

Engineering Manager		South Australia
ASCO Code: 1332-11	March 2009	
Labour market rating	No Shortage	
Comment		

Occupational demand

More than forty per cent of engineering managers are employed in the manufacturing industry. A further twenty six per cent work in the business services sector. Demand for engineering managers is largely dependent on the level of manufacturing activity, although other sectors such as construction, mining and energy also contribute to overall demand. A monthly survey undertaken by the Engineering Employers Association of South Australia shows a steady decline in SA manufacturing activity from mid-2008 onwards. Media reports indicate a significant number of manufacturing jobs have been shed in the past year, especially in the automotive manufacturing and printing industries. Demand for engineering managers to work on specific mining and water treatment/supply projects has created a small number of new positions in SA, although overall demand conditions in the mining industry have declined in response to slowing global demand for commodities. DEEWR's Skilled Vacancy Index data show that newspaper vacancies for engineering managers were relatively stable over the twelve months to February 2009.

Occupational supply

Employer requirements vary in terms of the qualifications and experience needed for specific roles. As such, there are no mandatory qualifications for this occupation. ABS 2006 Census data show that around fifty five per cent of engineering managers hold a bachelor degree, nineteen per cent have diploma-level qualifications, and almost twenty per cent have a qualification equivalent to an AQF Certificate III or IV. Given the diverse means of entry into the occupation, estimates of supply are not available. Supply to the occupation from net overseas immigration numbered 59 in 2007-08, compared to 35 in 2006-07.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

A survey of employers who had recently advertised for engineering managers showed that 83 per cent of vacancies were filled within six weeks, compared to 60 per cent in 2008. On average, there were approximately 19 applicants per vacancy, more than double the number twelve months earlier. However, the number of suitable applicants per vacancy declined from 2 to 1.6 over the same period, largely due to the highly specialised skill sets required by those employers included in the survey. Nonetheless, there was a noticeable improvement in the percentage of successful recruitment outcomes compared to a year ago, and a shortage of engineering managers was not apparent. Employers and recruitment agencies contacted for this report indicated that more than half of the vacancies advertised in recent months were new positions, the majority related to upcoming water treatment and supply projects in various parts of Australia. At the same time, there was evidence that some employers had deferred recruitment decisions due to the economic downturn. Overall, a high proportion of recently advertised vacancies for engineering managers were filled without difficulty and the occupation is not regarded as being in shortage at this time.

Labour market outlook

Demand for engineering managers is likely to be weak over the short-term given the unfavourable outlook for industries which are major employers, especially manufacturing, non-residential construction and mining. A shortage of engineering managers is therefore not expected to emerge over the next twelve months.