

3.10. Wood Product Manufacturing

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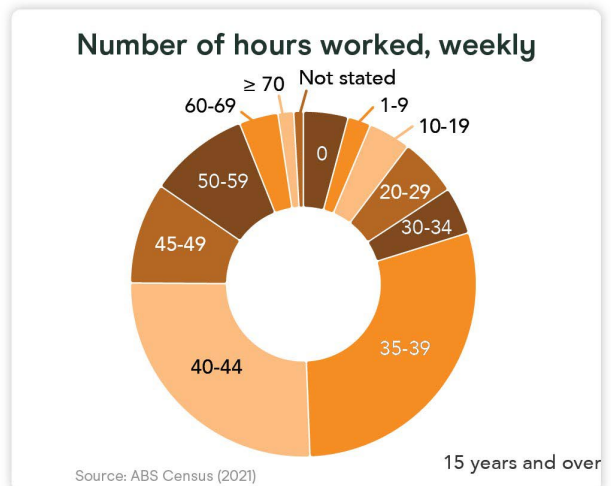
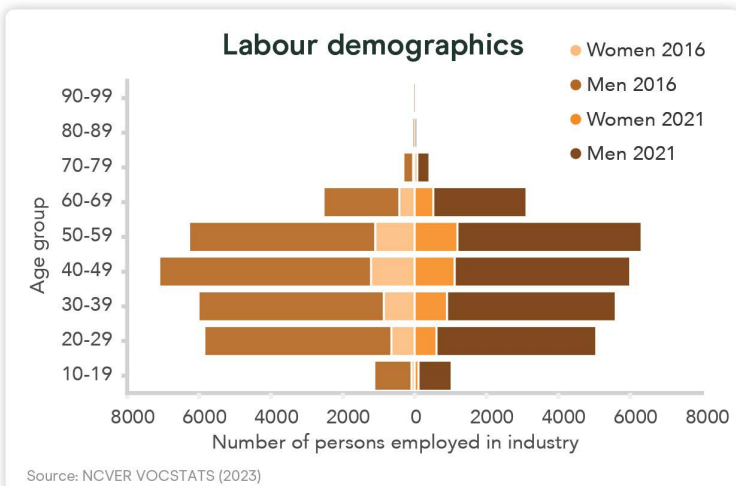
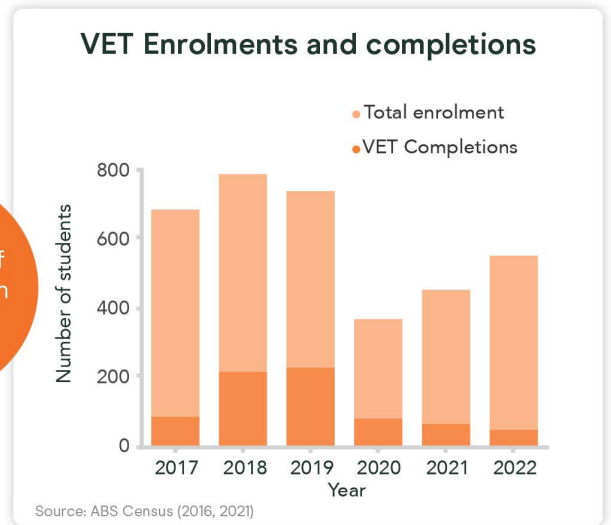
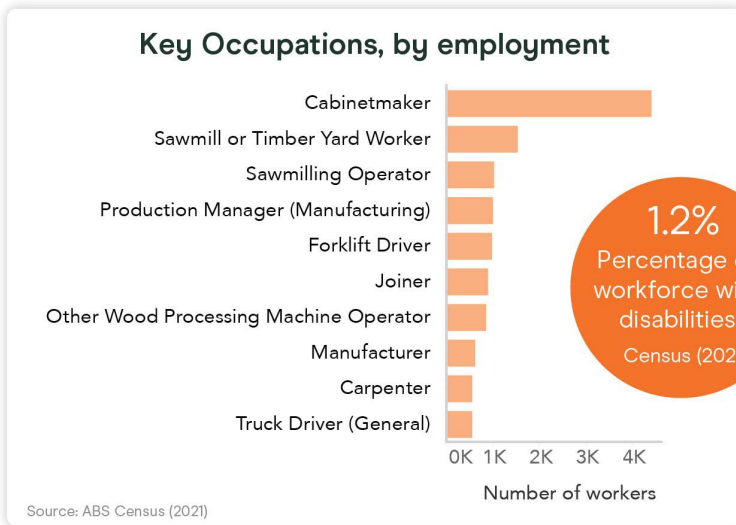
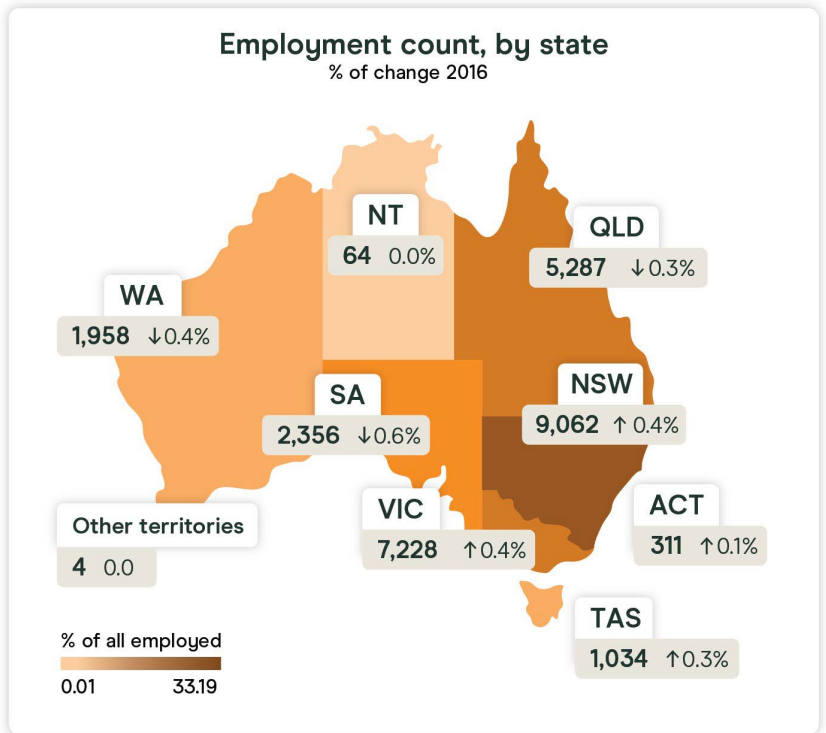
ANZSIC A1411, A1412, A1413, A1491, A1492, A1493, A1949, A1499



Industry snapshot

\$14,329 M Revenue (2022-2023)	6,639 Establishments (2022-2023)
\$1,640 M Export value (2022-2023)	19% Women (2021) ↑ 1% from 2016
651 Indigenous workers (2021) ↑ 99 from 2016	4.6% Projected decline in employment (2026)

Source: IBISWorld, ABS Census (2016, 2021), NSC Employment projections (2021)



3.10.1. Industry sectors (ANZSIC Classes)

- Log Sawmilling
- Wood Chipping
- Timber Resawing and Dressing
- Prefabricated Wooden Building Manufacturing
- Wooden Structural Fitting and Component Manufacturing
- Veneer and Plywood Manufacturing
- Reconstituted Wood Product Manufacturing
- Other Wood Product Manufacturing

Key insights from industry sector infographic and other data	Priority
Volatile industry conditions	High
Labour shortages	High
Declining VET qualification completions	High
Lack of gender diversity	Medium

The wood product manufacturing industry is a vital part of the timber value chain, turning harvested trees into materials that can be used to construct buildings, furniture, flooring, timber products and other items. In keeping up with the high demand for these materials, industry has adopted new technologies and equipment to improve safety, sustainability, and efficiency. High levels of technical skills are required for operating the latest technologies in drying and cutting, including optimisation equipment, allowing industry to continue to supply the high-quality timber that is used to produce some of our most essential structures and products.

This industry requires high level safety skills for working with diverse tools and machinery, including saws, finger jointing equipment, moulders, chippers, kilns and boilers, cranes, log loaders, forklifts and timber stacking machines. The workforce also implements digital operations associated with log and timber transfer, drying and packaging, and X-ray scanning technologies for optimising log cutting patterns.

The National Training Register details qualifications corresponding to specialised job roles in this industry:

- Timber and Wood Products Operations (Certificates II, III, IV)
- Timber Building Products Supply (Certificate III)
- Timber Frame or Truss Manufacture (Certificate III)
- Saw Technology (Certificate III)
- Wood Machining (Certificate III)
- Timber Systems Design (Certificates III, 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
Sharpen and position blades or knives in chipper, canter and reducer (FWPCOT3283)	This unit applies to individuals who set up, sharpen and use either babbitt or set screw processes for positioning straight and angled blades or knives in disc chippers, chipping heads, canters and reducers to process logs.
Build and maintain timber stacks (FWPCOT3320)	This unit applies to individuals who undertake to safely build and maintain timber stacks in a variety of workplace settings, according to regulations and site procedures.
Prepare timber or related products to meet import/export compliance requirements (FWPCOT3310)	This unit applies to individuals who ensure timber or related products meet compliance requirements for import/export. It includes reviewing existing workplace procedures for timber import/export for compliance with regulatory requirements, checking that import/export timber meets biosecurity requirements, and completing compliance documentation.

3.10.2. Drivers of workforce dynamics

Volatile industry conditions

The house construction industry is a major customer of this industry group and is currently going through a period of turbulence with the collapse of multiple major construction companies. Raw timber prices have also fluctuated widely in the past two years, driven by multiple demand and supply factors which may drive the development of alternative products either within or outside of the sector. The mid- to long-term labour market implications of these changes are unclear at this stage.

Labour shortages

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

- Wood Machinist
- Carpenter

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

- Saw Doctor
- Sawmilling Operator
- Wood Turner
- Logging Plant Operator
- Wood Machinists and Other Wood Trades Workers nec

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries advises their understanding is that Saw Doctor shortages are National not in isolated regions/states.

Gender diversity

Addressing shortages in the Wood Product Manufacturing industry may involve actively attracting more women to the workforce. Despite a 1% rise from 2016, women accounted for only 19% of workers in 2021.

Wood Product Manufacturing Summary

Workforce challenges

- Labour shortages.
- Workforce diversity and culture: gender disparity, ageing workforce, long working hours.
- Declining VET qualification completions.

Key evidence gaps

- Disparities between occupations classified as 'in shortage' in the Skills Priority List and intelligence held by Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Workforce planning priorities

- Support industry to attract a diverse workforce to address imbalances and labour shortages. **(2d, 4b)**
- Research on declining Wood Product Manufacturing completions. This may support the identification of barriers to training delivery and learner retention. **(1a, 3a)**
- Work with key agencies to assess gaps in jobs and skills shortage datasets and to collaborate on potential solutions. **(1a, 1b)**