

5 Job experience of clients

5.1 Job history

The job profiles presented in chapter 4 describe the characteristics of work gained in different industries or occupations. However, because a job may vary from a few hours worked casually on 1 day to a full-time, permanent job worked for the whole year, such description does not present a full picture of employment trends of clients. To examine employment trends it is necessary to summarise the job history of clients over the period that they were receiving support, and thus to have the individual rather than the job as the basic unit of analysis.

Clients who had a job at some time during 1997–98 (referred to as ‘workers’) can be classified into four job history groups, depending on whether they had a job at the beginning and/or at the end of 1997–98, as in Table 5.1. Not all clients were receiving support for the whole financial year, either because their support began after 1 July, and/or more rarely because support was recorded as withdrawn before 30 June. In these cases, the support period, or time in support, was less than 1 year and calculated in weeks. (See Appendix 1 for further details.) Within each of the job history groups, clients may have had one or more jobs.

Table 5.1: Classification of job history for workers^(a) in a financial year

Job history	Job at start of support period	Job at end of support period
Job retained	Yes	Yes
Job lost	Yes	No
Job gained and retained	No	Yes
Job gained and lost	No	No

(a) A ‘worker’ is any client who had a job at any time during 1997–98.

A total of 15,455 clients had a job at some time during 1997–98 (i.e. were workers in the 1997–98 financial year), an increase of 3,024 or 24% over 1996–97 (12,431 workers; Table 5.2, see also Figure 4.1).

Of these 15,455 workers, 9,164 had a job at the start of the support period, of whom 1,952 (21%) were unemployed at the end of the period (Table 5.2, Figure 5.1). A further 6,291 clients who were not employed at the beginning of the support period obtained a job during the period. However, 1,902 (30%) of these workers were unemployed again by the end of the period.

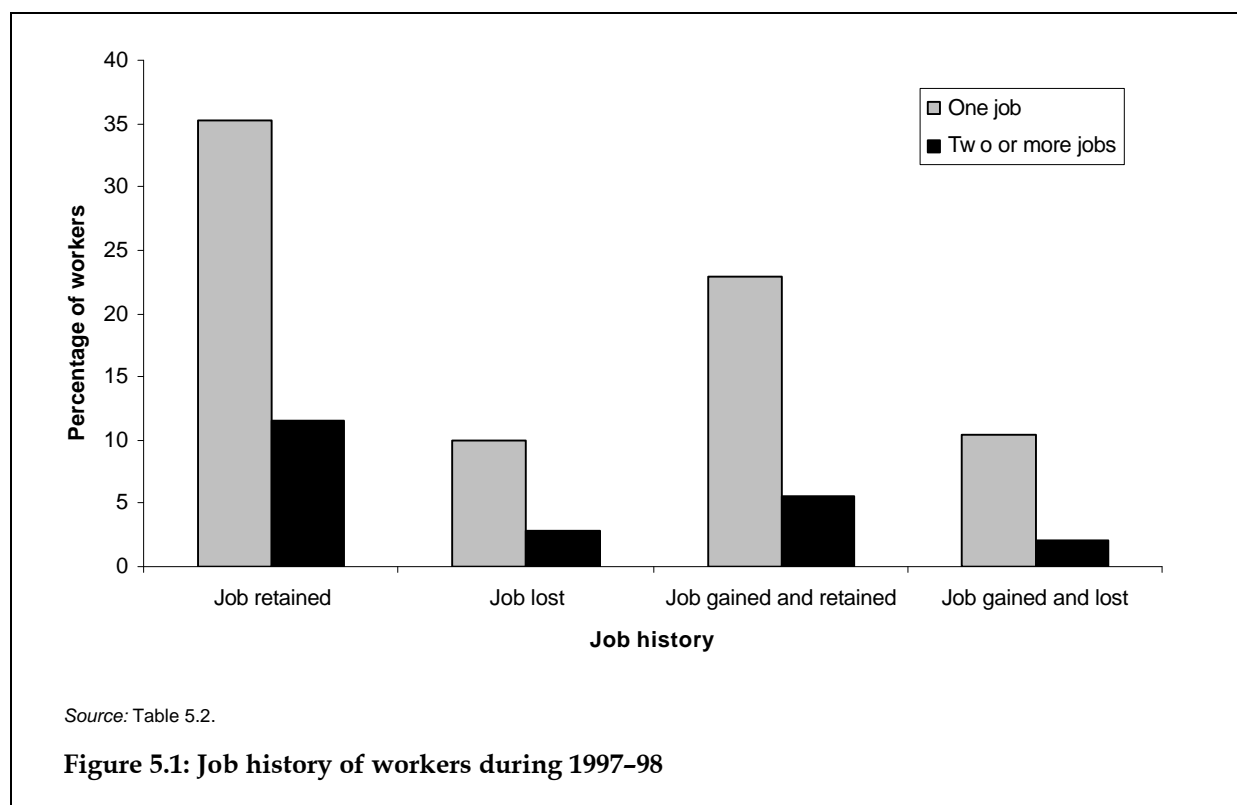
The increase in employment over each financial year can be calculated by comparing the number of workers at the beginning with the number at the end. This equals the number of ‘job gained and retained’ workers minus the number of ‘job lost’ workers. As at 1 July 1997, 9,164 clients had a job and this increased by 2,437 or 27% to 11,601 by 30 June 1998. The proportional increase from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 was slightly higher at 30% (2,170 clients, from 7,309 to 9,479; Anderson & Golley 1998:47).

Table 5.2: Job history of workers during 1997-98

Job history	With one job		With more than one job		All workers	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Job retained	5,436	35.2	1,776	11.5	7,212	46.7
Job lost	1,527	9.9	425	2.8	1,952	12.6
Job gained and retained	3,539	22.9	850	5.5	4,389	28.4
Job gained and lost	1,600	10.4	302	2.0	1,902	12.3
Total	12,102	78.3	3,353	21.7	15,455	100.0

The worker retention rate is the percentage of workers who had a job at the end of the support period (i.e. the combined percentage of 'job retained' and 'job gained and retained' workers). This rate is not a measure of overall employment, only of the probability that a worker who had a job at some time during the year remained in employment at the end of that year (or their support period if they left the agency).

Three-quarters (75%) of workers in 1997-98 had a job at the end of the support period (11,601 out of 15,455). This was a slight decrease from 1996-97 when 76% of workers (9,479 out of 12,431) were employed at the end of the support period (Anderson & Golley 1998:47). In both years, this percentage was lower for those who had one job compared with those who had more than one job (74% versus 78% in 1997-98, Table 5.2 and Anderson & Golley 1998:47).



The job experience of a worker was also affected by the number and type of jobs they had. The 'job retained' category includes workers who continued in the same job through the whole period, those who changed jobs without being unemployed and those who lost work and regained it. Similarly the 'job gained and retained' category includes workers who gained a permanent job, as well as those who gained one or more casual or temporary jobs, at least one of which they still had at the end of the period. Some workers classed as 'job lost' or 'job gained and lost' will have been in and out of temporary or casual work.

For each worker, the primary job is defined as the job with the highest total hours of work during the whole support period. The basis of employment of the primary job by job history category is shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Workers, basis of employment of primary job by job history, 1997-98

Basis of employment	Job retained		Job lost		Job gained and retained		Job gained and lost		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
One job										
Permanent—regular	4,187	77.0	1,063	69.6	2,342	66.2	955	59.7	8,547	70.6
Permanent—irregular	453	8.3	206	13.5	474	13.4	295	18.4	1,428	11.8
Permanent—seasonal	560	10.3	189	12.4	470	13.3	163	10.2	1,382	11.4
Temporary—regular	167	3.1	48	3.1	188	5.3	131	8.2	534	4.4
Temporary—irregular	13	0.2	10	0.7	26	0.7	40	2.5	89	0.7
Temporary—seasonal	55	1.0	11	0.7	38	1.1	16	1.0	120	1.0
All	5,436	100.0	1,527	100.0	3,539	100.0	1,600	100.0	12,102	100.0
More than one job										
Permanent—regular	1,193	67.2	260	61.2	521	61.3	145	48.0	2,119	63.2
Permanent—irregular	222	12.5	80	18.8	143	16.8	69	22.8	514	15.3
Permanent—seasonal	233	13.1	45	10.6	90	10.6	33	10.9	401	12.0
Temporary—regular	78	4.4	21	4.9	66	7.8	32	10.6	197	5.9
Temporary—irregular	18	1.0	6	1.4	14	1.6	19	6.3	57	1.7
Temporary—seasonal	32	1.8	13	3.1	16	1.9	4	1.3	65	1.9
All	1,776	100.0	425	100.0	850	100.0	302	100.0	3,353	100.0
All workers										
Permanent—regular	5,380	74.6	1,323	67.8	2,863	65.2	1,100	57.8	10,666	69.0
Permanent—irregular	675	9.4	286	14.7	617	14.1	364	19.1	1,942	12.6
Permanent—seasonal	793	11.0	234	12.0	560	12.8	196	10.3	1,783	11.5
Temporary—regular	245	3.4	69	3.5	254	5.8	163	8.6	731	4.7
Temporary—irregular	31	0.4	16	0.8	40	0.9	59	3.1	146	0.9
Temporary—seasonal	87	1.2	24	1.2	54	1.2	20	1.1	185	1.2
All	7,212	100.0	1,952	100.0	4,389	100.0	1,902	100.0	15,455	100.0

In 1997-98, as in the last two financial years, workers were most likely to have had a permanent regular primary job (69% in 1997-98, 68% in 1996-97 and 1995-96). In 1997-98, this percentage was higher for workers with only one job (71%) than for workers with more than one job (63%). A further 13% of workers had a job which was permanent irregular, and 12% a job which was permanent seasonal. Workers in the 'job retained' category were the most likely to be in permanent regular work. Those in the 'job gained and lost' category were the least likely to have had permanent regular work and the most likely to have had permanent irregular work.

A total of 6,475 workers finished at least one job during 1997–98 (Table 5.5). By definition, this includes all workers in the ‘job lost’ and ‘job gained and lost’ categories, plus most of those in the ‘job retained’ and ‘job gained and retained’ categories who had two or more jobs (some workers retained two or more concurrent jobs).

Of these workers, nearly one-third (31%) had resigned because of reasons other than career development and 11% were dismissed from a job. Workers in the ‘job lost’ and ‘job gained and lost’ were more likely to have finished a job for one of these reasons than workers who retained employment at the end of support period. ‘Job retained’ workers were more likely to have resigned from a job for career development, which suggests that they were changing jobs. Other major reasons for job completion were retrenchment (12%) and completion of employment contract (17%).

Table 5.5: Reason for job(s) ending, by job history, for workers who finished one or more jobs, 1997–98

Reason for job ending	Job retained		Job lost		Job gained and retained		Job gained and lost		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Retrenched	185	12.6	270	13.9	75	9.1	220	11.3	786	12.1
Dismissed	93	6.3	213	11.0	83	10.1	296	15.2	712	11.0
Resigned—career development	310	21.1	114	5.9	108	13.1	62	3.2	634	9.8
Resigned—other reason	302	20.6	736	38.0	175	21.2	729	37.5	2,022	31.2
Work trial	23	1.6	46	2.4	46	5.6	86	4.4	211	3.3
Employment contract finished	286	19.5	246	12.7	191	23.2	344	17.7	1,122	17.3
Mixed reasons—with dismissal ^(a)	48	3.3	91	4.7	36	4.4	63	3.2	250	3.9
Mixed reasons—other ^(a)	151	10.3	183	9.5	90	10.9	131	6.7	586	9.0
Unknown	70	4.8	37	1.9	21	2.5	15	0.8	152	2.4
Total	1,468	100.0	1,936	100.0	825	100.0	1,946	100.0	6,475	100.0

(a) Workers who finished two or more jobs for different reasons.

5.2 Measures of job experience

To summarise the job experience of each worker, four measures of time spent in work and three of amount of income earned were calculated (Table 5.6). These measures are based on the total number of weeks with a job or jobs, the total number of hours spent in work for all jobs, and the total amount of income earned from all jobs over the whole of the support period.

The measures for time in work are:

- **Time in work in weeks** – the total number of weeks during the support period that the worker had a job or job(s). If the worker had more than one job, then the weeks in work may not necessarily have been continuous.
- **Time in work as a proportion of time in support** – to adjust for the fact that the support period varied from worker to worker, the number of weeks in work can also be calculated as a proportion of the number of weeks in the support period. This measure is used in most tables rather than the unadjusted time in work in weeks above.
- **Mean hours of work per work week** – the total hours worked in all jobs for each worker during the support period divided by the number of weeks in work; that is, the average weekly time spent in work when working.

- **Mean hours of work per week** – for each worker this is calculated as the total hours worked in all jobs during the support period divided by the number of weeks in the support period; that is, the average work time per week for all weeks in support including those without a job. This is a measure of overall time spent in employment.

The measures of mean income earned from jobs are:

- **Mean wage per hour** – the hourly wage rate for each worker calculated as the total salary earned from all jobs divided by the total number of hours worked.
- **Mean wage per work week** – the weekly wage rate while in work for each worker, calculated as the total salary earned from all jobs divided by the total number of weeks with a job. The mean wage per hour and the mean wage per work week are measures of the pay from all jobs.
- **Mean income per week** – the amount of income earned from all jobs, calculated as the total salary earned from all jobs divided by the total number of weeks in the support period. It is a measure of the amount of income received by the worker over the support period.

Thus for workers who had more than one job, the above means are weighted by the total number of hours for each job. That is, the job with the largest number of hours will most influence the mean.

One other job variable is included in most tables:

- **Weeks to get a job** – applies only to workers who did not have a job at the beginning of the support period and who were not recorded as having had a job previously. It is the number of weeks from the first episode of support to the start of the first (or only) job gained.

See Appendix 1 for the precise formulas for calculating all of the above measures.

In 1997–98 the average worker was employed for about 32 weeks, which equated to just under three-quarters (73%) of their time in support (Table 5.6). This was almost identical to 1996–97 (33 weeks or 73%).

The average worker in 1997–98 was in work for 24 hours per work week (or 18 hours per week over the support period) and earned \$235 per work week (or \$173 per week over the support period). These figures are similar to those in 1996–97.

The average time taken to get a job (for those clients who obtained work after the beginning of the financial year) was 12.8 weeks in 1997–98, compared with 14.0 weeks in 1996–97.

On average, workers with one job were employed for slightly less of their time in support than workers with two or more jobs (72% compared with 74%). Workers with one job also earned slightly lower hourly wages than workers with more than one job (\$9.69 compared with \$10.01) but had almost identical income earned over the support period (\$173 compared with \$174).

There was substantial variation among job history categories. By definition, workers who retained one job must have been in work 100% of their support time. Workers in the ‘job retained’ category who had two or more jobs on average worked 89% of their support period, the remaining 11% being spent between jobs. ‘Job gained and lost’ workers on average spent less than a third (31%) of their time in work.

Overall, workers who gained a job during the year had higher mean hourly wage rates than workers who started the period with a job. However, ‘job retained’ workers had the highest mean incomes due to working longer hours for a longer time.

Table 5.6: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by job history, 1997-98

Job history	Number of workers	Mean jobs/worker	Mean weeks to get job ^(a)	Mean time in work		Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
				Weeks	% ^(b)	Per work week	Per week ^(c)	Per hour	Per work week	Per week ^(c)
One job										
Job retained	5,436	1.0	..	46.6	100.0%	26.2	26.2	\$9.50	\$247	\$247
Job lost	1,527	1.0	..	19.3	47.8%	24.0	11.6	\$9.44	\$221	\$105
Job gained and retained	3,539	1.0	14.3	22.3	59.4%	22.8	14.0	\$9.90	\$221	\$135
Job gained and lost	1,600	1.0	11.8	11.8	29.9%	23.2	7.1	\$10.09	\$229	\$68
<i>Total</i>	<i>12,102</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>13.5</i>	<i>31.4</i>	<i>72.3%</i>	<i>24.5</i>	<i>18.2</i>	<i>\$9.69</i>	<i>\$234</i>	<i>\$173</i>
Two or more jobs										
Job retained	1,776	2.4	..	44.5	88.8%	23.7	21.0	\$9.84	\$234	\$207
Job lost	425	2.3	..	25.4	54.0%	24.4	13.2	\$10.01	\$243	\$130
Job gained and retained	850	2.4	9.5	28.4	63.7%	23.8	15.4	\$10.31	\$243	\$158
Job gained and lost	302	2.4	8.0	17.4	37.9%	23.4	9.2	\$10.09	\$236	\$93
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,353</i>	<i>2.4</i>	<i>9.1</i>	<i>35.6</i>	<i>73.5%</i>	<i>23.8</i>	<i>17.5</i>	<i>\$10.01</i>	<i>\$238</i>	<i>\$174</i>
All workers										
Job retained	7,212	1.3	..	46.1	97.2%	25.5	24.9	\$9.59	\$244	\$237
Job lost	1,952	1.3	..	20.6	49.1%	24.1	12.0	\$9.56	\$226	\$111
Job gained and retained	4,389	1.3	13.4	23.5	60.3%	23.0	14.2	\$9.98	\$225	\$139
Job gained and lost	1,902	1.2	11.3	12.6	31.2%	23.2	7.4	\$10.09	\$230	\$72
Total	15,455	1.3	12.8	32.3	72.5%	24.3	18.1	\$9.76	\$235	\$173

(a) Mean time receiving support before commencement of first or only job for workers without a job at the start of the support period.

(b) Percentage of the support period.

(c) Per week of the support period.

The remaining sections of chapter 5 examine each of the measures of job experience to determine whether any relationships exist between job experience and client and job characteristics such as sex, age, occupation and wage level. Comparisons will be made between 1997-98 and the previous two financial years. Where no comment is made, it should be assumed that no significant changes have been observed over the financial years. For further information on job experience in previous years, refer to Anderson & Golley 1998.

5.3 Job experience by sex

About 53% of male clients had a job during 1997-98 compared with 47% of female clients (Table 5.7). These percentages are similar to those in 1996-97, although the gap between the sexes has widened marginally (from 52% for males and 48% for females).

Both men and women spent almost three-quarters of their support period in work during 1997-98. The average time to get a job was higher for women (13.6 weeks) than for men (12.4 weeks). Women also had a higher mean hourly wage than men, although the mean income per week was greater for men due to the higher number of hours worked per week.

Table 5.7: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by sex, 1997–98

Sex	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Male	10,211	52.8%	12.4	72.7%	25.8	19.2	\$9.63	\$246	\$182
Female	5,244	47.4%	13.6	72.2%	21.5	15.9	\$10.01	\$212	\$156

5.4 Job experience by age

The proportion of clients with a job varied considerably according to age group, with clients aged 15–19 years by far the least likely to be workers (41%; Table 5.8). Over 55% of clients in the 20–29 age groups were workers, as were over half of all clients in the 30–44 and 60–69 age groups. In contrast, about 46% of clients aged 45–59 were workers in the support period. Compared with 1996–97, the percentage of clients in work increased for all age groups except 60–64.

On average, clients in the 15–19 age group took longer to get a job and spent a lower proportion of their time in work, compared with clients aged 20–64. The small number of workers aged 65–69 had the lowest proportion of time in work during the support period (61%). The mean hours of work per working week tended to be higher for workers under 30 years of age compared with older workers.

The 15–19 age group had by far the lowest hourly and weekly wage rates. The hourly rate increased steadily across the age groups 20–59 and then fell slightly for the workers over 60 years of age (Figure 5.2). This pattern was not repeated in the weekly wage rates due to the interplay between hourly wage rates and mean hours of work. For instance, although workers in the 45–59 age group earned the highest hourly wage rate, they earned only the third highest weekly income due to relatively low hours per work week.

Table 5.8: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by age, 1997–98

Age group	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
15–19	1,861	40.9%	13.7	63.9%	25.2	16.4	\$7.35	\$179	\$115
20–24	3,886	55.4%	13.3	73.1%	25.0	18.6	\$9.21	\$228	\$167
25–29	2,939	56.0%	12.2	74.6%	25.0	19.1	\$10.02	\$251	\$190
30–44	4,987	51.1%	12.0	73.5%	24.0	18.1	\$10.51	\$250	\$187
45–59	1,704	46.4%	13.2	74.1%	22.0	16.9	\$10.91	\$239	\$182
60–64	64	52.0%	9.1	75.1%	18.9	15.3	\$10.83	\$212	\$171
65–69	10	52.6%	10.1	60.9%	22.0	15.2	\$10.50	\$220	\$135
Unknown	4	20.0%	17.4	74.4%	20.1	14.0	\$9.11	\$160	\$108



5.5 Job experience by Indigenous and South Sea Islander status

People who identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin were the least likely to have been workers in 1997-98. Workers of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin also had the lowest mean hours of work per week and the lowest income of all workers. South Sea Islander people were above average in terms of the percentage who were workers. On average, the 25 workers who identified as South Sea Islanders, took a long time to get a job and spent a relatively small percentage of time in work. However, due to relatively high mean hours of work and high hourly wages, these workers earned the highest income of all groups.

Table 5.9: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by origin, 1997-98

Origin	Workers		Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients			Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	245	45.6%	12.3	69.4%	22.9	15.6	\$9.21	\$213	\$140
South Sea Islander	25	53.1%	20.1	62.0%	27.4	17.3	\$9.71	\$271	\$178
Not Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, South Sea Islander	14,535	50.8%	12.7	72.6%	24.4	18.2	\$9.76	\$236	\$174
Not known	650	53.7%	14.7	73.4%	22.8	16.7	\$9.78	\$218	\$155

5.6 Job experience by preferred spoken language

Preferred spoken language did not appear to have any relationship to the likelihood of a client being a worker in 1997–98 (51% each; Table 5.10). This contrasts with the case in 1996–97, when people with a preferred spoken language other than English were slightly more likely to have been employed than others (52% compared with 50%).

On average, people with a preferred spoken language other than English took one week longer to get a job than others (13.8 compared with 12.8 weeks). They also spent a higher percentage of their time in work during the support period (76% compared with 72% for others). Although the hourly wage rate for people with a preferred spoken language other than English was lower than for others, the former group had higher mean hours of work per week and therefore higher weekly wages than others.

Table 5.10: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by preferred spoken language, 1997–98

Preferred spoken language other than English	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Yes	692	50.7%	13.8	75.6%	26.9	20.6	\$9.49	\$256	\$194
No	14,763	50.8%	12.8	72.4%	24.2	18.0	\$9.77	\$234	\$172

5.7 Job experience by primary disability

In 1997–98, as in 1996–97, there was considerable variation among primary disability groups in the measures of job experience (Table 5.11). People with a speech, hearing, intellectual/learning disability or acquired brain injury had above-average likelihood of employment, whereas people with a psychiatric or deafblind disability had the least likelihood of being employed during the support period. Workers with a psychiatric disability stood out as having had the lowest proportion of their support time in work, as well as the lowest mean hours of work per week.

Workers with a sensory disability had the highest weekly wages, ranging from \$293 to \$331 per working week. This was because on average their hourly wage rates and hours of work per week were among the highest. Workers with a psychiatric or a physical disability also had high hourly wage rates, but weekly wages were lower because they worked fewer hours per week on average. Workers with an intellectual/learning disability were the only group with a mean hourly wage rate substantially below the overall average (\$8.65 compared with \$9.76, Tables 5.11 and 5.6).

Table 5.11: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by primary disability group, 1997-98

Primary disability group	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Intellectual/learning	7,510	55.9%	13.3	75.7%	24.9	19.2	\$8.65	\$212	\$163
Psychiatric	3,110	43.3%	12.3	64.7%	21.7	14.3	\$11.14	\$239	\$157
Physical	2,166	47.3%	12.7	72.4%	23.8	17.6	\$10.72	\$256	\$188
Acquired brain injury	572	51.7%	13.9	68.8%	22.7	15.6	\$9.92	\$230	\$157
Neurological	546	46.9%	11.9	69.1%	22.6	15.9	\$9.64	\$217	\$152
Vision	767	50.6%	13.0	79.9%	29.2	24.0	\$11.42	\$331	\$275
Hearing	715	55.0%	11.4	71.4%	28.2	20.9	\$10.54	\$293	\$217
Speech	54	55.1%	9.1	73.4%	30.7	23.4	\$10.14	\$310	\$236
Deafblind	15	27.7%	22.0	70.1%	26.7	19.7	\$10.83	\$296	\$223

Clients with an episodic primary disability were less likely to have had a job than those with a non-episodic disability in 1997-98, as was the case in 1996-97. Although both groups took a similar time to get a job in 1997-98, clients with an episodic disability who did have a job spent less time in work, and worked fewer hours per week on average. Both groups had similar wages per work week because the average hourly wage for workers with an episodic disability was 14% higher than other workers. However, on average, workers with an episodic disability earned less per week over the support period, due to their great likelihood of spending time out of work. These differences reflect the fact that the majority (82%, Table 3.9) of people with an episodic disability have a psychiatric disability.

Table 5.12: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by episodic nature of primary disability, 1997-98

Nature of primary disability	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Episodic	2,773	45.4%	12.9	66.1%	21.8	14.7	\$10.87	\$234	\$157
Not episodic	12,682	52.2%	12.8	73.9%	24.9	18.8	\$9.51	\$235	\$176

5.8 Job experience and presence of other disability

As in 1996–97, clients with more than one disability were marginally less likely to have had a job than those with only one disability in 1997–98 (Table 5.13). On average, workers with one disability took less time to get a job, worked more hours per week and had greater hourly and weekly wage rates than those with more than one disability.

Table 5.13: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by presence of other disability, 1997–98

Presence of other disability	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Yes	2,742	50.2%	14.3	73.0%	23.0	17.1	\$8.98	\$204	\$147
No	12,713	51.0%	12.5	72.4%	24.6	18.3	\$9.92	\$241	\$179

5.9 Job experience and frequency of assistance required for activities of daily living

On average, workers who required continual assistance for activities of daily living (ADL) worked the fewest hours per week and earned the lowest wages (\$8.37 per hour, \$186 per work week and \$138 per week, all well below the average for all workers; Tables 5.6 and 5.14).

Table 5.14: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by frequency of activities of daily living (ADL)^(a) assistance required, 1997–98

Frequency of ADL assistance required	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Not at all	4,773	50.7%	14.0	71.0%	24.5	17.8	\$10.14	\$242	\$175
Occasionally	5,568	51.9%	11.8	73.5%	25.4	19.2	\$10.06	\$252	\$191
Frequently	3,621	50.2%	12.9	71.6%	23.1	16.9	\$9.36	\$217	\$157
Continually	1,493	48.6%	13.1	75.8%	22.6	17.3	\$8.37	\$186	\$138

(a) Frequency of assistance required by the person in their overall situation, due to their condition, in one or more of the areas of self-care (bathing, dressing, eating and/or toileting), mobility (around the home or away from home) and verbal communication (called 'level of support required' in the NIMS data dictionary).

5.10 Job experience and type of living arrangement

The majority of clients in 1997–98 either lived alone (20%) or with family members (67%) at the time they commenced support (see Table 3.6). Clients who lived with family members were more likely to have been workers than those who lived in other types of accommodation (Table 5.15). On average, workers who lived with family members spent a higher percentage of the support period in work than those who lived alone and also worked slightly longer hours per week. However, the former group earned less income from jobs over the year due to an hourly wage rate that was more than one dollar less than workers who lived alone. Workers with no usual residence took the shortest time to get a

job, worked relatively high hours per week and earned relatively high income from jobs. Workers whose residence was unknown had the highest mean hours of work per week, mean hourly and weekly wage rates; suggesting that this group may not be a random sample of all clients. People who lived in institutional accommodation were the least likely to be workers, took the longest time to get a job and had the lowest mean hours of work and income earned.

Table 5.15: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by type of living arrangement, 1997–98

Type of living arrangement	Workers		Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients			Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Lives with family members	10,713	52.8%	13.0	73.0%	24.7	18.5	\$9.54	\$233	\$173
Lives alone	2,950	48.3%	12.5	70.4%	23.3	16.9	\$10.63	\$246	\$177
Special purpose	515	48.5%	11.4	75.8%	19.4	14.7	\$7.93	\$151	\$109
Other community	478	46.3%	12.0	71.9%	23.8	17.5	\$9.42	\$211	\$147
Institutional	49	39.5%	14.1	74.1%	15.9	12.6	\$7.74	\$121	\$98
No usual residence	43	45.7%	7.6	70.9%	25.5	18.5	\$10.29	\$260	\$190
Not known	707	41.4%	12.3	71.6%	27.7	20.6	\$11.07	\$300	\$221

5.11 Job experience and referral source

As in 1996–97, clients referred to agencies by the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) programs or services were the most likely to have been employed during the support period, followed by clients referred to agencies by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) programs or services (Table 5.16). Clients referred from ‘other’ sources were the least likely to be workers and, once workers, had the lowest hours of work per week on average. Workers who were self- or family-referred and those referred by DETYA programs had the highest hourly and weekly wage rates. Those referred by educational institutions had the lowest rates, presumably because they were generally younger. This group also took the longest time to get a job.

Table 5.16: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by referral source, 1997–98

Referral source	Workers		Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients			Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Self or family	3,969	50.1%	12.7	71.5%	24.7	18.3	\$10.50	\$257	\$191
Education system	1,907	51.1%	15.0	73.9%	25.6	19.3	\$8.51	\$212	\$160
DETYA programs and services	1,035	55.8%	13.3	71.6%	26.1	19.3	\$10.29	\$261	\$192
FaCS	3,471	59.9%	12.9	77.8%	24.2	19.2	\$8.90	\$215	\$167
Other	5,069	45.7%	12.1	69.3%	23.3	16.5	\$10.12	\$234	\$164

5.12 Job experience, employment basis, occupation and industry

For workers with more than one job, the basis of employment, occupation and type of industry may have varied from job to job, so for these three variables each worker was classified by primary job (defined as the job in which the most hours were worked during the support period). However, as in the previous analysis, the measures of job experience were calculated across all of a worker's jobs.

Over two-thirds (69%) of workers had a permanent regular primary job (Table 5.17). On average, workers in primary regular jobs spent 9% more time in and worked about 7 hours more per week than other workers. Because of these differences, they had much higher weekly wages, even though their hourly wage rate was lower. These trends were very similar to those in the previous two financial years.

Table 5.17: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by basis of employment of primary job, 1997-98

Basis of employment	Workers		Mean % of time weeks to get job in work		Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of workers			Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Permanent regular	10,666	69.0%	12.6	75.2%	26.4	20.2	\$9.50	\$249	\$190
Other	4,787	31.0%	13.1	66.5%	19.7	13.3	\$10.33	\$203	\$135
Total	15,455	100.0%	12.8	72.5%	24.3	18.1	\$9.76	\$235	\$173

Three-fifths (60%) of all workers had a primary job classified as labourer/related worker. The other main occupation categories were clerks (14%), sales/personal staff (13%) and tradespersons (6%, Table 5.18).

Professionals, managers and para-professionals had the highest hourly wage rates and were above-average in terms of the percentage of time in work. Tradespersons had the lowest hourly wage rate, over a dollar below average (\$8.66 compared with \$9.76), and labourers/related workers had the lowest weekly income due to a combination of below-average wages and weekly hours. Although sales/personal service staff had an above-average hourly wage rate, they worked the least hours per week and thus also had a low average weekly wage. (See also Table 4.8 for job details by occupation group and wage level).

As a result of differences in time spent in work, hours of work and hourly wage rates, the income earned by workers varied widely. Averaged over all weeks in support, income ranged from a low of \$156 per week for labourers/related workers to a high of \$360 per week for managers.

Overall, mean income per week was \$3 higher than in 1996-97. Average income per week increased by \$43 for managers whereas average income for clerks decreased by \$1. Minor increases were experienced by the remaining occupations. Mean hours of work were marginally lower in 1997-98 compared with 1996-97 (mean hours per work week and mean hours per week down by 0.5 hours). (For 1996-97 details see Anderson & Golley 1998:53.)

Table 5.18: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by occupation group of primary job, 1997-98

Occupation group of primary job	Workers		Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of workers			Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Managers	61	0.4%	16.3	82.5%	33.4	28.1	\$12.77	\$435	\$360
Professionals	347	2.2%	12.6	80.5%	25.4	21.0	\$14.47	\$364	\$302
Para-professionals	344	2.2%	13.7	79.0%	22.9	18.8	\$12.56	\$280	\$231
Tradespersons	986	6.4%	12.5	75.5%	28.3	21.7	\$8.66	\$243	\$181
Clerks	2,119	13.7%	13.8	73.8%	25.3	19.3	\$10.84	\$275	\$210
Sales/personal service staff	2,012	13.0%	13.3	73.1%	21.8	16.2	\$10.30	\$222	\$164
Plant/machine operators/drivers	317	2.1%	9.8	71.8%	29.9	21.8	\$10.33	\$307	\$221
Labourers/related workers	9,258	59.9%	12.6	71.2%	24.0	17.5	\$9.19	\$217	\$156
Total^(a)	15,455	100.0%	12.8	72.5%	24.3	18.1	\$9.76	\$235	\$173

(a) Total includes 1 worker with missing occupation.

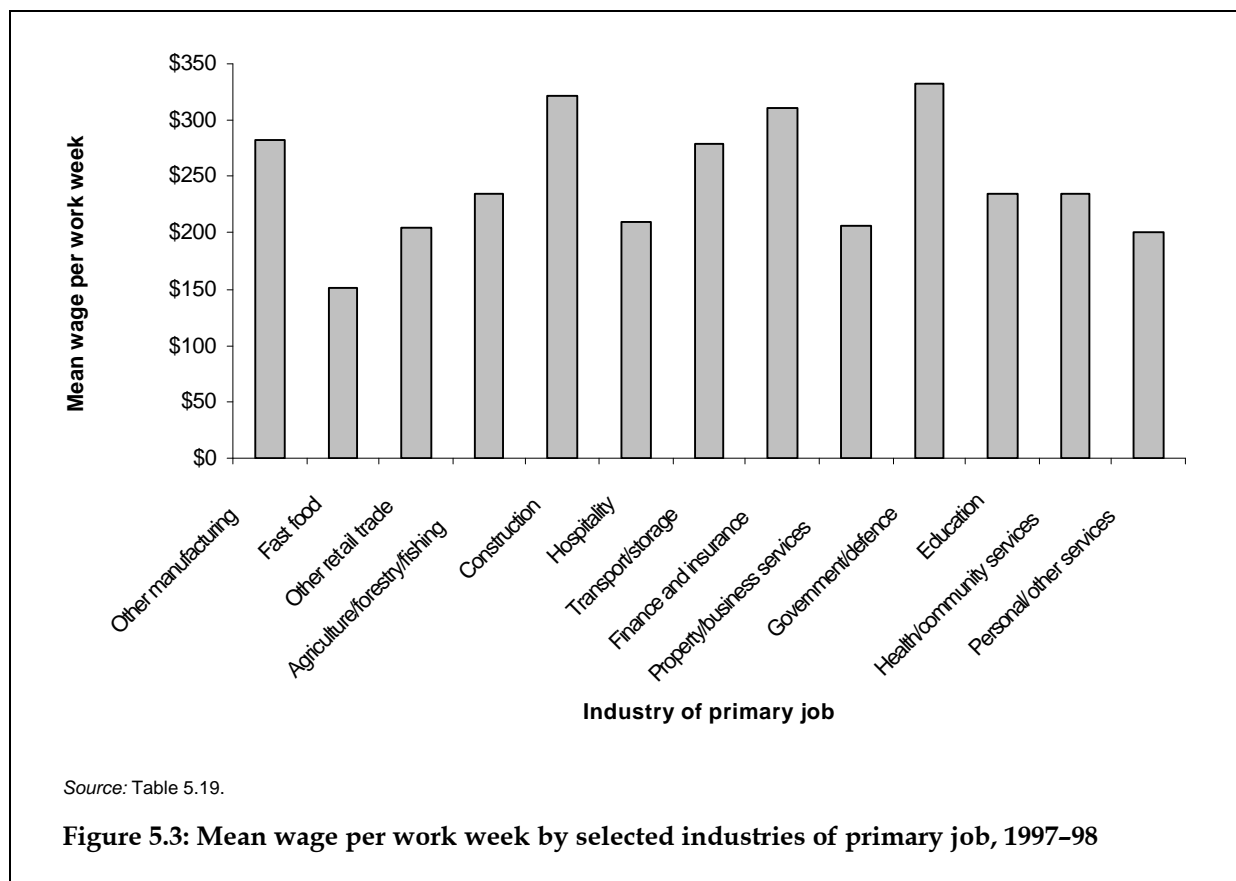
Mean hours of work per working week varied widely across industries, from 18 for the fast-food industry to 32 for electricity/gas/water supply (Table 5.19). Jobs in the fast food industry also attracted the lowest mean hourly wage rate (\$8.49), meaning that workers in this industry earned the lowest weekly wages in 1997-98.

The highest mean hourly wage rates were earned in the communication services (\$11.59), education (\$11.57), finance and insurance (\$11.41) and government/defence (\$11.29) industries. Despite a high hourly rate, however, workers in the education industry earned only an average wage per working week as they worked below average mean hours per working week.

The highest weekly wages per working week were earned in government/defence, construction, electricity/gas/water supply, and finance and insurance (Figure 5.3). These high wages were due to combinations of relatively high number of hours worked, time in work and hourly wages. Workers in the construction industry did not rank as highly in terms of weekly wage over the support period because they spent a below average proportion of their time in work (66%). On average, other industries with relatively little time spent in work were agriculture/forestry/fishing and property/business services.

Table 5.19: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by industry of primary job, 1997-98

Industry of primary job	Workers		Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of workers			Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Clothing/textiles/footwear	168	1.1%	12.0	75.0%	26.0	19.7	\$8.92	\$228	\$168
Other manufacturing	2,393	15.5%	12.3	72.7%	31.2	23.3	\$9.11	\$283	\$210
<i>All manufacturing</i>	<i>2,561</i>	<i>16.6%</i>	<i>12.3</i>	<i>72.9%</i>	<i>30.9</i>	<i>23.1</i>	<i>\$9.09</i>	<i>\$279</i>	<i>\$207</i>
Fast food	673	4.4%	12.6	77.4%	17.9	13.8	\$8.49	\$151	\$115
Other retail trade	2,272	14.7%	13.3	73.0%	22.2	16.4	\$9.35	\$204	\$149
<i>All retail trade</i>	<i>2,945</i>	<i>19.1%</i>	<i>13.1</i>	<i>74.0%</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>15.8</i>	<i>\$9.16</i>	<i>\$192</i>	<i>\$141</i>
Agriculture/forestry/fishing	861	5.6%	12.2	67.4%	26.7	18.3	\$8.75	\$234	\$156
Mining	24	0.2%	22.0	74.3%	28.0	21.5	\$10.60	\$289	\$227
Electricity/gas/water supply	57	0.4%	7.1	78.6%	31.9	25.5	\$10.01	\$315	\$250
Construction	245	1.6%	12.4	66.3%	30.6	20.7	\$10.47	\$322	\$214
Wholesale trade	583	3.8%	12.8	71.6%	27.1	19.8	\$9.22	\$253	\$178
Hospitality	1,254	8.1%	11.8	69.3%	22.0	15.7	\$9.65	\$209	\$148
Transport/storage	416	2.7%	12.6	72.2%	28.0	20.5	\$10.15	\$279	\$206
Communication services	285	1.8%	12.3	71.6%	25.1	18.2	\$11.59	\$290	\$211
Finance and insurance	227	1.5%	10.8	76.8%	27.2	21.4	\$11.41	\$311	\$246
Property/business services	676	4.4%	12.8	68.7%	21.1	15.5	\$10.09	\$206	\$150
Government/defence	670	4.3%	12.7	80.5%	29.3	24.2	\$11.29	\$332	\$277
Education	418	2.7%	16.4	73.2%	21.0	16.1	\$11.57	\$235	\$179
Health/community services	1,349	8.7%	14.1	75.2%	21.4	16.9	\$11.08	\$235	\$185
Cultural/recreational services	281	1.8%	12.8	72.0%	19.9	14.6	\$9.88	\$195	\$140
Personal/other services	914	5.9%	13.0	72.6%	20.0	14.9	\$10.27	\$201	\$150
Other	1,689	10.9%	12.9	71.2%	22.4	16.1	\$9.28	\$204	\$144
Total	15,455	100.0%	12.8	72.5%	24.3	18.1	\$9.76	\$235	\$173



5.13 Job experience by State and Territory

There was considerable variation among States and Territories in all aspects of job experience in 1997-98 (Table 5.20), as in the last two financial years. Western Australia had the highest percentage of clients employed (64%), however, workers in this State had the lowest hourly wage rate, the lowest wage per working week and among the lowest wage rate per week over the support period.

Workers in South Australia had the highest proportion of time in work, the highest mean weekly hours and the highest weekly wages. Tasmania had the lowest percentage of clients in work and the lowest time in work, and was below average in terms of hours worked and income earned from jobs.

Table 5.20: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by State and Territory, 1997-98

State/Territory	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
New South Wales	3,737	47.5%	13.4	73.0%	25.9	19.4	\$10.14	\$258	\$193
Victoria	4,710	47.0%	12.3	70.7%	23.5	17.1	\$10.25	\$235	\$169
Queensland	3,470	53.5%	13.2	69.6%	23.8	16.9	\$9.23	\$215	\$150
Western Australia	1,825	63.5%	12.2	75.0%	23.4	18.0	\$8.87	\$212	\$162
South Australia	840	54.3%	13.0	82.9%	26.6	22.6	\$9.80	\$265	\$226
Tasmania	247	42.5%	14.2	68.1%	23.4	16.1	\$9.85	\$223	\$155
Australian Capital Territory	494	60.9%	11.0	80.0%	23.8	19.3	\$9.10	\$224	\$175
Northern Territory	132	60.0%	12.8	81.5%	24.0	19.6	\$9.46	\$245	\$195

5.14 Job experience and location

During 1997-98, clients in remote locations were more likely to be workers (53%) than clients from rural and urban locations (51% each; Table 5.21). Clients from remote locations also took less time, on average, to get a job, than clients in rural and urban locations. However, on average, urban workers spent a higher proportion of their support time in work, and worked more hours more per week than workers from either rural or remote locations. This meant that weekly income was substantially higher in urban locations than in rural and remote locations.

Table 5.21: Workers: weeks to get job, time in work, hours of work and income earned from jobs, by location, 1997-98

Location	Workers				Mean hours of work		Income earned from jobs		
	Number	As % of clients	Mean weeks to get job	% of time in work	Per work week	Per week	Per hour	Per work week	Per week
Urban	10,863	50.7	12.7	73.6	25.5	19.2	\$9.83	\$248	\$186
Rural	4,309	51.1	13.1	70.1	21.6	15.6	\$9.55	\$201	\$143
Remote	283	52.8	11.4	69.0	20.7	14.4	\$9.87	\$209	\$142

Note: Location is classified according to the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services Rural and Remote Areas classification, which is based on 1991 Australian Bureau of Statistics data and 1996 Australian Electoral Commission data.

The differences between urban, and rural and remote workers can be largely explained by the frequency of permanent regular work (Table 5.22). Urban workers were much more likely to have had a permanent regular primary job (71%), compared with rural workers (64%) and remote workers (55%).

Table 5.22: Workers: employment status of primary job by location, 1997-98

Location	Permanent regular		Other		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban	7,757	71.4	3,106	28.6	10,863	100.0
Rural	2,754	63.9	1,555	36.1	4,309	100.0
Remote	155	54.7	128	45.3	283	100.0
Total	10,666	69.0	4,787	31.0	15,455	100.0