Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021 Public Administration and Safety

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) asked businesses about their skills, recruitment and training needs for the Victorian Employer Skills Survey 2021.

Findings from the survey will help the Victorian government identify areas of skills demand, drive innovation across the VET sector and better plan for Victoria’s future training needs.

The VSA conducted the survey between August and December 2021. It approached 70,000 businesses and achieved a response rate of 20.5%, with coverage across all industries, business sizes and regions in the state.

*The statistics below reflect the experience of employers across the five key survey domains:*

#### Business climate | Skills | Recruitment | Training | Apprentices, trainees and work placements

## Business climate

#### **Despite the global pandemic, many employers adapted to maintain or grow their workforce. Employers had a mostly positive outlook for the year ahead.**

#### Workforce

Nearly a third of employers reported growing their workforce in 2021. This was the highest rate reported amongst all industries

**Grew**

Public Administration and Safety 32%

Vic Avg 19%

**Contracted**

Public Administration and Safety 22%

Vic Avg 19%

**Remained the same**

Public Administration and Safety 45%

Vic Avg 61%

#### Outlook

Employers in the industry held mixed views about their business outlook, with 15% uncertain about their future outlook and a fewer number of employers expecting their workforce to remain the same size.

**Predict growth**

Public Administration and Safety 34%

Vic Avg 33%

**Remain about the same**

Public Administration and Safety 44%

Vic Avg 56%

**Predict contraction**

Public Administration and Safety 7%

Vic Avg 5%

#### Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19 skills-related challenges experienced by employers in the industry were the highest among all industries.

**Skills-related challenges**

Public Administration and Safety 73%

Vic Avg 57%

**Adapted new ways of working related to COVID-19**

Public Administration and Safety 54%

Vic Avg 45%

**Staff retention challenges**

Public Administration and Safety 51%

Vic Avg 26%

## Skills

#### **Finding candidates with the right skills presented the most common skill challenge in the past year. More employers are expecting skill shortages in 2022 than in 2021.**

#### Skills shortages

Almost one-quarter of employers in the industry expect to face skills shortages in 2022. This was higher than the state average.

**Last 12 months**

Public Administration and Safety 23%

Vic Avg 16%

**Next 12 months**

Public Administration and Safety 24%

Vic Avg 21%

#### Skills challenges

The top skills challenges reported by employers were the same across all industries. They were:

**Finding candidates with the right skills**

Public Administration and Safety 67%

Vic Avg 47%

**Adapting to the new ways of working due to COVID-19**

Public Administration and Safety 54%

Vic Avg 45%

**Finding job-ready candidates**

Public Administration and Safety 50%

Vic Avg 37%

#### Skills needs

More employers in the industry needed workers with job specific skills as well as the right attitude.
 **Technical/job-specific skills**

Public Administration and Safety 56%

Vic Avg 73%

**The right attitude/mindset**

Public Administration and Safety 53%

Vic Avg 50%

**Digital skills**

Public Administration and Safety 78%

Vic Avg 47%

## Recruitment

Most employers in the industry had undertaken some recruitment activity over the past year and the majority reported experiencing challenges.

Recruitment need

More employers in the industry undertook some form of recruitment over the past 12 months, compared to the state average.

Public Administration and Safety 80%

Vic Avg 62%

Recruitment challenges

Six in seven employers reported having difficulties recruiting for particular roles. This was higher than the state average.

Public Administration and Safety 86%

Vic Avg 76%

Type of challenge

Six in seven employers reported having difficulties recruiting for particular roles. This was higher than the state average.

**Few applicants**

Public Administration and Safety 67%

Vic Avg 63%

**Candidates lacked relevant experience**

Public Administration and Safety 61%

Vic Avg 50%

**Candidates lacked relevant technical/job-specific skills**

Public Administration and Safety 58%

Vic Avg 47%

## Training

Four in five employers in the industry engaged in some form of staff training

**Engagement in training**

More employers in the industry used both internal and external training (55% compared to 37% state average). Fewer used internal or external training only.

**Internal training**

Public Administration and Safety 16%

Vic Avg 17%

**External training**

Public Administration and Safety 29%

Vic Avg 45%

**Satisfaction with training**

Satisfaction levels were higher than the state average for improved staff performance, training quality and price.

**Helped staff do their job better**

Public Administration and Safety 86%

Vic Avg 81%

**Trainers had good industry knowledge**

Public Administration and Safety 79%

Vic Avg 80%

**Training was high quality**

Public Administration and Safety 86%

Vic Avg 76%

**Training was reasonably priced**

Public Administration and Safety 76%

Vic Avg 71%

 **Skillsets**

More employers than any other industry said they would consider a skillset (microcredential or part qualification) rather than a full qualification to upskill their staff

Public Administration and Safety 80%

Vic Avg 61%

## Apprentices, trainees and work placements

Employers continue to make use of apprentices, trainees and work placements to assist them in filling the skills pipeline.

**Apprentices and trainees**

Uptake of trainees over the past 12 months was higher than the state average.
 **Apprenticeship**

Public Administration and Safety 21%

Vic Avg 24%

**Traineeship**

Public Administration and Safety 28%

Vic Avg 18%

**Challenges**

Fewer employers in the industry cited barriers to uptake. More employers reported that they did not need more apprentices and trainees.

**There are no barriers/challenges**

Public Administration and Safety 14%

Vic Avg 20%

**You don’t need more apprentice(s)/trainee(s)**

Public Administration and Safety 17%

Vic Avg 13%

**Not aware of program availability in the industry**

Public Administration and Safety 16%

Vic Avg 11%

**Work placement students**

One in five (20%) of employers in the industry took on work placement students. The most common type of work placement students were:

**University student**

Public Administration and Safety 44%

Vic Avg 49%

**Secondary school student as part of work experience**

Public Administration and Safety 41%

Vic Avg 41%

**Secondary school student as part of a VET qualification**

Public Administration and Safety 18%

Vic Avg 22%

**A VET student**

Public Administration and Safety 41%

Vic Avg 19%

**View the complete report here or visit** [Victorian employer skills survey | Victorian Government (www.vic.gov.au)](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-employer-skills-survey)