

# Snapshot Survey

## Long Term Skilled Shortage List



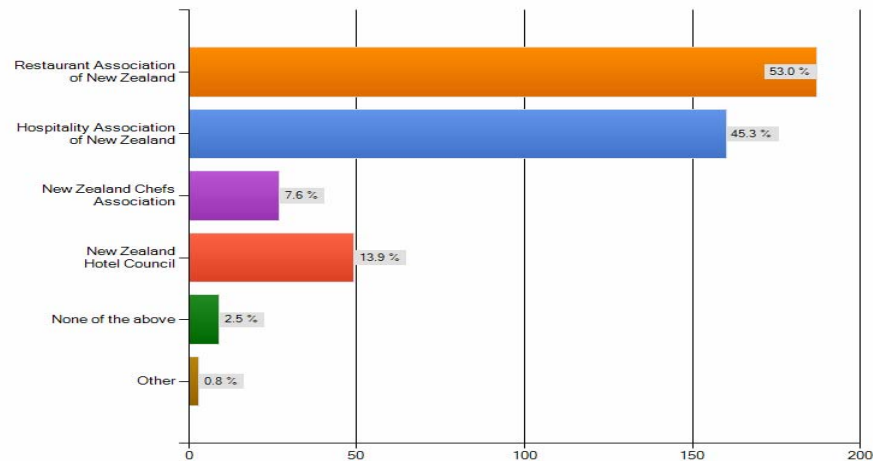
RESTAURANT  
ASSOCIATION  
OF NEW ZEALAND

*(chefs)*

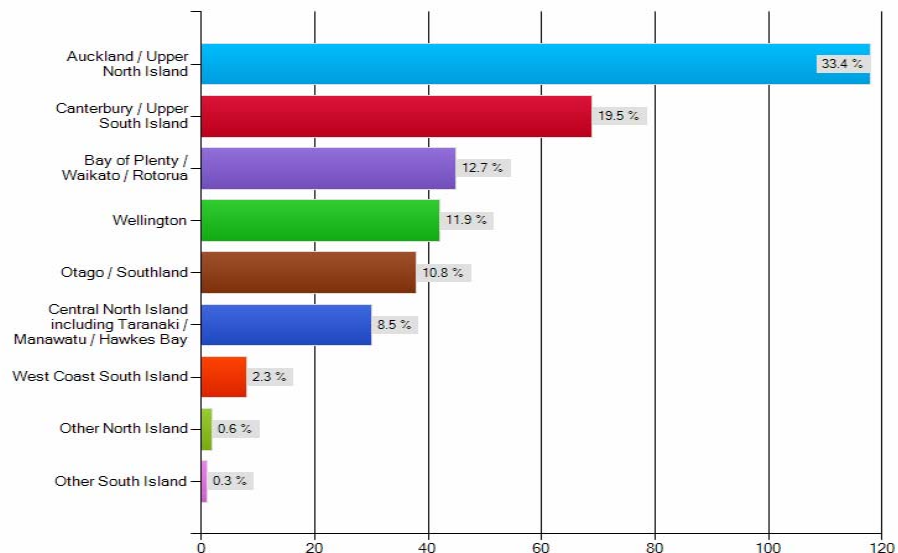
15 April, 2010

**In a snapshot...**Over 350 businesses participated in this survey – spread over the memberships of the following organizations: Restaurant Association of NZ, HANZ, New Zealand Chefs Association, New Zealand Hotel Council. 77% of this survey’s respondents have advertised for a *senior* chef position over the past year and around 87% have had difficulty (over half of the survey respondents had extreme difficulty) finding a suitable candidate. All regions indicated major difficulty in recruiting for senior roles with Auckland, Wellington and Central North Island businesses having the greatest difficulty (over 90% found it extremely difficult or difficult to recruit in these regions). In addition over 69% of the survey respondents have advertised at least once over the past year for a *junior* chef position. Again, around 73% had difficulty in recruiting for a junior position. Confirming the long term difficulty in finding suitable staff for chef roles, 84% of survey respondents have found the recruitment process as difficult, or even more difficult, over the past 12 months.

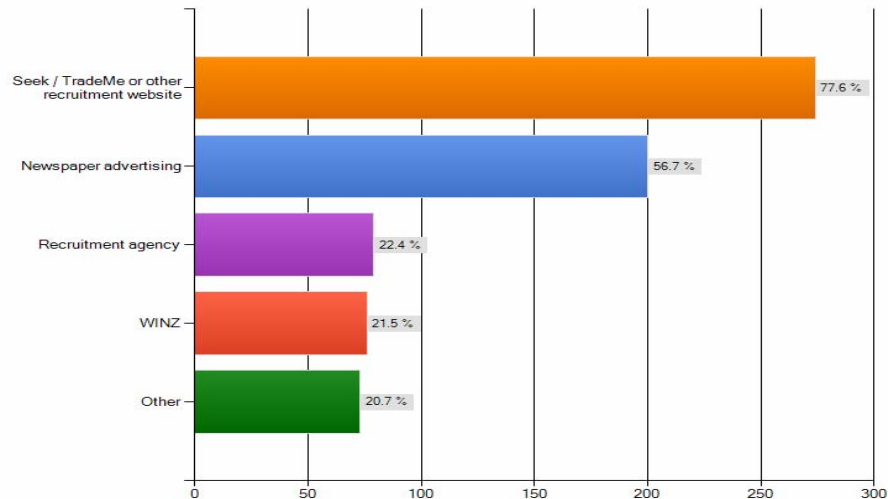
### 1. What industry hospitality organization(s) do you belong to?



### 2. What region is your business located?



### 3. How do you recruit for your chef positions?

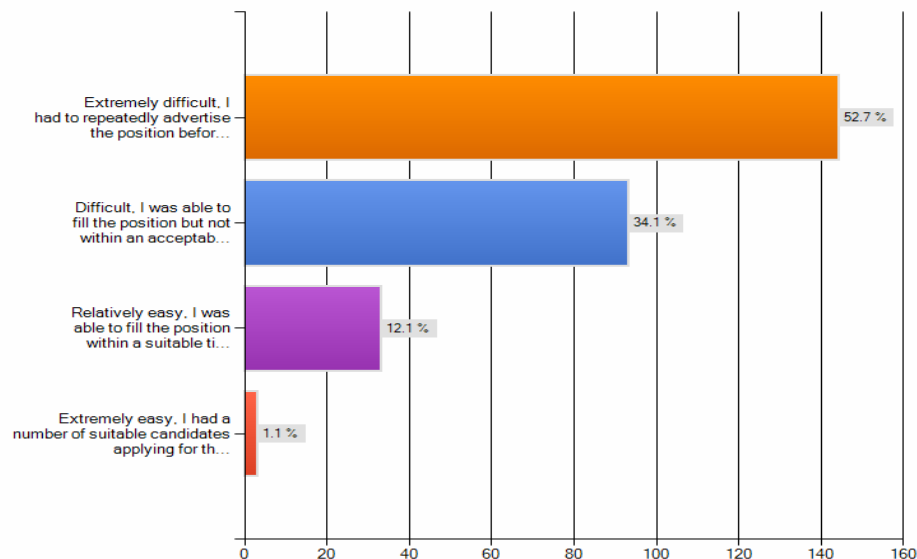


**Other recruitment sources included:** word of mouth; through our own staff; in house advertising; walk-ins; Restaurant Association website.

### 4. Have you recruited for a senior chef (chef de partie or higher) position over the past year?

77% have recruited for a senior chef position at least once over the past year.

### 5. If yes, indicate the degree of difficulty in finding a suitable candidate.



#### Key comments...

"Many apply but the skill level is too low for the position OR they are a visa holder with only a few months left."

"We also had to promote internal candidates before they were really ready, in order to fill lower, less qualified roles - leaving an inexperienced kitchen team."

"There were plenty applications however the calibre of the applicants was far from the profile required. Either lacked experience, higher standards, complete understanding of needs etc."

"Never found a suitable chef at present closed restaurant."

"In fact we appointed a Chilean Chef whose Work Permit expired last Dec. After MUCH negotiating with Immigration it has been extended to June this year, at which point we are back to needing a Head Chef AGAIN. ."

### Snapshot survey...

"I advertised on TradeMe. Was impressed with the number of responses however there were some "non-specific" applications from overseas from candidates who were doing nothing more than attempting to secure working visas. Plus there were a good number of NZ replies who were outside of the job description advertised."

"While eventually the positions were filled, often we are having to compromise our standards in order to get "someone" rather than our ideal candidate.."

"Do not get anything back from recruitment agents. Had to rely on staff who had worked with us before but who are not NZ residents and assist in getting them to NZ i.e. work visa etc."

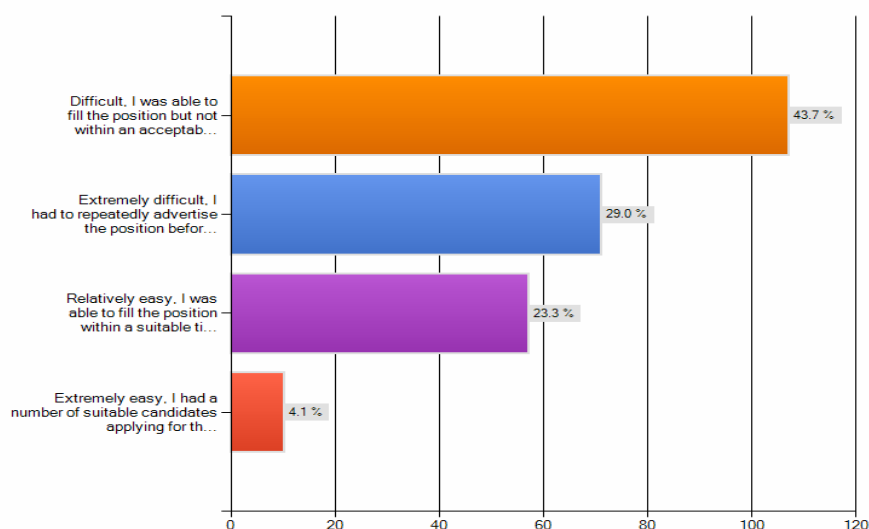
"There are lots of 'baby' chefs being churned out but trying to find one with skill and experience is a nightmare! We ended up having to shut the restaurant one day a week and our Head Chef works six nights but how will he ever take holidays or what if he gets sick or injured? We are STUFFED!"



## 6. Have you recruited for a junior chef position (lower than chef de partie) over the past year?

69% of the survey respondents have advertised at least once over the past year for a junior chef position.

## 7. If yes, indicate the degree of difficulty in finding a suitable candidate.



### Key comments...

"We are currently looking for an Assistant Chef, a seemingly impossible task. No response from advertising or from WINZ!"

"Easier to find a suitable candidate and commence and apprenticeship"

"I was forced to use WINZ as part of the immigration process. The Winz candidates were useless, the best stayed for 3 weeks, the worst for 4 hours. (and I'm really not a bad boss)."

Not as hard to fill as the higher positions, however, you need to allow a lot more time for training unskilled candidates

"and then alot of them are overseas candidates and there are inevitably problems with their visas. Getting current employees visa renewed is a huge problem at the junior level"



## 7. When recruiting for chef positions over the past year, do you consider that the recruitment process has been more difficult, or less difficult, than in years previous?

84% have found the recruitment process as difficult or even more difficult over the past 12 months.

### Key comments...

"Less difficult due to the economic environment resulting in less movement and lower expectations however this is quickly changing back to being very difficult.."

## Snapshot survey...

*"I almost cannot believe how difficult it has been!! Am relying on chefs on working holiday visas, but the conditions of their visas require that that can only work for 3 months for 1 employer which is difficult"*

I have been employing chefs for 22 years and never has the pool to choose from so poor and the drive for those applying to work so low. Most of the new kids don't want to work weekends.



## Regional analysis...

Region	Recruited for senior chef?	Degree of difficulty		Recruited for junior chef?	Degree of difficulty		Harder this year than in previous?
		Extremely difficult	Difficult		Extremely difficult	Difficult	
Auckland	78%	53%	37%	69%	32%	46%	33%
Bay of Plenty	73	51	27	67	33	40	46
Central North Island including...	73	64	27	70	29	38	38
Wellington	88	56	36	86	42	39	51
Canterbury/Upper Sth Is.	75	46	37	64	16	39	32
Otago..	71	48	41	66	15	65	19

- 8. Currently the recommended qualifications and experience for a chef position through the long term skill shortage list are either: National Certificate in Hospitality (Professional Cookery) Level 4 AND a minimum of five years work experience, with a minimum of two years at Chef de Partie (Section Leader) level or higher OR National Certificate in Hospitality (Cookery) Level 4 plus National Certificate in Hospitality (Basic Cookery) (Level 3) AND a minimum of five years work experience, with a minimum of two years at Chef de Partie (Section Leader) level or higher OR Level 5 Diploma (specialising in the area of professional cookery) AND a minimum of five years work experience, with a minimum of two years at Chef de Partie (Section Leader) level or higher. Do you agree with this requirement (this is also under review)?**  
74% agree and 26% disagree with this comment.

## Key comments (if you disagree provide further comment)...



*"Work experience - qualifications are not relevant as have had extremely qualified staff but completely useless in the work place"*

*"I disagree because according to the restaurant where you work or will work, the experience needed will vary; from 1 year to five also it will depend on where you work before. Also, there are chefs who will adapt, learn and progress very quickly and others will take years."*

*"Chefs should have to gain higher qualifications and experience should be longer than a minimum of two years at Chef de Partie level. This level does not provide the candidates with enough experience to manage a kitchen which includes designing and costing menus, quality control, staff wages control etc."*

*"We have had a number of Czech chefs over the years. They come with a three year degree, more complete than level 4, but Immigration has not yet recognized this as an equivalent. This is unfair and discriminatory and makes it difficult for them to get a work permit even though they are very well qualified. This problem needs to be addressed - these guys are good workers and very skilled."*

*"Both quals and experience are key to employing. Sometimes it's the experience that is more important, yet NZIS stick rigidly to the above quals. We have found this inflexibility in the current market shortage of chefs to be extremely frustrating and detrimental to our business."*

*"Happy with the qualifications however the experience requirement is too strict. Dependant on the property, experience at a lower level would be acceptable (e.g. a demi chef at a very prestigious restaurant could easily fulfill the requirements of a CDP anywhere else). Also having found it extremely difficult to fill a demi chef position, I would suggest that the shortage of chefs is apparent at this level also."*

*"Equivalent qualifications and experience in high-end hotels and restaurants etc should be given more recognition. There are many career paths that chefs can follow and an over reliance on specific technical qualifications is not appropriate (even if administratively easier)."*

*"There should be a difference made between the experience required for Chef de partie (and lower) and Sous Chef (and higher). Also, the number of years of experience does not always reflect their true skills - the calibre of restaurants they have worked for (in the case of recruitment for fine dining) is important."*

## To finish...

*"We have been very lucky to have retained our chef & sous chef over the last 2 years but I am very aware that it is hard, & costly, to find good chefs. Before this chef we had about 3 chefs in the preceding 3 years & they were all very average, especially in the area of food costing. There is definitely a shortage of skilled chefs in NZ. The abandonment of the apprentice scheme some years ago was a major mistake."*

**On the need to employ international staff...** *"Coming from the country that always was seasonal but now busy mostly all year we require chefs to be full time 12 months a year and that is hard. We have increased our base wage for all positions in the kitchen making it a costly exercise but being able to keep the chefs helps with continuity. When I apply for a new chef I get bombarded by foreign applicants and have employed 2 who have been good and are staying on but the procedure with Immigration is hard and some times it takes 70 working days to get an approval which makes it hard for businesses like us and the applicant as well. Out of probably 50-60 applicants for various chef positions over the last 4 years I think maybe only 10 -15 were Kiwis the rest were foreign so there is definitely a lack of Kiwis in the trade in NZ."*

*"My current chef is from Uruguay and after extensive advertising including Seek he was the only one suitable. I got more interest from overseas than from chefs in NZ. I am in a small town on state highway, very difficult to attract chefs. We helped our chef get a 2 year working visa because chefs are on the long list and would not like to see them removed."*

*"We continue to be frustrated by doI and immigration in not being able to be work permits for one of our top people. They do not consider things on a case by case basis and their bench mark of utilizing winz information to validate that there are suitable candidates available is absolute rubbish. the winz candidates have poor attitudes and work ethic which without prejudice is why they are with winz. these candidates don't even turn up to work regularly."*

*"I would suggest to keep this on the LTSSL, since applicants then have the opportunity to apply for residency. This would be better for us as a restaurant because it will give us the opportunity to hire applicants permanently rather than temporary."*

*"The government of NZ encourages migration from countries where there are traditionally little or no structured levels of qualification, as there is in some Asian, Pacific and South American countries. It then foolishly restricts able bodied and willing workers from these countries in qualifying for official status, work permits and eventually Permanent Residence, by placing artificial barriers in the form of these so-called lists of NZ minimum levels of qualifications. This often makes criminals of honest, hard-working and tax-paying Kiwis who own and operate successful restaurants, bars and cafes and who, along with all other small and medium sized businesses, are the back-bone of the NZ economy. We provide secure and stable work opportunities for thousands of migrants to NZ yet get little or no assistance from the very government who encourages their arrival here in the first instance. It is surely far better for the whole country for our industry to employ honest, hard-working migrants in the various levels where there are no KIWI's available, rather than having them sponging off the state (and us tax-payers) on the already bloated dole queues that costs this country billions each year!"*

*"With Rugby work cup coming up employers are getting very nervous about having enough talent to see them through this nationally significant event. it seems we are getting contradictory information from the government - on one hand saying tourism is our biggest money maker and it's going to expose NZ to the world, and then on the other, immigration saying no, you can't attract the right level of talent to provide international level product and service"*

*"Good chefs with good skills and correct attitude / commitment levels are very very difficult to come by in NZ and it would help the restaurant business hugely if the government could help make NZ a more attractive place to come work in. There is a difference between the calibre of chefs that say a fine dining restaurant needs (highly skilled, highly trained - smaller pool of qualified candidates) as opposed to say a cafe chef or a pizza chef (larger pool of candidates). Perhaps these differences should be taken into account in terms of 'skills' shortages."*

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