

You make the difference...we make it work.



### EDGE Employment Solutions

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**DISABILITY  
SUPPORT  
CERTIFICATION**  
by Quality Assurance Services  
Certificate No: DSC20012

**EDGE**  
EmploymentSolutions



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## HIGHLIGHTS 2012/13

**The highlights of EDGE Employment Solutions’ activities for the year ended 30th June 2012 were:**

- Since 1984 EDGE has secured 5,850 jobs in open employment for 2,436 people with disability.
- 491 people with disability were being supported in employment as at 30 June 2013.
- 59% of all workers supported by EDGE were employed in major corporations.
- 22% of all workers supported by EDGE were employed across 40 public sector agencies.
- 10% of workers supported by EDGE were undertaking apprenticeships or traineeships.
- 57% of all jobs secured by EDGE were 'repeat business', where a current employer hires another employee through EDGE.
- The average wage of workers supported by EDGE was 12% higher than the federal minimum wage.
- The average tenure of workers supported by EDGE was 49 months.
- Workers supported by EDGE continue to demonstrate safety, attendance and turnover records that exceed those of the general workforce.



## MANAGEMENT REPORT

EDGE Employment Solutions Inc has been operating as a non-profit employment agency for people with disability since 1984. EDGE has a complement of 65 staff and received \$6.4 million in funding from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in 2012/13.

EDGE has long been acknowledged as one of Australia's leading open employment agencies for people with disability. In its 29 years of operation EDGE has secured 5,850 jobs across the Perth metropolitan area for 2,436 people with intellectual, learning, physical, sensory, psychiatric and neurological disabilities. As at 30 June 2013, EDGE had a register of 874 people with disability ranging from mild to severe - of which 56% were employed in individually supported jobs in the regular workforce. Almost all of these workers were being paid at or above Award wage levels.

In the 2012/13 financial year, 57% of all positions secured by EDGE were secured with employers who were already using, or had previously used, EDGE's services. EDGE is a national leader in placing and supporting apprentices and trainees with disability. As at 30 June 2013, 10% of all workers supported by EDGE were undertaking apprenticeships or traineeships - or were working as qualified tradespersons.

EDGE has been at the forefront of research into open employment for people with disability since 1985. EDGE is currently undertaking a national research project in conjunction with Curtin University of Technology, National Disability Services and Group Training Australia that is following several hundred recently graduated apprentices and trainees with disability from around Australia. The research is tracking the economic and social benefits of completing an apprenticeship or traineeship.

An important indicator of a quality employment service is the calibre of the employer with respect to offering stable, secure, well-paid and satisfying employment. More than 80% of workers with disability supported by EDGE are employed in large corporations or public sector agencies (while only 40% of the general WA workforce is employed in these sectors). Research published previously by EDGE demonstrates that public sector employers and large corporations generally deliver greater job security, better conditions, more workplace flexibility and significantly higher wages than small to medium businesses. Workers supported by EDGE earned an average of \$18.38 per hour, 12% higher than the adult minimum wage. This is in spite of the fact that a growing number of schools students and leavers

with disability are being assisted by EDGE and are taking up part-time jobs that fit around their studies.

Workers with disability supported by EDGE are rewarding their employers with attendance, safety and tenure rates that outstrip their non-disabled co-workers. The average tenure for these workers is 49 months, double that of the general workforce in the same industries.

The key to delivering quality services is employing quality staff to deliver those services. EDGE's staff believe in the important economic contribution that people with disability can make to the Western Australian economy and bring professionalism, energy, creativity, passion and persistence to their work.

The Board and management congratulate the staff of EDGE for their deep commitment, unwavering support and continuing success in enabling people with disability to establish meaningful and rewarding careers in the open workforce.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Gordon".

**Keith Gordon BSc (Agric) Hons, MBA**  
CHAIRMAN



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Robertson".

**Susan Robertson B. Psych FAIM**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

EDGE'S TOP EMPLOYERS

NUMBER OF WORKERS SUPPORTED BY EDGE

Wesfarmers (Coles, Bunnings, Kmart, OfficeWorks, Target)	62	Department of Training and Workforce Development	5
Woolworths (Woolworths, Big W)	39	Australia Post	4
Department of Health	14	Department of Commerce	4
Spotless Group	13	Landcorp	4
Ramsay Health	11	IGA	3
McDonald's	10	City of Swan	3
University of Western Australia	10		
Disability Services Commission	9	Adwest	3
Sizzler	9	Masters Cabinets	3
Competitive Foods (Hungry Jack's, KFC, Domino's)	7	Dome	3
St John of God Health Care	7	Mercy Care	3
Department of Education	7	Curtin University of Technology	3
CROWN	6		
Department of Housing	5		

EDGE AT WORK - A Hospital Career Takes Off!

With EDGE's support, Ben Urban's career has undergone an "extreme makeover".

It took study, hard work and support from EDGE, but last year Ben finally qualified as an Anaesthetic Technician and is currently employed at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

When patients undergo procedures ranging from spinal blocks for epidurals to major surgery, Ben is often part of the operating theatre team.

"My role is to assist the anaesthetist with airwaves, monitoring the patient, with ECG, blood pressure cuff and setting up drips for the patient," he tells INSIDE EDGE.

It's quite a change from the role of hospital orderly - a position Ben held for eight and a half years.

"It was on my radar and this was something I thought I could do, but I just kept procrastinating" he says.

The prospect of doing more study was very daunting for Ben. He wasn't sure that he could go back to study and was worried that the course would take him a long time to complete. That is, until his EDGE Job Coordinator stepped in to help.

"Edge was assisting me with the studies, just to help me get through that side of things. If I had any issues, they were always there to back me up," says Ben.

"I wanted to challenge myself. I felt like I had nothing to lose," he says. "I really pushed myself to study hard.



It wasn't an easy time."

Eventually, all that effort paid off when Ben secured a second year trainee position at Royal Perth Hospital. Later, after successfully completing his studies, he was offered a position at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

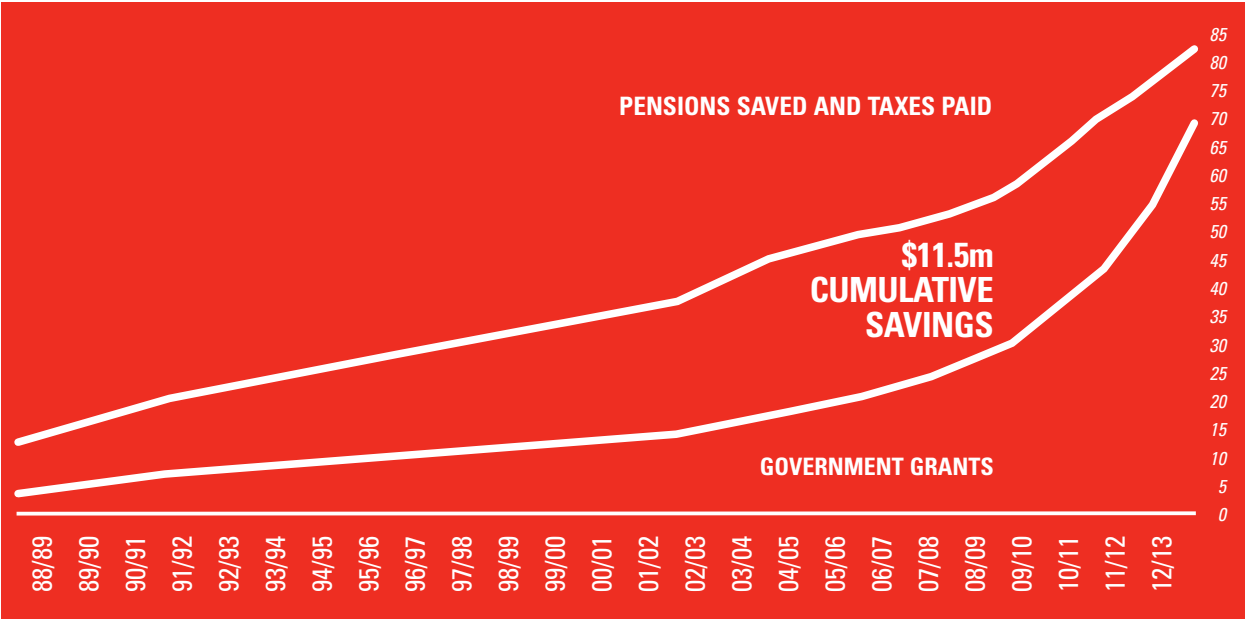
"I am very proud of myself. Three years ago, I didn't think I'd be where I am now," he says.

EDGE Job Coordinator Lisa says, "Ben's incredible self discipline and perseverance helped him to achieve his dream. He is a delight to support and a genuine down-to-earth Mr Nice Guy!"

Ben laughs off the compliment. "Oh, I agree completely!" he jokes.

So what's Ben's next ambition? To gain confidence in his new job. "I only qualified in November - I still feel like I'm the rookie!" he says.

# PUTTING YOUR TAX DOLLAR TO WORK



EDGE continues to produce significant savings for the taxpayer. Over the 23 years that records have been kept, EDGE has saved the taxpayer a total of \$81.5 million in unpaid pensions and paid income taxes. However, the service has cost only \$70 million to operate over the same period (see graph):

a total net saving to government of \$11.5 million, or a return of \$1.16 on every dollar that government has invested in EDGE. In other words, it would have cost government \$11.5 million more if it had never funded EDGE in the first place.

# EDGE AT WORK - Five Star Service

Terry Price won't forget the day he started working at "In House Dining" at Perth's five-star Pan Pacific Perth hotel.

"The first person I served, I remember that, because he tipped me in American dollars," the 20 year old tells INSIDE EDGE.

Later that same day, a subsequent customer was also American - but unforgettable for a different reason. This guest was a celebrity –alternative heavy metal/ glam rock American star, Marilyn Manson. When the male singer came to the door to collect his meal, he also didn't disappoint.

"He had all his makeup on!" remembers Terry.

Since then, Terry's served the Springboks rugby team on their last trip to Perth, even passed Tony Abbott in the foyer, on his way to work.

Peter Knight, Human Capital and Development Officer at Pan Pacific Perth believes Terry's an asset to the team.

"Terry is one of a number of people with disability we have on staff. In our organisation we look at what people can do, not what they can't"

Terry's duties include preparing trays and delivering them to patrons rooms, polishing glasses and cutlery, as well as taking special care of hotel club members by providing fruit baskets, wine, even chocolates.

"If you care about your job, you do your job properly,

you take pride in what you do" says Terry.

And while many people would balk at the idea of starting work at 6am, Terry's supervisor has scheduled his shifts, to suit both Terry and Pan Pacific Perth.

"She's got my roster all perfect," Terry says "She lets me do early morning shifts, so I can do training."

"Everyone is different, so we work with every staff member to create a flexible and supportive environment," says Peter Knight.

"It's a logical approach - happy employees ensure a productive, welcoming hotel."

EDGE Job Coordinator, Sarah Ditommaso believes her work with Terry has complemented the hotel's thorough training. "It's very team-orientated, very supportive, almost like a little mini family, which I think is fantastic!" Sarah says. "Not just for Terry, but for anybody starting a new job."



# JOB SEARCH

Each job seeker, plus anybody they wish to bring along, is interviewed by a Customer Relations Advisor. At the interview, vocational skills and career interests are discussed and an individual employment plan is developed. The plan identifies jobs that match the job seeker’s skills, lifestyle and interests.

The job seeker is then introduced to one of EDGE’s Employer Consultants who works with them to secure a job in accordance with the individual employment plan. As part of its commitment to quality, EDGE seeks to match jobs to people - as opposed to matching people to jobs. Starting with the job seeker and finding the right job with the right employer increases the likelihood of people with disability securing and retaining satisfying and meaningful employment.

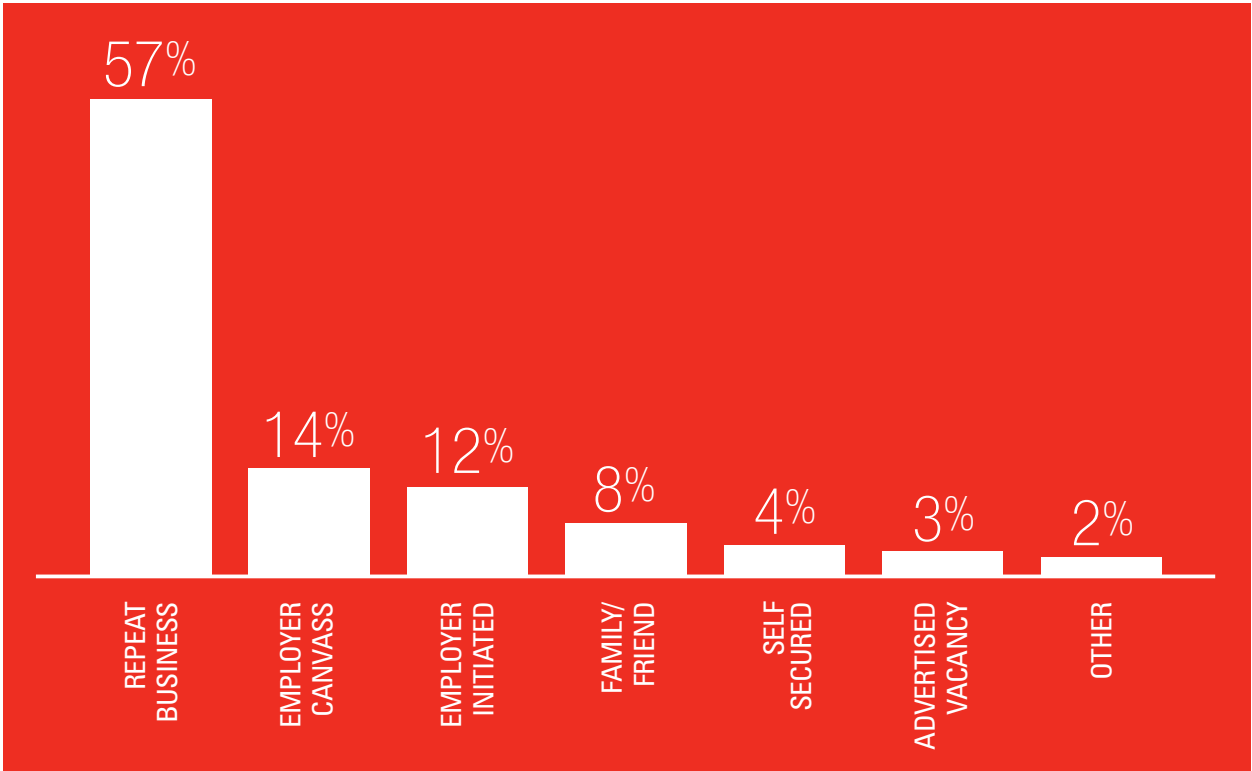
In the skilled workforce of the future, people without useful vocational skills will be consigned to the most menial, poorly paid and casual jobs. EDGE has had a long commitment to securing positions that offer access to nationally recognised training, such as apprenticeships and traineeships, so that people with disability can grow and prosper in the workforce of the future. Since 1999, EDGE has assisted 473

people with a wide range of disabilities to commence apprenticeships and traineeships.

EDGE’s own research demonstrates that larger businesses and the public sector generally deliver greater job security, better conditions, more workplace flexibility and significantly higher wages than small to medium businesses. In the 2012/13 financial year, 60% of the 223 jobs secured by EDGE were in businesses employing more than 100 staff and another 12% of jobs started were in the public sector (3% local government, 7% state government and 2% federal government).

Employers have responded very positively to the services of EDGE and the quality of the workers it represents. More than half of all jobs secured during 2012/13 were ‘repeat business’ - where a current employer hires another person through EDGE because of their satisfaction with the performance of a previous employee placed by the agency.

# HOW JOBS WERE SECURED



The next most effective means of securing jobs, comprising 14% of all job starts, was cold canvassing employers who could offer positions that matched job seekers’ interests and abilities. Job seekers themselves secured 4% of all jobs starts. Family members and friends of job seekers also assisted

in job hunting by sourcing a further 8% of all new jobs. Vacancies advertised in newspapers or on-line accounted for 3% of jobs secured. Pleasingly, 12% of job starts resulted from employers not known to EDGE contacting the agency and offering an employment opportunity to a person with a disability.



# JOB SUPPORT

Once a job is secured, EDGE seeks to establish an ongoing partnership between the newly appointed worker, their family, the employer and the agency. Prior to the job commencing, the Job Co-ordinator visits the workplace, meets with key co-workers, clarifies the duties to be performed and determines any training requirements. The Job Co-ordinator then provides back-up and advice to the supervisor along with any additional training and support to enable the worker to perform the job to the employer’s expectations.

On-the-job support from the Job Co-ordinator decreases as the worker becomes more independent, but regular contact is maintained with the worker, their family, and the employer. EDGE is always available to provide additional support in response to changing job demands.

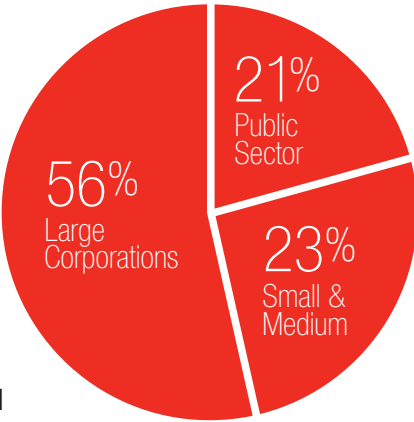
More than 80% of workers with disability supported by EDGE are employed in large corporations or public sector agencies (while less than 40% of the general WA workforce is employed in these sectors). Workers supported by EDGE earned an average of \$18.38 per hour, 12% higher than the adult minimum wage.

As at 30 June 2013, 112 major Western Australian and national companies were employing 290 workers through EDGE, while 40 public sector agencies were employing 109 workers with disability through EDGE.

EDGE offers a one-day ‘Mentoring Co-workers with Disability’ training course to all employers. This free course provides co-workers with the skills and confidence to train and support their colleagues with disability. In the 2012/13 financial year, 96 co-workers from both the private and public sector attended. Participants commented that the course enables them to be better trainers of all employees in their workplace, not just those employees with disability. Since its inception in 1991, a total of 1,789 co-workers have attended the course.

The combination of good job match, on-the-job support, co-worker training and employer back-up has delivered impressive outcomes for workers with disability, who demonstrate attendance, safety and tenure that usually exceed those of the general workforce.

## WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION



# EDGE AT WORK - Continued Success



The 2012 Annual report featured Glen Hawke, a nineteen year-old apprentice horticulturist, working at Curtin University.

Now twenty-one, it’s pleasing to report that Glen’s success continues. He’s recently completed his apprenticeship and is working full-time as a qualified horticulturist on campus.

“One of the best things I’ve ever done!” he says. Indeed, Glen’s story is being held up by industry as a good example of the benefits of including people with disability in the workforce. Glen was recently featured in a WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry publication.

Glen got his start with a school-based traineeship. Help from EDGE and group training organisation South Metropolitan Youth Link (or SMYL) subsequently secured the opportunity to embark on an apprenticeship.

Glen studied at Challenger TAFE in Murdoch one day a week and worked at Curtin the other four days a week. Colleagues reinforced his lessons with practical help.

“He’s a nice kid,” says Jacqui Addison, Curtin University’s Parks and Gardens Technical Officer. “You don’t mind helping someone who helps himself.”

TAFE staff also adapted their teaching styles to assist Glen.

“Challenger would send an assessor on site and teach him skills on site, rather than having to go to TAFE and sit in a classroom with other students.”

Glen’s Curtin colleagues celebrated his graduation with a barbeque in his honour. Glen says he’s happy to have completed the course and is enjoying the free time and financial benefits of having a full time job.

“Feel really, really happy, means I can do more, can get a car,” he says.

A keen martial artist, he’s also saving his pay, hoping to attend a muay thai bootcamp in Thailand.

Curtin’s Jacqui Addison says the collaboration has been mutually beneficial.

“It’s been a good evolution, and a really good learning curve for me.” she says.

“Glen’s always positive about everything.”

“He’s inspirational really!”

## SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

The SWOT Program, first developed by EDGE in 2007, operates across 60 government and non-government schools in the Perth metropolitan area offering supported work experience, paid part-time employment, school-based traineeships and apprenticeships to final year students with disability. In conjunction with the SWOT Program, EDGE offers a one-day Mentoring Students with Disability training program to education assistants from the involved schools whose students are undertaking work experience.



## NATIONAL DISABILITY CO-ORDINATION OFFICER

EDGE also received \$378,000 in grant funding to operate the National Disability Coordination Officer Program across Western Australia. This Commonwealth funded, state-wide program is designed to improve transition between school, TAFE, university and employment for people with disability. The NDCOs maintain EDGE's popular [careertips.net.au](http://careertips.net.au) website for school, TAFE and university students with disability as well as teachers, lecturers, career advisors, mentors and employers.



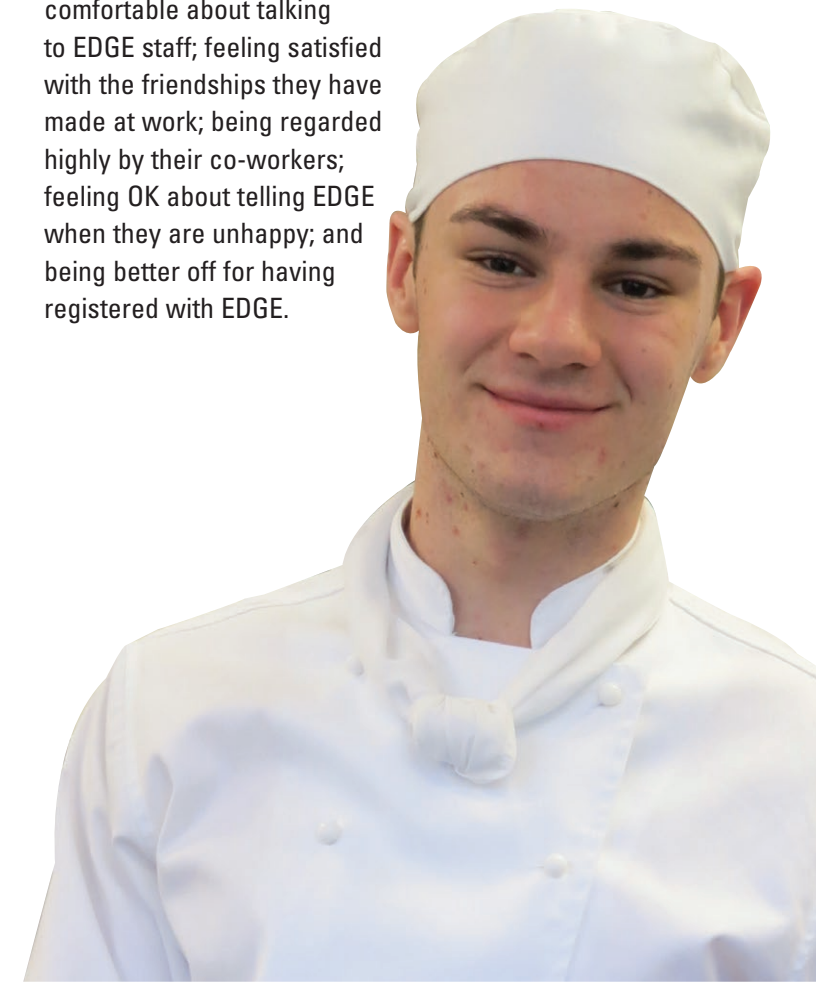
## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

EDGE formally monitors customer satisfaction through a series of four standardised, independently conducted surveys of job seekers, workers, family members and employers respectively. A total of 205 telephone surveys were undertaken during the year.

Job seekers rated EDGE highly overall, and higher than 80% in 14 out of 15 areas: really listening to them; respecting their job interests; caring about them and their careers; respecting their privacy; knowing about their job skills and job interests; feeling comfortable with the way they were talked to; feeling welcome when they first registered; having EDGE's services well explained to them; knowing about them and their job skills; letting them know what they are doing to get them a job; talking to them about the type of job they want; being happy with agreed work goals; feeling comfortable talking to EDGE staff; and feeling okay about telling EDGE when they are unhappy.

Workers rated EDGE very highly overall, and higher than 80% in 20 out of 22 areas: really listening to them; caring about them; respecting their privacy; explaining things before the job starts; explaining things at work; knowing what the Job Co-ordinator is doing for them; providing the promised support; being there when needed; working hard to find out what the worker needs and wants; working hard to

help them keep their job; feeling comfortable with the way they were talked to; liking the job they are doing; being well regarded and treated by workmates; the skills they had learned at work; knowing about their job and their job skills; feeling comfortable about asking EDGE to find them another job; feeling comfortable about talking to EDGE staff; feeling satisfied with the friendships they have made at work; being regarded highly by their co-workers; feeling OK about telling EDGE when they are unhappy; and being better off for having registered with EDGE.





## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



Family members rated EDGE very highly overall, and higher than 80% in 21 out of 24 areas: feeling welcome when they first met EDGE; feeling comfortable with the way they were talked to; really listening to their son or daughter; explaining things clearly to them; respecting their privacy; respecting their son or daughter's job interests and career goals; keeping the family informed about job search progress; involving the family in the job search process; being there when needed; feeling comfortable talking to EDGE staff; feeling comfortable with how EDGE staff talked to their son or daughter; feeling OK telling EDGE when they are unhappy; EDGE's knowledge of son or daughter's job and skills; knowing about the their son or daughter's future career plans; explaining everything they needed to know about the job before it started; explaining the

Job Co-ordinator's role; their son or daughter being well treated and well regarded by workmates; their son or daughter liking the job they are doing; and being better off for having registered with EDGE.

Employers rated EDGE very highly overall, and higher than 80% in 10 out of 12 areas: EDGE's initial approach; the explanation of EDGE's services; matching the job duties to the worker; the quality of EDGE's on-the-job training; level of contact from EDGE; overall support provided by EDGE; support to promote the worker's socialisation at work; access to EDGE's Mentoring Co-workers with Disability course; the responsiveness of the Job Co-ordinator to requests for assistance.

EDGE EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

REGISTRANTS AND WORKERS BY AGE

Age Group	Registrants	Workers
25 years and under	372	190
26-35 years	192	121
36-45 years	145	107
46-55 years	104	47
56 years and over	61	26

REGISTRANTS AND WORKERS BY GENDER

Gender	Registrants	Workers
Male	546	318
Female	328	173

REGISTRANTS AND WORKERS BY DISABILITY

Primary Disability	Registrants	Workers
Intellectual/Learning	417	264
Physical	145	74
Psychiatric	142	62
Autism	82	42
Hearing/Speech	32	17
Acquired Brain Injury	25	12
Vision	9	9
Neurological	22	11



REGISTRANTS AND JOB SITES BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

Local Government Area	Registrants	Job Sites	Local Government Area	Registrants	Job Sites
Armadale	9		South Perth	11	3
Bassendean	14	8	Stirling	119	52
Bayswater	74	12	Subiaco	17	13
Belmont	7	16	Swan	82	26
Cambridge	26	6	Victoria Park	9	16
Canning	33	26	Vincent	16	9
Claremont	13	7	Wanneroo	92	17
Cockburn	48	16			
Cottesloe	6	2			
East Fremantle	1	2			
Fremantle	31	11			
Gosnells	19	5			
Joondalup	92	22			
Kalamunda	24	6			
Kwinana	6	1			
Melville	41	17			
Mosman Park	4	4			
Mundaring	21	2			
Nedlands	16	12			
Peppermint Grove	1	0			
Perth	18	61			
Rockingham	24	5			