

Quality Assurance Manager	New South Wales (NSW)
ASCO Code: 2294-15	June 2007
Labour market rating	Recruitment difficulty
Comment: <i>There are recruitment difficulties for positions requiring experience in quality management and in-depth knowledge of particular industries and processes.</i>	

Occupational demand

Underlying demand for quality assurance has increased over the past decade due to the growth in regulatory requirements stipulating quality standards in various industries and the greater international acceptance of common standards for documenting processes and quality control systems (for example, the ISO 9000 series standards). The translation of this underlying demand to effective demand for quality assurance managers, however, depends on the decisions of individual enterprises and organisations to assign the task of overall quality management to a dedicated individual or team of quality managers, or to allocate the function to other positions (for example, the production manager of a small manufacturing enterprise) or to decentralise the responsibility. Census data show that the number of quality assurance managers employed in NSW fell from about 3600 in 1996 to about 3200 in 2001. There are no more recent and reliable data on employment of quality assurance managers.

Occupational supply

Quality assurance managers usually have relevant technical qualifications (for example, in food technology for the food manufacturing industry) or expertise in a particular product, service or administrative process along with experience in quality management. There are no university degrees or post-graduate courses in general quality management in NSW. However, there are many courses run by universities, TAFE and private providers which cover quality assurance in particular industries including specific quality programmes such as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

Separate data on immigration of quality assurance managers are not available.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A DEEWR survey of employers who had recently advertised for quality assurance managers was conducted for this report. The survey found that 50 per cent of vacancies were filled within six weeks of advertising. Unfilled vacancies were scattered across a wide range of industries and specialisations including health care, construction, manufacturing and the management of specific public sector programmes and processes. Employers generally were not seeking applicants with a broad knowledge of quality management which could be applied in a specific job context but rather persons with a technical background in their own industry (for example the manufacture of specialised medical equipment) and experience in quality management. No clear pattern emerged regarding industries or geographic locations where positions were especially difficult to fill and the labour market would be best characterised as a collection of recruitment difficulties for positions requiring specific industry knowledge rather than a shortage of professionals with broad training in quality management skills.

Labour market outlook

The long-term trend towards the development of regulatory or voluntary quality control systems, along with continued solid growth in the NSW economy, should lead to firm demand for quality assurance managers over the short term. Recruitment difficulties are likely to remain for quality assurance professionals with expertise in a range of specific industry sectors and management systems.