

A swimmer in a pool, wearing a swim cap and goggles, is the central focus. The water is a deep blue, and there are light rays and bubbles around the swimmer. The overall tone is energetic and aquatic.

— Sport, community recreation and aquatics

People working in sport, community recreation and aquatics have an understanding of the complex needs and goals that drive participation – and they are highly motivated to make physical activity meaningful and fun for everyone.

The sport, community recreation and aquatics workforce delivers wellbeing to the population through physical recreation. This group of professionals supports people to be active, and to get the maximum benefit from the shared resources devoted to sport and recreation in New Zealand.

This group spans everyone from lifeguards and swim teachers, facility staff and programme managers, through to sport coaches and referees. It includes a significant proportion of volunteers who freely give their time and knowledge.

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Industry structure

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (COUNCILS)



Councils employ a significant proportion of the industry, delivering sport and recreation, and maintaining community recreation assets. Integral to local government delivery of sport and recreation are the various council-controlled organisations and commercial businesses working out of council-owned facilities.

SPORT AND RECREATION PROVIDERS



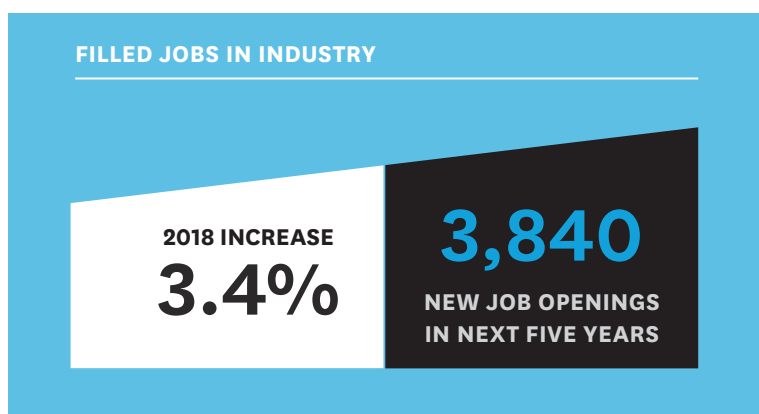
More than 200 national and regional sport and recreation organisations, 14 regional sports trusts, and some 15,000 clubs deliver sport and recreation and services, along with non-incorporated societies and non-profit trusts, out-of-school caregivers, Pasifika church and community groups, iwi and hapu, and health services. Some providers are commercial businesses, including Kelly Sports, Belgravia, and Community Leisure Management.

Workforce profile in 2018

There were some 37,233 people employed in sport, community recreation and aquatics in 2018. This represented 1.5% of the New Zealand workforce. The gender ratio was 54:46 male to female – this is a slightly higher proportion of men than in the total workforce.

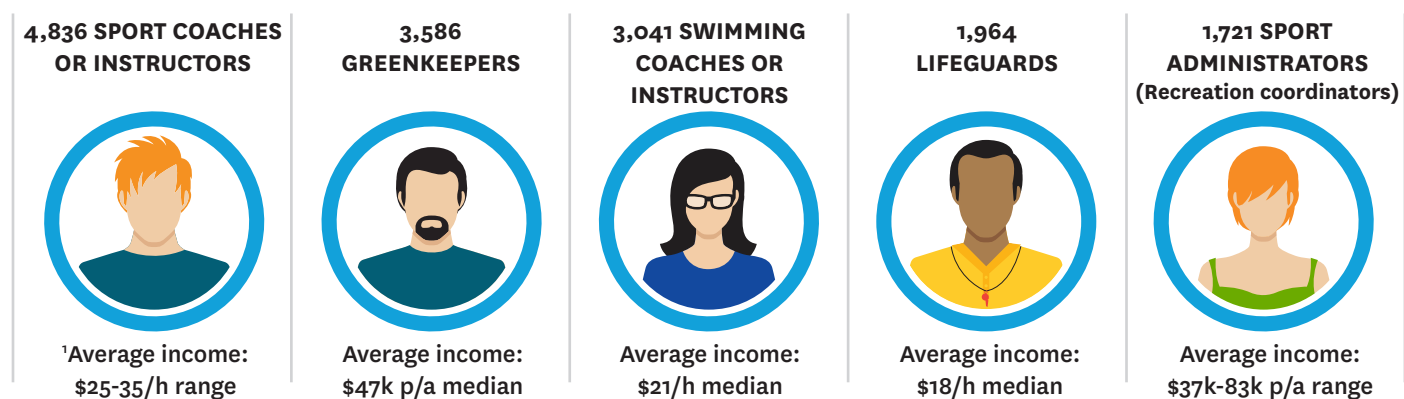
The sport, community recreation and aquatics industry saw a 3.4% increase in the size of its workforce in 2018. It has been on an upward trend since 2014, with an average annual rise of 3.3%.

The workforce is forecast to keep growing steadily for the next five years, to fill approximately 3,840 new job openings expected over that time.

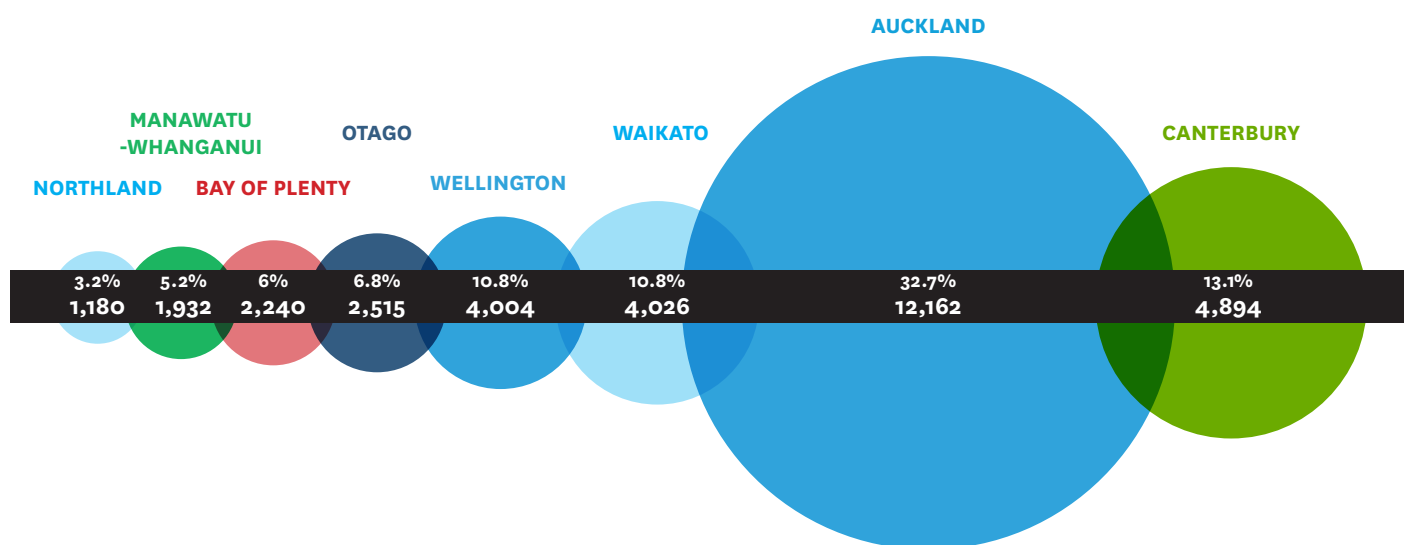


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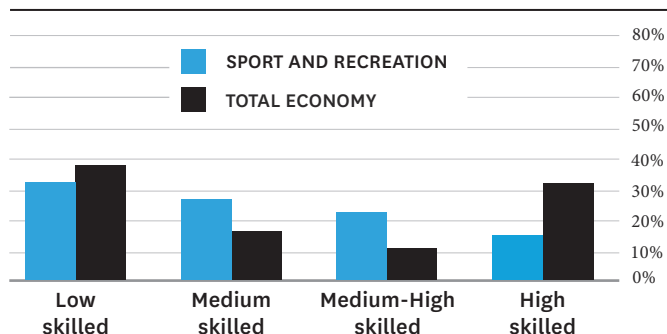
TOP FIVE JOBS BY VOLUME IN 2018



REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT (JOBS) IN 2018



SKILL LEVEL



AVERAGE EARNINGS

In 2017, the average annual income in sport, community recreation and aquatics was \$52,100. This rate of pay for the industry was in contrast to an average of \$58,900 for the total economy.

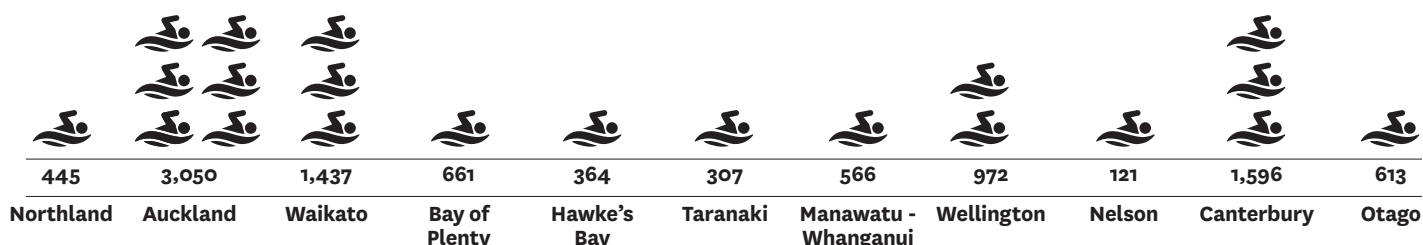
EARNINGS GROWTH

Industry salaries grew by an average of 2.8% per year between 2007 and 2017, compared to a figure of 3.2% per year for the total economy.

SELF EMPLOYMENT

The self employment rate in 2018 was 16.2% or 6,030 people.

REGIONAL BUSINESS UNITS



Economic impact

The sport, community recreation and aquatics industry added \$2.6 billion to the New Zealand economy in 2018 – a contribution of 1.07% of national GDP.

Industry GDP was up 1.3% in 2018, after having grown by 3.7% the year before. GDP per capita for the industry was \$83,643, which was down by 1.9% compared to 2017.

There were 10,882 businesses operating in the industry during the year, with an average of 3.4 workers in each – compared to a figure of 4.4 workers for the economy as a whole.

The total number of sport, community recreation and aquatics businesses was down by 1.2% year-on-year.

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

\$2.6B

GDP

1.07% of New Zealand's GDP in 2018

Workforce challenges

A Skills Active survey of the sport, community recreation and aquatics workforce found that a lack of available workers was a major concern for 70% of those surveyed.

Nor was it easy to retain staff once they were employed, with 65% of respondents saying that the industry was seen as a stop-gap on the way to a real career.

Lifeguards and swim teachers were the top two hardest roles to fill, according to respondents. Attracting candidates to live in “small town New Zealand” was difficult at times, said one respondent.

Another cited the pressure of being a 364-day-a-year operation. “There is an inability for staff to take holidays during our busiest times, which are everyone else’s school holidays and Christmas.”

Of those respondents who relied on volunteers, these unpaid workers typically contributed through events, marketing, coaching, programme assistance, fundraising and committee membership.

Themes and trends

As new community recreation facilities are opened, especially in post-quake Christchurch, local authorities are striving to design spaces that serve people of all ages, genders, cultures, abilities and interests, according to research from Recreation Aotearoa.²

“Facilities are also taking a holistic view of health and wellbeing and looking at including allied health functions such as nutrition, naturopathy, massage, mediation, podiatry and physiotherapy under the same roof.”³

In the sport world, the last twelve months have seen some big and meaningful changes in terms of national strategy and direction.

In June, Sport NZ released the NZ Facilities Framework, a

resource for local authorities developing and maintaining facilities around the country - with the goal of increasing integration and “hubbing” of codes, reducing duplication, and improving access.⁴

In September, Sport NZ and several national sport organisations announced a joint plan to commit more resources to improving participation for all ages and abilities. At the same time they agreed to reduce the focus on winning and early specialisation, and increase diversification, including getting more girls and women participating, and more women in leadership roles.⁵

One example of this drive for change comes from Auckland Cricket, which launched a scheme to increase engagement amongst Southeast Asian and Indian social cricket groups. The successful scheme saw 2,000 social players get involved in club cricket. It is now being rolled out across more Auckland clubs.⁶



Active Careers through
On-Job Qualifications

²Aquatic Facility Design in the 21st Century, Alex Head, Recreation Aotearoa Insights, May 2019 ³Ibid ⁴Better value from New Zealand sporting facilities: The New Zealand sporting facilities framework, June 2019, Sport NZ ⁵Sports bodies join together to change youth sport, September 2019, Sport NZ ⁶Club is the Hub Case Study: Encouraging a relationship between Southeast Asian social cricketers and Auckland Cricket Clubs, Sport NZ, September 2019