

<b>Electrical Engineer</b>	<b>Victoria</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code: 2333-11</b>	April 2009
<b>Labour market rating:</b>	Recruitment Difficulty
<b>Comment:</b> <i>Positions requiring a high degree of specialisation were difficult to fill across the state.</i>	

### **Occupational demand**

Electrical engineers design and develop equipment for the generation, distribution and utilisation of electric power. In Victoria demand for electrical engineers traditionally comes from the electrical power generation, transmission and distribution industries, as well as electric power requirements for manufacturing, non-residential construction and some infrastructure projects.

According to the 2006 Census there were over 1000 electrical engineers in Victoria of which 30 per cent worked in engineering services businesses, 27 per cent were employed directly in manufacturing and 17 per cent worked in electrical infrastructure service companies.

### **Occupational supply**

Higher education data show the number of persons completing electrical engineering courses in Victoria has been relatively stable over the 6 years to 2006 with an average of 145 persons attaining a relevant degree in electrical engineering. 210 persons graduated in 2007.

Migration data does not isolate electrical engineers from the closely related electronic engineer cohort, nevertheless that data for 2007-08 shows the net migration of 270 persons exceeds the numbers graduating from university. Eighty per cent of this net migration is categorised as long term visitor arrival and a negligible number is attributed to resident return. The data does not capture the migration effects of the deteriorating global economic conditions experienced since mid-2008. Anecdotal evidence from the survey indicates that migration effects are being seen currently, with increasing numbers of applications from qualified expatriates returning from overseas.

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

This survey found that 5 per cent of all positions were filled, with 2.7 suitable candidates per vacancy. The filled rate increases to 85 per cent if vacancies requiring highly specialised electrical engineering skills and experience were isolated from the calculation. This is supported by comments from the surveyed employers and agencies indicating that shortages are only evident for highly specialised electrical engineering positions. In these highly specialised positions employers appear to be specifying skills and experience in the selection criteria whereas in the recent past employers would compromise on their selection criteria because of an overall lack of suitable candidates. Employers and agencies also stated there have been a number of retrenchments where the majority of those affected are the less experienced and less skilled staff. Companies and consultancies are retaining the more highly skilled and experienced personnel because, although these may demand higher remuneration, their deeper and broader skills mean a number of positions may be covered with fewer personnel.

### **Labour market outlook**

The outlook for the next 6 months is that there is an adequate supply of electrical engineers with general experience, but that positions requiring a high degree of specialisation will remain difficult to fill in Victoria.