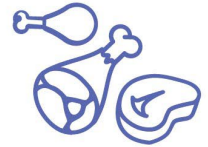
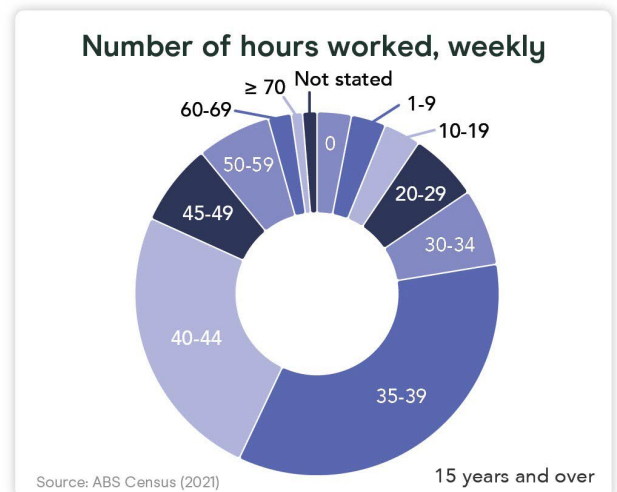
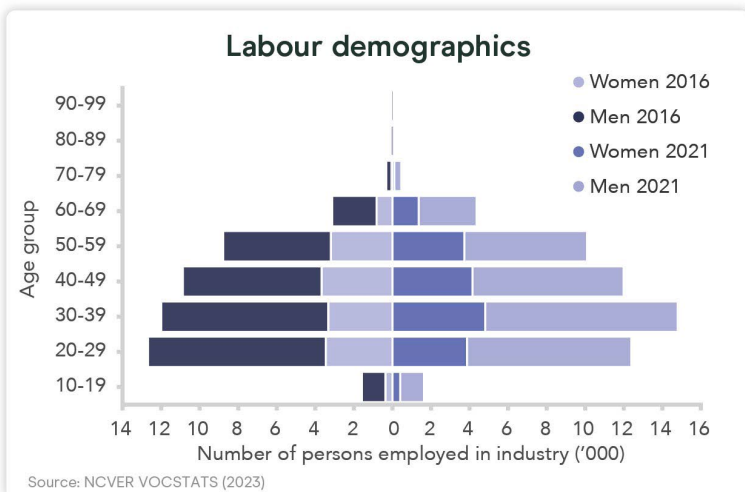
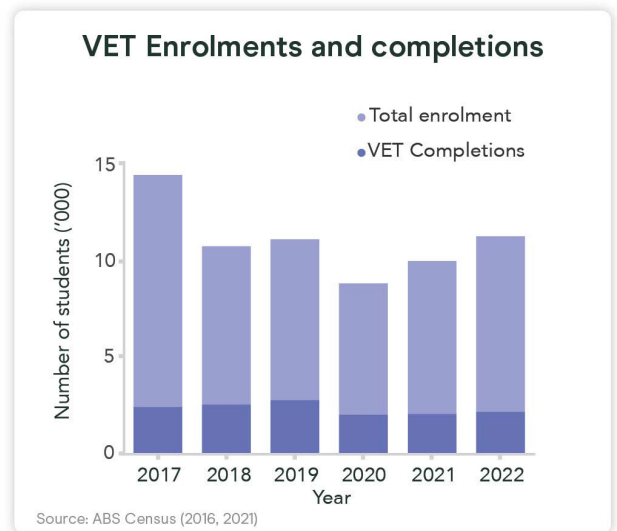
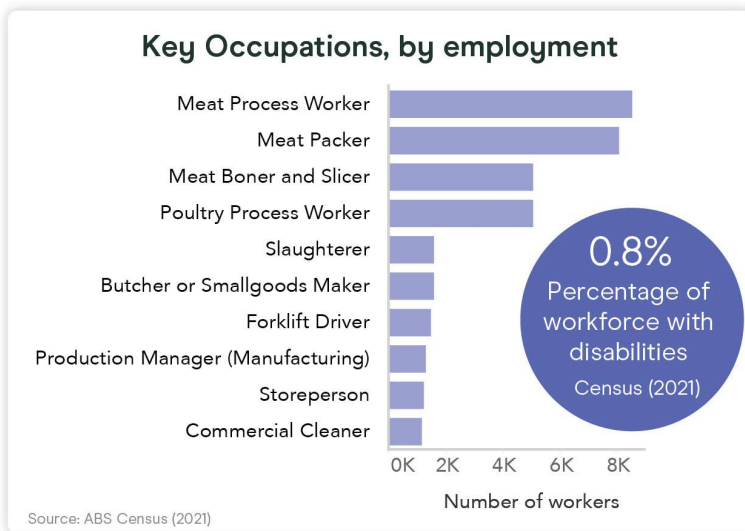
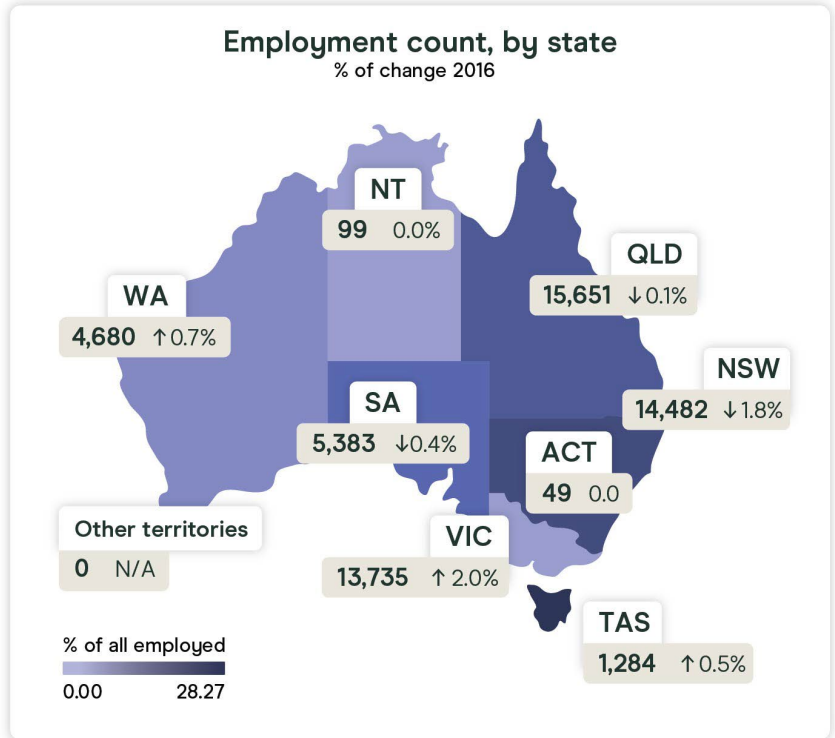


3.8. Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Processing/ Manufacturing

Meat, Poultry and Seafood Processing and Manufacturing



ANZSIC A1111, A1112, A1113, A1120



3.8.1. Industry sectors (ANZSIC Classes)

- Meat Processing
- Poultry Processing
- Cured Meat and Smallgoods Manufacturing
- Seafood Processing

Key insights from industry sector infographic and other data	Priority
Labour shortages	High
Increasing employment of First Nations peoples	High
Lack of gender diversity	Medium

The Australian meat, poultry and seafood processing and manufacturing industries are comprised of processors, wholesalers, retailers and exporters who collectively are responsible for supplying products to domestic and international markets. Domestic consumer demand and tastes and global markets have a strong impact on industry trends, promoting new innovations, increased automation, and use of big data.

Meat, poultry and seafood process workers process, grade and package meat, poultry, fish and shellfish. This variably involves processing offal and tripe, moving carcasses to chillers and freezers, loading meat products into trucks, packing boned and sliced meat into cartons, removing viscera and residual material from poultry carcasses, separating organs and glands (e.g. sweetbreads, livers, hearts and spleens), inspecting and grading poultry, fish and shellfish for size and quality, packing and freezing fish, operating machines which slice, peel, skin and crumb fish, and cleaning and sanitising equipment and work areas.

Strong skills in food safety, quality control, animal welfare and compliance requirements underpin Australia's reputation for producing high-quality meat, poultry and seafood products. The National Training Register details qualifications corresponding to specialised job roles in this industry, including:

- Meat Processing (Certificates III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma)
- Meat Processing – Food Services (Certificates II and III)
- Meat Processing – Abattoirs (Certificate II)
- Meat Processing – Meat Retailing (Certificate II)
- Meat Processing – Boning Room (Certificate III)
- Meat Processing – Rendering (Certificate III)
- Meat Processing – Slaughtering (Certificate III)
- Meat Processing – Retail Butcher (Certificate III)
- Meat Processing – Smallgoods - General (Certificate III)
- Meat Processing – Smallgoods - Manufacture (Certificate III)
- Meat Processing – Livestock Handling (Certificate III)

- Meat Processing – Packing Operations (Certificate III)
- Meat Safety Inspection (Certificates III and IV)
- Seafood Post Harvest Operations (Certificates II, III and IV)

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
Utilise refrigeration index (RI) (AMPQUA403)	This unit applies to individuals who work in quality assurance roles and who utilise the RI to validate compliance of a chilling or freezing process. Legislative and regulatory requirements apply to meat inspection and meat safety and are enforced through state/territory jurisdictions.
Oversee meat processing establishment's Halal compliance (AMPX431)	This unit applies to individuals who oversee the procedures and personnel required to gain and/or maintain Halal approvals in a meat processing establishment. The role requires a detailed knowledge of Halal requirements in Australia and of nominated overseas customers.
Handle animals humanely while conducting ante-mortem inspection (AMPLSK301)	This unit applies to individuals who work in a meat processing environment and who undertake, or assist with, ante-mortem inspection. Such inspection may take place in a slaughtering establishment or stockyard or lairage.
Prepare animals for slaughter (AMPA2000)	This unit applies to individuals who manage and handle animals in lairage prior to slaughter in a slaughtering establishment.
Prepare, pack and dispatch stock for live transport (SFISTR204)	This unit applies to individuals who prepare, pack and dispatch wild caught (fished), cultured or held seafood stock for live transport to other facilities. Licences may be required if operating load-shifting equipment.

3.8.2. Drivers of workforce dynamics

Labour Shortages

Labour shortages have been widely reported across the meat, poultry and seafood processing industries. Over half of all workers in the meat, poultry and seafood processing industries are employed in occupations that align with ANZSCO skill level 5. Further consideration will be given to the needed composition of lower- and higher-skilled industry workers.

The National Skills Commission's (2022) Skills Priority List drew attention to the following occupations as experiencing nationwide shortages:

- Meat Inspector
- Meat Boner and Slicer
- Butcher or Smallgoods Maker
- Slaughterer

- Food Technologist

A 2022 industry survey conducted by the Australian Meat Industry Council suggested shortages of skilled labour were contributing to over 50% of establishments operating below 80% capacity. A variety of reasons for these shortages were suggested, including unwillingness to work in the industry, competition from other sectors and lack of international worker availability.⁴⁴

In Victoria, the Victorian Skills Authority calculated that to meet anticipated demand, Victoria will need an additional 600 meat, poultry, and seafood process workers, and 300 additional workers as slaughterers and meat boners and slicers in the 2022 to 2025 period.⁴⁵ This was mainly attributed to a disparity between new entrants and retirements in the industry, along with the recent trend of removing butchers from major supermarkets, which has required upskilling workers in meat processing by local butchers (e.g. meat selection).⁴⁶

Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Processing / Manufacturing Summary

Workforce challenges

- Labour shortages.
- Workforce diversity and culture: gender disparity, long working hours.

Key evidence gaps

- No noted evidence gaps specific to Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Processing / Manufacturing at this time.

Workforce planning priorities

- Support and contribute to existing industry strategies and resources, notably by MINTRAC, aimed at addressing skills and labour shortages. **(2b)**
- Support industry to attract a diverse workforce, including migrant workers, to address imbalances and labour shortages. **(4b)**
- Undertake state and territory consultation and engagement workshops with the meat and post-harvest seafood industries to understand workforce challenges and to pilot approaches for raising the profile of industry careers. **(4a)**
- Develop materials for a new Meat Safety Induction program. **(3a, 3c)**
- Develop nationally consistent assessment and training materials to support the delivery of recently updated and new training products for the meat processing sector. **(3c)**
- Complete Stage 2 of the AMP Training Package review project to ensure it is ready for the implementation of forthcoming qualifications reforms. **(3a)**