

# Contact Centre and Business Support

JOB INDEX

APRIL 2024





# Introduction

Welcome to the latest edition of the DFP Contact Centre and Business Support Job Index with data collated from the first quarter of 2024.

This report provides a summary of the changes in the Contact Centre and Business Support employment market over the past 3 months, based on seasonally adjusted data.

The latest data has shown hiring demand across Contact Centre and Business Support decline by 2.4% over the last 3 months. While Contact Centre agent roles have fallen again, there has been a considerable increase in leadership roles. In the Business Support group, all categories fell with the exception of General Clerical roles.

Nationally, job vacancies continue to decline in the key employment states of Victoria and NSW, with NSW recording the largest decline this quarter. Conversely, hiring demand in Queensland and WA continues to rise recording positive starts for the first

quarter of 2024. In the other states, demand contracted in the ACT, while Tasmania and SA/NT recorded positive results.

Of the Industry Sectors, Health Care and Financial Services saw an increase in demand over the first quarter. However, both sectors are still recovering from the fall in demand over the past 12 months. It was a tough opening quarter for both Professional Services and Utilities with both sectors recording double digit falls. Hopefully there is some stabilisation over the coming months for job seekers.

We will continue to monitor the data across the Australian employment market and break down information to ensure each industry sector and state can access the latest Contact Centre and Business Support hiring trends throughout 2024.

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# National Job Index

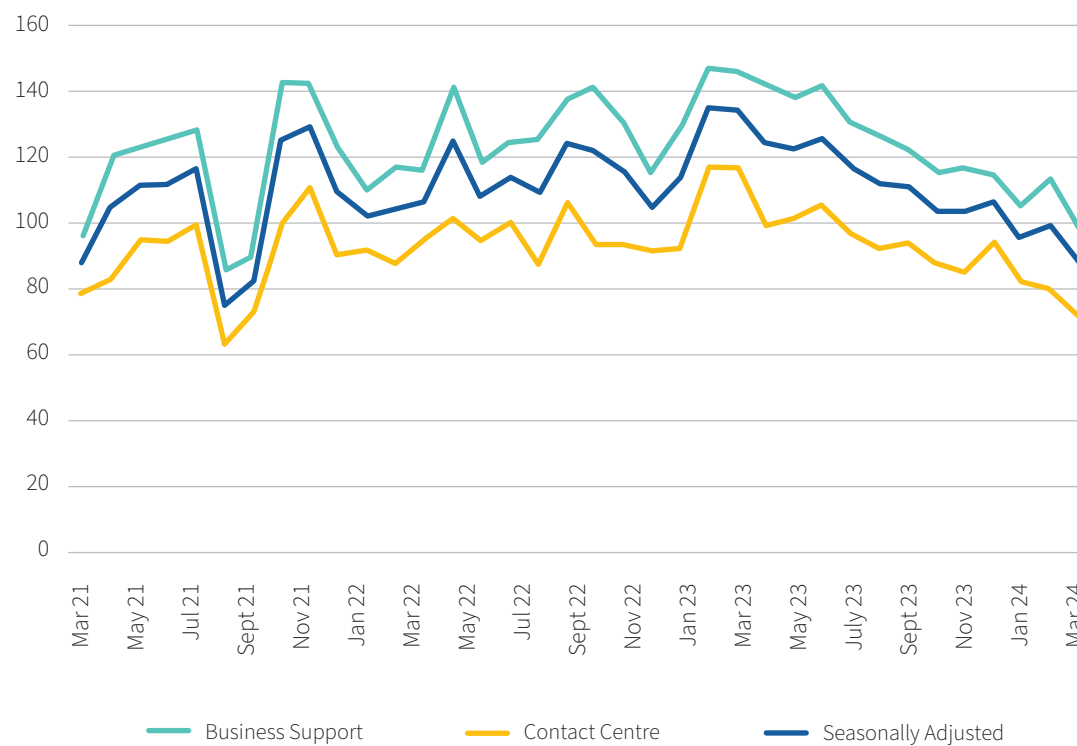


Chart 1 // National Time Series Analysis



# Sectoral Analysis

The first quarter of 2024 has seen a further decline in job vacancies with the DFP Contact Centre and Business Support Job Index reporting a 2.4% contraction in job postings in the latest 3 month period. This follows more significant falls in the last 3 quarters of 2023.

The positive news is that the rate of decline is slowing, while the broader Australian employment market fell by a greater volume in the last 3 months. Employers remain concerned about high interest rates, high inflation and fragile geopolitical developments, all impacting business confidence. Surprisingly, unemployment did fall last month, however it is not clear if this trend will continue or whether it was a statistical aberration.

On an annualised basis, demand has fallen 24.7%. Contact Centre and Business Support job vacancies were at a record high level last January and their indices are close to or below 100 indicating average job expectations by historical standards.

Contact Centre was the weaker sector last quarter with demand falling 5.2%. Business Support fell just 1% but over a 12 month period, is slightly weaker, down 26.3%, since last March. Both categories have fallen in 4 successive quarters.

“Employers remain concerned about high interest rates, high inflation and fragile geopolitical developments, all impacting business confidence.”

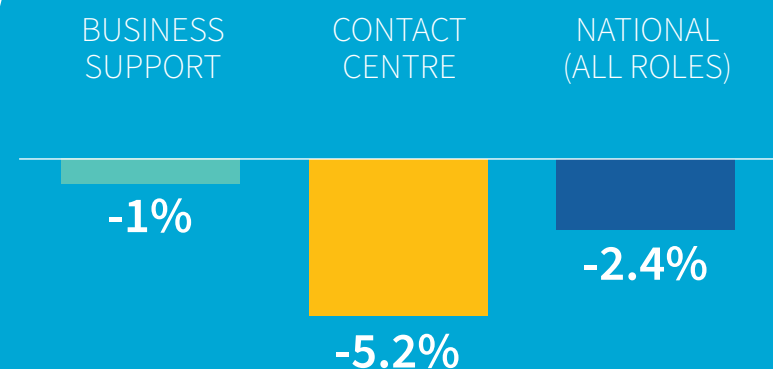


Chart 2 // Change in Job Index by Sector,  
Q1 – January-March 2024

# Contact Centre Occupational Analysis



CONTACT CENTRE  
AGENT

**-5.3%**



CONTACT CENTRE TEAM  
LEADER / MANAGER

**+17.3%**

**Chart 3 // Change in Job Index by Contact Centre Occupation,  
Q1 – January-March 2024**

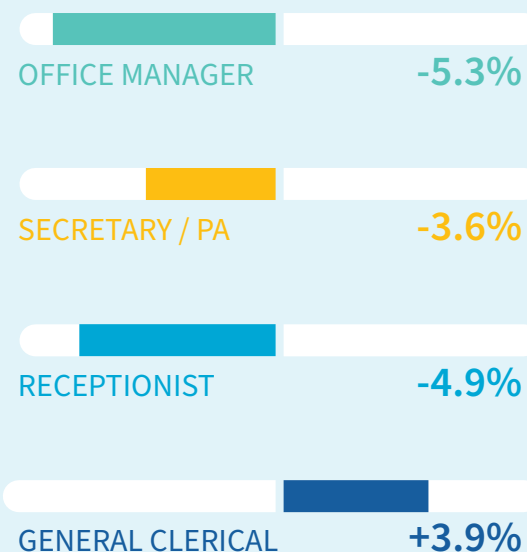
Contact Centre Agent jobs took the brunt of the decline, falling 5.3%. It's the fourth consecutive decline for the category.

There was a 17.3% upswing in Team Leader/Managerial roles, however this may be misleading. Demand for this leadership group fell by over 20% in the preceding 2 quarters, and low volumes as well as the December seasonal factor can lead to volatility. The more reliable but disappointing trend for job seekers is that demand has slipped 28.6% over the last year.

# Business Support Occupational Analysis

All occupations fell with the notable exception of General Clerical which rose a modest 3.9%. It can be regarded as modest as it recorded double digit declines in the preceding 3 quarters.

The declines in the other 3 occupations were also all below 5%, whilst falls in the prior quarters have been more significant. It suggests a slowing in the rate of decline, but no pivotal change. It is likely that demand in 2024 will remain suppressed until interest rates fall and business confidence returns.

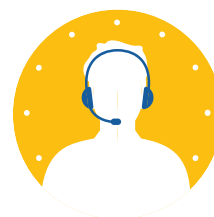


**Chart 4 // Change in Job Index by Business Support Occupation, Q1 – January-March 2024**

“It is likely that demand in 2024 will remain suppressed until interest rates fall and business confidence returns.”



# Job Type Analysis



PERMANENT  
-0.6%



TEMPORARY  
-8.2%

**Chart 5 // Change in Job Index by Job Type,  
Q1 – January-March 2024**

The trend away from Temporary and Contract roles continues as Temporary job opportunities fell 8.2%, while Permanent jobs declined by 0.6%. The gap between Temporary and Contract roles compared to Permanent jobs continues to widen. Over the last year, Temporary demand has fallen 40.8% while Permanent roles are down 19%.

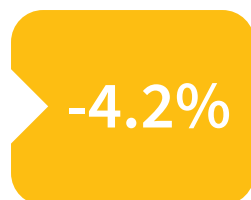
Typically, employers shift their workforce mix towards temporary and contract roles during an easing employment market as it offers greater flexibility. As this is not currently the case, it is possible that recent skill shortages post Covid has employers continuing to lock in talent.

# Hours Worked Analysis

Part-Time work fell steadily in 2023 but rose 9.7% in the first quarter of 2024. Over the same period, Full-Time work fell 4.2%. Part-Time jobs have generally performed slightly better in previous quarters, falling less than Full-Time.

The annual decline in Part-Time, 12.1%, is less than half the annual decline in Full-Time work, which is down 26.8%. Another feature of this weakening employment market is employers may be employing staff on reduced hours, taking a cautious approach. This is also a strategy or employer initiative to offer flexible working conditions popular with candidates.

FULL-TIME



PART-TIME



Chart 6 // Change in Job Index by Hours Worked,  
Q1 – January-March 2024



# State Analysis

All the major states experienced declines in the last three quarters of 2023 and in this quarter there has been a divide. While NSW and Victoria continue their contraction, both Queensland and Western Australia enjoyed a bounce in demand.

NSW fell 22.1% taking the annual decline to a significant 43.5% as demand peaked last February and has almost halved since then.

Victoria fell a further 5.6% in the last 3 months and demand is down 32.4% since last March. Whilst Victoria is not declining at the same pace as NSW, it has been in decline over a considerably longer period.

Conversely, Queensland and Western Australia both enjoyed double digit growth in the March Quarter. Both also report growth over 12 months – Queensland up 3.8% and WA up 6.7%, demonstrating considerable variation across the national employment landscape.

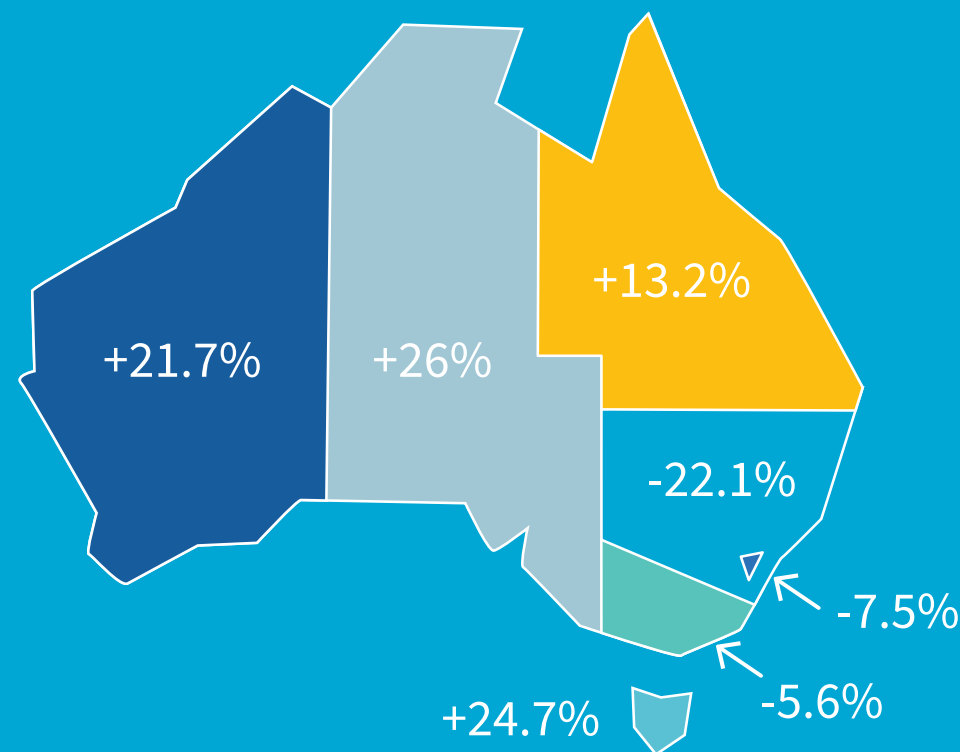


Chart 7 // Change in Job Index by selective State and Territory,  
Q1 – January-March 2024

# Industry Analysis

Once again, industry sector variations continue to present. Healthcare and Financial Services are showing some signs of recovery. Healthcare was in decline throughout 2023, and a 4.6% rise in the last quarter is encouraging. Continued growth will be required to reverse the accumulated 26.9% decline over 12 months.

The 8.6% rise in Financial Services is also encouraging, however it is an industry sector that has been in decline since prior to Covid as opportunities remain well down on historical benchmarks.

The biggest decline is in the Professional Services sector with job postings down 15.8% over the last 3 months. It's a sector that has been struggling across a multitude of occupations.

Another sector continuing to record lean results is Utilities. Hiring demand in Utilities is down 14% for the first quarter of 2024. This follows a relatively stable 2023.

▼ -15.8%	Professional, Scientific and Technical (inc IT)
▼ -8.9%	Public Administration
▲ +4.6%	Healthcare and Social Assistance
▲ +8.6%	Financial and Insurance Services
▼ -4.5%	Information, Media & Telecommunications
▼ -14%	Utilities

Chart 8 // Change in Job Index in Selective Industries,  
Q1 – January-March 2024

“Healthcare and Financial Services are showing some signs of recovery...”





# Recruitment Solutions for Contact Centre and Business Support

Recruiting for all roles within Contact Centre and Business Support, DFP Recruitment has demonstrated experience in providing quality recruitment solutions for permanent positions, contract roles and temporary assignments.

We work closely with clients and candidates continually listening, learning and building on our understanding.

Our ongoing commitment to the rapidly evolving market has led to the following innovations in service delivery:

## Assessment

- The Simulator: our unique phone-based simulation exercise measuring talk-type synchronicity in a live contact centre environment
- Tailored behavioural assessments and bespoke team exercises
- Flexible testing solutions including skills assessment, work styles and situation judgement tests
- Assessment centre solutions offered virtually or on site at DFP offices and client sites
- DFP Scheduler: Online interview and assessment centre scheduling tool to improve the candidate experience and effectively manage timeframes

## Project management

- Campaign planning methodology
- Dedicated Project Managers
- Scalable service delivery team

## Diverse and Inclusive Partnering

- Disability Confident Recruiter
- Graduate Disability Program

## We recruit roles in:

- Inbound Customer Service
- Inbound Sales
- Outbound Sales
- Collections
- CX Digital & Service
- Helpdesk Operations
- Team Leading
- Workforce Management
- Operations Management
- Professional & Technical
- Contact Centre Management
- Administration & Clerical
- Business Support
- Office Management
- PA & Secretarial
- Reception

## Other services:

- Volume Recruitment
- Assessment Services
- Graduate Recruitment
- Unbundled Services
- Psychometric Testing
- Managed Onsite Services
- Payroll Services

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