

Recruitment Difficulty for Truck Drivers

April 2022 Spotlight

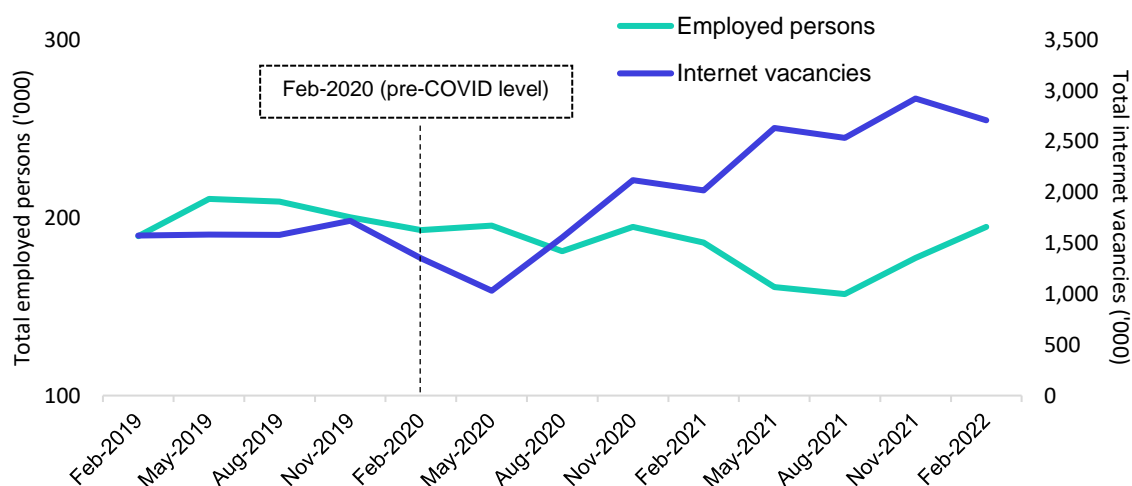
Truck Drivers¹ play an important role in the distribution and transportation of goods across Australia. Data from the *National Skill Commission's* Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS) show that employers are increasingly looking to recruit Truck Drivers, but many have difficulty doing so.

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.

Total employment and internet vacancies for Truck Drivers



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 vacancies²

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

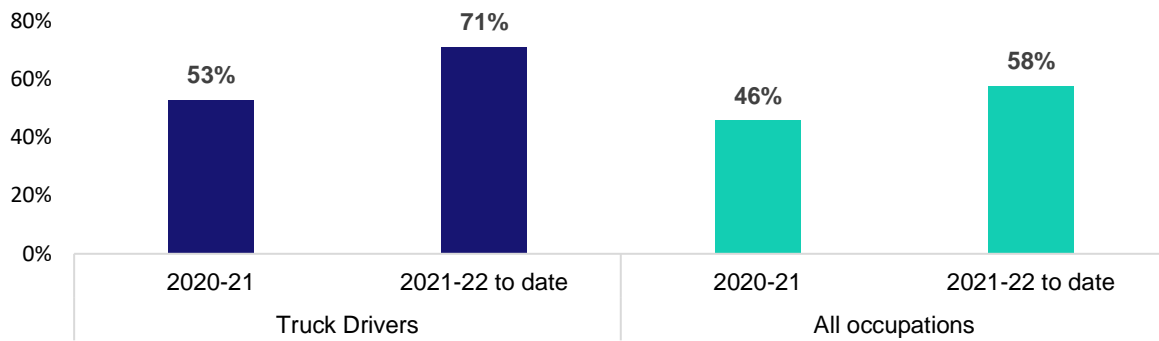
Since the commencement of REOS monthly data collection, recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers has been higher than average. There has also been a recent increase in recruitment difficulty for Truck Drivers, with the difficulty rate increasing from 53% in 2020-21 to 71% in 2021-22 to date. Over this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

¹ 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.

² 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

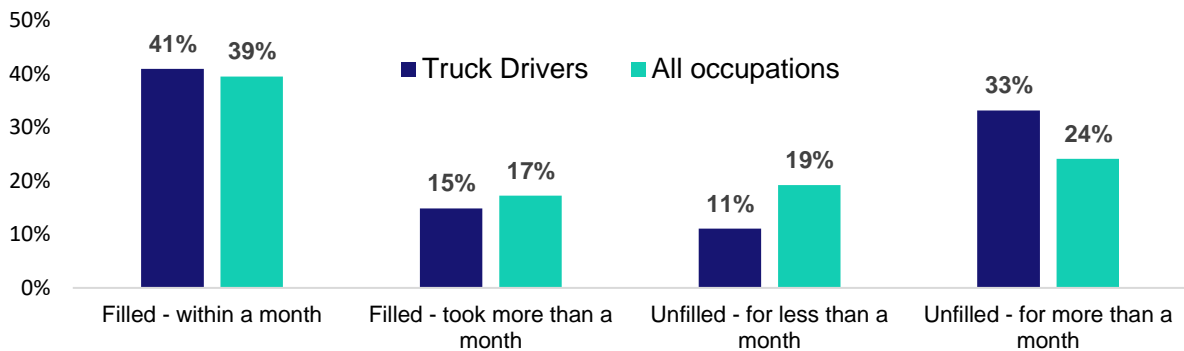
(Proportion of recruiting employers, August 2020 – April 2022)



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)

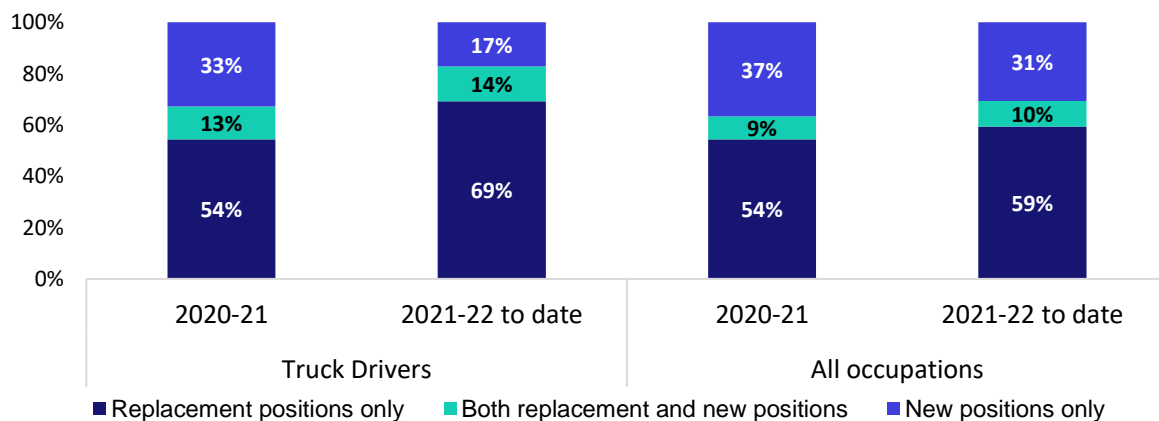


There is a high level of turnover for Truck Drivers

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

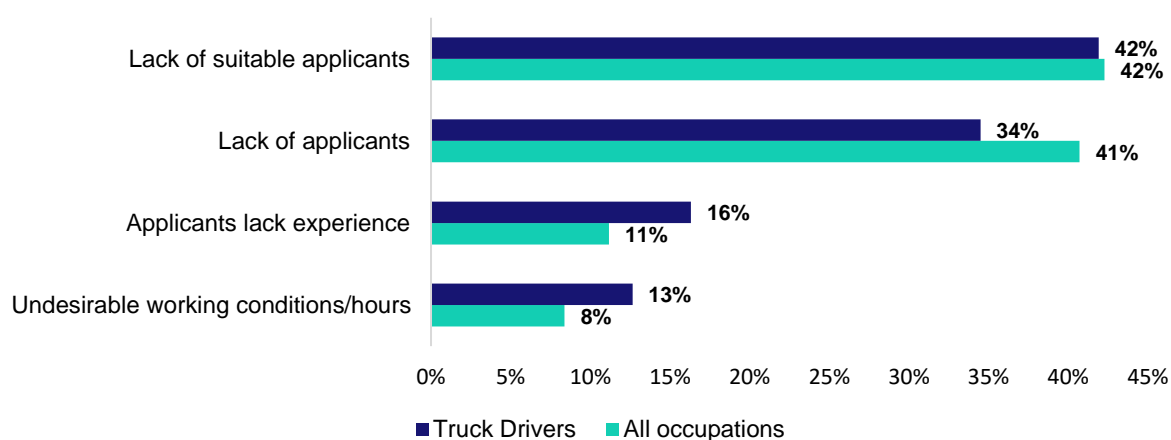
When asked about why recruitment for Truck Drivers was difficult, employers most commonly said that applicants were unsuitable (mentioned by 42% of those who had difficulty) and that they received a lack of applicants in general (34%).

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)

