

THE WORKING POPULATION PROFILE OF THE CITY OF SYDNEY



As an adjunct to the Census of Population and Dwellings, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) produces data on the characteristics of the workforce of local government areas as at the Census date of August 2001. This is achieved through the mechanism of the “Where do you work” question.

This report summarises the results of this Working Population Profile and complements Council’s Floorspace and Employment Census of each establishment and building conducted in the latter half of 2001.

Given that both of these were conducted prior to May 2003, the data relate only to the ‘old’ boundaries of the City of Sydney – the 6.18 square kilometres made up of the CBD and Pyrmont-Ultimo Peninsula.

Global events since 2001 (post-Olympics, Sept 11, Ansett collapse, SARS, global and US economic downturn) have had some impact on subsequent employment levels. This is estimated in the range of 8,000-10,000, which is on par with the estimated employment downturn in percentage terms in the London CBD. Nevertheless, the data provides a useful data set to compare both changes in the City Workforce and differences between the City worker and those in the Sydney metropolitan area.

1. *Total Employment*

- The ABS estimates the total workforce at 252,580, an increase of 34,722 (15.9%) from the equivalent total at the 1996 Census.
- Given definitional and conceptual differences (e.g. the exclusion of people on leave and workers compensation), this approximates well with the Council estimate over the latter half of 2001 of 260,095, with a similar increase from the previous Council survey.

2. *Employment Growth*

- The ABS data show that the City workforce represented just over 15% of the workforce of the total metropolitan area. This represents an increase of over one per cent from the 14% share recorded in 1996.
- Most significantly, it implies that the City absorbed a massive 27.8% of the entire Sydney metropolitan employment growth of 125,000 from 1996 to 2001. This was a growth share almost double its workforce share.
- More significantly, the rate of employment growth in the City was double the rate of employment growth in the Sydney metropolitan area (8%) in the five year period.
- This stemmed from the rapid and broad-based economic growth of industries such as Finance and Business Services (Legal and Accountancy) in the later part of the 1990s decade: in response to globalisation and global economic growth; the recognition of Sydney as a tourist and convention destination in response to the Olympics and the retail/entertainment renaissance of the CBD in response to increases in both workforce, residential and visitor numbers.

3. *Age/Gender Distribution*

- The data reveal that the average (median) City worker is 34 years and 9 months old. This was a slight decrease on the 1996 median age.
- However, it is a significant three and a half years less than the Sydney metropolitan average of 38 years 3 months.
- Five years previously, the City workforce was, on average, just 2 years younger than the Sydney-wide average.
- Just under half the City workforce (47.9%) is aged between 20 and 34, compared to 36% in the same age range in Sydney.
- Between 1996 and 2001, 43% of the City workforce growth occurred in the 25-34 age range.
- The dominance of the City in attracting the 'twenty-thirty-something's' is reflected in the fact that the employment growth in this age range was equivalent to the entire Sydney-wide workforce growth in the same 25-35 range.
- With increased inner-city residential activity of the 'empty-nesters' (50-59 years), just over 20% of the City employment growth was within this age range. This saw the 'fifties plus' age group increase its relative share by about 1.3% in the five-year period to about 12.7% (about one-in-eight), and its percentage growth from a smaller base exceed that of the dominant 'late twenties-early thirties' group discussed above.
- Whilst this is important, it should also be remembered that this age group (50-59) represented just on one-half of the workforce growth of Sydney metropolitan area, so that the City's share of this was no more than the Sydney-wide average.
- The 2001 Census also reveals the continuation of the 'feminisation' of the City workforce from its previous male-domination. A mere 52% of the workforce is now male compared to 53.1% in 1996 and 56% in 1991.
- With a five-year employment growth rate approaching 19% (compared to 13.5% for males), women workers represented 55% of the growth in City employment from 1996-2001.
- More particularly, in the critical 25-34 year old growth range, women outnumbered men by a 56:44 ratio so that the female 25-34 age group growth rate was 23% whilst the male growth rate for the same ages was less than 19%.
- A similar, though less spectacular, gender-balance shift occurred in the more mature 50-59 age group, where the growth rate of women workers was nearly double that of men of similar age.

4. *Marital Status*

- Reflecting the age-shift and lifestyle choices of the City workforce, an even more dramatic shift has taken place in the marital status of the City workforce.
- In 2001, 52.4% of men and 38% of women in the City of Sydney workforce were married. Conversely, 40% of men had never married compared to 50.2% of women.

- Significantly, in the 1991-2001 decade, the proportion of married workers declined from over 50% to 45.6%, while the proportion never married increased by 5.0% to 45.0%.
- Even more dramatically, 62.9% of employment growth for the 1996-2001 period occurred among workers who had never married, compared to less than 30% who were married.
- In absolute terms, the number of single workers (i.e. never married, separated, divorced or widowed) had increased by 21.8% between 1996 and 2001, whereas the number of married workers had increased by less than 10% (9.7%).
- Moreover, the decline in the incidence of marriage was greater among men than women. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of married men in the city workforce increased by just 7.9% whereas the number of married women increased by 12.5% and the numbers of single men and women increased by 20.4% and 22.9% respectively.
- Despite these trends, single women continue to out-number single men in the City workforce by about 15%, and married men still outnumber married women by more than 20,000.

5. *Place of Birth*

- A significant proportion of the City workers were born overseas, many in Asian countries.
- In 2001, just 61.6% of the Sydney City workforce was born in Australia. This compared with 65.0% of the metropolitan workforce and 74.2% of the Australian workforce.
- Moreover, between 1996 and 2001, there was a relative decline of 3.4% in the number of City workers born in Australia.
- Of those born in non-English-speaking countries, there was a dramatic increase, in both relative and absolute terms, in the number born in Asia. Between 1996 and 2001, the proportion of City workers born in China (including Hong Kong), Vietnam, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines rose by more than 43%. Overall, 11.2% of the city workforce in 2001 was born in six Asian countries with over 25% of employment growth occurring among workers from these countries. These workers represent almost one-in-eight (8.2%) of all such workers in the entire Australian labour force.

6. *Hours of Work*

- City of Sydney workers are working longer hours than ever before.
- Between 1996 and 2001 there was a considerable increase in the number of hours worked per week. The proportion working more than 40 hours per week increased from 37.1% (and 30.5% in 1991) to 38.8%. More significantly, those working more than 48 hours increased from 16.3% in 1996 (and 13.0% in 1991) to 23.3%. Thus, in a decade, the proportion working 49 hours or more a week has increased from about one-in-eight to almost a quarter. This trend applied equally to men and women.
- Of occupational categories, a massive 46.5% of 'Managers and Administrators' worked more than 48 hours a week (compared to

37.4% in 1996). The proportion of 'Clerical, sales and Service' workers working 49 or more hours a week almost doubled from just over 5% to just under 10%.

- Conversely, reflecting the increase in part-time and casual work during the same period, the proportion working less than 15 hours, or less than 35 hours, increased from 7.9% to 8.1%, and from 18.6% to 19.4%, respectively.
- Decline in hours worked was concentrated among those working between 35-40 hours a week, particularly men. This was probably the result of a decline in the public sector in the City.

7. Education

By international standards, the City of Sydney workforce is highly skilled and educated. In the new "information economy", the skills and qualifications derived from education are increasingly important. The City of Sydney's highly skilled and educated workforce makes it an attractive location for national and international corporations competing in the global market-place.

7.1 Educational attendance.

- The proportion of City workers attending further and higher educational institutions continues to increase.
- In 2001, 15.5% combined work with some form of educational attendance, including 9.7% who were attending university and 3.3% TAFE.
- The 24,217 attending a University in 2001 represented a 36.9% increase from the number in 1996, which, in turn, was a 42.5% increase over the 1991 educational attendance data. Thus in a mere decade the number of University attendees amongst the City workforce has virtually doubled, at a time when the workforce has increased about a quarter.
- Not surprisingly, these figures are considerably higher than those recorded for the Sydney metropolitan area. In Sydney overall, 6.4% of the workforce attend a University and 4.0% are undertaking a TAFE course.
- Aside from personal motivation, the proximity to the CBD of the University of Technology Sydney, the University of Sydney, the TAFE Sydney Institute, and several international business colleges undoubtedly encourages such further education.

7.2 Educational Qualifications

- While more than one-sixth of City of Sydney workers are actively enrolled in further education, including 10% doing a degree, an even greater proportion already has an educational qualification.
- In 2001, a massive 40% of the City workforce – more than 100,000 workers – had a Bachelor degree or higher educational qualification. This was an increase of over 30,000 or 43% over the 1996 figure, which in turn was an increase of more than 50% from 1991, when only one-in-four city workers had such qualifications.

- Including post-school diplomas and certificates, a total of 68.1% of the city workforce had an educational qualification, compared to 62.4% in 1996 and 56.5% in 1991.
- Most significantly, the increase in the number of those with a Bachelor degree or higher was equivalent to 87.2% of the increase in the workforce in the 1996-2001 period.
- Such figures compare more than favourably with those for Sydney Metropolitan, where fewer than 25% of the workforce had a degree and only 58.9% had some post-school qualification.
- Of those workers in the Sydney metropolitan area with a bachelor's degree or higher qualification, nearly one-quarter, 24.4%, were employed within the City of Sydney. Of the growth in such highly qualified workers, the City absorbed just under 30% (29.0%) in the 1996-2001 period.

7.3 *Field of Study*

- Of the 172,000 City workers with a post-school qualification, just fewer than 40% (39.1%) were qualified in the area of Management and Commerce.
- A further one-fifth (19.6%) were qualified in Society and Culture, 9.3% in Engineering, 6.5% in Information Technology and 5.0% in Creative Arts.
- Of the men and women in the Sydney metropolitan area who had a degree in Management and Commerce, 38.3% were employed within the City of Sydney LGA. Similarly, of those who had a degree in Society and Culture, 37.7%, including 42% of men, also worked in the City.
- 35% of Sydney-siders with a degree in IT, and 25% of those with a Creative Arts degree, worked in the City.
- Whilst the Census definitional coding frame changed between the 1996 and 2001 Censuses, in all the equivalent fields above, the City's dominance over the metropolitan area increased.

8. *Internet Use*

For the first time, the 2001 Census asked a question about the increasingly important area of Internet use. Whilst this is important in terms of residential access to electronic information and the "digital divide", analysis of the work access to the Internet by working population profile, can also give an insight into the spatial distribution of the Internet by business. It can thus form a useful surrogate to access/use by business to/of Information Technology.

- Broadly, the 2001 Census showed that 80.4%, or over 200,000 workers, in the City of Sydney had access to the Internet, either at home, work or elsewhere.
- This was considerably in excess of Sydney Metropolitan level of 60.8%.
- In terms of home use, the data suggest that just under a half of all City workers (48.8%) have Internet access at their homes. This is slightly higher than the 43.1% figure for the Sydney metropolitan area.

- Over 150,000 City workers (62.7%) use the Internet at work. This is considerably higher than the 35.4% of metropolitan workers who similarly use the Internet at work.
- City workers make up over a quarter (26.8%) of all Sydney workers who use the Internet at work.
- Not surprisingly, City workers employed in the Business and Property Services, Finance, Communication, Education and Mining industries all had work-usage rates in excess of 70%.
- Government Administration workers were slightly lower at 64.6%, which was on a par with City workers in the Manufacturing industries and the Utilities.
- Conversely, at the other end of the spectrum, City workers employed in the predominantly service industries of Retail, and Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants, where the work-usage rate was less a quarter, at 23.2% and 20.9%, respectively.
- Again, not surprisingly, Internet usage at work strongly reflected the skill level hierarchy implicit in the Occupational categories.
- Approximately four out of every five City workers in the Manager/Administrator (83.4%) and Professional (79.6%) categories used the Internet at work.
- This dropped to approximately two-thirds of both Associate Professionals and Advanced Clerical and Service workers.
- Just under a half (47.4%) of Intermediate Clerical and Service workers used the Internet at work in the City; a quarter of Tradespersons; less than a fifth of Elementary Clerical and only 6% of 'Labourers' (largely Cleaners in the City).
- Of Sydney-wide workers in each occupation, the proportion using the Internet at work in the City comprised 25% of Managers and 28% of Professionals.

9. Occupation

- In 2001, almost 60% of the city workforce fell into the top three high-skill occupation categories (as defined by the ABS): 30.5% were Professionals, 16.0% Associate Professionals, and a further 12.2% Managers and Administrators.
- Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service workers accounted for one-fifth (20.1%) of the City workforce and Advanced Clerical and Service workers for one-twelfth (8%).
- In 2001, there were more men than women employed in the top three high-skill occupations. More than two-thirds (68.4%) of men fell into these categories, with over a third (34.2%) employed as professionals, 19% as associate professionals and 15.2% as Managers or Administrators. A further 14.2% were employed as 'Intermediate clerical, sales and service' workers.
- Conversely, just under a half of women (48.3%) were employed in the top three high-skill occupations – including over a quarter (26.5%) as professionals. Fewer than 10% (9.0%) were employed as Managers and over a quarter (26.4%) were employed in the 'Intermediate Clerical, sales and service' worker category.

- However, in a sign of change, 2001 represented the first time, the number of female Managers exceeded the number of female 'Elementary clerical , sales and service' workers, and the number of female 'Professionals' exceeded the number of 'Advanced clerical and service' workers.
- A comparison of 1996 and 2001 Census data reveals a continuation of the shift toward more high-skill occupations.
- Over the five-year period, the number of Managers increased by a massive 36.2%, and the number of Professionals by 34.1%. In both these cases, this was more than double the increase in overall employment.
- All up these two highest skill occupations encompassed almost four-fifths (78.5%) of the total employment growth in the five-year period.
- As a consequence of this high-skill occupation growth, the City is absorbing a larger proportion of the metropolitan-wide employment in these occupations.
- At 2001, approximately 20% of Sydney-wide Managers and Administrators, Professionals and Associate Professionals were employed in the City.
- This compared with 18% in 1996 and implies that, particularly for the top two categories of Managers and Professionals, the City absorbed approximately a third of all Sydney growth in the 1996-2001 period in these critical occupation groups.
- This proportion was reasonably constant between men and women, although the City employed a higher proportion of the Sydney total of male Professionals (24.2%) and female Managers (23.2%).
- Similarly, even though the numbers of City workers in the Advanced Clerical category remained unchanged, decreases in the Sydney metropolitan levels saw the City's share of these workers increase from 23% to 25%.
- This increased concentration in the City of certain high-skill occupations is even more evident at a finer occupational classification.
- Of those workers employed in the 'Miscellaneous Social Professionals' category (i.e. lawyers, economists and town planners) in the Sydney Metropolitan area, a massive 64% worked in the City, as did 54% of 'Finance Associate Professionals'.
- 40% of Accountants, Auditors and Corporate treasurers; 37% of Business and Information Professionals; 35% of Advanced Clerks; and 33% of Computing Professionals employed in Sydney metropolitan also worked in the city.
- The City's share in all these cases increased in the 1996-2001 period - by as much as 4.5% (Business and Information Professionals)
- Conversely, the City lost relative metropolitan share in the occupations of: General and Elementary Clerks; Keyboard Operators; Intermediate Service Workers and, Cleaners, as well as in Tradespeople and Production workers.
- The City also lost absolute and relative numbers of Building and Engineering Professionals and Associate Professionals; University and Vocational Education Professionals and Social Welfare Professionals.

- In part, these occupational shifts reflect the shifts and growth of specific industries in the period and the City's centralised dominance in some of these. This, in turn, is reflective of changes in the structure of the domestic economy and the process of globalisation and connections to overseas and global markets.

10. Industry of Employment

Council's Census of Floorspace and Employment (as distinct from employees) conducted over the latter part of 2001 and reported upon in a separate report elucidated trends in employment by industry. The Census data confirms that analysis. However, the ABS Population Census data set enables comparison of the City employment with equivalent numbers in the Sydney metropolitan area.

- Well over half (56.5%) of all Sydney metropolitan employees in the Finance and Insurance industry division is located in the City.
- Given Sydney's national dominance in the industry sector, one-fifth (19.9%) of all Australian Finance and Insurance workers are located in the City.
- Similarly, the City is the work-place location for over a quarter (27.3%) of people engaged in the Property and Business Services industry division in Sydney. This sector includes the legal and accountancy industries, as well as marketing, computing and business management services industries, in addition to those in property services.
- Over 30% of Government Administration workers are employed in the City, although this is a decrease from the 34% recorded in 1996.
- Other industries which are highly concentrated, by employment, in the City include the Utilities, Accommodation, Cafes and restaurants, Rail and Water Transport, Services to Transport (including Travel agencies), and Cultural and Recreational Services. In all these industries the City employs over 20% of the Sydney-wide workforce.
- The Libraries, Museums and the Arts' workforce in the City represented 28% of all such employees in the Sydney metropolitan area.
- Significant increased concentration of Sydney-wide employment in the City in the 1996-2001 period occurred in the Finance and Insurance industries (up for 51% to 56%) and in the Business Services area (up from 25% to 29%).
- Aside from the Finance and Business Services industries, particularly noticeable are the Cultural and Recreation industries. The industries in the Motion Picture, Radio and Television Services increased their City concentration from 18% to 24% in the 1996-2001 period.
- Other industries to record an increase in share of metropolitan employment (of about 1-2%) included the Accommodation, Café and Restaurant sector and Personal and Household Goods Retailing industry.
- Conversely, Government Administration, the Utilities of Electricity and Water, and the Communications Services industries all became more dispersed and saw the City's share of metropolitan employment decrease.

11. Income

- The increased concentration of high-skill occupations in the City workforce is driving up the average personal income of city workers.
- In 2001, almost one-quarter (23.6%) of the City workforce received more than \$1,500 per week in personal income, compared to 11% of the Sydney metropolitan workforce, and just 6% of the Australian workforce.
- Conversely, only 24% of City workers received less than \$600 a week, compared to 42% of metropolitan-wide workers.
- Based on personal income from wages, interest and dividends, the average City worker received \$47,712 per annum, whereas the median Sydney Metropolitan worker received just \$35,542 per annum.
- It is also worthwhile noting that the median Sydney metropolitan employee received significantly more than the median Australian worker income of \$30,636 per annum. Thus, the median City worker received over half (55.7%) more than the average Australian worker.
- In mean average terms this disparity is further magnified. The mean refers to the estimated total income divided by the number of workers whereas the median refers to the 50th percentile worker when all are placed in increasing income rank order.
- The estimated mean average of the City worker is just under \$60,000 per annum and exceeds that of the Sydney-wide workforce by 35% and that of the workforce Australia-wide by almost 60%.
- On estimated mean income the total personal income of City workers approaches \$15 billion annually and represents over 20% of the estimated personal income of the metropolitan workforce and, in fact, over 5% of the Australia-wide workforce.
- The dramatic discrepancy between the City and metropolitan workforce occurred because a massive one-third of Sydney metropolitan workers in the highest income category of more than \$1500 a week were employed within the City. The City was also the workplace for 20% of workers in the \$1000-1500 per week category. Conversely, City workers made up only 10% of the \$400 to \$600 per week categories. This is despite the total City workforce representing 15% of the total metropolitan workforce.
- Based on estimated mean average incomes, the City workforce has a personal income approaching \$15 billion annually.
- In the five-year 1996-2001 period the daily workforce market has expanded by 50% from a total of \$10 billion as both the City has expanded in relative employment significance (in that period the City absorbed over one-quarter of the entire Sydney metropolitan employment growth in that 1996-2001 period) and the occupation/skill level and income of the City workforce has grown at a faster than Sydney-wide average (in the five-year period, the median average City worker personal income has increased by 35% , whereas that of the Sydney metropolitan worker by 26%). Moreover, they represent a market that's available every day to City retailers.
- Because of the predominance of those with high incomes, these people have a high level of discretionary expenditure - that is, more

choice-based commodities or luxuries - after necessities (and debts) are paid for.

- This market is growing rapidly, as an increasing proportion of high income workers are located in the CBD.

12. Car Use

- Finally, and most dramatically, despite the increase in incomes, the City workforce has begun to turn away from driving a car to work and is relying more on public transport.
- Compared to 1996, and despite a 16% increase in employment, the number of people driving to work in the City actually fell 10%.
- The 2001 total of 40,672 driving to work is, in fact, less than the number driving to work in the City in 1981.
- Conversely, an additional 20% since 1996 are using the train and an additional 25% are travelling to work by bus.
- In large part, this is due to Council's parking policies.
- Similarly, the Living City residential strategy has resulted in an almost doubling of the number walking to work. In 2001, over 10,000 people partook of a 'daily constitutional' walk to work, which is over a quarter of those that still drive a car to work.