

MANUFACTURING TRAINING, SKILLS AND WORKFORCE UPDATE

| DECEMBER QUARTER, 2024



HIGHLIGHTS

1. Queensland's manufacturing workforce is lower than this time last year, but the 2024 average was higher than 2023.
2. Strong workforce growth is seen in regional areas of Queensland.
3. In occupations related to manufacturing, the median weekly earnings for full-time female employees are between 81% and 91% of the median for male employees.
4. Central Queensland region has highest rate of apprenticeship and traineeship commencements, per capita.
5. The Australian Meat Processing (AMP) and Metal and Engineering (MEM) account for nearly 70% of all engagements with apprenticeships and traineeships.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Queensland's manufacturing industry continues to play a vital role in the state's economy, showcasing resilience and adaptability amidst ongoing changes. With a strong labour force foundation, the industry remains a key driver of economic growth, contributing nearly one-fifth of Australia's total manufacturing output. Although workforce attraction and retention continue to be some of the biggest challenges for manufacturers, regional areas such as Central Queensland and the Gold Coast are emerging as thriving hubs for manufacturing activity. This regional growth highlights industry's ability to adapt and expand, supporting local economies and communities.

Diversity and training remain focus areas for the sector. Programs targeting women, and individuals with disabilities aim to ensure equal opportunities and strengthen the workforce's diversity. For the 12 months to 30 June 2024, 36.8% of all apprenticeship commencements in Queensland were females, compared to 19.7% for manufacturing training packages. Central Queensland and Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday lead the way in apprenticeship commencements, particularly in engineering and fabrication trades. Apprenticeship and traineeship data highlights the significant engagement with the Australian Meat Processing (AMP) and Metal and Engineering (MEM) training packages.

By harnessing regional strengths and supporting inclusivity, Queensland manufacturing is set to remain a cornerstone of the state's economic landscape.

WORKFORCE SUMMARY



Jobs

- There were **169,300** employees in the Queensland manufacturing workforce in November 2024—a **decrease of 16,600** since November 2023.
- Queensland's workforce is **19.1%** of the total Australian manufacturing workforce, and **83.6%** are full-time.
- Comparing the 2024 average workforce with the 2023 average workforce:
 - Primary Metal and Metal and Fabricated Metal sub-industries have shown the greatest growth.
 - Transport Equipment, Non-metallic Mineral, Polymer and Rubber, and Beverage manufacturing sub-industries have all decreased in size by more than 20%.
 - Greater Brisbane has **fallen by 5,100**, while the regional workforce has **increased by 8,900**. Strongest growth is seen in Gold Coast and Central Queensland areas.



Job Vacancies

- In Queensland, there are **3,500** unemployed persons in which their last job was in the manufacturing industry (November 2024).
- The average duration of job search for a Queenslanders who last worked in the manufacturing industry is **30.2 weeks** – the highest value across all industries for this quarter.
- Manufacturing has **14,800** job vacancies across Australia (4.3% of Australia's vacant jobs). Approximately, 3,100 of these vacancies are in Queensland



Gross Value Added

- In the 2023/24 financial year, manufacturing in Queensland added **\$28.97 billion** to the economy. This represents 19.7% of total value added to the economy by manufacturing across Australia. The percentage share has been stable for the past 12 financial years.



Earnings

- National employee earning data (released August 2024) demonstrates a significant difference between the median weekly earnings of full time male and female employees in occupation groups closely aligned to manufacturing.

| Occupation Group | Males | Females | Female earning percentage |
|---|------------|------------|---------------------------|
| Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers | \$1,672.30 | \$1,518.10 | 90.8% |
| Food Trades Workers | \$1,400.00 | \$1,200.00 | 85.7% |
| Other Technicians and Trades Workers | \$1,499.10 | \$1,225.70 | 81.8% |
| Machinery and Stationary Plant Operators | \$1,750.00 | \$1,424.80 | 81.4% |

TRAINING AND SKILLS SUMMARY

Diversity

- In November 2024, Queensland manufacturing has 41,900 female employees, representing 24.8% of the workforce. For three consecutive years, the average size of the female workforce in Queensland manufacturing has fallen.
- A gap exists in apprenticeship and traineeship data when comparing manufacturing training packages to the state averages across all qualifications. The greatest gap exists in the female cohort.

| Cohort | Commencements | | Completions | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| | Manufacturing | Queensland | Manufacturing | Queensland |
| Females | 19.7% | 36.8% | 19.6% | 37.1% |
| First Nation people | 7.5% | 10.1% | 5.8% | 7.5% |
| People with a Disability | 2.9% | 4.4% | 2.9% | 3.8% |

Skills Pipeline (by Region)

Data is based on apprenticeship and traineeship totals for the 12 months to 30 June 2024. Commencements are individuals who enrolled in a qualification for the first time within the time period, and completions are individuals who completed a qualification within the time period.

- Highest commencement numbers are seen in Ipswich, Logan-Beaudesert and Central Queensland regions.
- More individuals, per capita, commencement manufacturing apprenticeships in the Central Queensland region, than any other region. Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday ranks second, and both are twice the state average.
- Certificate III in Meat Processing (Food Services) and Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication Trade, are the qualifications that had the highest number of completions.
- In the Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday region, 63.6% of all commencements were in a Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication, Mechanical or Fixed and Mobile Plant Mechanic trades.

| Region | Qualification with highest commencements | Commencements | Completions |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|--------------|
| Brisbane – East | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 240 | 115 |
| Brisbane – North | Certificate III in Competitive Systems and Practices | 155 | 125 |
| Brisbane – South | Certificate III in Meat Processing (Food Services) | 270 | 145 |
| Brisbane – West | Certificate III in Engineering - Mechanical Trade | 85 | 35 |
| Brisbane – Inner City | Certificate III in Engineering - Mechanical Trade | 105 | 55 |
| Cairns | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 315 | 195 |
| Central Queensland | Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs) | 785 | 555 |
| Darling Downs-Maranoa | Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs) | 390 | 285 |
| Gold Coast | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 615 | 300 |
| Ipswich | Certificate III in Meat Processing (Food Services) | 985 | 395 |
| Logan-Beaudesert | Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs) | 850 | 380 |
| Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 590 | 335 |
| Moreton Bay – North | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 310 | 205 |
| Moreton Bay – South | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 190 | 120 |
| Queensland – Outback | Certificate III in Engineering - Fixed and Mobile Plant Mechanic | 155 | 90 |
| Sunshine Coast | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 340 | 190 |
| Toowoomba | Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs) | 415 | 355 |
| Townsville | Certificate III in Engineering - Fabrication Trade | 415 | 265 |
| Wide Bay | Certificate II in Meat Processing (Abattoirs) | 465 | 365 |
| Queensland Total | | 7,675 | 4,505 |

* 920 students commenced and completed in the 12-month period.

Skills Pipeline (by Training Package)

| Training Package | Commencements | Completions |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Aeroskills | 160 | 100 |
| Australian Meat Processing | 2,205 | 1,450 |
| Chemical, Hydrocarbons and Refining | 140 | 85 |
| Food, Beverage and Pharmaceutical | 295 | 265 |
| Furnishing | 725 | 310 |
| Laboratory Operations | 455 | 300 |
| Manufacturing | 100 | 75 |
| Metal and Engineering | 3,155 | 1,705 |
| Plastics, Rubber and Cablemaking | 115 | 60 |
| Printing and Graphic Arts | 35 | 15 |
| Sustainability | 280 | 130 |
| Textiles, Clothing and Footwear | 10 | 10 |
| Queensland Total | 7,675 | 4,505 |

** 920 students commenced and completed in the 12-month period

Sources: ABS, Labour force, Australia, detailed and NCVET, Apprentices & trainees, released 17 January 2025 10:00am AEST.

Notes: Workforce Summary data is based on November 2024 data, unless stated. Training and Skills Summary data is based on totals for the 12 months to 31 June 2024 and utilises the 12 training packages associated with manufacturing and the usual residence of individuals, unless stated.