



State of the Industry - Heavy Automotive

The industry is a key supporter of the transportation and Mining

Enrolment in heavy automotive training has increased over the years. Completions in AUR31220 Certificate III in Mobile Plant Technology have increased from 990 in 2020 to 2,342 in 2024.¹

The heavy vehicle industry employs around 70,000 people involved in designing, manufacturing, and servicing roles.² The occupation with the highest employment among key occupations is earthmoving plant operator (11,000), followed by excavator operator (10,600) and diesel motor mechanic (7,400). Almost half of the key occupations for heavy automotive are currently experiencing workforce shortages (Table A7).

Table A7: Key occupations, 2021

Occupation	Employed	Shortage	In CSOL?
Earthmoving Plant Operators nfd	11,000	No data	No
Excavator Operator	10,600	S	No
Diesel Motor Mechanic	7,400	S	Yes
Mobile Plant Operators nfd	5,300	No data	No
Loader Operator	5,100	S	No
Earthmoving Plant Operator (General)	3,700	No data	No
Grader Operator	2,100	S	No
Bulldozer Operator	1,500	S	No
Mobile Plant Operators nec	1,400	NS	No
Road Roller Operator	600	S	No
Backhoe Operator	400	NS	No
Railway Track Plant Operator	400	S	No
Paving Plant Operator	300	NS	No
Other Mobile Plant Operators nfd	0	No data	No

Source: ABS, 2021 Census Data, 2022; JSA, "Occupation Shortage List", 2025; Department of Home Affairs, "The Core Skills Occupation List", 2024. Note: 1. RS: Regional Shortage; S: Shortage; NS: Not in Shortage. 2. The key occupations have been selected based on AUSMASA's remit. Since it is difficult to measure the heavy automotive workforce within ANZSIC classification, the occupation figures presented reflect the total number of workers in relevant occupations (ANZSCO 6-digit level) across all Australian industries. 3. The employment figure is rounded to the nearest 10.

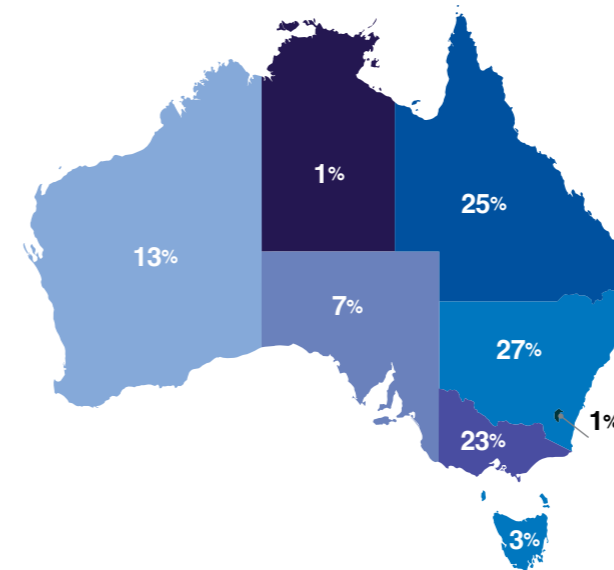
Employment is concentrated along the eastern coast

The state with the highest number of heavy automotive jobs in Australia is NSW (27.4%), followed by QLD (24.9%) and VIC (23.3%) (Figure A15). Mining machinery users (27%) represent the largest market for the Heavy Machinery Repair and Maintenance industry, relying on equipment such as excavators and loaders for extraction and material handling (Figure A16). The sector faces acute skills shortages, particularly in the TAE and diesel space. Standardised RPL can unlock some of these challenges, but there are other perception-based challenges around recruitment and attraction that will require coordinated action from various stakeholders. The sector also faces competition for skills from the Mining industry, which tend to have large workforce numbers dedicated to maintaining their heavy automotive fleets.

¹ AUSMASA, "VET Dashboard", 2025.

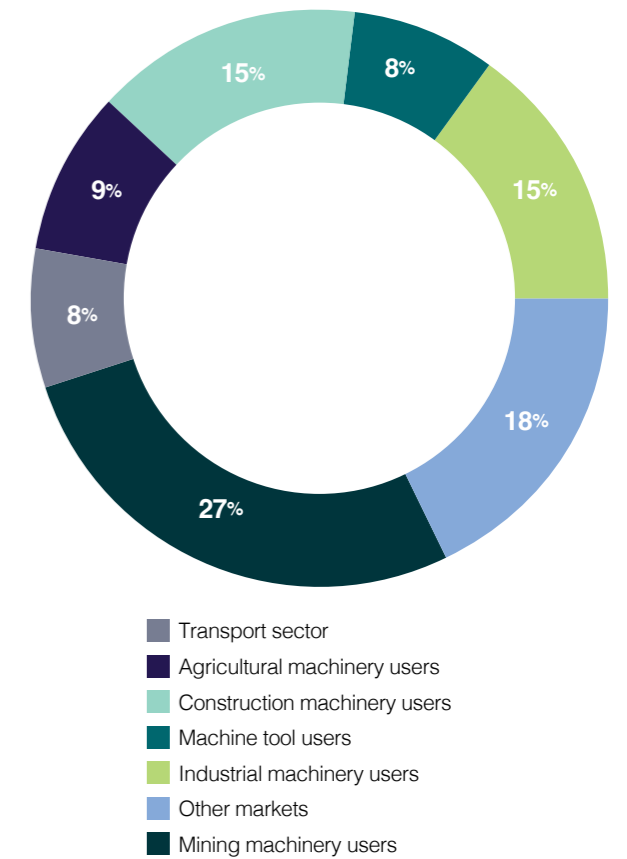
² HVIA, "Leading Australia's Heavy Vehicle Industry Since 1968", 2026.

Figure A15: Occupation by state, 2021



Source: ABS, 2021 Census Data, 2022; Note: The key occupations have been selected based on AUSMASA's remit.

Figure A16: Products & Services segments, 2025



Source: IBISWorld, "Heavy Machinery Repair and Maintenance in Australia", 2025.

