

<b>Architectural Associate</b>	<b>Victoria</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 3121-13	March 2007
<b>Labour market rating</b>	Metropolitan Recruitment Difficulties
<b>Comment:</b> <i>Recruitment difficulties restricted to vacancies requiring CAD experience and Australian industry knowledge.</i>	

### **Occupational demand**

Demand for architectural associates, who include architectural draftspersons and a building drafting officers, is primarily determined by the business levels within the overall economy and more specifically by the level of construction activity. Population growth and rising interest rates impact upon the level of investment being made into construction. Building activity in Victoria has decreased over the last two years. The value of new residential building fell by around seven per cent during this period and the number of housing commencements fell by approximately 13 per cent between 2004 and 2006. However, construction activity may improve in the short to medium term, indicated by a rise in dwelling units approved during the last seven months. DEWR Skilled Vacancies Index data suggests demand for architectural associates fell between 2000 and 2006 and although vacancies have remained rather stable during 2006, they are slightly higher than the level recorded in 2005.

### **Occupational supply**

DEWR Job Outlook educational profile data suggests over 30 per cent of employed building, architectural and surveying associates have Certificate III or Certificate IV qualifications. Department of Education, Science and Training enrolment data suggests the number of persons who enrolled in an architecture and building diploma (AQF) in Australia decreased by over 50 per cent from 2004 to 2005. The supply of building, architectural and surveying associates from net immigration has decreased, down by around 60 per cent from last year. Net immigration to Victoria during 2005-2006 was around 10 building, architectural and surveying associates.

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

The Survey of Employers who Recently Advertised of metropolitan employers found approximately 62 per cent of vacancies were filled. The average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was 1.15, compared to an average of 23 unsuitable applicants for each vacancy. The main reasons applicants were considered by employers to be unsuitable was lack of direct experience with Australian building codes along with previous experience working with CAD. Unsatisfactory communication skills were a significant reason why applicants were deemed unsuitable. Many of the employers surveyed commented they were seeking strong communication skills to deal with clients, not just technical skills. Both metropolitan and regional employers stated that the occupational turnover of architectural associates was low amongst existing employees. Employers in regional Victoria were cold canvassed to determine their perceptions if they were to advertise architectural associate vacancies. Regional employers felt it would be difficult to fill vacancies due to a small pool of skilled professionals in regional Victoria. Regional employers stated being both in a regional location and a small business made it difficult to be competitive employers and fill vacancies. The need to offer competitive remuneration to attract and retain suitably skilled architectural associates was a comment of both metropolitan and regional employers.

### **Labour market outlook**

The relatively balanced labour market for architectural associates in Victoria is expected to continue over the next six months, with recruitment difficulties persisting in metropolitan areas for vacancies requiring CAD experience and Australian industry knowledge.