

## **REGIONAL SALARY SURVEY SNAPSHOT May 2009 – May 2010**

4,000 local and 10,000 Sydney salaries assessed

### **What is the Snapshot?**

In March 2009 Forsythes Recruitment launched an independent online salary survey which for the first time allowed people from the Newcastle, Hunter Valley and Central Coast regions to anonymously exchange and compare salary information.

In the last 12 months the survey has been viewed by over 6,000 people to assess and benchmark local remuneration data.

Every six months (May and November) we capture, analyse and summarise the live data to report on evolving trends. This 'Snapshot' is then forwarded to our clients and the media. For more detail on specific employment categories or regions please visit [www.huntersalaries.com.au](http://www.huntersalaries.com.au) or [www.centralcoastsalaries.com.au](http://www.centralcoastsalaries.com.au). The survey and resulting statistics are live, readily accessible and provided as a complimentary service to the local business community.

Please contribute! More contributions = Better data for you.

### **Average local salary increases best for sales and trades**

**Newcastle:** The average salary has increased over the last 12 months by 2%. Notable exceptions are sales (up 6%) and trades (up 7%).

**Central Coast:** The average salary has not changed significantly in the last 12 months. However, administration, executive and accounting salaries in this region have increased by between 2% and 5%. Salaries for salespeople are up 7%.

**Hunter Valley:** The average salary has increased over the period by 5% and most professions in this region averaged this sort of increase. Notable exceptions are trades (up 8%).

**Sydney:** The average salary has increased over the period by 5% and most professions in this region averaged this sort of increase. Notable exceptions are trades (up 8%), engineering (up 8%) and accounting (up 7%).

**National:** By comparison, the average increase reported by the Australian Institute of Management 2010 Salary Survey was approximately 4%. This excludes the 25% (approx) of companies that reported no pay increases.

### **Engineering and trades paid well locally but Sydney still strong**

Average salaries in the Hunter Valley are higher across all categories except for IT, executive, building/construction and administration where Sydney salaries are higher.

Consistent with the November 2009 Snapshot, average engineering and trades salaries in Sydney are equal to, or sometimes lower than, average salaries in the Hunter Valley and Newcastle.

## **Large employers leading the way on average salaries**

Generally the data shows the larger the business the higher the average salary. This trend holds regardless of education level and location. The trend is particularly prevalent in building/construction, trades and accounting salaries. It is less prevalent in customer service or sales salaries.

Average salaries for large businesses (500+ employees) consistently increase with employee experience. However, average salaries for small (1-49 employees) and medium businesses (50 – 499 employees) peak, and then decrease, for staff with more than 30 years of experience.

## **Education and experience influence salary peak but location a factor**

Average salaries are more likely to consistently increase for employees with an undergraduate (or higher) degree of education. In the absence of these qualifications, average salaries for employees peak, and then decrease, for staff with more than 30 years of experience.

Consistent with November's Snapshot, more experienced employees are being rewarded higher salaries in the Hunter Valley, Newcastle and Central Coast regions. However, Sydney's earning peak remains at 20-30 years of experience and so appears less supportive of an ageing workforce.

## **Returning confidence and an increased openness to change jobs**

In May 2009 respondents were, on average, prepared to change jobs for a 25% increase in salary. In May 2010 respondents are, on average, prepared to change jobs for an 18% increase in salary. Such a change could be reflective of an increased openness to change jobs, driven by an increased level of confidence in the regional economy.

The most notable contributors to this trend are employees in the construction and sales professions.

Across the board, men command more of a salary increase to leave their current jobs than women.

## **Gender gap improving and influenced by education level**

Consistent with the November Snapshot, the gender salary gap is more significant in small companies than it is in medium and large companies.

The average gender salary gap decreases as education level increases.

In the last 12 months the average gender salary gap decreased in Newcastle, Sydney and on the Central Coast.

## **Flexible working hours versus company paid training**

Flexible working hours are less common, as an employee benefit, than this time last year and, consistent with the November Snapshot, flexible hours appears to have only a small impact on staff retention.

In contrast, mobile phone and/or phone allowance is increasing. Company paid training continues to be a benefit with the most impact on staff retention.