

<b>Surveying and Cartographic Associate</b>		<b>South Australia (SA)</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-15	October 2006	
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Shortage	
<b>Comment</b>		

### **Occupational demand**

The 2001 ABS Census recorded around 160 employed surveying and cartographic associates in South Australia. Over 40 per cent are employed in the property and business services industry with a further 30 per cent employed in government administration and defence. Building and construction activity levels significantly impact on the demand for the occupation. 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, the value of building approvals – a useful indicator of forward demand and activity levels – declined for six consecutive months up to August 2006, and was 5.1 per cent lower compared to August 2005. There has been a substantial increase in engineering construction activity in the State over the past few years and the value of engineering work 'yet to be done' is at a historically high level.

Given growth in both engineering and building construction activity, demand for surveying and cartographic services has increased, yet employers contacted for this research reported no change in their workforce size over the past 12 months. In part, this was due to their inability to fill vacant positions when they arose.

### **Occupational supply**

Almost 80 per cent of surveying and cartographic associates have Certificate III level qualifications or higher. Around 40 per cent have diplomas or advanced diplomas and a further 10 per cent have degrees. TAFE SA offers a Diploma and Advanced Diploma in Spatial Information Services and graduates may be eligible for Associate Membership with the Institution of Engineering and Mining Surveyors (Australia). TAFE student statistics recorded 13 commencements in 2005 and 20 in 2006, with 10 completions in 2005. Although these data only cover the past two years, they suggest there has been an increase in training levels which would translate in additional supply to the occupation in the next year or so. Occupational supply to this occupation from net migration is insignificant.

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

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for surveying and cartographic associates showed that most vacancies remained unfilled after six weeks of advertising. These results were consistent with employer comments regarding the difficulties they experienced in recruiting for this occupation. Of the total applicants, only a small percentage were deemed by employers to be suitable and the ratio of suitable applicants per vacancy was 0.3. The main reasons given by employers for rejecting unsuitable applicants were lack of experience and relevant qualifications. Employers generally report no difficulties in recruiting graduates and appear to be pursuing this option in response to the tight labour market.

### **Labour market outlook**

The level of engineering construction activity is likely to increase over the next few years due to a number of large projects including the possible expansion of the Olympic Dam mine and the Air Warfare Destroyers project. The Housing Industry Association has forecast a 15 per cent increase in the value of engineering construction 'work done' in South Australia for 2006-07. As a consequence, demand for surveying and cartographic associates is expected to continue to grow and current shortages are likely to persist.