capital Cities doing the same.
  - Note that the proportion of employers who decreased staffing levels is also high at 11% – the second highest result since May 2020.
- The proportion of employers expecting to increase staffing levels over the next 3 months reached a record high of 36% in April 2022, increasing from 32% in March 2022. Expectations to increase staff were slightly higher in Capital Cities (37%) than in Rest of State areas (35%).
- This month's Spotlight examines demand for Truck Drivers, and the difficulty employers have in trying to recruit them. It also reveals the reasons employers gave for their recruitment difficulty, and the impacts that recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers has had on businesses.

<sup>1</sup> Note: Recruitment activity (also referred to as the 'recruitment rate') refers to the proportion of all employers who are either currently recruiting or who had recruited in the previous month. The recruitment difficulty rate is the proportion of recruiting employers who experienced difficulty hiring. The 'expect to increase staff' figure is the proportion of all employers who expect to increase staff numbers over the next three months.

<sup>2</sup> NSC, *Preliminary IVI Factsheet, April 2022* ([labourmarketinsights.gov.au/our-research/internet-vacancy-index](https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/our-research/internet-vacancy-index))

<sup>3</sup> ABS, *Labour Force, Australia, March 2022*

## Recruitment indicators – key charts



Note: Some disaggregated data was not publishable in January 2022; hence in some of the above charts data points from December 2021 to February 2022 have been joined by a dotted line.

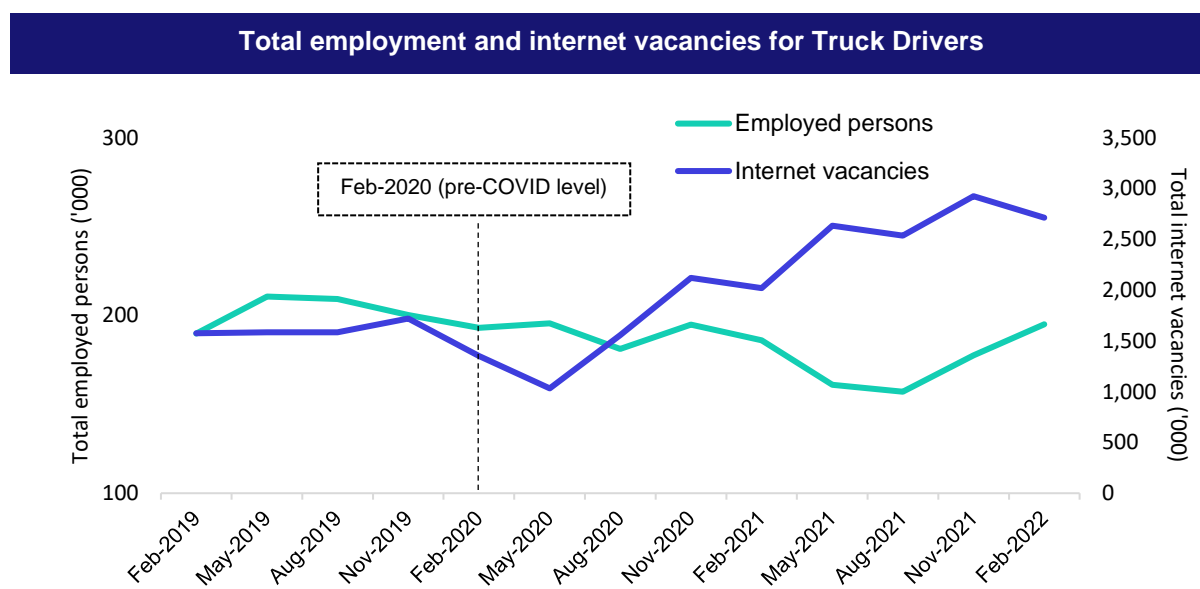
## Spotlight: Recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers

Truck Drivers<sup>4</sup> play an important role in the distribution and transportation of goods across Australia. *National Skill Commission* data shows that employers are increasingly looking to recruit Truck Drivers, but many have difficulty doing so.

### There are many vacancies for Truck Drivers

Demand for Truck Drivers is strong. Since February 2020, the number of online job advertisements for Truck Drivers has increased by 101%, compared with 59% for all occupations.

Meanwhile, the number of people employed as Truck Drivers has not substantially increased, despite the rising number of online job advertisements. Since February 2020 there has been a 1.0% increase in the number of people employed as Truck Drivers, compared with a 2.9% increase for all occupations. Given the higher-than-average surge in vacancies, this data suggests that employers have had trouble filling their vacancies.



Sources: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, March 2022; NSC, Internet Vacancy Index, March 2022.

### Recruitment difficulty is common and a third of employers can't fill their vacancies<sup>5</sup>

*Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey* (REOS) data shows that recruitment for Truck Drivers is difficult, and vacancies are not being filled.

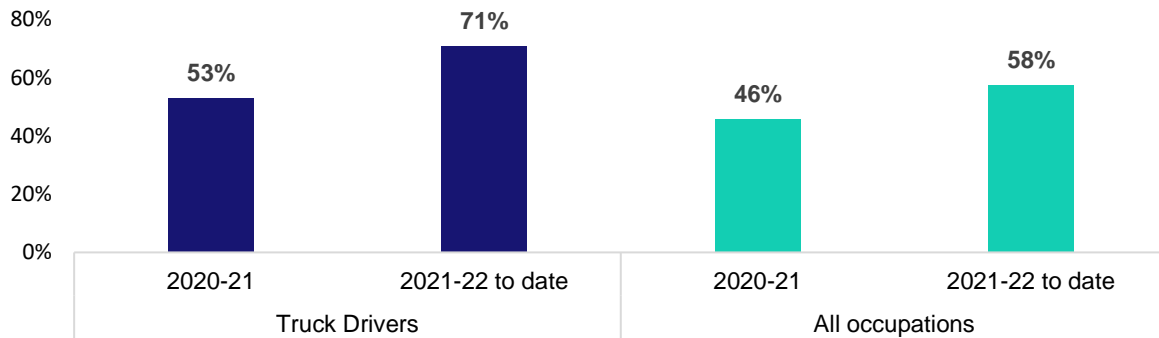
Since the commencement of REOS monthly data collection, recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers has been higher than average. There has also been a recent increase in recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers, with the difficulty rate increasing from 53% in 2020-21 to 71% in 2021-22 to date. Over this period the difficulty rate also increased for all occupations, but to a lesser extent, from 46% to 58%.

<sup>4</sup> Truck Drivers are defined according to Unit Group 7331 in the ABS' ANZSCO classification: Truck Drivers drive heavy trucks, removal vans, tankers and tow trucks to transport bulky goods and liquids.

<sup>5</sup> Another of the NSC's employer surveys, the Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised (SERA), which targets 250 skilled occupations, has also found a high level of recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers. Employers surveyed were often unable to fill advertised vacancies and typically received small pools of candidates. These applicants were often considered unsuitable if they did not have the required experience or lacked the required qualifications (typically a driver's licence, including heavy vehicle licencing).

## Recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers versus all occupations

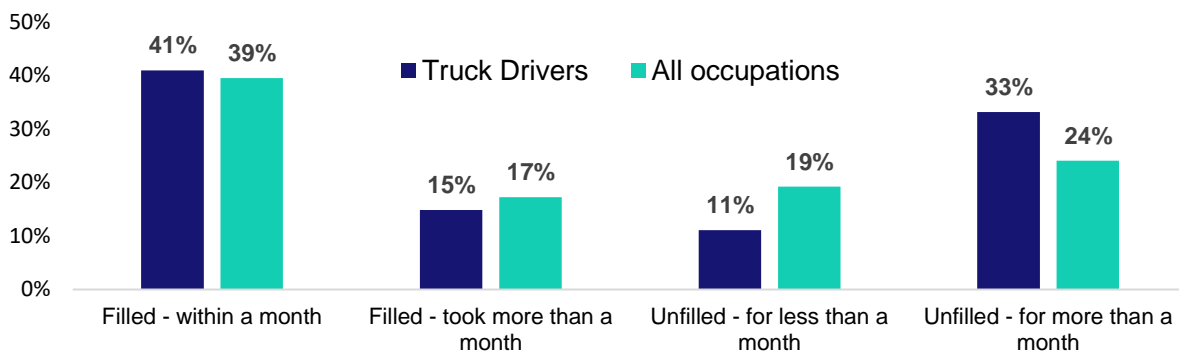
(Proportion of recruiting employers, August 2020 – April 2022)



Truck Driver vacancies also take longer to fill than other occupations. Notably, one third (33%) of employers recruiting for Truck Drivers had vacancies that had been unfilled for more than one month at the time of the survey. This was higher than the average across all occupations (24%).

## Time to fill vacancies for Truck Drivers versus all occupations

(Proportion of recruiting employers, May 2021 – April 2022)

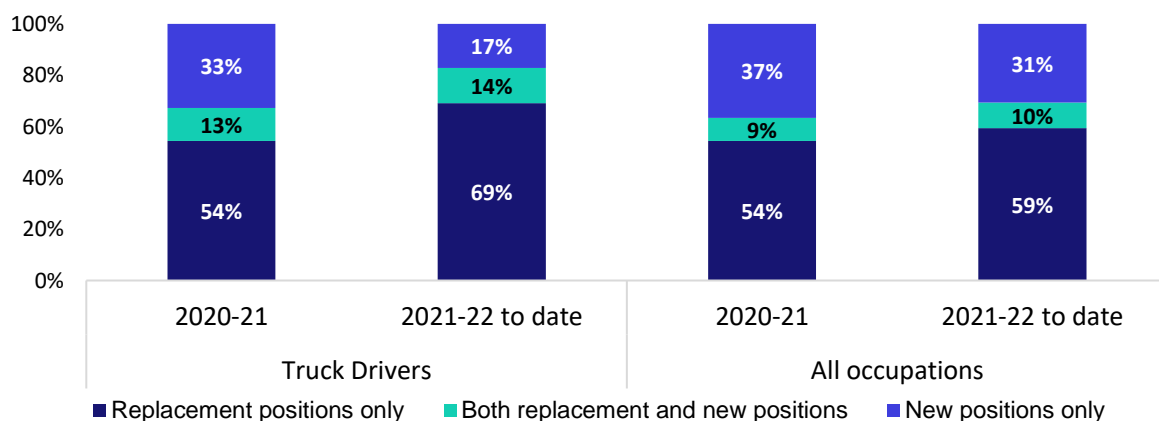


## There is a high level of turnover for Truck Drivers

Recent data reveals a high level of turnover for Truck Drivers. In the current financial year to date, 69% of employers who recruited for Truck Drivers were trying only to replace staff (as opposed to filling new positions). This is substantially higher than the 59% for all occupations. In the previous financial year (2020-21), the share of Truck Driver recruitment that was only to replace staff was lower than it currently is (54%) and the same as for all occupations.

## Reasons for recruiting Truck Drivers versus all occupations

(Proportion of recruiting employers, August 2020 – April 2022)



## Inexperienced applicants and working conditions are factors in recruitment difficulty

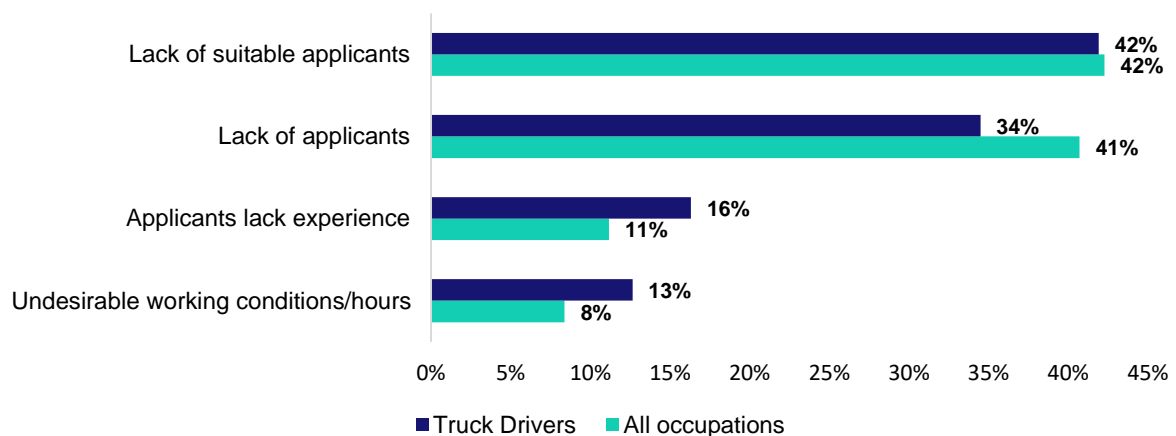
When asked about why recruitment for Truck Drivers was difficult, employers most commonly said that applicants were unsuitable (mentioned by 42% of those who had difficulty) and that they received a lack of applicants in general (34%).

Other notable responses to this question included that applicants lacked experience (16%) and that the job has undesirable working conditions or hours (13%). These two reasons were mentioned less commonly for all occupations (11% and 8% respectively).

The relatively high proportion of employers citing inexperienced applicants as a reason for their difficulty may be a reflection of the high experience requirements of Truck Driver positions: 88% of employers looking for Truck Drivers required relevant experience, compared with 65% for all occupations.

### Selected reasons for recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers versus all occupations

(Proportion of employers with recruitment difficulty, September 2020 – April 2022)



## Productivity and revenue are often impacted by these recruitment difficulties

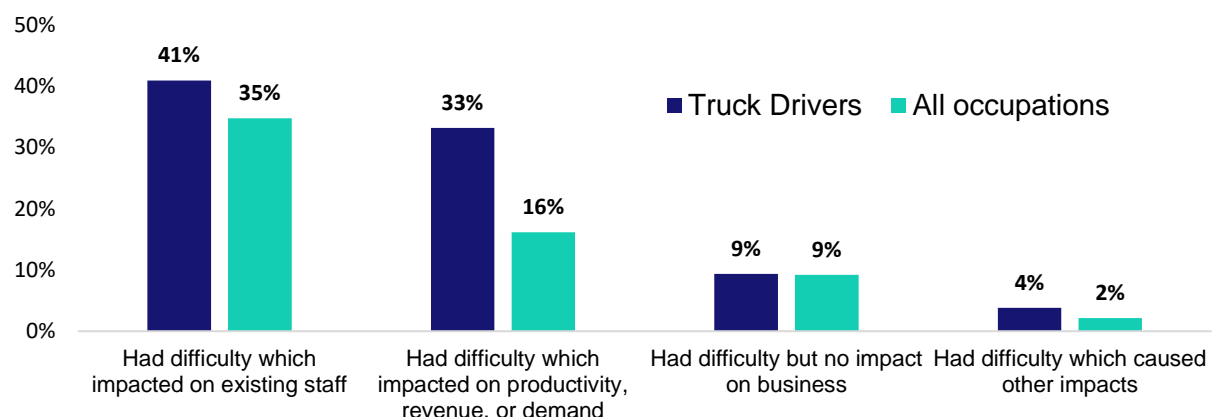
Employers trying to recruit Truck Drivers more often experience impacts from recruitment difficulty than other employers.

Some 41% of employers who recruited Truck Drivers had recruitment difficulty which impacted on their existing staff, higher compared with employers recruiting for any occupation (35%).

Furthermore, a third (33%) of employers who recruited for Truck Drivers had difficulty which impacted on the business' productivity, revenue, or demand. This was substantially higher than the corresponding proportion for all occupations (16%).

### Impacts of recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers versus all occupations

(Proportion of recruiting employers, August 2021 – April 2022)



## Background

Information in the monthly Recruitment Insight Reports is based on the *Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey* (REOS), which is an ongoing survey of employers across Australia. Approximately 1,200 employers are surveyed each month, with data published on the Labour Market Insights website ([labourmarketinsights.gov.au](http://labourmarketinsights.gov.au)). While the data are indicative of recruitment activity, they may be subject to seasonal factors and other volatility and should therefore be used with caution. In addition, the survey is targeted towards employers with 5 or more employees, and excludes many government organisations.

REOS results may not reflect the full impact that outbreaks of COVID-19 and associated restrictions have had on employers and their recruitment experiences since the survey is unable to gather data from employers who have closed down (even temporarily) and response rates can vary significantly by industry in areas under lockdown restrictions.

Please note that data collection paused over the Christmas and New Year period from 21 December 2020 until 8 January 2021, and 18 December 2021 to 7 January 2022.

Results from February 2022 have been revised and now differ slightly from what was published in the original release.

Data in this release should be referenced as – National Skills Commission, Recruitment Insights Report, April 2022.

For additional information email [RecruitmentAnalysis@skillscommission.gov.au](mailto:RecruitmentAnalysis@skillscommission.gov.au).