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| Production Manager (Mining) | | Queensland |
| ANZSCO Code: 1335-13 | May 2009 | |
| Labour market rating | Shortage | |
| Comment: | | |

Occupational demand

Mining production managers plan, administer and review the production activities of mining operations to optimise resource use, minimise costs and maintain quality standards. Demand for this profession depends on the scale of demand for the State's mineral resources and subsequent investment to satisfy that demand. Data from the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics (ABARE) indicate that despite the recent global economic downturn and a moderate decline in the number of new mineral resource projects commencing in Queensland, capital investment in advanced minerals and energy projects continues to expand. Indeed, as at May 2009, Queensland accounted for \$12 billion of capital expenditure on advanced mineral resource projects.

Occupational supply

Formal entry to this profession can be gained by completing a four-year Bachelor of Engineering (Mining) although a number of mining related postgraduate courses are available for holders of related science and engineering degrees. Employers are also willing to accept applicants with trade/technical qualifications and relevant experience in production management, which makes it difficult to accurately quantify new supply to this occupation. Data from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations show that the annual number of commencements in university mining programs has averaged approximately 42 since 2003. The number of graduates completing their studies and entering the labour market each year over the same time has averaged approximately 37. Although the exact number of mining production managers are not specified, arrivals and departures data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship suggest that overseas migration contributed 73 self-identified production managers (mining and manufacturing) to supply for this profession in Queensland during 2007-08.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

Despite employers repeatedly using a variety of methods such as newspaper and internet advertising, word of mouth and poaching to secure suitable applicants, no vacancies for mining production managers were filled within six weeks of advertising. In many cases, employers did not regard tertiary qualifications as an essential criterion, but they all insisted that applicants have mining production management experience. Employers therefore considered 80 per cent of candidates as unsuitable because they did not have relevant experience (open-cut versus underground mining) or they had insufficient experience. Contacts reported receiving a strong response from overseas but they did not give these candidates serious consideration because of the time and costs associated with the immigration process and because most of the applicants lacked knowledge of Australian safety standards and regulations. The majority of interstate candidates were reported to have withdrawn their applications upon realising the geographic location of the work. A minority of businesses from this study reported that the recent economic slowdown led them to defer recruitment exercises for several months in the first quarter of they year, but the vast majority stated the number of vacancies for this profession continues to strengthen, albeit at a slightly slower pace than the last few years.

Labour market outlook

According to the Department of Mines and Energy, mining activity in Queensland continues to perform at high levels and coal exports are expected to strengthen despite the global recession. It is therefore likely that demand for mine production managers will also strengthen. Without significant improvements to supply through either education or immigration, the current state-wide shortage of mine production managers is likely to continue over 2009.