

JOBS OUTLOOK STILL POSITIVE DESPITE INCREASE IN RATE

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“Optimism” is still the key word on the jobs front according to Matthew Tukaki, Head of Drake International. “Even with the increase in the unemployment rate to 5.8%, companies are increasingly positive in their outlook for 2010. Many are now at, or below, the minimum staffing level required to function effectively and recognise the need to start hiring if they are going to take advantage of the recovery.”

Industries that are most active in the employment market for new staff, from a national perspective include finance, infrastructure and construction, procurement, and IT. From a state perspective, Matthew Tukaki provides the following insights:

- “Our Cairns branch is seeing slight increases in demand for hospitality and tourism staff, which is being reflected across our Queensland branch network. Tourism to the state has decreased by 7% over the year, however we’re confident that this trend is reversing based on jobs activity we’re witnessing”
- “Demand in jobs in Agribusiness in South Australia has increased in line with good crop results and we expect this will provide flow on employment effects to other sectors, particularly in regional areas”
- “New South Wales is experiencing a lag in jobs growth compared to other states however we believe this will improve into 2010, particularly given the continuing improvement in the finance sector.”
- “The Mining and Resources sector is once again driving the WA jobs market with strong demand starting to come through as sidelined project come back online and new projects kick-off”

As companies become active in the labour market again, Matthew Tukaki extols them to be cognisant of the sacrifices made by their existing staff during the past 18 months, “Companies also need to be putting the interests of their existing employees first, before going out and hiring new talent – otherwise issues related to retention, productivity and culture will occur. Many staff are on reduced hours, have taken reduced pay or had a pay freeze and companies who go out and pay for top talent without firstly recognising and rewarding existing staff are going to have to deal with some very disgruntled employees.”

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