

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

April 2025

SKILLED WORKFORCE IN FOCUS:

OVER 330,000
APPRENTICES AND
TRAINEES BEING
TRAINED NATIONALLY

Source: Federal Budget

UNEMPLOYMENT STEADY AT

4.1%


SHOWING
RESILIENCE

Source: ABS

TRANSPORT JOBS IN FLUX: ROAD FREIGHT DECLINES, BUT AIR AND RAIL SOAR

Source: Jobs and Skills Australia





The unemployment rate remained steady at 4.1% in February, reflecting stability despite shifts in employment figures

JOB MARKET EVOLVING WITH RESILIENT OUTLOOK

Australia's job market is showing signs of adjustment. The unemployment rate remained steady at 4.1% in February, reflecting stability despite shifts in employment figures. Seasonally adjusted full-time employment declined by 35,700, while part-time employment saw a decrease of 17,000.

Jobs and Skills Australia reported a 5.9% drop in online job ads in February (13,200 fewer ads), marking the largest monthly decline since late 2022. SEEK also noted a 1.8% dip in job ads following a strong January.

Despite these changes, the job market remains relatively healthy. The Federal Budget projects the unemployment rate to peak at 4.25%—a quarter of a percentage point lower than previously forecast in December, signaling resilience in the broader employment landscape.

A LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN INDUSTRY SECTORS

TRADES



The longstanding issue of uniform trade licencing may be about to get attention, with the federal government funding states, territories, unions and employers to work on a national occupational licence for electrical trades. It would enable electricians to move to where they are needed and is being looked at as a template for possible extension to other licenced trades.

TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS



Job ads in these sectors were down 3.4% in February. Total payroll jobs in transport industries have declined by 4,640 jobs (or 2%) between July 2021 and February 2024, according to Jobs and Skills Australia's Food Supply Chain Workforce study. The decrease was driven by the road freight sector. However, JSA reports good growth in other transport industries: Jobs in Air and Space Transport (up by 24%); Freight Forwarding Services (up by 10%); and Rail Freight Transport (up by 12%).

GOVERNMENT AND DEFENCE



Over the three months to February, the number of job ads in Government and Defence have dropped by 8%, according to SEEK. Federal government hiring has been muted in the lead up to the federal election, and state and territory government are under increasing pressure to restrain expenditure.

APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES



The number of apprentices and trainees 'in-training' stood at 333,765 at the end of September 2024, down 7.8% on a year earlier, according to NCVER. Trade apprenticeships decreased by 1.9%, to 232,610, while traineeships were down by a hefty 18.9%, to 101,120. Commencements were down 17.4% over the year, with the largest decreases among Construction, (down 18.6%) and Automotive and Engineering trades, (down 18%).

SOURCES: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Jobs and Skills Australia (ABS), SEEK Employment Report, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), Commonwealth Budget 2025-26.

From Trainees to Full-Time Telstra Technicians: Kenneth & Andrew's Success Story

The challenge

- ▶ Starting a new career in an unfamiliar industry is never easy, especially when stepping into the fast-paced world of telecommunications.

For Kenneth Allen and Andrew Adolfo, their journey began on 16 February 2023, when they enrolled in the Certificate III in Telecommunications Technology with no prior experience in the field.

Like many trainees, they faced the challenge of learning highly technical skills from scratch while also adapting to a real-world work environment. Telecommunications requires not just technical expertise but also problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and communication skills, all of which they had to develop quickly.

The skill

- ▶ At Programmed Training Services, we don't just connect people with jobs. We equip them with the skills and support they need to succeed. Kenneth and Andrew's training journey was built on:

- **Practical learning** — Hands-on experience through structured training and real-world applications.
- **Soft skills development** — Strengthening communication and teamwork to thrive in a fast-paced industry.
- **Industry integration** — Working alongside experienced Telstra professionals to apply their knowledge in real time.

With Programmed's expert mentoring and on-the-job training, they quickly became skilled, confident, and job-ready. Their willingness to learn and dedication to the craft set them apart.

The success

- ▶ • **Progressing to the next level** — After completing their Cert III in Telecommunications Technology, both Kenneth and Andrew were offered the opportunity to continue their training with a Cert IV in Telecommunications Engineering.
- **Real-world application** — During their traineeship, they became an integral part of the Telstra team, seamlessly adapting to workplace challenges and gaining hands-on experience in the field.
- **Achieving their career goals** — Upon completing their Cert IV, Kenneth and Andrew were offered full-time positions with Telstra—a true testament to their hard work, determination, and the strength of Programmed's training Program.



Speak to your Account Manager about how Traineeships and Apprenticeships can help solve your workforce challenges.



by PERSOL

Skilled for success

For more information, contact your Account Manager at 13 STAFF (13 78 23) or email:

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