

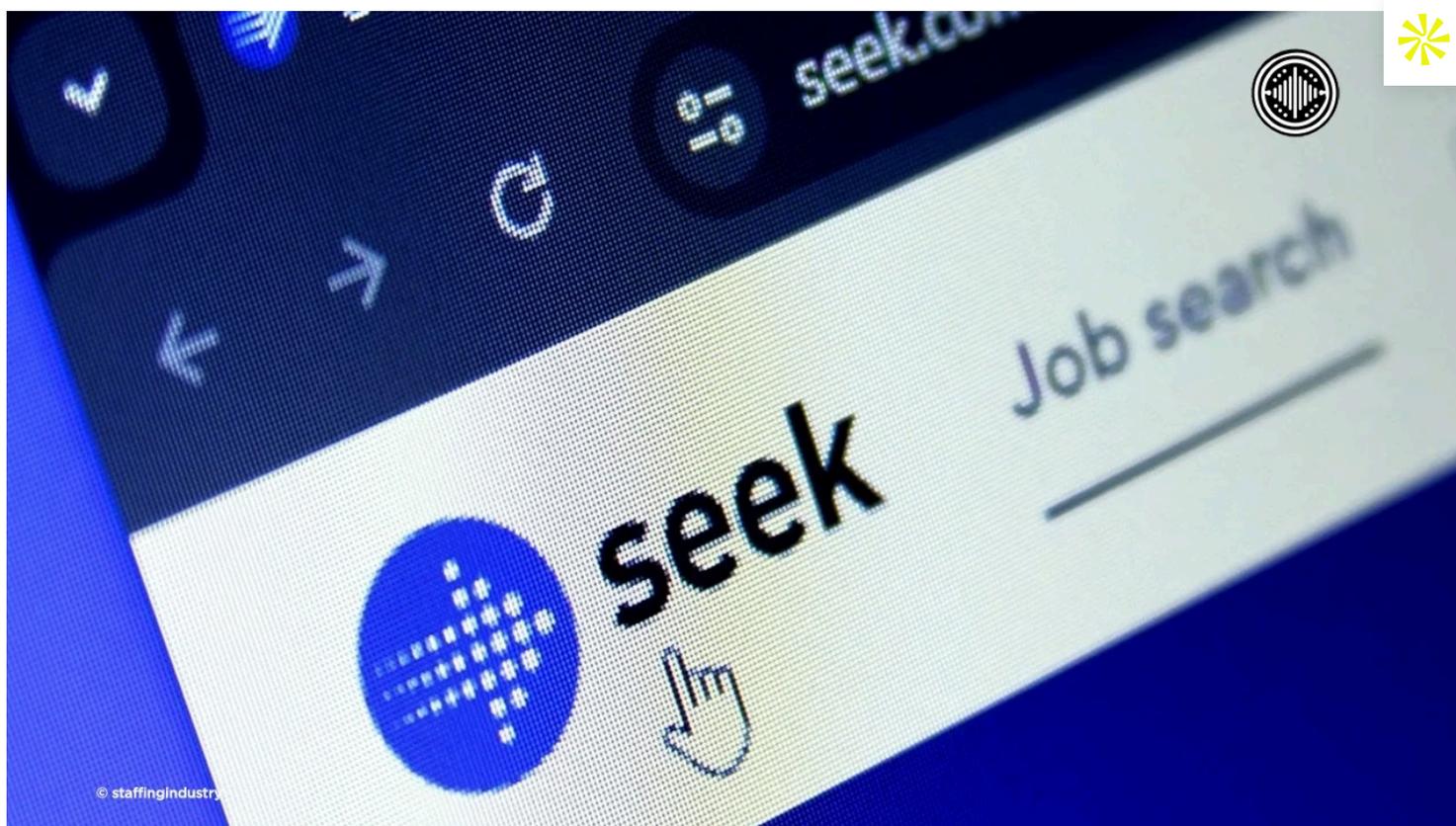
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## Australian Job Ads Decline as Hiring Cools

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– Categories: Economics



Australian job advertisements fell 1% in July, marking the fourth consecutive monthly decline according to ANZ-Indeed data. The drop suggests employers are growing cautious despite recent interest rate cuts, with job postings now 12% below last year's peak. The trend reflects broader economic softening, particularly in consumer-facing sectors that drove pandemic-era hiring surges.

ANZ economists note the slowdown appears concentrated in retail and hospitality, where job ads plummeted 3.2%. Professional services and healthcare proved more resilient, dipping just 0.3%. Regional markets outperformed capital cities, with Western Australia recording gains while New South Wales and Victoria led declines. The data precedes Thursday's official employment figures, which analysts expect to show unemployment holding near 4%.

The cooling labor market contradicts typical responses to monetary easing, raising questions about consumer demand weakness. ANZ senior economist Catherine Birch attributes the anomaly to businesses awaiting clearer signs of sustained economic recovery before committing to new hires. Wage growth moderation and reduced job-switching activity further indicate declining worker confidence in the employment outlook.

With the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) monitoring labor conditions closely, July's figures may influence future rate decisions. While not yet signaling recessionary conditions, the persistent ad decline suggests Australia's jobs engine is shifting gears – from white-hot demand to more sustainable growth levels. How this plays out in coming months will test whether the slowdown represents healthy normalization or the leading edge of broader economic weakness.