Earthmoving plant operators operate plant to excavate earth, ore and rock; break up pavement, road, rock and obstructions; move and load earth, rock and debris; and level, smooth and compact surfaces in construction and other projects.

**Job title examples**

- Backhoe Operator
- Bulldozer Operator
- Earthmoving Plant Operator/Construction Plant Operator
- Excavator Operator
- Grader Operator
- Loader Operator

**Other jobs in this field of work**

**What earthmoving plant operators do**

- prepare and position plant for operation
- select, fit and remove attachments such as buckets, winches, loading scoops, shovel blades and rock breaking hammers
- operate controls to excavate, break, drill, level, compact, gouge out, move, load and spread earth, rock, rubble, soil and other materials
- monitor operation of plant and adjust controls to regulate pressure, speed and flow of operation, and ensure safety of other workers
- raise, lower and manipulate attachments using manual and hydraulic controls
- work from drawings, markers and verbal instructions
- service, lubricate, clean and refuel equipment (plant) and perform minor adjustments and repairs

**Main employing industries**

- Construction
- Mining
Qualifications

The following government subsidised qualifications are available in NSW:

Certificate II in Surface Extraction Operations available as a traineeship or qualification
Certificate II in Civil Construction available as a traineeship or qualification
Certificate III in Civil Construction available as a traineeship, apprenticeship or qualification
Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations available as an apprenticeship or qualification
Certificate III in Civil Foundations available as a traineeship or qualification
Certificate III in Local Government (Operational Works) available as a traineeship or qualification
Certificate III in Trenchless Technology available as a traineeship or qualification

Apprenticeships and traineeships: Find out how to get an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Course fees: You may be eligible for government subsidised training under Smart and Skilled. Go to the Course Finder to find training in your area, estimate your fee and find a training provider.

Job prospects and pay

- There are around 11,239 earthmoving plant operators working in NSW.
- Over the next four years, employment in this occupation is expected to decline in NSW.

Average weekly full time earnings (before tax):
- Earthmoving plant operators: $1,514
- All occupations: $1,200

Related jobs

- Crane, Hoist and Lift Operator

To find out more regarding this related job, visit the Job Guides Homepage.

Information sources

Occupations: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, 1220.0
Skills shortages: Department of Employment, Skill Shortage List NSW 2015-16
Job prospects: Centre of Policy Studies (CoPS), Victoria University, Employment Forecast Data for NSW 2015/16 to 2022/23