

Production Manager (Mining)		Victoria
ANZSCO Code: 1335-13	February 2009	
Labour market rating:	Recruitment Difficulty	
Comment: Difficulties were experienced recruiting quarry managers, particularly in regional areas.		

Occupational demand

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 census data indicate that in Victoria, the labour market for mining production managers is small with 367 people employed in this occupation. Most are employed in the construction material mining industry (nearly 30 per cent) and the cement, lime, plaster and concrete product manufacturing industry (16 per cent); therefore most of the demand for this occupation in Victoria comes from the building sector. The global recession is expected to result in a downturn in construction activity in 2009 and 2010. ABS labour force data for Victoria suggest that over the year to November 2008 quarter, the number of people employed in these industries fell by 60 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. In contrast, employment levels in the metal ore mining industry, primarily gold ore and mineral sand mining in Victoria, increased by 60 per cent. This is due in part to increased investment in exploration in gold (up by 26 per cent) and mineral sands which has more than tripled since the September 2007 quarter, according to ABS data from September 2008. The Extractive Industries Development Act 1995 (EIDA) has been repealed and regulation of this industry will merge into the Mineral Resources (Sustainability Development) Act 1990 (MRSDA) effective from 1st January 2010.

Occupational supply

While entry to this profession is usually gained by completing a bachelor degree in mining engineering and gaining relevant work experience in a production environment, ABS 2006 census data suggest less than a quarter of people working as production managers in the Victorian mining industry hold a bachelor degree or higher qualification and 35 per cent hold a certificate III/IV or advanced/diploma. Industry contacts suggested people from a related technical or trade background can be suitable candidates, provided that they have substantial relevant work experience in the industry. There are no separate data on net immigration of mining production managers to Victoria from overseas.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

Advertised vacancies were limited, so a number of employers were cold canvassed for comment. From the small number of employers who had recruited production managers in the previous six months, all vacancies were filled, with an average of 1 suitable applicant per vacancy. Most positions were filled internally while the remainder were filled with candidates from overseas. Despite the fill rate, all contacts from the extractive industries believed there was a shortage of quarry managers as the recruitment process was quite protracted and there were few applicants - particularly for positions in regional areas. A small number of employers in the gold industry indicated they had filled their vacancies reasonably easily as the contraction of the mining industries in the resource rich states had increased supply in Victoria. Some of these contacts however, believed this disguised a real shortage of skilled and experienced candidates. Generally, employers seeking managers for quarries required extensive practical knowledge and experience rather than a degree. This was particularly true for smaller quarries (less than ten staff), although for larger quarries, an engineering degree or one related to business planning, would be looked upon favourably. Some employers from this industry expressed concerns the merging of legislation for the mining and extractive industries may mean quarry managers will require higher levels of education. However other industry sources indicated that the merge was more of an administrative change and that employment was unlikely to be affected.

Labour market outlook

Recruitment difficulties for production managers in the extractive industries are expected to persist over the next six months.