Total Jobs

The total number of jobs located in the SouthCoast is 124,267 (2012 3Q), an increase of 4.5% from 1990. Although the number of jobs is still below the 2006 peak (128,140), the job total has steadily increased since the end of the Great Recession (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Number of Jobs in the SouthCoast: 1990 to 2012 (3Q)

Unemployment

Average unemployment rates in the region are historically higher than the statewide average throughout the business cycle and much of the difference is driven by high unemployment rates in Fall River and New Bedford. While the region’s unemployment rate declined steadily during the 1990s and slowly closed the gap with the statewide unemployment rate, this gap is increasing once again. The 2012 annual average unemployment rate in the SouthCoast was 10.4%, which compares to a statewide average unemployment rate of 6.7% and a national rate of 8.1% (see Figure 2). Annual unemployment rates in Fall River (13.0%) and New Bedford (12.5%) were significantly higher than the state average in 2012.

Figure 2
Unemployment Rate: 1985 to May, 2013

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development, ES202 data file, CFPA.