

Results of RCSA Survey Number 1, September 2001

The results of the RCSA's inaugural online survey showed that members are concerned over the shortage of suitably skilled candidates; pressure on margins; and the absorption of the good and services tax (GST).

RCSA members expected to see increases in volumes, however the survey was conducted prior to the attack on the United States on 11 September. Nevertheless, ongoing pressure on margins still put a question mark over the flow-on to increased profitability.

Fifty-six percent of those surveyed also attributed what is widely acknowledged by Australian business as a slow year to the GST. The effect of the GST was two-pronged: it directly led to a drop in business volume, and the industry had to absorb the cost of increased administration.

The shortage of candidates with the right skill combinations was highlighted as a critical issue for the industry. Less than 30 per cent of respondents said it was easy to find appropriate candidates to fill positions.

Members said that they have candidates with individual skills and attitudes that are in demand – it was the combination of those skills and attitudes in any one person that was an issue.

The breakdown by industry sector of positions filled suggested better employment prospects in the non-professional services and trades sector than in others. This sector accounted for the greatest number of people placed in the last month (13.6%) and the highest average number among all respondents (622). The general office management sector hired the second highest number of candidates (320).

Among the sectors accounting for the lowest placement numbers were marketing and advertising and, not surprisingly, information technology and telecommunications.

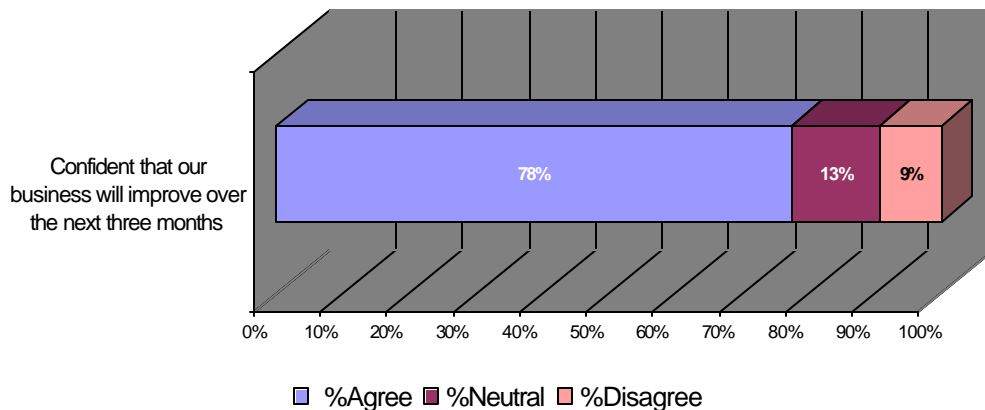
As far as single occupations were concerned, non-professional service providers and tradespeople were most the most successful in finding work. General office management workers as well as logistics and supply workers had also fared well.

The confidential survey was conducted in early September via a secure Internet site by independent market research company The Values Bank Research Centre P/L.

Of the 1300 members surveyed, 10 per cent responded. Sole traders were close to 25 per cent of respondents.

RCSA members are confident their business will improve in the next three months

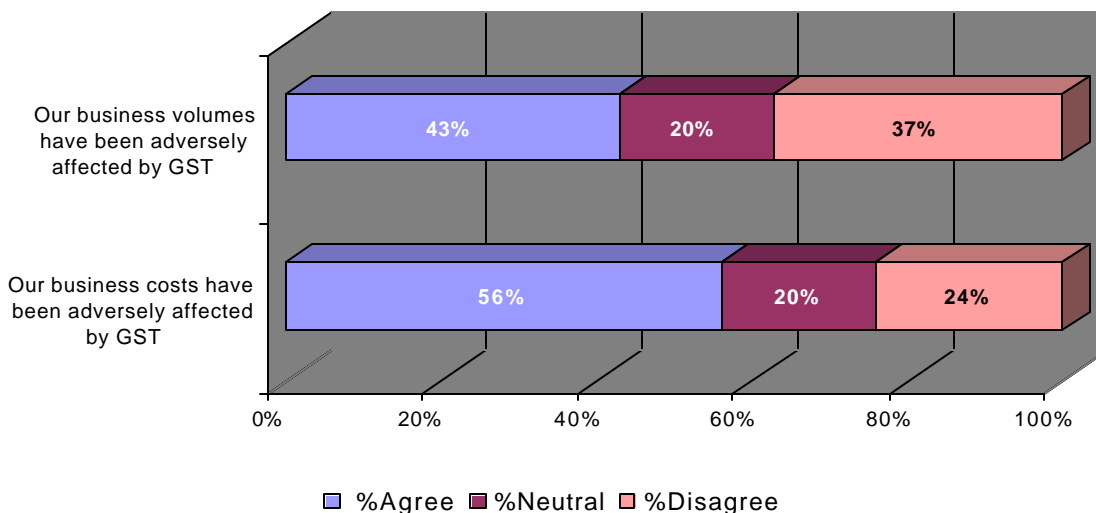
They are expecting a lift in their business **volume** in the next three months. But they are under margins pressure. Will this equate to increased profitability?



Expected volume of business increase in the next quarter = 5.5%

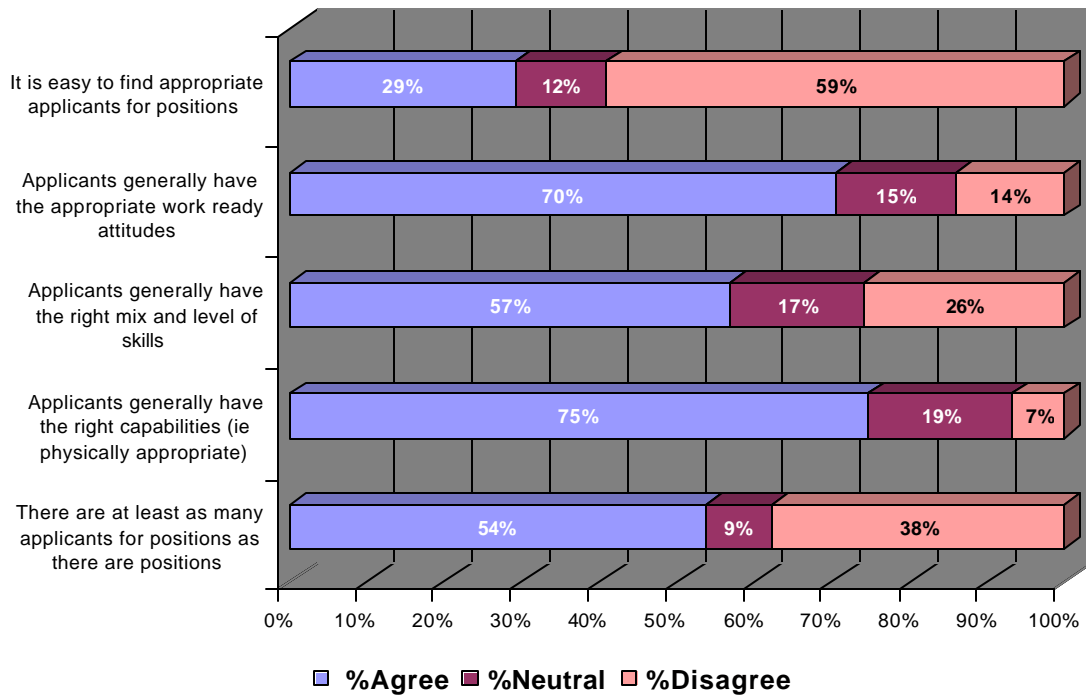
The GST has not been kind to RCSA members

Business volumes have been adversely affected and RCSA members have had to absorb costs especially the cost of administration



It is not easy to find applicants for positions.

There are not enough applicants with the right combination of ALL the job attributes (skills, work ready attitudes and capabilities) despite there being sufficient of each attribute considered alone. Skills is the most critical shortage



Industry sectors the greatest number of people placed in the last month are in Trades & Services followed by General Management

Placed in the last month by industry total	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Total number Placed	41.60	0	969
Trade & services	13.60	0	622
General Management	11.00	0	320
Other	3.90	0	270
Logistics & supply	3.80	0	250
Hospitality & Travel	1.90	0	111
Banking & Finance	1.80	0	61
Building & Engineering	1.40	0	73
Health & Medical	1.30	0	100
Legal	0.80	0	70
IT & Telecoms	0.70	0	23
Scientific	0.70	0	50
Marketing & Advertising	0.40	0	11
Education	0.20	0	15

The top 31 occupations are:

Significant **Other** occupations include:

- Telemarketers
- IT managers

Placed in the last month by occupation	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Trade & services - Labourers	8.80	0	400
Other	3.90	0	275
General management – Secretary/PAs	3.80	0	300
General management – Clerks	3.30	0	151

Staff placed and on-hired workers

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Number of staff placed on client payrolls by your business – last month	68.60	0	5,000
Total number of on-hired workers you manage – last month	149.40	0	1,500
Number of hours billed for on-hired workers by your business – last month	17,136.90	0	450,000