



Construction Industry Round Table

Economic News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

9/02/2016 – Employment Numbers Uninspired for August '16, Construction Slips

Employment figures from the Department of Labor for August were sluggish, down sizably (over 100k) from July, with the growth of 151,000 new jobs during the month (this number only *meets* 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 exhibited a customary late summer drop-off, although it may also be an early sign that the market is slowing as suggested by CIRT's Sentiment Index. DOL reported construction related unemployment at 5.1 percent up from the robust 4.5% in July 2016 [which was still 10 basis points (1.0 percent point), below a year ago August 2015, when it stood at 6.1%].

Meanwhile, the overall unemployment rate stayed the same at 4.9 percent (which amounts to 7.8 million "unemployed persons" as the government counts) for the third month in a row. The "labor force participation" rate also flat-lined at 62.8 percent. (This level remains around historic lows set back in the 1970's when women made-up less of the "outside the home" workforce. Note: at the end of the recession [June '09] this rate stood at a healthier 65.7%). Meanwhile, the "employed-population ratio" remained at it previous level of 59.7 percent.'

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