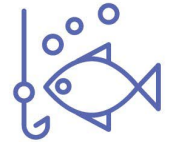
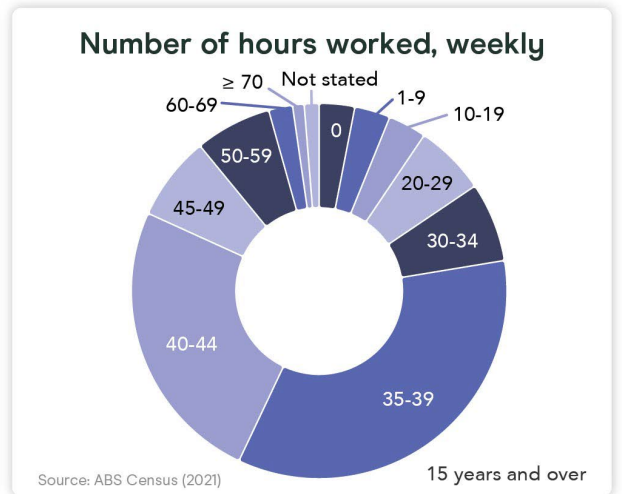
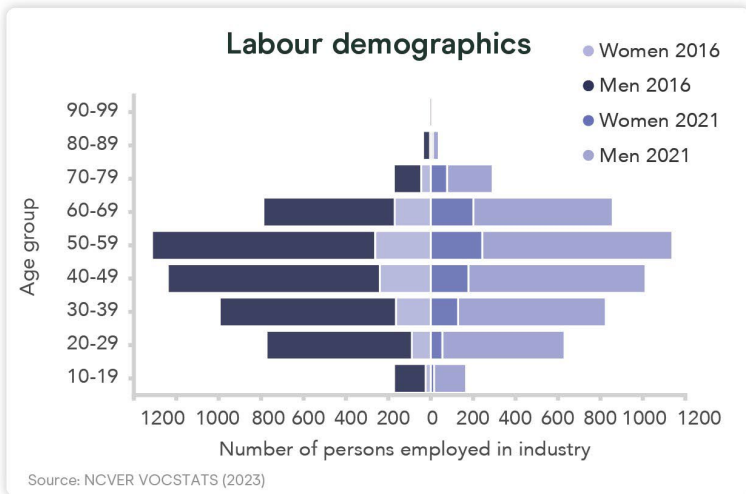
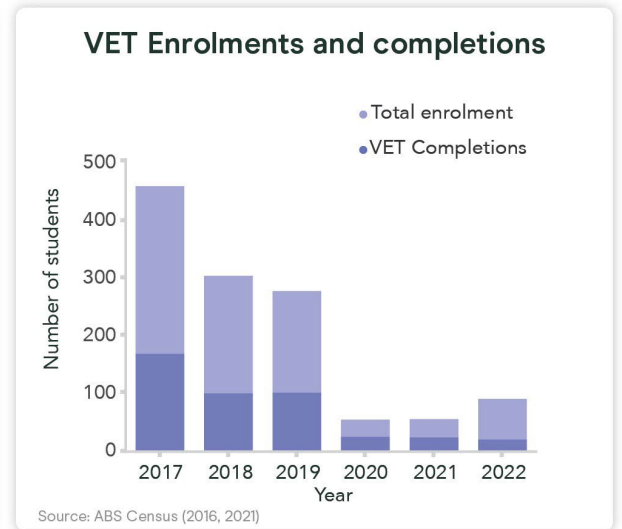
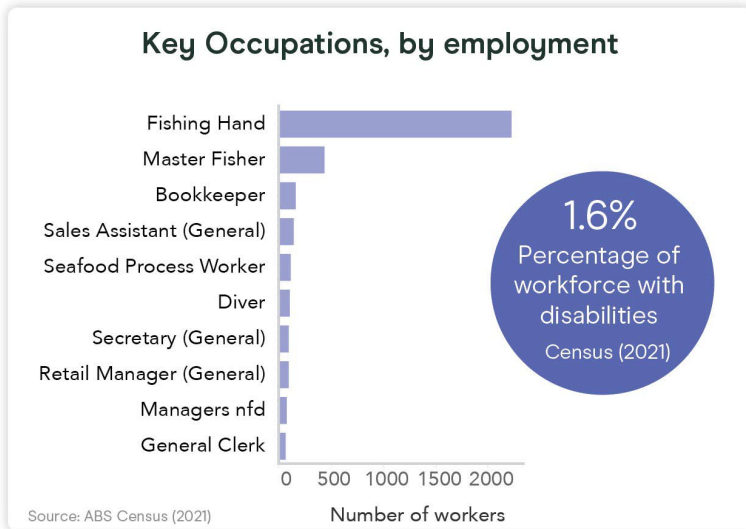
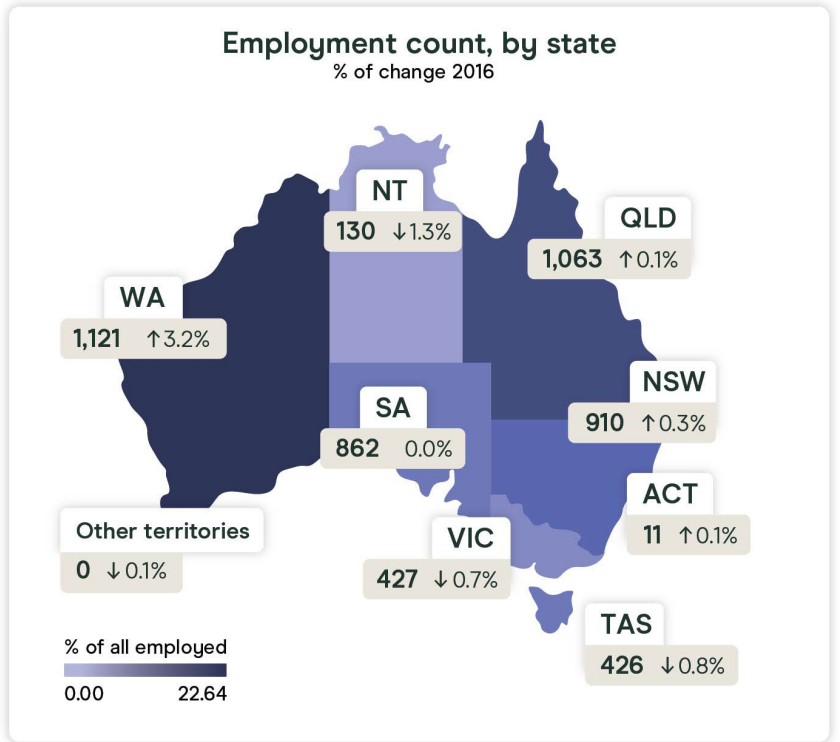


3.7. Fishing and Wild Catch

Fishing and Wild catch



ANZSIC A0411, A0413, A0414, A0419



3.7.1. Industry sectors (ANZSIC Classes)

- Prawn Fishing
- Line Fishing
- Fish Trawling, Seining and Netting
- Other Fishing and wild catch

| Key insights from industry sector infographic and other data | Priority |
|--|----------|
| Labour shortages | High |
| Declining VET programme enrolment and completions | High |
| Lack of workforce diversity | High |

Businesses in this industry catch inshore, estuarine, offshore and freshwater fish, finfish, molluscs, crustaceans, prawns, rock lobsters, oysters and pearls. The commercial fishing industry operates with advanced vessel design and technologies, including global positioning systems (GPS) and colour sounders, providing real-time updates on tides, weather conditions and indications of productive fishing zones. The sector is highly regulated across every level, meaning that businesses must adhere to complex and overlapping international, national, state/territory and local compliance legislation.

The industry covers a broad range of occupations, with highly contextualised skills and knowledge, including in the custodianship and roles performed by First Nations peoples, that cannot immediately be transferred from jobs in other industries. The National Training Register details qualifications corresponding to specialised job roles in fishing and wild catch:

- Fishing Operations (Certificates II and III)
- Fisheries Compliance (Certificate II, III, IV and Diploma)

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

| Unit title | Unique skills and knowledge |
|---|--|
| Monitor fish catches for legal compliance (SFICPL308) | This unit applies to individuals who monitor fish catches and fisheries quotas for legal compliance, and record and report all compliance activities. All work must be carried out to comply with relevant state/territory health and safety, food safety, biosecurity and environmental regulations, legislation and standards. |
| Construct nets and customise design (SFIFSH303) | This unit applies to individuals who construct nets used as fish or prawn trawls, purse seines, beach seines, gill nets and the net component of holding cages. |
| Locate fishing grounds and stocks of fish (SFIFSH305) | This unit applies to individuals who position the fishing operation to locate concentrations of fish and fishing environments. It includes the ability to use electronic aids and sources of information to position the vessel and locate fishing grounds. Maritime authority licencing and regulatory requirements apply to this unit. |

3.7.2. Drivers of workforce dynamics

Labour Shortages

The National Skills Commission's 2022 Skills Priority List identified state-based and regional shortages of:

- Master Fisher
- Aquaculture or Fisheries Technician
- Fishing Leading Hand
- Deck Hand
- Fishing Hand
- Aquaculture or Fisheries Scientist

Data from the 2021 Census shows that women only account for 19% of the fishing and wild catch workforce (only up 1% from 2016). Participation by First Nations peoples rose by 1.4% between 2016 and 2021.

The Australia Government *National Fisheries Plan 2022-2030* identifies multiple initiatives with the intended outcome being a prosperous workforce and a health fishing, aquaculture and seafood community.⁴⁰ The implementation of the Plan is being driven through the National Fisheries Plan Coordination Group, made up of members from Commonwealth and state and territory governments, and sector representatives. The Coordination Group has agreed to progress work to support employment, participation and health in the fishing, aquaculture, and seafood sectors.⁴¹

First Nations collaboration

Collaborating with First Nations stakeholders means working with different groups and communities to ensure mutually agreed aspirations and objectives are being met, as well as supporting the development of the First Nations fishing sector.

Consideration of the skills required to work with traditional owners and custodians are included in workforce planning activities. This is a priority strategy following recent examples of commercial fishers being banned from important fishing areas in the Northern Territory after the breakdown of negotiations between the Northern Territory Government and the Northern Land Council, which represents traditional owners, who are concerned about overfishing. This move has impacted the local commercial fishing industry and may result in job losses.⁴²

The National Fisheries Plan aims to empower the First Nations fishing sector and actively involve customary practices. Initiatives are being led by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation Indigenous Reference Group and the Australian Fisheries Management Forum Indigenous Working Group to implement these objectives. Through this work it is envisioned that employment may be created in the seafood industry as well as in fisheries management.

Biosecurity and contamination

As part of their Northern Biosecurity Strategy 2030, the Northern Australian Framework Reference Group singled out marine and aquatic environments as requiring additional workforce biosecurity skills. Their recommendations included to build incursion response capability through the training of industry participants and Indigenous Rangers. There are additional requirements for building subject matter expertise capability for pest management, response, diagnostics and for endemic pests in Northern Australia.⁴³

Fishing and Wild Catch Summary

Workforce challenges

- Labour shortages.
- Workforce diversity and culture: gender disparity, ageing workforce and long working hours.
- Empowering the First Nations fishing sector.
- Declining VET enrolments and completions.

Key evidence gaps

- No noted gaps specific to Fishing and Wild Catch at this time.

Workforce planning priorities

- Support industry to attract a diverse workforce to address imbalances and labour shortages. **(2d, 4b)**
- Research on declining enrolments and completions, and other education and training pathways to/within Fishing and Wild Catch. This may support the identification of barriers to training delivery, skills gaps, duplication in existing training pathways, and the extent to which delivering more graduates may help to alleviate skills shortages. **(1a, 3a)**
- Support relationship building and collaboration between employers and training organisations, including to connect national training products with delivery of training. **(3d)**
- Research and analysis of skills and workforce issues in the fishing industry in Northern Australia, particularly in First Nations communities (including biosecurity and Indigenous Ranger program skills). **(1b, 3b)**