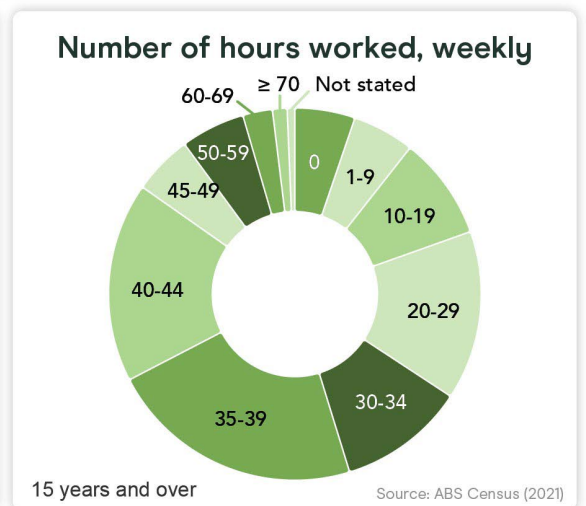
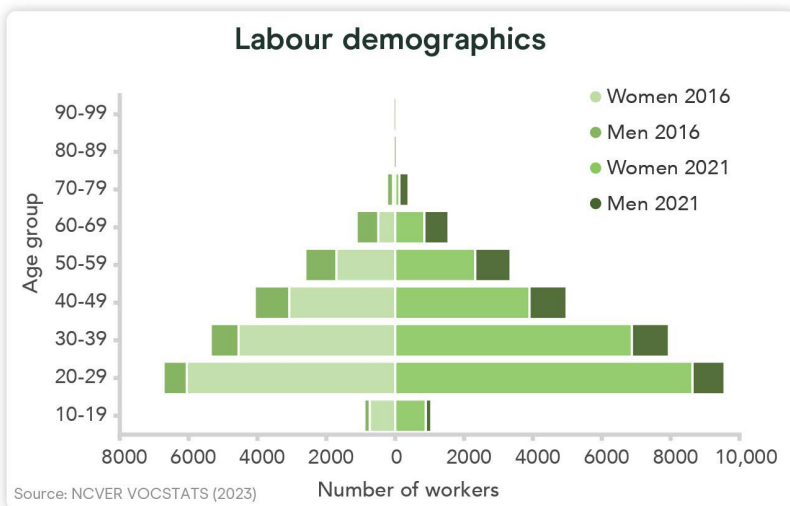
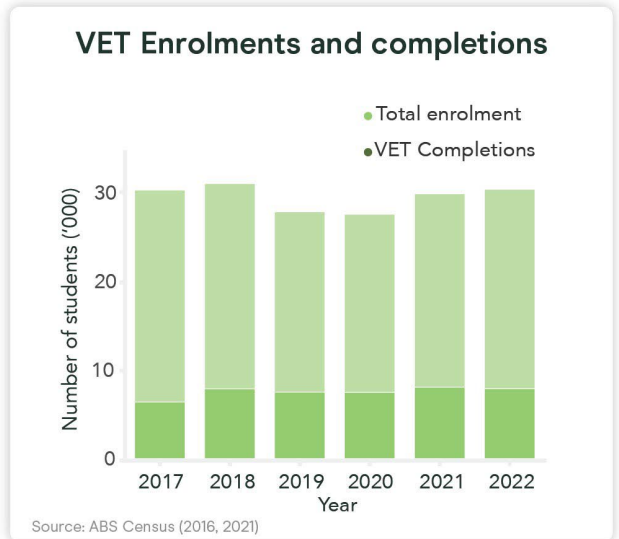
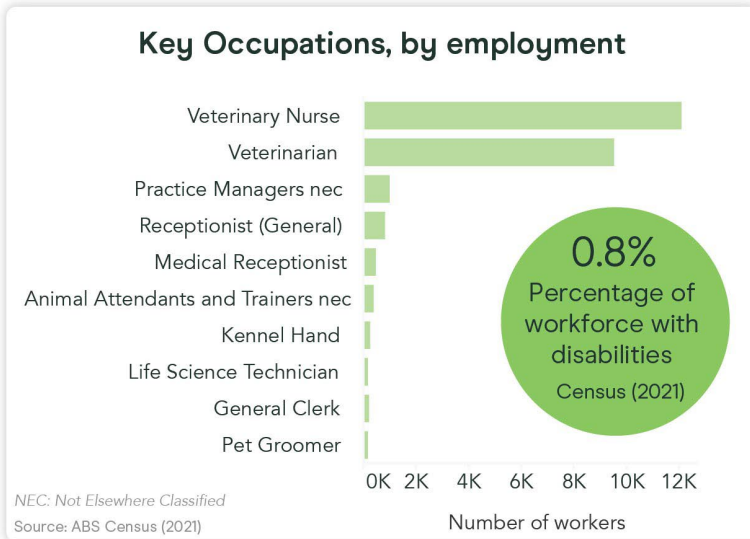
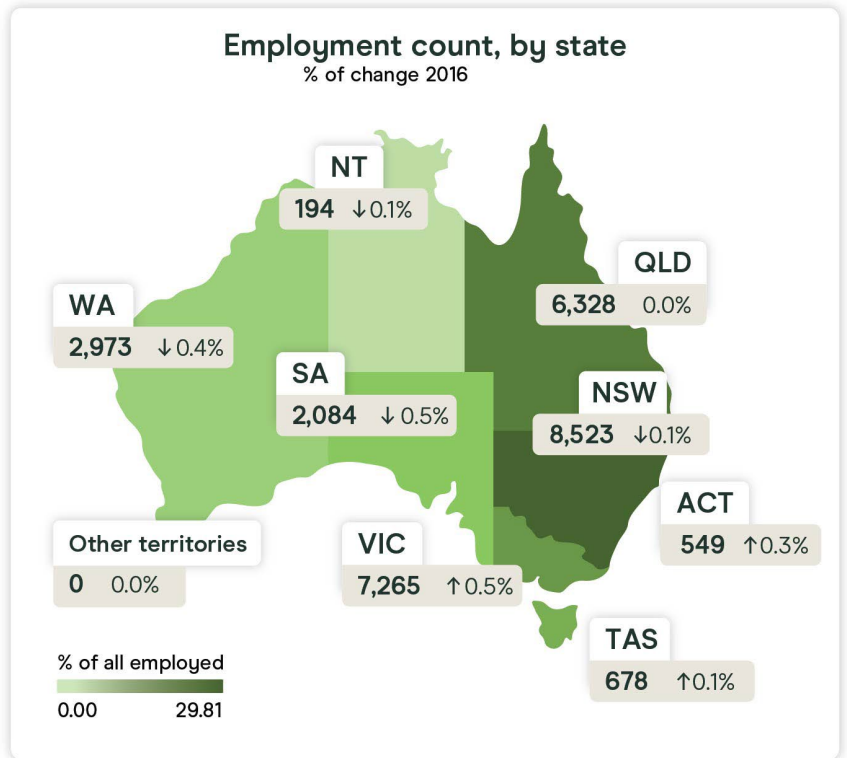


3.14. Animal Care and Management



Animal Care and Management

ANZSIC A6970



3.14.1. Industry sectors (ANZSIC Classes)

- Veterinary services

Please note: Zoological and Botanical Gardens Operations is in the Amenity Horticulture, Landscaping, and Conservation & Ecosystem Management industry grouping. There are other animal care and management services covered by Skills Insight, but they are not articulated in the ANZSIC. This is addressed in further detail below and in the section on 'data and evidence gaps'.

Key insights from industry sector infographic and other data	Priority
Under-representation in the ANZSCO and ANZSIC	High
Labour shortages	High
Lack of workforce diversity	High
Underemployment and overemployment	Medium

Australia's animal care and management industry workers are continually adapting and progressing their skills to work with and support the welfare of wildlife, exhibited, working, and domestic animals. The animal care and management industry is experiencing accelerated growth, with increasing opportunities and challenges for pet-related businesses, many of which are seeking to expand operations but facing issues with attracting skilled workers, especially in regional, rural and remote Australia.

The highly contextualised skills and knowledge applied by the animal care and management workforce support multiple industries that work with animals, to whom they provide essential services.

The National Training Register details qualifications corresponding to specialised job roles in animal care and management. These include:

- Animal Care Industry Pathways (Certificate I)
- Animal Care (Certificate II)
- Horse Care (Certificate II and III)
- Animal Care Services (Certificate III)
- Animal Technology (Certificate III and Diploma)
- Wildlife and Exhibited Animal Care (Certificate III)
- Equine Hoof Care (Certificate III)
- Animal Regulation and Management (Certificate IV)
- Animal Facility Management (Certificate IV)
- Animal Behaviour and Training (Certificate IV)
- Veterinary Nursing (Certificate IV and Diploma)
- Farriery (Certificate IV)
- Equine Care (Certificate IV)
- Equine Management (Diploma)
- Equine Allied Health (Diploma)

Below are examples of units of competency, which sit within these qualifications, that are unique to the skills and knowledge applied by competent workers in animal care and management:

Unit title	Unique skills and knowledge
Respond to marine wildlife stranding (ACMAIM308)	The unit applies to individuals who work in a team to assess, stabilise and release stranded live marine wildlife, typically whales, dolphins and dugongs, and assist with the handling of deceased marine wildlife. All work must comply with workplace procedures according to Commonwealth and state/territory health and safety, wildlife, and animal welfare regulations, legislation and standards. Most government jurisdictions allow only appropriately authorised agencies to undertake response operations.
Fit shoes to alleviate severe abnormalities and defects in equines (ACMFAR403)	The unit applies to individuals who perform farriery services across different equine industry sectors. It describes the skills and knowledge required to fit shoes to equines that exhibit a range of severe abnormalities and defects where the level of assessment and remedial technique is regarded as severe. It includes shaping and fitting heart bar, straight bar and lateral extension hind shoes.
Manage and maintain the health of research animals (ACMATE502)	This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to manage the health of animals in a research environment. All work practices must be undertaken in accordance with legislative requirements, the current Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, and follow protocols, policies and procedures approved by the organisation's Animal Ethics Committee (AEC). Individuals are also required to minimise stress and discomfort for animals through gentle and calm handling and appropriate care.
Instruct handlers with disability to train assistance dogs (ACMADT402)	This unit applies to individuals who instruct handlers to train and socialise their assistance dogs in domestic and public access environments. It describes the skills and knowledge required to prepare and conduct assistance dog instruction for handlers with mental health, physical, sensory, neurological or developmental disability.
Provide general care of common native mammals (ACMSPE315)	This unit applies to individuals who may be responsible for caring for native mammals, including in animal shelters or rehabilitation organisations, pet shops, zoos and animal technology facilities or similar workplaces. In some cases, animals may have been rescued from the wild and successful rehabilitation is required to restore animal health and wellbeing before their releasing back to their natural environment.
Develop a plan for the rescue of companion animals during major incidents (ACMAIM501)	This unit applies to individuals who apply research and planning skills and knowledge to prepare for companion animal emergency rescue activity during major incidents.

Assist with the preparation of veterinary drugs and poisons (ACMVET416)

The unit applies to veterinary nurses who work under the supervision of a registered veterinarian. Veterinary nurses who assist with the preparation of veterinary drugs and poisons for animals need to hold and apply specialised knowledge of animal pharmaceuticals, and the relevant legislation and regulations that apply to working with veterinary drugs and poisons.

Evaluate saddlery and gear fit for horse and rider combination (ACMEQU419)

The unit applies to individuals who have responsibility for assessing the fit, condition and suitability of saddles and gear for rider and horse safety and comfort for a range of horse sport or work activities.

3.14.2. Drivers of workforce dynamics

Under-representation in the ANZSCO and ANZSIC

Animal grooming and allied health services, such as physiotherapy and massage, are a growing market; however, they are under-represented in the ANZSIC and so there is limited data available on this workforce. Likewise, the ANZSCO is reported by stakeholders by under-representing animal care and management occupations. Skills Insight will participate and make appropriate, industry-informed recommendations to the ABS for the creation and refinement of appropriate ANZSIC industry sectors and ANZSCO occupations (see the section below on 'data and evidence gaps'). There may also be a need to further develop training products to ensure that animal welfare standards are described for these sectors.

The animal care and management workforce

There are a recorded 58,400 animal care and management employees in Australia, though industry stakeholders estimate the true number to be much higher because of the large workforce not classified under the ANZSCO. Workers in the animal care and management value chain include animal ethicists, wildlife conservationists, laboratory workers, veterinary pharmaceutical manufacturers, animal feed processors, farmers, breeders, shelters and boarding services, animal rescue services, veterinary services, animal therapy services, pet insurance services, transport services, assistance animal services, traders (including wholesalers), pet product manufacturers and processors, zoos and other exhibited animal businesses, hunters and trappers, pet groomers, animal behaviourists and trainers, animal attendants, dog walkers, sport industry participants (e.g. horse and greyhound racing), inspectors and regulatory officers, and retailers.

Labour shortages

The National Skills Commission's 2022 Skills Priority List data shows national shortages of the following occupations:

- Veterinarian
- Veterinary Nurse
- Farrier

There are also state-based and regional shortages in the following occupations:

- Boarding Kennel or Cattery Operator
- Pet Groomer
- Animal Husbandry Technician
- Kennel Hand

- Animal Attendants and Trainers nec
- Dog Handler or Trainer
- Inspectors and Regulatory Officers nec

Veterinarians and others working in related fields are central to Australia’s animal health and biosecurity. There is evidence of labour shortages in this sector, including in a 2021 workforce survey conducted by the Australian Veterinary Association, which found almost 31% of veterinary job vacancies took over 12 months to fill or were still not filled.

The Australian Veterinary Association have also signalled ongoing concerns over there being an insufficient number of veterinarians in rural, regional, and remote areas to adequately assist with biosecurity control and response measures. The view of the Veterinary Nurses Council of Australia (VNCA) is that there is scope for a greater role for veterinary nurses and veterinary technicians in assisting veterinarians in their biosecurity role in rural, regional, and remote areas.

The National Skills Commission reported in *The Shape of Australia’s Post COVID-19 Workforce* that ‘animal attendants and trainers’ was one of the top 20 most resilient occupations in Australia.⁶⁰ Stakeholder feedback indicates this is due to high levels of skills that can withstand structural changes, which cannot be replaced by automation, and for which future demand is likely to be sustained or grow. By 2026, there is projected to be 14.9% more ‘animal attendants and trainers’ and 15.4% more ‘veterinary nurses’ employed in Australia than in 2021.⁶¹

The very low participation of men in the animal care and management sector (17% in 2021, which was a 3% decline from 2016) is worthy of attention, particularly in light of the anticipated increases in labour demand in this sector.

Underemployment and overemployment

The 2021 Census shows that 54% of Animal Care and Management workers are employed full-time but 45% of these people work under 35 hours weekly. This may be indicative of underemployment in these industries, with potential productivity growth in the future if such issues are addressed.

On the other hand, 32% of the workforce works over 39 hours per week, which exceeds industry award standards. This suggests that a significant portion of the workforce works longer hours.

Animal Care and Management Summary

Workforce challenges

- Labour shortages.
- Underemployment and overemployment.

Key evidence gaps

- Significant under-representation in the ANZSIC.

Workforce planning priorities

- Participate in reviews of the ANZSCO and ANZSIC by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). **(1a)**
- Support industry to address labour shortages, especially through holistic workforce planning strategies in rural, regional and remote areas. **(1b, 1c)**
- Support industry skills and workforce leadership development, and contribute to existing industry strategies and resources aimed at addressing workplace conditions, skill and labour shortages. **(2a, 2b)**