



Construction Industry Round Table

Economic News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

5/09/2016 – April 2016 Employment Levels Stall

Employment figures from the Department of Labor for April “fizzled” showing less than expected growth over March with an increase of only 160,000 jobs being added during the month (this was barely above the generally accepted estimate that it takes approximately 130-150,000 new jobs per month, just to absorb the expanding workforce). The *non-seasonally* adjusted unemployment figure for construction slide to 6.0 percent [1.5 basis points (percent points), below a year ago April 2015, when it stood at 7.5%]. Construction employment rose briskly over March levels as the spring construction season began to take hold across the country.

The overall unemployment rate remained unchanged at 5.0 percent (which amounts to 8.0 million “unemployed persons” as the government counts). However, the “labor force participation” rate deteriorated to 62.6 percent, (reversing recent improvement, and again flirting with historic lows set back in the 70’s when women made-up less of the “outside-the-home” workforce. At the end of the recession [June ‘09] this rate stood at a healthier 65.7%). The “employed-population ratio” edged down by 0.2 percent going to 59.7%. The overall picture seems to have “cooled” from the more robust numbers earlier in the year when employment was growing at more than 200K per month. Even measuring job growth since the “bottom” of the recession [February 2010], as the Obama Administration does, at 14.6 million new jobs . . . the “recovery” still lags work-age population expansion over the same time by 1.4 million (14.6 vs. 16.0).

*You can view the current and historical **Workforce Statistics** charts [here](#).*