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1.0 SURVEY OVERVIEW

The survey has been complex, focusing on three survey components. In addition, a series of depth interviews was undertaken with six industry leaders in the sectors of the residential home building market, the commercial segment, the housing industry association, and the MPA before the main survey was created.

These interviews were conducted as part of the process of developing the survey questionnaires, and provided an industry background understanding of the manpower and training issues facing the industry.

The formal quantitative survey component covered three areas. They were:

- Apprentices.

The sample frame for this survey was the list of apprentices held by the BCITF. This included apprentices currently indentured either to a group training scheme, or directly indentured to specific tradesmen, some apprentices who had recently completed their training, others who had cancelled their apprenticeship mid-way through its term, and finally a few apprentices who had withdrawn before the apprenticeship commenced. A total of 387 telephone interviews were conducted with current or recently completed apprentices. The results from the apprentice survey can be regarded as being accurate to within approximately $\pm 4\%$ of the total apprentice attitude.

- Current Tradespeople.

The survey also covered a range of tradesmen and general workers employed in the construction industry. This included some (tradesmen) employers of apprentices, and others who currently have no apprentices working with them. A total of 360 telephone interviews were conducted with people currently working in the industry. Based on an estimated 28000 workers in the industry, the survey error for the currently employed trades-people can be regarded to be within $\pm 5\%$ of the “real world figures”.

- The General Public.

The third survey component was a broad community attitude survey, conducted as part of Patterson Market Research's twice monthly telephone omnibus survey. The community view was therefore based on 300 metropolitan and 100 country interviews with people aged 18 yrs or older. The survey error for this component is with $\pm 4.9\%$ of the "real world" attitudes and opinions.

In total, the survey program covered 1147 interviews across the three target groups. This provided feedback from the current (or recently completed) apprenticeship cohort, from people working within the industry, and from the broader community.

1.1 INDUSTRY AND APPRENTICE ATTRITION RATES

The industry appears to be facing a fairly significant age bulge towards the older age groups. In section 3.1.1, we discuss the finding that whilst 53% of the tradesmen we surveyed were aged 18 to 45, this compares with the adult male population of Western Australia of 62% in that age group. 37% of tradesmen are aged 46 to 59 years compared to the adult male population of 29%, and 10% are aged 60 to 70 years (this is the same proportion as for the adult male population).

There is a very clear pattern of the building and construction industry workforce having an under-representation of workers under 30 years. In fact, 40% of the tradesmen surveyed were aged 30 to 45 years, which is significantly greater than the adult male population proportion of 33%. The younger age group (18 – 29 yrs) is materially under-represented in the building and construction industry. This suggests that a relatively high proportion of current trades people are approaching retirement age, and they're not being adequately replaced by the "intake" age groups of the 18 to 29 year age group.

Table T1.1.1 Age Profile of Building Trades	Tradesmen	Adult Male Population
	%	%
18-29 Years	13	29
30-45 Years	40	33
18-45 Years	53	62
46-59 Years	37	29
60-70 Years	10	10
46-70 Years	47	38

The implication from the above table is that almost half the people working in the building and construction industry work force are in their senior working years, and whilst there is a “bulge” in the 30 to 45 year age group, the younger trades people are significantly under-represented in the age profile.

1.1.1 THE CURRENT WORKER ATTRITION RATES

The survey of current tradesmen and workers found that 1 in 5 of the workers interviewed report that they are at least “quite unlikely” to be still working in the industry in 5 years time. In fact, two thirds (66%) of those aged 60 years and over report that they are unlikely to be working in the field in 5 years.

The problem with the small number of workers in the younger age groups is exacerbated by the fact that 1 in 5 in the 18 to 29 year age group also report that they are at least “quite unlikely” to stay in the industry.

Retirement is the main reason for people to want to leave the industry (this is strongly influenced by the proportion of people aged 60 years and over who are considering leaving the industry), but it is of significance that slightly over 1 in 8 (16%) report that the reason they are considering leaving the industry is that a “new opportunity” has emerged. The attraction of working in alternative fields of employment were largely; the perception of a less physically demanding occupation, the fact that they would have to carry less responsibility, and the prospect of earning more money.

1.1.2 THE APPRENTICE ATTRITION RATES

It appears that most apprentices have a quite strong motivation to complete their apprenticeship. 80% of current apprentices describe it as being “very important” that they complete their training, and a further 16% rated it as being “quite important”. Effectively therefore, almost all the apprentices rate the completion of their apprenticeship as being important.

It also appears that most apprentices plan to complete their apprenticeships and stay on in their trade area. 86% report that they intend to complete their apprenticeship and continue into work in their apprenticed trade area, and only 2% report that they intend to stay working in the trade area they were training in, but “maybe not” complete their apprenticeship. There is also evidence that some apprentices value the concept of completing their trade even if they do not plan to stay in that skilled area. There appears to be a firm intention amongst apprentices to stay in the trade that they are working in, and to complete their apprenticeship. In short, it does not appear that apprentices are dropping out of their apprenticeships and leaving the industry.

Those apprentices who do not complete their training appear to be staying on in the industry that they have trained in, being attracted by the “higher wages” that they can achieve as a tradesman who has not completed his formal apprenticeship, rather than as an apprentice. Apart from the licensed trades, there does not seem to be a difference in earning capacity for a tradesman who has completed his apprenticeship, and one who has not.

In the depth interviews with senior industry figures, we found very little notice was taken of whether or not a tradesman had completed his apprenticeship. They relied on reputation, and inspection of the quality of work completed. In a sense the subcontract system makes it possible to quickly and easily replace a tradesman whose work does not come up to an acceptable standard. The building supervisor system is the mechanism that ensures quality standards are maintained, and tradesmen know that substandard work will make it difficult to win further contracts from a building company. However, this system suffers in times of building booms as builders are under pressure to find sufficient skilled workers to complete projects on time.

1.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS TRAINING

1.2.1 APPRENTICE ATTITUDES TOWARDS TRAINING

Only 6 out of 10 apprentices believe that they will need all of the skills that they are learning in their apprenticeship to get good employment over the next 4 to 5 years. Almost 3 out of 10 (29%) believe that they needed at least most (but not all) of the skills from their apprenticeship to achieve employment, with the residual thinking that they only needed a few of the skills of their apprenticeship to secure good employment over the next 4 to 5 years.

On the surface, it does not appear that the notion of a shorter apprenticeship would be effective in encouraging apprentices to complete their training. 3 out of 4 (74%) of apprentices indicated that they would prefer one long apprenticeship than to have a partial basic trade qualification, and then an “extension” apprenticeship scheme to achieve an effective “master tradesman” status. However, **amongst apprentices who cancelled their apprenticeship**, half (47%) indicated that they would prefer a shorter apprenticeship period with fewer skills to learn.

In fact, only half (45%) of all apprentices interviewed think that they need a full 4 year apprenticeship to learn all the skills they need to be able to become a full tradesmen. 4 out of 10 (41%) believe they could learn all they need to learn in a 3 year program and 1 in 10 (11%) believe they could do it in just 2 years. Only 1 in 10 of apprentices who had cancelled their apprenticeship indicated that they believe that the 4 year apprenticeship was necessary for them to learn all of the skills that they needed for their trade.

It appears then that whilst in the main, apprentices have every intention of completing their apprenticeship and continuing on in the field in which they have been training, about half of those who have dropped out of their apprenticeship indicate that they believe that they only need a program of a 3 year apprenticeship to achieve the level of skills that they need to be able to secure employment. (Some will have dropped out to follow other careers altogether).

Apart from the licensed trades, the majority of apprentices believe that they could learn sufficient skills in a 3 year program for them to get good employment over the “next 4 to 5 years”.

1.2.2 THE NOTION OF STAGED APPRENTICESHIPS

The notion of a “progressive” apprenticeship was given short shrift. When given the option of completing a short apprenticeship, and “coming back to it” if they wanted to progress to higher skill levels, three quarters of apprentices indicated that they wanted to complete the apprenticeship in one program. The notion of having to go back into an apprenticeship training scheme having completed their initial apprenticeship was not at all attractive. It appears that apprentices are prepared to “grind their way through” the apprenticeship (particularly the last 12 months of their apprenticeship) to achieve their trade accreditation, but whilst they generally believe that they could learn enough to meet the skill needs of their trade in a 3 year apprenticeship, they do not warm to the notion of completing a “partial” apprenticeship in a shorter period, to return for further training at a later date.

The potential impact of a shorter apprenticeship on the rate of completion of apprenticeships may be reflected in the finding that almost half (47%) of apprentice cancellations report that they have remained working in the industry in which they had been training. It appears likely that a shorter apprenticeship period would retain a greater proportion of these people in the scheme to ensure that they achieved their training accreditation without the necessity for a fourth year of (comparative) underpayment for the work that they do.

Poor pay and incompatibility with their apprentice employer were the main reasons for apprentices not completing their final year.

1.2.3 TRAINING LEVELS AMONGST THE CURRENT TRADESMEN

Only 6 out of 10 tradesmen interviewed report that they had completed an apprenticeship. However, this was strongly influenced by two areas. 90% of licensed trades-people interviewed reported having completed an apprenticeship, as did 77% of carpenters and 66% of the “finishing trades”.

However, amongst the wet trades (bricklaying and tiling) only 36% of the current workforce reported that they had completed an apprenticeship, and only 29% of people in the “general construction” categories report having completed an apprenticeship.

There is a suggestion therefore that the informal feedback from the workforce particularly in the wet trades would be that a full apprenticeship is not necessary to “get by” in the industry. Overall, three quarters of the self-employed trades-people reported that they had completed an apprenticeship, compared to only 52% of those who report working for someone else (or being a second tier) sub-contractor.

Whilst two thirds of trades-people believed that tradesmen needed all the skills they learn in their apprenticeship scheme to be able to do their job properly, this perception varied materially from one trade category to another. Not surprisingly, those who had completed an apprenticeship were most likely to believe that a workman would need all of the skills learnt in his apprenticeship to be able to do his job properly. Similarly, respondents from the licensed trades and carpentry and finishing trades were likely to believe that a worker would need all of the skills covered in their apprenticeship scheme.

Moreover, almost 8 out of 10 preferred that the apprenticeships covered all of their training in one training course.

1.3 ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY

In an endeavour to establish whether or not workers in the building and construction industry, and people in the broader community are generally supportive or not of people taking up a career in the industry, respondents were asked to indicate if they would favour a “son or daughter” taking up a career in the building industry. The exercise has found a majority support for a son or daughter taking up such a career. 70% of people currently working in the building industry would favour a son or daughter taking up a career in the industry, 15% would neither support nor oppose and only 14% reported that they would oppose such a move.

Amongst the broad community survey, 60% would support a family member taking up a career in the building industry, 31% would neither favour nor oppose it, and only 4% would oppose that development.

Universally, the reasons for favouring a career in the building and construction industry are that it is:

- Good “honest work”
- An opportunity to earn good money
- An opportunity to create things / build something tangible
- An opportunity to “be your own boss”.

The reasons for opposing people working in the building industry were:

- A perception that there are better opportunities working in other industries
- A perception of union involvement / heavy handed union tactics
- A perception that the industry is not well paid
- A perception that the working conditions are not good.

It is interesting that amongst people currently working in the industry, the 14% who would oppose someone taking up a career also included reasons to the effect that

“It’s hard work” and the “work flow” is inconsistent.

1.3.1 PERCEIVED ADVANTAGES OF WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY

It may be seen from the above section that broadly, the community attitudes towards working in the building and construction industries are fairly positive. The perceived benefits were that there is satisfaction for the job / creating something, that you have a variety of jobs and the opportunity to “work outside”. There were also references to “being your own boss / making your own hours”.

1.3.2 DRAWBACKS / DISADVANTAGES OF WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY

The problems that the building workers and the broader community identified about working in the industry related to:

- Chasing money / not being paid on time
- The hard work (hard physical labour)
- Being “out in the elements” (suffering the effects of extreme heat and cold etc).

1.4 IS THERE A LOOMING CRISIS?

If there is a crisis of skilled manpower developing in the industry, it does not appear to be a simple function of the rate of attrition of apprentices from the system. The evidence strongly suggests that apprentices either tend to complete their apprenticeship, or if they withdraw from an apprenticeship, in the main they do so to simply progress to the “full pay” status that they can achieve in the industry a little more quickly than they would if they completed their apprenticeship. There is some evidence that some apprentices leave their position due to dissatisfaction with the way that they are managed by their employer, but whilst this is an important consideration, it is not the central issue driving the shortage of skilled workers.

Feedback from the current workforce does suggest that there is a looming problem with pending withdrawals of skilled labour from the industry. Currently, the industry appears to be chronically short of people in the 18 to 29 year old age bracket in

particular. This leaves a “bulge” in the older age groups, who are approaching retirement age, many of whom may be expected to exit the industry in search of a less physically demanding occupation as their income requirements diminish in their senior years.

In trying to understand the reasons for the dearth of young entrants to the industry, we examined the broader community attitude towards the industry. The survey has found that there does not appear to be a community mind-set against the notion of working in the industry. The evidence for this assertion is that the majority of people currently working in the industry and people in the community at large would support a member of their family taking up a career in the building and construction industry.

Yet it appears that the industry is not being “fed” with an adequate supply of new entrants to the industry. Certainly new entrants can only surface if there is demand for them. They cannot simply create opportunities in the industry, they can only respond to opportunities that are available. The current micro business subcontract system in which individual workers have their separate micro business of (typically) the worker and his wife may make it more difficult for young workers to get a start in the industry. The apparent looming retirement of up about one in four of the current skilled workforce suggests that there will be many opportunities opening up in the next few years. The question to be asked is whether the young people will take up those opportunities. Will the remaining sub contractors take on new apprentices to fill the void left by older workers leaving the industry?

The missing piece in this survey program is the attitudes and opinions of young 16 to 18 year olds who are about to leave the schooling environment, and to enter some career structure. In the initial investigation process of this project it became apparent that to varying degrees, the apprentice scheme managers are finding it difficult to attract sufficient applicant to fill the apprenticeships they have on offer.

It is possible that the industry is suffering from Australia’s push towards greater levels of tertiary education amongst its young people. It is possible that the building and construction industry (particularly the manual end of the scale) has simply become very unfashionable amongst young people, to the effect that even people

who are not particularly suited to an academic career are closing off the option of a career in the building and construction industry due to the overriding mindset of the push for a “smarter Australia”.

In our assessment, the correction to the industry’s looming skilled manpower problems may best be addressed by a two pronged approach.

The first is to make it more attractive for employers to take on apprentices. The second is to improve the industry’s standing amongst young people themselves. At this stage, we do not know how young people in particular regard the building and construction industry, but the evidence from this exercise strongly suggests that the assessments that they are making are not being negatively impacted by the broader community attitudes. By a process of elimination, we may arrive at an assessment that any negative perceptions they have are emerging from the education system and its drive for a higher proportion of tertiary educated young people. This need not be by means of any overtly negative messages about the building and construction industry. It is more probable that the focus on the “higher order” occupational categories throughout the schooling system is effectively creating a default negative perception amongst young people, many of whom may, under a more traditional circumstance, have considered a career in this industry.

To counter this phenomenon, we believe it will be important to show the building and construction industry as also being a “smart” industry. The fact that the industry involves manual rather than mental skills should not preclude it from being able to portray itself as being at the forefront of building technologies and world’s best practice construction methods. Potential messages that would be to the effect that we build the best homes and civil projects in the world should be explored and exploited.

In short, the industry needs to be able to show that a career in the building and construction industry is a smart move, not a “second best” alternative.

2.0 APPRENTICES' ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS

2.1 WHAT APPRENTICES THINK

This survey interviewed 387 apprentices. 199 of these were current, 50 had withdrawn, 95 had completed and 43 had cancelled their apprenticeship. 104 were operating in the wet trades, 105 were apprenticed in one of the licensed trades, 88 were in carpentry, 12 were in a roofing trade (including carpentry), 69 were in “finishing” trades (including painters and decorators), and 11 were in general construction. 187 of the apprentices were directly indentured, and 168 were working within a group scheme.

Table 2.1 below shows the age and stage of apprentices that were interviewed. It shows that 44% of apprentices surveyed were aged up to 19 years, 43% were aged 20 to 23 years and 12% were aged 24 years or over.

Table T2.1 Age and Stage Profile of Apprentices Surveyed	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	N=387	N=73	N=73	N=46	N=50
	%	%	%	%	%
Up to 19 years	44	70	63	54	24
20 to 23 years	43	19	25	30	70
24 years plus	12	11	12	16	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100

The above table is interesting. Note that the proportion in the “24 plus” age group increases from year 1 through to year 3, but then shows a sharp fall off in year 4. This means that of first year apprentices, the great bulk (70%) were aged up to 19 years, but, about 1 in 5 (19%) were aged 20 to 23 years and about 1 in 10 (11%) were aged 24 years and over. As we progress through the second and third year, the proportion aged up to 19 falls progressively from 63% to 54% and the proportion aged 20 to 23 years grows from 25% to 30%. Over the same period, those aged 24 years and older increases from 12% to 16%.

However in year 4, when one would expect the “24 plus” group to increase again, we have a sharp fall off in the proportion in that age group. The strong suggestion is that older apprentices are much less likely to complete their apprenticeship (that is progress through to year 4 apprenticeship) than are their younger counterparts. Of respondents in year 4, the great bulk are in the 20 to 23 age group. The suggestion is that those who are aged over 24 years are more likely than the other age groups to drop out in their last year.

Moreover, it appears that apprentices in the brick laying and brick paving trades are more likely to not complete their trade than are apprentices in either the carpentry and joinery trade, or in one of the licensed trades (electrician or plumbing and gas fitting). Table 2.2 below shows the proportion of first, second, third and fourth year apprentices who are in the brick laying / paving, carpentry / joinery or one of the licensed trades.

Table T2.2 Year of Apprenticeship by Trade Category	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	N=387	N=73	N=73	N=46	N=50
	%	%	%	%	%
Brick layer / Paver	16	32	21	15	4
Carpentry / Joinery	20	16	18	26	26
Electrician or Plumbing	29	9	28	22	30
Others	35	43	33	37	40
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Note that amongst first year apprentices, brick layers and pavers make up 32% of the sample. They make up 21% of second year apprentices, 15% of third year apprentices, and only 4% of fourth year apprentices. The tendency for carpentry and joinery apprentices to complete their apprenticeship is reflected in the growth from 16% to 18% to 26% of apprentices over the years. The proportion of “licensed trades” in second third and fourth year shows a fairly consistent trend (albeit the third year figure shows a dip, probably due to the sample error). The brick layer proportion however shows a consistent negative trend, suggesting that they are more likely to terminate their apprenticeships over time. Whilst 32% of first year apprenticeships are from brick laying and paving trades, only 4% of those in the fourth year of their apprenticeships are from these trades.

While about half the apprentices interviewed were directly indentured, and a similar proportion were in a group scheme, this also varied by trade category. Table T2.3 below summarises the proportion of directly indentured and group scheme apprentices for four major trade categories (those with sufficient sample sizes for us to be able to treat them individually).

Table T2.3 Form of Indenture for Main Trade Categories	Total	Wet Trades	Licensed Trades	Carpentry & Joinery	Finishing Trades (Paint)
	N=387	N=104	N=112	N=79	N=69
	%	%	%	%	%
Direct Indenture	48	28	69	46	57
Group Scheme	43	60	25	46	39
Other / Don't know	9	12	6	8	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

It is interesting that whilst over the total sample, 43% of apprentices were in a group scheme, that proportion is greatest amongst the wet trades (brick laying and plastering) at 60%. It is interesting that only 1 in 4 (25%) of licensed trade apprentices report that they are in a group scheme (7 out of 10 are directly indentured), and 4 out of 10 (39%) of the finishing trades (largely painters and decorators) are in a group scheme. On the surface, it appears that trades that have the highest proportion who are directly indentured to a specific tradesman also have the highest proportion of apprentices completing their apprenticeships. This does not necessarily indicate a causal relationship. It may be that the “wet trades” apprentices are simply less likely to be able to find a direct indentured position and that the licensed tradesmen are more able to provide a directly indentured apprenticeship. Perhaps the licensed trades have a more secure work pattern, or better margins, to give them more confidence to take on a directly indentured apprentice.

2.1.1 PRE-APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Half (45%) of apprentices report that they had no pre-apprenticeship training before they had entered their apprenticeship. 8% had exposure to a VET school program, 8% had been to a traineeship and 39% had been on a pre-apprenticeship course.

Apprentices who were currently directly indentured were less likely than those enrolled in a group scheme to have had some previous pre-apprenticeship training. Whilst 47% of the directly indentured group reported that they'd had some form of pre-apprenticeship training, amongst apprentices enrolled in a group scheme, we found 63% had reported some form of pre-apprenticeship training.

Half of those who had some form of pre-apprenticeship training had found that their course was “very helpful” to them and a further 34% described it as being “quite helpful”. Effectively then, slightly over 8 out of 10 (84%) of those who had undertaken some pre-apprenticeship course regard that training as being at least “quite helpful”. Against this, 15% described the course as being either “not really helpful” or of “no help at all”. It would appear therefore that in the main, those who had completed a pre-apprenticeship course found it to be helpful in their apprenticeship program.

2.1.2 COMPLETING THE TRAINING

80% of current apprentices describe it as being “very important” that they complete their training and a further 16% rate it as “quite important”. Effectively therefore all current apprentices rate the completion as being at least quite important. The perceived importance of completion increases by year of apprenticeship. It also appears that those with a direct indentured apprenticeship rate the completion of their apprenticeship even more highly than those who are from a group scheme (85% and 73% respectively rated the completion of their apprenticeship as “very important”). This may be more a function of the different profiles of the apprenticeships in the directly indentured positions. They are more likely to be in the licensed and finishing trades.

The perceived importance of the completion of the apprenticeship is consistent amongst apprentices who are in year one through four. Note in table 2.4 below that the proportion of the view that the completion of the apprenticeship is “very important” actually appears to increase according to the year of the apprenticeship.

Table T2.4 Perceived Importance of Completion of Apprenticeship amongst current Apprentices	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	N=199	N=51	N=60	N=44	N=44
	%	%	%	%	%
Very Important	80	75	78	80	89
Quite Important	16	22	17	16	9
Net Important	96	97	95	96	98

It should be recalled however that the above table is of people who are currently still engaged in their apprenticeship. Amongst those who remain in the program, it would appear that their conviction of the importance of their completion increases marginally as they get closer towards their goal of completion. In a sense, it is a function of the “doubters” dropping out over time, leaving only the more firmly committed apprentices still in the program in years three and in particular year four.

It appears that most apprentices plan to complete their apprenticeship and stay in their trade area. 86% report that they intend completing their apprenticeship and then continuing to work in their apprenticed trade area. Only 2% reported that they would be staying in the trade that they were training in, but “maybe not” complete their apprenticeship.

It appears that some apprentices value the notion of completing their trade even if they do not plan to stay in that skill area. 8% thought that they would complete the trade and then drop out of the industry and do something else altogether, and a further 2% thought that they would drop out of their apprenticeship to do something outside of the building trades.

In summary it would appear therefore that amongst current apprentices, there is a very strong intention to complete their apprenticeship and stay in the trade in which they are training. The next most likely activity is for them to drop out and do something completely different (8%). This pattern appears to be consistent across all the trades surveyed, though the sample size in some of the trades is too small for us to be able to predict whether or not there is a material difference in attitude on this issue. In summary, it would appear that the great majority of apprentices at least have the intention of completing their apprenticeship and staying in the trade of their training. It also appears that this conviction may increase as the year of their apprenticeship progresses. That is those who are closer to the end of their apprenticeship are even more likely to have the intention of completing the apprenticeship and staying in the trade of their apprenticeship.

This finding is borne out by the feedback from those who had recently completed their apprenticeships. When asked about the type of work they have done since completing their apprenticeship, the same proportion (effectively 9 out of 10) reported that they had in fact stayed in the same trade as their apprenticeship. The few (about 12%) who reported that they had changed to another trade or another industry reported having made that transition for “better pay” or a “better opportunity” of some description.

2.1.3 ATTITUDES TO THE RANGE OF SKILLS

6 out of 10 (59%) of apprentices believe that they will need all of the skills that they are learning in their apprenticeship to get “good employment” over the next 4 to 5 years. A further 29% indicated that they believed that they needed at least most of their skills from their apprenticeship to achieve employment. Only 9% reported that they would need only a few of their skills, and the residual was unsure.

It appears therefore that for most apprentices, there is a firm intention to complete the apprenticeship, that they will need all or most of the skills that they are acquiring, and that their intention is to stay in the trade in which they are apprenticed once they have completed their apprenticeship.

2.1.4 ATTITUDES TO SHORTER APPRENTICESHIPS

74% of apprentices indicated that they prefer one long apprenticeship than to have shorter apprenticeships. However, amongst those who cancelled, 47% indicated that they would prefer a shorter apprenticeship period with fewer skills.

45% of apprentices think that they need the 4 years of the apprenticeship to learn all the skills that they need to be able to become a full tradesman. However, 4 out of ten (41%) believe they could do it in 3 years, and 11% believe they could do it in just 2 years.

Amongst those who had cancelled their apprenticeship, 1 in 4 (23%) believed they could learn all the skills that they needed in 2 years only and almost half (47%) believed they could achieve it within 3 years. Only slightly over 1 in 4 (28%) believe that they needed the full 4 years apprenticeship to learn all the skill they needed for their trade. This is in contrast to the opinion of other apprentices.

Table 2.5 below shows the attitudes to the period in which the apprenticeship could be completed (they could learn all the skills they need) for the total sample of apprentices, and those in the major trades.

Table T2.5 Period needed to learn all skills necessary to get “Good Employment” over next 4-5 years

	Total	Wet Trades	Licensed Trades	Carpentry & Joinery	Finishing Trades (Paint)
	N=387	N=104	N=112	N=79	N=69
	%	%	%	%	%
2 years	11	15	5	8	13
3 years	41	45	32	48	42
Keep 4 year term	45	38	61	43	41
Don't know	3	2	2	1	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

As the table shows, overall about half the apprentices (45%) believe that the current 4 year apprenticeship is needed to learn all they need to know to get good employment over the next 4 to 5 years. However, this attitude varies materially by the trade category. Note that only 38% of those in the wet trades believe that they need to keep the full 4 year term, and half (45%) believe they could learn sufficient skills in 3 years to get good employment. There are similar attitudes amongst the carpentry and finishing trades apprentices, but amongst the licensed trades, 6 out of 10 (61%) believe that they need to keep their apprenticeship going for the full 4

years for them to get good employment over the next 4 to 5 years. It seems likely that this attitude is related to the licensing system for these trades (electrical / plumbing trades), and note that even amongst this group, a third (32%) believe that they had learnt sufficient to be able to meet the requirements of their trade in 3 years.

The temptation to drop out of the apprenticeship in the last year is clear in the above table. The majority of apprentices in everything except the licensed trades believe that they do not need to go the full 4 years to learn sufficient for them to get good employment in the next 4 to 5 years. As they progress through the apprenticeship, and their financial commitments increase as they mature into the adult world, the temptation must be to opt out of the final year of the trade certificate to get ready access to an immediate wage increase. The extent to which they believe that they can learn all they need to know in a 3 year term exacerbates the “non-completion” problem.

2.1.5 MULTI PHASED APPRENTICESHIPS?

When given the option of completing a shorter apprenticeship and “coming back to it” if they wanted to progress to higher skill levels, three quarters of apprentices indicated that they wanted to complete the apprenticeship in one program. This suggests that the notion of a “progressive” apprenticeship would not be attractive. They appear unwilling to go through a second, more advanced apprenticeship, after having completed a “base skills certificate”.

However, if there is a means by which the apprenticeships could be shortened to 3 years, one would anticipate a significant decrease in the proportion of apprenticeships which are cancelled in the last year. It should be recognised however, that having achieved a certificate, it is very unlikely that many apprentices would subsequently seek to extend their range of skills with a further apprenticeship style of training system.

It is possible that some form of “off-the-job” extension program could be attractive to tradesmen to take up in the “down” period of the building cycle. That may be attractive if it would enable them to more confidently manage their own sub-contracting business, or expand their range of skills to include other skills which would expand their earning opportunities in the quiet periods of the building cycle.

2.1.6 DO CANCELLED APPRENTICES LEAVE THE BUILDING INDUSTRY?

Those apprentices who had either withdrawn or cancelled were asked what they had done once leaving, and amongst those “non-completers” (93 respondents), we found:

- **24%** stayed in the trade without bothering to complete their apprenticeship
- **18%** reported that they are in fact still in an apprenticeship (perhaps having switched employers, or as a reflection of defects in the Apprenticeship database)
- 14% went to a non-building trade
- 9% went to another building trade without doing a formal course
- 6% went to full time study
- 6% went to train in something outside of the building industry
- **5%** had taken up a different apprenticeship in the same trade area (still in the building industry)
- 5% reported leaving the industry altogether
- 3% had taken up some other trade in the building industry
- 3% were unemployed
- 3% had taken up an apprenticeship in another trade in the building industry.

The **bold** figures in the above add to 47% of cancellations who have remained in the building industry.

The main reasons for not completing the apprenticeship were:

- 14% poor pay / low pay
- 12% boring / just wanted to do something else
- **10%** incompatible with boss / other employees
- 8% the job wasn't what I thought it would be
- 8% an injury
- **4%** bad working conditions
- **3%** boss not paying award / owed money
- 3% the apprenticeship wasn't cost effective for the business anymore
- 3% the person teaching didn't have the skills / did not learn anything
- 3% not enough work
- 2% got sacked
- 2% lack of employers
- 2% wage increase (government change in wage rates) meant that the employer couldn't afford us anymore
- 4% I already had enough skills.

Note from the bold items above that almost one in 5 (17% total) indicated that some form of falling out with their employer or working conditions were the cause of dropping out of the apprenticeship.

2.1.7 THE ORDER OF PREFERENCE OF TRADES

Apprentices were asked to indicate whether or not they'd be happy for a friend or relative to take up one or another of a range of trades. The "licensed" trades and carpentry had the greatest level of support from apprentices. When asked to indicate if they'd be happy for a friend or a relative to get a start in a range of trades, the proportions happy for them to take up a trade were:

- 85% electrical
- 84% carpentry
- 76% plumbing and gas fitting
- 63% roof carpentry
- 56% tiling
- 50% painting and decorating
- 50% brick laying
- 45% concrete workers
- 40% roof tiling or plumbing

It would appear from the above that the "glamour" trades of the licensed trades and carpentry are the most attractive in the minds of apprentices. It is interesting to consider the attitudes towards a friend taking up an apprenticeship in a particular trade according to the trade category that the apprentices are currently working in.

Table T2.6 Approved Rating of Trades by Current Trade Category

	Total	Wet Trades	Licensed Trades	Carpentry & Joinery	Finishing Trades (Paint)
	N=387	N=104	N=112	N=79	N=69
	%	%	%	%	%
Electrician	85	80	89	85	87
Carpentry & Joinery	84	84	78	94	84
Plumbing & gas fitting	76	69	82	78	80
Roof carpentry	63	63	62	61	62
Wall and floor tiling	56	65	42	57	68
Brick laying	50	63	36	47	52
Paint & Decorators	50	45	42	49	75
Plastering	46	59	32	39	57
Concrete worker	45	47	37	47	54
Roof tiling / Plumbing	40	38	38	35	45

It is notable that 85% of apprentices would approve of a friend or a relative taking up an electrician apprenticeship. Amongst the licensed trades themselves, 89% were of this view, and there are similar proportions across the board of the other trades identified. Plumbers and gas fitters also achieve a high “conversion rate” amongst the licensed trade category, with 82% of them reporting that they would be happy for a friend or relative to take up this trade. Roof carpentry is also relatively attractive “across the board” with about 6 out of 10 indicating that they would support a friend or relative taking up this trade.

These figures may be contrasted with the assessment of the roof tiling / plumbing trade. Only 4 out of 10 indicated support for this trade, and that lack of support is also reflected across the board. Most trades had a fairly positive attitude towards wall and floor tiling, except for the licensed trades, who down graded it materially compared to the assessments from the other trade categories. Whilst the painters and decorators only managed a 50% approval rating, amongst those in the finishing trades (largely painters and decorators, their “conversion rate” was a high 75%. In other words, apprentices that are currently in this trade category are likely to recommend the trade to others. This attitude may be contrasted with that for the wet trades. Only 63% of wet trade apprentices would be happy with a friend or relative taking up brick laying. Almost 4 out of 10 of those currently in this trade category would not recommend it to another person. Only plastering, roof tiling/ roof plumbing achieved lower scores, and lower “conversion rates” as expressed by approval ratings from apprentices in the same (or similar) trade categories.

3.0 **FEEDBACK FROM THE INDUSTRY**

3.1 **FEEDBACK FROM PEOPLE WORKING IN THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

Feedback from people working in the building and construction industry was by means of three separate survey sources. The primary source was tradesmen listed in the Yellow Pages under specific trade listings. This was supplemented by a list provided by the Building and Construction Industry Training Fund list of people who had apprentices indentured to them. The third component was members of the building and construction industry picked up at random over three waves of PMR's twice monthly opinion poll survey (part of which is published on a monthly basis as WestPoll).

	#	%
Yellow Pages Trade Listings	198	55
BCITF Apprentice Masters	52	14
Random Population Survey	110	31
Total	360	100

83% of trades people indicated that they were self-employed (working as individual sub-contractors for a range for clients) and 17% indicated that they work specifically for one major builder as a sub-contractor to that builder (with no other employers), or as a direct employee of a building firm or trade partnership or business.

3.1.1 AGE PROFILE OF BUILDING TRADES

The survey sample suggested that the building tradesmen have a much older age profile than does the adult male population. Table T3.1.1 following compares the age profile for our survey of tradesmen with the adult male population for the City of Perth. Note that 53% of the tradesmen surveyed were aged 18 to 45 years, but the adult male population for the City of Perth shows 62% of males in this age group. Further examination shows that the “tradesmen” population is significantly understated in the 18 to 29 age group (only 13% of tradesmen are in this category) compared to the adult male population of 29%.

Similarly, 47% of tradesmen surveyed are aged in the age group of 46 to 70 years, compared to 38% of the adult population. The big differences are in the profile of the 46 to 59 age group, which shows a dramatic difference between the tradesmen profile and the adult population profile.

Table T3.1.1 Age Profile of Building Trades	Tradesmen	Adult Male Population
	%	%
18-29 Years	13	29
30-45 Years	40	33
18-45 Years	53	62
46-59 Years	37	29
60-70 Years	10	10
46-70 Years	47	38

The small “tradesmen” proportion in the 18 to 29 age group can not be explained away by the proportion of tradesmen who may well be apprentices. Apprentices were not excluded from this data for the purposes of this analysis, to the effect that tradesmen are dramatically underrepresented in the 18 to 29 age group. In short, it appears that the trades are not attracting young people into the industry to the extent that they should.

The implications of the above table are that the skilled trades are ageing rapidly, and that this is caused in the main by a slow intake of young men and women into the industry. Statistically, about 25% to 29% of tradesmen should be in the 18 to 29 year age group, yet according to our survey data, this age group currently represent just 13% of the skilled trades working in the industry.

The resistance to take up a career in the industry does not appear to be a function of people who currently work in the industry trying to dissuade others from entering the industry. Note in section 3.1.6 that 70% of people currently working in the industry would favour a son or daughter taking up a career in the building industry. Only 14% of people currently in the industry reported that they would oppose such a move. (The residual indicating that they would neither support nor oppose that move, commenting that they would “leave it up to them.”)

3.1.2 TRAINING

60% of tradesmen interviewed report that they'd completed an apprenticeship.

This varied across the trade categories, in that:

- 90% of licensed trades reported having completed an apprenticeship
- 77% of carpenters had completed an apprenticeship
- 66% of the “finishing trades” had completed an apprenticeship
- 36% of the “wet trades” (brick laying and tiling) had completed an apprenticeship
- 29% of “general construction” people had completed an apprenticeship.

Note that amongst those who are self employed, 75% report having completed an apprenticeship. However, amongst employees and “second tier” subbies, only 52% report having completed an apprenticeship.

Table T3.2 Training Experience of Tradesmen	Total	Wet Trades	Licensed Trades	Carpentry	Finishing Trades	Self Emp	Employees
	N=360	N=73	N=100	N=52	N=58	N=208	N=42
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Completed Apprenticeship	60	36	90	77	66	75	52
Other training (not apprenticeship)	17	23	9	15	12	12	31
No formal training at all	23	41	1	8	22	13	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

It is apparent from the above that the “wet trades” have the lowest level of formal training of the trades covered in the survey. It is to be expected that the licensed trades had the highest level of training, but the fact that 4 in 10 people working in the wet trades have no formal training in their trade at all may be of some concern.

The fact that three quarters of the self employed subbies have completed an apprenticeship suggests that there is some “on-the-job” guidance for the untrained people, and this seems to be a likely scenario. That is, those who set up their own sub-contracting business are more likely to have a trade certificate, and are able to pass on the necessary knowledge to any people working with them to provide a satisfactory outcome and to thereby secure future trade contracts.

The relative lack of training amongst the wet trades could be of concern for the future however. Specifically, the current fashion of rendered brick work could hide a relatively “sloppy” level of bricklaying that is hidden by the brick rendering process. If the fashion returns to a face brick environment, the industry could well find that it is short of skilled brick layers who are able to produce high quality face brick work.

Two thirds (66%) of trades people believe that they need all of the skills that they learn in their apprenticeship scheme. The perceived need to acquire all of the skills that are covered in a trade apprenticeship varied from one trade category to another. As table 3.3 below indicates, those in the licensed trades, carpentry and the finishing trades were most likely to believe that they need “all” of the skills learned in a trade apprenticeship.

Table T3.3 Perceived proportion of Apprenticeship Trade Skills required to “do the job”	Total	Wet Trades	Licensed Trades	Carpentry	Finishing Trade	Completed Apprentice
	N=250	N=57	N=88	N=39	N=47	N=178
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Need all skills	66	54	69	69	72	71
Need most skills	24	25	25	26	19	23
Need a few only	4	9	3	5	0	3
Don't know	6	12	3	-	9	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The final column in the above table expresses the opinions of tradesmen who completed an apprenticeship. 71% of those who have completed an apprenticeship indicated that they need all of the skills that they learnt in their apprenticeship program to be able to do their job properly. A similar proportion may be found amongst people in the licensed trades, carpentry and the finishing trades. However, amongst the wet trades, only 54% believed that you would need

all the skills covered in a trade certificate to be able to do the job. This is probably a reflection of the current reality on the work sites. They see other workmen with no formal training able to work alongside the trained tradesmen with little apparent effect on output.

3.1.3 ATTITUDE TO SHORTER APPRENTICESHIPS

Tradesmen were asked to indicate if they would prefer to see a shorter apprenticeship scheme that covered fewer skills, or one long apprenticeship (the current system) that covered all of the skills currently in the program.

In response, we found that 8 out of 10 trades people (whether trained or not) would prefer to see one long apprenticeship scheme rather than a shorter apprenticeship that covered a smaller range of skills. 18% indicated that a shorter apprenticeship would be appropriate, and significantly, this was most likely to be the case amongst people working in the wet trades.

Table T3.4 Attitude towards length and depth of coverage of Apprenticeships

	Total N=250 %	Wet Trades N=57 %	Licensed Trades N=88 %	Carpentry N=39 %	Finishing Trade N=47 %	Apprentice N=178 %
Prefer shorter Apprenticeship covering fewer skills	18	33	6	13	21	13
Prefer all training in one Apprenticeship course	78	56	92	85	77	86
Don't know	4	11	2	2	2	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The attitude towards the notion of shorter apprenticeships that was reflected amongst current apprentices is repeated in the above. The industry generally appears to favour the notion of one single apprenticeship which covered all of the skills that they would need to work proficiently in the industry. The “lower skilled” areas of the wet trades and to a lesser extent the finishing trades showed a slightly greater propensity to opt for a shorter apprenticeship covering fewer skills, but even in these areas, the majority view is that there should be one apprenticeship course to cover all that is needed.

3.1.4 LIKELIHOOD OF WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS

1 in 5 (21%) report that they're at least "quite unlikely" to be still working in the industry in 5 years. This was clearly age related, in that 66% of those aged 60 years and over reported that they'd be unlikely to be working in the field in 5 years. However, 1 in 5 (22%) of the 18 to 29 year olds were also not likely to stay in the industry. Those in the mid-aged group of 30 to 45 were most likely to stay, with 84% reporting that they are likely to stay in the industry, but 19% of those in the 46 to 59 age group reported that they are unlikely to stay in the industry beyond about 5 years.

3.1.5 REASONS FOR LEAVING THE INDUSTRY

The main reasons for leaving the industry were:

- 28% nearing retirement age
- 16% a new opportunity emerged
- 14% "work too hard / worn out"
- 7% "not enough money"
- 5% chronic injury
- 5% lack of job satisfaction
- 3% building downturn.

It is evident then that after the retirement issue, the emergence of a new opportunity is the next most common factor that would encourage people to leave the industry.

The attraction of alternative fields of work were:

- less physical
- less responsibility
- more money.

3.1.6 ATTITUDES TOWARDS OTHERS TAKING UP A CAREER IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

70% of people currently in the industry would favour a son or daughter taking up a career in the building industry. 15% neither support nor oppose and only 14% reported that they opposed such a move.

It would appear therefore that in the main, people currently working in the building and construction industry are largely supportive of a son or daughter taking up a career in that industry.

Those who would support their offspring working in the industry did so because it is:

- Good honest trade / secure trade
- The money is good
- It leads to many job opportunities.

Amongst the approximate 14% of trades-people who would oppose their son or daughter taking up a career in the building and construction industry, the reasons for the opposition to taking up a role in the industry were:

- It's hard work
- There are better opportunities in other industries
- Wage is not good
- Work safe conditions are not good
- "Cowboys" / not a good trade in the industry
- Inconsistent work.

3.1.7 WHAT IS MOST ENJOYED ABOUT WORKING IN THE FIELD

In an endeavour to identify features which could be useful in a promotional sense to attract workers into the building and construction industry, trades-people were asked to indicate what things they most enjoyed about working in the building trade. The most common observations were:

- 19% working for myself / making your own hours / own boss
- Challenging / variety of jobs
- Satisfaction for the job / create something
- Good pay
- Working “outside”
- Moving from one place to another
- Job security.

The freedom of being “your own boss” appears to be the most common observation, followed interestingly by the “challenge” of a variety of jobs, and the “satisfaction” of “creating something”.

3.1.8 *DRAWBACKS OF WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY*

When asked to indicate what they saw as the drawbacks of working in the industry, we found comments of:

- 17% chasing money / not being paid on time
- 15% no drawbacks
- 14% hard work / physical labour
- 9% the environment (heat, cold, open to elements)
- 8% paperwork
- 7% consistency of work
- 6% low wages
- 5% tax / GST / BAS statements
- 4% lack of skilled or qualified people.

The task of managing cash flow appears to be the major issue, followed by the hard work and physical labour, and the fact that the work involves being “out in the elements”.

4.0 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK.

Community feedback about the building and construction industry was covered in a wave of PMR's monthly telephone omnibus. This aspect of the survey program was designed to provide a picture of the way that the general community views the Building and Construction Industry. The intent being to provide some understanding of the way that parents, relations and teachers might guide youngster who may be considering a career in the building and construction industry.

This exercise interviewed 300 metropolitan people aged 18 years and over, and 100 country residents.

4.1 BROAD COMMUNITY ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE INDUSTRY

Respondents were asked to indicate if

“You had a son or daughter nearing school leaving age, would you be in favour of or opposed to them taking up a career in the building industry, in any occupation from the design right through to construction?”

In response, we found broad support for the notion of working in the building and construction industry, in that:

- 60% favour their family members working in the building industry
- 31% neither favour or oppose
- 4% oppose

It appeared that females are slightly more likely than males to favour a son or daughter working in the building and construction industry (65% of females favour this tack compared to 54% of males). It also appeared that country respondents were more likely to favour a son or daughter working in the industry, with 65% of that view compared to 58% of metropolitan respondents. See Table T4.1 overleaf.

Table T4.1 Community Attitudes Towards a Son or Daughter Working in the Building & Construction Industry

	Total	Male	Female	BLDG WRKR	No BLDG Connection	Metro	Country
	N=420	N=211	N=209	N=37	N=338	N=313	N=107
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly Favour	17	13	21	32	15	18	16
Favour	43	41	44	29	43	40	49
Neither Favour nor Oppose	31	35	27	24	33	33	25
Oppose	2	3	1	8	2	3	2
Strongly Oppose	2	2	1	5	1	2	2
Don't know	6	5	5	0	6	5	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Net Favour	60	54	65	61	58	58	65
Net Oppose	4	5	2	13	3	3	2

Whilst we note that the survey only found 37 people currently working in the building and construction industry, it is interesting that two thirds of that group (61%) would favour a son or daughter working in the industry. In fact, this group had a heightened “strongly favour” response of 32% compared to the survey average of 17%.

It is interesting that this group also had a heightened negative assessment, with 13% reporting opposition to a son or daughter working in this industry. It seems that the majority of workers in the industry have taken the view that the industry has been good to them, and would support their offspring working in it, but about 1 in 8 would not support this for their son or daughter.

The essence of the above is that there is no strong resistance to the notion of a son or daughters taking up a career in the building and construction industry.

4.1.1 REASONS FOR FAVOURING THE INDUSTRY

Amongst the 250 respondents who indicated they would favour a son or daughter taking up a career in the building and construction industry, the main reasons for that support were:

- It is a good “honest trade” / work (38%)
- You always have work in the industry (22%)
- You can “make good money” (10%)
- Though 42% reported “it’s their choice” / “whatever makes them happy”

It would appear then that amongst the majority of the community that would favour a son or daughter taking up a career in this industry, the main reasons are that is an “honest trade”, that work is always available and that you can earn a good living in this industry.

4.1.2 REASONS FOR OPPOSING THE INDUSTRY ARE

Amongst the few respondents (4%) who opposed the notion of a son or daughter taking up a career in the industry, the main reasons (amongst these 17 respondents) were:

- A perception of better opportunities in other industries
- A perception of “too much union involvement”
- A perception that the industry is “not well paid”
- Some comments to the effect of poor working conditions (unsafe working conditions)
- And that the work is not consistent enough.

It should be noted that these last two comments were only made by two individuals in each case.

The overall assessment from the community is that there is widespread support for a son or daughter taking up a career in the industry, and very small levels of opposition. It might be remembered however that the question asked about their attitudes towards a career in the industry ranging from the “design right through to construction”.

4.2 PERCEIVED BEST FEATURES OF WORKING IN THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

When asked what they regard as the best features of a career in the building and construction industry, the major advantages that were raised were:

- Perception of regular Employment (23%)
- That they are building a better community / create something “tangible” (22%)
- The industry offers varying job opportunities (21%)
- “There is good money to be made” (15%)
- 9% said that the knowledge of the industry meant that “you would know how to build your own house”
- 8% referred to being able to “do your own renovations”
- 6% referred to “working outside / fresh air and sunshine”.
- 4% referred to the notion that they would be self-employed and be “your own boss”

There were no material differences in attitudes between metropolitan and country respondents on these issues, apart from perhaps a difference over the perception of the money that was available in the industry. 18% of metropolitan respondents noted “good money” as a good feature of the industry, compared to just 10% of those in the country.

4.3 THE WORST FEATURES OF WORKING IN THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

When asked to indicate what they believed to be the worst features of a career in the building industry, the main issues raised were:

- 18% Weather conditions / skin cancer risk / being “rained off” work.
- 18% referred to unions and heavy handed tactics
- 17% expressed some concern over the consistency of work in economic downturns
- 16% referred to workplace safety issues / people being hurt or killed on site
- 11% referred to the hard physical labour
- 7% Long hours worked
- 5% referred to a perception that the industry is not well paid
- 3% referred to too many “shoddy” people in the industry.

4.4 RANKING OF ACCEPTABILITY OF TRADES FOR A CAREER

When asked to indicate support or opposition to a family member taking up a career in a range of building trades, we found the levels of support varied quite significantly, with a strong leaning towards the licensed trades of electricians and plumbers. Respondents were asked to express support or opposition to a family member taking up a career in any one of a list of 9 building trades. The order of presentation of these trades was rotated to remove any possible sequence bias in the response. The proportions that would support a family member taking up a career in the trades were:

- 69% Electrician
- 67% Plumber
- 65% Carpentry
- 53% Paint & Decorator
- 48% Tiling
- 45% Roof Carpentry
- 41% Plastering
- 40% Roof Tiler
- 35% Bricklayers

It would appear from the above that the community attitude towards the physically demanding trade of bricklaying suggests a possible shortfall or bricklayers in the future. The members of the community are twice as likely to support a family member taking up a career in the electrical trades then they are in the bricklaying trades. In the absence of any influx of bricklaying skills into the community, one would predict that the supply and demand of bricklayers will force an increase in the cost of bricklaying in the future, and possibly a transition in the method of construction away from bricklaying towards alternative construction methods. The data suggests a quite pressing need for bricklaying (and related plastering skills) to be promoted to the community at large.

