

<b>Engineering Manager</b>		<b>Northern Territory</b>
<b>ANZSCO Code:</b> 1332-11		March 2009
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Recruitment difficulty	
<b>Comment:</b> Recruitment difficulties exist for vacancies where capital city fly-in-fly-out is not available.		

### **Occupational demand**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census recorded 80 engineering managers employed in the Northern Territory (NT) in 2006, a marginal decline from the 2001 level. Expenditure on mineral exploration (excluding petroleum) in the NT increased to a record level in December 2008, continuing an upward trend that began in 2003 (ABS 8412.0). The value of engineering construction work done in the NT increased throughout 2008 (ABS 8762.0), after declining during 2007, to surpass 2006 levels. The NT Government spending on infrastructure programs has grown each year since 2001 and increased by 33 per cent in 2007-08 to \$711 million. The NT has, at least initially, been somewhat shielded from the global economic crisis and its impact on engineering demand.

### **Occupational supply**

Employers found there were very few engineering managers within the NT looking for work. They commented that existing engineering managers tend to be stable in their roles and that little movement between companies occurs. There was a reliance on interstate recruitment but employers had difficulty sourcing candidates who were willing to relocate to the NT. Candidates commonly sought a fly-in-fly-out option from other capital cities. Some employers considered international candidates but were reluctant to employ them due to the sponsorship requirements and the lack of Australian experience.

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

All employers contacted were able to fill advertised engineering manager vacancies. However, there were difficulties securing suitable applicants with negotiations for conditions and start times causing considerable delays and resulting in some vacancies being filled outside the survey period. Vacancies attracted multiple applicants, with applicants from overseas most common. Some employers commented that it had been difficult to attract people to the NT because it tends to be perceived as an unattractive location due to its small size and relative isolation. Unsuitable candidates were rejected as they lacked project management qualifications or experience and some employers sought local or Australian candidates only due to their demonstrated experience with Australian conditions.

Employers noted a lack of local and Australian applicants was a factor making their engineering manager vacancies difficult to fill. They did not consider wage pressures to be an issue and one employer stated that people were flexible enough to consider pay cuts if required due to the economic climate. Vacancies generally arose due to the previous occupant moving either within the same company or to the private sector for higher remuneration. Although staff turnover did occur, retention rates for engineering managers were considered to be good.

### **Labour market outlook**

The global economic crisis has affected demand for engineering manager roles across Australia in the mining and construction sectors freeing extra supply for vacancies that do arise. Less demand interstate for these roles creates more potential to attract suitable people to the NT. It is expected that when the global economy recovers the labour market rating for engineering manager roles will shift back to shortage.