

**PRESS RELEASE Under embargo until 11 December 2018 (00.01 GMT)**

## Retailers plan for post-Christmas hiring boost

*Employment expectations remain upbeat despite considerable decline in New South Wales*

**ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey: Quarter 1 2019**

**AUSTRALIA (11 December 2018)** – A rebound in hiring intentions across the Wholesale & Retail Trade sector along with a strong Outlook in the Transport & Utilities sector has compensated for sharp declines elsewhere ensuring the employment Outlook remains steady heading into the New Year.

These are the results from the *ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey* for the first quarter of 2019, which records a national Net Employment Outlook (NEO)<sup>1</sup> of +14% for Australia, signalling that more employers expect to increase staffing levels than not in the first three months of 2019. The survey collects data from over 60,000 employers in 44 countries, including over 1,500 in Australia.

**INSERT GRAPH OF AUSTRALIAN NEO FROM 1Q12 (LINE GRAPH)**

This national result is unchanged when compared to the previous quarter and remains relatively stable year-on-year. Yet despite the overall strength, the headline number obscures sharp differences in hiring intentions across the country.

In particular, employment expectations in the Wholesale & Retail Trade sector have doubled over the past year and now report an NEO of +12% for Q119. Employers in the Transportation & Utilities sector report a moderate year-on-year increase of seven percentage points, and offsets notable declines across the Services and Manufacturing sectors where employers report decreases of seven and four percentage points, respectfully, when compared to this same time last year. The Mining & Construction sector has reported the strongest hiring intentions for the start of the new year with a solid Net Employment Outlook of +22%.

**INSERT SECTOR COMPARISON GRAPH OF NEO (CHANGES NOT ABSOLUTE NUMBERS) – BAR GRAPH**

Regionally, the largest state of New South Wales has reported a considerable decline in employment expectations, down ten percentage points when compared to Q118. The

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<sup>1</sup> The Net Employment Outlook is calculated by subtracting the percentage of employers anticipating a decrease in hiring activity from the percentage of employers anticipating an increase in employment. Seasonal adjustment is then applied to the data.

Australian Capital Territory (ACT), although unchanged year-on year, reports a decline of four percentage points quarter-on-quarter. Employers in the state of Victoria report upbeat hiring intentions with an NEO of +16%; a moderate increase of five percentage points year-on-year. Furthermore, employers in the Northern Territory are showing signs of increased hiring optimism and have reported a positive Outlook for the first time in twelve months (+13%). Year-on-year gains have also been reported in Tasmania and Western Australia for the upcoming quarter, up three and two percentage points, respectively.

### INSERT STATE COMPARISON GRAPH OF NEO (CHANGES, NOT OVERALL RESULT)

ManpowerGroup Australia & New Zealand Managing Director Richard Fischer says this latest data reveals clear differences across the country with signs that the decline in property prices is impacting employment in New South Wales while retailers are planning for a post-Christmas boost.

“The strength of Australia’s labour market remains at six-year highs but there are clear differences across the economy,” said Mr Fischer. “Although Mining & Construction employers report the strongest employment outlook for the upcoming quarter, hiring intentions in the sector considerably declined throughout 2018 and remain unchanged when compared to this same time last year. This may be related to the notable decline also reported in New South Wales where property prices and residential construction are coming off the boil.”

“At the same time, it appears as though employers in the Wholesale & Retail Trade sector are anticipating a post-Christmas bounce for the start of the new year.”

Mr Fischer also believes this hiring optimism in Wholesale & Retail Trade may contribute to the Reserve Bank of Australia’s (RBA) anticipation for an increase in wages.

“A boost to hiring across the retail sector combined with the recent increase in the national minimum wage may put upward pressure on wages, which will provide broader support for the economy”, said Mr. Fischer.

The *ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey* also shows that Australia’s largest organisations will continue to underpin the nation’s strong employment Outlook despite recording a small year-on-year decline. Large firms with more than 250 employees report an NEO of +25%, a slight decline of two percentage points year-on-year, followed by medium firms with 50 – 240 employees, which reported an overall Outlook of +17%. At the smaller end of the scale, businesses with 10 – 49 employees reported an Outlook of +9%, while Australia’s micro firms (<10 employees) reported an Outlook of +3%.

### INSERT HIRING INTENTIONS BY ORGANISATION SIZE LINE GRAPH

Across the Asia-Pacific region the strongest Outlooks are reported in Japan (+27%), Taiwan (+21%), Hong Kong (+18%) and New Zealand (+16%).

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