

The Australian HR Institute

# Quarterly Australian Work Outlook

A forward view of the  
Australian labour market

June  
Quarter  
2025

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Australian HR Institute
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# AHRI's Quarterly Australian Work Outlook report

**AHRI's Quarterly Australian Work Outlook – a quarterly report monitoring the state of the Australian labour market – offers a forward view of the work environment facing HR professionals and business leaders.**

I am pleased to introduce the findings from the Australian HR Institute's (AHRI) *Quarterly Australian Work Outlook* for the June quarter of 2025, a comprehensive survey of 600+ senior HR professionals and decision-makers across private, public and not-for-profit organisations in all Australian states and territories.

This report serves as a valuable resource for HR professionals, executives, board members and government departments, as it offers essential insights into recruitment and redundancy intentions, employee turnover rates and pay expectations.

The latest *Quarterly Australian Work Outlook* report presents a broadly positive employment outlook.

In a continuation of recent trends, employment is expected to grow strongly in the June quarter 2025, albeit at a slightly slower pace than in previous surveys.

The report shows that net employment intentions, which measures the overall effect on employment of recruitment and redundancy activity are still strong, with the proportion of employers intending to increase staffing levels well above those intending to decrease them, and the net employment intentions index showing that employment will continue to grow strongly in both the private (+35) and public sectors (+50) (Figure 1). However, while the index remains strong and stable at +38 in the June 2025 quarter compared with the +39 recorded in the March 2025 quarter, the longer-term trend shows a gradual easing in the strength of employment intentions over time.

## FOREWORD

The average employee turnover rate in Australian workplaces remains flat at 15 per cent in the June quarter (previously 16 per cent) however, the share of organisations reporting employee turnover levels of 20 per cent or more has fallen sharply to 27 per cent from 34 per cent in the previous quarter.

At the same time, the labour market appears to have tightened again for some employers, with the proportion of organisations reporting recruitment difficulties rising to 38 per cent in the June 2025 quarter. This reverses the easing in recruitment difficulties we saw in the previous two quarters, taking workplaces back to the same level of recruitment difficulty they experienced in the first half of 2024. It is unclear what the specific drivers are, however it is likely due to challenges across a range of factors including job-seekers' skills and experience, rising wage expectations, and the reduction in the permanent migration program cap for 2024-25.

Employers reported that the mean basic pay increase in their organisation (excluding bonuses) is expected to be 3.3 per cent for the 12 months to April 2026, up slightly from 3 per cent for the 12 months to January 2026 and 2.7 per cent for the 12 months to October 2025. Wage expectations for this latest period are higher in the public sector (3.7 per cent) than the private sector (3.2 per cent).

The increase in wage expectations aligns with the recent decision by the Fair Work Commission to award substantial pay increases to a number of industries and professions, such as health professionals. It will be interesting to see how this affects actual nominal wage growth, which in recent months has been slowing in response to lower inflation. Growing wage expectations highlight the need for business and government to prioritise productivity growth.

## FOREWORD

Evidence shows that effective people management is vital to driving both high productivity and strong organisational performance. Recent AHRI research<sup>1</sup> reinforces this, showing that organisations implementing High-Performance Work (HPW) practices, such as flexible working and greater employee consultation, are more likely to achieve higher profitability.

The policy focus of this quarter's report is on the effect of recent changes to workplace regulation. Many employers reported that a number of the reforms, such as changes to fixed-term contracts, casual employment and the Respect@Work agenda, have had a positive impact on their organisation, including on productivity and employee engagement.

In addition, employers appear open to further changes, including extending the right to request flexible working and extending protections around perimenopause and menopause.

It is also important to note that the data reflects the views of business leaders and HR professionals, who are well placed to assess the impact of changes to employment legislation on both the organisation and employees.

While this latest *Quarterly Australian Work Outlook* indicates an ongoing strength in the labour market, albeit with some longer-term easing, there are a number of risks to stability going forward, including the effect of the higher tariffs across the global economy.

I look forward to engaging further with our members on the findings of this quarter's report and its implications for HR and our workplaces.

**Sarah McCann-Bartlett**  
CEO, Australian HR Institute

AHRI welcomes feedback on this report and ideas and suggestions for how the quarterly series might be developed. These should be sent to: [research@ahri.com.au](mailto:research@ahri.com.au)

1. *High Performance Work Systems Report*  
[ahri.com.au/resources/hr-research/high-performance-work-systems](http://ahri.com.au/resources/hr-research/high-performance-work-systems)

A smiling man in a white shirt holding a laptop in an office setting. The background is a blurred office environment with a woman in a white dress working at a desk.

## At a glance:

40% of organisations plan to increase staff levels; only 3% anticipate reductions.

# Summary of key findings

1

The AHRI Net Employment Intentions Index, which measures the difference between the proportion of employers that expect to increase staff levels and those that expect to decrease staff levels, remains strong and stable at +38 in the June quarter of 2025, compared with +39 in the March 2025 quarter. However, the longer-term trend shows a gradual easing in the strength of employment intentions over time. Employment is expected to continue to grow strongly in both the private (+35) and public sectors (+50).

2

Forty per cent of organisations intend to increase staff levels in the June quarter of 2025, compared with just 3 per cent that anticipate reducing the size of their workforce over the same period.

3

Sixty-four per cent of organisations plan to recruit staff in the June quarter of 2025, unchanged from the figure recorded for the March quarter of 2025.

4

Twenty-three per cent of employers intend to make some staff redundant this quarter – unchanged from the figure recorded for the March 2025 quarter.

5

Thirty-eight per cent of organisations report experiencing recruitment difficulties in the June quarter of 2025, up from 30 per cent in the March 2025 quarter.

6

The 12-month average employee turnover to the end of March 2025 was 15 per cent, about the same as in the previous quarter (16 per cent).

7

Fifty-eight per cent reported that the introduction of the right to disconnect had either 'significantly increased' or 'somewhat increased' employee engagement and productivity levels at their organisation. Thirty-seven per cent of employers reported that they had seen 'mostly positive changes' in the stress levels of employees.

8

Almost half (48 per cent) of employers say they would like to see the right to request flexible working extended to all employees now. In addition, just under a third (30 per cent) support the policy, but not before 2027.

# 1. Employment outlook for the upcoming quarter

The AHRI quarterly survey asks employers how they expect staffing levels to change in the next quarter.

While this should not be read as a forecast of what will actually happen, it nonetheless reflects employers' general mood or sentiment about the economy and the labour market at the time of each survey.

AHRI's Net Employment Intentions Index for the June 2025 quarter, which measures the difference between the proportion of employers who expect to increase staffing levels and those who expect to decrease staffing levels, suggests that the recent pattern of strong employment growth will continue in the June 2025 quarter.

The *AHRI Net Employment Intentions Index* can be used as a proxy for employers' projected demand for labour and provides an indicator of how the jobs market may fare in the current quarter.

The *AHRI Net Employment Intentions Index* is calculated by taking the percentage of employers intending to increase staffing levels and subtracting the percentage of employers intending to decrease staffing levels:

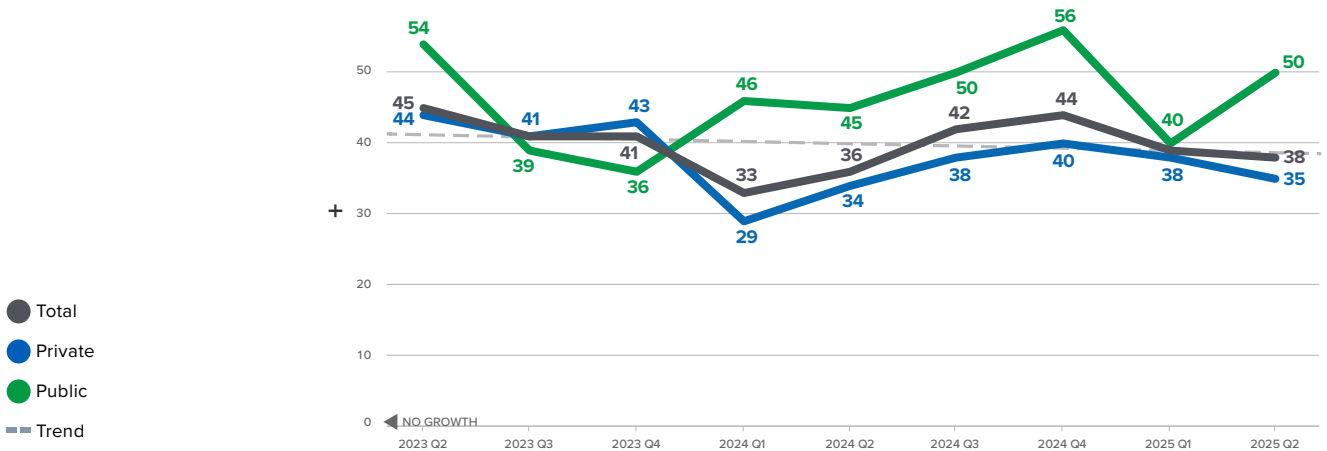
- An index of +100 would mean that all organisations intend to increase staffing levels
- An index of -100 would mean that all organisations intend to decrease staffing levels
- A 0 index could mean that either all organisations expect no change in employment levels, or that 50% of employers intend to increase staffing levels while the other 50% intend to decrease staffing levels.

## EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

The report shows that AHRI’s Net Employment Intentions Index, which measures the overall effect of recruitment and redundancy activity, remains largely stable at +38 in the June 2025 quarter, at about the same level as the +39 recorded in the March 2025 quarter. However, the longer-term trend indicates some easing in the strength of the index.

The report shows that employment will continue to grow strongly in both the private (+35) and public sectors (+50) (Figure 1). In terms of sub-sectors, consistent with recent trends, employment growth intentions are strongest in the production sector (+41) and, while still positive, weakest in the construction sector (+23).

**Figure 1:** AHRI Net Employment Intentions Index  
June quarter 2025



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619  
(private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

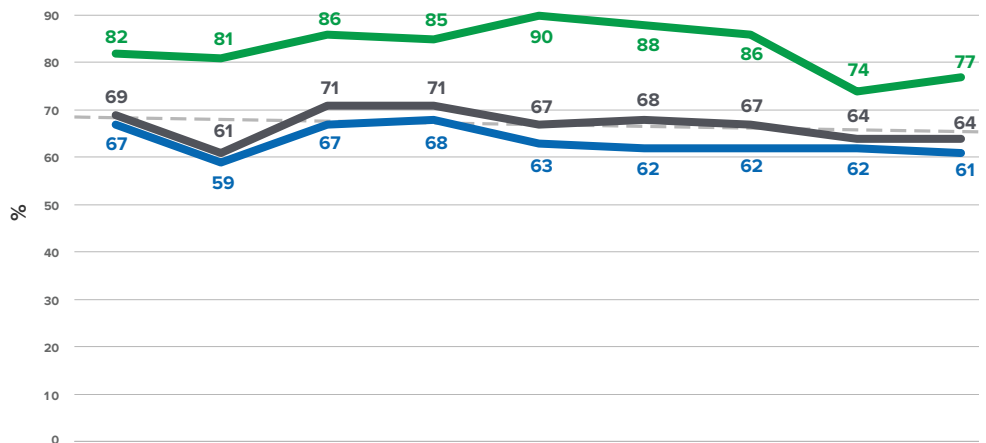
# Recruitment intentions

June quarter 2025

**AHRI asked respondents to share their recruitment intentions for the upcoming quarter.**

In the June quarter of 2025, 64 per cent of organisations plan to hire staff, which while the same as the previous quarter, equals the second lowest level for recruitment intentions recorded in any of our surveys (Figure 2). Recruitment intentions remain higher in the public sector (77 per cent) than in the private sector (61 per cent).

**Figure 2: Recruitment intentions June quarter 2025**



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)



## At a glance:

38% of organisations report experiencing recruitment difficulties in the June quarter of 2025, up from 30% in the March 2025 quarter.

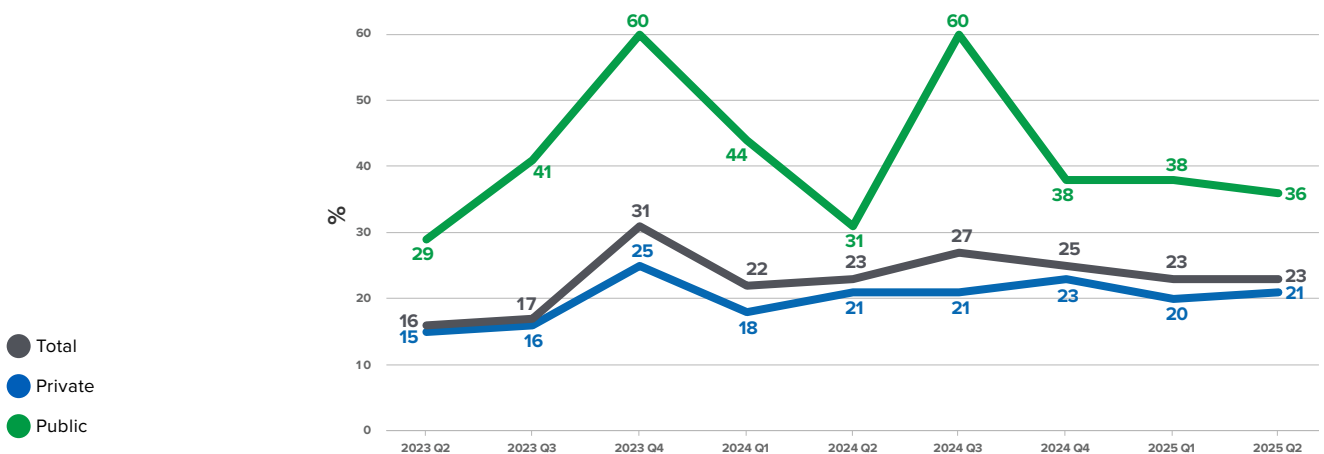
# Redundancy intentions

June quarter 2025

**Almost a quarter of employers expect to make workers redundant this quarter.**

Almost a quarter (23 per cent) of employers expect to make workers redundant in the June 2025 quarter, unchanged compared with the March 2025 quarter. This figure is in line with the survey’s historical average (23 per cent). As in previous reports, redundancy intentions are higher in the public sector (36 per cent) than in the private sector (21 per cent). Redundancy intentions are highest in the distribution sector (29 per cent).

**Figure 3: Redundancy intentions, June quarter 2025**



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

# Recruitment difficulties

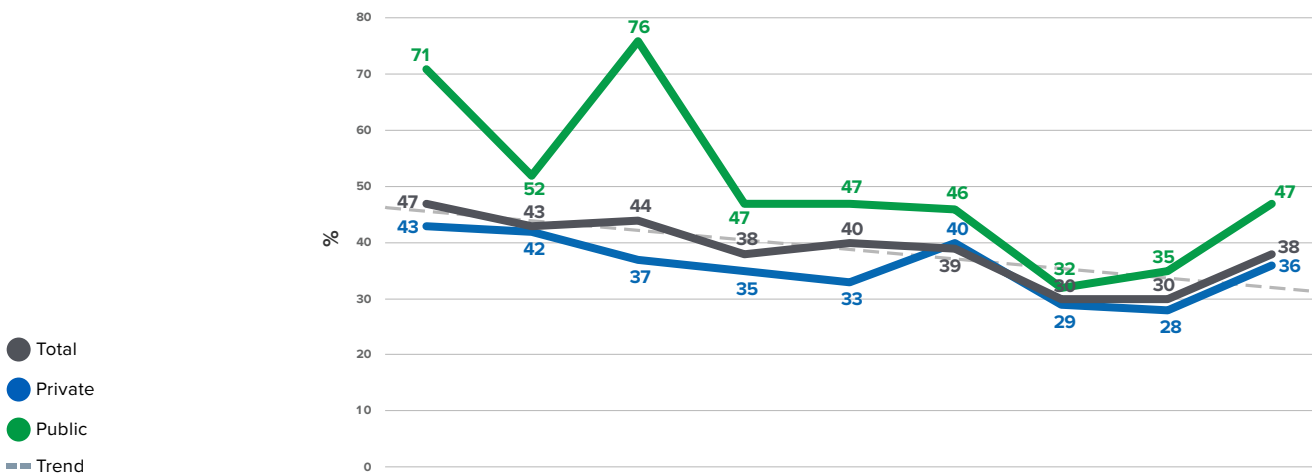
June quarter 2025

**38 per cent of recruiting employers are experiencing recruitment difficulties.**

Almost four in ten (38 per cent) of recruiting employers report that they are currently experiencing recruitment difficulties, up from 30 per cent in the March 2025 quarter (see Figure 4). While a significant increase compared with the previous quarter, the percentage of organisations experiencing recruitment difficulties is still lower than the longer-term average.

Consistent with previous reports, the incidence of recruitment difficulties is lower in the private sector (36 per cent) than in the public sector (47 per cent). In terms of sub-sectors, recruitment difficulties are highest in the health and education sectors (49 per cent).

**Figure 4: Share of recruiting organisations currently experiencing recruitment difficulties**



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all recruiting employers n=554 (private: n=440; public: n=97; not-for-profit: n=17)

# Employee turnover

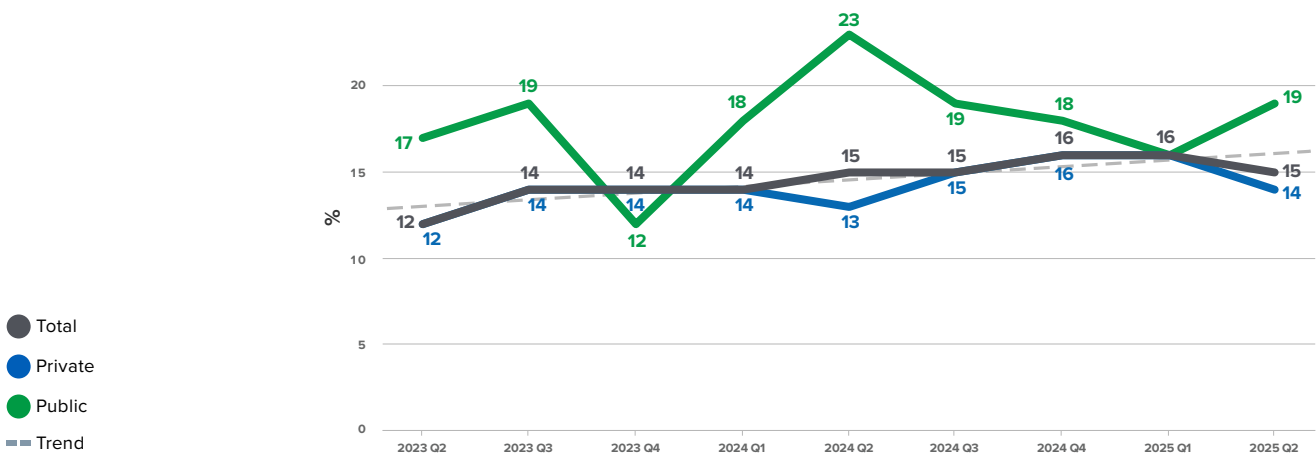
June quarter 2025

The average employee turnover was 15 per cent.

The average employee turnover (which includes involuntary and voluntary turnover) in Australian workplaces for the 12 months to the end of March 2025 was 15 per cent (see Figure 5). This is broadly consistent with recent *Quarterly Australian Work Outlook* reports.

However, there was some divergence between the sectors. While the employee turnover rate for the public sector increased from 16 per cent to 19 per cent compared with the previous quarter, it fell in the private sector from 16 per cent to 14 per cent.

Figure 5: Annual employee turnover to March 2025



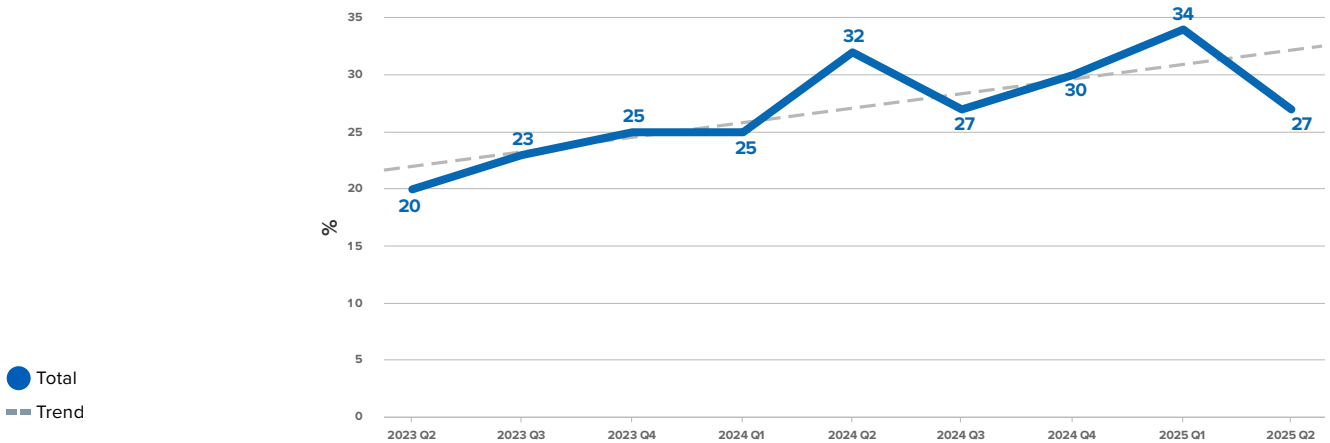
Base: June quarter 2025, all employers who are aware of organisation’s turnover rate n=602 (private: n=483; public: n=100; not-for-profit: n=19)

# EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

However, as in previous surveys, there was considerable variation across organisations. At one end, more than two fifths of organisations (44 per cent) said that total annual average employee turnover for the 12-month period was less than 10 per cent.

At the other end, around a quarter (27 per cent) of organisations reported that total annual average employee turnover for the same period was 20 per cent and higher, lower than in the previous two quarterly reports, although in line with the survey’s historical average (Figure 6).

**Figure 6:** Share of organisations reporting annual employee turnover of 20 per cent and higher



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers who are aware of organisation’s turnover rate n=602 (private: n=483; public: n=100; not-for-profit: n=19)

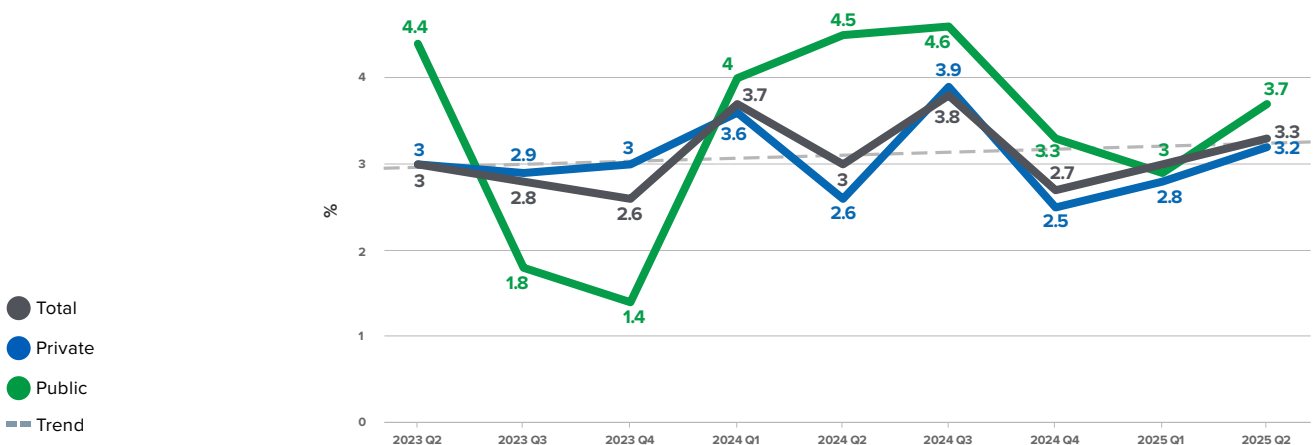
## 2. Wages outlook for the 12 months to April 2026

Pay increase expectations have risen to 3.3 per cent.

Pay increase expectations for the 12 months to April 2026 have risen to 3.3 per cent, slightly up on the 3 per cent recorded in the previous quarter. Wage expectations are somewhat higher in the public sector (+3.7 per cent) than in the private sector (+3.2 per cent).

Only 12 per cent of employers reported that they are planning to implement a pay freeze. A third (33 per cent) of employers reported that they do not yet know the extent of wage changes in their organisation for the 12 months to April 2026.

**Figure 7: Employers' mean total fixed remuneration expectations for the 12 months to April 2026**



**Base:** June 2025 quarter, all employers who are clear about the extent of wage increases/decreases over the next 12 months (n=433; private: n=335; public: n=81; not for profit: n=17)

## At a glance:

58% of employers reported that the right to disconnect had increased employee engagement and productivity.



## 3. Focus

# Employers' views on recent employment legislation

This quarter's Australian Work Outlook survey asked employers about recent changes to employment legislation.

Over the last three years, Australian workplaces have seen the implementation of an ambitious and fast-moving workplace legislative-change program.

HR practitioners, who are responsible for leading and implementing these changes in the workplace, have reported increased workload, including the need to understand the practical application of the changes on their organisation and employees, update workplace policy and practice, train managers and inform employees, all in a remarkably short period of time.

To understand the actual effect of these workplace legislative changes on Australian workplaces, this quarter's Focus section examines employers' experiences of implementing some of the key legislative changes introduced through the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes) Act 2023* (Cth) and the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Closing Loopholes No 2) Act 2024* (Cth) alongside other legislative changes.

Despite the administrative burden and potential cost of some of these changes, this survey has found that the proportion of employers that say these amendments have had a positive impact on their workplace outweighs those who say they have had a negative impact.

## FOCUS

In addition, the survey results suggest that employers are interested in further policy interventions, such as extending the right to request flexible working to all employees.

Survey respondents were provided with a list of workplace legislative changes introduced in the last Parliament and were asked whether they have had a positive or negative impact on their organisation. The net impact was calculated by taking the percentage who said positive and subtracting the percentage who said it was negative.

The results show that many of the policies were perceived to have had an overall positive impact on organisations. The Respect@Work agenda, which was designed to support individuals and organisations in preventing and responding to workplace sexual harassment and bullying, was perceived to have the most positive impact on Australian workplaces, with a net positive rating of +66. Other 'net positive' legislative changes included flexible working (+47), limits on fixed-term contracts (+37) and casual employment conversion (+35).

Responses were more balanced for other policies, in particular the wage theft laws which had a net positive rating of +5.

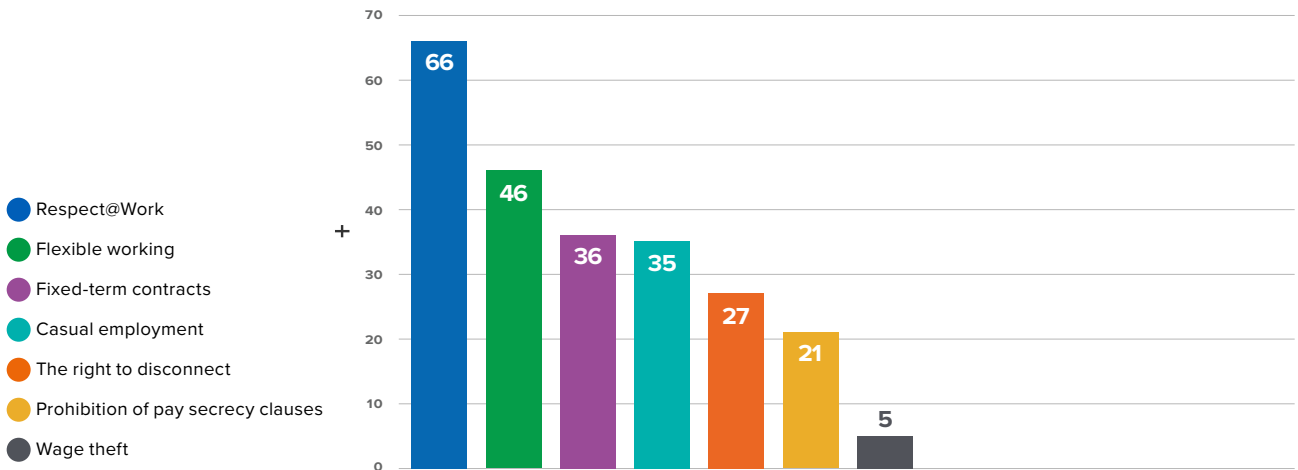
There was a difference in the perceived impact of the wage theft laws on large and small organisations. Forty-two per cent of large organisations reported that the new wage theft laws have had a positive impact on their organisation, while just 21 per cent of small organisations said the same. Overall, a quarter of employers (25 per cent) reported that the wage theft laws had had a negative impact on their organisation, as compared with 30 per cent of employers that perceived a positive impact.

### Summary of key legislative changes:

Policy	Overview	Date came into force
<b>Right to disconnect</b>	The right to disconnect gives employees the right to refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact (or attempted contact) outside their working hours unless that refusal is unreasonable.	26 August 2024 for organisations with 15 or more employees. For small businesses, the law will apply from 26 August 2025.
<b>Casual employment</b>	Some of the key changes to casual employment laws include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new requirement to provide a Casual Employment Information Statement</li> <li>• A new pathway for eligible employees to change to full-time or part-time (permanent) employment</li> <li>• A new definition of ‘casual employee’.</li> </ul>	26 August 2024 for organisations with 15 or more employees. For small businesses, the law will apply from 26 August 2025.
<b>Fixed-term contracts</b>	Some of the key changes to fixed-term contract laws include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed-term contracts are now limited to a maximum of two years, including any extensions or renewals (although there are exemptions)</li> <li>• An employee can’t have more than two consecutive contracts for the same or similar work, except in certain circumstances</li> <li>• A requirement for employers to give any employees they’re engaging on a new fixed term contract a Fixed Term Contract Information Statement (FTCIS).</li> </ul>	6 December 2023
<b>Respect@Work</b>	Employers now have a legal obligation to take proactive and reasonable measures to eliminate workplace sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and victimisation. The changes also include a new, broadened definition of sexual harassment.	12 December 2023
<b>Flexible working</b>	Employers are now under stricter obligations to consider and negotiate the right to request flexible-working requests. In addition, there are new powers for employees to challenge refusals through the Fair Work Commission.	6 June 2023
<b>Wage theft</b>	Employers that deliberately underpay employees now face criminal charges. Penalties include fines and imprisonment. In addition, the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) now has enhanced authority to investigate suspected criminal underpayments and refer cases for prosecution. Employers are encouraged to self-disclose underpayments and cooperate with the FWO to mitigate potential penalties.	1 January 2025
<b>Prohibition of pay secrecy clauses</b>	Employers are prohibited from including pay secrecy clauses in new employment contracts or agreements. Employees also now have the right to disclose (or not disclose) their own pay and terms/conditions of employment that determine pay outcomes. They can also ask colleagues about their pay and conditions.	7 June 2023

**Figure 8:** Thinking about your organisation, which, if any, of the following policies has impacted your organisation in a positive or negative way?

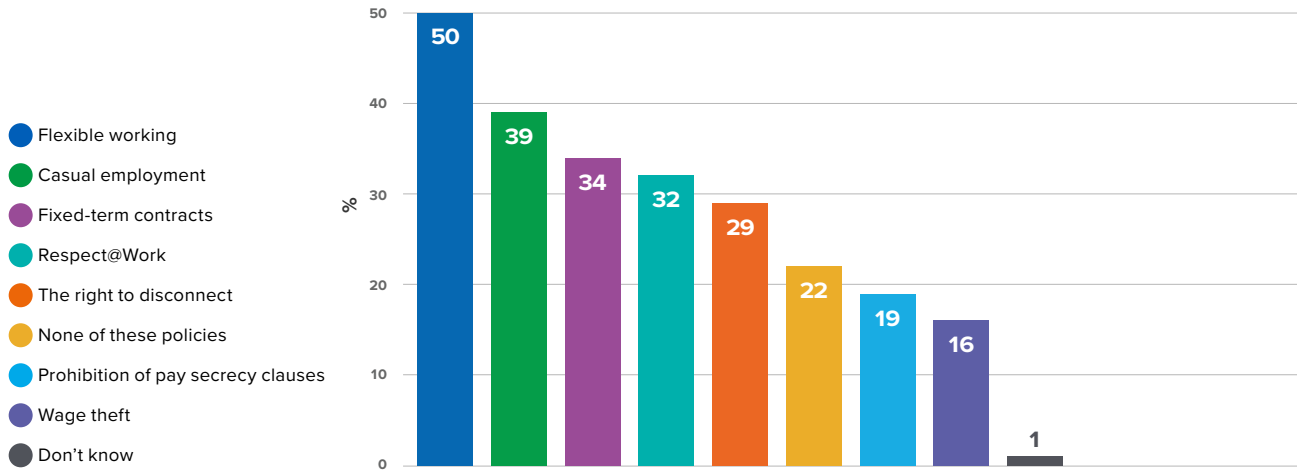
These ratings are calculated by taking the percentage of employers who say that policies have positively impacted on their organisation and subtracting the percentage of employers who say that policies have negatively impacted on their organisation. For example, a rating of +100 would mean that all employers report that policies have positively impacted on their organisation.



**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

Employers were also asked whether any of the policies had led to changes in their organisation. The legislative changes most likely to lead to change within organisations were flexible working (50 per cent of organisations), casual employment (39 per cent), and fixed-term contracts (34 per cent).

**Figure 9:** Thinking about your organisation, which, if any, of the following policies and/or any changes made by your organisation in responding to these policies has led directly to change of policy or practice at your organisation?



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619  
(private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

# Right to disconnect

**The right to disconnect gives employees the right to refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact (or attempted contact) outside their working hours unless that refusal is unreasonable.**

Employers were asked to assess the impact of the right to disconnect on a range of performance measures, in order to understand the impact of the new legislation on employers and employees against a range of criteria.

Many employers reported benefits to productivity and employee engagement as a direct result of the introduction of the right to disconnect legislation. Overall, 58 per cent reported that the legislation had either ‘significantly increased’ or ‘somewhat increased’ employee engagement and productivity levels at their organisation. This was particularly apparent among public-sector employers, 75 per cent of whom reported seeing benefits to employee engagement.

In addition, a higher share (77 per cent) of public-sector employers said that the new right to disconnect legislation had either ‘significantly increased’ or ‘somewhat increased’ productivity at their organisation.

In contrast, just 4 per cent of organisations reported that the right to disconnect legislation had either ‘significantly decreased’ or ‘somewhat decreased’ both employee engagement and productivity levels. There were no significant differences by sector.

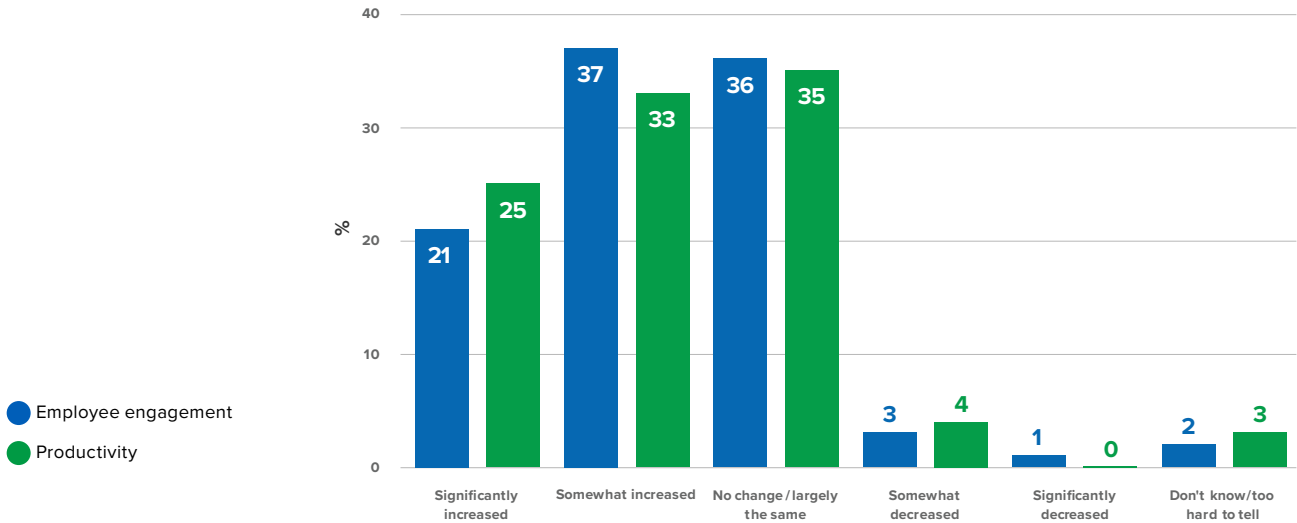
A smiling man with short, grey-tinted hair and a light beard, wearing a black blazer over a white t-shirt. He is buttoning his jacket. The background is dark with geometric patterns. A blue square is in the top right corner.

## At a glance:

Almost half of employers would like to see the right to request flexible working extend to all employees now.

As might be expected, small employers that employ between two and 19 employees were far less likely to report increased productivity and employee engagement levels because small businesses are not yet covered by the legislation, which is set to commence operation for them from 26 August 2025.

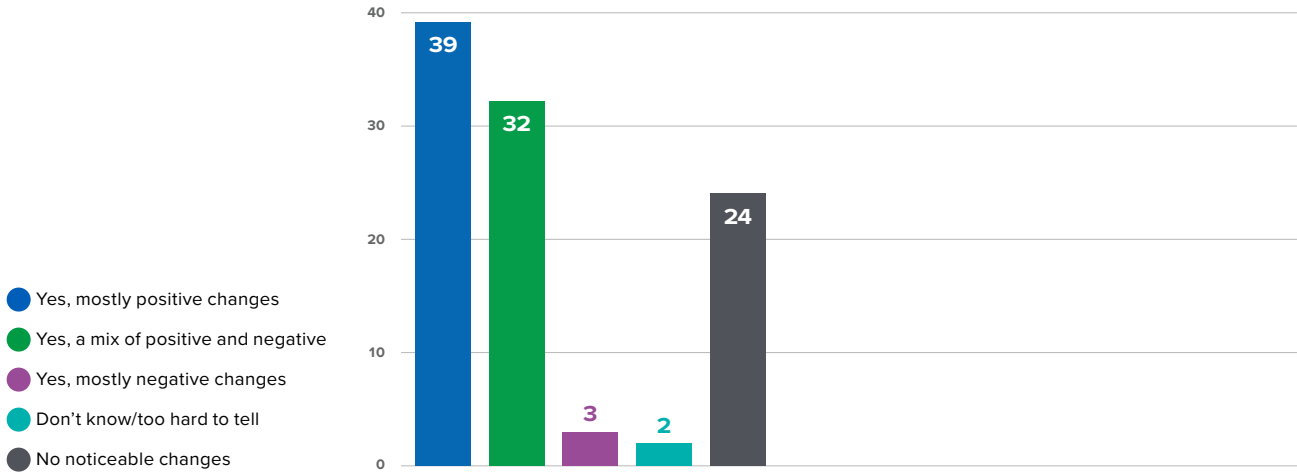
**Figure 10:** To what extent, if at all, have you noticed any changes in the following aspects of your organisation post-legislation of the right to disconnect and/or any changes made by your organisation in responding to this legislation in relation to productivity and employee engagement?



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

Overall, almost four in ten (39 per cent) employers reported benefits to work-life balance among employees at their organisation (Figure 11) as a direct result of the right to disconnect legislation. In comparison, just 3 per cent of employers reported negative changes to work-life balance. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) of employers reported no noticeable changes.

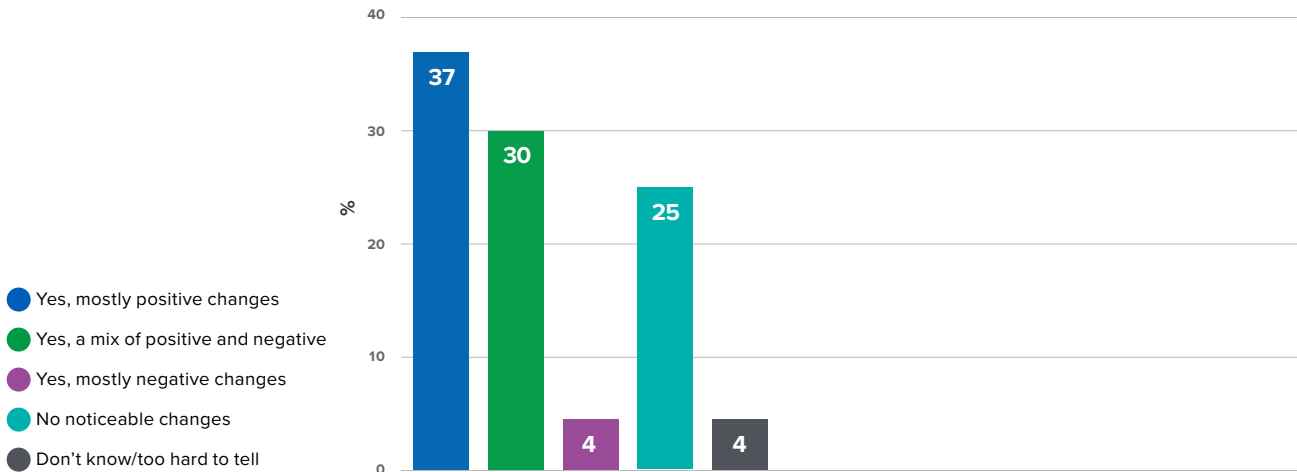
**Figure 11:** Have you noticed any changes in the work-life balance among employees of your organisation post-legislation of the right to disconnect and/or any changes made by your organisation in responding to this legislation?



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

Similar results were reported by employers regarding employee stress levels. Thirty-seven per cent of employers reported that they had seen ‘mostly positive changes’ in the stress levels among employees of their organisation post-implementation of the right to disconnect legislation.

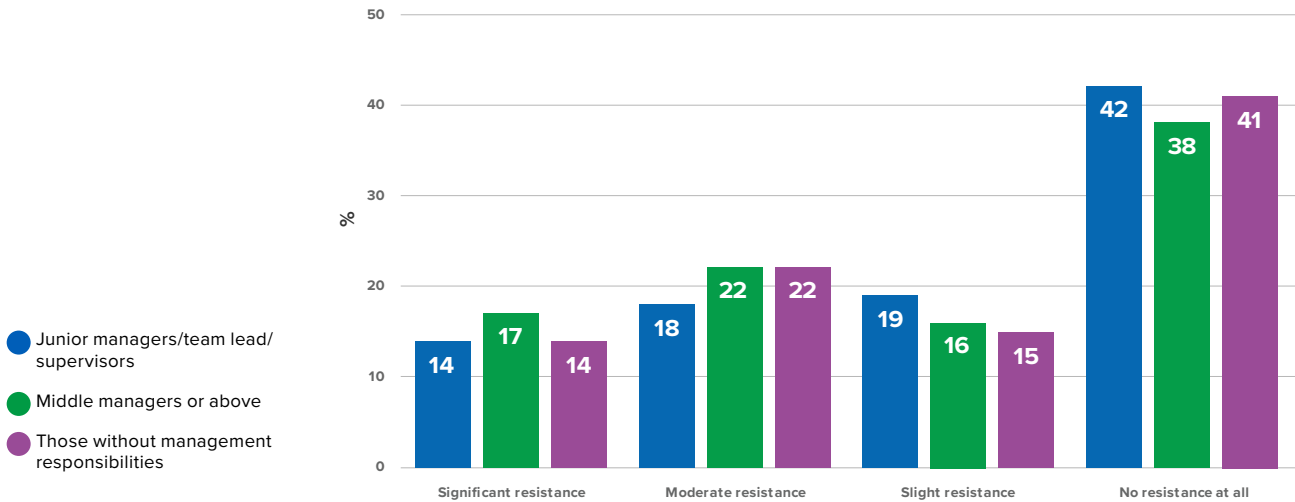
**Figure 12:** Have you noticed any changes in the stress levels among employees of your organisation post-legislation of the right to disconnect and/or any changes made by your organisation in responding to this legislation?



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

Despite these positive findings, employers report that some employees have found the adjustment difficult, with 38 per cent of organisations indicating that the changes had been met with resistance from middle managers. This result was particularly true of large organisations that employ 200 employees or more. Almost half (47 per cent) of large organisations reported resistance from middle managers regarding the new right to disconnect legislation.

**Figure 13:** Thinking about your organisation, have you noticed any employee resistance to the legislation and/or any changes made by your organisation in responding to this legislation? Please select the option that best applies per row



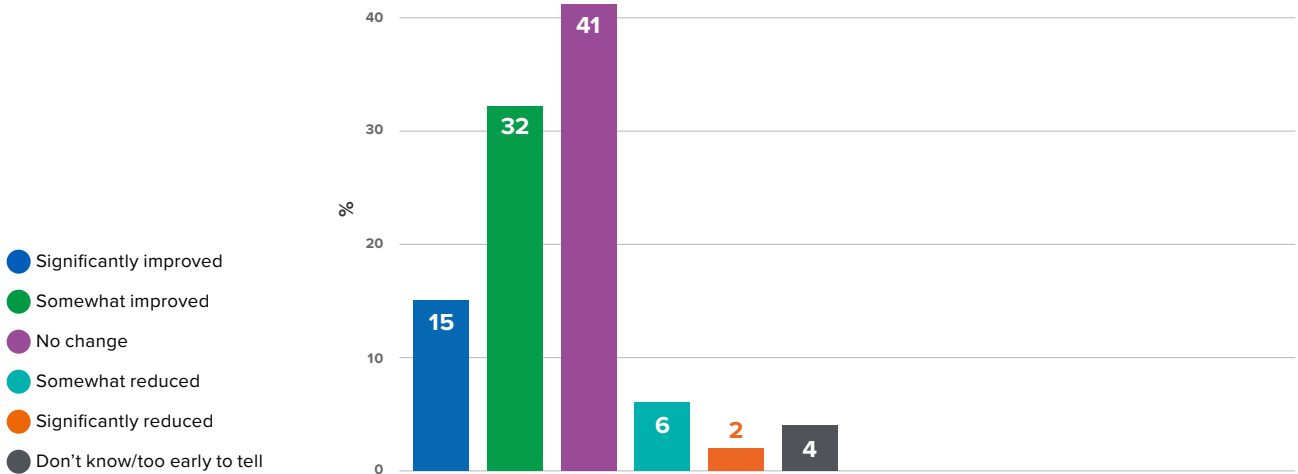
**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

It appears that the legislation has only had a noticeable operational impact on a small proportion of employers, with just 10 per cent of organisations reporting that the right to disconnect had affected their organisation’s communication practices outside of standard working hours. However, there was some variation across sectors; this was most notable in the public sector, where almost a quarter (23 per cent) of employers said that they had been operationally affected. There were no significant differences in terms of organisation size.

It also seems that the introduction of the right to disconnect has improved organisations’ ability to manage urgent or time-sensitive matters outside standard working hours, with nearly half (47 per cent) reporting an improvement in this area.

That said, there is some variation by size of organisation. Almost two thirds (62 per cent) of small employers say that they have not seen any changes in the management of urgent or time-sensitive matters outside standard working hours, compared with an all-survey average of 41 per cent.

**Figure 14:** How, if at all, have the right to disconnect legislation and/or changes made by your organisation in response to this legislation impacted your organisation’s ability to manage urgent or time-sensitive matters outside standard working hours?



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

# Casual Employment

**Some of the key changes to casual-employment laws include:**

- A new requirement to provide a Casual Employment Information Statement
- A new pathway for eligible employees to change to full-time or part-time (permanent) employment
- A new definition of 'casual employee'.

**By international standards, Australia's workforce has a large proportion of casual employees.**

Against the background of recent changes to casual-employment legislation which came into force in August 2024, the survey asked employers what proportion of the workforce is typically made up of casual employees across each quarter of the year.

Underlining Australian employers' reliance on casual employees, 77 per cent of employers say that they make use of casual staff.

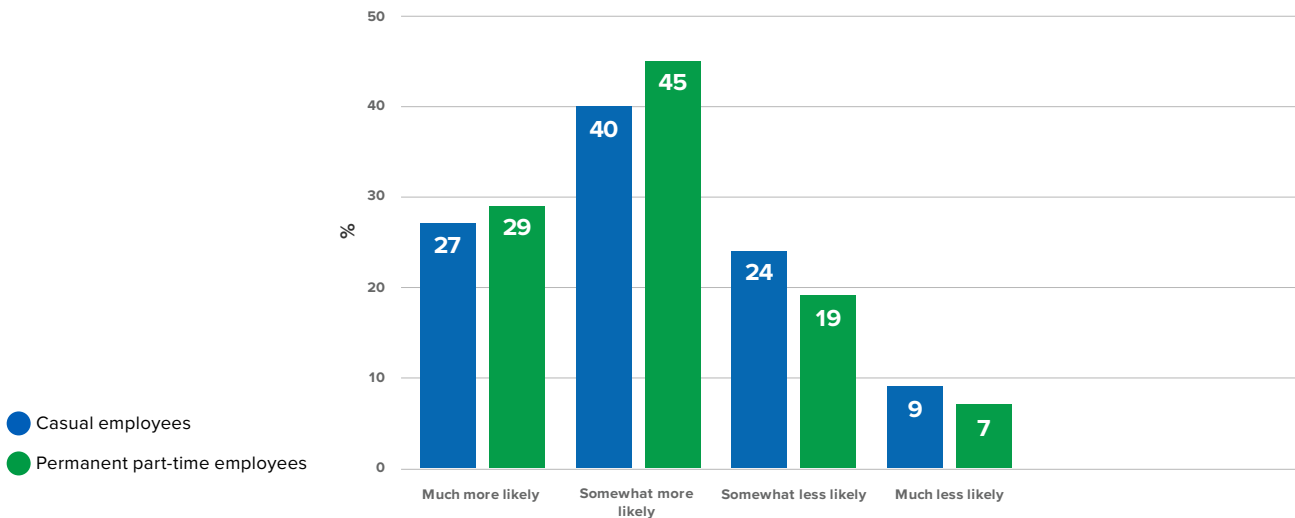
During the course of the year, employers reported that the proportion of casual employees in all Australian workplaces (including organisations that don't employ casual employees) was at its lowest point (23.6 per cent) in Q3 2024 and at its highest (26.4 per cent) in Q1 2025. The survey data is broadly consistent with the latest official data, which shows that around 22 per cent of employees are engaged without paid holiday or sick leave entitlements<sup>2</sup>.

2. Working arrangements, August 2024 | Australian Bureau of Statistics

It might surprise some commentators to see more than two thirds (68 per cent) of employers report that they are more likely to employ casual employees following the implementation of the new legislation. By comparison, a third (32 per cent) of employers say that they are either ‘somewhat less likely’ or ‘much less likely’ to employ casuals.

As might be expected, the share of small organisations who say that they are less likely to hire casual employees is higher at 41 per cent than the all-survey average of 33 per cent.

**Figure 15:** How much more or less likely, if at all, is your organisation to employ the following types of employees now compared to before the changes to casual employment laws were introduced: a) casual employees and b) permanent part-time employees?

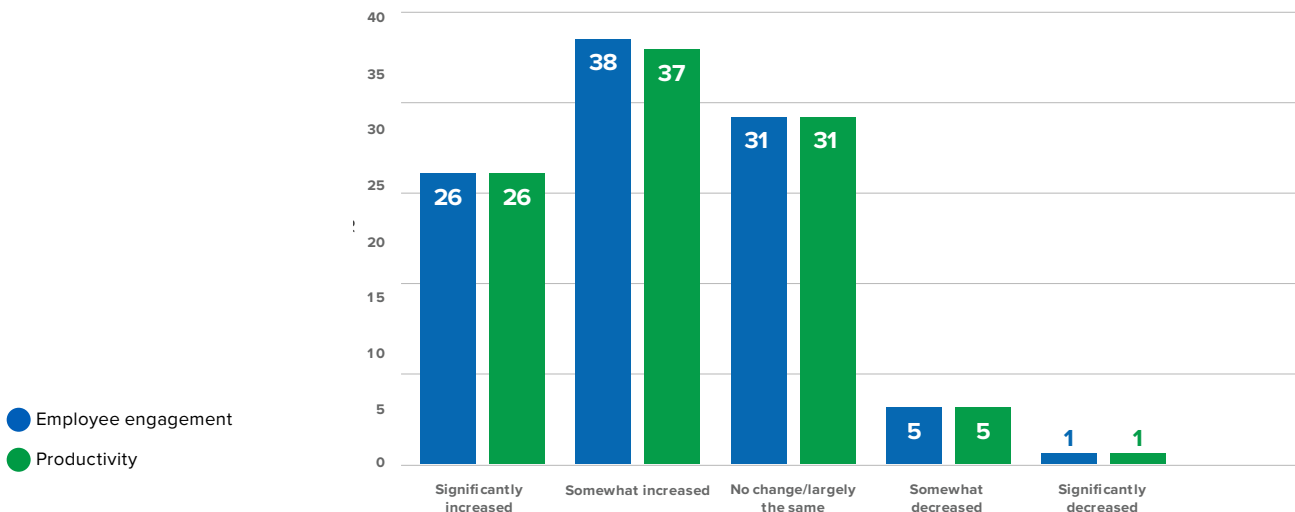


**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

To determine whether any negative or positive attitudes towards the new casual-employee legislation are based on experience, the survey asked employers to assess the impact of the new casual-employment provisions on employee engagement and productivity.

The survey data suggests that both employee engagement and productivity levels have received a boost since the new rules were implemented (Figure 15). Almost two thirds (64 per cent) of employers attribute the new rules to higher levels of employee engagement in their organisation, and a similar proportion (62 per cent) say the same of productivity growth in their organisation.

**Figure 16:** To what extent, if at all, has the new legislation (i.e., the definition of casual work, the pathway to full/part-time employment, employee and employer responsibilities, etc.) and/or any changes made by your organisation in responding to these legislations influenced the following aspects of your organisation: employee engagement and productivity?

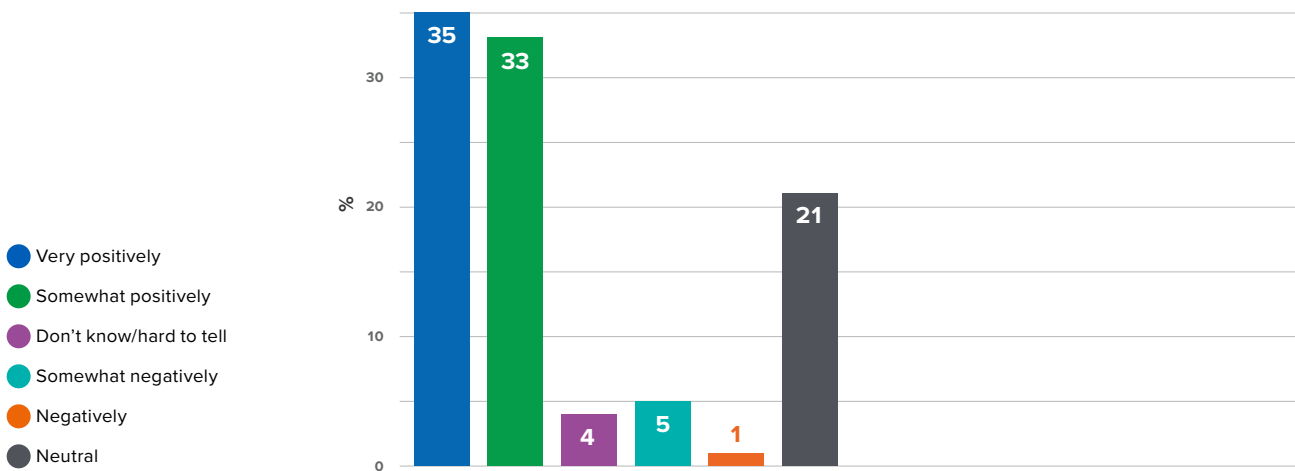


**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers that employ casual employees n=485 (private: n=377; public: n=95; not-for-profit: n=13)

The data also suggests that the legislative changes have been well-received by casual employees. More than two thirds (69 per cent) of employers say the rules have been viewed positively by casual employees, compared with just over a fifth (21 per cent) who say it has had a neutral impact.

Just 6 per cent say that the changes have been viewed negatively by casual employees and 4 per cent were unsure.

**Figure 17:** Overall, what is your assessment of how casual employees have viewed the changes that have arisen from the legislation? Please select the option that best applies

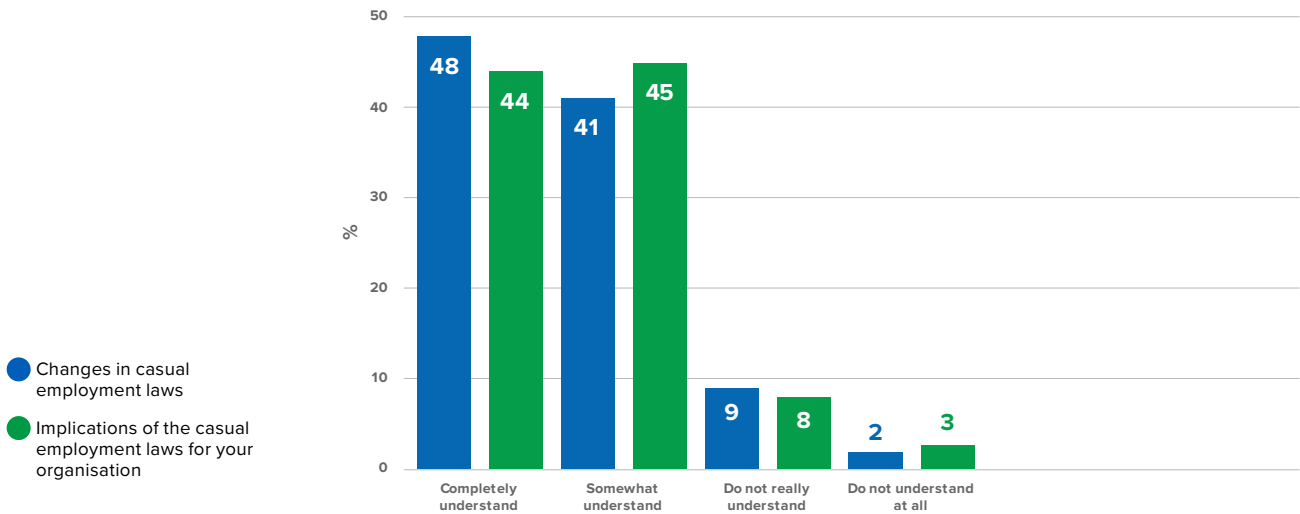


**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=485 (private: n=377; public: n=95; not-for-profit: n=13)

Employers were also asked a question relating to their understanding of the new casual-employment laws. While some employers say they understand the laws completely, the survey data suggests that many employers lack a deep understanding of the new casual-employment laws. Around half (48 per cent) say that they completely understand the laws compared with 41 per cent who say they partially understand them. Just over one in ten (11 per cent) say that they either do not really understand the laws or do not understand them at all.

These findings are echoed in employers’ understanding of what the new laws mean for their organisation. Only 44 per cent of employers say that they completely understand the implications of the casual-employment laws for their organisation while a similar share of organisations (45 per cent) report that they somewhat understand the laws. Just over one in ten (11 per cent) claim ‘not to either really understand the laws’ or ‘not understand them at all’.

**Figure 18:** To what extent, if at all, do you understand these legislative changes [casual employment] and their implications for your organisations? Please select the option that best applies per row



**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

The findings overall suggest that the legislative changes benefit casual employees. There also appears to be a modest shift in the structure of employment in favour of both casual employment and part-time, permanent employment, possibly at the expense of full-time employment.

# Fixed-Term Contracts

**Some of the key changes to fixed-term contract laws include:**

- Fixed-term contracts are now limited to a maximum of two years, including any extensions or renewals (although there are exemptions)
- A requirement for employers to give any employees they're engaging on a new fixed term contract a Fixed Term Contract Information Statement (FTCIS)
- An employee can't have more than two consecutive contracts for the same or similar work, except in certain circumstances.

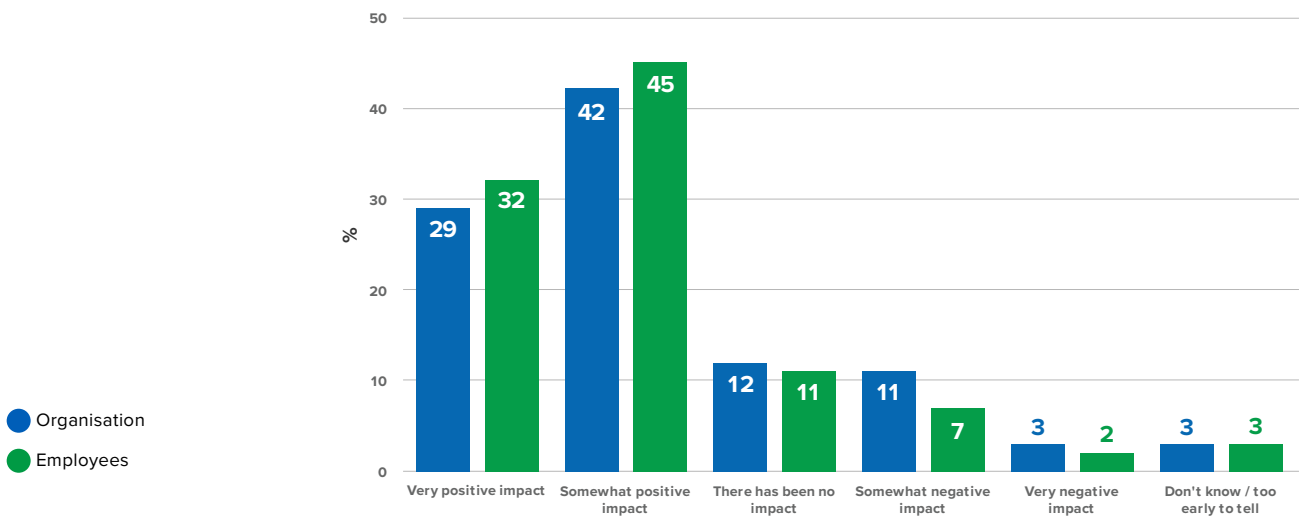
**Given the legislative changes to fixed-term contracts, which came into force in December 2023, the survey also asked about employers' use and experience of fixed-term contracts.**

Consistent with the data relating to the right to disconnect and casual employment, the survey results suggest that the new rules pertaining to fixed-term contracts have been well received by both employers and employees.

Seventy-one per cent say the rules have had either a 'very positive impact' or 'somewhat positive impact' on their organisation, compared with just over one in 10 (12 per cent) who say it has had a neutral impact. Just 14 per cent reported that it has had a negative impact on them and 3 per cent were unsure. There are no significant differences between the sectors. However, there is some variation in terms of size of organisation, with 78 per cent of organisations reporting that the new rules have had either a 'very positive impact' or 'somewhat positive impact' on their organisation compared with 56 per cent of organisations that employ between two and 19 employees.

The figures are marginally more positive for employees. More than three quarters (78 per cent) of employers say that the new rules have had either a ‘very positive impact’ or ‘somewhat positive impact’ on their organisation, compared with just over one in 10 (11 per cent) who say it has had a neutral impact. Just 10 per cent reported that it has had a negative impact on employees and 3 per cent were unsure.

**Figure 19:** What impact, if any, have the changes (e.g., introduction of new legislation relating to the use of fixed-term contracts affecting fixed-term, seasonal, or task-based contracts) had on your organisation and fixed-term contract employees?



**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=356 (private: n=282; public: n=61; not-for-profit: n=13)

## Looking ahead to this parliamentary term

### Employers are interested in new initiatives and policies.

Despite the large volume of workplace legislation introduced in the last three years, the survey data suggests that employers are interested in new initiatives and policies in the new parliamentary term.

There is broad appeal for the government to extend the right to request flexible working to all employees.

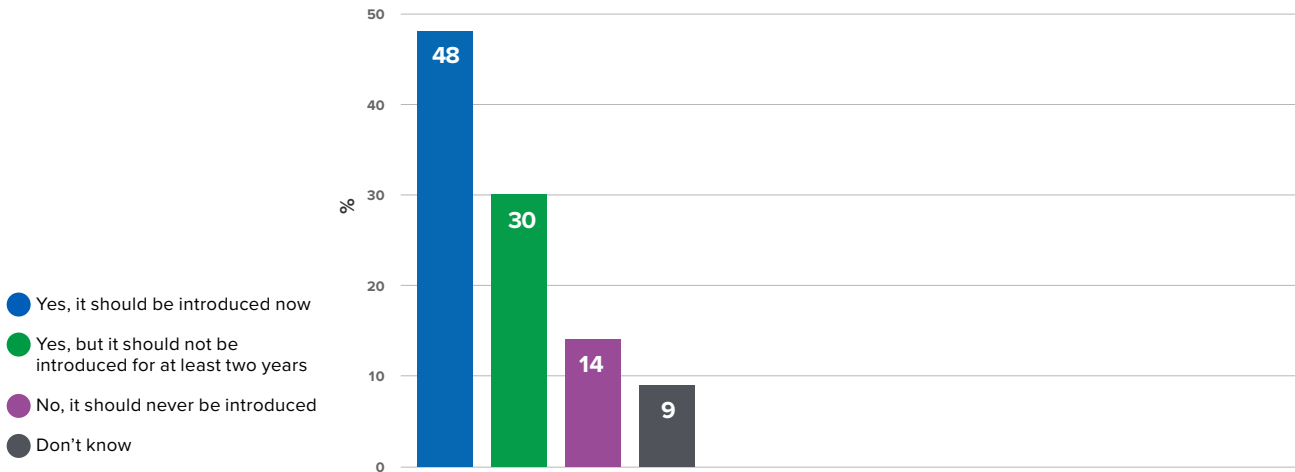
The right to request flexible working is currently restricted to certain workforce groups, such as parents with school-age children, older workers and people with a disability, although many workplaces extend that right to a much broader group of employees as a matter of policy, so such a legislative change would be catching up with widespread practice.

Almost half (48 per cent) of employers say they would like to see the right to request flexible working to all employees extended now. In addition, just under a third (30 per cent) support the policy, but not before 2027.

Only 14 per cent of employers surveyed oppose extending the right to request flexible working to all employees.

Reflecting the broad-based support, there are no significant differences across sectors or size of organisation. However, support for the immediate introduction of the extension is stronger among large employers (54 per cent) than small employers (42 per cent).

**Figure 20:** Thinking about your organisation, would you support a proposal to extend the right to request flexible working to all employees?

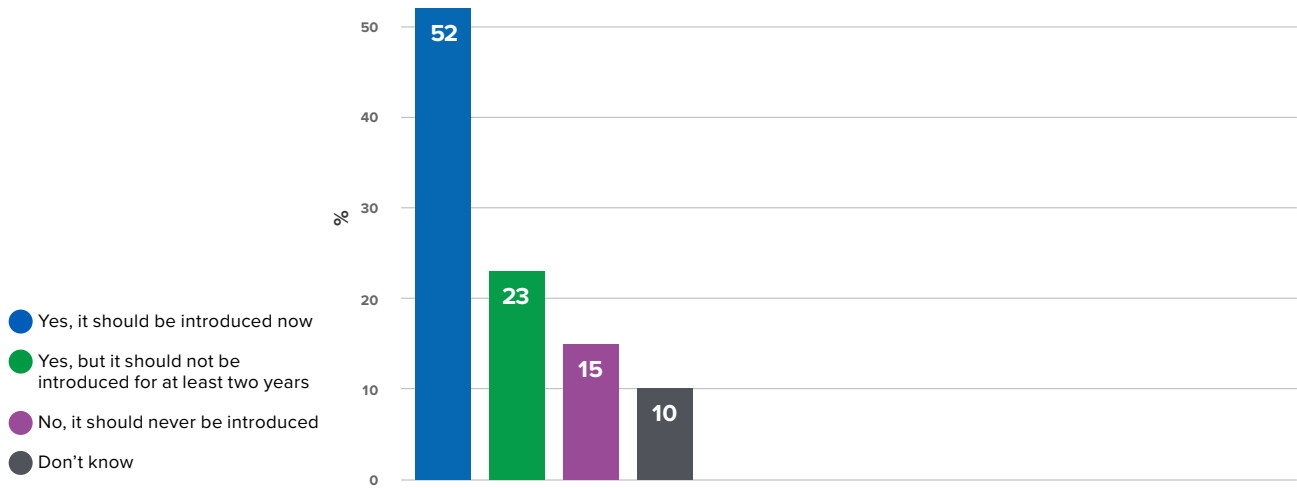


**Base:** June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

There is also broad appeal to adding ‘reproductive’ health as a protected attribute in anti-discrimination laws, including the Fair Work Act. Just over half of employers (52 per cent) support the immediate introduction of such a provision. Almost a quarter (23 per cent) of employers support the policy, but not before 2027 at the earliest.

Despite the broad support, appeal for the immediate introduction of the policy is lower among small employers. Just under half (46 per cent) of small employers say the policy should be introduced now, compared with 57 per cent of large employers. There are no significant differences between the sectors.

**Figure 21:** Thinking about your organisation, would you support the proposal to extend the protected attributes in the Fair Work Act to cover perimenopause and menopause, as well as other reproductive health issues?



**Base:** Base: June quarter 2025, all employers n=619 (private: n=498; public: n=101; not-for-profit: n=20)

# Research methodology

All data, unless otherwise stated, is from YouGov Plc.

The total sample size for this survey was 619 senior business decision makers, including HR, from organisations with two or more employees.

Fieldwork was undertaken online between 5 April and 8 April 2025.

The figures have been weighted by employee size, state and industry to reflect the latest ABS Industry Employment estimates.

## Respondent profile

### Breakdown of the sample, by number of employees per organisation

Employer size band	2-19	20-199	200+	Total
Count	173	188	258	619

### Breakdown of the sample, by sector

Sector	Private	Public	Not-for-profit	Total
Count	498	101	20	619

*In addition, some sub-sectors, such as retail and hospitality, have been grouped together to provide a more granular breakdown by industry.*

AHRI welcomes feedback on this report, and ideas and suggestions for how the quarterly series might be developed. These should be sent to: [research@ahri.com.au](mailto:research@ahri.com.au)

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