



# **The Tasmanian Community Survey: Employment**

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The research findings, conclusions and recommendations of this report are those of Anglicare Tasmania. The views expressed in this report are also those of Anglicare and should not be attributed to any members of the reference group or their employers. Any errors in the report are the responsibility of the author. This research project was conducted by Kelly Madden with the assistance of Prue Cameron, Margie Law and Jo Flanagan.

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

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Anglicare conducted the Tasmanian Community Survey in Autumn 2005 to investigate the standard of living, employment experiences and wellbeing of the Tasmanian community. This document is the second of two reports that draw on the findings of the survey and focuses on experiences of employment in Tasmania.

The survey was sent to 3800 Tasmanians selected from the Electoral Roll and 2106 people completed and returned the survey. A post stratification weighting process was conducted to ensure the final sample reflected the actual Tasmanian population on the key variables of gender, region of residence and receipt of major Centrelink benefits.

This research was conducted during a period of economic prosperity for Tasmania following several years of strong employment growth, including growth in full-time employment. The research also follows a long period of labour market readjustment in Australia characterised by the growth of casual and contract employment and an expansion of the possibilities for times and days for a working week.

The key findings of this research are that there are several major disparities between the actual employment patterns of Tasmanian adults and their preferred employment patterns.

A large proportion of working Tasmanians reported that they were not happy with the number of hours that they were currently working. Just over 40% of those who were working full-time reported that they would like to work less hours than they are currently employed. By contrast many part-time workers, particularly those working less than 18 hours per week, indicated that they would prefer to work more hours each week. This finding indicates that over-employment for full-time workers and under-employment for part-time workers are issues in the Tasmanian labour market.

There are also major discrepancies in the proportion of Tasmanian adults who indicate that they would prefer to be in paid employment compared with the proportion who are in the labour force. The Tasmanian Community Survey indicated just over one third of adults aged between 18 and 65 were not in the labour force at the time of the survey with a further 4% unemployed. However, very few Tasmanians indicated that they would prefer not to be in paid employment while they were in this age group, particularly from the ages of 20 to 60 years. One possible conclusion from this finding is that many more working age Tasmanians would like to participate in the labour force but currently face barriers to participation such as unemployment, disability, ill health and child care responsibilities.

Casual work has become an increasingly significant feature of the Australian labour market and this survey provides valuable insights into the experiences and preferences of casual workers in Tasmania. The survey found that:

- casual workers were more likely to have experienced some degree of food insecurity than permanent employees;
- only 18% of adult casual workers were also students;
- most casual workers were not young people –
  - less than one third of casual workers were aged under 30 years;
  - 27 percent of all casuals were aged between 40 and 49 years;
  - a further 20% of casuals were aged between 50 and 59 years.

The survey also indicated that many casual workers would prefer to be in other types of employment:

- 42% of casual workers indicated that they would prefer to be in permanent employment
- 16% indicated that they would prefer to be self-employed
- 5% of casual employees reported that they had already asked their employer to convert to a permanent position but the employer had refused
- 41% reported that while they had not asked to convert to permanent they did not think their employer would allow them to convert if they wanted to.

The findings of the research indicate that more needs to be done to ensure that casual work can be a pathway into more secure employment arrangements.

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## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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Anglicare calls on the State Government to take on a more active and strategic role in developing and monitoring the Tasmanian labour market, recognising that the wellbeing of this State depends on interdependent economic, employment and social policies. This strategic approach acknowledges that in modern economies it is no longer only a case of creating jobs through economic development, but also of ensuring that workers have the necessary education, training, skills and confidence to attract jobs and that this in turn depends on interlinked education, health and housing policies. Social policies therefore underpin economic development, particularly those which address poverty.

Policy development has not kept pace with the changing nature of the Tasmanian labour market, particularly the growth in casual employment. The State government can assist Tasmanians to deal with the changing nature of the labour market by developing a strategic plan for the next term of Government to assist Tasmanians to deal with the changing nature of the labour market and the long-term effects of recession, long-term unemployment and disadvantage. Such a strategic plan, with strategies and performance indicators attached, would have as its goal the facilitation of participation in employment by Tasmanians. Appropriate principles to guide such a plan could be the promotion of access to stable and quality employment for all people of labour force age who are capable of working and the prevention of the exclusion of people from the labour force by improving their employability.

Issues which would need to be considered within the plan include ways of addressing barriers to work such as the availability and cost of child care as well as ways of improving the security of work, particularly for casual workers. This may include addressing issues such as appropriate casual wage loadings, definitions of casual work, portability of employment entitlements such as long service leave and the capacity to convert to permanent employment after a continuous period as a regular “casual” worker. While acknowledging that changes proposed by the Australian Government are expected to shift State responsibility for industrial relations Anglicare would suggest that remaining State Industrial Relations Legislation should be reviewed to be brought into line with the goals of the strategic plan. Further, Anglicare recommends that forums be established, convened by the Tasmanian Industrial Commission, to conduct public hearings to collect information from Tasmanian workers on the impacts of the new Federal laws.

This plan requires the dedication of appropriate resources and strategic leadership. Anglicare therefore continues its call for a dedicated Minister for Employment supported by an appropriately resourced Office for Employment and Labour.

**Recommendation: That the State Government re-establish a Minister for Employment to be supported by an appropriately resourced Office for Employment and Labour.**

**Recommendation: That the State Government, through the Minister for Employment, develop a 5-year strategic plan for the Tasmanian Labour Market.**

**Recommendation: That the State Government review the State Industrial Relations Legislation to achieve the goals of the 5-year strategic plan.**

### **Research**

The effectiveness of strategies to address the particular issues affecting the Tasmanian labour market will need to be evaluated. Action in this area will require funding to be made available to facilitate research, particularly into the growth in casual employment, the relationship between poverty and barriers to participation in the labour market and strategies for tackling this.

**Recommendation: That the State Government, through the Minister for Employment, commission regular research into policy measures concerning employment and disadvantaged groups within the labour market.**

The current Forms of Employment Survey provides valuable data about casual employment. The survey would be even more useful if it were to include questions about respondents preferred employment status and casual wage loading. The preferred employment status question could be similar to the present question which asks respondents if they would prefer to work more hours, less hours or the same number of hours. In addition, all employees could be asked if they would prefer to be employed as a casual or in a position with paid benefits. The casual wage loading question could be easily added to the sections which already ask about the employee's entitlement to sick pay and holiday pay. These questions would provide quantitative data on the preferences and experiences of employees which is increasingly important in light of the trend towards casual employment.

**Recommendation: That the Australian Bureau of Statistics insert new questions into the Forms of Employment Survey which examines employees' preferences regarding employment status and whether they are receiving a casual wage loading.**

### **Superannuation**

Anglicare believes that it is unfair that some part-time and casual employees do not receive the benefit of compulsory superannuation payments and the accompanying insurance benefits. These workers are essentially receiving 9% less remuneration than their colleagues. While Anglicare acknowledges the administrative difficulties associated with providing superannuation coverage to all employees, it is important that workers are not disadvantaged by missing out on the benefits of insurance and retirement savings. Anglicare recommends that the Australian Government examine ways to ensure that all employees are covered by the superannuation guarantee with a priority on ensuring that all employees have some death and permanent disability insurance.

**Recommendation: That the Australian Government examine ways to ensure that all employees receive the superannuation guarantee.**

### **Older workers and professionals seeking to return to the labour force**

For older professional workers wishing to reduce their work hours significantly and others wanting to re-enter the workforce on a part time basis the costs of registration, insurance and ongoing professional development can be a barrier to taking on small amounts of



paid work. Even the registration costs of a few hundred dollars associated with registering in health professions such as nursing or psychology may be prohibitive as an up front cost for a single mother wishing to return to work on a very part-time basis.

**Recommendation: That professional registration bodies consider introducing sliding scale fees for part-time workers and that the State and Australian Government examine strategies for assisting workers with registration costs where this assistance would allow them to remain in or take up part-time work.**

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## 3. INTRODUCTION

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This report contains findings from the Tasmanian Community Survey which was a major social research project conducted in Autumn 2005 examining the standard of living, employment experiences and wellbeing of the Tasmanian community. Traditionally Anglicare's research focuses on issues affecting low income Tasmanians holding Health Care and Pension Concession Cards. While this research pays particular attention to issues affecting disadvantaged groups, the broader scope of the project allows Anglicare to examine the employment experiences of Tasmanians across the income spectrum.

The research was conducted in a period following five years of very strong economic growth for Tasmania. This growth has led to a substantial increase in the number of Tasmanians in employment and improvements across a range of economic indicators. However, despite these improvements, the Tasmanian community continues to be disadvantaged compared to the broader Australian community with lower than average incomes, a higher degree of reliance on Centrelink payments, and a greater proportion of people with disabilities and experiencing ill health (ABS, 2005a). Low income status is widespread in Tasmania with 38% of households relying on Centrelink payments as their main source of income compared to the national average of 27% of households (ABS, 2005a).

This research compliments regular Australian Bureau of Statistics surveys which provide detailed information on specific social and economic indicators. It also builds on the Healthy Communities Survey which was conducted by the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services in 1998. The Healthy Communities Survey was a large scale survey examining the health and wellbeing of Tasmanian adults. Although the focus of the surveys differ there are significant areas of cross-over and some of the questions from the Healthy Communities Survey have been replicated in this research. This allows comparisons to be made between the two surveys.

### **Project Objectives**

This project seeks to provide a detailed picture of life in Tasmania with a particular focus on issues affecting low income households.

Specifically the project objectives are to:

- provide an assessment of the proportion of Tasmanians experiencing financial stress;
- identify key factors associated with financial stress for low income households;
- examine the impact of employment status on measures of wellbeing and financial hardship; and
- inform policy development.

This document is the second of two reports which draw on data from the Tasmanian Community Survey. This report will focus on experiences of employment while the first report examined financial hardship in Tasmania.

### **Tasmanian Labour Market**

The strong economic growth in Tasmania has had a very positive impact on the labour market in the state. Between October 2002 and October 2005 the number of Tasmanians aged over 15 who were employed grew from 199,800 people to 221,700 (ABS 2005b). Just over half of this growth has been in full time employment which has gone from 138,700 people in October 2002 to 150,200 people in October 2005 (ABS, 2005b). In the same period the participation rate, that is the number of people employed or actively looking for work and available to start, has increased from 58.2% to 60.7% (ABS, 2005b). The participation rate for females has grown particularly strongly from 50.2% in October 2002 to 54.5% in October 2005 (ABS, 2005b).

Many unemployed Tasmanians have also clearly felt the benefits of the improved labour market with a drop in the unemployment rate from 8.8% in October 2002 to 6.6% in October 2005 (ABS, 2005b). The unemployment rate was as low as 5.7% in January 2005 and was at 5.9% in Autumn 2005 when the Tasmanian Community Survey was conducted (ABS, 2005b).

### **Federal Industrial Relations Reform**

A further major recent shift in the employment landscape in Australia has been the Australian Government's Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Bill which passed through the Parliament in late 2005. These changes include the establishment of the Australian Fair Pay Commission which will set and adjust minimum and award classification wages, changes to unfair dismissal laws and the inclusion of minimum conditions in Federal legislation. The Australian Government has stated that these changes are designed to make the workplace relations system simpler and more fair (Abetz, 2005). Critics of the changes argue that the new system will disadvantage low paid workers and shift the balance of power in employment relationships further towards employers (Briggs, 2005, Quiggin, 2005). As these changes did not come into effect until late March 2006, they will not be reflected in the findings of this research as the surveys were completed in Autumn 2005. However data from the Tasmanian Community Survey may be useful in the future as a point of comparison to gauge the impacts of the changes on Tasmanian workers.

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## 4. METHODOLOGY

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The Tasmanian Community Survey was designed to measure the employment experiences, standard of living and wellbeing of the adult population. Participants were selected from the Tasmanian Electoral Roll, using a systematic sampling methodology with a random start. The sample was stratified by region to ensure that the sample reflected the actual proportion of the population living in the South, North and North-West of the state. The use of the electoral roll as a sampling frame for the survey brings with it particular limitations as people who have not registered to vote will not be included in the sample at all and people who have not updated their address details with the Electoral Commission will not receive the survey form. These limitations mean that younger people, particularly those who have just turned 18, and people who move house frequently are likely to be under-represented in the sample.

After considering a range of survey methods a postal survey method was selected as the most appropriate for the sample size, budget and time frame. As a postal survey requires that respondents read and respond to questions without assistance from an interviewer this method required the researchers to consider the length and complexity of the survey form as well as how to make the survey as easy as possible to read and follow for people with literacy, language or comprehension difficulties. The use of a postal survey means that people without a postal address such as those experiencing homelessness will not be included in the survey.

The researcher looked at a range of surveys investigating standard of living, employment and wellbeing including the Tasmanian Healthy Communities Survey, The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey, the Australian Unity Wellbeing Index as well as Australian Bureau of Statistics surveys including the Labour Force Survey, Census and Household Expenditure Survey. While none of these survey instruments covered the entire scope of the proposed research, elements of them were included in the Tasmanian Community Survey along with questions developed specifically for this research.

The draft survey instrument was reviewed by the Research Reference Group and cognitive interviewing was conducted with five participants who identified themselves as having difficulties with literacy. The respondents were given the pre-letter which was to be sent to participants one week prior to the survey as well as the survey form and return envelope. The participants were asked to read aloud as much as possible and talk through any thoughts they had as they went through the letters and while they read and filled in the survey form. The researchers took notes through these sessions which generally took about one hour. The pre-test was conducted to identify problems with the survey form, particularly the length and complexity of the form, and identify any difficulties with specific questions such as wording, comprehension, clarity and intrusiveness. The main issue identified in this testing was participants not following 'skip' instructions to move past questions which did not apply to them, as well as some difficulties with the wording of particular questions. The survey form was revised in response to the issues identified in the pre-testing, with changes including larger and more prominent 'skip' instructions and simplification of the wording of some questions.

Methods to increase response rate identified by Dillman (2000) were implemented, particularly multiple, personalised contacts, respectful correspondence, maintaining standardised structures for 'skips' and scales, providing telephone assistance and attracting publicity to increase awareness of the survey. All correspondence was personally addressed to participants and the initial survey mailout received coverage in *The Mercury* and on ABC radio.

Pre-survey letters were sent to the 3800 Tasmanians selected for the survey sample. These letters informed participants that they had been selected for the survey, which would arrive by post the following week, as well as informing them of the objectives of the survey and a free-call number that they could call if they had any questions or concerns. The following week the survey was sent, along with a further explanatory letter including the free-call number and a stamped return envelope. Approximately two weeks after the survey was posted a postcard was sent to participants thanking those who had already responded and reminding non-respondents to send their survey back. Five weeks after the original survey mail out a replacement survey form and reply-paid envelope was sent to non-respondents. People who did not wish to participate in the survey were able to opt out of receiving the follow-up mailings by calling the free-call number or by returning their blank survey form in the pre-paid envelope.

Of the 3800 survey forms posted out, 2106 completed surveys were returned, a response rate of approximately 55%. This response rate is considered good for a survey of this type and is only 5% below the response rate for the Healthy Communities Survey, which was conducted by the State Government in 1998, accompanied by a much larger publicity campaign.

Data from completed surveys were coded in Excel by the researchers and four data entry assistants and were checked for quality using double entry of some forms. A researcher also conducted random checks of the data by comparing the entered data against completed survey forms. All data was transferred into SPSS (v.13) for analysis.

Dr Helen Johnson (Queensland University of Technology) was engaged as a consultant to conduct data weighting. The purpose of weighting is to allow statements to be made about the Tasmanian adult population as a whole, not just about those people who responded to the survey. Post stratification weighting was conducted to ensure that the final sample reflected the actual Tasmanian population on the key variables of gender, region of residence and receipt of the major Centrelink benefits<sup>1</sup>. The estimate for the number of people in the actual Tasmanian community for each strata was drawn from the ABS (2003a,b) population estimates and Centrelink (2005) data on payment recipients. The factors to be applied were calculated in Excel, transferred to SPSS and applied to all cases in each strata. Where cases did not contain data for one of the stratification variables these cases were excluded from the analysis leaving the final analysis based on 1944 responses. Further details of the population data used to complete this process can be found in Appendix A.

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1. Due to the selection strata only containing one of the desired stratification variables – i.e. region – the sample proportions in the resulting post-strata were adjusted to be the same as the population proportions of these strata. This process was completed by multiplying the sample proportion by a factor which consisted of the ratio of the post-stratum population proportion to the responding sample proportion within the respective post-stratum. This factor was utilised as a weighting variable for all estimates produced from the survey.

The survey estimates have been compared with other data which covers similar topics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In most instances the best available data have not been collected as recently as the Tasmanian Community Survey data. Table 4.1 shows these comparisons both for the original survey sample and the weighted data. It shows that amongst the original respondents young people, particularly those aged under 25, were under-represented among the survey respondents. To a lesser degree men and very low income earners (including those reporting nil and negative incomes) were also under-represented among the respondents. However, once the population weighting was completed Table 4.1 shows that the weighted data more closely matches the actual population although young people and people reporting very low incomes remain somewhat under-represented.

Table 4.1 Tasmanian Community Survey Sample and Population Demographics

Variable	Response Categories	Original data as % of respondents n=2106	Weighted data to represent Tasmanian adult population (as %) n=1944 <sup>2</sup>	Similar data as % of Tasmanian adult population Source: ABS estimated population 2003b unless otherwise indicated
Gender	Male	44.7	48.4	48.7
	Female	55.3	51.6	51.3
Region	South	55.1	49.7	49.4
	North	24.9	28.2	28.3
	North-West	20.0	22.2	22.3
Age Group	18-24	8.0	8.7	12.0
	25-29	5.9	6.1	7.5
	30-39	15.8	14.6	17.8
	40-49	22.6	23.6	19.9
	50-59	19.2	19.8	17.5
	60-69	13.9	14.3	11.8
	70+	14.5	12.9	13.4
Household living arrangement	Alone	14.5	14.4	Not available
	With partner	38.1	38.2	
	With partner & children	30.2	28.8	
	Sole parent & children	4.7	5.4	
	With parents	5.6	6.4	
	Extended family	1.5	1.6	
	Share house	2.2	2.2	
	Other	2.0	2.1	
Employment Status	Employed	61.5	62.4	56.0
	Unemployed	3.2	3.8	5.9
	Not in the labour force	35.3	33.8	40.5
				Labour Force ABS 2005b

Identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Yes No Missing	2.2 95.6 2.1	2.2 96.1 1.7	2.5 93.9 3.6 Census Indigenous Profile ABS 2002
Country of birth	Australia Other	86.8 13.1	87.1 12.9	Not available
Gross income per week	\$1500+ \$1000-\$1499 \$800-\$999 \$700-\$799 \$600-\$699 \$500-\$599 \$400-\$499 \$300-\$399 \$200-\$299 \$160-\$199 \$120-\$159 \$1-\$119 Nil or Negative income Missing	3.8 10.4 8.5 5.5 5.9 8.2 8.5 10.4 14.1 7.7 3.0 3.5 2.4 7.9	4.0 10.9 9.0 5.6 5.9 8.0 8.6 11.0 14.3 7.7 3.0 3.4 2.2 6.4	1.8 4.7 5.7 4.2 5.6 7.7 8.4 9.9 15.3 11.6 6.4 6.9 5 6.5 Census ABS 2001#
Centrelink payment	Newstart Disability Support Pension Parenting Payment Single Parenting Payment Partnered Aged Pension Youth Allowance Not on any of the payments listed above (includes those not receiving any Centrelink payment)	3.7 5.5 2.4  3.3 14.2 3.3 62.7	5.0 6.9 3.7  1.7 15.0 1.5 66.2	5.0 6.9 3.7  1.7 15.0 2.0 65.9 Centrelink 2005
Highest level of school completed	Never attended school Year 8 or below Year 9 or equivalent Year 10 or equivalent Year 11 or equivalent Year 12 or equivalent Missing	0.4 10.1 12.2 34.9 6.6 34.2 1.8	0.4 9.7 12.7 35.6 6.4 34.1 1.2	0.4 9.4 10.8 33.4 7.4 27.2 7.8 Census ABS 2001#

2 The sample size for the weighted data is less than the original because cases which did not include answers for the three weighting variables were excluded for the weighted data.

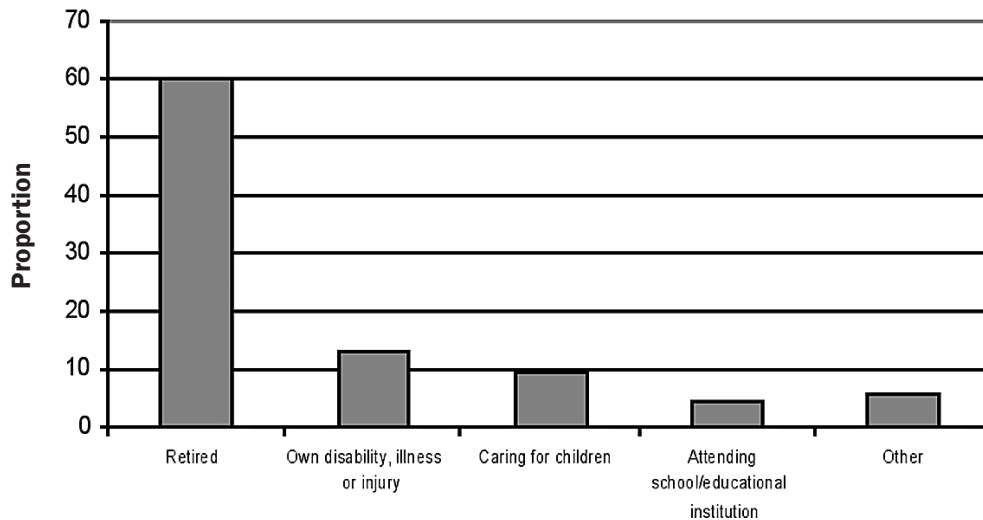
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## 5. FINDINGS

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### Employment Status

Sixty two percent of the Tasmanian adults surveyed in this research are classified as employed with 34% classified as not in the labour force and a further 4% classified as unemployed. Those adults who were not in the labour force were asked about their circumstances in more detail. As shown in figure 5.1 most of the adults who were not in the labour force were retired, 14% had a disability, illness or injury which meant that they didn't work, 10% were caring for children and there were small groups studying or not in the labour force for other reasons.



**Reason not in labour force**

Figure 5.1 Proportion of adults who are not in the labour force by the main reason that they were not in the labour force

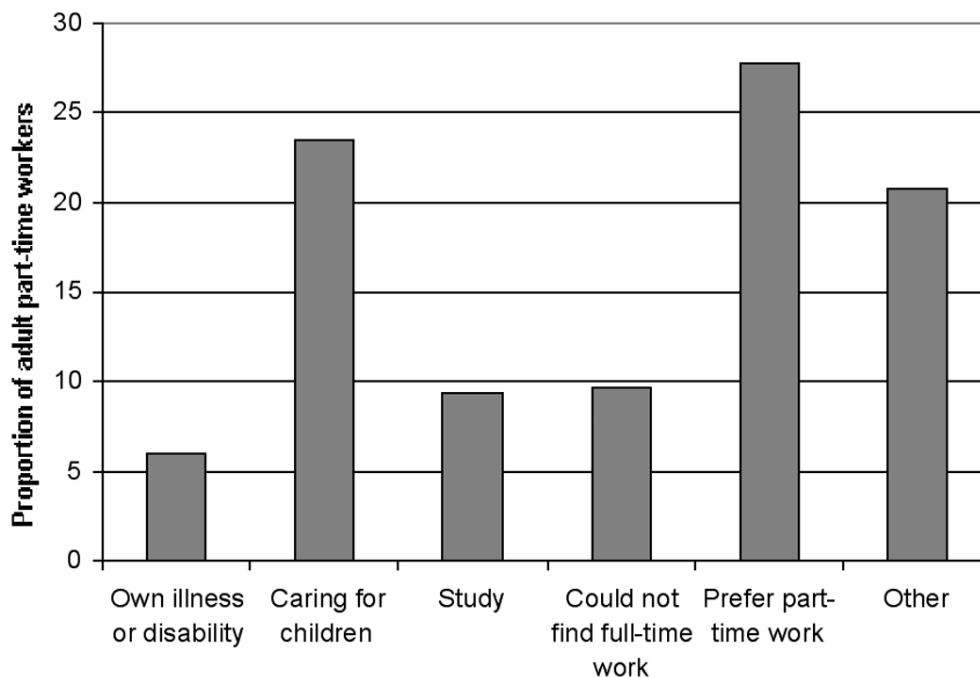
### In the Labour Force

Of those adult Tasmanians who were in paid employment the Tasmanian Community Survey asked a range of questions about their conditions and experiences of employment.

### Working Hours

For those adults in employment 69% reported that they worked 35 hours or more per week which is considered to be full time for the purposes of this research with the remaining 31% of workers employed on a part time basis. With almost one third of Tasmanian workers employed on a part time basis it is important to recognise the important role that this type of work now plays in the Tasmanian economy. Figure 5.2 shows the main reasons part-time workers gave for working less than 35 hours per week. The two most common reasons were a personal preference for part-time work and child care responsibilities.





**Main reason for working part-time**

Figure 5.2 Proportion of adult part-time workers by the main reason for working part-time

The Tasmanian Community Survey examined hours of work with a particular focus on comparing actual hours of work and preferred hours of work. As noted above 69% of workers were full-time, 19% were working part time for between 18 and 34 hours per week and 12% were working for less than 18 hours per week. All workers were asked about their current hours of work and whether they would prefer to work more hours, less hours or about the same number of hours as they currently work. In making a choice, workers were asked to consider how any change in hours would impact on their income. Table 5.1 shows that while just over half of all workers (58%) are happy with their current working hours there is a large group of full-time workers who would prefer to be working less hours and many part-time workers, particularly those on less than 18 hours per week, who would prefer to have more hours.

Table 5.1 Preferred number of hours for adult Tasmanian workers by current number of hours

Actual Hours Preferred hours	Part-time working less than 18 hours (%)	Part-time working 18 to 34 hours (%)	Full-time (working 35 hours or more per week) (%)	All
Prefer fewer hours than now	**	13	41	31
Prefer about the same hours as now	59	66	56	58
Prefer more hours than now	40	21	3	11

\*\* estimate has a relative standard error of more than 50%

Figure 5.3 shows that the proportion of full-time workers who would prefer to work less hours increases steeply with the number of hours currently being worked. Almost two thirds of those who were working 50 or more hours per week responded that they would prefer to work less hours. Further analysis shows that people who were self-employed were far more likely than other workers to report that they worked more than 50 hours a week with 37% of all self-employed people working these hours compared with 17% of all working Tasmanian adults.

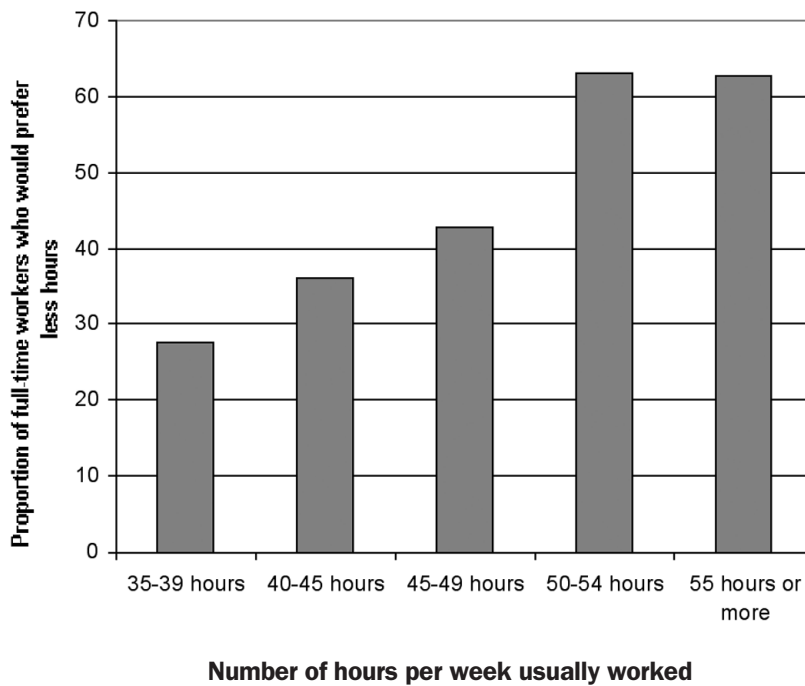


Figure 5.3 Proportion of full-time adult Tasmanian workers who would prefer to work less hours by number of hours being worked

The days of work for full-time workers was also analysed and figure 5.4 shows that about 60% of full-time workers reported that they worked a traditional Monday to Friday week while 15% reported that the days they worked varied from week to week and 6% reported that they worked a five day week which included one weekend day or two weekend days. The remaining workers were employed in other working patterns as shown in figure 5.4.

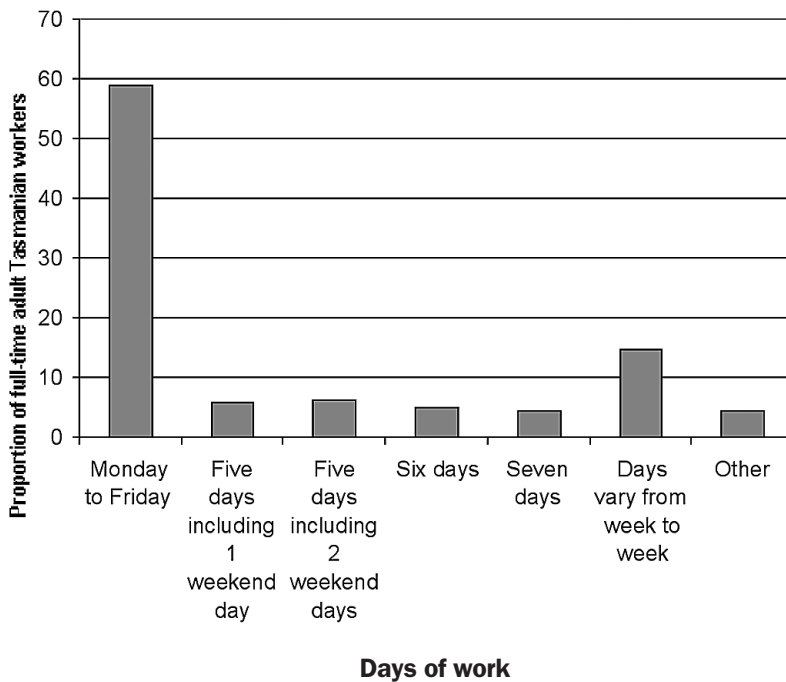


Figure 5.4 Proportion of full-time adult Tasmanian workers by work schedule

All workers were asked if they would describe their employer's business as seasonal and 10% reported that it was. Of those who did describe their employers business as seasonal 40% reported that their own hours varied a lot from season to season, 41% reported that their hours varied a little and the remaining 18% reported that their own hours did not vary from season to season.

Table 5.2 shows that 20% of adult Tasmanian workers classified their position in their main job as a professional position, with 17% classified as managers or administrators, 13% as salesperson or personal service worker and 11% as tradesperson. Overall 43% of adult Tasmanian workers reported that they usually supervised other employees in their main job.

Table 5.2 Position in main job for adult Tasmanians

Position	Proportion of adult Tasmanian workers (%)
Manager or administrator	17
Professional	20
Technician or associate professional	5
Tradesperson	11
Clerical	10
Sales person or personal service worker	13
Plant or machine operator, miner or road transport driver	6
Labourer or related worker	9
Other	8

Workers were also asked about the industry they worked in with 16% in community and health services, 13% in retailing, 12% in education and 11% in agriculture, forestry and fishing (see Table 5.3). One quarter of all adult Tasmanian workers reported that they worked in other industries which were not individually listed in the survey. Casual workers were most likely to be employed in retailing and hospitality as well as in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Self employed workers were concentrated in retailing, construction and agriculture, forestry and fishing. Employees with paid entitlements were most likely to be working in community and health services and education.

Table 5.3 Industry of employment of adult Tasmanians by contract of employment

Industry	Employees with paid entitlements (%)	Self identified casuals (%)	Self employed (%)	All Tasmanian workers (%)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	7	14	19	11
Manufacturing	8	9	6*	8
Education	16	10	3*	12
Retailing	10	19	20	13
Hospitality (inc Accommodation, cafes and restaurants)	3	19	6*	7
Community and health services	20	13	5*	16
Construction	6	2*	20	8
Other	31	14	22	26

\*estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

Most workers are in the private sector; 63% of Tasmanian adult workers indicated that they worked in private industry, a company or institution. One quarter worked for the government, 5% worked for not-for-profit organisations and the remaining 6% worked for other types of organisations.

Many Tasmanian workers are employed in small businesses; 38% of all workers reported that they were in a workplace of less than 20 people, including 18% whose workplace had less than 5 workers.

## Type of Employment

People in paid employment were classified into employment categories based on their entitlement to paid sick leave and holiday leave as well as their own perceptions of their employment status (see Appendix B for further discussion of this classification). As shown in figure 5.5 just over half (57%) of the workers were classified as employees with paid leave entitlements with 20% self employed and 19% identified themselves as casual workers. The small remaining group did not identify themselves as casually employed but did not receive paid holiday or sick leave.

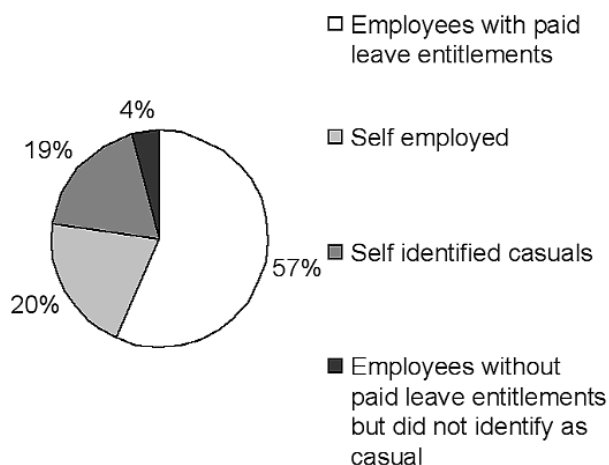


Figure 5.5 Type of employment for adult Tasmanian workers

## Casual Work

Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicate that at a national level casual employment has grown relatively rapidly over the past 15 years (ABS in Kryger, 2004). In 1998 19% of all Australian employees were identified as casuals but by 2003 this figure had grown to 28% (ABS in Kryger, 2004). This growth has prompted significant interest in the nature of this type of work and the experiences of people employed as casuals.

The Tasmanian Community Survey sought to explore the experience of casual work in some detail. Several general employment issues are analysed with consideration for contract of employment throughout this report but this section deals with issues which specifically relate to casual employment. All the results in the report for casuals relate to self-identified casual workers only and do not include those employees without paid entitlements who do not identify as casual.

As noted earlier, the definition of casual used in the Tasmanian Community Survey is broadly consistent with the ABS classification. However, it should also be noted that there are other definitions of casual work which are in common use, particularly in industrial matters. In many Industrial Awards there is no specific definition of a casual employee, it is simply someone who is employed and paid as a casual (for example plant operators and civil construction and maintenance workers under the Building and Construction Industry Award). Casual employees receive a higher hourly rate of pay than a permanent employee in a comparable position through a casual pay loading which is

designed to compensate these employees for the lack of paid benefits such as holiday pay, sick leave and long service leave. Traditionally casual employment has been seen as informal, irregular and uncertain with each employment engagement negotiated individually between the employer and the employee. However, many casual employees now work quite regular schedules and some are even employed full-time. Indeed the Tasmanian Community Survey found that 11% of casual employees reported that they usually worked more than 35 hours per week and a further 14% of casual workers reported that while their hours varied from week to week they worked more than 35 hours in the week prior to the survey. Almost all of these full-time casuals reported that they only had one employer so their full-time work did not represent a combination of two or more part-time jobs. Almost half (46%) of all casual employees reported that they usually worked a set number of hours, only 32% of casuals reported that their days of work varied from week to week and only 26% of casuals described their employer's business as seasonal.

Casual work has traditionally been perceived as being concentrated among students and young people. However, the Tasmanian Community Survey shows that only 18% of all casual employees reported that they were also studying. While this figure is much higher than the proportion of employees with paid entitlements who reported that they were studying (9%) it is still a relatively small group among all casuals.

As shown in table 5.4 while 23% of all casuals were young people aged between 18-24 years, 27% were aged 40-49 years and a further 20% of casuals were aged 50-59 years.

Table 5.4 Proportion of all adult Tasmanian casuals by age groups

Age Group	Proportion of all casuals (%)
18-24 years	23
25-29 years	8*
30-39 years	15
40-49 years	27
50-59 years	20
60-69 years	6*

\*estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

The survey also found that:

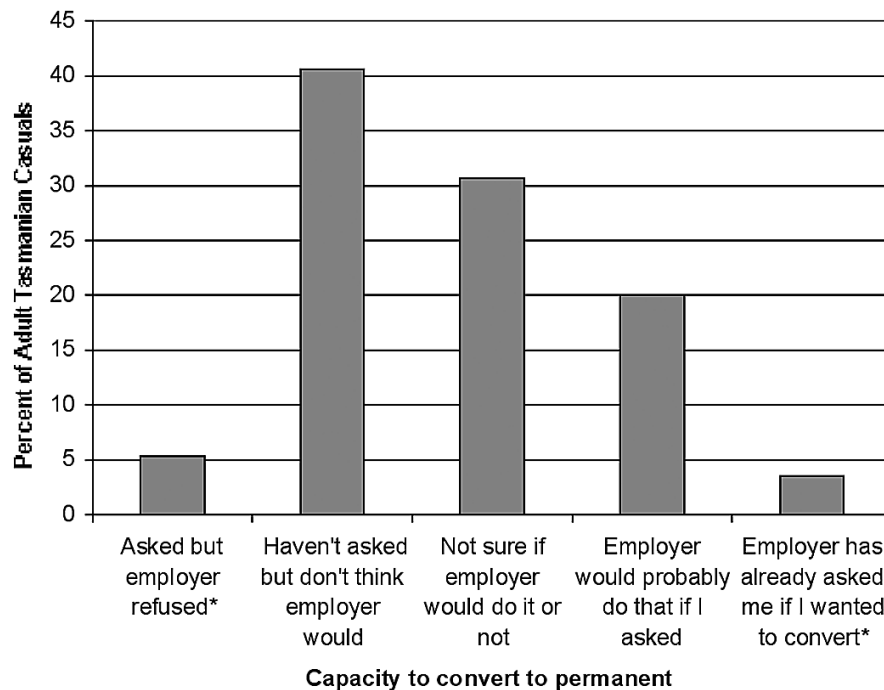
- 59% of all casuals were women compared with 49% of all workers;
- 9% of casual workers were single parents with children compared with 5% of all workers; and
- 48% of casual workers reported that they did not have any post-secondary school education compared with 34% of all workers.

Table 5.5 shows that casual workers were more likely to be living in rented accommodation than other working Tasmanians although the proportion of casual workers who own their own home was the same as those in positions with paid entitlements.

Table 5.5 Accommodation arrangements for adult Tasmanian workers by contract of employment

	Employee with Paid Entitlements	Self-identified casuals	Self-employed	All workers
Own	33	33	57	39
Buying	46	25	34	39
Renting	13	23	5	13
Other	8	19	4	9

Casual workers were asked about whether they thought that their employer would be willing to convert their casual position to a permanent one if they (the employee) wanted to become permanent. As shown in Figure 5.6 20% of casuals reported that they thought that their employer would convert them to permanent employment if they wanted that and a further 4%\* reported that they had already been asked by their employer if they wanted to convert. Five\* percent of casuals reported that they had already asked if they could convert but that their employer had refused and a further 41% reported that while they had not asked they did not expect that their employer would allow them to convert if they wanted to.



\*estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

Figure 5.6 Expectations about whether employer would convert casual position to permanent for adult Tasmanian casual workers.

The ability to determine when they work might be considered as an indicator of the degree of control that workers have over their work and leisure time. When asked how much say they had regarding when they would work:

- 41% of casually employed Tasmanian adults reported that mostly they told the employer when they were available to work;
- 20% reported that sometimes they said when they could work and sometimes their employer told them; and
- 39% reported that mostly their employer told them when they were required to work.

### Financial Hardship and Employment

This research sought to examine the impact of employment status on measures of financial hardship. Due to the relatively small number of unemployed Tasmanians included in the survey it is not possible to make reliable comparisons between this group and other Tasmanians. However, it is possible to compare the experiences of employees with paid entitlements, casual workers and self-employed Tasmanians. Table 5.6 shows the proportion of workers who reported that they had experienced financial hardship in the previous year. Although there does appear to be a trend of self-identified casuals being more likely to report financial hardship than employees with paid entitlements, the relatively smaller number of casuals who completed the survey means that only one of the differences is statistically significant. The only item on which this is a statistically significant difference is the proportion who reported that they had sought assistance from a community organisation where 6% of self identified casuals reported that this had happened compared with only 1% of employees with paid entitlements. Casual workers were more likely to report that they had experienced some degree of food insecurity. Twenty seven percent of casuals reported that they had at least occasionally worried about whether the amount of food they could afford for the household would be enough compared with 18% of employees with paid entitlements.

Table 5.6 Financial difficulties experienced in the previous 12 months for adult Tasmanians by contract of employment

Type of difficulty due to shortage of money	Employees with paid entitlements (%)	Self Identified Casuals (%)	Self employed (%)	All workers (%)	All Tasmanian adults (%)
Couldn't pay telephone or electricity bill on time	15	18	8*	14	15
Couldn't pay car registration/insurance on time	10	13	5*	10	11
Pawned or sold something	6	5*	3*	5	7
Gone without meals	3	4*	**	3	4
Unable to heat home	3	4*	**	3	4
Sought assistance from welfare/community organisation	1	6*	3*	3	4
Sought financial help from family and friends	13	14	5*	12	14
Couldn't pay rent/home loan	4	6*	**	4	4
Phone disconnected	4	5*	**	4	5
Electricity disconnected	1	2*	**	1	1
Didn't seek health care when needed	10	9*	6*	9	10
Didn't fill a prescription ordered by a doctor	9	11	4*	8	9

\*estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

\*\*estimate has a relative standard error of more than 50%

### Conditions of Employment

Access to leave and other conditions are examined below for all employees. Most employees (71%) were entitled to paid sick leave and paid holiday leave. Access to other types of paid leave was more restricted (as shown in table 5.7) and it is notable that the proportion of employees who did not know about their entitlements was quite high,



particularly for maternity leave, parental leave and special leave for caring for family members. Access to permanent part-time work was the most common condition reported as being available followed by special leave for caring for family members and flexible start and finish times.

Table 5.7 Proportion of adult Tasmanian employees by whether employer offers conditions or entitlements for the employee or other employees working at a similar level

Condition	Yes	No	Don't know
Paid maternity leave	36	32	32
Unpaid maternity leave	44	15	40
Parental leave	39	19	41
Special leave for caring for family members	57	14	29
Permanent part-time work	63	16	21
Home-based work	10	72	17
Flexible start and finish times	47	45	8

As shown in table 5.8 casual employees were much less likely to report that they had access to the conditions or entitlements except flexible start and finish times for which there was no statistically significant difference between casual employees and other employees.

Table 5.8 Proportion of all adult Tasmanian employees and casual employees who report that they have access to conditions and entitlements.

Condition or entitlement	Proportion of all employees reporting that they have the condition (%)	Proportion of casual employees reporting that they have the condition (%)
Paid maternity leave	36	8*
Unpaid maternity leave	44	19
Parental leave	39	13
Special leave for caring for family members	57	31
Permanent part-time work	63	46
Home-based work	10	7*
Flexible start and finish times	47	45

\*estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

Public sector employees were much more likely than other employees to report that they had access to all of the conditions and entitlements listed except for home based work and flexible start and finish times.

### Trade Union Membership

The Tasmanian Community Survey also asked workers whether they were members of a trade union. Overall 34% of employees indicated that they were members of a trade union, 63% were not members and 4% did not know if they were members. Figure 5.7 shows that the proportion of casual workers who were members of a trade union was significantly lower than the proportion of employees with paid entitlements.

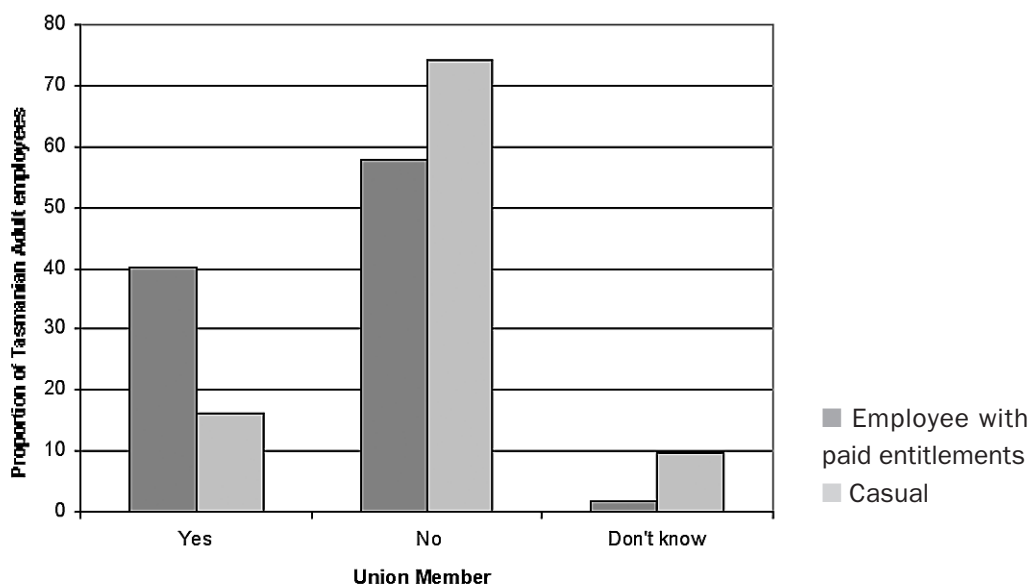


Figure 5.7 Proportion of Tasmanian adult employees who are union members by employment contract

### Superannuation

Under the superannuation guarantee scheme employers must contribute 9% of an eligible employee's earnings base to superannuation. This contribution is a compulsory form of savings which can be accessed on retirement. Most superannuation funds also provide their members with some death and permanent disability insurance while contributions are being received on their behalf.

The Tasmanian Community Survey indicates that there is a significant difference between employees with paid entitlements and casual employees regarding employer contributions to superannuation. Only 2% of the employees with paid entitlements reported that their employer did not make contributions to superannuation on their behalf but 17% of casual employees reported that their employer did not make contributions. These employees may be missing out on a superannuation contribution for a range of reasons, the most common being:

- that they are paid less than \$450 in a calendar month;
- they are aged over 70 years; or
- they are employed for domestic or private work for less than 30 hours per week.

Although the superannuation guarantee scheme was introduced in 1992 following the introduction of compulsory award-based superannuation the previous year, some employees report that they do not have any superannuation at all. In the Tasmanian Community Survey 9% of casual employees and 3% of employees with paid entitlements reported that they did not have any superannuation. Of those who were aged under 60 years and unemployed at the time of the survey, 40% reported that they did not have any superannuation at all. For those who were not in the labour force for other reasons (such as ill health or caring responsibilities) and aged under 60 years, 57% reported that they did not have any superannuation at all.

## Preferred employment status and contract of employment

The Tasmanian Community Survey sought to examine the experiences and preferences of Tasmanian adults regarding their employment. In order to examine preferences regarding employment contract all workers were asked about the type of employment contract they would prefer currently. All survey respondents were also asked about the type of employment (if any) that they would prefer when they were at different stages of their life (for example when they were in their twenties or when they were in their sixties). These questions sought to provide a quantitative examination of qualitative findings from Anglicare's earlier research into employment although the construction of the questions proved difficult and the response rate for these questions was lower than for other parts of the survey<sup>3</sup>. The earlier research indicated that many unemployed people and casual workers in insecure employment had a strong preference for permanent work over casual work, particularly as they got older (Madden, 2003).

Table 5.9 shows that the Tasmanian Community Survey asked workers about their current contract of employment and also asked them to indicate what type of employment they would prefer to have at the time they were completing the survey if they could have a choice. While the vast majority of self-employed workers clearly preferred self-employment, only about one third of casual employees indicated that their preference was for casual work. Forty two percent of all casual workers indicated that they would prefer to be in permanent or ongoing employment and a further 16% indicated that they would prefer to be self employed. While this finding should be treated cautiously due to the methodological difficulties noted in the footnote below, it does indicate that for many casual workers their employment status is not a result of their personal preference for casual work as the majority of casuals would prefer to have other types of employment. This issue deserves further exploration at a national level.

Table 5.9 Preferred contract of employment for adult Tasmanian workers by actual contract of employment

Current Status	Employees with paid entitlements	Self-identified casuals	Self-employed	Total
Preferred Status				
Self-employment	18	16	80	30
Fixed-term contract	6	4*	2*	5
Casual	5	36	6*	11
Permanent or ongoing	69	42	9	51
No employment	3	2*	2*	3

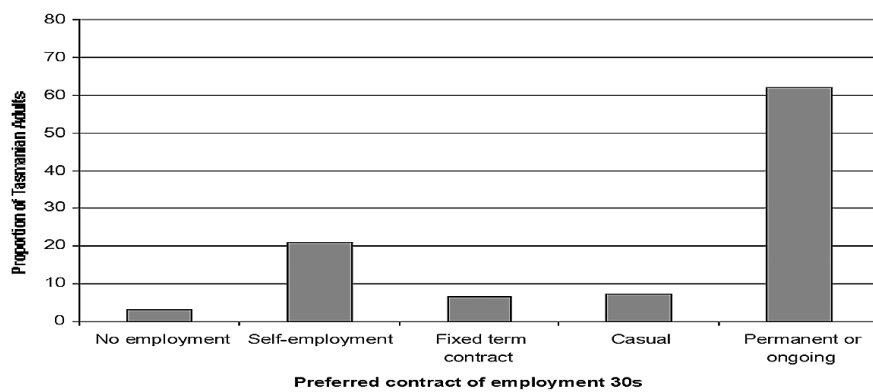
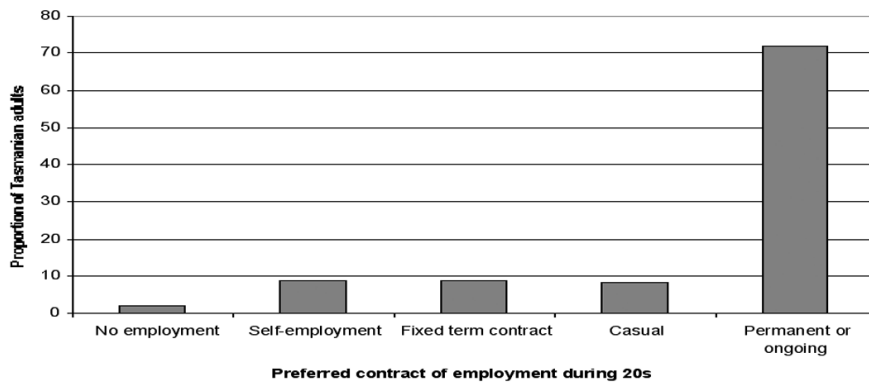
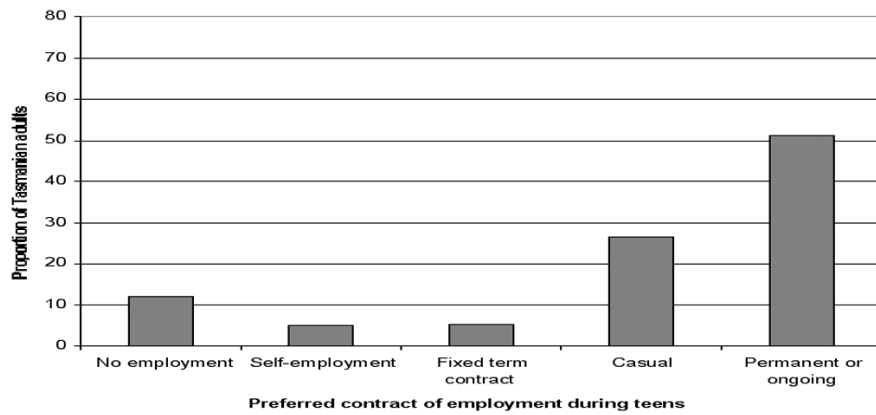
\* estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

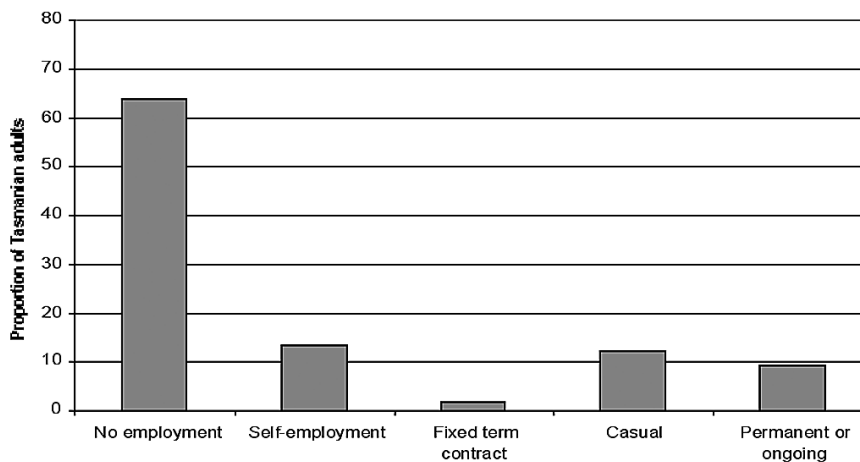
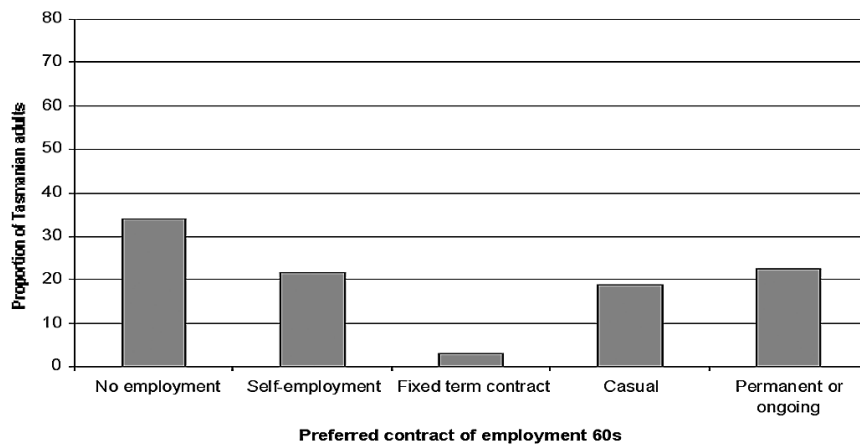
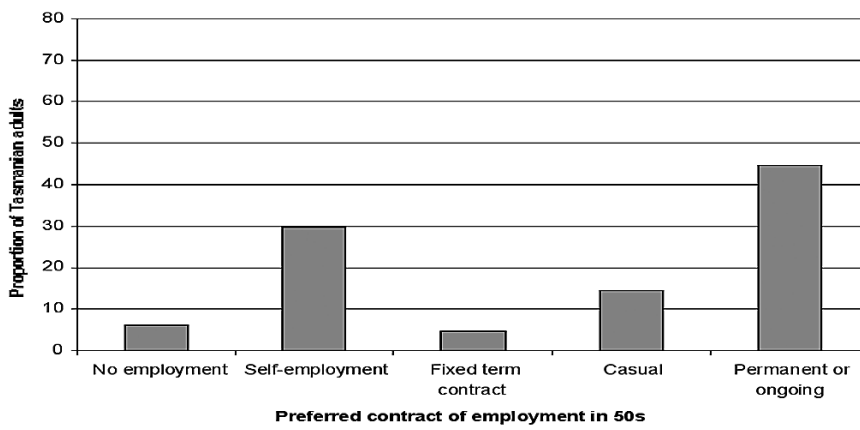
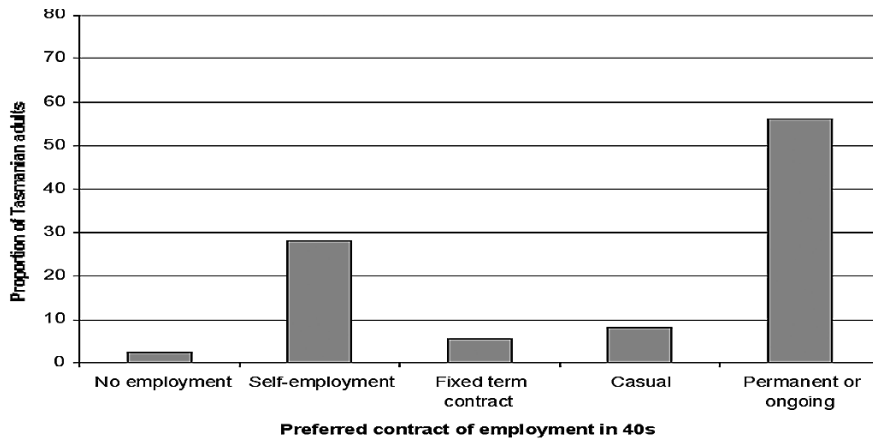
All survey respondents, including those who were not in paid employment, were asked to think about other stages of their life in the past and the future and indicate what type of employment contract (if any) they would prefer at that stage in their life. The response categories were divided into groups of ten years (for example the teens, twenties, thirties etc up to the seventies).

3 The construction of questions to measure these preferences was difficult and the wording of the question was revised several times during the preparation and testing phase of this research. A further difficulty is that the term 'casual' can be interpreted in different ways for different respondents, for example some people mistakenly classify any part-time work as casual work. Responses to the questions on preferred status had a much higher rate of missing responses than most other questions with about 25% of respondents not answering these questions. However, the responses to the questions have been included in this report and should be considered as a preliminary examination of this issue. The responses which were gathered provide an interesting insight into the preferences of Tasmanian adults regarding employment through their life cycle.

As shown in figures 5.8 to 5.14 there does seem to be a shift in preferences at different times in the life cycle. While permanent or ongoing employment is the most popular preference for Tasmanian adults from the teens through to the 50s, there are quite significant shifts in the preference for other types of employment.

Figures 5.8 to 5.14 Employment preferences of all Tasmanian adults for particular life stages





During the teen years 51% of Tasmanian adults reported that they would prefer permanent or ongoing employment followed by 27% who reported that they would prefer casual employment and 12% who would prefer no employment during the teen years.

There is a major shift in preferences between the teens and the twenties for many respondents. Almost three quarters of Tasmanian adults (72%) indicated that they would prefer permanent or ongoing employment in their twenties. Only 2% of respondents indicated that they would prefer not to be employed in their twenties. The remaining 26% of respondents were almost evenly divided between preferring self-employment, casual work and fixed-term contract work. Respondents' preferences for their thirties are relatively similar to the preferences for their twenties. However, by this stage 21% of respondents indicated that they would prefer to be self-employed.

During the forties permanent employment remained the preference for most Tasmanian adults but the proportion preferring self employment at this stage of life increased to 28% of respondents. The preference for other types of employment contract remained below 10% and just 3% indicated that they would prefer not to have employment during this stage of life.

For their fifties the proportion of respondents who indicated that they would prefer permanent or ongoing work dropped below 50% for the first time. Thirty percent of respondents indicated that they would prefer to be self-employed in their fifties. The proportion of respondents who indicated that they would prefer to be in casual employment also jumped to 14% in the 50s as did the proportion (6%) who indicated that they would prefer not to be working in paid employment.

About one third of respondents (34%) indicated that their preference would be to have no paid employment in their sixties. Of those who preferred to have paid employment there was a fairly even spread of preferences between self-employment (22%), permanent or ongoing employment (22%) and casual employment (19%).

As would be expected, most Tasmanian adults preferred no employment during their seventies although interestingly more than one third (36%) of respondents indicated that they would prefer to be in some type of paid work at this stage of life. Self-employment (13%) and casual work (12%) were the most common preference followed by permanent or ongoing work (9%). This finding indicates that there is quite a large group of Tasmanians who would like to continue in some form of paid employment beyond the traditional retirement age of 65 years.

### **Employment Status – Preference versus Reality**

It is also useful to compare the proportion of adult Tasmanians who report they would prefer a particular employment status or contract of employment at each life stage with the actual proportion of workers in that age group who are in each employment category.

Figure 5.15 shows that the proportion of Tasmanians who report they would prefer not to be in employment at each life stage is far lower than the actual proportion of Tasmanians

in each age group who are not in paid work. The gap between preferences and reality is particularly large for the older age groups although the differences are statistically significant for all age groups<sup>4</sup>. While these findings should be considered cautiously due to the methodological difficulties discussed in footnote 3, it is possible to conclude that many Tasmanian adults would prefer to have some form of paid employment for much longer than is currently the case.

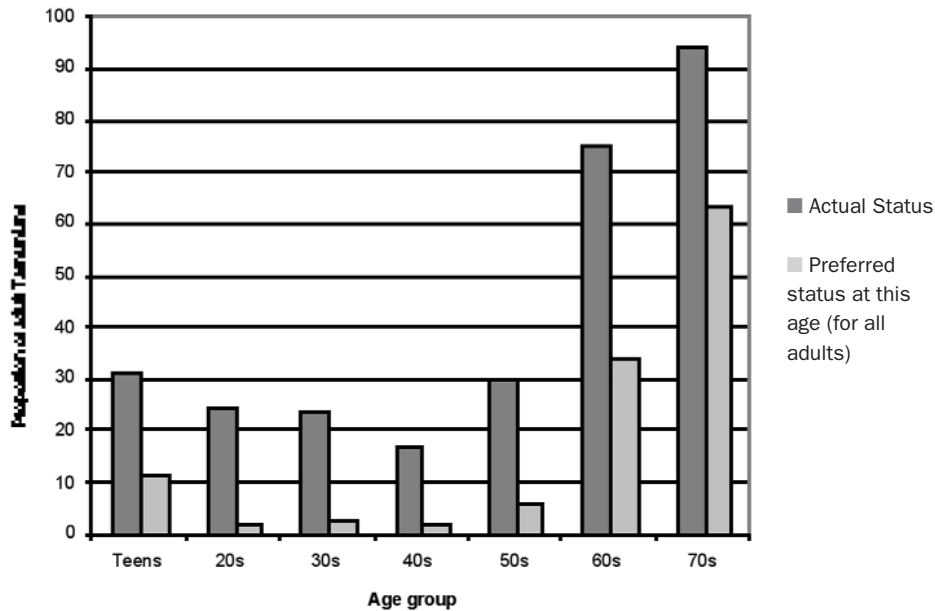


Figure 5.15 Proportion of Tasmanian adults without paid employment grouped by age versus proportion of all adults who report that they would prefer no paid employment when they are/were in that age group

The large differences between the proportion of Tasmanian adults who indicate that they would prefer not to be in paid employment at each life stage and the actual proportion of Tasmanians who are not working in that age group means that there are corresponding differences in the proportion of Tasmanians in each type of employment. As shown in figure 5.16 and 5.17 the proportion of Tasmanians who indicate that they would prefer to have permanent or ongoing employment and be self employed at each life stage is much higher than the proportion of adults who actually have that type of employment when they are in that age group.

4 Where differences are reported as significant they refer to differences which are significant at the 0.05 level

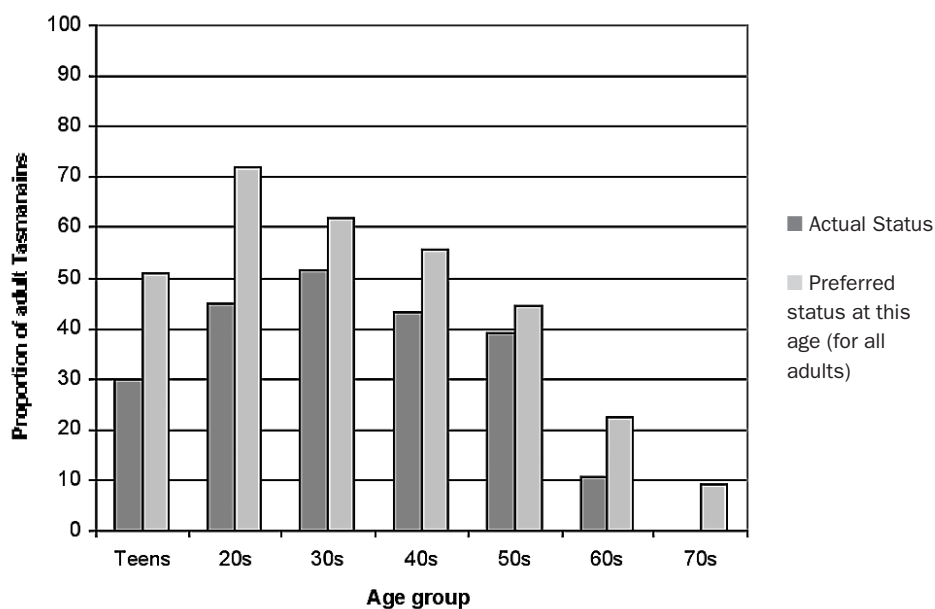
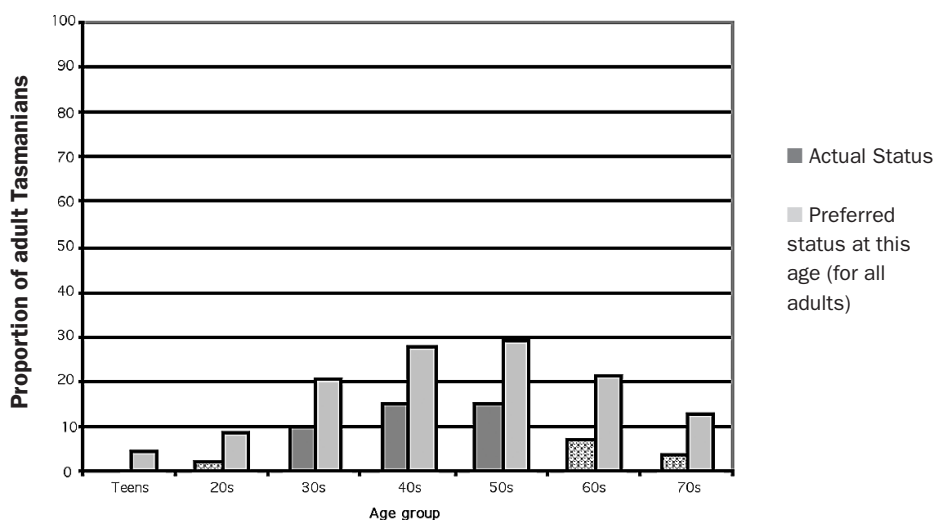


Figure 5.16 Proportion of Tasmanians in permanent or ongoing employment grouped by age versus proportion of all adults who report that they would prefer to be in permanent or ongoing employment when they are/were in that age group

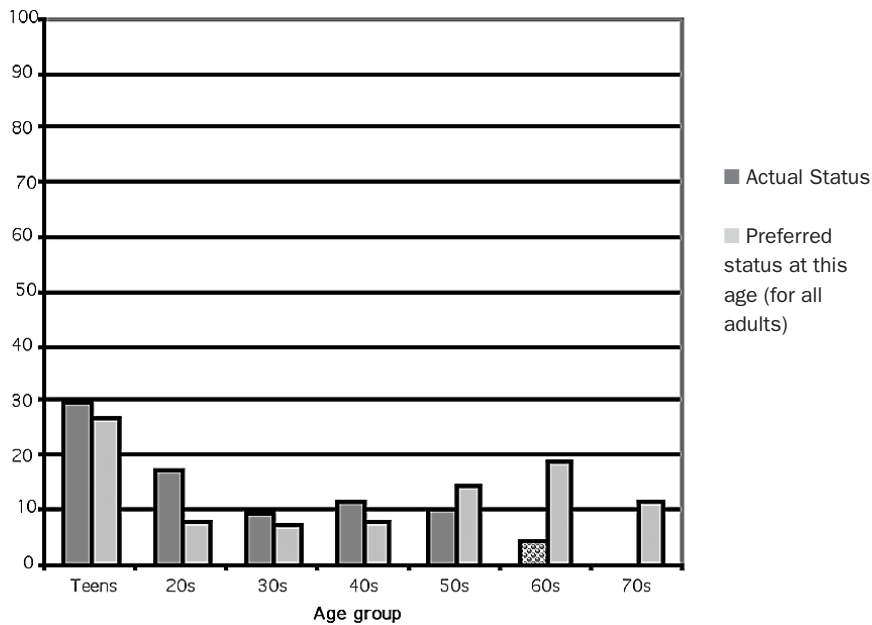


 estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution

Figure 5.17 Proportion of Tasmanians in self-employment grouped by age versus proportion of all adults who report that they would prefer to be self-employed when they are/were in that age group

However, as shown in figure 5.18 the results for casual employment go against this trend. More Tasmanian adults are actually employed as casuals in some age groups than the proportion of adult Tasmanians who report that they would prefer casual employment for these age groups. These differences are statistically significant for the twenties age group and the forties age group.





estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

Figure 5.18 Proportion of Tasmanians in casual employment grouped by age versus proportion of all adults who report that they would prefer to be in casual employment when they are/were in that age group

### Satisfaction

The measurement of satisfaction with various aspects of working life provides an alternative way of assessing the experiences of people who are employed. Satisfaction scales typically ask people to rate their satisfaction on a scale of zero to ten to indicate how satisfied they are with various aspects of their life with zero being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied. Researchers working in this area note that when people are asked to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of life on a zero to ten scale, the scores are not generally evenly spread across all scores, instead the average score tends to be around 7.5 (Cummins, Okerstrom, Woerner & Tomy, 2005). They also argue that each individual tends to have a personal 'set point' for satisfaction and that individual satisfaction scores will tend to return back to this set point in the absence of very positive or very negative life events (Cummins et al, 2005)<sup>5</sup>.

The Tasmanian Community Survey included a range of questions asking employed Tasmanian adults to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of their work. Table 5.10 shows average scores on the 0 to 10 satisfaction scale for these questions. These average scores clearly fit the expected pattern as they are clustered around a score of 7.5. However the average scores do indicate lower than average satisfaction for the amount of pressure or stress people experienced at work and slightly lower levels of satisfaction with total pay. Tasmanian adult workers reported higher than average levels of satisfaction about their relationship with their workmates.

5 Cummins et al (2005) provide an outline of the theoretical framework relating to this 'set-point' and readers interested in the detail of this should refer to the extensive work done on this topic by the Australian Unity research group and other researchers on satisfaction scales.

Table 5.10 Average satisfaction scores for aspects of paid employment

Aspect of work	Average satisfaction score
Your job overall	7.24
Your total pay	6.97
Your job security	7.55
The number of hours you work	7.02
The days and times you work	7.40
Flexibility available to balance work and non-work commitments	7.27
The physical environment of your workplace	7.34
The level of responsibility you have	7.88
Your relationship with your workmates	8.27
The amount of pressure or stress you are under at work	6.03
The respect you are given as a person at work	7.50

These average satisfaction scores were also analysed to see if there were significant differences in the degree of satisfaction reported by workers in different age groups, household types, contract of employment and household income status. Several significant differences were found, particularly for contract of employment and are reported below (see Appendix C for detailed tables showing statistical tests). As shown in table 5.11 the average satisfaction scores for self employed workers were higher than for other adult Tasmanian workers across a range of indicators including overall job satisfaction, job security, flexibility and responsibility. These differences between self-employed people and those who were casual or employees with paid entitlements were significant for all of the items listed below with the exception of satisfaction with relationship with workmates. For this item there was no significant difference in average scores between those who are self employed and casual workers. The only item where the difference between the average satisfaction scores of employees with paid entitlements and casuals was significant was satisfaction with job security – for this indicator, employees with paid entitlements had a higher average satisfaction score than casual workers.

Table 5.11 Average satisfaction scores for aspects of paid employment for Tasmanian adult workers by contract of employment

Contract of employment	Employees with paid entitlements	Self identified casuals	Self employed
Aspect of work			
Your job overall	7.05	7.19	7.48
Your job security	7.54	6.72	8.13
Flexibility available to balance work and non-work commitments	7.17	7.15	7.90
The level of responsibility you have	7.69	7.78	8.73
Your relationship with your workmates	8.16	8.32	8.61

Table 5.12 indicates that younger workers tend to have lower average levels of satisfaction than older workers. The average score for job satisfaction overall for workers aged 18-24 is lower than for workers aged 60-69. The average for workers aged 25-29 years was also lower than workers aged 60-69 years and workers aged 40-49 years.

Table 5.12 also shows that:

- Older workers aged 50-59 and 60-69 years were more satisfied with their level of responsibility than workers in the 25-29
- Workers in the 25-29 years age group were also less satisfied with their relationship with their workmates than workers in all other age groups except those aged 30-39 who had similar average satisfaction score for this item.

Table 5.12 Average satisfaction scores for aspects of paid employment for Tasmanian adult workers by age group

Age	18-24 years	25-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	60-69 years
Aspect of work						
Your job overall	6.93	6.61	7.14	7.34	7.31	7.92
Your level of responsibility	7.60	7.25	7.86	7.91	8.02	8.48
Your relationship with your workmates	8.32	7.55	8.20	8.25	8.40	8.79

Workers were also asked to respond to a series of statements in order to gain a more detailed picture of their experiences and perceptions of work. For these statements workers were asked to rate their responses from 0 if they strongly disagreed with a statement to 10 if they strongly agreed with a statement.

Although on average workers had reported lower levels of satisfaction with the amount of pressure and stress they were under at work than other measures of satisfaction, table 5.13 indicates that on average workers did not feel that they were under extreme stress. They generally disagreed with the statements “my job is more stressful than I ever imagined” or “I fear that the amount of stress in my job will make me physically ill”.

On average workers indicated that they were very confident that their employer would still be in business in 5 years time and felt fairly secure about the future of their own job.

The average score for the statement “I use many of my skills and abilities in my current job” was relatively high (7.63) with slightly lower scores for statements about needing to learn new skills and considering their job to be complex and difficult.

On average workers indicated that there was more freedom for them to decide how they did their work than when they did their work. Moderate scores were recorded for how much say workers felt they had about what happened in their job and the degree to which they felt that their employer took a genuine interest in them and their wellbeing.

Table 5.13 Average scores on 0-10 scale for statements on experiences of employment for adult Tasmanian workers

Statement	Average score for adult Tasmanians
My job is more stressful than I ever imagined	3.77
I fear that the amount of stress in my job will make me physically ill	2.86
I get paid fairly for the things I do in my job	6.58
I have a secure future in my job	6.90
The company I work for will still be in business 5 years from now	8.20
I worry about the future of my job	3.36
My job is complex and difficult	5.24
My job often requires me to learn new skills	6.35
I use many of my skills and abilities in my current job	7.63
I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my own work	6.96
I have a lot of say about what happens in my job	6.05
I have a lot of freedom to decide when I do my work	4.92
My employer takes a genuine interest in me and my wellbeing	6.23

There were also some differences between different groups for some of the statements.

Casual workers on average agreed more strongly (7.11) than employees with paid entitlements (6.40) that they were paid fairly for the things they did in their job. This difference may be related to the casual wage loading that casual workers receive in lieu of paid leave.

There were several differences among groups for the statement that my job is complex and difficult. The average score for workers in the south of the state (5.62) was higher than those in the north (4.93) and north-west (4.71) of the state. Those aged 18-24 had a lower average score for this item (4.10) than those in the 25-29 years (4.80), 30-39 years (5.23) and 40-49 years (5.48) age groups. Those workers who did not have any type of concession card also had much higher average scores for this item (5.51) than those workers who lived in low income households and held a Health Care Card (3.78) or a Pension Concession Card (2.76).

Workers in low income households with a Health Care Card had a lower average score (4.53) for the statement "I have a lot of say about what happens in my job" than those with Pension Concession Cards (5.92) and those without any concession card (6.18).

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## 6. CONCLUSION

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The Tasmanian Community Survey was conducted following a period of five years of strong economic and employment growth for the State. It also follows a long period of labour market readjustment at a national level with particular growth in casual employment.

This survey has found that while employment levels were high during Autumn 2005 there are several major discrepancies between the preferences of Tasmanian workers and their actual employment experiences. Many Tasmanians who are not currently in the labour force indicate that they would prefer to be in paid work between the ages of 20 and 60 and even beyond. Many casual workers would prefer to be in permanent and ongoing positions and many part time workers would prefer to have more hours of paid work.

While these workers, with few hours or insecure contracts of employment, are seeking more hours and greater security, there is also a large group of full-time workers who would prefer to be working less hours despite the impact this would have on their income. These findings indicate that many Tasmanians are seeking to achieve a balance between the need for income and security at work and their lives outside the workforce.

This research indicates that there is much to be done at a state and national level to assist workers and those wishing to enter the workforce to find paid employment which meets their needs. It is particularly important that those workers at the bottom end of the labour market are given the opportunities to ensure that their working lives are secure and rewarding.

What is required is active and strategic leadership from the State Government to address the particular needs of the Tasmanian labour market within a properly resourced Ministry and Office for Employment and Labour.

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## APPENDIX A

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### **Data Weighting**

Population data used to construct the weights for this survey were drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated resident population (ABS, 2003a, b) as at June 30, 2003 and Centrelink Tasmania Payment Statistics for March 2005.

The population was divided into three regions, North, South and North West, which cover areas identical to the ABS statistical divisions. North covers the Northern Statistical Division, South covers the Southern and Greater Hobart Statistical Divisions and North-West covers the Mersey-Lyell Statistical Division.

It was necessary to calculate estimates of the number of 18 and 19 year olds living in each region as people of this age were included in a 15-19 year old age group in the ABS tables. The 18 and 19 year olds were assumed to account for 2/5 of the 15-19 year old population in each region.

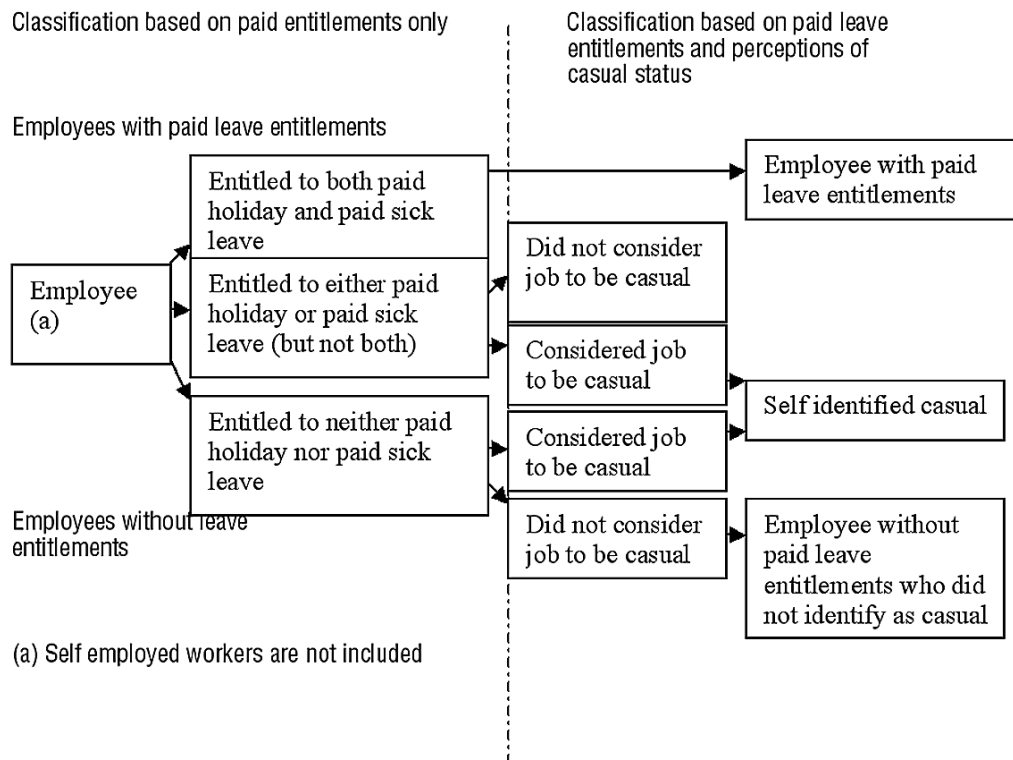
Centrelink data were also used to conduct the weighting as these data provide important information on income status. The March 2005 statistics on payments by local government area were used as this coincided with the time period when the bulk of the survey forms were completed by participants and the LGA areas can be combined together to be geographically identical to the regions outlined above. The categories used were adults in receipt of Youth Allowance, Newstart Allowance, Aged Pension, Disability Support Pension, Parenting Payment Single and Parenting Payment Partnered. Those not in receipt of one of the major income support payments were placed in a separate category which for the purposes of this analysis will be considered as 'non-recipients of the major Centrelink income support payments'. As estimated population data for 2005 was not available, the total population used to determine the size of this 'non-recipient' group was based on the 2003 estimated population figures from the ABS. It should also be noted that there was a group of a few thousand people on the major Centrelink income support payments whose region of residence was unknown; for the purposes of the weighting calculations these adults were distributed proportionally across the three regions according to the overall population living in the region.

## APPENDIX B

### Employment Classification

Working adults were classified into four groups based on whether they had access to paid sick leave and holiday leave and their own perceptions of their employment status. The method for this classification is shown below and is based on the ABS classification method. The ABS used the classification based on paid leave entitlements and perceptions of casual status in its 2001 Forms of Employment Survey. The Tasmanian Community Survey used this classification method and some questions were asked only for those respondents who perceived themselves to be casuals. For this reason the results reported in this document use this classification method for all tables where employment contract is considered. However, in the ABS's 2005 release of the Forms of Employment Survey the main findings of the survey are reported using the paid leave entitlement classification. The classification which uses both paid leave entitlements and own perception of casual status is available but not generally reported.

Flow chart for classifying contract of employment.





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## **APPENDIX C**

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