

<b>Architectural Associate</b>	<b>New South Wales (NSW)</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	December 2006
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage.
<b>Comment:</b> <i>Shortages are evident in Sydney and a number of regional areas of NSW.</i>	

### **Occupational demand**

Demand for architectural associates in 2006 was adversely affected by subdued residential building activity. However, employer and industry contacts stated that some residential development work was continuing and solid non-residential activity was helping to support demand for the occupation. The value of building work done fell in 2005-06, with a significant drop in the residential sector partly offset by solid growth in non-residential building. Building activity was weak in Sydney but grew moderately in regional NSW. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) Skilled Vacancies Index shows that newspaper vacancies for the profession have declined significantly from a peak in 2003 and were particularly low in the second half of 2006. Employer and industry contacts stated that the limited success of newspaper advertising had induced most employers to turn to other methods of recruiting architectural associates.

### **Occupational supply**

The number of persons commencing certificate and diploma courses in architectural technology increased substantially in 2002 and has remained stable since then. Completions from these courses have been steady at about 350 persons a year since 2003. However, the consensus of employers contacted for this report was that a significant proportion of drafting graduates go on to university studies or enter related drafting occupations. No separate immigration data are available for architectural associates. However, net overseas immigration to NSW of building, architectural and surveying associates as a whole has been 10 to 15 persons a year for the last five years, indicating that net immigration is not a significant source of supply to the occupation.

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

A DEWR survey of employers who had recently advertised for architectural associates found that 47 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period. Most surveyed employers were seeking associates with experience in particular sectors of the industry and competent in specific software and, as a result, there was often a mismatch between the skills required for a position and those possessed by qualified applicants. Several employers stated that the demands of current projects precluded them from providing additional training to semi-suitable applicants and that they would re-arrange work loads, turn down new projects, or engage design-firms on contract until they were able to locate an employee who exactly matched their requirements. Even when applicants did have the necessary technical skills and experience, employers often were unable to meet their salary expectations. (One employer offered a position to five suitable applicants who all rejected the offer.)

In many cases, however, employers weren't able to attract a single suitable applicant to vacancies. Employers stated that most applicants were either yet to complete the relevant course or had no experience working with Australian building codes. One employer who required a senior draftsman trialled several qualified and experienced applicants but found that their drafting and technical skills were not of a sufficient standard for the position.

### **Labour market outlook**

The Construction Forecasting Council expects building activity to remain fairly flat in 2006-07 but to recover strongly in 2007-08. In view of this, demand for architectural associates should increase from the second half of 2007. No significant increase in supply from local training or net immigration is expected over the short term and shortages are likely to persist in 2007.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>		<b>Victoria</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	March 2007	
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Metropolitan Recruitment Difficulties	
<b>Comment:</b> <i>Recruitment difficulties restricted to vacancies requiring CAD experience and Australian industry knowledge.</i>		

### **Occupational demand**

Demand for architectural associates, who include architectural draftspersons and a building drafting officers, is primarily determined by the business levels within the overall economy and more specifically by the level of construction activity. Population growth and rising interest rates impact upon the level of investment being made into construction. Building activity in Victoria has decreased over the last two years. The value of new residential building fell by around seven per cent during this period and the number of housing commencements fell by approximately 13 per cent between 2004 and 2006. However, construction activity may improve in the short to medium term, indicated by a rise in dwelling units approved during the last seven months. DEWR Skilled Vacancies Index data suggests demand for architectural associates fell between 2000 and 2006 and although vacancies have remained rather stable during 2006, they are slightly higher than the level recorded in 2005.

### **Occupational supply**

DEWR Job Outlook educational profile data suggests over 30 per cent of employed building, architectural and surveying associates have Certificate III or Certificate IV qualifications. Department of Education, Science and Training enrolment data suggests the number of persons who enrolled in an architecture and building diploma (AQF) in Australia decreased by over 50 per cent from 2004 to 2005. The supply of building, architectural and surveying associates from net immigration has decreased, down by around 60 per cent from last year. Net immigration to Victoria during 2005-2006 was around 10 building, architectural and surveying associates.

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

The Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised of metropolitan employers found approximately 62 per cent of vacancies were filled. The average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was 1.15, compared to an average of 23 unsuitable applicants for each vacancy. The main reasons applicants were considered by employers to be unsuitable was lack of direct experience with Australian building codes along with previous experience working with CAD. Unsatisfactory communication skills were a significant reason why applicants were deemed unsuitable. Many of the employers surveyed commented they were seeking strong communication skills to deal with clients, not just technical skills. Both metropolitan and regional employers stated that the occupational turnover of architectural associates was low amongst existing employees. Employers in regional Victoria were cold canvassed to determine their perceptions if they were to advertise architectural associate vacancies. Regional employers felt it would be difficult to fill vacancies due to a small pool of skilled professionals in regional Victoria. Regional employers stated being both in a regional location and a small business made it difficult to be competitive employers and fill vacancies. The need to offer competitive remuneration to attract and retain suitably skilled architectural associates was a comment of both metropolitan and regional employers.

### **Labour market outlook**

The relatively balanced labour market for architectural associates in Victoria is expected to continue over the next six months, with recruitment difficulties persisting in metropolitan areas for vacancies requiring CAD experience and Australian industry knowledge.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>	<b>Queensland</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	December 2006
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage
<b>Comment:</b>	

### **Occupational demand**

Most architectural associates are employed by private sector firms providing architectural, design and planning services to the building industry, although a significant proportion are directly employed by building companies themselves. Some architectural associates are self-employed and provide their services on a contract basis while others are employed in the public sector. In all cases, demand for architectural associates depends directly on the level of activity in the building industry. Building activity is presently at high levels across Queensland, supported by the State's growing population and recent strong growth in non-residential building. Australian Bureau of Statistics data on building activity confirm the present robust condition of the building industry in Queensland, while data on building approvals and the value of work yet to be done indicate that the outlook for the industry over coming months remains very positive.

### **Occupational supply**

Formal education for the occupation of architectural associate is generally at the level of a Certificate IV in Residential Drafting or a Diploma/Advanced Diploma of Building Design, which are offered through several technical colleges and institutes across Queensland. Only Central Queensland University offers a four year part time Associate Degree of Building Design and a five year part time Bachelor of Building Design, both of which are available through external study to students who are employed, or seeking work, in the industry. Most students undertaking these studies at any level do so while already working, at least in a basic capacity, in the role of an architectural associate. Data from the Department of Education, Science and Training indicate that there were 64 new enrolments at the university level in 2005 and 40 in 2004 when the courses were first established, but there have been minimal completions to date. Supply has also been supported by overseas migration, with net permanent and long term temporary arrivals to Queensland of 31 self-identified building, architectural and surveying associate professionals in 2005-06.

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

Employers contacted for this year's survey reported that it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit architectural associates, mainly due to the lack of specific industry experience among potential employees. Only 65 per cent of the vacancies included in the survey were filled within six weeks of advertising, and a majority of employers claimed they had advertised several times. Over 75 per cent of the applicants were regarded as unsuitable, mostly because they lacked appropriate qualifications or experience. The need for local knowledge of the building industry and regulations can make the option of looking overseas for possible candidates much less attractive to employers. Some employers said that, when an advertised position cannot be filled, they are willing to recruit and train new employees with lower skill levels and support them in formal studies. Employers reported that work for skilled architectural associates continues to grow in most regions of Queensland and suggested greater marketing of the career in schools to help in addressing supply issues in coming years.

### **Labour market outlook**

With levels of residential construction holding up well in the State, supported by population growth, and significant continuing strength in the non-residential building sector, demand for architectural associates will remain high over the coming year. At the same time, the numbers of new entrants to the occupation are not expected to increase significantly. The present State-wide shortage of architectural associates is therefore expected to continue, and might intensify, through 2007.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>		<b>South Australia (SA)</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	October 2006	
<b>Labour market rating</b>	No Shortage	
<b>Comment</b>		

### **Occupational demand**

Over 70 per cent of architectural associates are employed in the business services industry, with a further 20 per cent working in construction. Demand for architectural associates is affected by the level of building and construction activity. The value of SA building 'work done' increased 2.8 per cent in the June quarter 2006 to around \$910 million, the highest level on record. However, building approvals – a useful indicator of forward demand and activity levels – declined for six consecutive months up to August 2006, and were 5.1 per cent lower compared to August 2005. Australian Bureau of Statistics labour force data (averaged over four quarters) show that employment of architectural and related associate professionals fell by over 10 per cent in the year to August 2006.

### **Occupational supply**

Architectural associates usually complete a relevant certificate IV or diploma course through TAFE. Training data show that combined course completions numbered 64 in 2003, 130 in 2004 and 132 in 2005. The number of annual course completions is high relative to the small size of the workforce, which numbered less than 400 at the time of 2001 ABS Census. Supply from immigration is insignificant for this occupation.

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

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for architectural associates showed that almost 80 per cent of vacancies were filled within six weeks. Most employers were seeking workers with some prior design/drafting experience, and almost a quarter of all applicants were considered suitable in this respect. On average, there were two suitable applicants per vacancy and only a small number of positions could not be filled. More difficult to fill vacancies were those requiring significant levels of experience (in excess of five years) or specialist skills (such as high level computer design skills). Labour turnover amongst architectural drafters was described as low, although some employers noted that higher levels of demand from the eastern states had made it more difficult to retain experienced workers in the past year. Demand conditions within SA have been reasonably solid during 2006, with employment levels increasing in some firms due to additional work. Not surprisingly, employers who experienced recruitment difficulties indicated that this was a constraint on business growth. At the same time, some firms noted that activity levels within the SA construction sector are declining and this may reduce occupational demand over the short term. Overall, the employer survey results show a high vacancy fill rate which suggests that architectural associates are not currently in shortage.

### **Labour market outlook**

Training data suggest that the number of annual TAFE course completions is high relative to the overall size of the architectural associate workforce. At the same time, forecasts from the HIA show that combined SA investment in new housing and non-residential construction will decline by around 2 per cent in 2006-07. A shortage of architectural associates is therefore not expected to emerge over the short-term.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>		<b>Western Australia (WA)</b>
ASCO Code: 3121-13		November 2006
<b>Labour market rating:</b>	Shortage	
<b>Comment</b> <i>The shortage is greatest for those with three or more years' experience.</i>		

### **Occupational demand**

Demand for architectural associates has continued to increase due to the buoyant WA economy. Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows that there was an increase of 22.7 per cent in the value of all building construction work done in WA in the 12 months to June 2006, compared with the same period to June 2005. Of this, there was a 26.7 per cent increase in residential building work and an increase in non-residential building work of 16.5 per cent. The value of all building construction work remaining to be done at September 2006 was 0.2 per cent lower than the previous quarter; however, the value of approvals for residential building work was 10.1 per cent higher.

This occupation is too small for quarterly Australian Bureau of Statistics' Labour Force Survey figures to be reliable, however, the number of architectural associates recorded in WA increased by 40.1 per cent to 768 over the five years to the 2001 Census. Given the strong demand from the building industry since then, the number is likely to have increased significantly.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' Skilled Vacancy Count shows that newspaper vacancies for architectural associates from January to November 2006 increased by 45.8 per cent over the number for the same period last year.

### **Occupational supply**

Architectural associates generally work as a draftsman or architectural draftsman. Suitable TAFE courses appear to have become available only in recent years and architectural associates generally complete a Certificate IV in Residential Drafting or Diploma in Building Design and Technology. Completion of a university three-year bachelor degree course in architectural science and environmental design would also be suitable. TAFE course completions were 75 in 2005, compared with an average of 68 the previous two years. Some employers are prepared to recruit people who have no formal qualifications but have gained a number of years of relevant experience. It is not possible to obtain separate migration statistics for architectural associates, but the number is likely to be low.

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

Sixty per cent of the surveyed vacancies were filled, with 1.5 suitable applicants per vacancy. Only one-quarter of the applicants were considered suitable. The main reasons applicants were unsuitable was they were not qualified or had little or no experience. Many applicants had unrealistic expectations about their ability and the work involved. Recruitment was thought to be at least as, if not more, difficult than 12 months ago. The shortage of suitable applicants covered positions for both residential and commercial work, with the shortage more pronounced for drafters with about three or more years' experience. There was no discernable difference in the vacancy fill rate between residential and commercial work positions. Some draftsmen are attracted away from Perth to work on remote mine sites, doing mechanical drawing work, for much higher pay rates. This has exacerbated the shortage of draftsmen in Perth and major regional centres who are in high demand from the building industry. Eighty per cent of the vacancies surveyed were for new positions, reflecting new business growth.

The WA Labour Economics Office has not previously assessed this occupation.

### **Labour market outlook**

Demand for architectural associates is likely to be maintained for at least the next six months. Although supply from course completions is generally considered adequate, this will not alleviate the shortage of experienced draftsmen. Shortages are likely to persist over the short term.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>		<b>Tasmania</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	November 2006	
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage	
<b>Comment</b> <i>Architectural Associates may also be known as architectural draftspersons, building designers, architectural technicians, or technical officers.</i>		

### **Occupational demand**

There were 113 architectural associates recorded at the 2001 Census. Unfortunately the occupation is too small to be picked up in subsequent labour market surveys, and so no more recent data is available. However, given that there has been a construction boom in Tasmania since 2001 it seems reasonable to assume that demand has increased somewhat in the mean time. Services to the construction industry is where most (72 per cent) architectural associates are employed.

### **Occupational supply**

TAFE Tasmania offer formal training for architectural associates in Tasmania. Under State legislation governing the building industry a certificate IV in residential drafting is the minimum qualification required for someone to be registered as a building designer. TAFE sources suggest that demand for architectural associates is such at present, that there is little incentive for people to progress from the certificate IV to diploma level, as it is common for all people undertaking the certificate IV to already be employed before they have completed their course.

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

All of the employers who advertised in the lead up to this report were able to eventually fill their vacancies, but none of them were filled as a result of their advertisements, and none were filled within six weeks of advertising. People arriving from interstate, and the use of agencies were the most common methods of filling the vacancies. None of the employers who advertised received any applicants at all through their job advertisements. Other employers who were contacted also indicated that they would expect it to be very difficult to fill vacancies for architectural associates, should they need to recruit at present. The combination of the length of time it takes to fill vacancies, and the absence of any responses to advertisements support a rating of shortage.

### **Labour market outlook**

Despite a slowing of domestic construction in the second half of 2006, demand for architectural associates is still expect to outstrip supply for at least the next 12 months, ensuring that shortages will remain.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>	<b>Northern Territory (NT)</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	November 2006
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage
<b>Comment</b>	

### **Occupational demand**

ABS Census data show that there were 48 architectural associates employed in the NT in 2001. Since 2001, ABS Labour Force Survey data indicate that the number of building, architectural and surveying associate professionals declined over 2002 and 2003, before stabilising from 2004 onwards. The value of both residential and non-residential building work done has grown considerably since 2001. The annual average growth rate over the past five years to June 2006 has been 19 per cent and growth has been particularly strong for the past two years. In chain volume measure terms, the value of building work done is at the highest level since the previous construction boom peak in 1998, which suggests increased demand for architectural associates from the 2001 level.

### **Occupational supply**

Charles Darwin University offers Certificate IV and Diploma level courses in building drafting and design courses (Certificate IV in Building Drafting and Diploma of Building Design and Drafting). The Bachelor of Design is also available at the university and employers commented that students sometimes would take up drafting roles locally rather than continuing with further tertiary studies interstate required to become an architect. A significant proportion of the source market for this occupation tended to the local.

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

Employers tended to advertise on the internet and use agencies as well as the newspaper to attract applicants to vacancies, however typically were not able to generate a significant response. Forty four per cent of advertised vacancies were filled and there were less suitable applicants than vacancies.

Vacancies were most commonly due to a combination of increased demand and job turnover.

Some architectural firms commented that they avoid employing senior architectural associates due to concerns they will be training future competitors to their business. Building designers have taken market share from architectural firms and they typically start in associate roles for architects before leaving to start up their own building designer businesses.

### **Labour market outlook**

Employers consistently commented that they expected the construction boom to continue next year and that demand for architectural associates would remain strong. Therefore, the occupation is expected to remain in shortage.

<b>Architectural Associate</b>	<b>Australian Capital Territory (ACT)</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	October 2006
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage
<b>Comment</b>	

### **Occupational demand**

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey data indicates building, architectural and surveying associates work mainly in the construction industry in Australia, with a reasonable portion also working in the property and business services industry.

ABS figures on Construction Work Done show the total value of construction work in the ACT in the June quarter 2006 was a record high. This was largely the result of the value of non-residential construction, which has increased significantly over the past five years. The value of residential building has remained fairly steady over the past three years.

### **Occupational supply**

A high portion of architectural associates nationally, together with building and surveying associates, have hold Certificate III or Certificate IV qualifications. Formal training for this occupation in the ACT is available through the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), which offers a Diploma of Architectural Drafting.

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

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for architectural associates in the ACT was undertaken for this report. This occupational classification includes architectural draftspersons and building drafting officers.

The survey indicated the vacancy fill rate for architectural associates was about 40 per cent, and employers received an average of around three applications per vacancy. A very small number of these applicants were considered by employers to be suitable for the advertised vacancies. Approximately one third of the vacancies surveyed did not attract any suitable applicants.

Employers noted most applicants were unsuitable as they did not possess the experience sought and many lacked relevant qualifications. A small number of employers noted they operated in specific sectors of the construction industry and received applications from architectural associates with experience in other sectors. In these instances, the applicants were usually considered by employers to be unsuitable for their advertised positions. Demand for AutoCAD skills was reportedly high, with some employers commenting on applicants' inability to support their claims about this skill.

### **Labour market outlook**

There is no evidence to suggest there will be significant change in the level of supply or demand for skills in this occupation over the next six months.