Future Work, Future Communities

Wave 4 Report of the Longitudinal Survey of Retrenched Workers

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Acknowledgements

This project involves a partnership between three of Australia's leading research universities: the University of South Australia, Australian Catholic University and Flinders University; and two partner universities: Tampere University and the University of Birmingham.

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Of course, the responses presented in this report would never have come to light without the input of the participants themselves who took their time to complete the surveys. We owe all our respondents a considerable debt of gratitude.

All photographic images used in this report are courtesy of Ms. Sandy Horne to whom we extend our thanks for access to her quality photography.

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1. Introduction

This report provides the univariate responses from the fourth wave of the longitudinal workers survey administered between May and July 2023. It does not include background information of the project or the methodology of the data collection. Appendix A presents the data collection instrument used for Wave 4 of the longitudinal workers survey.

Further information about the project or data can be provided on request. It is also recommended that this document be viewed in conjunction with the three prior reports in this series available either on request or through the login section of the project website – <fwfc.com.au>. Namely,

- Wave 1 Report of the Longitudinal Survey of Retrenched Workers
- Wave 2 Report of the Longitudinal Survey of Retrenched Workers
- Wave 3 Report of the Longitudinal Survey of Retrenched Workers

At the conclusion of the project, all data will be made Open Access with a trusted data repository.

2. Univariate survey responses, Wave 4 survey

This section of univariate survey responses of the Wave 4 survey provides the foundation alongside the previous reports for additional, more sophisticated analyses. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of respondents who have consented to be contacted for future research as 690, or 98.3 per cent.

Table 1. Consent provided for future contact

Are you happy to be contacted in the future?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Yes	690	98.3
No	12	1.7
Total	702	100.0

This response puts the longitudinal project on a continued positive track as it suggests that the project will retain adequate sample numbers through to completion of the project in 2025 for the last wave of administration.

2.1 Household circumstances

Changes in household composition

Wave 4 Survey Question F8b. Are the people and number of people living in your household the same as since we spoke in May/June of last year?

Respondents were asked about the changes in household composition that had occurred between the Wave 3 and Wave 4 surveys. The vast majority of respondents (88.3%, n=620) indicated there had been no changes while a small proportion (11.5%, n=81) indicated there had been some changes; one respondent preferred not to give an answer.

Wave 4 Survey Question F8c. Can you tell me how many have entered and left the household?

Of the 81 households to experience a change in composition, 46 had people enter the household, and 51 had people leave (Table 2). It is noted that for some respondents, people had both entered and left the household.

Table 2. Number of people who entered or left household

Can you tell me how many have entered and left the household?	Entered		Left	
	Frequency	Per cent (%)	Frequency	Per cent (%)
1	22	52.4	34	66.7
2	13	31.0	11	21.6
3	6	14.3	4	7.8
4	1	2.4	2	3.9
Total	42	100.0	51	100.0

Note: Some households had people both enter and leave. Hence, the sum of the totals is greater than 81 – the total number of households to experience a change in composition.

Relationship with household members entering and leaving

Wave 4 Survey Question F9a. What is your relationship with this person?

Table 3 shows new household members were mostly non-partner family members of the respondent with children (30.4%) and parents (11.6%) being the most common. Some 18.8 per cent of new household members were a spouse or partner of the respondent; one person was a grandparent (1.4%); and 31.9 per cent held another unspecified relation (Table 3).

Table 3. Relationship with persons who entered household

What is your relationship with this person?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Spouse/de facto partner	13	18.8
Child	21	30.4
Parent	8	11.6
Grandparent	1	1.4
Sibling	2	2.9
Other	22	31.9
Prefer not to say	2	2.9
Total	69	100.0

Wave 4 Survey Question F9f. What is, or was, your relationship with this person?

Table 4 shows that children (63.5%) made up the greatest number of people leaving households followed by household members not further described (20.3%). Spouses (n=5) and parents (n=4) collectively made up 12.2 per cent.

Table 4. Relationship with persons who left household

What is, or was, your relationship with this person?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Spouse/de facto partner	5	6.8
Child	47	63.5
Parent	4	5.4
Other	15	20.3
Prefer not to say	3	4.1
Total	74	100.0

Changes in spouse/partner activity

Wave 4 Survey Question F10. Since we last spoke, did your spouse or partner do any of the following?

Respondents were asked whether their spouses or partners changed employment activity since the Wave 3 survey in 2022. Table 5 shows that 157 spouses or partners changed their employment activity with the most common changes including:

- an increase in working hours (n=42);
- a decrease in working hours (n=28);
- a change of job (n=26); and,
- Start working when previously they were not (n=24).

Table 5. Change in spouse's work activity

Since we last spoke, did your spouse or partner do any of the following…?	Yes	No
Start working when previously they were not	24	516
Change jobs	26	514
Increase their working hours	42	498
Take an extra job	7	533
Stop working	18	522
Decrease their working hours	28	512
Other	18	522
Experienced a change in employment activity	157	383
Prefer not to say	5	535

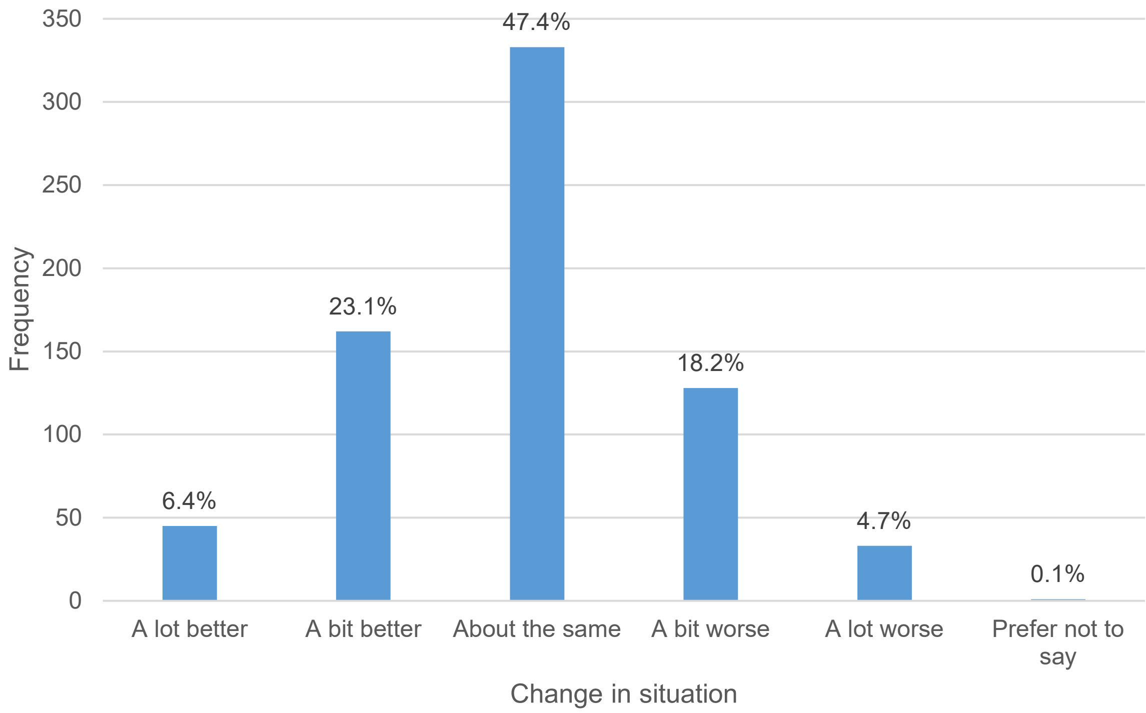
Note: Multiple responses allowed, 540 observations

2.2 Finances, security, and stress

Change in financial situation

Wave 4 Survey Question F12a. How much better or worse off has your financial situation changed since we spoke last year?

Respondents were asked to provide an assessment of the *change* in financial situation since we had last spoken to them at the administration of the Wave 3 survey. 47.4 per cent reported that their circumstances were the same; 29.5 per cent reported that they were a bit or a lot better; and 22.9 per cent indicated that they were a bit or a lot worse (Figure 1).



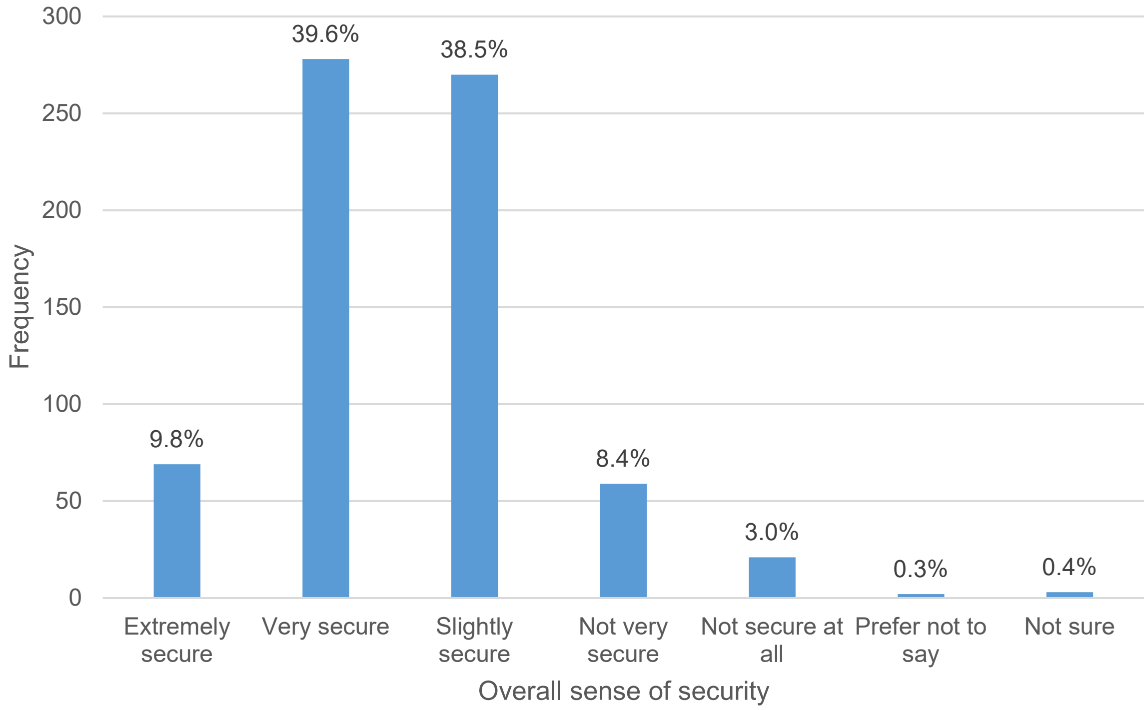
Note: 702 observations

Figure 1. Financial situation compared to Wave 3

Financial security

Wave 4 Survey Question F11. How secure do you feel about your overall financial situation?

Respondents were also asked how they felt about their financial situation *overall*. 87.9 per cent of respondents indicated they feel slightly to extremely secure. 8.4 per cent reported not feeling very secure, and a further 3.0 per cent reported not feeling secure at all (Figure 2).



Note: 702 observations

Figure 2. How secure respondents feel about their overall financial situation

Reliance on paid income

Wave 4 Survey Question B2 To what extent do you still rely on income from paid work to get by?

When asked about respondents' reliance on paid work to 'get by':

- 38.9 per cent indicated they rely on paid work to a very large extent;
- 25.1 per cent indicated to a large extent;
- 13.5 per cent indicated to a moderate extent;
- 6.0 per cent indicated to a small extent; and,
- 16.1 per cent indicated they did not rely on paid work at all (Table 6).

Table 6. The extent to which respondents rely on paid income

To what extent do you still rely on income from paid work to get by?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
To a very large extent	273	38.9
To a large extent	176	25.1
To a moderate extent	95	13.5
To a small extent	42	6.0
Not at all	113	16.1
Prefer not to say	3	0.4
Total	702	100

Financial stress, overall

Wave 4 Survey Question F17. Which of these statements best describes your household with regard to money?

Respondents were asked to choose a description of their household's financial situation in regard to discretionary and necessary expenditure. Table 7shows:

- 21.2 per cent reported having enough money for anything they want;
- 43.4 per cent of households reported having enough money so long as they plan spending carefully;
- 19.9 per cent reported a balanced budget;
- 11.0 per cent reported only being able to afford necessary items; and,
- 3.8 per cent reported experiencing financial difficulties to afford basic things.

Table 7. Respondent household's financial situation

Which of these statements best describes your household with regard to money?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
You normally have enough money for anything you want	149	21.2
You have enough money, so long as you plan spending carefully	305	43.4
You have a balanced budget of your household income and expenses	140	19.9
You have enough money for basic things, but can't afford anything unnecessary	77	11.0
Sometimes it is hard for you to afford even basic things	27	3.8
Other (please specify)	1	0.1
Prefer not to say	3	0.4
Total	702	100

It is noted that the terms 'anything you want,' 'carefully,' 'balanced,' and 'basic' were not defined, so it was left up to the interpretation of the respondents when providing an answer.

Financial stress, since retrenchment

Wave 4 Survey Question F18a. Has your household experienced financial stress as a result of you finishing your job in the automotive industry?
Wave 4 Survey Question F18b. Due to financial stress, has your household…?

Some 204 respondents (29.1%) indicated their household had experienced financial stress as a result of finishing up in the automotive industry. Respondents who indicated they had experienced financial stress between finishing up in the automotive industry and the administration of the Wave 4 survey were asked a follow-up question to ascertain some ways in which this financial stress had been realised in their lives.

Responses in Table 8 show that the most common effects were:

- not being able to pay bills on time (n=69);
- seeking income from the government (n=68);
- withdrawing money from superannuation funds (66);
- pawning or selling possessions (n=58); and,
- asking for financial help from family or friends (n=54).

Other effects included being unable to heat their home (n=43); selling assets other than a house (40); the inability to pay their rent or mortgage on time (n=36); applying for mortgage relief (n=28); going without meals (n=22); asking for help from community organisations (n=19); borrowing against the value of their home (n=19); and selling a house or property (n=17).

Table 8. Effects of financial stress on respondent household

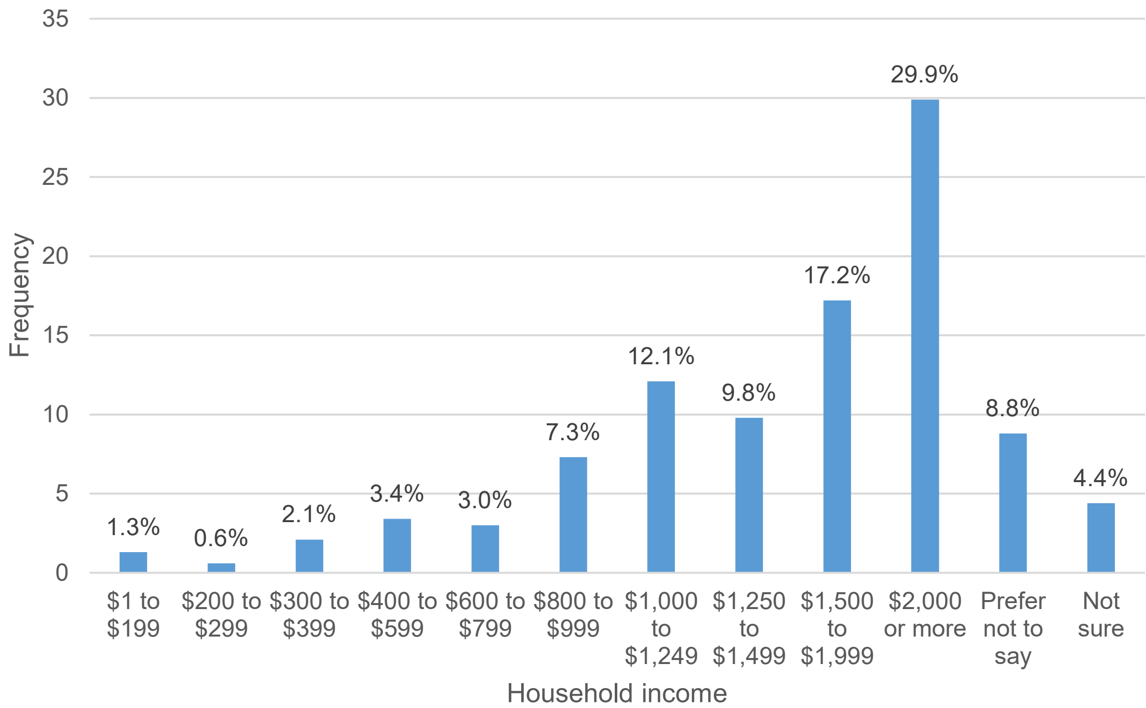
Due to financial stress, has your household…?	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Prefer not to say
Not been able to pay your bills on time	69	131	3	1
Not been able to pay your rent or mortgage on time	36	155	11	2
Asked for financial help from family or friends	54	146	3	1
Been unable to heat your home	43	155	4	2
Gone without meals	22	179	1	2
Pawned or sold something	58	143	2	1
Asked for income support from government (e.g., Centrelink)	68	133	2	1
Asked for help (e.g., food parcels or vouchers) from community organisations	19	183	1	1
Sold a house or property*	17	182	4	1
Sold other assets other than a house (e.g., stocks, car, jewellery)	40	160	2	2
Withdrew money from your superannuation	66	136	1	1
Applied for a mortgage relief (e.g., by changing the terms of your loan, or temporarily pausing or reducing your repayments)	28	163	11	2
Borrowed against the value of your home	19	176	7	2

Note: Multiple responses allowed, 204 observations

Household income

Wave 4 Survey Question F16. Approximately, what is your weekly household income after tax?

As shown in Figure 3, most respondents (29.9%) reported a weekly household income of over $2,000 *after tax*. The next two brackets with the greatest number of responses were $1,500 to $1,999 (17.2%) and $1,000 to $1,249 (12.1%). It is noted that a significant population either preferred not to give an answer (8.8%) or were uncertain what their weekly household income was (4.4%).



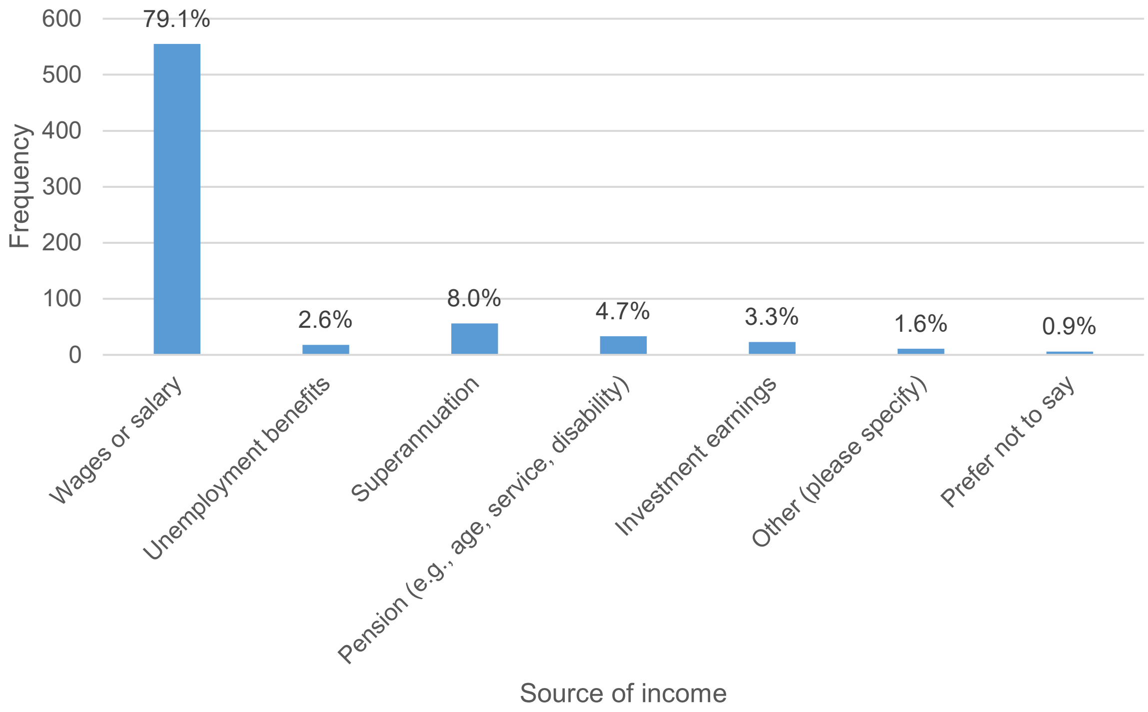
Note: 702 observations

Figure 3. Household weekly income after tax

Source of household income

Wave 4 Survey Question F15. What is your household's primary source of income?

Just over 79.1 per cent of respondents reported their household's primary source of income was from wages or salaries (Figure 4). An additional 8.0 per cent indicated superannuation was their primary source of income; 4.7 per cent, pensions; 3.3 per cent, investment earnings; 2.6 per cent, unemployment benefits; and the remainder either had another source of primary income (1.6%) or preferred not to answer (0.9%) (Figure 4).



Note: 702 observations

Figure 4. Household primary source of income

2.3 Job searching and training

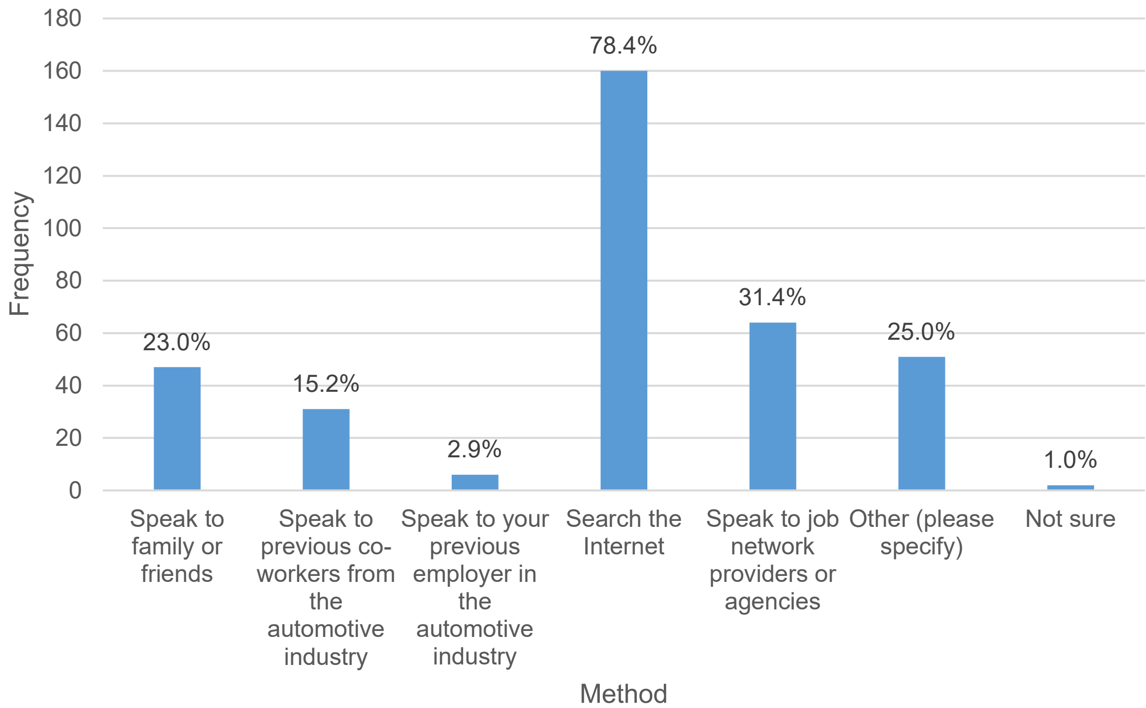
This section outlines responses to questions on job search and applying for new employment since the administration of the Wave 3 survey. This section considers job searching activity and job preferences at the Wave 4 interview.

Significantly, 241 respondents had participated in some type of job searching activity between the Wave 3 and Wave 4 surveys.

Job search methods

Wave 4 Survey Question E3 What methods did you use to look for work? Did you...?

The most common method in looking for work since the Wave 3 survey was searching the Internet (78.4%). The next most used method was speaking to job network providers or agencies (31.4%). The next two most used methods were speaking to family or friends (23.0%) and speaking to previous co-workers from the automotive industry (15.2%) (Figure 5). The Wave 4 survey shows that speaking to previous contacts in the automotive industry is showing less prevalence as the years since retrenchment progress.



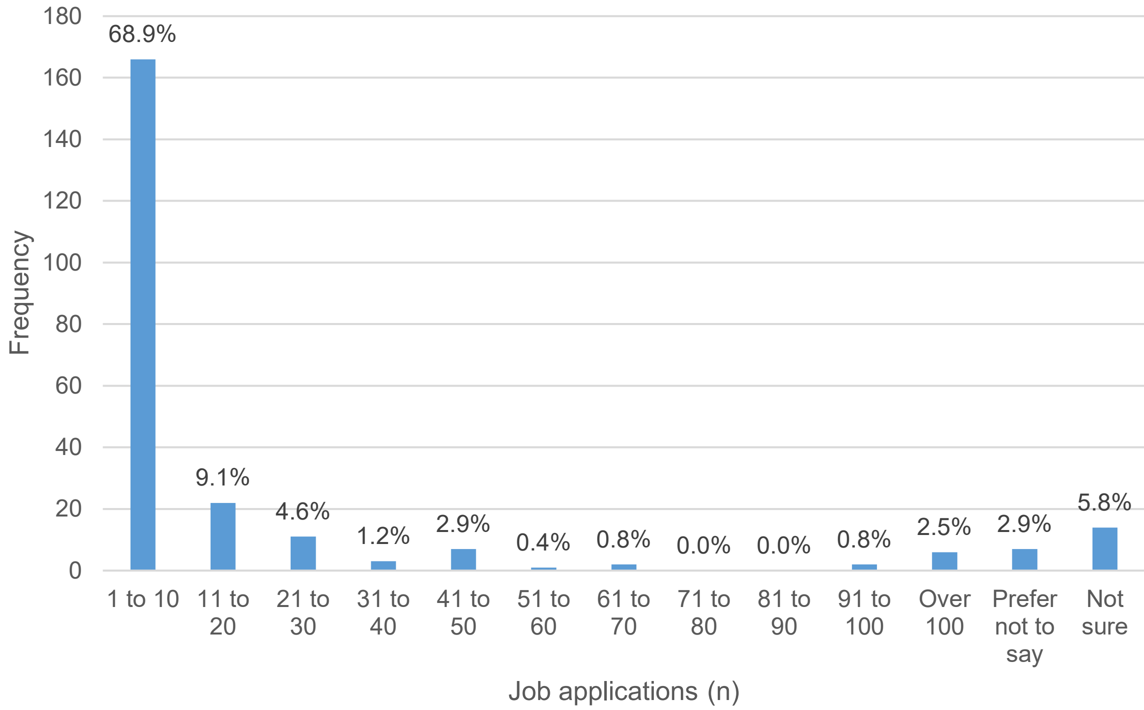
Note: Multiple responses allowed, 241 observations

Figure 5. Methods used to look for work (job searching since Wave 3)

Number of job applications

Wave 4 Survey Question E1. Approximately how many jobs have you applied for since we last spoke?

As shown in Figure 6, most respondents who had actively been looking for work between the Wave 3 and 4 surveys had applied for one to 10 jobs (68.9%); 9.1 per cent had applied for 11 to 20 jobs; 8.7 per cent had applied for 21 to 50 jobs; and 2.1[1] per cent of respondents had applied for 51 to 100 jobs. Some participants reported they applied for more than 100 jobs (2.5%) between the two surveys (Figure 6).



Note: 241 observations

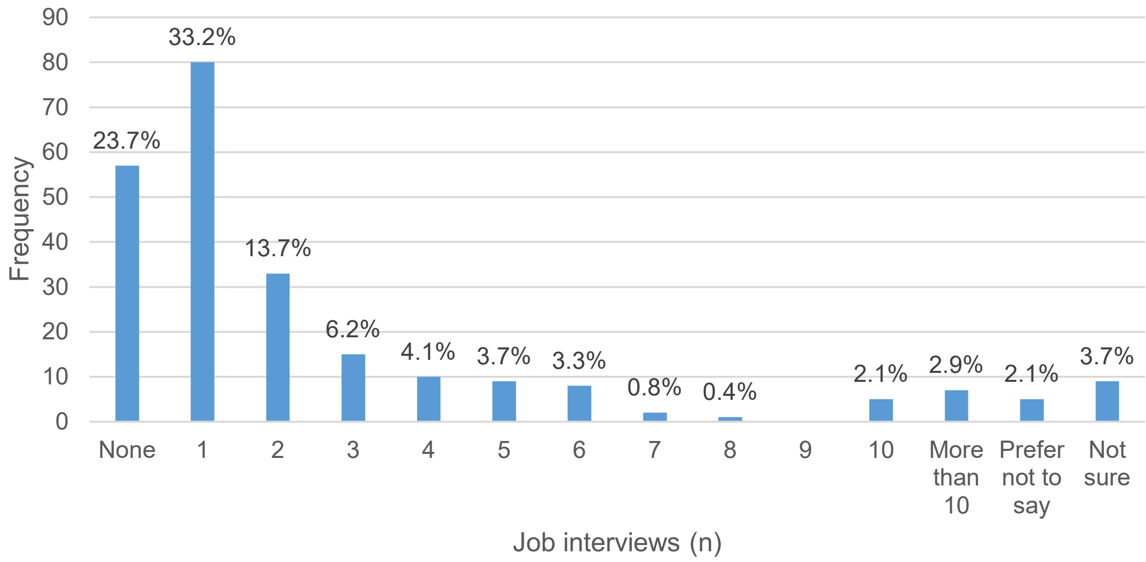
Figure 6. Jobs applied for since Wave 3

[1] Apparent inconsistencies between this number and Figure 6 are due to rounding

Number of job interviews

Wave 4 Survey Question E2. With approximately how many employers have you had interviews with since we last spoke?

Overall, 53.1 per cent of respondents reported they had job interviews with 3 or fewer employers; 14.5[2] per cent reported having interviews with between 4 and 10 employers inclusive; 2.9 per cent reported having interviews with more than 10 employers and 23.7 per cent indicated they had not had any job interviews between the Wave 3 and 4 surveys (Figure 7).



Note: 241 observations

Figure 7. Number of interviews with different employers since Wave 3

[2] Apparent inconsistencies between this number and Figure 7 are due to rounding

Job offers

Wave 4 Survey Question E5. Have you turned down any job offers?

In all, 10.5 per cent of respondents reported having turned down a job offer between the Wave 3 and 4 surveys.

Job searching at Wave 4 interview

Wave 4 Survey Question E7. Are you currently looking for (a/another) job?

At the Wave 4 interview, 103 or 16.5 per cent of respondents reported they were looking for some, more or different work with a/another employer. Some of these people had been searching since leaving the automotive sector, others had recommenced their search to improve their employment status or conditions.

Wave 4 Survey Question E8. How long have you been looking for (a/another) job?

Table 9 shows that of these 103 respondents, 68.0[3] per cent had been looking for a job for less than six months; 15.5 per cent had been looking for a job for six months to a year; 6.8 per cent had been looking for a job for one to two years; and 9.7 per cent had been looking for a job for over two years. The percentage of those looking for two or more years has lessened in Wave 4 reflecting the current economic climate of full-employment.

Table 9. Time spent looking for a/another job

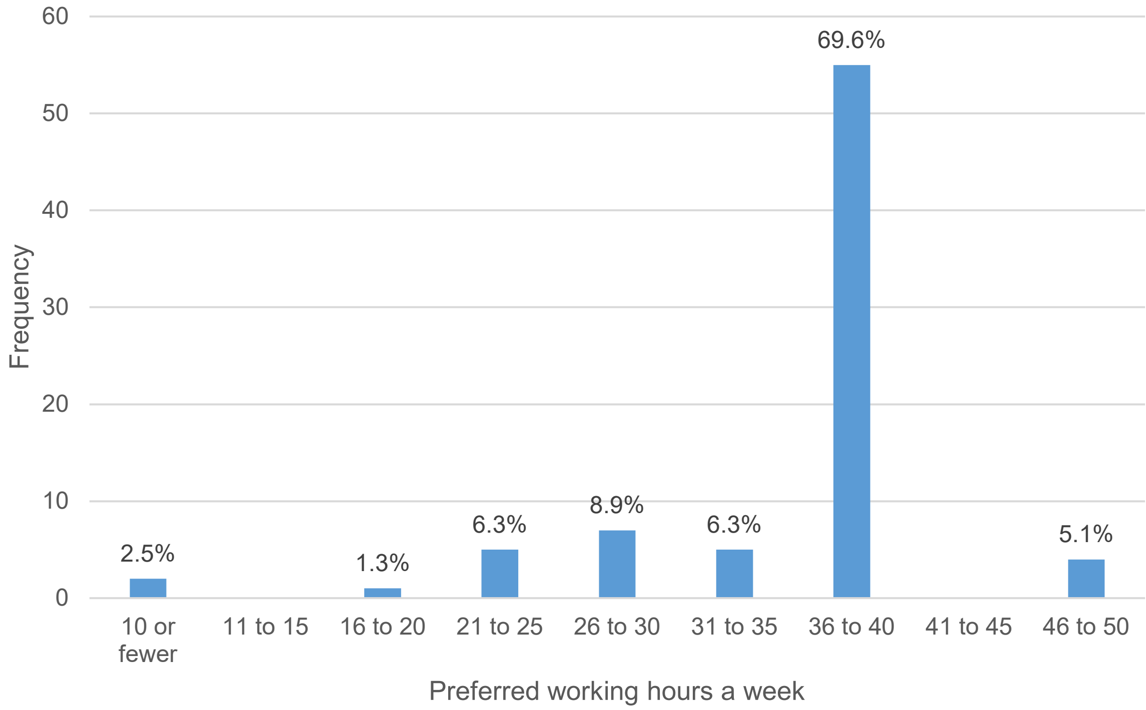
How long have you been looking for a/another job?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Less than 1 month	26	25.2
1 to less than 3 months	19	18.4
3 to less than 6 months	25	24.3
6 months to less than 1 year	16	15.5
1 to less than 2 years	7	6.8
2 or more years	10	9.7
Total	103	100

[3] Apparent inconsistencies between this number and Table 9 are due to rounding

Preferred working hours (job searching)

Wave 4 Survey Question E9. How many hours would you prefer to work each week?

Respondents looking for work were asked their preference for working hours. Figure 8 shows that there was a preference amongst respondents (55 or 69.6% of respondents) to work full-time – 36 to 40 hours a week. 25.3 per cent of workers (20) preferred to work less than 36 hours a week and 5.1 per cent of workers (4) preferred to work overtime (Figure 8).



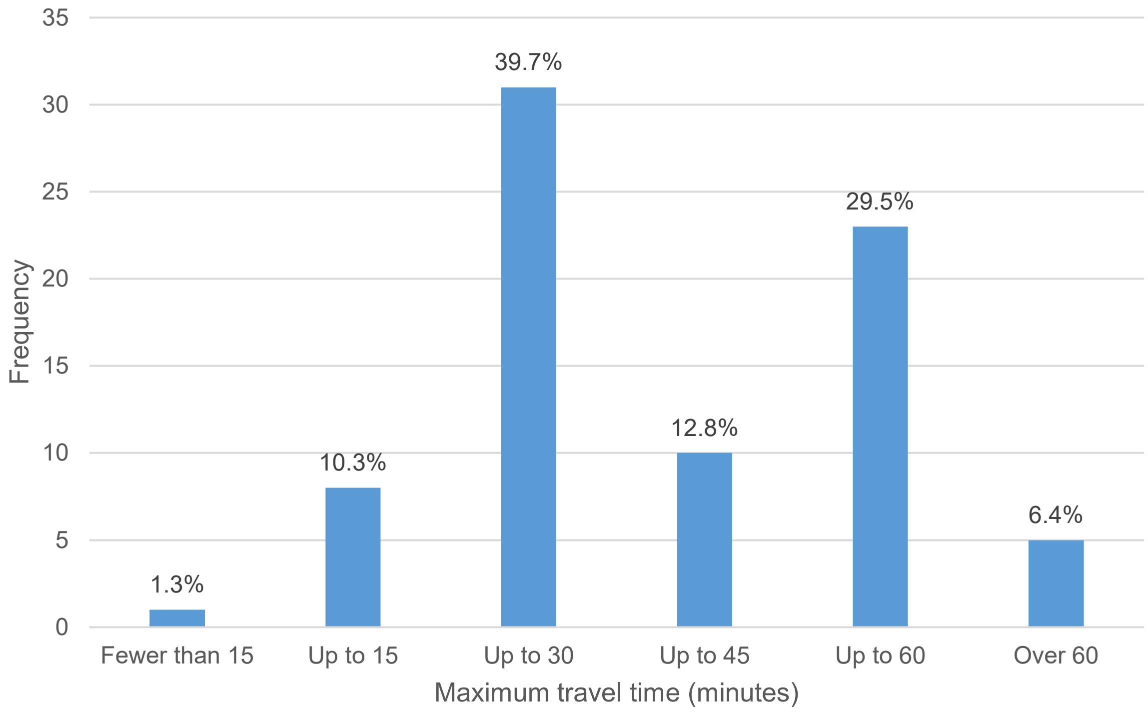
Note: 79 observations

Figure 8. Preferred working hours (job searching)

Time prepared to travel to work

Wave 4 Survey Question E10. What is the maximum time you are prepared to travel for work?

Figure 9 shows that one job searcher (1.3%) was only willing to travel fewer than 15 minutes to work; 10.3 per cent were willing to travel up to 15 minutes; 39.7 per cent were willing to travel up to 30 minutes; 12.8 per cent were willing to travel up to 45 minutes; 29.5 per cent of workers were willing to travel up to 60 minutes; and 6.4 per cent of job searchers were willing to travel over 60 minutes to a place of work.



Note: 78 observations

Figure 9. Maximum time prepared to travel to work (job searching)

Confidence in the labour market – finding work

Wave 4 Survey Question E12.

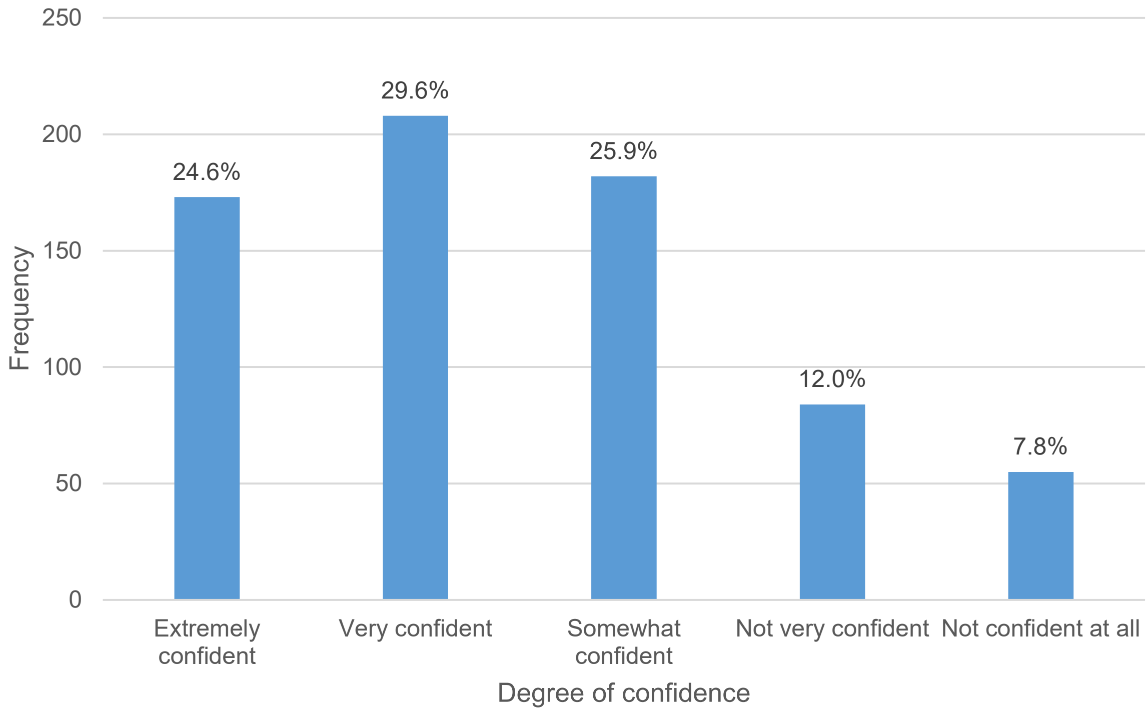
How confident are you that you will be able to find work within the next 6-12 months?

Alternative wording:

In the event you had to look for work, how confident are you that you would be able to find employment within 6-12 months?

Participants were asked about how confident they are that they would find work in the next six months. For those actively looking for work, this was posed as a question in concrete terms, but for those not looking for work, it was posed as a hypothetical.

Some 54.2 per cent of respondents reported being very to extremely confident they would find work in the next six months; 25.9 per cent indicated they were somewhat confident; and 19.8 per cent indicated they were either not very confident or not confident at all they would find work (Figure 10).



Note: 702 observations

Figure 10. Confidence respondent would find work within the next 6-12 months

Confidence in the labour market – utilising current skills

Wave 4 Survey Question E13.

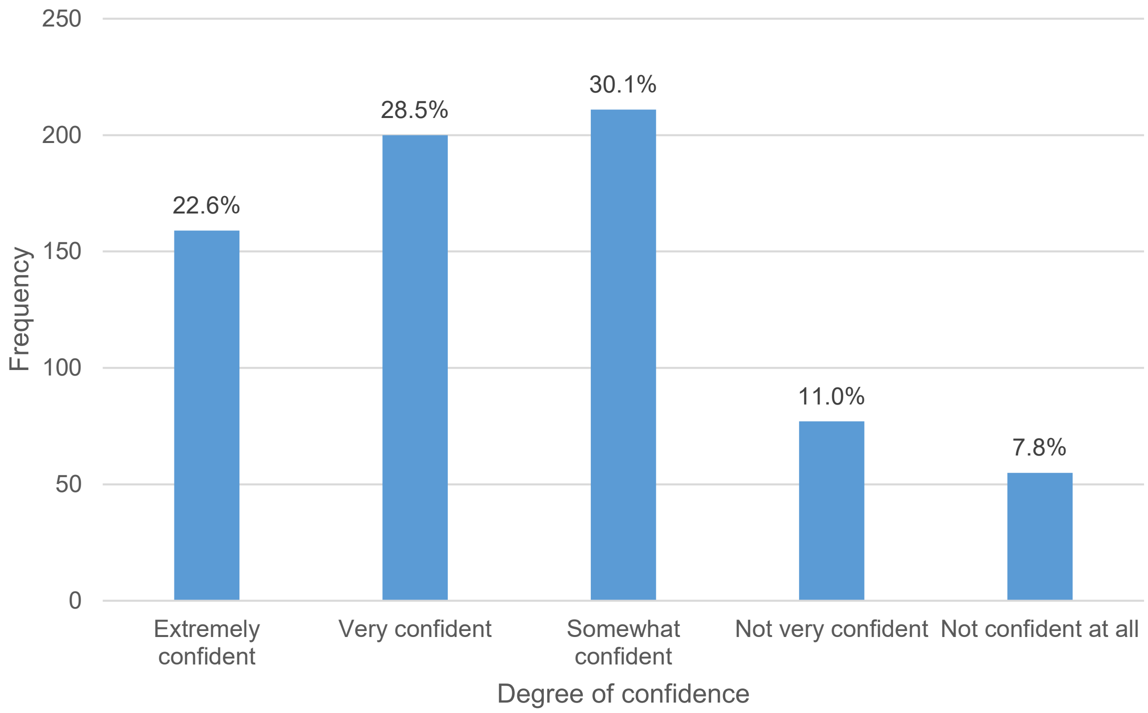
How confident are you that you will be able to find work in which your current skills would be relevant?

Alternative wording:

In the event you had to look for work, how confident are you that you would find a job in which your current skills would be relevant?

Respondents were asked about their confidence they would be able to find work that uses their current skills as a follow-up to question E12. Similarly to E12, question E13 had two separate wordings: one concrete for those who were looking for work, and one hypothetical for those who were not.

51.1 per cent of respondents reported being very to extremely confident they would find work in which their current skills were relevant; 30.1 per cent indicated they were somewhat confident; and 18.8 per cent indicated they were either not very confident or not confident at all they would be able to find work that utilised their current skills (Figure 11).



Note: 702 observations

Figure 11. Confidence respondent would find work within the next 6-12 months, current skills

Training and qualifications

Wave 4 Survey Question E14a. In the last 12 months, have you undertaken any new training, re-training or obtained new qualifications?

In the time between Wave 3 and 4 surveys, 167 participants (23.8%) had undertaken either training, re-training or obtained new qualifications (Table 10).

Table 10. Training, re-training or obtainment of new qualifications since Wave 3

In the last 12 months, have you undertaken any new training, re-training or obtained new qualifications?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Yes	167	23.8
No	535	76.2
Total	702	100.0

2.4 Occupational status at Wave 4 Interview

Wave 4 Survey Question B1. Which of the following best describes your current situation? Are you mainly…?

Respondents were asked about their current occupational status at the Wave 4 interview. Table 11 shows that:

- 71.5 per cent of respondents were in paid work or self-employed;
- 3.3 per cent were unemployed and looking for work;
- 2.3 per cent were either studying or taking a break but intended to return to work at some point;
- 1.3 per cent were volunteering in unpaid work and,
- 15.1 per cent were semi or fully retired.

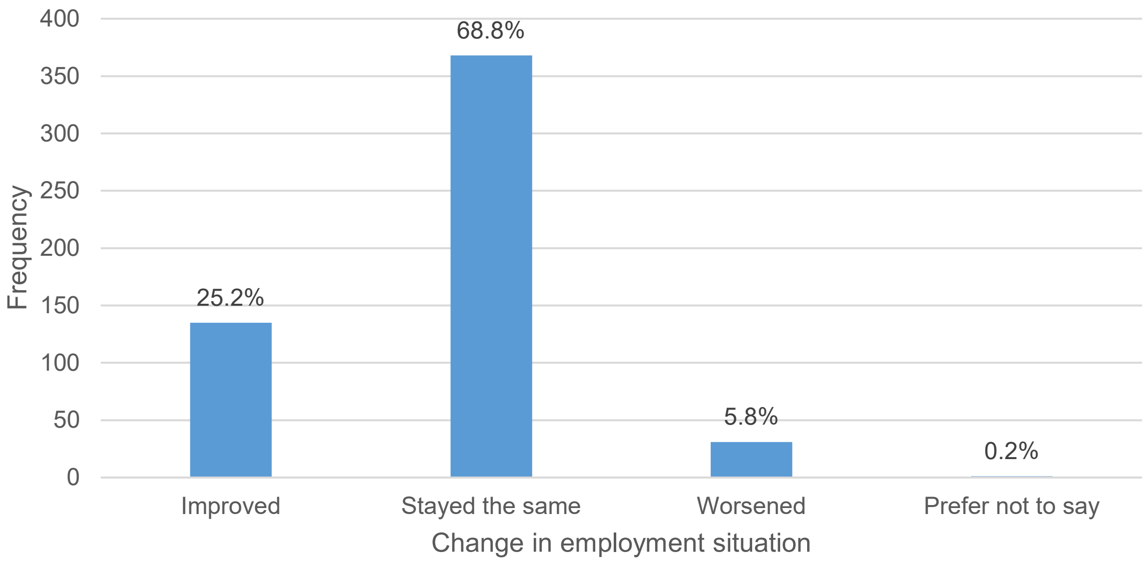
Table 11. Occupational status at Wave 4 interview

Which of the following best describes your current situation? Are you mainly...?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
In paid employment	502	71.5
Self-employed	33	4.7
Unemployed but looking for a job	23	3.3
Fully retired from work	76	10.8
Semi-retired – in other words, doing paid work occasionally	30	4.3
Taking a break from paid work but intending to return at some point in the future	13	1.9
Studying but not doing paid work	3	0.4
Volunteering in unpaid work only	9	1.3
Other	13	1.9
Total	702	100

Change to overall employment situation

Wave 4 Survey Question C29. Overall, has your employment situation improved, stayed the same or worsened since we last spoke?

Just under two thirds of respondents in jobs reported that their employment situation had stayed the same overall (68.8%); just over a quarter (25.2%) reported improved circumstances; 5.8 per cent indicated their employment situation had worsened; and 0.2 per cent preferred not to answer (Figure 12).



Note: 535 observations

Figure 12. Change to overall employment situation (Wave 4 main current job)

2.5 Employment at Wave 4 Interview

2.5.1 All respondents in employment

Number of jobs at Wave 4 Interview

Wave 4 Survey Question C1. How many paid jobs do you currently have?

Respondents in paid employment were asked how many jobs they held. 95.0 per cent of respondents reported holding one job only; 23 people (4.3%) held two jobs; and four people held three or more jobs (<1%). Information was collected on these additional jobs, but the next sections report on the nominated 'main' job held at the Wave 4 interview.

Wave 4 main current job – continued employment since Wave 3

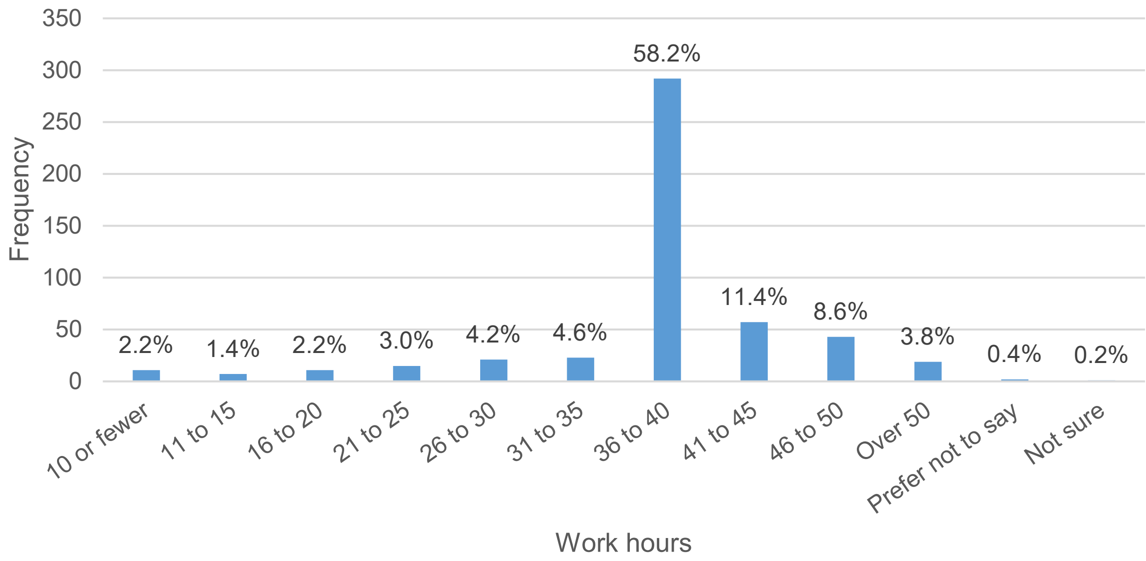
Wave 4 Survey Question C21a. Is this job with the same employer that you worked for when we spoke in May/June of last year?

80.9 per cent (n=406) of respondents in work had kept their job with the same employer as at the Wave 3 survey and 18.9 per cent (n=95) per cent of respondents were with a new employer.

Wave 4 main current job – work hours

Wave 4 Survey Question C7. How many hours do you work in this job in a typical week? Please provide an estimate if you are not sure.

58.2 per cent of respondents in paid work were employed for 36 to 40 hours a week with 17.5[4] per cent of respondents working less than this and 23.7%[4] working more than this (Figure 13). Most workers were working full-time.



Note: 502 observations

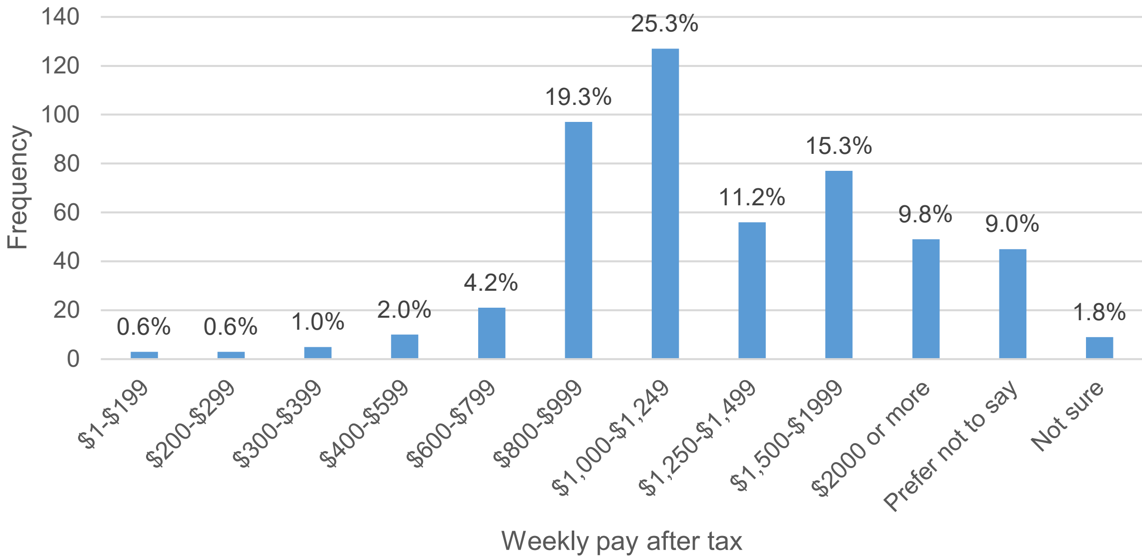
Figure 13. Hours worked in a typical week (Wave 4 main current job)

[4] Apparent inconsistencies between these numbers and Figure 13 are due to rounding

Wave 4 main current job – weekly remuneration

Wave 4 Survey Question C6. What is your weekly take home pay after tax from this job?

Figure 14 shows that the median weekly pay after tax was in the range of $1,000-$1,249 (25.3%) and the next highest frequency of income was between $800-$999 a week (19.3%). 8.4 per cent of respondents were earning $799 or less a week and 36.3 per cent were earning $1,250 or more a week (Figure 14). A significant proportion of people preferred not to provide information regarding their weekly income at (9.0%) or reported being unsure (1.8%) (Figure 14).



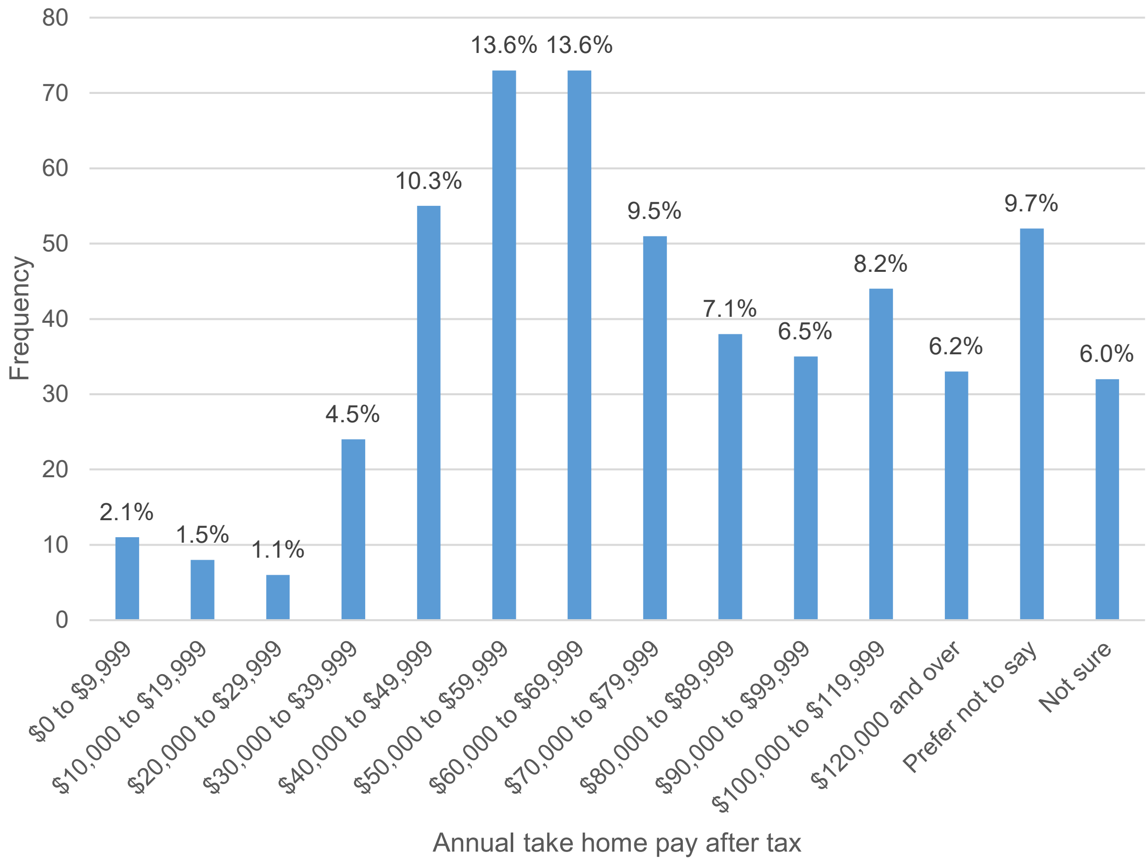
Note: 502 observations

Figure 14. Weekly pay after tax (Wave 4 main current job)

Annual remuneration – all sources of income

Wave 4 Survey Question C27. Over the last 12 months, what was your annual take home pay after tax?

Respondents were asked to provide their yearly take home pay to provide a wholistic understanding of their financial income. Figure 15 shows just under half of respondents (47.1%[5]) had an annual take home pay between $40,000 and $79,999; 9.2 per cent of people earnt less than this and 28.0 per cent earnt more than this. 9.7 per cent of respondents said they preferred not to provide an answer and 6.0 per cent said they were not sure (Figure 15).



Note: 535 observations

Figure 15. Annual pay after tax (all sources of income)

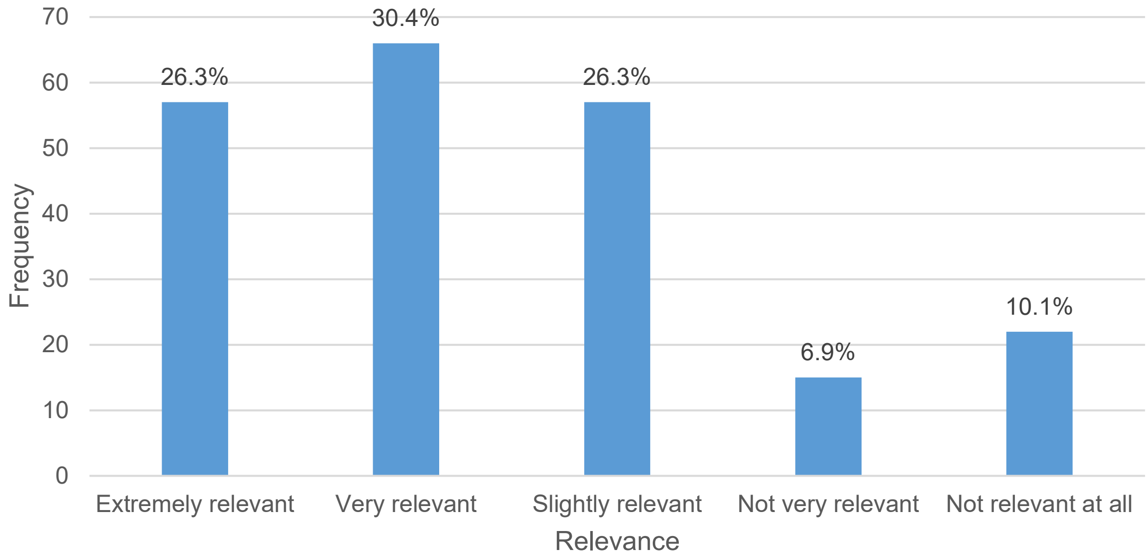
[5] Apparent inconsistencies between these numbers and Figure 13 are due to rounding

Wave 4 main current job – relevance of knowledge and skills from the automotive industry

The next several questions were asked to respondents who identified a change in their employment circumstances, whether that be conditions in their work or a change in employer. The number of observations for these questions is 217.

Wave 4 Survey Question C13. How relevant is the knowledge and skills you previously used in the automotive industry before the major plant closures to the current job?

Some 83.0 per cent of these respondents indicated their current work was slightly to extremely relevant to their knowledge and skills used when working in the automotive industry; 6.9 per cent reported their current work not to be very relevant; and 10.1 per cent reported no relevance at all (Figure 16).



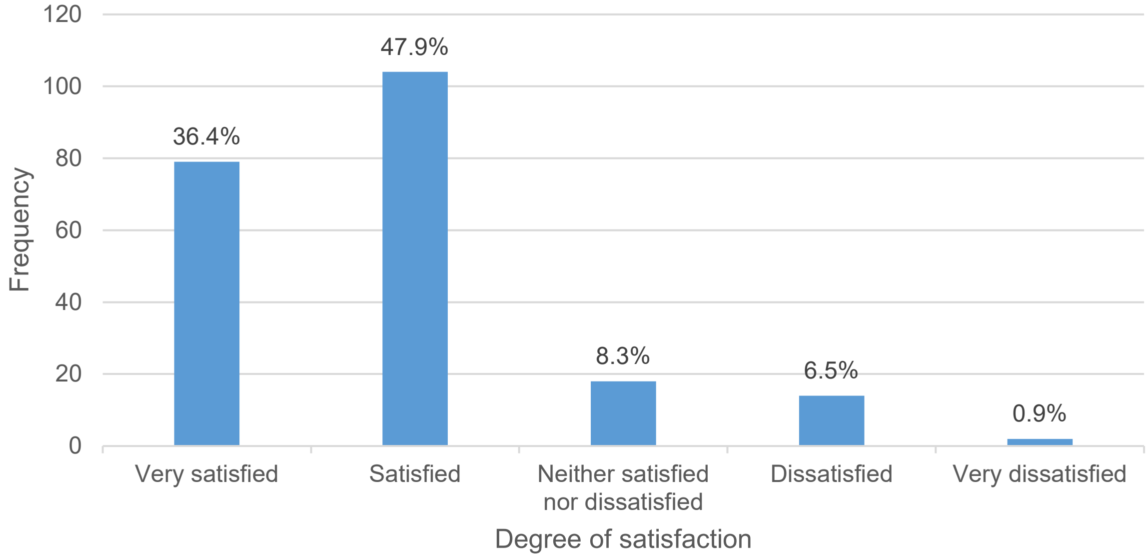
Note: 217 observations

Figure 16. Relevance of automotive job knowledge and skills (Wave 4 main current job)

Wave 4 main current job – job satisfaction

Wave 4 Survey Question C14. To what extent are you satisfied with this job overall? Are you…?

84.3 per cent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied in their main current job, 8.3 per cent were neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 6.5 per cent were dissatisfied and two participants reported being very dissatisfied (0.9%) as seen in Figure 17. Although there is an impression of job satisfaction, Figure 18 shows there is a still a significant population who continue to be less satisfied with their main current job than they were in their jobs in the automotive industry.



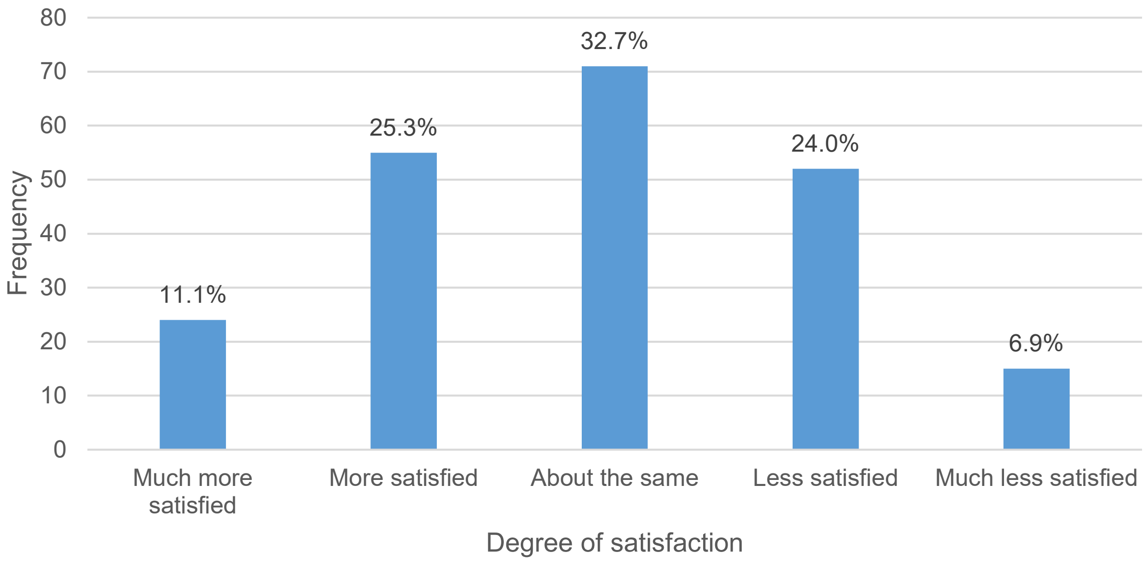
Note: 217 observations

Figure 17. Job satisfaction (Wave 4 main current job)

Wave 4 main current job – job satisfaction compared to automotive job

Wave 4 Survey Question C15. How much more or less satisfied are you with this job compared to your job before the major plant closures? Would you say you are…?

Over a third of respondents (36.4%) were more satisfied with their new employment than the job held in the automotive sector before retrenchment (Figure 18). 32.7 per cent reported their job satisfaction was 'about the same', and 30.9 per cent reported they were less satisfied or much less satisfied (Figure 18).



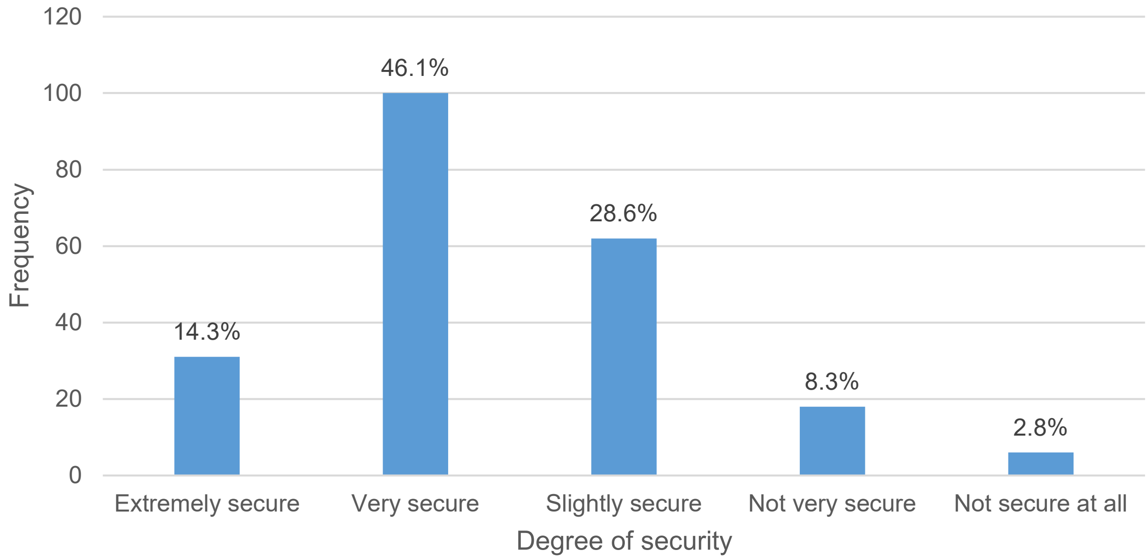
Note: 217 observations

Figure 18. Job satisfaction compared to automotive job (Wave 4 main current job)

Wave 4 main current job – job security

Wave 4 Survey Question C16. How secure do you feel about this job?

60.4 per cent of respondents felt very to extremely secure in their main current job; 28.6 per cent felt slightly secure and 11.1 per cent felt not very secure to not secure at all (Figure 19).



Note: 217 observations

Figure 19. How secure respondent feels in employment (Wave 4 main current job)

2.5.2 Respondents in jobs with the same employer as at Wave 3

Changes in job

Wave 4 Survey Question C22. Now thinking about the work you do for this employer, has your work changed in any way, including your conditions of employment since we spoke in May/June of last year?

Of the 406 people who had continued in their job recorded at Wave 3, 26.1 per cent (n=106) reported a change in the work they do for that employer.

Change in job position

Wave 4 Survey Question C23a. Has this change included a new job position?
Wave 4 Survey Question C23b. What was the main reason for the change in position?

For 45.3 per cent of the 106 respondents (n=48), changes to their job included a new job position. As shown in Table 12, the most common reason for the change in position was the respondent had been promoted to a higher position in a similar area of expertise (n=26, or 54.2%).

Table 12. Change in job position with employer since Wave 3

What was the main reason for the change in position?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Applied for an internal vacancy that better suited your skills	3	6.3
Asked to be moved to a position that better suited your skills	5	10.4
Promoted to a higher position in similar area of expertise	26	54.2
Promoted to a higher position in other area of expertise	2	4.2
Employer moved you to fill a vacancy	6	12.5
Other (please specify)	6	12.5
Total	48	100

Note: 48 observations

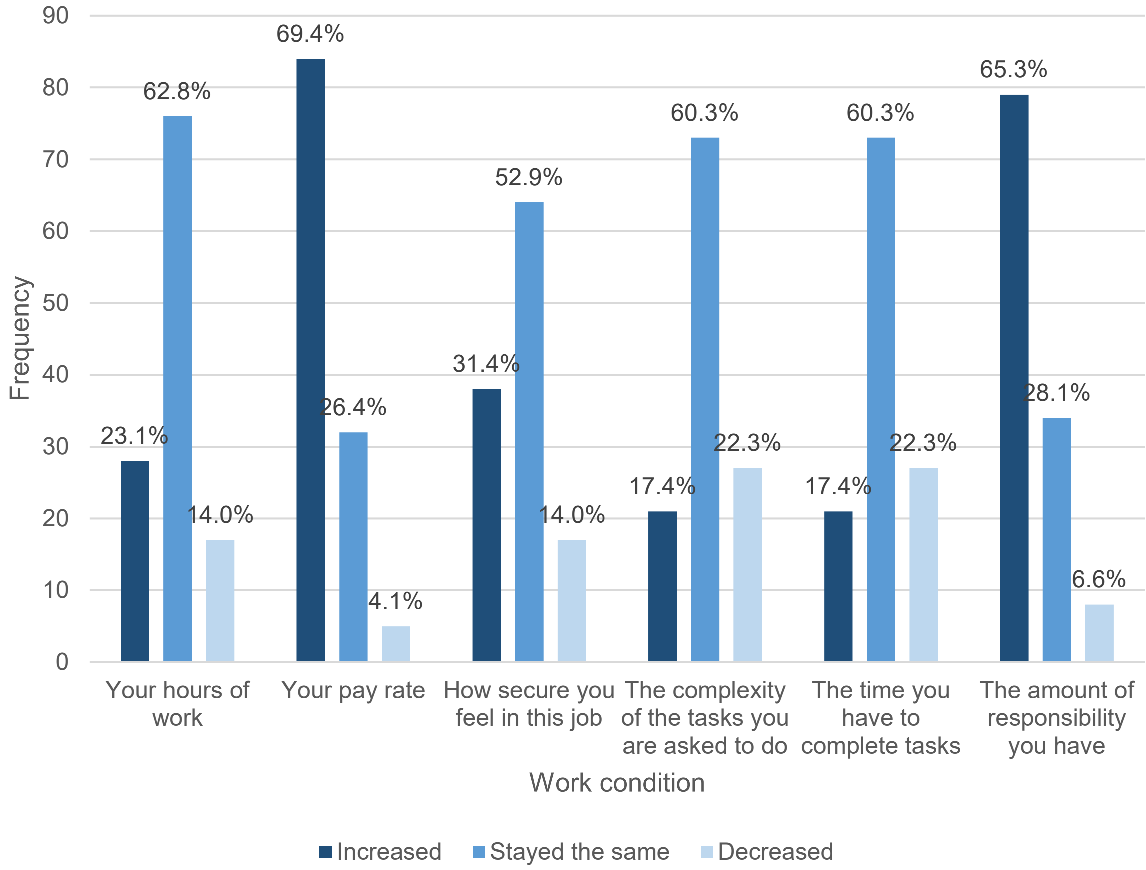
Changes in work conditions

Wave 4 Survey Question C24. I am now going to read out a number of statements about your job. Please tell me whether each one has increased, stayed the same, or decreased since we spoke in May/June of last year. Firstly…

Respondents, were read several aspects of their job and asked to indicate whether they had increased, stayed the same, or decreased.

Figure 20 illustrates the responses to the statements read to them and shows that:

- the hours of work (62.8%), the complexity of work tasks (60.3%) and the time respondents have to complete tasks (60.3%) had mostly stayed the same;
- respondents' pay rate had increased for more than two thirds who reported change in their work (69.4%);
- how secure respondents felt in their job mostly had a positive shift (31.4%); and,
- the amount of responsibilities respondents had, increased by 65.3%.



Note: 121 observations

Figure 20. Change in work conditions with employer since Wave 3

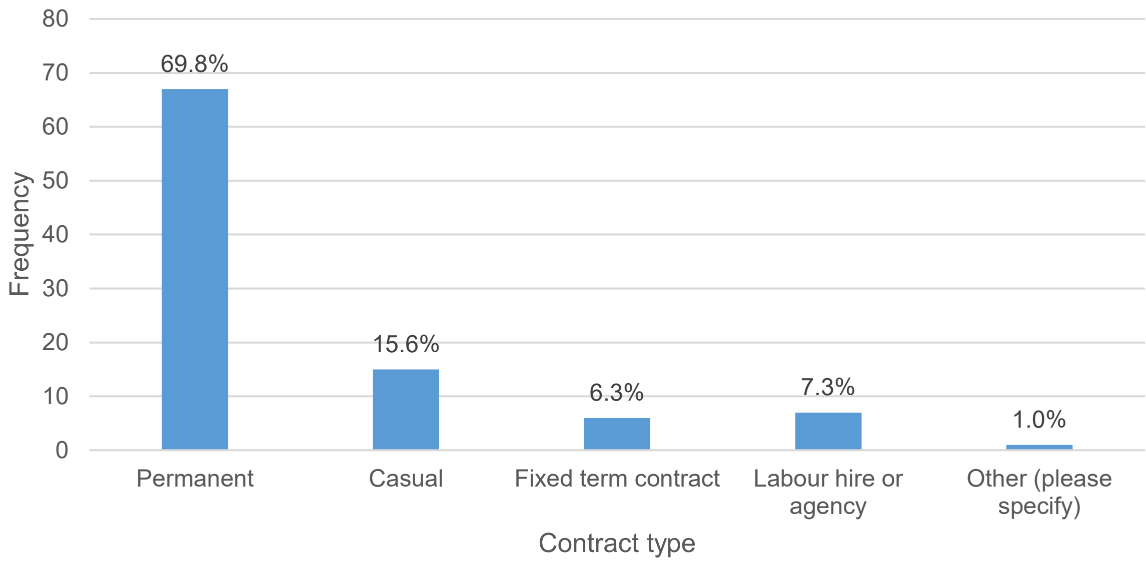
2.5.3 Respondents with a new and different job at Wave 4

Participants whose main current job at Wave 4 was different to the their work at Wave 3, were asked some basic questions around their employment as well as understanding how they found their job, how related the job was to their automotive work and their levels of satisfaction in their job.

New job at Wave 4, main current job – employment arrangement

Wave 4 Survey Question C9. Which of the following best describes your employment arrangement?

Respondents who acquired a job different since Wave 3 were mostly in permanent positions (69.8%); 15.6 per cent were in casual positions; 6.3 per cent were in fixed term contracts; and 8.3 per cent were hired as labour hire or through agencies (Figure 21).



Note: 96 observations

Figure 21. Employment arrangement (new job at Wave 4, main current job)

New job at Wave 4, main current job – satisfaction with work hours

Wave 4 Survey Question C8. For this job, would you prefer?

Table 13 shows that most respondents were happy with the number of hours they had secured in their new jobs (77.1%). Nevertheless, 10.4 per cent preferred they were working more hours and 12.5 per cent preferred they were working fewer hours (Table 13).

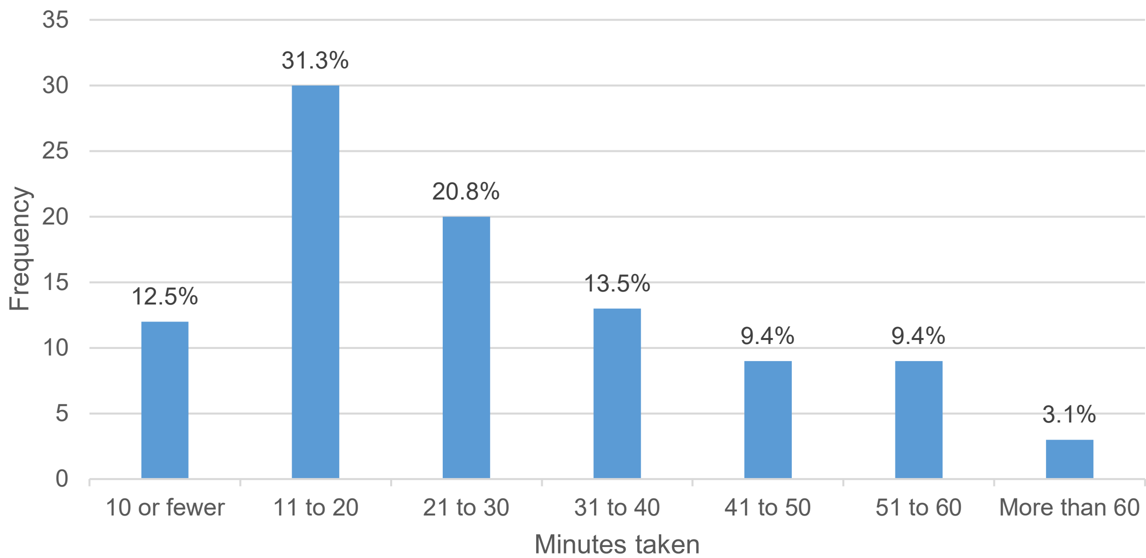
Table 13. Satisfaction with work hours (new job at Wave 4, main current job)

For this job, would you prefer...?	Frequency	Per cent (%)
More hours	10	10.4
About the same hours	74	77.1
Fewer hours	12	12.5
Total	96	100.0

New job at Wave 4, main current job – time taken to travel to work

Wave 4 Survey Question C10. How long does it take you to get to work on a typical day?

Most respondents were travelling less than 30 minutes to work (64.6%) as shown in Figure 22. A further 13.5 per cent were travelling 31 to 40 minutes; 9.4 per cent were traveling 41 to 50 minutes; 9.4 per cent were travelling 51 to 60 minutes; and 3.1 per cent were travelling more than 60 minutes (Figure 22).



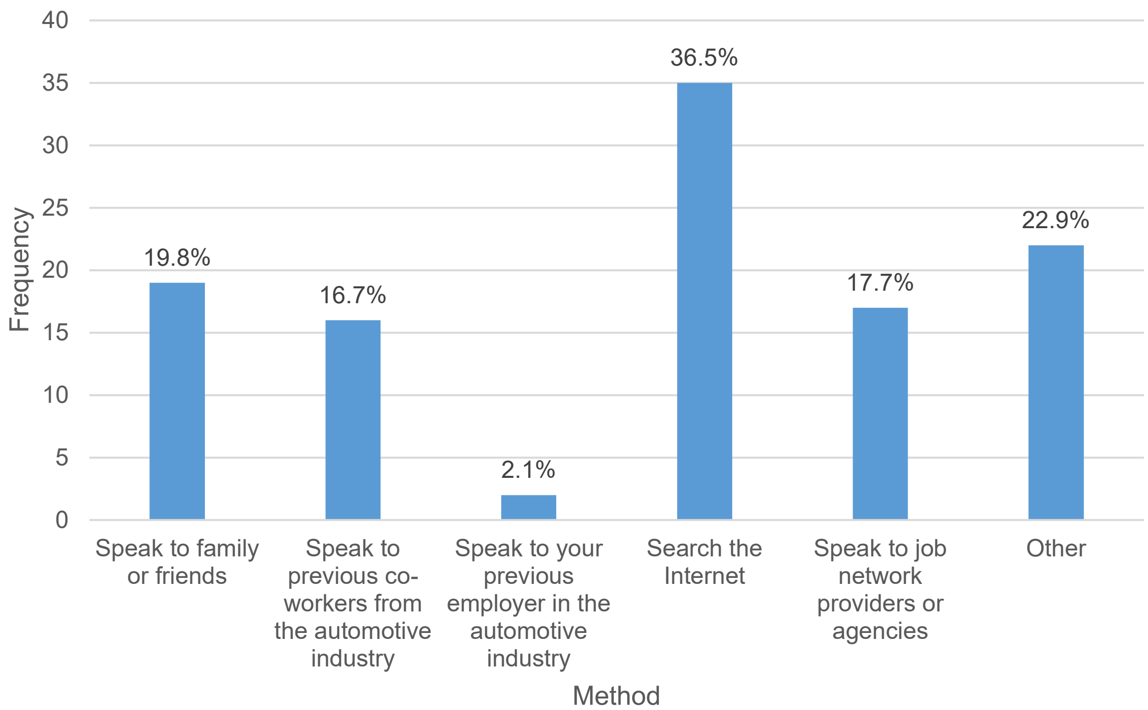
Note: 96 observations

Figure 22. Time taken to travel to work (new job at Wave 4, main current job)

New job at Wave 4, main current job – how respondent found job

Wave 4 Survey Question C11. How did you find out about this job? Did you…?

The two most used methods by respondents to find their new job were searching the Internet (36.5%) and speaking to family or friends (19.8%) (Figure 23). Speaking to job network providers or agencies (17.7%) and speaking to previous co-workers (16.7%) are similarly represented as the third and fourth most common methods to find work, while the number of respondents to find work by speaking to previous employer in the automotive industry (2.1%) ranks as the lowest occurring method (Figure 23). Workers finding new work using non-specified methods has proportionally increased from previous waves (22.9%).



Note: Multiple responses allowed, 96 observations

Figure 23. Methods used to look for work (new job at Wave 4, main current job)

2.6 Business owners at Wave 4 interview

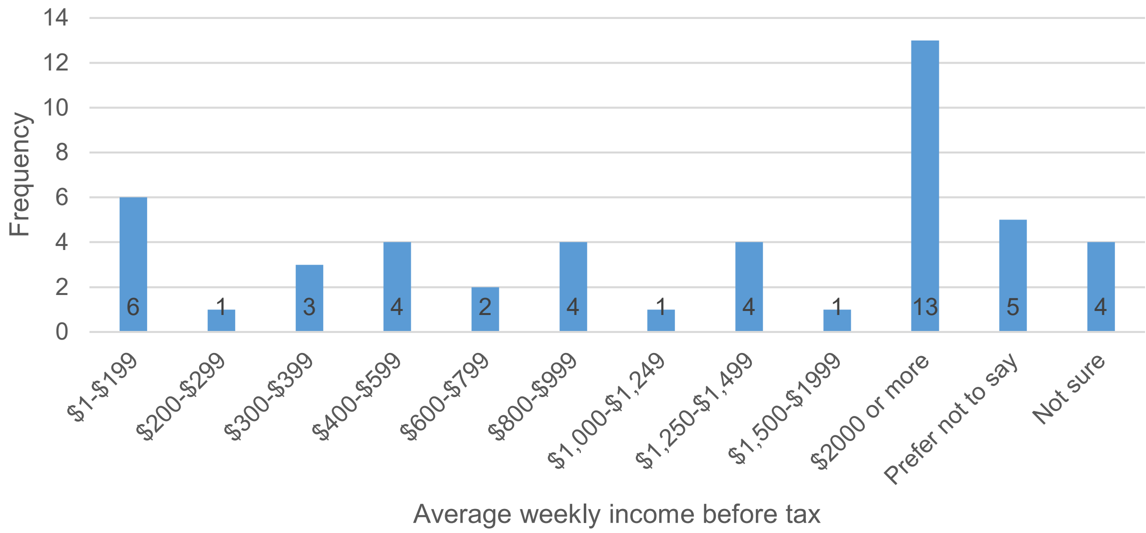
Wave 4 Survey Question C18. Are you currently running a business?
Wave 4 Survey Question C19. Are you earning any income from your business?

54 respondents were identified as being business owners at the time of the Wave 4 survey. Of this population, 48 respondents indicated they were earning an income from this business.

Business owners – weekly earnings

Wave 4 Survey Question C20. What is your business' average weekly income before tax?

Respondents earning an income from their business were asked the typical weekly income of their businesses before tax. 16 businesses were earning less than $800 before tax; 5 businesses were earning between $800 and $1,249 before tax; 5 businesses were earning between $1,250 and $1999 before tax; and 13 businesses were earning $2000 or more a week before tax (Figure 24). 9 respondents to answer this question either preferred not to give an answer or were unsure (Figure 24).



Note: 48 observations

Figure 24. Business average weekly income before tax (Wave 4 current business)

Business owners – same business as at Wave 3

Wave 4 Survey Question C28. Is the business that you are running now the same business as the one you were running when we spoke in May/June of last year?

32 respondents were identified as having owned a business in Wave 3 as well as Wave 4 and were asked if this was the same business across the two surveys. All 32 businesses indicated that it was the same business.

2.7 Job history between Wave 3 and Wave 4 surveys

Section 2.7 presents responses to questions regarding work that the participant has gained *AND* exited between the Wave 3 and 4 interviews. In other words, these are responses to questions regarding work in which they were working in-between, but not during the administrations of either the Wave 3 or Wave 4 surveys.

Number of jobs since Wave 3

Wave 4 Survey Question D1a. Since we spoke in May/June of last year, have you held any other paid or unpaid jobs that you are no longer working in?

Wave 4 Survey Question D1b. Of these jobs that you are no longer working in, how many paid or unpaid jobs did you previously have?

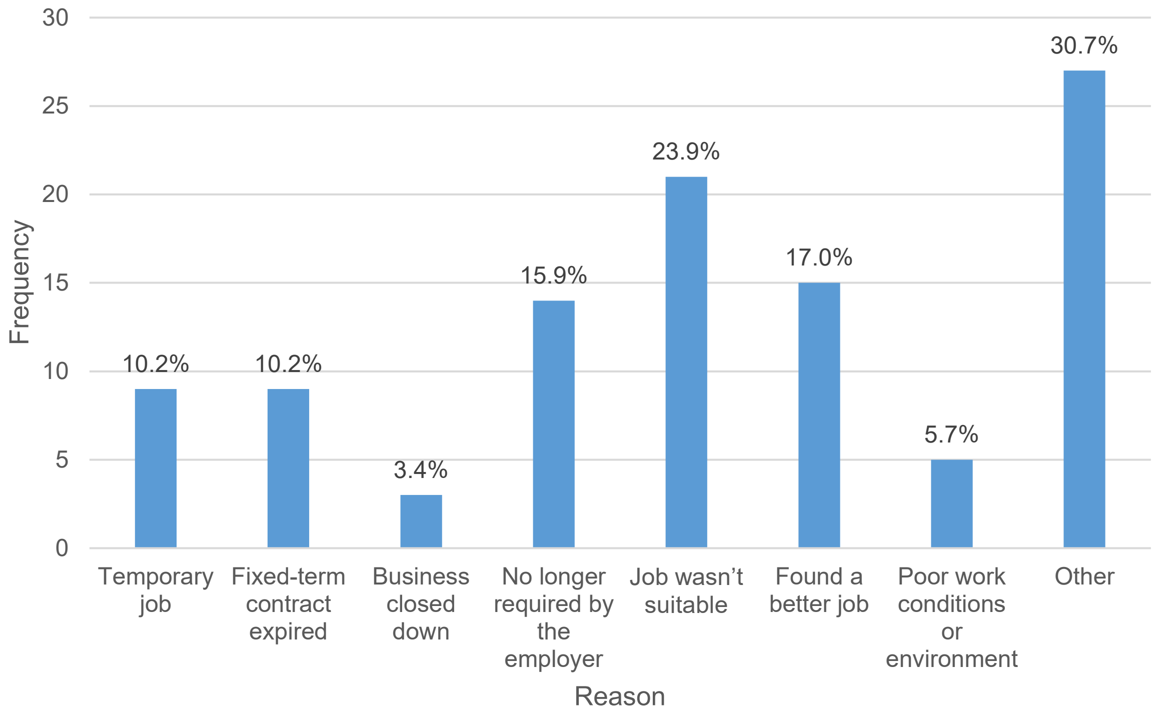
88 (12.5%) respondents had held jobs between the Wave 3 and Wave 4 surveys in which they were no longer working. Of this 88, 76.1 per cent held only one job between this time; 18.2 per cent held two jobs; four people (4.5%) held three jobs and one person (1.1%) held four jobs.

Reason for leaving employer from first job since Wave 3

Wave 4 Survey Question D3a. For what reasons did you finish this job?

Respondents were asked why they finished the *first job held* after the Wave 2 survey. In order of frequency, Figure 25 shows that:

- 23.9 per cent indicated their job was not suitable;
- 17.0 per cent found a better job;
- 15.9 per cent finished their jobs because they were no longer required by their employer;
- 10.2 per cent were in temporary jobs;
- 10.2 per cent had their fixed-term contract expire; and,
- 3.4 per cent finished their jobs due to businesses closing down.



Note: Multiple response allowed, 88 observations

Figure 25. Reason for leaving job (first job since Wave 3)

Effects of COVID-19

Wave 4 Survey Question D3b. Was the reason you finished this job due to COVID-19?

'Other' factors played a part in many workers finishing up with their employment, and this reflected the complexity of personal circumstances. Only one person who answered 'other' indicated COVID-19 as a contributing factor. However, when directly asked whether COVID-19 played a role in losing their job, a further 4 people indicated COVID-19 had played a role, resulting in a total of 5.7 per cent of participants (n=5) who had lost work in part due to COVID-19.

Beyond Wave 4 of the Longitudinal Survey of Retrenched Workers

The next part of the longitudinal survey will commence in May 2024. It aims to document changes that have occurred since the Wave 4 survey and will form the last survey in this longitudinal study.

The Wave 5 survey will cover the following topics:

- Changes in employment since Wave 4;
- Job searching and training activity since Wave 4; and,
- Changes in personal and household circumstances since Wave 4.

Some useful links

Findings and publications – https://fwfc.com.au/findings-publications/

Information about the project – https://fwfc.com.au/about/project-background/

Information about the team – https://fwfc.com.au/about/team/