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Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns

1994–1997

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P R E F A C E

This publication presents information about the labour market activities of the same group of Jobseekers over a period of three years, from September 1994 to September 1997. The experiences of this group are, in some cases, compared with those of the general population over the same period.

The publication is the last in a series of publications that used data based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns.

The publication draws extensively on information provided by individuals. Their cooperation is very much appreciated.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND OTHER USAGES

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
DEETYA	Department of Employment, Education, Training, and Youth Affairs
DSS	Department of Social Security
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LMP	Labour Market Program
PRG	Population Reference Group
RSE	Relative standard error
SE	Standard error
SEIFA	Socio-economic Indexes for Areas
SEUP	Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns
TAFE	Technical and Further Education institution

SYMBOLS

*	subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes
..	not applicable
—	nil or rounded to zero

ROUNDING

Because estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns (SEUP) were to provide information on the dynamics of the labour market and to assist in the assessment of the impact of labour market assistance initiatives in alleviating the extent of joblessness in Australian society.

SURVEY FEATURES

The SEUP was a longitudinal survey with information collected from the same individuals (referred to as a panel) over a number of years (referred to as waves).

The panel was established in April to July 1995, for simplicity referred to as 'May 1995'. It included people who were aged 15–59, and who were living in private dwellings in both urban and rural areas. Initial data was also collected at this point. A further interview later in 1995 extended the time frame for which information was available to the full year ending September 1995, completing the collection of wave 1 data.

Interviews to collect wave 2 (year ending September 1996) and wave 3 (year ending September 1997) data were undertaken during September and October of each year. Detailed labour market activity information, together with a wide range of socio-demographic information, is therefore available for the period September 1994 to September 1997.

Data collected directly from the respondent was supplemented with information from administrative systems maintained by the Department of Employment, Education, Training, and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) and the Department of Social Security (DSS). However, this only occurred with the respondent's consent.

PANEL COMPOSITION

The panel comprised three subgroups: Jobseekers, a Population Reference Group (PRG), and people known to have been Labour Market Program (LMP) participants.

Jobseekers

The Jobseeker subgroup was the main component of the panel. It comprised those people considered most likely to be eligible to participate in a LMP or likely to become eligible for such assistance in the near future.

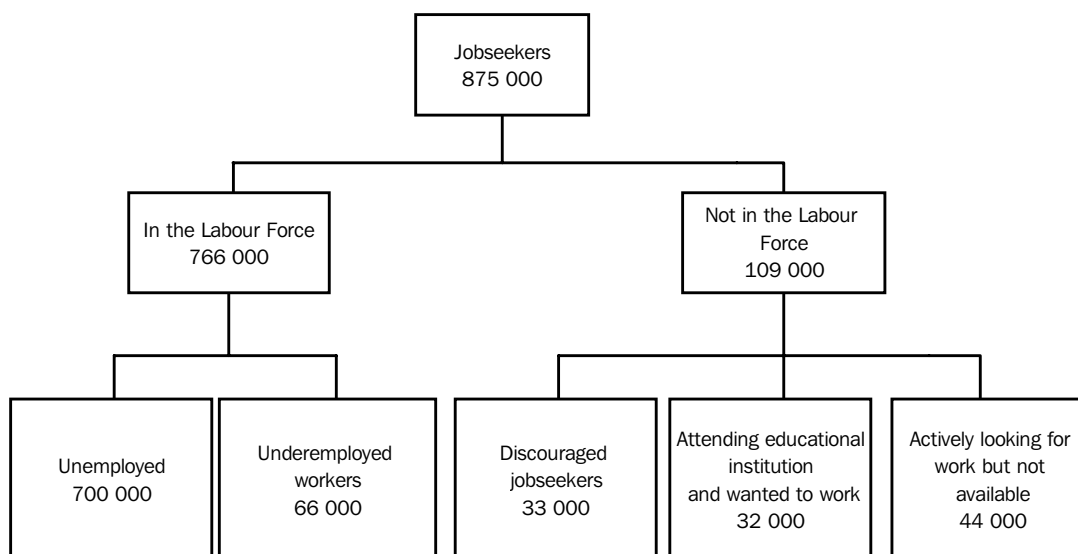
Broadly speaking, Jobseekers were defined as persons who, *at May 1995*, were aged 15–59 and were in one of the following categories:

- unemployed;
- marginally attached to the labour force (such as discouraged Jobseekers); and
- underemployed.

These people, initially identified as Jobseekers in May 1995, might have had a wide range of labour market experiences after that point. Irrespective of this, *they continue to be referred to as Jobseekers in this publication.*

A full description of the Jobseeker population is at Appendix 1.

THE JOBSEEKER POPULATION—May 1995



Population Reference Group

The PRG component of the panel was a random sample of the population aged 15–59. It was included in the panel so that the labour market experience of Jobseekers could be assessed in the context of the experience of the general population.

Labour Market Program participants

The LMP component of the panel was a sample of people aged 15–59 who had been in continuous receipt of an unemployment allowance for 18 months or more and who had commenced a subsidised employment placement and/or commenced a labour market training program between July 1994 and February 1995. This component of the panel complemented the Jobseeker subgroup, and was included to ensure that the survey had a sufficient number of LMP participants to support analysis of their characteristics in the first year.

LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES

Two measures of respondents' labour market activities are available from the SEUP.

Labour force status (employed, unemployed, and not in the labour force) is a point in time categorisation of respondents and is only available at the time of panel establishment and at each subsequent interview. This measure uses the full rigour of the concepts used in the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). In particular, the job search and availability criteria are applied to determine whether a person is 'unemployed' or 'not in the labour force', and the three labour force states of 'employed', 'unemployed' and 'not in the labour force' are mutually exclusive.

Episodal status is a categorisation of each episode of labour market activity as either 'working', 'looking for work', or 'absent from the labour market' (neither working nor looking for work). The categorisation of each episode into one of these three types is based on the respondent's perception. This is because it is not feasible to apply the rigour of the LFS questioning to labour market activities which may extend over considerable periods of time, nor to situations that prevailed up to 12 months

LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES *continued*

previously (the SEUP having annual interviews). Unlike the labour force status measure, this approach enables a person to be categorised simultaneously as both 'working' and 'looking for work' (that is, looking for different or additional work) if these activities are undertaken concurrently. However, no overlap is allowed between either of these two states and that of 'absent from the labour market'.

Additionally, respondents' episodes of labour market assistance from the CES and DSS may also overlap with each other and with any of the labour market activity categories. For example, a respondent may have participated in a labour market program at the same time as they were looking for work and receiving an unemployment benefit.

TIME PERIODS

The full reference period for the SEUP is September 1994 to September 1997. However, in this publication, the following time references are generally used:

- May 1995 to September 1997—as Jobseekers were identified at May 1995, the period following their identification is generally used to analyse their labour market experiences;
- September 1997—this is the end of the survey period and in the publication is used as the point at which Jobseekers' labour market outcomes are determined.

In addition, some information in the survey relates to respondents' employment history, for example, whether the respondent had worked before September 1994.

PUBLICATION CONTENT

This publication describes the characteristics and labour market activities of Jobseekers during the period September 1994 to September 1997 and, in some cases, compares their experiences with those of the general population.

There are many data items collected in the SEUP. There are also many ways in which the data can be analysed and presented. This publication presents only a selection of findings from the survey in a descriptive manner. The aim is to inform public debate about the dynamics of the labour market, and, more particularly, about Jobseekers' labour market experiences and outcomes. The data items covered in this publication, and the styles of presentation, were selected to provide the reader with a good understanding of the capacity of the survey to support analysis of labour market and social issues.

Much of the data is reported in summary form. While each chapter concludes with a set of statistical tables for reference, they may not contain all the data referred to in the text. More detailed information is available on request. However, due to the relatively small sample size, little reliable information can be provided for smaller States and Territories or for fine disaggregations.

PUBLICATION CONTENT *continued*

The chapters are as follows:

Chapter 2: Overview—this chapter provides a brief summary of the main findings of the publication.

Chapter 3: Labour Market Experiences—this chapter looks in detail at Jobseekers' labour market experiences during the period May 1995 to September 1997.

Chapter 4: Jobseekers' Labour Market Outcomes—this chapter focuses on Jobseekers' labour market outcomes at September 1997.

Chapter 5: Characteristics of Jobs—the focus is on Jobseekers who were working in September 1997 and the characteristics of the jobs that they held. The characteristics of the main jobs held by Jobseekers at September 1997 are compared with those held by the general population.

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF SEUP DATA

The SEUP dataset will support a wide range of projects across many policy interests which might draw on a range of analytical techniques. A Research Fellowship scheme has been established to facilitate high quality analysis of the data by researchers who have experience in the analysis of longitudinal data and an in-depth understanding of labour market issues and operations. The researchers' findings will be released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as they become available.

JOBSEEKERS' LABOUR MARKET EXPERIENCES

At May 1995 there were approximately 875,000 Jobseekers aged 15–59 years in Australia. Between May 1995 and September 1997, 25% of these found 'sustained work' (that is, they worked for at least 12 months in total, and in jobs with an average length of 12 months or more).

A further 21% of Jobseekers worked for at least six months in jobs between 6 and 12 months duration on average ('moderate' work experiences), and 16% had 'shorter' work experiences (that is, they worked for six months or more in at least two jobs with an average length of less than six months).

Some 16% of Jobseekers found 'minimal work'—less than six months in total—while 23% did not find any work at all.

Age

People aged 15–24 made up 35% of all Jobseekers, but represented 49% of those who had 'shorter' work experiences and 24% of those who had not worked at all.

Annual income

Jobseekers with sustained work experiences between May 1995 and September 1997 received more income than others—for example, these Jobseekers received \$21,500 on average in the financial year 1996–97, compared with \$13,700 for those with shorter work experiences and \$8,600 for those who had not worked.

Job characteristics

Of wage and salary jobs found by Jobseekers with shorter work experiences, 25% were permanent compared with 55% of those found by Jobseekers with sustained work experiences.

More than one in four jobs found by Jobseekers with sustained work required a post-school qualification, compared with one in seven jobs found by those with minimal work.

Job search episodes

On average, Jobseekers with sustained work experiences spent 18 days longer looking for work than Jobseekers with shorter work experiences. This may be partly because Jobseekers with sustained work were looking for full-time work only in 47% of their job search episodes. In comparison, Jobseekers with shorter work experiences were looking for full-time work only in 41% of their job search episodes.

JOBSEEKERS' LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

The proportion of Jobseekers at May 1995 who were working in subsequent months increased steadily to 45% after 12 months (to May 1996), but then rose only gradually to 52% in September 1997.

At September 1997, 32% of Jobseekers were in 'stable' work (either full-time or part-time), that is, they were in a job which had lasted for six months or more and were not concurrently looking for work.

Another 20% were in 'unstable' work, that is, they were in a job that had lasted for less than six months or the Jobseeker was concurrently looking for work.

A further 26% of Jobseekers had worked at some time between May 1995 and September 1997, but were no longer working at September 1997. The remaining 23% had not worked at all between May 1995 and September 1997.

Personal characteristics

Just over 30% of both males and females were in stable work at September 1997. For males, this work was predominantly full-time, but half of the females in stable work were in part-time jobs.

Of Jobseekers aged 15–19, 87% had worked between May 1995 and September 1997, a greater proportion than Jobseekers in other age groups. However, 25% of young Jobseekers were in unstable work at September 1997.

Over a third of Jobseekers who had a post-school qualification, or who attended the highest level of secondary school available, were in stable work at September 1997, compared with just over a quarter of those who did not attend the highest level of secondary school available.

Jobseekers' labour market outcomes were clearly related to English proficiency. Of Jobseekers who reported that they did not speak English well or at all, 61% had not worked at all between May 1995 and September 1997.

Relative socio-economic disadvantage

The proportion of Jobseekers in stable work increased as the degree of socio-economic disadvantage of their area of residence decreased. Conversely, the proportion of Jobseekers who had not worked increased with increasing socio-economic disadvantage.

Time spent looking for work

There was a clear relationship between the time Jobseekers had spent looking for work before May 1995 and their labour market outcome at September 1997. Almost 40% of Jobseekers who had been looking for work for 12 months or more (and were not concurrently working) did not find any work between May 1995 and September 1997, more than double the proportion of those had been looking for work for less than 12 months. Of Jobseekers who had been looking for work for less than 12 months, 34% were in stable work, compared with 20% of those who had been looking for work for 12 months or more.

Job offers

The vast majority of Jobseekers who had not worked between May 1995 and September 1997 reported that they had not had any job offers (91%).

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOBS

An issue of interest associated with Jobseekers' transition to work is whether the jobs they obtain are predominantly permanent or long-term or whether they are more likely to be short-term or casual, and how the characteristics of these jobs compare with those of jobs held by the general population.

Jobseekers and the general population

In making comparisons between Jobseekers and the general population, it should be noted that some differences between the job characteristics or the work experiences of the two groups may be due to the different composition of these two groups. For example, Jobseekers at May 1995 tended to be younger than the general population—35% were aged 15–24, compared with 24% of the general population.

At September 1997, of Jobseekers who were working, 61% were in stable jobs compared with 83% of the general population. Of those Jobseekers who were working, 62% were in full-time jobs compared with 72% of the general population.

Of Jobseekers who were wage and salary earners, 56% were in permanent jobs, compared with 76% of those in the general population.

Jobseekers who were employees at September 1997 tended to earn less than those in the general population—63% earned less than \$480 per week, compared with 37% of those in the general population.

A larger proportion of Jobseekers' stable jobs were in less skilled occupations, compared with the general population. Smaller proportions of Jobseekers who were in stable jobs were working as Managers and administrators or Professionals, while larger proportions were working as Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers or Labourers and related workers.

Jobseekers' work

A larger proportion of Jobseekers in stable work were in their preferred occupation than those in unstable work (68% and 53% respectively).

Of Jobseekers who were working full-time at September 1996, 73% were working full-time a year later, and 57% were in the same job.

Some 60% of Jobseekers who were in a permanent job at September 1996 were still permanent in the same job a year later. Of those in casual work at September 1996, 9% had moved to permanent work in the same job a year later.

Jobseekers have a variety of labour market experiences. While some move quickly into long-term work, others pick up a number of shorter-term jobs and others find little or no work. This chapter provides insight into Jobseekers' labour market experiences during the period May 1995 to September 1997.

Two measures of Jobseekers' success in finding long-term work—the total duration of work and the average job duration—have been used to classify Jobseekers into five work experience groups:

- *Had not worked*—Jobseekers who had not worked at all since May 1995;
- *Minimal work experience*—Less than six months work between May 1995 and September 1997;
- *Shorter work experiences*—Jobseekers who worked for at least six months between May 1995 and September 1997, with an average job duration of less than six months. Note that because of this definition, these Jobseekers had at least two jobs in this period;
- *Moderate work experiences*—Jobseekers who had worked for at least six months between May 1995 and September 1997, with an average job duration of between six and 12 months; and
- *Sustained work experiences*—Jobseekers who worked for at least 12 months between May 1995 and September 1997, with an average job duration of at least 12 months.

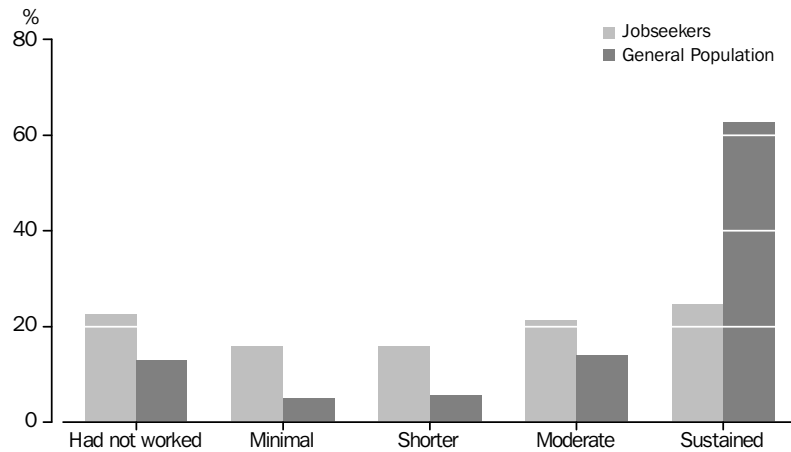
JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Work Experience Groups



COMPARISON WITH THE GENERAL POPULATION

A larger proportion of the general population experienced sustained work between May 1995 and September 1997 than did Jobseekers—63% of the general population compared with 25% of Jobseekers. Some 32% of Jobseekers had either minimal or shorter work experiences during this period, compared with 10% of the general population.

WORK EXPERIENCE GROUPS



PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

By analysing the characteristics of Jobseekers from different work experience groups it is possible to identify which characteristics might be related to their likelihood of finding long-term work, and which characteristics might put Jobseekers at risk of finding little work, or finding none at all.

Sex

There were considerably higher proportions of males than females with shorter work experiences—61% compared with 39%. In other work experience groups the ratios of males to females were more balanced. For example, 50% of Jobseekers who had not worked between May 1995 and September 1997 were female.

Age

Jobseekers with shorter work experiences had a much younger age profile than other work experience groups. While those aged 15–24 made up 35% of all Jobseekers, 49% of those with shorter work experiences and 24% of those who had not worked between May 1995 and September 1997 were in this age group.

Birthplace

Jobseekers born in Australia were over-represented among those with shorter work experiences—81% were born in Australia compared with 73% of all Jobseekers. Of Jobseekers who had not worked, 28% were born in a country in which English was not the main language.

Mobility

Shorter work experiences were associated with a higher degree of geographic mobility. Some 58% of those with shorter work experiences moved house between September 1994 and September 1997, compared with 40% of those with sustained work experiences and 32% of those who had not worked.

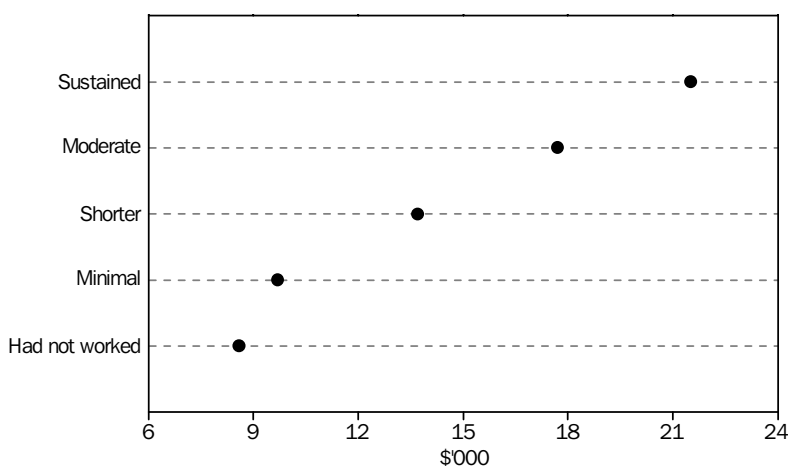
Educational attainment

Jobseekers with sustained work experiences had the highest levels of educational attainment. While 37% of all Jobseekers had post-school qualifications, 40% of those with sustained work had obtained post-school qualifications. A lower but still substantial proportion of Jobseekers who had not worked had post-school qualifications (27%).

Annual income

Jobseekers with sustained work experiences received considerably more income than others. For example, for the financial year 1996–97, they received an average income of \$21,500 compared with \$13,700 for Jobseekers with shorter work experiences and \$8,600 for Jobseekers who had not worked.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Average Annual Incomes of Work Experience Groups—1996–97



WORK EXPERIENCES

Jobseekers' work experiences can be described in quantitative terms, for example job duration and total amount of work, which are used to distinguish Jobseekers in the different work experience groups. In addition, there are some qualitative aspects to work, reflected in such characteristics as occupation, whether the job was in the preferred occupation, and whether any qualifications were required to obtain the job.

Amount of work

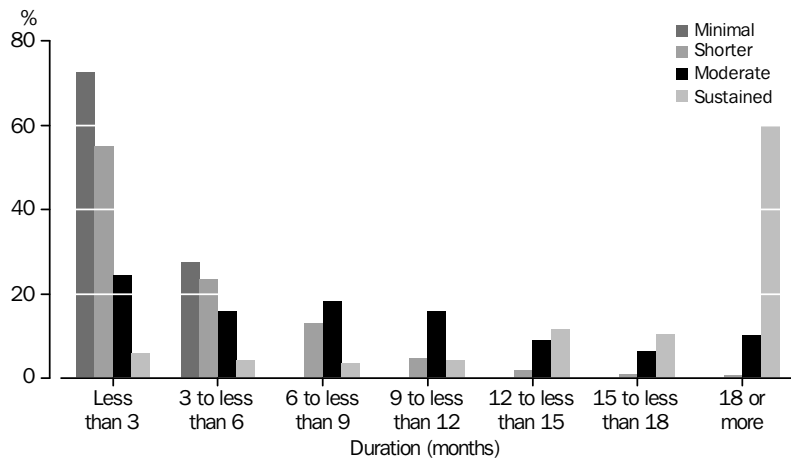
On average, Jobseekers with sustained work experiences had fewer jobs than others who had worked. However, as their jobs were of longer average duration, these Jobseekers spent a greater proportion of the period May 1995 to September 1997 working than did others. Those with sustained work experiences worked an average of 692 days of the period May 1995 to September 1997 whereas those with shorter work experiences worked an average of 408 days.

WORK EXPERIENCES, May 1995 to Sep 1997

WORK EXPERIENCE GROUP.....				
Average	Sustained	Moderate	Shorter	Minimal
	no.	no.	no.	no.
Jobs	1.31	2.27	3.79	1.54
	days	days	days	days
Job duration	565	256	113	61
Working in total	692	538	408	94

Jobseekers with shorter work experiences had an average of almost four jobs during the period May 1995 to September 1997. Most of these jobs were very short—55% lasted less than three months compared with 6% of jobs held by those with sustained work experiences.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Job Durations—May 1995 to Sep 1997



Job characteristics

Of Jobseekers who were in a wage and salary job at some time after May 1995, those with sustained work experiences had the highest proportion of permanent jobs (55%). In comparison, Jobseekers with shorter work experiences had the lowest proportion of permanent jobs (25%).

Of the wage and salary jobs held by Jobseekers with sustained work experiences, 61% were in their preferred occupation (where nominated), compared with 45% of jobs held by those with minimal work experiences.

Job characteristics *continued*

Among Jobseekers with minimal work, only 14% of wage and salary jobs required a post-school qualification; the equivalent figure for those with sustained work experiences was 27%.

A larger proportion of wage and salary jobs held by Jobseekers with sustained work experiences were in larger businesses (with more than 100 employees). For example, businesses with more than 100 employees accounted for 25% of wage and salary jobs held by Jobseekers with sustained work experiences and 15% of jobs held by those with minimal work experiences.

EPISODES OF LOOKING FOR WORK

This section examines the time Jobseekers spent looking for work, their efforts to find work and the sort of work they were prepared to accept.

Duration

Jobseekers with shorter work experiences had, on average, more job search periods than other Jobseekers. The average period of job search for those with shorter work experiences was 221 days compared with 239 days for those with sustained work experiences, and 351 days for those with minimal work experiences.

Jobseekers with sustained and moderate work experiences tended to spend less time looking for work (that is, looking for an additional job, or for a different job) while they were working than other Jobseekers. For example, those with sustained work experiences looked for work for an average of 20% of the days that they were working. In comparison, those with shorter work experiences were looking for work for an average of 31% of the days that they were working.

EPISODES OF LOOKING FOR WORK, May 1995 to Sep 1997

Average	WORK EXPERIENCE GROUP.....				
	<i>Sustained</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Shorter</i>	<i>Minimal</i>	<i>Had not worked</i>
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
Job search episodes	1.06	1.46	2.07	1.65	1.03
	days	days	days	days	days
Job search episode duration	239	235	221	351	483
Looking for work in total	253	344	458	579	498
Working while looking for work	142	125	125	35	..
Looking for work only	111	219	333	544	498

Selected characteristics

As discussed above, Jobseekers with shorter work experiences had higher geographic mobility than other groups. Consistent with this, those with shorter work experiences reported that they would be prepared to move interstate in 32% of their job search episodes, and intrastate in 44%. In comparison, Jobseekers who had not worked were prepared to move interstate in 18% of their job search episodes and intrastate in 29%.

For those with sustained work experiences, 47% of job search episodes involved looking for full-time work only, compared with 41% for Jobseekers with shorter work experiences. This greater emphasis on looking for full-time work may partly explain why Jobseekers with sustained work experiences spent longer looking for work than did those with shorter work experiences.

For all Jobseekers, contacting prospective employers was the most common active step taken to find work. For example, those with moderate work experiences used this method in 93% of their periods of looking for work. Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) registrations during periods of looking for work were highest amongst those with minimal work experiences (85%) and lowest for those with sustained work experiences (75%).

ABSENCE FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

This section looks at the amount of time spent absent from the labour market for different groups of Jobseekers and the main activities while absent.

Durations

Most Jobseekers who worked had very few days absent from the labour market. For example, Jobseekers with sustained work experiences were absent from the labour market for an average of only 20 days between May 1995 and September 1997.

Extended periods of absence from the labour market were most prevalent among Jobseekers who did not work. Between May 1995 and September 1997, this group was absent from the labour market for an average of 325 days.

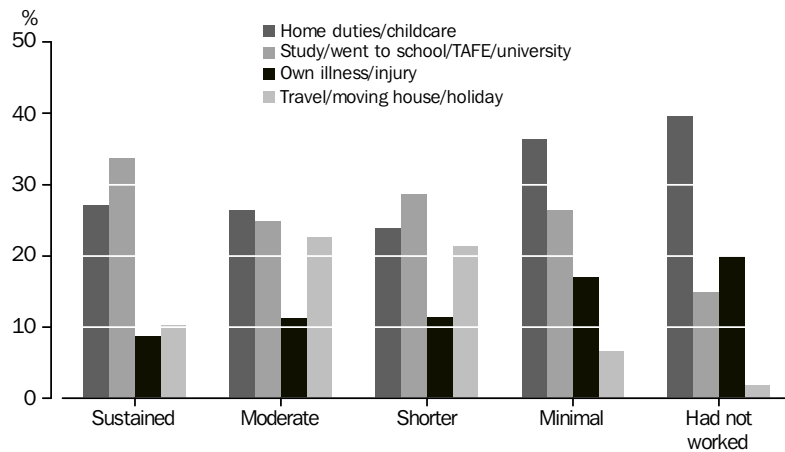
ABSENCE FROM THE LABOUR MARKET, May 1995 to Sep 1997

Average	WORK EXPERIENCE GROUP.....				
	Sustained	Moderate	Shorter	Minimal	Had not worked
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
Episodes of absence from the labour market	0.21	0.53	0.71	0.80	0.72
	days	days	days	days	days
Episode duration	93	124	115	231	449
Absence from the labour market in total	20	66	82	185	325

Selected characteristics

Among Jobseekers with moderate, minimal or no work experience, the most common activity during their episodes of absence from the labour market was Home duties/childcare. For those with other labour market experiences the most common activity was Study/went to school/TAFE/university. For those with shorter work experiences and moderate work experiences, 21%–23% of their episodes of absence from the labour market could be attributed to Travel/moving house/holidays. This is consistent with their higher degree of mobility relative to other Jobseekers.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Main Activity During Labour Market Absence, work experience groups



3.1 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Work Experience Groups

Selected characteristics	WORK EXPERIENCE GROUP.....					Total
	Sustained	Moderate	Shorter	Minimal	Had not worked	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Sex						
Males	56.9	53.0	61.4	57.5	50.3	55.4
Females	43.1	47.0	38.6	42.5	49.7	44.6
Age group (years) at May 1995						
15–19	14.9	17.6	25.8	19.4	9.4	16.7
20–24	17.9	20.6	22.8	17.3	14.3	18.3
25–34	27.9	25.9	26.0	26.1	18.4	24.8
35–44	24.0	22.0	15.9	20.3	21.3	21.1
45–59	15.3	13.9	9.4	17.0	36.6	19.2
Birthplace						
Born in Australia	71.0	74.7	81.4	75.1	64.7	72.6
Born outside Australia	29.0	25.3	18.6	24.9	35.3	27.3
Main English-speaking country	9.7	9.5	8.3	8.3	7.8	8.8
Other country	19.2	15.8	10.3	16.6	27.6	18.5
Educational attainment at September 1995						
Post-school qualifications obtained	42.8	41.3	37.6	35.1	29.5	37.4
Higher degree	*0.7	*1.0	*0.5	*0.2	*0.0	0.5
Postgraduate degree or diploma	*1.5	*1.2	*1.8	*0.8	*1.0	1.2
Bachelor degree	8.7	7.3	7.6	4.9	3.6	6.5
Undergraduate diploma	2.0	*2.0	*1.6	*1.7	*0.6	1.6
Associate diploma	5.0	5.3	5.1	5.5	2.3	4.5
Skilled vocational qualifications	17.7	16.3	13.8	14.3	14.8	15.6
Basic vocational qualifications	7.4	8.2	7.2	7.8	7.1	7.5
No post-school qualifications obtained	56.9	58.4	62.3	63.9	69.5	62.0
Attended highest level of school available	20.8	20.2	20.6	18.2	14.1	18.7
Did not attend highest level of school available	36.1	38.2	41.7	45.7	54.9	43.2
Age left school						
18 years and over	*1.8	2.5	*1.5	*1.3	3.7	2.2
17 years	6.5	4.6	8.7	5.9	6.6	6.4
16 years	12.9	11.3	13.9	13.9	11.1	12.5
15 years	14.9	19.8	17.6	24.6	33.5	22.1
Never attended school	*0.0	*0.1	*0.0	*0.1	*0.5	*0.2
Still at school	*0.3	*0.3	*0.1	*1.0	*1.0	0.5
Whether moved house—Sep 1994 to Sep 1997						
Moved	40.1	49.7	58.0	45.0	32.1	44.0
Moved interstate	*1.7	4.9	6.2	*2.9	2.4	3.4
Moved intrastate	38.4	44.7	51.8	42.1	29.8	40.5
Did not move	59.9	50.3	42.0	55.0	67.9	56.0
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total persons	216.0	185.2	138.3	138.3	197.2	875.1

3.2 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, All Wage and Salary Jobs Held After May 1995

Selected characteristics	WORK EXPERIENCE GROUP.....				
	Sustained	Moderate	Shorter	Minimal	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Full-time/part-time status					
Full-time	56.5	53.2	55.9	52.2	54.7
Part-time	43.5	46.8	44.1	47.8	45.3
Permanent/casual status					
Permanent	54.6	39.1	24.5	15.6	33.0
Casual	44.5	59.9	74.7	83.9	66.2
Occupation					
Managers and administrators	*1.5	*1.0	*0.7	*0.8	0.9
Professionals	10.0	9.2	8.4	4.3	8.3
Associate professionals	6.4	5.7	3.5	2.2	4.5
Tradespersons and related workers	11.1	9.8	12.2	11.1	11.1
Advanced clerical and service workers	2.7	2.7	1.0	2.0	1.9
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	22.8	24.1	18.1	15.9	20.4
Intermediate production and transport workers	11.3	11.2	12.4	12.5	11.9
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	15.0	13.3	12.5	15.2	13.6
Labourers and related workers	19.2	23.0	31.3	35.6	27.3
Whether job was in preferred occupation					
Job was in preferred occupation	56.2	55.1	54.6	44.0	53.4
Job was not in preferred occupation	20.5	25.9	28.4	33.7	27.0
Did not have preferred occupation	15.0	15.4	15.2	20.8	16.1
Not collected	8.3	3.4	1.8	*1.6	3.4
Business size					
1–10 employees	34.4	38.0	41.9	46.8	40.1
11–50 employees	29.1	30.5	30.8	32.9	30.7
51–100 employees	11.6	9.8	9.4	5.6	9.3
More than 100 employees	24.8	21.7	17.9	14.6	19.8
Whether required an educational qualification to obtain job					
Post-school qualification required	24.7	25.8	22.4	14.2	22.6
Post-school qualification not required	66.9	70.4	75.6	84.1	73.8
Not collected	8.3	3.4	1.8	*1.6	3.4
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total jobs	237.3	376.8	479.5	194.9	1 288.5

3.3 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, All Looking for Work Episodes Ending After May 1995

Selected characteristics	WORK EXPERIENCE GROUP.....					Total
	Sustained	Moderate	Shorter	Minimal	Had not worked	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Whether looking for full-time or part-time work						
Full-time	46.6	40.5	40.8	33.8	27.0	38.2
Part-time	12.4	14.0	10.8	16.4	21.2	14.6
Both full-time and part-time	41.0	45.5	48.3	49.8	51.7	47.2
Active steps taken to find work						
Registered with the CES						
Took no other active steps	2.2	1.8	3.3	*1.6	3.8	2.5
Contacted prospective employers	68.9	73.1	77.1	80.6	72.7	74.6
Took other active steps	3.5	2.8	3.6	2.9	6.1	3.7
Not registered with the CES						
Took only inactive steps	*1.4	*0.5	*0.2	*1.3	*1.6	0.9
Contacted prospective employers	21.6	19.6	14.5	11.6	12.7	16.1
Took other active steps	2.3	2.2	*1.3	2.0	3.1	2.1
Main difficulty in finding work						
Own ill health or disability	5.1	2.7	3.6	6.5	10.4	5.4
Considered too young or too old by employers	12.7	15.2	9.6	15.1	25.9	15.2
Unsuitable hours	2.9	3.4	2.3	2.3	1.9	2.6
Too far to travel or transport problems	5.7	5.0	5.9	8.3	4.9	6.0
Lacked necessary education, training or skills	14.8	13.6	16.2	14.3	13.5	14.6
Language difficulties	3.2	2.5	1.2	2.4	5.9	2.9
Insufficient work experience	15.4	15.1	15.0	14.7	11.3	14.4
No vacancies at all	14.6	14.4	16.4	14.4	11.8	14.5
No vacancies in line of work	11.7	13.1	18.2	13.0	8.2	13.2
Difficulties with ethnic background	*0.5	*0.6	*0.2	*0.4	*0.1	0.3
Childcare	*0.4	*0.9	*1.1	*0.7	*1.7	0.9
Other family responsibilities	*0.4	*0.7	*0.4	*1.2	*0.8	0.7
Other difficulties	4.6	4.1	2.8	3.3	2.8	3.5
No difficulties at all	8.0	8.7	7.0	3.3	0.9	5.8
Whether prepared to move interstate if offered a suitable job						
Prepared to move interstate	24.6	25.5	31.6	24.0	18.5	25.3
Not prepared to move interstate	65.2	67.0	57.1	65.2	73.6	65.1
Moving interstate would depend on						
Job conditions	5.9	3.3	6.5	5.3	3.2	4.9
Personal/family reasons	*1.4	*1.4	*1.0	2.1	2.3	1.6
The specific State or Territory	*0.8	*1.2	1.9	*1.2	*1.0	1.2
Other conditions	*1.1	*1.0	*0.8	*1.4	*1.0	1.0
Whether prepared to move intrastate if offered a suitable job						
Prepared to move intrastate	36.3	37.5	44.3	35.1	29.1	37.0
Not prepared to move intrastate	50.8	50.9	42.3	49.0	59.5	50.0
Moving intrastate would depend on						
Job conditions	5.2	5.1	6.3	6.2	4.2	5.5
Personal/family reasons	2.8	1.7	1.6	3.2	3.5	2.5
The specific part of the State or Territory	3.0	3.0	3.8	3.7	2.7	3.3
Other conditions	*0.9	*1.1	*1.0	*2.1	*0.8	1.2
.....						
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Total episodes	224.9	265.2	279.9	225.5	203.1	1 198.6

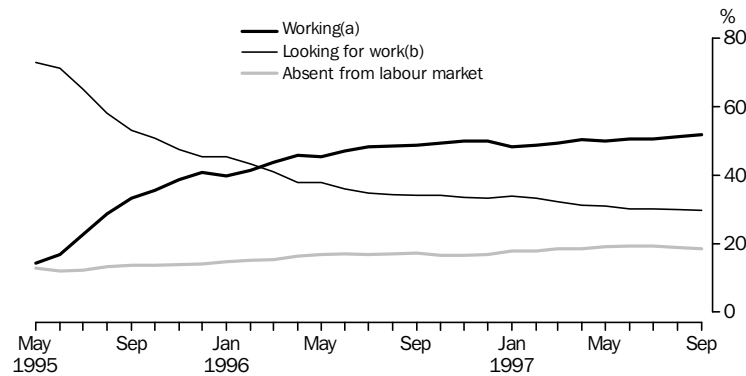
Labour market outcomes can be described in many ways. At the simplest level, the SEUP results show what proportions of Jobseekers had a job in each month since May 1995 (i.e. since being identified as a Jobseeker). More detailed analysis can provide information about the total time Jobseekers spent in work, and whether the jobs they found were full-time or part-time, permanent or casual, long-term or short-term.

This chapter focuses mainly on Jobseekers' labour market outcomes at September 1997, based on whether the Jobseeker was working, and incorporates information about the duration of the job and whether any work had been found during the period May 1995 to September 1997.

LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITIES OVER TIME

The proportion of Jobseekers at May 1995 who were working in subsequent months increased steadily to 45% in May 1996. However, after this, the number in work remained relatively steady, increasing only gradually to 52% in September 1997. Similarly, the number of Jobseekers who were looking for work (and not concurrently working) fell from 73% in May 1995 to 38% in May 1996, but then fell only gradually after this. At September 1997, 30% of Jobseekers were looking for work (and not concurrently working).

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Labour Market Activity Over Time



(a) Includes people who were working and looking for work concurrently.
 (b) Excludes people referred to in (a).

DESCRIBING JOBSEEKERS' LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

The following categories are used to describe Jobseekers' labour market outcomes at September 1997:

- *In stable work*—Jobseekers who were working at September 1997, who had been in that job for six months or more, and who were not concurrently looking for work. This group is divided into those who were working full-time and those who were working part-time at September 1997;
- *In unstable work*—Jobseekers who were working at September 1997 and who had been in that job for less than six months or were concurrently looking for work;
- *No longer working*—Jobseekers who had worked at some time since May 1995, but were no longer working at September 1997. This group is divided into those who were looking for work and those who were absent from the labour market; and
- *Had not worked*—Jobseekers who had not worked at all since May 1995. This group is divided into those who were looking for work and those who were absent from the labour market.

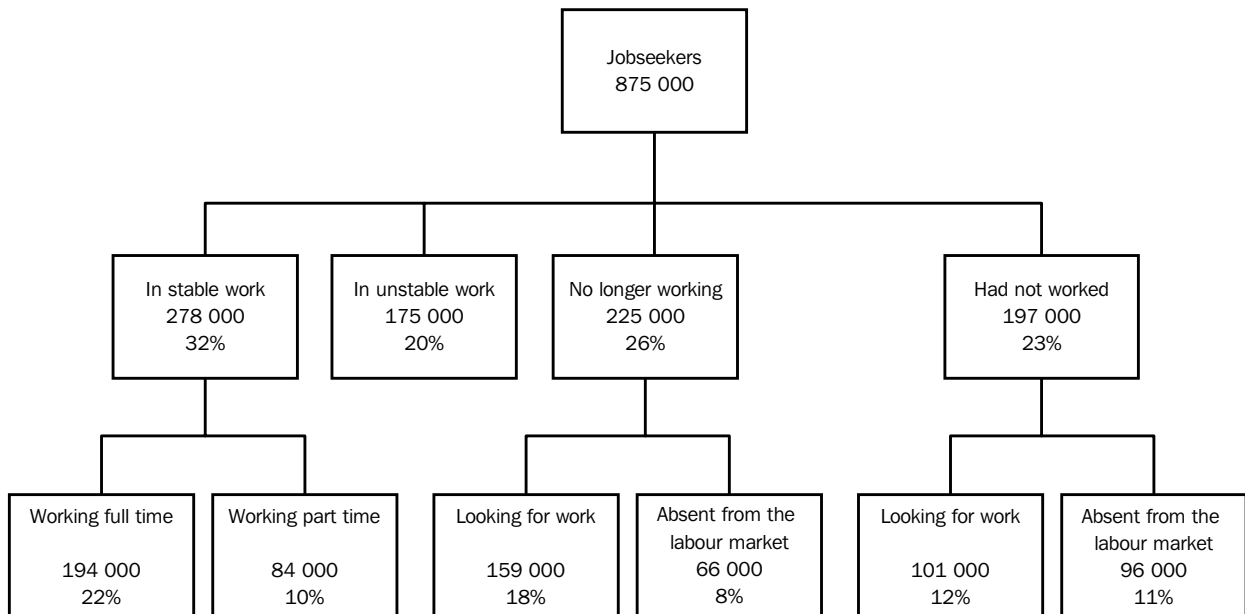
LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AT SEPTEMBER 1997

At September 1997, 52% of all Jobseekers were working:

- 22% were in a stable full-time job;
- 10% were in a stable part-time job; and
- 20% were in unstable work.

A further 26% of Jobseekers had worked at some time since May 1995 but 23% had not worked at all between May 1995 and September 1997.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Labour Market Outcomes at September 1997



LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Jobseekers with certain characteristics, such as low levels of education, poor English proficiency, or lack of work experience, may be disadvantaged in the labour market. The following analysis indicates that some characteristics are strongly related to Jobseekers' labour market outcomes.

Sex

Virtually the same proportions of male and female Jobseekers were in stable work at September 1997 (32% and 31% respectively). For males, this work was predominantly full-time, but half of the females in stable work were working part-time.

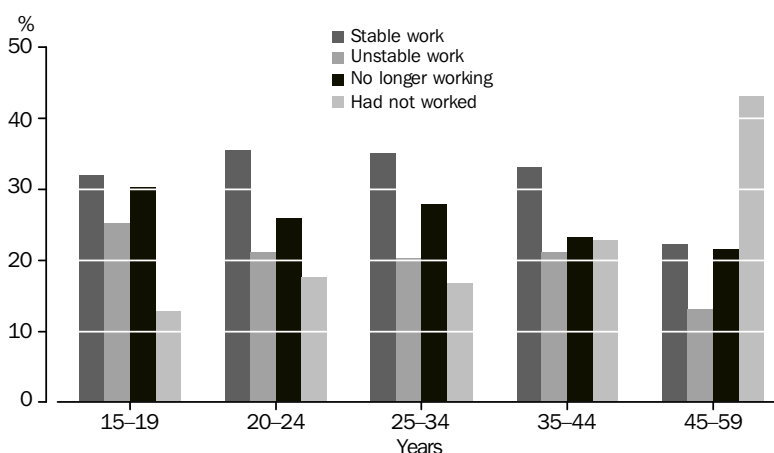
Age

Of Jobseekers aged 45–59, 43% had not worked at all since May 1995. At September 1997, only 22% of older Jobseekers were in stable work, and of those who had not worked since May 1995 and were looking for work at September 1997, 50% reported that their main difficulty in finding work was that they were considered too old by employers.

Of Jobseekers aged 15–19, 32% were in stable work at September 1997, and 25% were in unstable work, a larger proportion than other age groups. The proportion of Jobseekers who had not worked at all since May 1995 was lowest in the 15–19 year age group (13%).

For 66% of Jobseekers aged 15–24 who had not worked since May 1995 and were looking for work at September 1997, the main difficulty in finding work was they lacked necessary training or skills, had insufficient work experience or there were no vacancies.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Outcomes at September 1997—By age group



Educational attainment

The labour market outcomes of Jobseekers who had obtained a post-school qualification were similar to those of Jobseekers who attended the highest level of secondary school available. At September 1997, 38% of Jobseekers with a post-school qualification and 35% of Jobseekers who attended the highest level of secondary school available were in stable work. About 17% in each category had not worked at all since May 1995. In comparison, 26% of Jobseekers who did not attend the highest level of secondary school available were in stable work at September 1997 and 28% had not worked since May 1995.

Birthplace

Similar proportions of Jobseekers born in Australia, born in main English-speaking countries, and born in other countries were in stable full-time work at September 1997 (22%–23%). Of Jobseekers born in other than main English-speaking countries, 33% had not worked since May 1995, compared with 20% of other Jobseekers.

English proficiency

For Jobseekers whose first language was not English, there was a clear relationship between self-reported English proficiency, and labour market outcomes. Of those who reported they did not speak English well, or at all, 61% had not worked since May 1995, almost twice the proportion of those who reported speaking English well or fairly well, and almost three times the proportion who reported speaking English very well.

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AND AREA OF USUAL RESIDENCE

Section of State

Of Jobseekers living in capital cities, 35% were in stable work at September 1997, a similar proportion to those living in rural areas (32%) but a larger proportion than those living in other urban areas (26%). The proportion of Jobseekers in unstable work was higher in rural areas than capital cities (26% and 18% respectively).

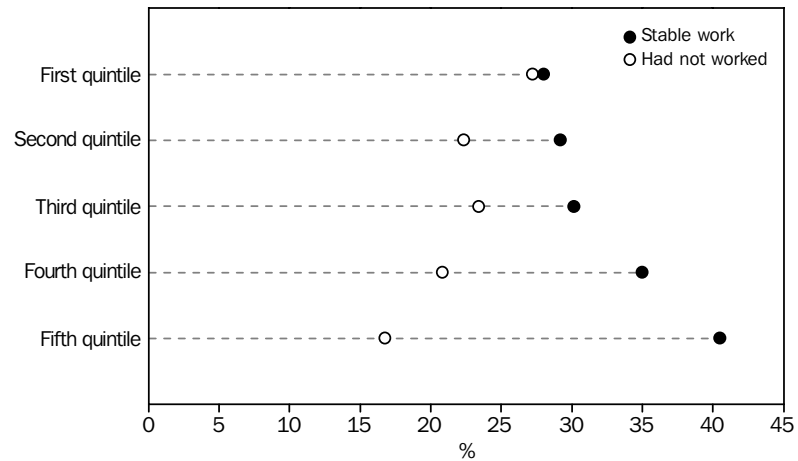
The proportion of Jobseekers who had not worked since May 1995 was highest in major urban areas other than the capital cities (27%) and lowest in rural areas (20%).

Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage is one of the Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) compiled using results from the Census of Population and Housing. This index is an indicator of relative socio-economic disadvantage for geographical areas, based on attributes such as low income, low educational attainment and high unemployment. The following analysis divides the index into quintiles. The lower the quintile, the more low income families there are and the more people with little training and in unskilled occupations. The higher the quintile, the fewer families of low income there are and the fewer people with little training and in unskilled occupations.

A larger proportion of Jobseekers in higher quintiles (relatively less disadvantaged areas) were in stable employment at September 1997. Some 28% of Jobseekers in the fifth quintile were in stable full-time work, compared with 19% of those in the first quintile. The proportion in unstable work was similar across the quintiles. However, larger proportions in lower quintiles had not worked at all. For example, 27% of Jobseekers in the first quintile had not worked by September 1997, compared with 17% of those in the fifth quintile.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Selected Outcomes at Sep 1997 by SEIFA(a)



(a) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AND LABOUR MARKET HISTORY

Whether worked previously

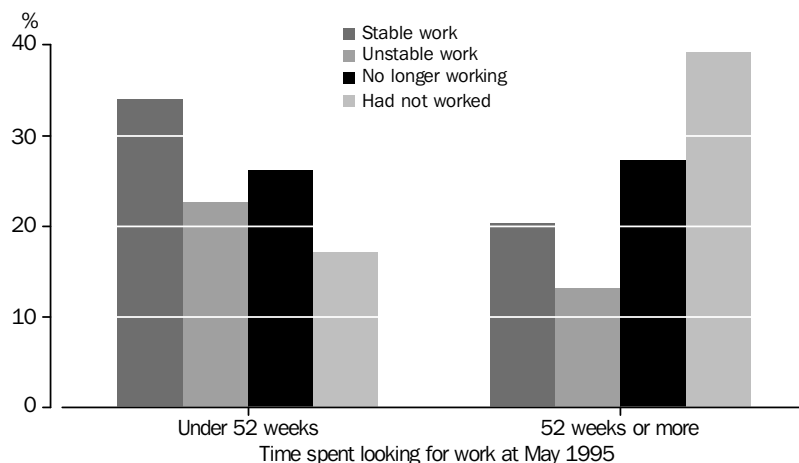
Jobseekers' labour market outcomes were related to their labour market history since first leaving full-time education. About a third of those who had worked part-time only or had worked both full-time and part-time before September 1994 were in stable work at September 1997, compared with a quarter of those who had never previously worked. Over a quarter of those who had never worked, or had worked full-time only, had not worked since May 1995, compared with under one-fifth of those who had worked part-time only or had worked both full-time and part-time.

Time spent looking for work

Of Jobseekers who, at May 1995, had been looking for work (and not concurrently working) for 12 months or more, 39% had not worked since May 1995, more than double the proportion of those had been looking for work for less than 12 months.

Of Jobseekers who had been looking for work for less than 12 months, 34% were in stable work, compared with 20% of those who had been looking for work for 12 months or more.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Outcomes at September 1997



LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AND TRAINING

In-house training

Of Jobseekers who were in stable full-time work at September 1997, 48% had participated in an in-house training course, compared with 43% of those in stable part-time work, 34% of those in unstable work, and 23% of those who had worked during the reference period but were no longer working at September 1997.

External training

External training consists mainly of short courses taken to improve job skills. It excludes courses that lead to an educational qualification and that are of one semester or more in duration.

Compared with in-house training, lower proportions of Jobseekers participated in external training courses. Similar proportions of Jobseekers in unstable work at September 1997 (35%) and Jobseekers who had worked but were no longer working at September 1997 (34%) had attended external training courses. Smaller proportions of Jobseekers in stable part-time work (29%) and stable full-time work (27%) had participated in an external training course, and a similar proportion of Jobseekers who had not worked at all (28%) had participated in an external training course.

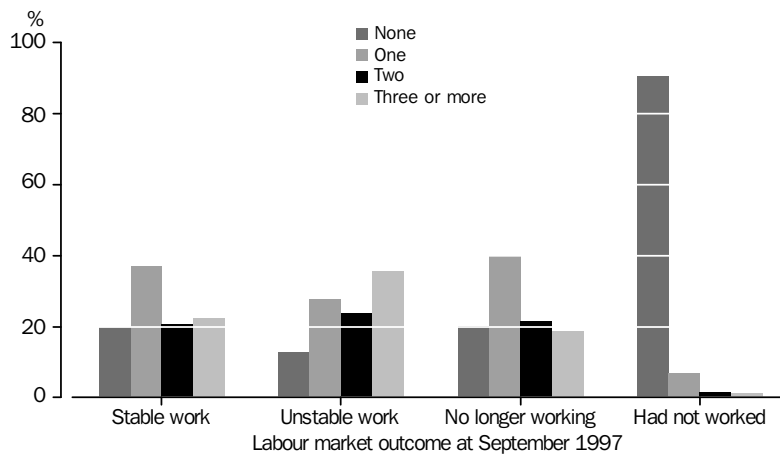
Some 23% of Jobseekers participated in an external training course while not working, and just 15% of these reported that the training course resulted in a job.

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AND JOB OFFERS

Of Jobseekers who had not worked, 91% reported that they had not had any job offers, while 7% reported that they had received one job offer.

On average, Jobseekers received 1.5 job offers. Those in unstable work at September 1997 received the most job offers (2.4 on average). Jobseekers in stable work received 1.7 job offers on average, and those who were no longer working were offered 1.6 jobs on average.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Number of Job Offers



LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES AT SEPTEMBER 1997 AND CHANGE FROM 12 MONTHS EARLIER

While it is useful to be able to describe Jobseekers' labour market outcomes at a particular point in time, it is also useful to describe changes over time. The following analysis shows that some labour market outcomes are relatively stable, while others are less so, and Jobseekers in these categories may be more likely to experience future periods of job search, or work in several jobs.

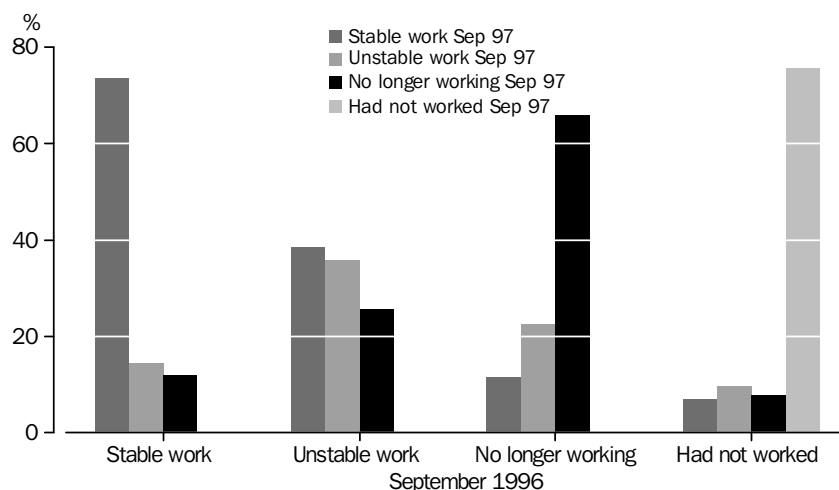
For example, 71% of Jobseekers who were in a stable full-time job at September 1996 were also in this situation a year later. A relatively small proportion (5%) were in a stable part-time job a year later, while 13% were in unstable work. Some 10% of Jobseekers who had a stable full-time job at September 1996 were no longer working at September 1997. Of those no longer working, the majority (77%) were looking for work at September 1997.

Of Jobseekers who were in a stable part-time job at September 1996, 49% were also in a stable part-time job a year later, but substantial proportions were in a stable full-time job (18%) or in unstable work (18%), and 15% were no longer working.

The labour market outcomes at September 1997 of those who were in unstable work a year earlier were diverse, indicating the more precarious nature of this category of work. While 38% had progressed to stable work (either full-time or part-time), 26% were no longer working. Of Jobseekers who were in unstable work at September 1996, 36% were also in the same situation at September 1997.

Of those Jobseekers who had not worked since May 1995 and were looking for work at September 1996, 55% did not find work in the following year, and were still looking for work at September 1997. A further 16% were absent from the labour market at September 1997. The remaining 29% found some work between September 1996 and September 1997.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Change in Labour Market Outcomes



4.1 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Labour Market Outcomes—September 1997

Selected characteristics	ENDED IN STABLE WORK		Ended in unstable work	NO LONGER WORKING.....		HAD NOT WORKED.....		Total.....	'000	
	Full-time	Part-time		Looking for work	Absent from the labour market		Looking for work			Absent from the labour market
					%	%				
Sex										
Males	27.4	4.9	20.5	21.7	5.1	12.5	7.9	100.0	484.9	
Females	15.6	15.5	19.5	13.7	10.6	10.3	14.8	100.0	390.2	
Age group (years) at May 1995										
15–19	23.5	8.3	25.2	22.6	7.7	8.4	4.3	100.0	146.0	
20–24	28.1	7.4	21.1	18.5	7.4	9.2	8.3	100.0	160.3	
25–34	23.8	11.3	20.2	19.0	8.9	9.3	7.5	100.0	216.7	
35–44	21.3	11.8	21.0	17.1	6.0	12.3	10.4	100.0	184.5	
45–59	14.0	8.3	13.2	13.9	7.6	18.6	24.5	100.0	167.6	
Section of State at May 1995										
Capital city	24.7	10.4	17.6	17.0	6.7	12.1	11.5	100.0	468.9	
Balance of major urban area	15.8	9.3	22.1	21.6	*3.8	13.5	13.9	100.0	50.1	
Other urban area	18.0	8.3	21.3	21.5	10.1	10.3	10.6	100.0	233.7	
Rural area	22.8	9.0	26.4	14.8	7.5	10.8	8.8	100.0	122.5	
State or Territory of usual residence at May 1995										
New South Wales	21.6	7.4	18.4	19.0	6.7	14.9	12.1	100.0	269.8	
Victoria	24.6	9.3	19.2	15.3	6.6	12.6	12.5	100.0	229.5	
Queensland	20.1	10.4	23.6	19.3	9.5	7.6	9.5	100.0	161.3	
South Australia	20.5	12.2	20.2	19.9	6.5	11.2	9.6	100.0	90.0	
Western Australia	23.7	15.1	19.7	16.7	9.8	6.3	8.6	100.0	73.2	
Tasmania	19.1	*8.1	20.9	25.2	*8.3	*9.1	*9.2	100.0	33.2	
Northern Territory	*29.7	*6.3	*19.0	*11.3	*15.3	*8.4	*10.0	100.0	5.3	
Australian Capital Territory	*20.5	*8.0	*26.2	*15.6	*7.4	*12.4	*9.8	100.0	12.7	
Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage at May 1995										
First quintile	19.0	9.1	20.1	18.0	6.7	13.8	13.4	100.0	199.9	
Second quintile	18.6	10.5	21.0	18.8	8.7	11.2	11.1	100.0	249.1	
Third quintile	23.1	7.1	18.6	20.5	7.3	13.2	10.2	100.0	151.0	
Fourth quintile	26.6	8.4	18.6	17.5	8.1	9.7	11.1	100.0	143.1	
Fifth quintile	27.6	12.9	21.4	15.1	6.2	8.7	8.0	100.0	132.0	
Total	22.1	9.6	20.0	18.1	7.5	11.5	11.0	100.0	875.1	

4.1 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Labour Market Outcomes—September 1997 *continued*

Selected characteristics	ENDED IN STABLE WORK		Ended in unstable work	NO LONGER WORKING.....		HAD NOT WORKED.....		Total.....	'000
	Full-time	Part-time		Looking for work	Absent from the labour market	Looking for work	Absent from the labour market		
	%	%		%	%	%	%		
Birthplace									
Born in Australia	21.9	10.0	20.9	19.1	8.0	10.2	9.9	100.0	635.8
Born outside Australia	22.9	8.5	17.7	15.5	6.3	15.1	14.0	100.0	239.3
Main English-speaking country	23.3	11.1	21.2	16.8	7.8	9.9	10.0	100.0	77.0
Other country	22.7	7.3	16.0	15.0	5.6	17.6	15.9	100.0	162.3
Educational attainment at September 1995									
Post-school qualifications obtained	27.5	10.4	20.9	15.4	8.0	9.2	8.7	100.0	297.2
No post-school qualifications obtained	19.4	9.2	19.6	19.5	7.3	12.8	12.2	100.0	577.9
Attended the highest level of secondary school available	26.2	8.6	22.3	17.8	8.3	9.3	7.7	100.0	166.2
Did not attend the highest level of secondary school available	16.7	9.4	18.5	20.3	6.9	14.2	14.0	100.0	411.7
Still at school	*25.0	*21.6	*23.0	*12.1	—	*12.8	*5.5	100.0	9.2
English proficiency at September 1995									
English first language	21.8	10.2	21.1	19.0	7.9	10.2	9.8	100.0	694.7
English not first language	23.3	7.3	15.9	15.0	6.3	16.6	15.6	100.0	180.4
Speaks English—									
Very well	29.1	8.9	18.4	14.5	7.8	11.4	9.9	100.0	71.4
Well	23.9	*8.7	16.7	15.0	*3.8	15.6	16.3	100.0	39.1
Fairly well	22.0	*5.7	14.0	21.2	*6.7	16.7	13.7	100.0	39.6
Not well/not at all	*10.7	*3.8	*11.3	*7.9	*5.8	30.1	30.5	100.0	30.2
Total	22.1	9.6	20.0	18.1	7.5	11.5	11.0	100.0	875.1

4.2 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Outcomes at September 1997 and Labour Market History

	ENDED IN STABLE WORK		Ended in unstable work	NO LONGER WORKING.....		HAD NOT WORKED.....		Total.....	
	Full-time	Part-time		Looking for work	Absent from the labour market	Looking for work	Absent from the labour market		
<i>Labour market history</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	'000
Employment history (before September 1994)									
Worked full-time only	22.9	8.1	17.4	18.6	6.1	14.2	12.6	100.0	380.8
Worked part-time only	23.0	11.9	21.3	17.7	9.4	8.2	8.4	100.0	104.4
Worked both full-time and part-time	22.3	12.0	23.1	16.4	10.1	7.2	9.0	100.0	270.9
Never worked	18.6	6.8	20.4	21.0	4.8	15.4	12.9	100.0	118.2
Time spent looking for work (only) at May 1995									
Not applicable	24.5	14.0	22.1	13.9	9.5	4.6	11.3	100.0	250.5
Under 52 weeks	25.2	8.9	22.6	18.8	7.4	8.9	8.2	100.0	398.4
52 weeks or more	14.2	6.1	13.2	21.6	5.7	23.7	15.5	100.0	226.2
Total	22.1	9.6	20.0	18.1	7.5	11.5	11.0	100.0	875.1

4.3 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Labour Market Outcomes—Sep 1996 and Sep 1997

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOME AT SEPTEMBER 1997.....

Labour market outcome at September 1996	Ended in stable work.....		No longer working.....		Had not worked.....		Total	
	Full-time	Part-time	Ended in unstable work	Looking for work	Absent from the labour market	Looking for work		Absent from the labour market
NUMBER								
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Ended in stable work								
Full-time	105.3	7.7	19.4	11.8	*3.6	..	..	147.9
Part-time	11.7	30.9	11.1	*3.3	6.5	..	..	63.5
Ended in unstable work	50.8	31.6	77.3	42.4	12.6	..	..	214.7
No longer working								
Looking for work	10.5	5.1	36.2	72.3	14.2	..	..	138.4
Absent from the labour market	*3.6	*2.6	6.2	13.4	24.5	..	..	50.3
Had not worked								
Looking for work	9.2	*3.0	19.8	13.3	*1.9	88.0	24.9	160.1
Absent from the labour market	*2.6	*3.2	5.3	*2.2	*2.7	13.0	71.3	100.3
Total	193.7	84.1	175.4	158.7	66.0	101.0	96.2	875.1
PROPORTION								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ended in stable work								
Full-time	71.2	5.2	13.1	8.0	*2.4	..	..	100.0
Part-time	18.5	48.6	17.6	*5.1	10.2	..	..	100.0
Ended in unstable work	23.6	14.7	36.0	19.8	5.9	..	..	100.0
No longer working								
Looking for work	7.6	3.7	26.2	52.3	10.3	..	..	100.0
Absent from the labour market	*7.1	*5.3	12.4	26.6	48.7	..	..	100.0
Had not worked								
Looking for work	5.8	*1.8	12.3	8.3	*1.2	55.0	15.6	100.0
Absent from the labour market	*2.6	*3.2	5.3	*2.2	*2.7	12.9	71.1	100.0
Total	22.1	9.6	20.0	18.1	7.5	11.5	11.0	100.0

This chapter focuses on Jobseekers who were working at September 1997, in particular on the characteristics of the jobs that they held, and on changes in the jobs held between September 1996 and September 1997.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MAIN JOB

If a person had more than one job at September 1997, their main job was identified as that in which the greatest number of hours were usually worked per week.

Stable/unstable jobs

Of the 453,000 Jobseekers who were working at September 1997, 61% were in stable jobs (jobs held which had lasted for six months or more and in which the jobholder was not concurrently looking for other work). In comparison, of the 8,273,000 people in the general population who were working at September 1997, 83% were in stable jobs.

Hours worked

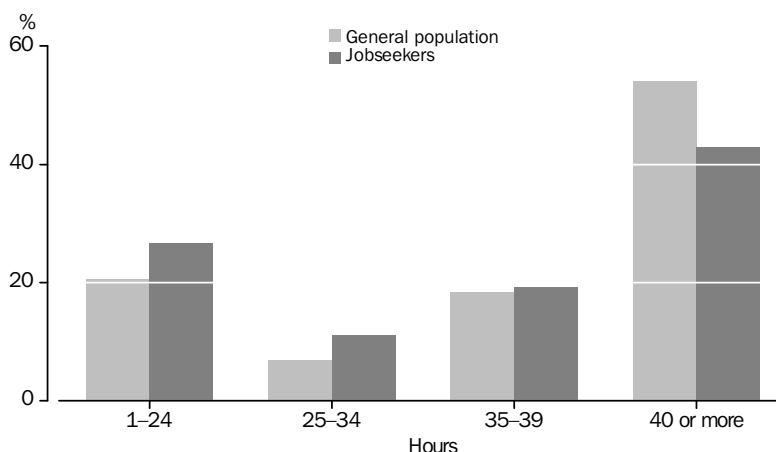
Of Jobseekers working at September 1997, 62% were working full-time (35 hours or more per week) compared with 72% of the general population.

Of Jobseekers who were in stable jobs, 70% worked full-time compared with 74% of the general population. A smaller proportion of Jobseekers in unstable jobs were in full-time work compared with the general population (49% and 63% respectively).

Compared with workers in the general population:

- a smaller proportion of Jobseekers worked 40 hours or more per week; and
- a higher proportion of Jobseekers worked less than 25 hours per week.

USUAL WEEKLY HOURS WORKED IN MAIN JOB AT SEPTEMBER 1997



EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

At September 1997, 86% of Jobseekers who were working were wage and salary earners compared with 79% of the general population.

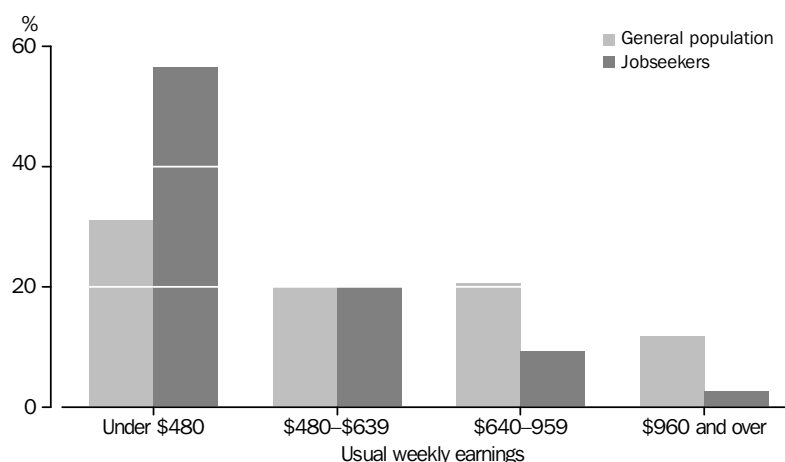
Permanent/casual status

At September 1997, 56% of Jobseekers who were wage and salary earners had permanent jobs compared with 76% of wage and salary earners in the general population.

Usual weekly earnings

Of Jobseekers who were working at September 1997, 63% earned less than \$480 per week compared with 37% of the general population. Similar proportions, 23% of Jobseekers and 24% of the general population, earned between \$480 and \$639 per week. Only 13% of Jobseekers earned more than \$640 per week compared with 39% of the general population.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995 WHO WERE WORKING AT SEPTEMBER 1997



Industry

More Jobseekers' main jobs were in Manufacturing (16%) and Retail trade (14%) than in other industries. This is comparable with the general population, where 14% of the main jobs were in Manufacturing and 13% were in Retail trade.

Occupation

The main types of jobs held by Jobseekers were Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (21%) and Labourers and related workers (21%).

Larger proportions of Jobseekers in stable jobs were working in less skilled occupations than the general population. A small proportion of Jobseekers in stable jobs were Managers and administrators (3%), compared with the general population (8%). Some 10% of Jobseekers were working in stable jobs as Professionals, compared with 19% of the general population. However, larger proportions of Jobseekers in stable jobs were working as Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (23% compared with 16% of the general population) and Labourers and related workers (16% compared with 9% of the general population).

Preferred occupation

Of Jobseekers who were working at September 1997, 62% were in their preferred occupation (where this was nominated).

Of Jobseekers who were in stable jobs, 68% were in their preferred occupation compared with 53% of those in unstable jobs.

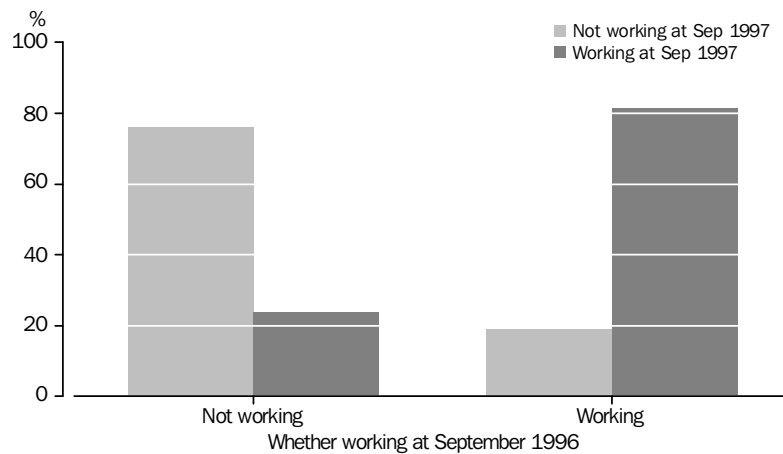
JOB CHANGES

This section looks at transitions into and out of work between September 1996 and September 1997, and then focuses on the characteristics and types of jobs held at these two points in time.

Between September 1996 and September 1997 the number of Jobseekers working increased from 426,000 to 453,200. While the number working increased by only 27,200, 187,500 Jobseekers had made a transition into or out of work. Of those who were not working at September 1996, 24% were working a year later.

Of Jobseekers who were working at September 1996, 19% were not working a year later, 56% were still working in the same job, and 25% were still working but in a different job.

JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Changes in Work—Sep 1996 and Sep 1997



Full-time/part-time status

Of Jobseekers who were working full-time at September 1996, 73% were working full-time a year later, and 57% were working full-time in the same job.

Of those working part-time at September 1996, 58% were working part-time a year later, and 40% were working part-time in the same job.

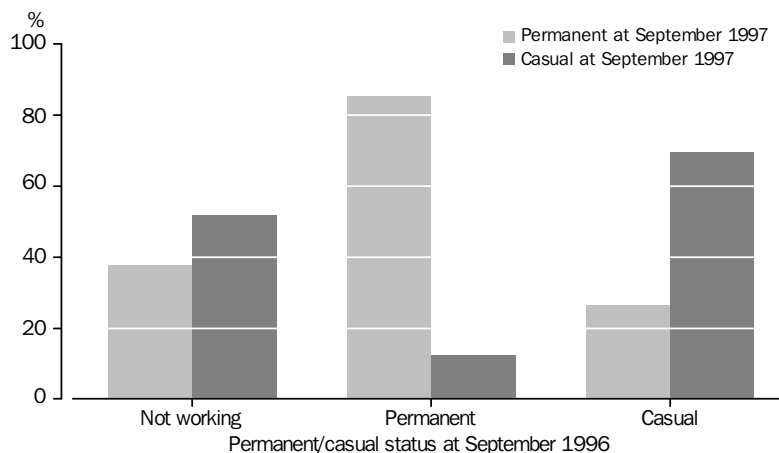
Of Jobseekers who had been working full-time, 5% moved to part-time work in the same job and 8% moved from part-time to full-time work in the same job.

Permanent/casual status

Of Jobseekers working in permanent jobs at September 1996, 60% were still permanent in the same job a year later. Of those in casual work at September 1996, 9% moved to permanent work in the same job.

Of Jobseekers in casual jobs at September 1996, 34% remained casual in the same job a year later. In comparison, 18% of Jobseekers in casual jobs at September 1996 were in a different casual job a year later.

WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS AT SEP 1997, Change in Permanent/Casual Status



Preferred occupation

Of Jobseekers who were working in their preferred occupation at September 1996, 83% were also working at September 1997 and 75% were in their preferred occupation.

Changes in earnings

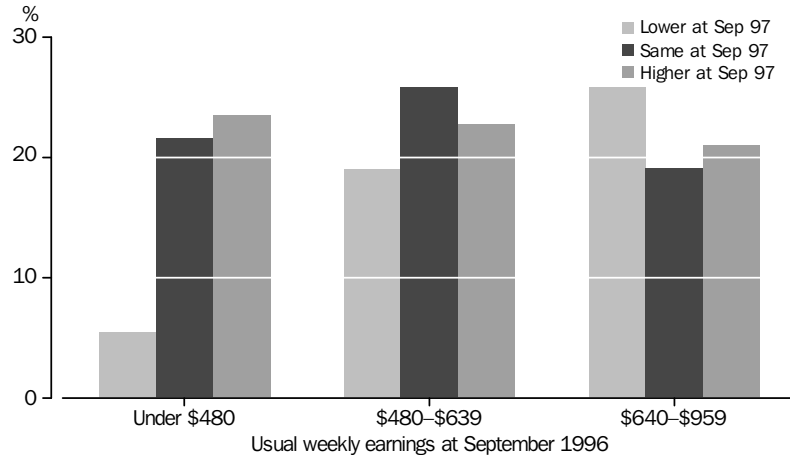
Of Jobseekers who were working as employees at September 1996, 79% were doing so a year later. At September 1996, 75% had usual weekly earnings of less than \$480 per week, with 18% of those earning less than \$160 per week.

Of those earning less than \$480 per week at September 1996, 39% were in a higher earnings category a year later and 10% were in a lower earnings category. Of those earning more than \$640 per week at September 1996, 23% were in a higher earnings category a year later and 36% were in a lower earnings category.

Changes in earnings *continued*

Of all Jobseekers working at September 1996, 24% remained in the same earnings category a year later.

WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, Changes in Earnings—Sep 1996 to Sep 1997



5.1 PERSONS WHO WERE WORKING AT SEPTEMBER 1997

Selected characteristics of main job	GENERAL POPULATION..			JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995.....		
	Stable jobs	Unstable jobs	Total	Stable jobs	Unstable jobs	Total
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Full-time/part-time status						
Full-time	5 137.3	860.5	5 997.8	194.8	86.7	281.5
Part-time	1 769.9	505.3	2 275.2	83.0	88.7	171.7
Permanent/casual status						
Permanent	4 262.7	706.2	4 968.9	165.0	55.6	220.5
Casual	1 106.6	464.1	1 570.7	73.6	97.1	170.7
Not defined(a)	1 537.9	195.5	1 733.4	39.2	22.8	62.0
Usual weekly hours worked						
1-15	813.5	270.8	1 084.3	25.3	42.3	67.6
16-24	475.5	143.6	619.1	26.8	26.3	53.1
25-34	480.9	*90.9	571.8	30.9	20.0	50.9
35-39	1 346.4	168.8	1 515.3	57.1	30.0	87.1
40	1 031.5	203.0	1 234.5	54.3	26.9	81.2
41-48	994.0	297.6	1 291.6	39.2	12.8	52.0
49 and over	1 765.4	191.1	1 956.5	44.2	17.0	61.2
Usual weekly earnings						
Under \$160	463.3	164.3	627.5	18.0	32.9	50.9
\$160-\$239	251.6	141.3	392.9	18.1	15.3	33.4
\$240-\$319	349.2	*92.7	441.9	30.8	19.3	50.1
\$320-\$399	351.9	115.5	467.4	34.2	19.4	53.6
\$400-\$479	535.6	102.3	637.9	43.9	22.8	66.7
\$480-\$559	717.6	148.2	865.8	40.8	18.3	59.0
\$560-\$639	678.8	129.8	808.6	22.0	10.2	32.2
\$640-\$719	476.3	108.0	584.3	12.5	5.6	18.2
\$720-\$799	375.6	*45.3	420.9	7.7	*3.0	10.7
\$800-\$879	471.4	*21.4	492.9	5.4	*1.9	7.3
\$880-\$959	198.4	*18.8	217.1	*3.5	*2.3	5.8
\$960 and over	864.0	103.4	967.4	8.2	*3.9	12.1
Payment in kind	*5.5	—	*5.5	*0.8	*0.7	*1.4
Not defined(b)	1 167.9	174.9	1 342.8	32.0	19.7	51.8
Total	6 907.2	1 365.8	8 273.0	277.8	175.4	453.2

(a) Comprises persons who were not wage and salary earners and a small number of persons for whom permanent/casual status was not known.

(b) Comprises persons who were not employees and a small number of persons for whom usual weekly earnings were not known.

5.1 PERSONS WHO WERE WORKING AT SEPTEMBER 1997 *continued*

<i>Selected characteristics of main job</i>	GENERAL POPULATION..			JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995.....		
	<i>Stable jobs</i>	<i>Unstable jobs</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Stable jobs</i>	<i>Unstable jobs</i>	<i>Total</i>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Industry						
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	335.9	*20.5	356.4	8.6	10.0	18.5
Mining	110.0	—	110.0	*3.5	*0.5	4.0
Manufacturing	975.4	192.7	1 168.1	42.8	29.4	72.2
Electricity, gas and water supply	*94.1	*6.9	*101.0	*1.7	*0.4	*2.0
Construction	464.6	111.9	576.6	15.6	15.8	31.5
Wholesale trade	370.5	*70.8	441.3	18.2	8.7	26.9
Retail trade	917.2	177.7	1 094.9	42.3	21.9	64.1
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	234.5	154.5	389.1	16.6	12.1	28.7
Transport and storage	401.2	*19.1	420.3	15.7	6.8	22.5
Communication services	139.3	*19.6	158.9	5.7	*1.1	6.8
Finance and insurance	257.5	*30.6	288.1	8.5	*3.3	11.8
Property and business services	595.1	169.5	764.6	27.4	21.9	49.3
Government administration and defence	259.4	*55.5	314.8	12.3	4.7	17.0
Education	556.5	*106.5	662.9	13.9	12.1	26.0
Health and community services	695.8	113.1	808.9	22.6	12.4	35.0
Cultural and recreational services	207.2	*73.2	280.4	7.4	6.2	13.6
Personal and other services	293.0	*43.6	336.6	14.2	7.7	22.0
Occupation						
Managers and administrators	569.4	*36.4	605.9	7.8	*1.2	9.0
Professionals	1 278.0	213.5	1 491.5	26.4	17.2	43.6
Associate professionals	801.4	170.2	971.6	20.6	7.7	28.3
Tradespersons and related workers	932.8	112.6	1 045.4	39.6	16.2	55.8
Advanced clerical and service workers	354.7	*49.1	403.7	8.2	*3.1	11.3
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	1 129.6	359.4	1 488.9	62.5	34.1	96.7
Intermediate production and transport workers	652.9	*94.2	747.1	34.2	25.1	59.4
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	566.4	117.0	683.4	33.2	22.2	55.4
Labourers and related workers	622.1	213.4	835.5	45.2	48.5	93.7
Total	6 907.2	1 365.8	8 273.0	277.8	175.4	453.2

5.2 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Changes in Full-time/Part-time Work—Sep 1996–Sep 1997

WHETHER WORKING AND FULL-TIME/PART-TIME STATUS AT SEP 1997.....

Whether working and full-time/part-time status of main job at Sep 1996	Working in same main job.....			Working in different main job.....				
	Not working	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Total
	NUMBER							
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Not working	341.7	..	..	..	59.3	48.1	107.4	449.1
Working	80.2	158.8	80.2	239.1	63.4	43.4	106.7	426.0
Full-time	43.8	144.5	11.7	156.2	42.4	13.0	55.3	255.3
Part-time	35.9	13.6	68.2	81.8	20.8	29.9	50.7	168.5
Not collected	*0.5	*0.7	*0.3	*1.0	*0.2	*0.5	*0.7	*2.2
Total	421.9	158.8	80.2	239.1	122.7	91.4	214.1	875.1
PROPORTION								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not working	76.1	..	..	..	13.2	10.7	23.9	100.0
Working	18.8	37.1	18.8	55.9	15.0	10.3	25.3	100.0
Full-time	17.1	56.6	4.6	61.2	16.6	5.1	21.7	100.0
Part-time	21.3	8.1	40.5	48.6	12.4	17.7	30.1	100.0
Not collected	*21.1	*31.8	*13.6	*45.5	*41.4	*37.5	*78.9	*100.0
Total	48.2	18.1	9.1	27.2	14.1	10.5	24.6	100.0

5.3 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Changes in Permanent/Casual Work—Sep 1996–Sep 1997

WHETHER WORKING AND PERMANENT/CASUAL STATUS AT SEPTEMBER 1997.....

Whether working and permanent/casual status at September 1996	Working in same main job.....					Working in different main job.....				
	Not working	Permanent	Casual	Not defined(a)	Total	Permanent	Casual	Not defined(a)	Total	Total
NUMBER										
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Not working	341.7	..	..	..	..	40.6	55.7	11.1	107.4	449.1
Working	80.2	132.7	65.7	39.7	238.1	47.2	49.4	11.2	107.8	426.0
Permanent	29.1	116.5	6.6	*0.4	123.5	24.1	13.8	*3.2	41.1	193.7
Casual	42.6	15.2	58.5	*0.9	74.6	18.6	30.3	4.0	52.8	170.0
Not defined(a)	8.5	*1.0	*0.6	38.4	39.9	4.6	5.3	*3.9	13.8	62.2
Total	421.9	132.7	65.7	39.7	238.1	87.8	105.0	22.3	215.1	875.1
PROPORTION										
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not working	76.1	..	..	..	..	9.0	12.4	2.5	23.9	100.0
Working	18.8	31.1	15.4	9.3	55.9	11.1	11.6	2.6	25.3	100.0
Permanent	15.0	60.1	3.4	*0.2	63.8	12.4	7.1	*1.7	21.2	100.0
Casual	25.1	8.9	34.4	*0.5	43.9	10.9	17.8	2.3	31.1	100.0
Not defined(a)	13.6	*1.6	*0.9	61.7	64.2	7.3	8.5	*6.3	22.2	100.0
Total	48.2	15.2	7.5	4.5	27.2	10.0	12.0	2.5	24.6	100.0

(a) Comprises Jobseekers who were not wage and salary earners and a small number of Jobseekers for whom permanent/casual status was not known.

5.4 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Whether in Preferred Occupation—Sep 1996 and Sep 1997

WHETHER WORKING AND PREFERRED OCCUPATION AT SEP 1997..

Whether working and preferred occupation at September 1996	Working in different main job.....							
	Not working	Working in same main job	Different job was in preferred occupation	Different job was not in preferred occupation	Did not have a preferred occupation	Not defined(a)	Total	Total
NUMBER								
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Not working	341.7	..	49.8	25.0	22.5	10.0	107.4	449.1
Working	80.2	238.1	63.3	18.7	14.0	11.8	107.8	426.0
Job was in preferred occupation	36.4	126.0	38.7	6.9	6.9	4.4	56.9	219.3
Job was not in preferred occupation	21.9	36.9	12.7	6.2	*3.8	*2.3	25.1	83.9
Did not have a preferred occupation	11.9	28.8	5.4	3.9	*1.6	*1.3	12.2	52.9
Not defined(a)	10.0	46.3	6.5	*1.6	*1.7	*3.8	13.6	69.9
Total	421.9	238.1	113.1	43.8	36.5	21.8	215.1	875.1
PROPORTION								
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Not working	76.1	..	11.1	5.6	5.0	2.2	23.9	100.0
Working	18.8	55.9	14.9	4.4	3.3	2.8	25.3	100.0
Job was in preferred occupation	16.6	57.5	17.6	3.2	3.2	2.0	25.9	100.0
Job was not in preferred occupation	26.1	44.0	15.2	7.4	*4.5	2.8	29.9	100.0
Did not have a preferred occupation	22.4	54.5	10.2	7.4	*3.0	2.4	23.1	100.0
Not defined(a)	14.3	66.3	9.2	*2.3	*2.4	5.5	19.5	100.0
Total	48.2	27.2	12.9	5.0	4.2	2.4	24.6	100.0

(a) Comprises Jobseekers who were not wage and salary earners and a small number of Jobseekers for whom job preference was not collected or not known.

5.5 JOBSEEKERS AT MAY 1995, Changes in Weekly Earnings—Sep 1996–Sep 1997

WHETHER WORKING AND WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MAIN JOB AT SEPTEMBER 1997

Whether working and weekly earnings of main job at September 1996	Working in same main job.....					Working in different main job.....					Total
	Not working	Earning lower than Sep 96	Earning same as Sep 96	Earning higher than Sep 96	Not defined(a)	Earning lower than Sep 96	Earning same as Sep 96	Earning higher than Sep 96	Not defined(a)		
		'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	
NUMBER											
Not working	341.7	..	..	..	..	..	..	98.3	9.0	449.1
Working	80.2	35.0	84.1	84.5	34.4	22.2	17.3	50.2	18.2	426.0	
Under \$160	19.5	—	17.4	8.6	—	—	4.9	15.1	*1.9	67.4	
\$160–\$239	7.4	*2.2	*3.6	12.9	—	*1.1	*2.8	9.5	*0.4	39.9	
\$240–\$319	15.9	*1.4	9.1	11.3	—	*3.6	*1.1	7.3	*1.0	50.7	
\$320–\$399	11.2	4.0	10.9	15.4	—	*3.3	*3.4	4.9	*0.5	53.5	
\$400–\$479	8.6	8.0	19.0	17.3	—	4.4	*1.0	6.6	*1.1	66.1	
\$480–\$559	6.0	5.9	10.4	7.6	—	*1.9	*1.6	*2.2	*0.4	36.1	
\$560–\$639	*0.8	4.6	*3.9	5.0	—	*2.2	*0.7	*1.9	—	19.3	
\$640–\$719	*0.8	*3.7	*2.9	*2.8	—	*1.0	*0.3	*1.1	*0.5	13.0	
\$720–\$799	*0.9	*1.5	*1.7	*1.7	—	*0.5	*0.4	*0.1	—	6.9	
\$800–\$879	*0.5	*2.2	*0.7	*1.6	—	*1.8	—	*0.6	*0.3	7.7	
\$880–\$959	*0.1	*0.7	*0.7	*0.5	—	*0.8	—	*0.8	*0.2	*3.8	
\$960 and over	*1.0	*0.7	*3.8	—	—	*1.4	*0.9	—	—	7.9	
Not defined(a)	7.5	..	..	..	34.4	..	..	..	11.9	53.9
Total	421.9	35.0	84.1	84.5	34.4	22.2	17.3	148.5	27.2	875.1	
PROPORTION											
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Not working	76.1	..	..	..	..	..	..	21.9	*2.0	100.0
Working	18.8	8.2	19.7	19.8	8.3	5.2	4.1	11.8	4.3	100.0	
Under \$160	28.9	—	25.8	12.8	—	—	7.3	22.4	*2.8	100.0	
\$160–\$239	18.6	5.6	*9.0	32.4	—	*2.7	*7.1	23.8	*1.0	100.0	
\$240–\$319	31.4	2.8	17.9	22.2	—	*7.1	*2.2	14.4	*1.9	100.0	
\$320–\$399	20.8	7.5	20.4	28.7	—	*6.2	*6.3	9.1	*1.0	100.0	
\$400–\$479	13.0	12.2	28.7	26.2	—	6.6	*1.5	10.1	*1.7	100.0	
\$480–\$559	16.6	16.4	28.9	20.9	—	*5.3	*4.6	*6.2	*1.1	100.0	
\$560–\$639	*4.2	24.1	*20.0	26.0	—	*11.7	*3.8	*10.1	—	100.0	
\$640–\$719	*6.2	*28.1	*22.4	*21.3	—	*7.9	*2.1	*8.1	*3.9	100.0	
\$720–\$799	*13.7	*22.1	*24.8	*24.3	—	*7.8	*6.4	*0.8	—	100.0	
\$800–\$879	*6.2	*28.4	*9.0	*20.8	—	*24.0	—	*8.2	*3.3	100.0	
\$880–\$959	*2.6	*18.4	*19.4	*11.9	—	*21.4	—	*21.1	*5.2	*100.0	
\$960 and over	*12.7	*9.2	*48.5	—	—	*17.7	*11.9	—	—	100.0	
Not defined(a)	13.9	..	..	..	64.0	..	..	..	22.1	100.0
Total	48.2	4.0	9.6	9.7	3.9	2.6	2.0	16.9	*3.1	100.0	

(a) Comprises Jobseekers who were not employees and a small number of Jobseekers who received payment in kind or for whom usual weekly earnings was not known.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication presents information about the labour market activities of the same group of Jobseekers over a period of three years, from September 1994 to September 1997. The experiences of this group are, in some cases, compared with those of the general population over the same period. The data are based on the longitudinal Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns (SEUP) which collected information from the same panel of respondents over a number of years. Data presented in this publication are for the years ending September 1995, 1996 and 1997.

2 The survey panel comprised three subgroups—Jobseekers, persons known to have been Labour Market Program (LMP) participants, and a Population Reference Group (PRG). For further explanation of these subgroups see paragraphs 9–13.

3 Information was collected about socio-demographic characteristics, employment history, episodes of labour market activity and training, employment offers, and supplementary information about other persons living in the household. A summary of topics is given in paragraphs 19–32 and a full listing of data items is available at Appendix 2.

PEOPLE INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Geographic areas

4 The survey was conducted in urban and rural areas in all States and Territories.

Dwellings

5 The survey included only persons in private dwellings, comprising houses, flats, home units and any other structures used as private places of residence.

Persons

6 The scope of the survey was all persons aged 15–59 years except:

- overseas residents in Australia;
- certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from the Census and estimated resident population figures;
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia; and
- certain remote areas in the Northern Territory and Queensland which were difficult or costly to enumerate.

COVERAGE

7 For the Jobseeker and PRG subgroups, coverage rules were applied to ensure each person in scope was associated with only one dwelling and hence had only one chance of selection. Coverage rules were not needed for the LMP subgroup as specific people had already been identified as members of this subgroup.

SAMPLE DESIGN

8 The sample was segmented into three subgroups to provide a sound, flexible base for analyses of labour market dynamics. These subgroups were:

- Jobseekers;
- LMP participants; and
- PRG persons.

Jobseekers

9 The Jobseeker subgroup was a sample of people aged 15–59 who were considered most likely to be eligible to participate in a labour market program or likely to become eligible for such assistance in the near future. Its composition was determined in consultation with DEETYA, DSS, the Department of the Treasury and other potential users of the data. This subgroup comprised unemployed persons, as well as discouraged Jobseekers, part-time workers looking for a job with more hours, and other persons not in the labour force who were identified as likely to join the labour force in the near future (see Appendix 1 for a full description). The sample methodology for this subgroup was an area-based probability sample of dwellings referred to as the SEUP dwelling sample.

Labour Market Program participants

10 The LMP subgroup was a sample of persons aged 15–59 who had been in continuous receipt of unemployment allowance for 18 months or more and who had commenced a subsidised employment placement and/or commenced a labour market training program between July 1994 and February 1995. This component of the sample was included to ensure that the survey had a sufficient number of LMP participants to support analysis of their characteristics in the first wave.

11 The sample methodology for this subgroup was a list-based probability sample. With consent of relevant clients, DEETYA provided the ABS with a list of eligible persons from which a random sample was selected. The methodology used ensured there was no overlap possible with the other subgroups.

Population Reference Group

12 The PRG subgroup was a random sample of the population aged 15–59. It was included so that outcomes of LMPs could be assessed in the context of general labour market conditions and movements. It was also a source of longitudinal information for the general population on other topics covered by the survey, such as housing and income.

13 The sample methodology for this subgroup was an area-based probability sample. A sub-sample of the SEUP dwelling sample was chosen to provide the PRG dwelling sample, one person then being selected from each PRG dwelling. It should be noted that because of the methodology, some Jobseekers also contributed to the PRG component of the sample.

DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

Panel establishment and data collection

14 Interviewers asked screening questions at approximately 69,000 households in order to identify respondents falling into the Jobseeker subgroup, and to establish the PRG. Screening interviews were conducted between 24 April and 7 July 1995, for simplicity referred to as 'May 1995'. The LMP subgroup were not asked screening questions, as specific people had already been identified as members of this subgroup.

Collection waves

15 There were three collection waves for the SEUP:

- wave 1—reference period 5 September 1994 to 3 September 1995;
- wave 2—reference period 4 September 1995 to 1 September 1996; and
- wave 3—reference period 2 September 1996 to 31 August 1997.

Panel size and maintenance

16 The ability to maintain contact with a relatively high proportion of the panel was critical to the usefulness of the survey data. A number of strategies were put in place to help the ABS stay in contact with respondents between interviews. These included:

- 'change of details' cards for respondents to advise a new address, etc.;
- a toll-free telephone number for the respondent to call;
- asking the respondent for contact details of up to three people who were likely to know the respondent's whereabouts; and
- regular mail contact throughout the survey.

17 However, it was inevitable that some non-response would occur when people were unwilling or unable to cooperate, or when they could not be contacted.

18 The attrition rate is the percentage of previous wave respondents who did not respond in the current wave. Attrition between waves caused a permanent drop in the sample size as the SEUP did not replace non-respondents. Although the weighting procedure for each wave partially corrected for attrition in the sample, there are some small differences in estimates between publications for each wave. Analysis of the attrition shows that higher than average sample loss occurred for males, young people, and people who were renting accommodation. The following table shows the size and composition of the panel at waves 1, 2 and 3, and the overall attrition rate.

COMPOSITION AND SIZE OF THE PANEL (Persons)

Subgroups	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Attrition rate
	no.	no.	no.	wave 1–wave 3 %
Jobseekers(a)	5 488	4 779	4 261	22.3
LMP participants	1 019	888	775	23.9
PRG	2 311	2 120	1 983	14.2
Total panel	8 591	7 585	7 019	18.3

(a) Includes some Jobseekers who were also part of the PRG.

SURVEY CONTENT

Fixed variable

19 As part of the survey a wide range of labour market related data was collected. Variables were grouped into five categories—fixed, dynamic, episodal, occurrence, and summary. For a full list of data items, see Appendix 2.

20 A fixed variable is a data item not inherently subject to change. Fixed variables were collected in wave 1 and were not collected in later waves. Fixed variables included:

- date of birth;
- sex;
- birthplace; and
- language first spoken.

Dynamic variable

21 Dynamic variables are subject to change over time and were updated each year at the time of interview. Dynamic variables included:

- marital status;
- labour force status;
- educational attainment;
- proficiency in English;
- housing details; and
- geographic location.

Episodal variable

22 This type of variable was collected in respect of a particular episode, defined as a particular activity or occurrence within a reference period or spanning more than one reference period. Three types of episodes were identified: episodes of labour market activity; episodes of DEETYA labour market support; and episodes of income support.

23 Episodes of labour market activity comprised periods of working, looking for work, or absence from the labour market (i.e. neither working nor looking). If a respondent had two or more jobs at the same time, each was treated as a separate episode. A change in employer constituted a new episode. An episode of working would overlap with an episode of looking for work if a respondent was working and looking for work at the same time. However, neither episodes of work nor episodes of looking for work could overlap with episodes of absence from the labour market. Episodal variables included:

- start and finish dates;
- occupation and industry (working episodes);
- active steps to find work (looking for work episodes); and
- main activity while absent from the labour market (episodes of absence from the labour market).

24 Episodes of DEETYA labour market support comprised periods of CES registration, case management and LMP participation. Episodal variables included:

- start and finish dates;
- type of episode; and
- type of program.

25 Episodes of income support comprised periods during which the respondent received income support. Episodal variables included:

- start and finish dates; and
- type of income support.

Occurrences

26 Occurrences of training comprised periods of in-house and external training undertaken. Variables included:

- field of training; and
- start date.

27 Occurrences of employment offers consisted of employment offers received or declined. Variables included:

- when offer was made; and
- reason for declining an offer.

Summary variable

28 A summary variable is a data item that summarises one or more episodal variables. Summary variables included:

- number of episodes of working;
- total duration of looking for work;
- number of training courses attended; and
- number of employment offers received.

29 Such variables might be specific to one reference period, or might span more than one reference period, for example, the number of episodes of working since September 1994.

Multiple episodes

30 Although basic information was collected for each episode of labour market activity, detailed information such as hours worked, usual weekly earnings and occupation (in the case of episodes of work) were not collected for all episodes. While it would have been desirable to collect full details about all episodes, many constraints prevented this. These included the interview situation, and the ability of respondents to recall with accuracy the detail of previous events, particularly for those respondents with numerous episodes.

31 However, examination of survey data showed that few respondents reported large numbers of episodes. As a consequence, a full range of data is available for almost all respondents.

USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

32 With respondents' consent, data collected directly from them during the interview was supplemented with data about CES registration, case management and LMP participation (from DEETYA) and data about income support (from DSS). This minimised the interview time for respondents and ensured that accurate information was available about their involvement with labour market assistance programs and about their receipt of income support.

DATA QUALITY

33 When interpreting results of the survey it is important to take into account that certain factors may affect the reliability of the results to some extent. These are known as sampling error and non-sampling error.

Sampling error

34 Estimates calculated from the SEUP data were based on information collected from a sample. As a result they are subject to sampling error (or sampling variability). For further information on the sampling errors associated with the SEUP, refer to the Technical Notes.

Non-sampling error

35 Apart from the variability associated with sampling error, data are also subject to other types of error referred to as non-sampling error. Non-sampling errors may occur because of non-response bias, incorrect responses, interviewer errors, attrition, or processing errors.

Survey testing

36 Testing of the survey procedures was carried out to investigate respondent reaction and to ensure the effectiveness of survey instruments, interviewing procedures and processing systems. These tests allowed early detection of some non-sampling errors to reduce error in the survey as far as possible.

Non-response errors

37 Non-response occurs when people cannot or will not cooperate, or cannot be contacted. Non-response can affect the reliability of results and can introduce bias. The magnitude of any bias depends upon the size of non-response and the extent of the difference between non-respondents' characteristics and labour market activity patterns compared with those of persons who responded in the survey. Weighting can partially correct these biases to the extent that weighting variables capture the characteristics of non-respondents.

38 The following methods were adopted to reduce the level of non-response and minimise bias:

- face-to-face interviews with the respondent;
- the use of foreign language interviewers where necessary;
- follow-up of respondents if there was initially no contact;
- respondent tracing strategies such as asking respondents to provide names and addresses of other people who would be likely to know the respondent's whereabouts; and
- weighting to population benchmarks to reduce non-response bias.

Response errors

39 Potential sources of response errors in the SEUP include deficiencies in questionnaire design and methodology, deficiencies in interviewing technique, and inaccurate reporting by respondents.

40 The SEUP questionnaires were thoroughly tested to minimise the potential for errors caused by ambiguous or misleading questions, by inadequate or inconsistent definitions or terminology, or by poor questionnaire sequence guides (causing some questions to be missed).

41 Methods employed to achieve and maintain uniform interviewing practices and a high level of accuracy in recording answers on the survey questionnaires included:

- a thorough training program for interviewers;
- a detailed interviewer's instruction manual;
- the use of experienced interviewers;
- checking of interviewers' work; and
- the use of computer-assisted interviewing for the second and third waves.

42 In a longitudinal survey, errors associated with recall can affect the compilation of a consistent and accurate picture of respondents' activities over an extended period of time. In particular, overseas experience with longitudinal surveys suggests that a respondent may report different labour market activity around the seam of two reference periods. That is, they report one type of activity at the end of a reference period and a different type of activity at the start of the next reference period when no change actually occurred; this is known as the seam effect. For example, a seam effect would exist if a respondent reported looking for work at 3 September 1995 (the end of the first wave) and working at 4 September 1995 (the start of the second wave), when the respondent had only been looking for work.

Response errors *continued*

43 The survey endeavoured to minimise this seam effect by the use of dependent interviewing. This is a technique whereby the interviewer reminds the respondent of their labour market activity recorded at the end of the previous reference period, thereby refreshing the respondent's memory. The interviewer then determined whether this activity continued into the current reference period. To further assist respondents in recalling particular events, they were supplied with a diary, and a calendar divided into months and weeks which was used to record their labour market activity during the reference period.

Processing errors

44 Processing errors may occur at any stage between initial collection of the data and final compilation of statistics. Steps were taken to minimise errors at all stages of processing, including:

- training of staff, detailed coding instructions and regular checking;
- computer edits designed to detect reporting or recording errors; and
- the use of standard ABS question modules.

Comparability of data

45 To facilitate comparison of the SEUP data with that from other collections, wherever possible, the SEUP used standard question modules from other ABS surveys, such as the Survey of Training and Education, and surveys conducted as supplements to the monthly LFS. However, caution should be used when comparing data across collections due to differences in scope, sample size and design, definitions and estimation methodology. In particular, in the SEUP the classification of respondents' labour market activity (i.e. working, looking, or absent from the labour market) is not comparable with the definition of labour force status as used in the LFS.

Benchmarking

46 Estimates obtained from the survey were derived using complex ratio estimation procedures with some benchmarking to independently estimated distributions of the total population. For further information refer to the Technical Notes.

DATA DISSEMINATION

Survey information papers

47 Six information papers about the SEUP have been issued:

Information Paper 1/95: Background and general overview
Information Paper 2/95: Preliminary list of variables to be available after the first wave
Information Paper 3/95: Sample design, outcome of panel initialisation and weighting
Information Paper 1/96: Dissemination strategy
Information Paper 1/97: Research Fellowships
Information Paper 2/97: Microdata file on CD-ROM

Copies of these are available on request and some are also on the Internet at <http://www.abs.gov.au> (Click on Statistics/ABS Papers and Classifications/Information Papers).

Survey newsletter

48 Several editions of a free newsletter have been issued. SEUPDATE is an irregular release which highlights interesting results from the SEUP. Readers who wish to be placed on the SEUPDATE mailing list should contact the officer listed at the front of this publication.

Special tabulations

49 As well as releasing information in publications, the ABS can make available special tabulations to suit individual user requirements. Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, tabulations can be produced from the survey incorporating data items, populations and geographic areas selected to meet individual requirements. These can be provided in printed form or on disk. Inquiries should be made to the contact officer listed at the front of this publication.

Access to microdata

50 The ABS offers a range of options for users who wish to undertake analysis based on the SEUP microdata (unit records). Inquiries should be made to the contact officer listed at the front of this publication.

Results of the survey

51 Users may wish to refer to the following publications in which earlier results from this survey were released:

Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns, September 1995

(Cat. no. 6286.0);

Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns, First Results, 1994–1996 (Cat. no. 6289.0); and

Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns, 1994 to 1996 (Cat. no. 6286.0).

Non-ABS sources

52 DEETYA has a range of data available which may complement the SEUP data set. Contact Philip Gatenby on Canberra 02 6240 8745 for further details.

RELATED PRODUCTS

53 Users may also wish to refer to the following related publications:

Australian Labour Market (Cat. no. 6284.0)

Education and Training Experience, Australia (Cat. no. 6278.0)

Information Paper: Measuring Employment and Unemployment (Cat. no. 6279.0)

Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia (Cat. no. 6222.0)

Labour Force, Australia (Cat. no. 6203.0)

Labour Force Experience, Australia (Cat. no. 6206.0)

Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia (Cat. no. 6220.0)

Successful and Unsuccessful Job Search Experience, Australia (Cat. no. 6245.0)

Working Arrangements, Australia (Cat. no. 6342.0).

The Jobseeker component of the SEUP sample consists of persons aged 15–59 years who met the following criteria at the time of recruitment to the survey panel (24 April 1995 to 7 July 1995):

- unemployed persons;
- persons not in the labour force who were discouraged jobseekers;
- persons not in the labour force who were attending an educational institution;
- persons not in the labour force who wanted to work but were not available to start work; or
- underemployed workers.

UNEMPLOYED PERSONS

Comprising persons who were not employed in the previous week, and had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the last four weeks up to the end of the previous week, and:

- were available for work in the previous week, or would have been available except for temporary illness (i.e. lasting for less than four weeks); or
- were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the previous week and would have started in the previous week if the job had been available then.

But excluding:

- persons who were stood down without pay for less than four weeks, i.e. they were waiting to be called back to a full-time or part-time job from which they had been stood down without pay for less than four weeks up to the end of the previous week (including the whole of the previous week) for reasons other than bad weather or plant breakdown; and
- full-time students aged 15–24 who were currently looking for part-time work.

PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WERE DISCOURAGED JOBSEEKERS

Comprising persons not in the labour force who wanted to work and were available to start work within the next four weeks but whose main reason for not taking active steps to find work was that they believed they would not find a job for any of the following reasons:

- considered to be too young or too old by employers;
- difficulties with language or ethnic background;
- lacked the necessary schooling, training, skills or experience;
- no job in their locality or line of work; or
- no job available at all.

But excluding:

- full-time students aged 15–24 who preferred a part-time job.

PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WERE ATTENDING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

- Comprising persons who wanted to work and were available to start work within four weeks, but whose main reason for not taking active steps to find work was that they were attending an educational institution or were on a job-related training program.

But excluding:

- full-time students aged 15–24 who preferred a part-time job.

PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WANTED TO WORK BUT WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO START WORK

- Comprising persons who, in the four weeks up to the end of the previous week, had taken active steps to look for work, but did not meet the criteria to be classified as unemployed as they were not available to start work in the previous week.

But excluding:

- full-time students aged 15–24 who were looking for part-time work.

UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

- Comprising persons who usually worked less than 10 hours per week, who had been actively looking for work for more hours, and were available to start work with more hours within four weeks.

But excluding:

- full-time students aged 15–24 who were currently looking for part-time work with more hours.

APPENDIX 2

DATA ITEMS — SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT PATTERNS

DEMOGRAPHIC

Sex
Age
Marital status
Birthplace
Year of arrival in Australia
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin

HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY STRUCTURE

Household type
Relationship in household
Family type
Family size (number of persons)
Number of dependent children in family
Number of dependent students in family
Age of youngest child in family
Age of all dependent children present in family

LANGUAGE USE

Language first spoken
Language usually spoken at home
Level of English proficiency

DISABILITY

Disability status
Severity of handicap
Whether disability impedes employment

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION/MOBILITY

State
Section of State
Socio-economic index of area of residence
Year commenced living at usual residence at time of recruitment
Number of times changed usual residence during reference period
Whether changed State or area of usual residence
Main reason for moving from last usual residence

HOUSING

Dwelling structure
Number of bedrooms
Tenure type
Landlord type
Total weekly housing costs

JOBSEEKER AND LABOUR FORCE STATUS

Jobseeker status
Labour force status
Duration of unemployment

WORKING

Number of episodes of working during the reference period
 Total number of episodes of working since 5 September 1994
 Total duration of working during the reference period
 Total duration of working since 5 September 1994
 Start and finish date of each episode of working
 Duration of each episode of working
 Status in employment
 Hours worked
 Full-time/part-time status
 Whether permanent or casual
 Sector of employment
 Industry
 Occupation
 Whether job was in preferred occupation
 Whether required an educational qualification to obtain job
 Size of location (number of employees)
 Enterprise employment size
 Whether usually works overtime and method of payment
 Usual weekly earnings
 Method of job attainment
 Role of CES in job attainment
 Reason for ceasing job
 Whether a multiple job holder during reference period
 Total duration of multiple job holding during the reference period
 Total duration of multiple job holding since 5 September 1994
 Whether used childcare while working
 Whether used formal childcare and type of formal care
 Main reason for not using formal childcare
 Whether used informal childcare and type of informal care

Working part-time

Whether wants to work more hours and preferred total number of hours
 Main reason for working part-time

LOOKING FOR WORK

Number of episodes of looking for work during the reference period
 Total number of episodes of looking for work since 5 September 1994
 Total duration of looking for work during the reference period
 Total duration of looking for work since 5 September 1994
 Start and finish date of each episode of looking for work
 Duration of each episode of looking for work
 Whether looking for full-time or part-time work
 Active steps taken to find work
 All difficulties in finding work
 Main difficulty in finding work
 Whether would move interstate if offered a suitable job
 Whether would move intrastate if offered a suitable job
 Reservation wage (lowest wage a person is prepared to accept)
 Hours prepared to work for reservation wage

ABSENCES FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Number of episodes of absence from the labour market during the reference period
 Total number of episodes of absence from the labour market since 5 September 1994
 Total duration of absence from the labour market during the reference period
 Total duration of absence from the labour market since 5 September 1994
 Start and finish date of each episode of absence from the labour market
 Duration of each episode of absence from the labour market
 Whether wanted to work and available to start
 Main reason not available to start work at that time
 Main activity
 All reasons for not looking for work
 Main reason for not looking for work

EMPLOYMENT OFFERS

Number of offers of employment during reference period
 Number of offers of employment since 5 September 1994
 When offer of employment was made
 Whether employment offer was accepted
 Reasons for not taking up or accepting offer

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Number of years in paid work since first left full-time education
 Number of years spent looking for work since first left full-time education
 Number of years of labour market absence since first left full-time education
 Year first left full-time education
 Main activity since first left full-time education

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Whether person has worked full-time or part-time
 Start and finish date of last full-time or part-time job
 Status in employment of last full-time or part-time job
 Hours worked in last full-time or part-time job
 Duration of employment of last full-time or part-time job
 Permanent/casual status in last full-time or part-time job
 Sector of employment of last full-time or part-time job
 Industry of last full-time or part-time job
 Occupation of last full-time or part-time job
 Size of location (number of employees) for last full-time or part-time job
 Enterprise employment size for last full-time or part-time job
 Usual weekly earnings for last full-time or part-time job
 Method of job attainment of last full-time or part-time job
 Role of CES in job attainment of last full-time or part-time job
 Time since finished last full-time or part-time job
 Reason for ceasing last full-time or part-time job
 Number of part-time jobs held in last five years

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

Whether a member of a trade union

TRAINING

In-house training courses

Number of in-house training courses attended during reference period
 Number of in-house training courses attended since 5 September 1994
 Start date of in-house training courses
 Time spent on in-house training courses
 Total time spent on in-house training courses
 Field of in-house training courses
 Whether skills gained through in-house training courses were transferable to another employer
 Whether in-house training course helped obtain a pay rise, promotion, or better job

External training courses

Number of external training courses attended during reference period
 Number of external training courses attended since 5 September 1994
 Start date of external training courses
 Time spent on external training courses
 Total time spent on external training courses
 Provider of external training courses
 Field of external training courses
 Whether external training course was government-sponsored
 Whether working at the time attended training course
 Employer support for external training course attended while working
 Non-employer support for external training course
 Whether external training course helped obtain a pay rise, promotion, or better job
 Whether attended external training course to help obtain a job
 Whether external training course helped obtain a job and whether it was a better job

CURRENT STUDY

School attendance
 Whether currently studying
 Full-time/part-time study status
 Type of educational institution attending
 Level of qualification currently studying
 Main field of qualification currently studying

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Age left school
 Level of educational attainment
 Main field of highest qualification obtained
 Year in which highest post-school qualification was obtained
 Country in which highest post-school qualification was obtained

INCOME

Annual income
 Sources of annual income
 Main source of annual income
 Current weekly income
 Sources of current weekly income
 Main source of current weekly income
 Current weekly income from wages and salaries
 Current weekly business and property income
 Current weekly income from government cash pensions, benefits, and allowances
 Annual income of income unit (income for spouse and respondent)
 Current weekly income of income unit

OTHER PERSONS

Demographic

Spouse's age last birthday
 Birthplace of parent(s) and spouse
 Year of arrival in Australia of parent(s) and spouse

Educational attainment

Educational attainment of parent(s) and spouse

Labour force details

Labour force status of spouse or parent(s)
 Number of employed usual resident family members
 Number of unemployed usual resident family members
 Number of usual resident family members unemployed for 12 months or more
 Number of usual resident family members not in the labour force
 Occupation of spouse or parent(s)
 Status in employment of spouse
 Time since last job of spouse
 Duration of unemployment of spouse
 All reasons for spouse not actively looking for work
 Occupation of parent(s) when respondent was 15 years old

Spouse's income

Annual income
 Sources of annual income
 Main source of annual income
 Current weekly income
 Sources of current weekly income
 Main source of current weekly income
 Current weekly income from wages and salaries
 Current weekly business and property income
 Current weekly income from government cash pensions, benefits, and allowances

LABOUR MARKET SUPPORT FROM DEETYA

Active CES registration

Start and finish date of CES registration
 Reason ceased CES registration

Labour Market Programs

Start and finish date of labour market program
Type of labour market program
Labour market program completion status
Post-program employment outcome at three months
Post-program education outcome at three months

Case management

Start and finish date of case management
Case management outcome

English skills

Reading proficiency
Speaking proficiency
Writing proficiency

INCOME SUPPORT FROM DSS

Start and finish date of income support
Type of income support
Total payment of income support

TECHNICAL NOTES

ESTIMATION PROCEDURE

Estimates from the SEUP were calculated by the use of a complex ratio estimation procedure, which ensures that the survey estimates relating to the Jobseeker population and to the PRG conform to independently estimated distributions (benchmarks) of these populations by age and sex, rather than to the age and sex distribution within the sample itself.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

Two types of error are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey: sampling error and non-sampling error. The sampling error is a measure of the variability that occurs by chance because a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed. Since estimates from the SEUP data are based on information obtained from a sample of persons, they are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the estimates that would have been produced if all in-scope persons had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of persons was included. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the estimate that would have been obtained if all persons had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two SEs. Another measure of sampling variability is the relative standard error (RSE) which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers. The RSE is a useful measure in that it provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer also to the size of the estimate.

The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the SE, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents, errors made in collection such as in recording and coding data, and errors made in processing the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling error and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. It is not possible to quantify non-sampling error, but every effort is made to reduce it to a minimum, as discussed under Data quality in the Explanatory Notes. For the example on the next page of these notes, non-sampling error is assumed to be zero. In practice, the potential for non-sampling error adds to the uncertainty of the estimates caused by sampling variability.

Person estimates

SEs for person estimates in this publication can be calculated using table T1 (for Jobseekers), and table T2 (for the PRG). For SEs for episodal estimates, and for methods used to calculate the SE for non-person estimates, such as average hours worked, average earnings, and number of episodes, users should contact the officer listed at the front of this publication.

Person estimates *continued*

The size of the SE increases with the level of the estimate, so that the larger the estimate, the larger is the SE. However, it should be noted that the larger the sample estimate the smaller the SE will be in percentage terms (that is, the RSE). Thus, larger estimates will be relatively more reliable than smaller estimates.

As the SEs in tables T1 and T2 show, the smaller the estimate, the higher is the RSE. Very small estimates are subject to such high SEs (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. In the tables in this publication only estimates with RSEs of 25% or less, and percentages based on such estimates, are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates and percentages with larger RSEs have been included and are preceded by an asterisk (e.g. *3.4) to indicate that they are subject to high SEs and should be used with caution.

An example of the calculation and use of SEs is as follows.

Consider an estimate of 200,000 Jobseekers who looked for work (only) during the reference period. By referring to table T1, in the row for an estimate of 200,000 Jobseekers, a SE of 4,950 is obtained. Therefore, there are about two chances in three that the true value (the number that would have been obtained if the whole population had been included in the survey) is within the range 195,050 to 204,950. There are about nineteen chances in twenty that the true value is within the range 190,100 to 209,900.

Proportions and percentages (e.g. proportion of Jobseekers who looked for work during the reference period) formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling error. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and denominator. The formula for the RSE of a proportion or percentage is given below:

$$RSE(x/y) = \sqrt{[RSE(x)]^2 - [RSE(y)]^2}$$

SEs contained in tables T1 and T2 are designed to provide an average SE applicable to most SEUP person estimates. However, the SEs are not exactly equal for different estimates, and tables T1 and T2 may be quite inaccurate for some unusual estimates.

Episodal estimates

SEs relating to episodal data are not provided in this publication, but are available on request. The following table shows the points at which different estimates have a RSE of more than 25%. Estimates below these levels are unreliable for most practical purposes.

	Estimate
.....	
Jobseekers' episodes	
Working	11 300
Looking for work	8 000
Absent from the labour market	6 700
General population episodes	
Working	181 400
Looking for work	134 200
Absent from the labour market	146 100

T1 STANDARD ERRORS, Jobseeker Person Estimates

<i>Size of estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>RSE</i>
no.	no.	%
100	200	200.0
200	270	135.0
300	330	110.0
400	370	92.5
500	400	80.0
600	440	73.3
700	470	67.1
800	490	61.3
900	520	57.8
1 000	540	54.0
1 100	570	51.8
1 200	590	49.2
1 300	610	46.9
1 400	630	45.0
1 500	650	43.3
1 600	650	40.6
1 700	700	41.2
1 800	700	38.9
1 900	700	36.8
2 000	750	37.5
2 100	750	35.7
2 200	750	34.1
2 300	800	34.8
2 400	800	33.3
2 500	800	32.0
3 000	850	28.3
3 500	950	27.1
4 000	1 000	25.0
4 500	1 050	23.3
5 000	1 100	22.0
6 000	1 150	19.2
8 000	1 300	16.3
10 000	1 450	14.5
20 000	1 950	9.8
30 000	2 300	7.7
40 000	2 600	6.5
50 000	2 900	5.8
100 000	3 900	3.9
200 000	5 200	2.6
300 000	6 200	2.1
400 000	7 000	1.8
500 000	7 700	1.5
1 000 000	10 350	1.0
2 000 000	13 900	0.7
5 000 000	20 550	0.4
10 000 000	27 650	0.3
20 000 000	37 150	0.2

T2 STANDARD ERRORS, PRG Person Estimates

<i>Size of estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>RSE</i>
no.	no.	%
100	100	100.0
200	210	105.0
300	320	106.7
400	430	107.5
500	540	108.0
600	640	106.7
700	740	105.7
800	840	105.0
900	940	104.4
1 000	1 030	103.0
1 100	1 120	101.8
1 200	1 210	100.8
1 300	1 300	100.0
1 400	1 390	99.3
1 500	1 480	98.7
1 600	1 550	96.9
1 700	1 650	97.1
1 800	1 750	97.2
1 900	1 800	94.7
2 000	1 900	95.0
2 100	1 950	92.9
2 200	2 050	93.2
2 300	2 150	93.5
2 400	2 200	91.7
2 500	2 300	92.0
3 000	2 650	88.3
3 500	3 000	85.7
4 000	3 350	83.8
4 500	3 650	81.1
5 000	3 950	79.0
6 000	4 550	75.8
8 000	5 600	70.0
10 000	6 600	66.0
20 000	10 450	52.3
30 000	13 450	44.8
40 000	15 900	39.8
50 000	18 050	36.1
100 000	25 900	25.9
200 000	35 600	17.8
300 000	42 000	14.0
400 000	46 800	11.7
500 000	50 650	10.1
1 000 000	62 900	6.3
2 000 000	74 750	3.7
5 000 000	87 850	1.8
10 000 000	94 300	0.9
20 000 000	96 950	0.5

GLOSSARY

Absent from the labour market	Neither working nor looking for work.
Business size	The total number of people who work for an employer at all locations.
Casual job	A job in which the employed person is not entitled to either paid annual leave or paid sick leave.
Episode	A period of time during which a particular activity is undertaken (such as working, looking for work or absence from the labour market). An episode can occur wholly within a reference period or can span more than one reference period. For more information, see paragraph 22 of the Explanatory Notes.
Full-time work	Work in which the employed person usually works 35 hours or more a week.
Income	The income received within a given time period before tax or any other deductions are made. It includes wages or salary, pensions, benefits and allowances, business, investment and property income.
Industry	All occurrences of industry refer to Industry Division as defined by the <i>Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC)</i> (Cat. no. 1292.0).
Jobseekers	See Appendix 1 for details.
Labour market activities	Periods of working, looking for work, and absence from the labour market.
Main English-speaking countries	Comprises the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, South Africa, the United States of America and New Zealand.
Minimal work experience	Less than six months work between May 1995 and September 1997.
Moderate work experiences	At least six months work between May 1995 and September 1997, with an average job duration of between six and 12 months.
Occupation	All occurrences of occupation refer to Major Group as defined by the <i>ASCO — Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, Second Edition</i> (Cat. no. 1220.0).
Part-time work	Work in which the employed person usually works less than 35 hours a week.
Permanent job	A job in which the employed person is entitled to paid annual leave or paid sick leave.
Shorter work experiences	At least six months work between May 1995 and September 1997, with an average job duration of less than six months.
Stable job	Job which lasted for six months or more and the jobholder was not concurrently looking for other work.
Sustained work experiences	Jobseekers who worked for at least 12 months between May 1995 and September 1997, with an average job duration of at least 12 months.
Unstable job	Job which lasted for less than six months or the jobholder was concurrently looking for other work.

- Wage and salary earner** A person who works for a public or private employer and receives remuneration in wages or salary but excludes persons in their own business, either with or without employees, if that business was incorporated.
- Wave** Describes the reference period for each data collection. The reference periods are as follows:
- wave 1—5 September 1994 to 3 September 1995;
 - wave 2—4 September 1995 to 1 September 1996; and
 - wave 3—2 September 1996 to 31 August 1997.
- Other definitions** For definitions of labour force and demographic classifications used in this publication, readers are referred to *Labour Force, Australia* (Cat. no. 6203.0).

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