

Construction Project Manager		Western Australia
ANZSCO Code: 1331-11	April 2009	
Labour market rating:	Recruitment difficulty	
Comment <i>Recruitment difficulties exist when specialised skills and workplace experience are being sought.</i>		

Occupational demand

The 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data indicate that most construction project managers in WA (62 per cent) work in the industry division of Construction, mainly in the specific industry classifications of house construction, followed by non-residential building construction and engineering consulting services. ABS data show the number of construction project managers in WA has increased by 144 per cent between 2001 and 2006, to 2032. The ABS Labour Force Survey show that the number of construction managers working in WA has remained stable from February 2008 to February 2009. ABS data also show that the total number of new residential building approvals fell slightly from 2006-07 to 2007-08. However, the value of non-residential building approvals in WA almost doubled from \$2758 million in 2006-07 to \$5358 million in 2007-08.

Occupational supply

Entry into this occupation may be through a Bachelor of Applied Science (Construction Management and Economics) degree which is offered by Curtin University and is specifically designed for this occupation or through TAFE WA which offers a Certificate IV in Building and Construction and a Diploma of Building and Construction (Building - Builder's Registration). It is also possible that graduates of architecture courses may work in this profession. Graduate numbers of domestic students from the Curtin University Bachelor of Applied Science in recent years have seen a peak in 2006 with 13 graduates in 2007, 32 in 2006, and 16 in 2005. Overseas migration has provided a net gain of construction project managers to WA in 2007-08 of 117 persons, which was similar to the previous year.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A DEEWR survey of employers who had recently advertised for construction project managers found that 60 per cent of vacancies were filled within six weeks following advertising. There were over 29 applicants per vacancy of whom slightly less than four per vacancy were considered by employers to be suitable. The main reasons applicants were not considered suitable were that they lacked the specific skills and workplace experience sought by employers. Many employers reported a significant increase in the number of applicants for positions compared with previous recruitments during the last year. Some employers advised that while numbers had increased, current applicants were comparatively of a lower quality than in the past, indicating that positions requiring very specific skills and experience remained difficult to fill. Some employers noted they were moving away from the traditional method of recruiting by advertising, as they were not finding this an effective way to attract suitable applicants. In these cases, word of mouth or referrals from other sources were seen as being more effective. Many employers noted local work experience as being a requirement for their positions, indicating a number of applicants could not meet this criterion. In some cases, employers suggested applicants would have required training in order to effectively fill the advertised position, adding that while they may have been happy to provide this development in the past, they were now seeking to recruit applicants who were fully functional in the role. Employers commented that in some cases, applicants were trying to move from one environment to another – such as from residential to commercial – but that employers preferred current experience in the area of the vacancy.

Labour market outlook

Recruitment difficulties are evident when specialised skills and workplace experience are being sought. This is likely to persist in the short to medium term.