



THE TOOLS ARE NOW COOL

Opportunities abound for tradespeople with the right skills. Melanie Burgess reports

TRADESPEOPLE are spoiled for choice in the job market, with national job listings growing more than 50 per cent in the past five years. Figures from employment marketplace SEEK reveal the number of ads in the trades and services category jumped 54.1 per cent between 2013 and 2017 financial years, taking account of both industry growth and staff turnover.

SEEK managing director for Australia and New Zealand Michael Ilczynski says automotive trades offered the most jobs during the five-year period, growing 41.6 per cent nationally. These were followed by labourer roles and electrician roles, with job ads rising 117.5 per cent and 19.7 per cent, respectively.

Ilczynski says the average advertised salary for trades and services listings was \$63,681 in the 2017 financial year – up 2 per cent on 2016.

It is the second largest advertising category on SEEK behind information and communication technology (ICT).

A Skilling Australia Foundation

report reveals strong demand in many vocational occupations, with particular skills shortages among technicians and trade workers. In 2015 to 2016 almost two in every five job requests (37 per cent) were left unfilled in this category. Building professionals, chefs, mechanics and construction workers were especially difficult to find.

Skilling Australia Foundation chief executive Nicholas Wyman says there is a range of “respectable, well compensated, upwardly mobile careers” that do not require a university education.

Between 2015 and 2020, Employment Department figures forecast strong employment growth for structural steel construction workers (up 22 per cent or 6400 jobs), electricians (15.7 per cent, 26,100 jobs), precision metal trades workers (15 per cent, 1300 jobs), telecommunications trades workers (12.5 per cent, 2800 jobs), architectural, building and surveying technicians (10.8 per cent, 6200 jobs), gardeners (10.2 per cent, 6600 jobs), carpenters and joiners (9.6 per cent, 12,000 jobs), and wall and floor tilers (9.8 per cent, 2400 jobs).



EXPANDING HIS OPTIONS: Electrical apprentice Nigel Sparshott, at PEER's Albert Park training facility, says there is strong demand for his trade. Picture: DEAN MARTIN