ECONOMIC POLICY
BRIEFING NOTE

DEWR SKILLED VACANCY SURVEY: JANUARY 2003

- The latest DEWR Skilled Vacancy Survey* shows that the number of skilled vacancies in Queensland rose in January 2003. The trend number of skilled vacancies increased 1.1% over the month. This follows a revised increase of 0.8% in December 2002. Nationally, skilled vacancies increased 0.4% in January following a revised 0.5% increase in December.

- In annual terms, skilled vacancies in Queensland rose 29.8% in January. The number of skilled vacancies at the national level increased 10.0% over the year.

- Nationally, the number of vacancies for trades (1.8%) and associate professionals (1.7%) rose in January, while vacancies for professionals (-1.6%) declined over the month. Growth in the number of vacancies for trades largely reflected increases in vacancies for the chef (4.7%), metal (3.4%) and construction (0.4%) trades. The rise in the number of vacancies for associate professionals was primarily due to an increase in the number of vacancies for building and engineering associates (2.8%). The decline in the number of vacancies for professionals largely reflected falls in the number of vacancies for accountants and auditors (-4.1%), building and engineer professionals (-1.1) and health professionals (-0.7%).

- Western Australia (2.0%) experienced the strongest monthly growth in skilled vacancies in January 2003, followed by Queensland (1.1%) and South Australia (0.7%). In contrast, Victoria (-3.2%) recorded the largest decline in skilled vacancies over the month, while Tasmania (-2.3%) and New South Wales (-1.7%) also recorded declines in skilled vacancies.

- Western Australia (45.0%) also recorded the strongest annual growth in skilled vacancies of all States in January 2003. Queensland (29.8%), Tasmania (28.6%) and South Australia (25.8%) also recorded increases in skilled vacancies over the year to January. In contrast, New South Wales (-14.3%) and Victoria (-11.0%) both recorded declines in the number of skilled vacancies over the year.

- The trend number of skilled vacancies in Queensland was 968 in January, representing 21.7% of total skilled vacancies in Australia, higher than the State’s total employment share of 18.8%.

- The national DEWR ICT Vacancy Index fell by 18.8% over the four weeks to mid January. Queensland accounted for approximately 495 of the 5,700 ICT vacancies advertised nationally over the four weeks to mid January.

* The DEWR (Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) Skilled Vacancy Survey is based on the count of skilled vacancies in the major metropolitan newspaper of each State and the Northern Territory, usually on the first Saturday of each month. It should be noted that this index is not necessarily a reliable leading indicator of employment growth in Queensland. The DEWR Skilled Vacancy Survey does not release data in seasonally adjusted terms.