

<b>Public Relations Professional</b>	<b>Australia</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code:</b> 2253-11	October 2008
<b>Labour market rating</b>	No shortage
<b>Comment</b>	

### **Occupational demand**

Demand for public relations professionals increased over the early 2000s, with ABS Census data showing employment rose by 14 per cent over the five years to 2006. However, recent ABS Labour Force Survey data indicate employment for public relations professionals may have peaked, with a slight fall over the year to August 2008 compared with the previous twelve months. Surveyed employers were often recruiting to replace existing staff, with 45 per cent of interviewees citing this as the reason for advertising. 2008 figures show employment numbers around 15 000 nationally.

Almost one quarter of public relations professionals are employed in the professional, scientific and technical services industry, with the highest concentration in the management advice and related consultancy services sector. One in every five public relations professionals is employed in public administration and safety.

DEEWR Skilled Vacancies Index data are consistent with the employment data, showing vacancies for this profession have fallen by about one third over the past year, suggesting weaker demand for these skills.

### **Occupational supply**

There are numerous pathways to this occupation, including a range of degrees and diplomas. The completion data used here are based on a selection of courses which specify public relations as a specialisation or field of study. DEEWR higher education data show completions averaged 330 per annum between 2001 and 2006, but increased over the period by more than one third.

ABS 2006 Census data show 55 per cent of public relations professionals hold a bachelor degree or higher qualification and about 15 per cent hold a certificate III/IV or diploma/advanced diploma.

Department of Immigration and Citizenship net migration data for the occupational group marketing and advertising professionals (of which public relations professionals a part), show that over the five years to 2007-2008 annual net gains averaged around 1300. However, there was a decline of eight per cent in the net gain from migration for this group over the period.

### **Employer and industry comments/current labour market.**

A survey of employers who had advertised for public relations professionals was conducted for this report, with a small number of employers cold canvassed in those states where vacancies were hard to find. The fill rate for public relations professionals exceeded 90 per cent, down slightly from the 97 per cent fill rate recorded in 2007. Employers received more than 19 applications per vacancy with slightly more than three applicants per vacancy considered by employers to be suitable. The majority of employers stated applicants were unsuitable for positions due to lack of experience. Most employers sought public relations professionals who have three or more years' experience.

Almost three quarters of employers surveyed required formal qualifications. Respondents wanted skills including community liaison in the public sector through to media management in the mineral and resources industry. Employers commented that public relations roles are often less difficult to recruit for than other occupations.

### **Labour market outlook**

There is no evidence to suggest that there will be any significant change in the labour market for this occupation over the next six months.