

HRhub Resonate Report
May 2021

Council Recruitment 2021 – Trends and Insights



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Foreword



I believe that a career at any level of public service in Australia can be both personally fulfilling and incredibly beneficial to our country. Local government (Council) has the enviable responsibility of building and enhancing the communities in which we all live. It takes more than skills and wanting a job to be suitable to work in council – it can take a level of extra motivation to contribute to others that many regard as a special sacrifice. These motivational traits drive people to work each day to see their infrastructure or services visions for their community's advancement through to fruition for the good of all.

Organisations excel when teamwork triumphs over mediocrity. Effective teamwork occurs when leaders step up and team members put the good of the team above their personal recognition and rewards. We know that conscientious leaders take responsibility way beyond what their job description calls for and we must continue to celebrate this in the public sector.

The challenges of dealing with the pandemic in 2020 landed without warning in the laps of all Australian councils and as one, they rose to the challenge and formed new teams to protect their communities. New work relationships and practices were invented virtually overnight so that the job got done without jeopardising the normal operation of the councils. I congratulate and celebrate all these achievements.

Identifying and developing leaders while building a culture of teamwork starts with effective recruitment practices. I'm very pleased to be associated with this HRhub project targeted at helping you improve your recruitment outcomes and commend their work to you.

Thank you for your community service.

David Thodey AO
Global Business Leader
Chairman of JobsNSW, CSIRO and Xero
Previous CEO of Telstra and IBM Aus/NZ
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Introduction

The Australian Council recruitment sector has endured unprecedented stress & evolution over the past three years. Not only due to the 2019 summer bushfires or the 2020 pandemic response, there have been numerous other factors coming together to make council recruitment even tougher.

- A national skills shortage in a few key areas – Engineering, Planning & Governance
- An ageing workforce without clear succession plans.
- Increased staff mobility driving up voluntary resignations especially in larger councils.
- Increased expectations on councils to do more with less at every level.
- Having to adapt to rapidly evolving technology solutions (HRIS, e-recruitment & social media).

HRhub was formed in 2017 as a simple collaboration on matters of mutual interest by three complimentary providers in the council recruitment space.

CouncilJobs – Australia’s oldest provider of targeted recruitment advertising just for councils.

Blackadder Associates – Experienced local government people delivering targeted recruitment and consultancy services.

Leonards Advertising – Australia’s longest serving provider of advertising solutions for councils.

Under the HRhub banner, fourteen one-day workshops have so far been conducted for over 100 Recruitment specialists from regional & remote councils to help boost their recruitment skills & outcomes. So, we have proven we can work together to great effect.

The idea for this project came up late in 2020 as we discussed how different council recruiters were coping with the challenges they faced. We felt that if we pooled our resources, we could share some worthy insights that might help many involved in council recruitment. The starting point for this project was a ‘temperature check’ of the opinions of you our customers to see how you are coping with all this change, so we engaged Taverner Research (formerly Jetty Research) to conduct a short survey of Council HR leaders & the findings of that survey lead this report.

Right from the start, we committed to give this information equally & freely to all councils whether they were existing customers of any of us or not.

We hope you find this report a valuable tool in your recruitment this year.

How to read this report

Short on time? Read the Executive Summary and Precise of each section on pages 8 to 11.

Looking for in depth information? Print and mark up the report as you read. As you read, take note of HRhub Signposts to **Trends**  and **Insights** 

Chris, Richard & Tony



Executive Summary

Summary of findings

1. Significant internal population movement is adding stress to Councils everywhere
 - There's an exodus underway from NSW/WA to Qld/Vic 
 - Mostly into Regional cities 
2. Council remuneration has had to grow significantly to attract and retain good candidates
 - Rural town Councils are reacting to the pressure by offering more money
3. Talent is short in a few critical areas across the country
 - Good engineers, town planners and executive leaders are hard to find 
4. Working for council is now much more attractive than it was a year ago 
 - due to improved perceptions of Job security, job stability and workplace flexibility, 
 - leading to an increased likelihood for councils to hire externally, 
 - however, there are issues with insufficient leadership skills and 
 - technology making it too easy for unsuitable candidates to apply 
5. External recruitment consultants are increasingly being utilised by councils for both executive leadership roles and hard-to-fill professional positions 
 - due to the extra time and the wide candidate networks required for these positions 
 - as well as the independence and task sensitivity required by councils. 
6. Recruitment advertising must continue to evolve rapidly against the backdrop of seismic shifts in traditional media and increased digitalisation of everything from talent networks, candidate communications and Social media to recruitment processes, so as to better balance quantity vs quality. 
7. Council recruiters must increasingly act as brand managers for councils to continually drive more effective targeted communications with potential candidates as smarter advertising design and processes significantly improve response rates. 

Report Precipis:

- 1. HR Leaders Survey 2021
by Taverner Research**
- 2. Recruitment market dynamics 2021
by CouncilJobs**
- 3. Outsourced executive recruitment
by Blackadder**
- 4. Advertising and communications
by Leonards**



Precis: HR leaders survey 2021 by Taverner Research



Survey Key Findings

Among the survey's key findings:

- Engineers were far and away the skillset in shortest supply – nominated by 53% of respondents, and 61% of rural councils. This shortage was most acute in NSW, Queensland and SA (mentioned by two-thirds-plus of respondents in each of those states.). Likewise, two-thirds of smaller councils (100-200 FTEs) noted a shortage of engineering staff.
- While town planning was the second most noted area of shortage, this again varied from 59% of metropolitan councils down to 25% of rural LGAs. In this case larger councils appeared to be worst affected, with 62% of those employing more than 500 FTEs claiming a shortage.
- Areas of lowest skill shortage included IT, compliance, human resources, and internal audit – all 10% or lower.
- One-third of Councils also had other shortage areas. Of these, multiple mentions were made of asset and property managers, labourers, plant operators, child care nurses, and pool staff/lifeguards.
- Two-thirds of respondents agreed that working for Council has become more attractive than it was 12 months ago (20% “a lot” and 48% “a little”). Larger councils were most likely to agree (at 92% “yes”).
- There were three dominant themes behind this perceived trend. Number one (by a long margin) was increased job security, with job stability and greater flexibility also popular choices. A number of respondents also believed councils are seen as more dynamic organisations than in the past.
- Only one in five respondents agreed that “good applicants are prepared to work for less than they were 12 months ago”.
- In a series of ten statements, agreement was strongest with “We are now more prepared to recruit from outside local government for technical and senior roles” (68% agree), “Many technically competent applicants lack the necessary leadership skills” (66%), and “new technology makes it too easy for unsuitable applicants to apply” (56%).
- Agreement was lowest with regard to “Short-listed applicants generally want more workplace flexibility than we are prepared to offer” (25% agreement), “Perceived Council culture or reputation deters external applicants from applying here” (30%) and “Many otherwise suitable applicants do not fit our culture” (34%).
- 9% also agreed it was true across the board that “We now have little difficulty attracting suitable applicants for our vacancies” – with 60% saying it was true “for some roles”.

Precis:

Recruitment market dynamics by CouncilJobs



Trends and Insights

Population movement is exerting heavy pressure on Council budgets

- It's an exodus from NSW/WA to Qld/Vic...

Population

While the Australian population grew by 339,000 (1.3%) in the year, the growth was nearly all in Qld (+382,000 or +6.2%) and Vic (+143,000 or +2.3%), offsetting sharp losses in NSW (-148,000 -1.9%), WA (-41,000 or -1.6%), SA (-3,000 or -0.2%) and NT (-1,000 or -0.4%).

Recruitment

Nationally, while council recruitment aligned with Australian Population growth (+1600 or +1.1%), the picture at the state level was far less consistent, with NSW, WA and SA expanding their work force and Vic, Tas and NT shrinking.

Remuneration

Council Employee remuneration grew in every state and every segment and overall, by 4.3% (\$608m), reflecting the challenges of recruiting suitably skilled and motivated candidates.

- And nearly all to Regional cities

Regional cities are exploding with people leaving Capital cities, Rural towns, and Remote districts. Regional cities gained 93% (315,680) of the country's entire population growth (+1.3%) in just one year. Regional City Councils

workforce (+1.3%) and Remuneration (+5.2%) grew fastest in response. Adding to their challenges, Regional cities also had the second highest rate of attrition (10.6%). 

- Rural towns are being squeezed (out)

With the highest level of population loss (-1.7%), lowest level of headcount (FTE) growth (0.2%), highest level of staff attrition (16.2%), Rural towns' only option seems to be to pay the people who remain more, so consequently they have the highest level of Remuneration growth (6%). 

Critical Skills shortages exist nationally

- Engineering still has the highest gap between demand and supply, and this is felt across all states but most of all in NSW
- Gaps also exist in most states in specialist council roles of
 - Governance,
 - Finance and
 - Planning

Smarter advertising design and processes significantly improve response rates

- Design ads to be first seen on mobile devices
- Consider key Ad copy inclusions for job level and type
- Automate recruitment processes to speed up communication with best candidates



Precis:

Outsourced executive recruitment by Blackadder

Key Findings

1. Expert external recruiters enhance Council's reputation and relieve overwhelmed HR teams

We are finding more and more Councils are looking for external recruitment assistance – especially for executive roles or professional positions. We believe this is due to a few factors; very busy HR teams and the lack of internal specialist executive recruitment resources, the opportunity for Council's reputation to be enhanced by a professional recruiter through excellent recruitment processes, the personal service a professional recruiter can provide, and the extensive database of potential candidates a recruiter has available.

2. Good candidates are now more prepared to move

We are seeing a definite move away from the city to the regional and rural areas. This started pre-Covid and has continued to escalate. This is resulting in more candidates for roles in regional and rural locations. As an extension of this, many applicants from the private sector are seeing local government as a profession of choice.

3. Effective advertising is critical and needs to be tailored for leadership positions

One of the most important, and often overlooked, areas of recruitment is advertising. Communicating the right message in an advertisement is so important, as is position title, and the advertisement should immediately grab the attention of a prospective candidate.

4. Interview strategy is key, and connections between candidates and panel members is important

The objective of the interview should be to get behind the person presented in the application. Speaking personally to potential applicants, the use of pre-interview questions and scenario questions and the use of profiling tools are key steps. We are finding that a candidate getting a “connection” with panel members is becoming more and more important and often can be the point of difference between two similar candidates.

5. Thorough background checks have never been more important

Comprehensive checking of credentials is fundamentally important prior to confirmation of offer. Using a professional service to ensure qualifications and police checks, as a minimum, are undertaken should be standard practice for Councils.

6. Hiring for Leaders needs a specialist approach that caters to the culture of council

Almost without exception, particularly for management level positions but also for other roles, we are finding Councils looking for well-developed leadership skills and demonstrated achievements through the utilisation of those skills. This is critically important as we believe leadership is the major determinant of culture and if you get your culture right the people in that culture will continue to amaze you.

The right leaders are an organisations greatest asset. Unfortunately, for varying reasons, recruitment of those staff into a position is sometimes not given the priority it deserves.

Precis: Advertising and communications by Leonards



The Recruitment Evolution Story

The Rise of the Digital Notice Board

- The internet of things has paved the way for nearly all things from commodities to real estate to jobs to now be freely traded on notice boards. including jobs.
- What we have learned is that the Notice Board management capacity decreases with transaction complexity. For example while many people would buy a pair of jeans delivered on line however a real estate portal is just the start of the purchase journey that goes “off line” to a real estate agent.
- Specialist Human Resource software and offline intervention is needed to assess, interview, check, gather details and select to make it “all work”.

Evolutionary Breakthroughs and Challenges

The advent of the jobs board has started an evolutionary chain like the universes “big bang” where there are pluses and minuses:

- Becoming the market accepted job seekers brand/ Employers suffer brand loss.
- Providing high volumes of applications/challenge for recruitment administration.
- Recruitment providers provide targeted applicant information/ Jobs boards are not a recruitment management system and more information is needed (double work).
- Providing targeted emails to passively disrupt potential applicants/broad market passive recruitment disruption still mainly in mastheads.

Importance of Councils Owned Space

- Councils web site has become a major asset for recruitment and is often the most viewed page (by a significant margin).
- Council Positions Vacant page is a high demand site for job seekers within an LGA.
- Council web site is providing the greatest source of quality applicants.
- The high traffic and focused recruitment demand creates great opportunity to grow Council’s corporate brand with recruitment as a communications spearhead.

Emerging Recruitment Trends

Emergence of the jobs board video that is cheaply tailored for each job by utilizing:

- Reusable hero video templates being edited/spliced with
- Cheap phone-based video for each job.
- Birth of the low-cost jobs board video (circa \$500).
- Content achieving numerous Council communication goals.
- Profiled databases utilizing HRIS data to build high quality data base eligibility lists ready for messaging.

Report: Survey of Australian Council HR leaders – January 2021



TAVERNER
RESEARCH

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Introduction and methodology

Introduction

In late 2020, HRhub (a collaboration of CouncilJobs, Blackadder Associates and Leonards Advertising) commissioned Taverner Research to conduct a short online survey of Australian Council HR professionals.

The survey was designed to understand recruitment trends and challenges for Australian councils, and to provide useful strategic insights for council HR leaders. It will also provide baseline data for future benchmarking research,

The HRhub collaborators are all extensively experienced with the market for council recruitment & desired to see whether their theories on the current trends & challenges were correct.

Taverner Research - and its subsidiaries Jetty and IRIS Research - are market-leaders in local government research, and have worked on previous studies with HRhub partners. We were hence delighted to be invited to assist HRhub on this latest project.

Methodology

The survey questionnaire was designed collaboratively between HR Hub and Taverner Research, designed to achieve the project objectives while keeping average completion time below 10 minutes. See Appendix 1 for final questionnaire.

The survey was sent to 523 Councils in early December 2020, with a series of reminders sent through to completion deadline on February 1st 2021. In all 83 Councils took part in this inaugural survey, for a participation rate of 16%.

Random sampling error for a sample size of n=83 councils is +/- 9.9%. (This effectively means that if we were to conduct the same survey 20 times with different samples, results should be representative of all Councils to within +/- 9.9% in 19 of those 20 surveys.) Due to the relatively small sample size, caution should be taken in extrapolating results to all Australian councils.

Survey participants

There was a good spread of respondents by state, with one-third from NSW and one in five from Victoria. All states (and the NT) were represented. Above and below, Blue are Survey participants & green are all LGA's.

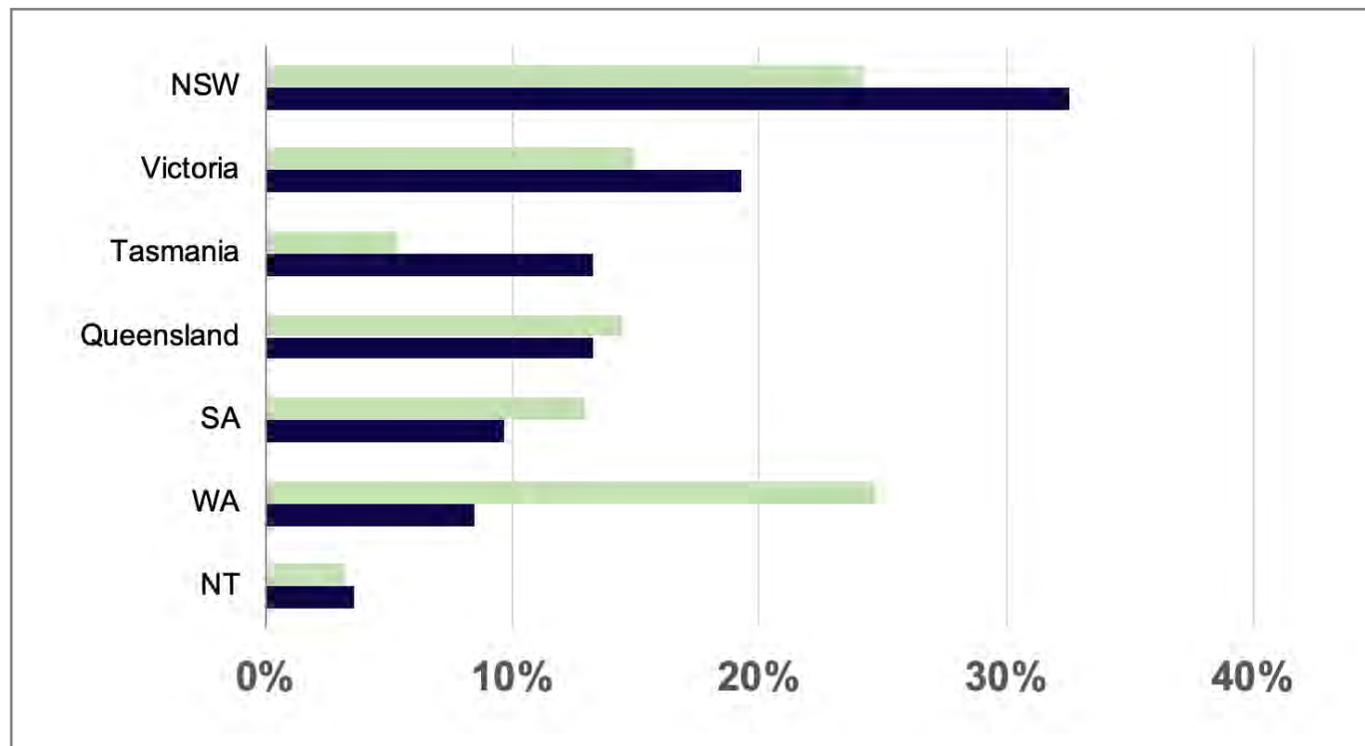


Figure 1: State of respondents

Survey participants

There was also a good spread by size of Council.

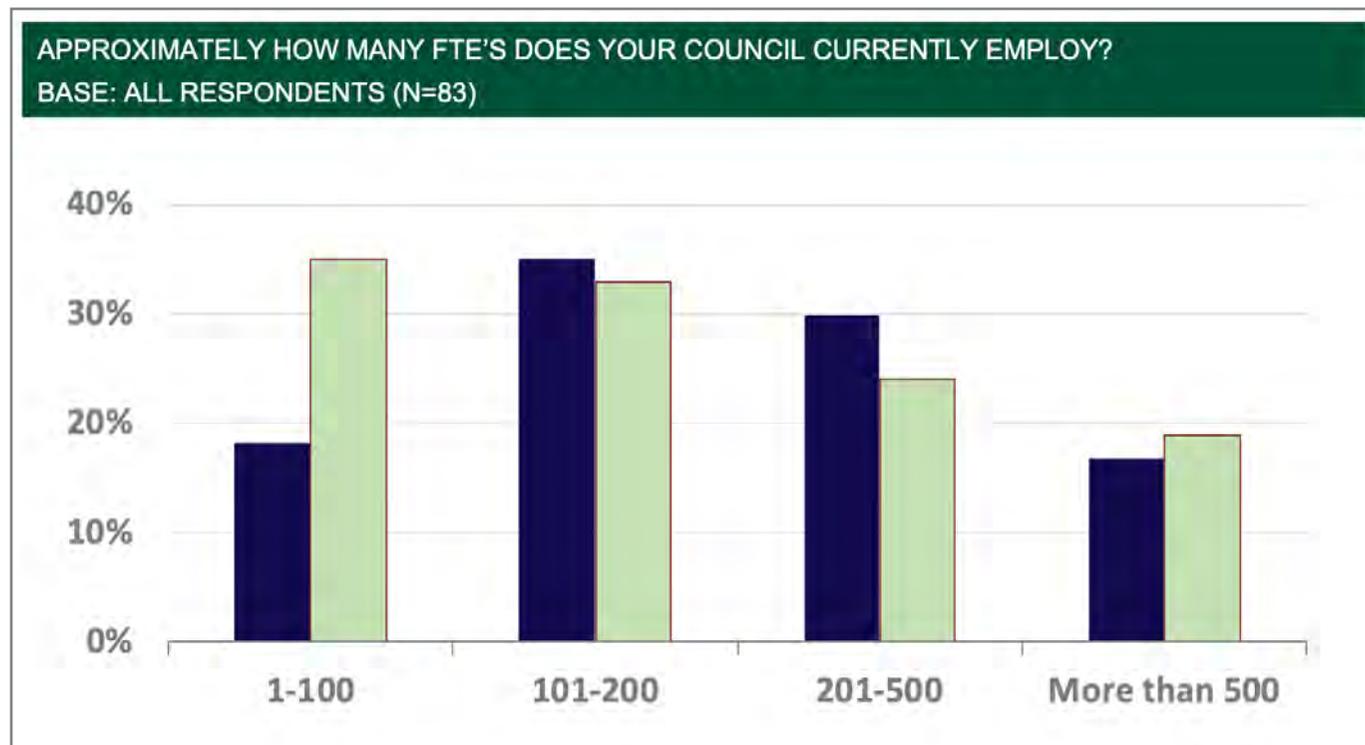


Figure 2: Size of Council (employees)

Survey participants

Just over half the Councils represented were rurally-based, with the remainder relatively evenly spread between metropolitan and regional city Councils.

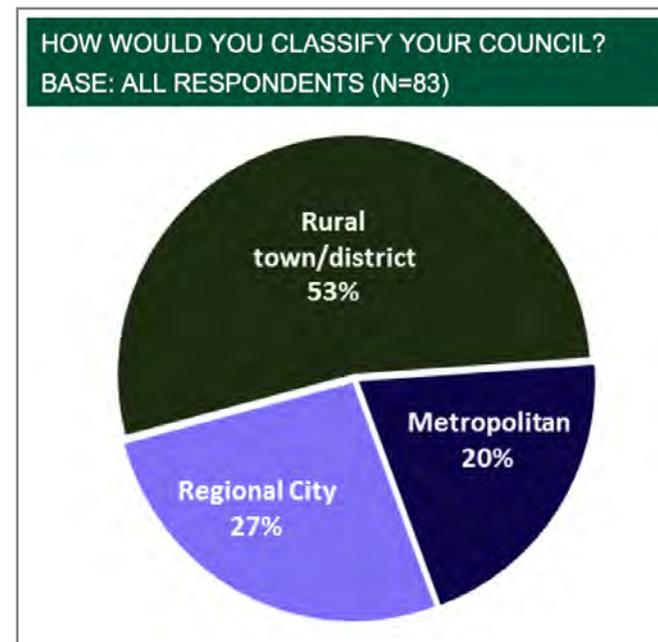


Figure 3: Type of Council

Research findings

The survey commenced with respondents asked to identify areas where they were currently experiencing skill shortages. The results are shown in Figure 4, below:

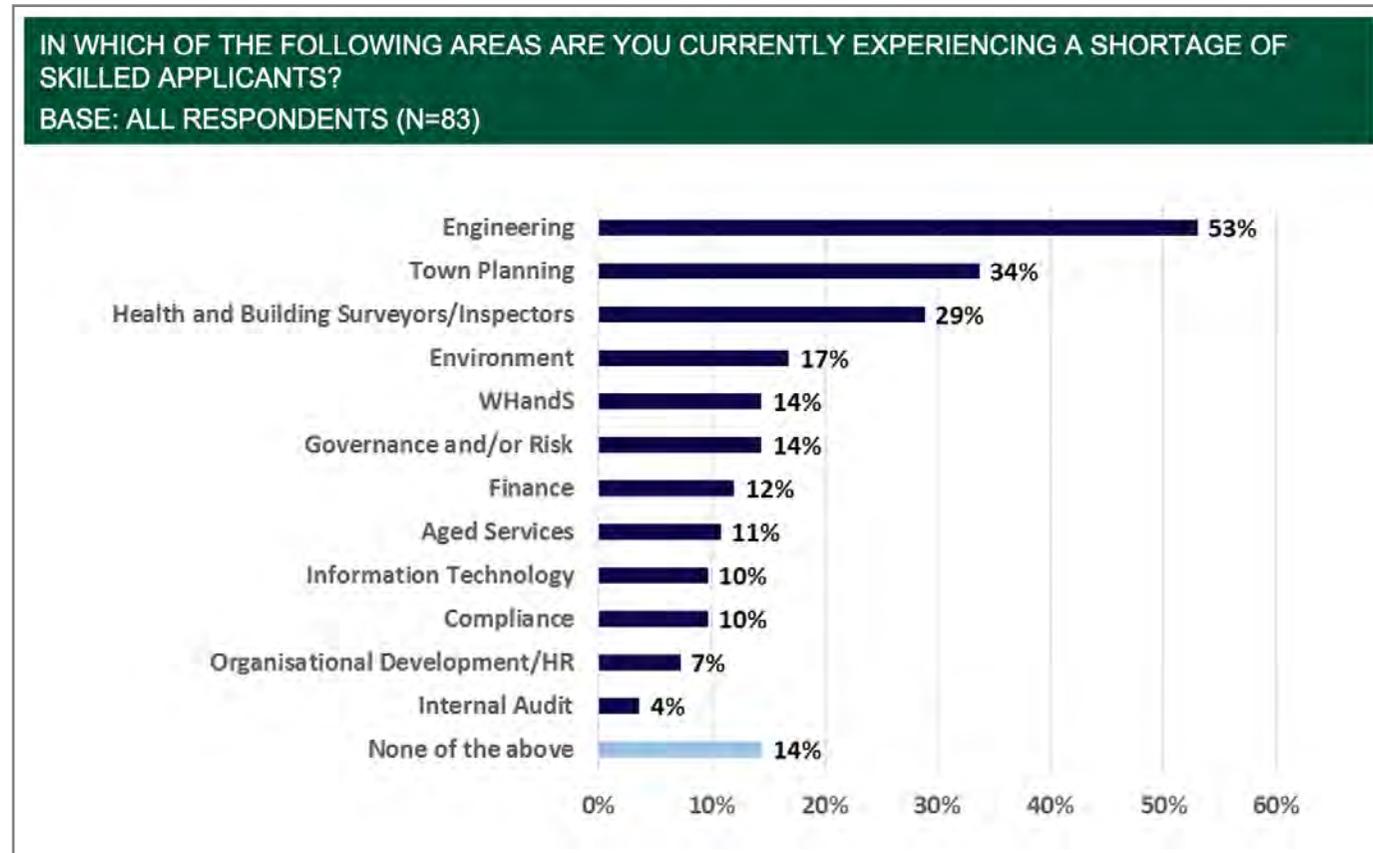


Figure 4: Summary of skill shortages

Research findings

Engineers were far and away the skillset in shortest supply – and this was even more pronounced in rural councils (at 61%). This shortage appeared particularly acute in NSW, Queensland and SA (mentioned by two-thirds-plus of respondents in each of those states.). Two-thirds of smaller councils (100-200 FTEs) noted a shortage of engineering staff.

While town planning was the second most noted area of shortage, this again varied from 59% of metropolitan councils down to 25% of rural LGAs. In this case larger councils appeared to be worst affected, with 62% of those employing more than 500 FTEs claiming a shortage.

The other skill to show a marked difference between urban and regional councils was environment: noted as a shortage by 47% of metro councils but only 11% of those in rural areas.

Areas of lowest skill shortage included IT, compliance, human resources, and internal audit – all 10% or lower.

One-third of Councils agreed they also had other shortage areas. Of these, multiple mentions were made of asset and property managers, labourers, plant operators, child care nurses, and pool staff/lifeguards.

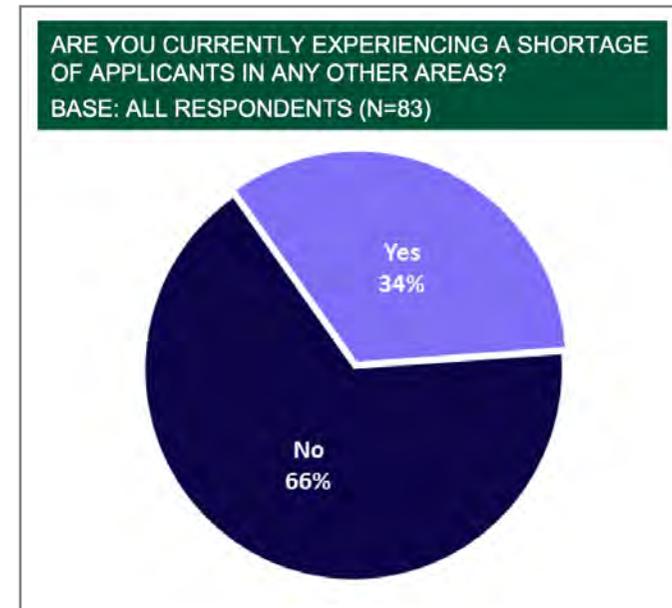


Figure 5: Other shortages?

Research findings

Two-thirds of respondents agreed that working for Council has become more attractive than it was 12 months ago (20% “a lot” and 48% “a little”). This was consistent across all states except WA (at 29%) and by type of Council. Larger councils were most likely to agree with this statement (at 92% “yes”).

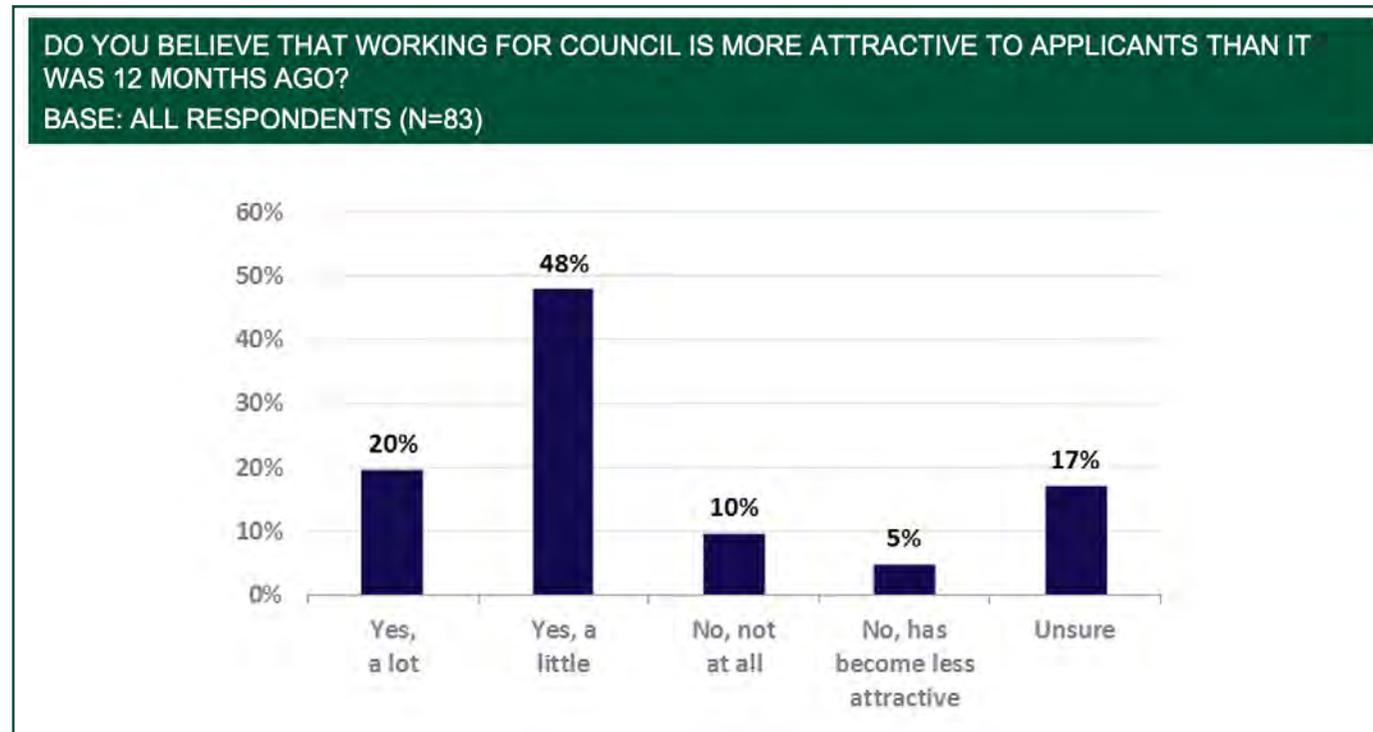


Figure 6: Attractiveness of working for Council

Research findings

There were three dominant themes behind this perceived trend. Number one (by a long margin) was increased job security:

- “I think there may be the perception of job security in the Local Government sector given the unsettling times faced globally in 2020.”
- “Secure employment through local government seems to be attractive in the COVID/post COVID world.”
- “Greater emphasis on security of council employment to private sector underlined during COVID-19 crisis.”

Job stability and greater flexibility were also popular choices :

- “We are a stable employer and continued to find work for even our casuals during the COVID 19 restrictions.”
- “All employees kept their positions during the 2020 year of COVID. Some employees were deployed to other areas of council but all remained gainfully employed.”
- “More flexible work environment. Increase in project work.”

A number of respondents also believed councils are seen as more dynamic organisations than in the past .

Only one in five respondents agreed that good applicants are prepared to work for less than they were 12 months ago. (However this included 40% of those based in Victoria, and 62% of Councils employing more than 500 FTEs.)

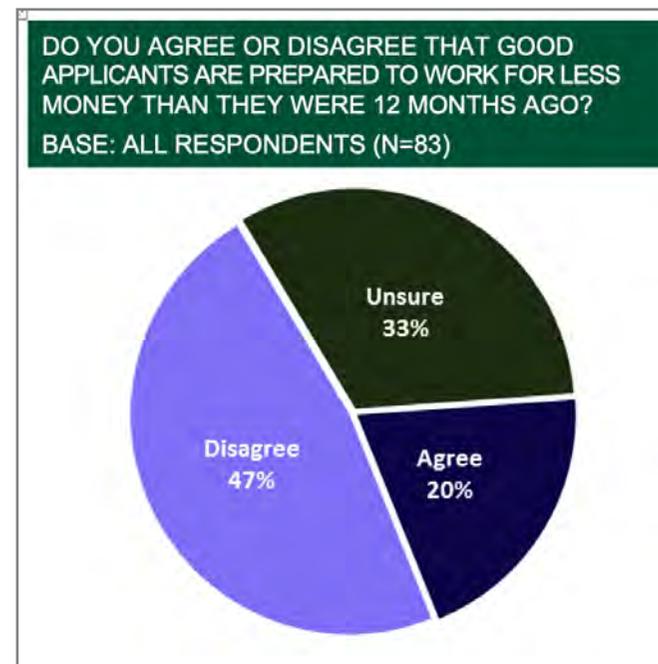


Figure 7: Changes in salary expectations

Research findings

Almost half of the managers agreeing that good applicants are prepared to work for less than they were 12 months ago believed this also applied to senior managerial roles. (However due to the small sample size for this question of n=16, results should be treated with extreme caution.)

Respondents were next asked to rank their level of agreement/disagreement with ten statements relating to applicants and employment trends. The results are shown in Figure 9, next page, with “strongly agree” in dark blue and “agree” in sky blue.

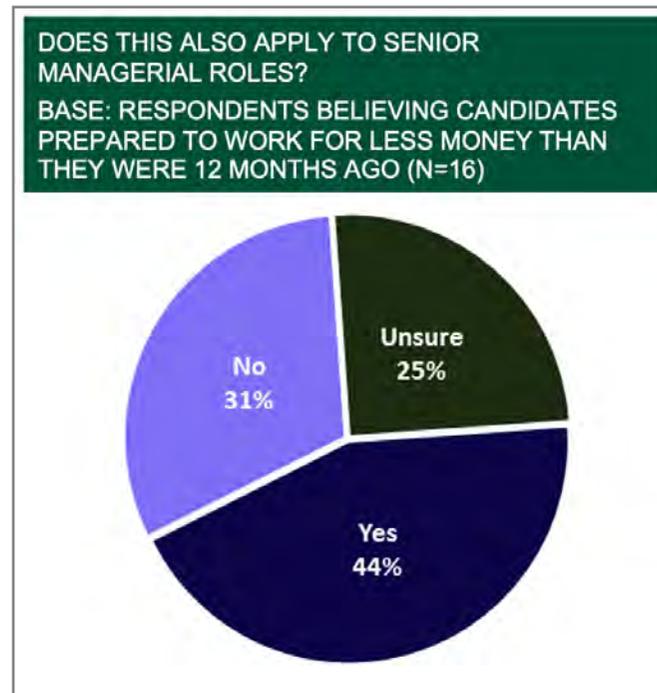


Figure 8: Changes in salary expectations for senior managers

Research findings

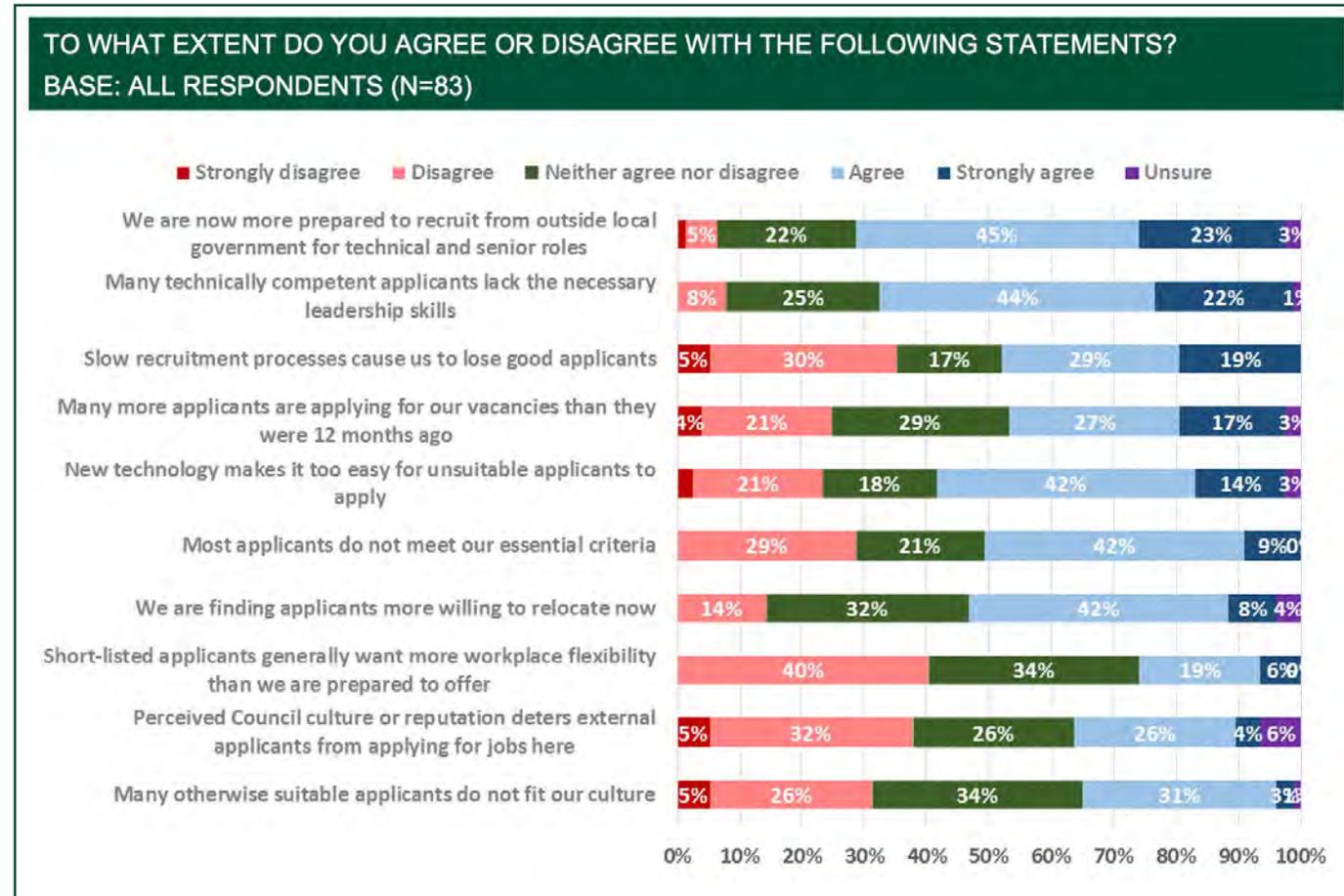


Figure 9: Agree/disagree statements

This indicates strongest agreement came with the statements “We are now more prepared to recruit from outside local government for technical and senior roles” (68% agree), “Many technically competent applicants lack the necessary leadership skills” (66%), and “new technology makes it too easy for unsuitable applicants to apply” (56%).

Research findings

Agreement was lowest with regard to the statements “Short-listed applicants generally want more workplace flexibility than we are prepared to offer” (25% agreement), “Perceived Council culture or reputation deters external applicants from applying here” (30%) and “Many otherwise suitable applicants do not fit our culture” (34%).

Across the board, results were generally consistent between location and type and size of Council, see Table 1, below.

Statement	Total	Q9 Where is your Council located?							Q11 Type of Council		
		NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	Metro	Regional City	Rural + Remote
Many otherwise suitable applicants do not fit our culture	3.00	3.08	3.07	2.78	3.13	3.00	3.00	2.33	3.13	3.00	2.95
Many technically competent applicants lack the necessary leadership skills	3.82	3.96	3.73	3.67	4.13	4.00	3.27	4.33	3.94	3.95	3.70
Many more applicants are applying for our vacancies than they were 12 months ago	3.33	3.54	3.86	3.44	3.13	2.20	2.90	2.67	3.88	3.24	3.16
Most applicants do not meet our essential criteria	3.31	3.38	2.87	3.00	3.63	3.40	3.55	4.00	3.25	3.48	3.25
We are finding applicants more willing to relocate now	3.45	3.28	3.77	3.33	3.25	2.60	3.91	4.00	3.40	3.57	3.39
Short-listed applicants generally want more workplace flexibility than we are prepared to offer	2.92	2.92	2.40	3.56	3.50	2.60	2.91	2.67	2.81	3.14	2.85
Slow recruitment processes cause us to lose good applicants	3.27	3.42	3.80	3.56	3.00	3.20	2.45	2.33	3.50	3.33	3.15
New technology makes it too easy for unsuitable applicants to apply	3.45	3.50	3.40	3.67	3.71	3.60	3.30	2.33	3.33	3.00	3.74
Perceived Council culture or reputation deters external applicants from applying for jobs here	2.90	3.00	2.50	3.33	2.63	3.80	2.90	2.00	2.88	2.76	3.00
We are now more prepared to recruit from outside local government for technical and senior roles	3.87	3.96	3.93	3.89	3.88	3.20	4.00	3.33	4.00	3.90	3.79

Table 1: Agreement statements by state and type of Council

Research findings

Councils were invited to add examples or anecdotes to their scores. Among the more interesting or insightful comments:

“Rural living impacts ability to attract candidates; additionally people relocating typically stay employed less long than local candidates. However we need the external skills/ knowledge and qualifications which comes largely outside of the community.” 

“While prepared (from necessity) to recruit from outside local government this is to councils’ detriment - as a complete lack of understanding of Local Government regulations in HR creates significant rework and error correction for bad (non-compliant) decision making.” 

“I think poor screening processes makes it too easy for unsuitable applicants to apply.” 

“Re flexibility, we are intending to move to a blended model workforce so we see a greater likelihood that people can live much further away, and not need to relocate for some roles, traditionally office-based.” 

“Although diversity is good, there are far too many under skilled applicants being placed in vital roles (particularly in remote/regional locations), such as finance and engineering. They tend to have no idea how small councils work, waste a load of resources and make less than average decisions leaving the council to pick up their mess years down the track. They seem to come in without skills or knowledge for a quick dollar and make very unethical/unreasonable decisions those small councils have to remedy down the track wasting precious resources.” 

“Agree slow recruitment loses great candidates, but our process is very efficient combatting this.” 

Research findings

Meanwhile over two-thirds agreed that there was at least some truth to the statement “We now have little difficulty attracting suitable applicants for our vacancies”. However this hides a stark difference between metropolitan councils (94% saying true to “some roles” or “across the board”) against 52% of rural and remote councils (with regional city councils roughly in the middle). Likewise, some 64% of those councils with less than 100 FTEs said this statement was untrue.

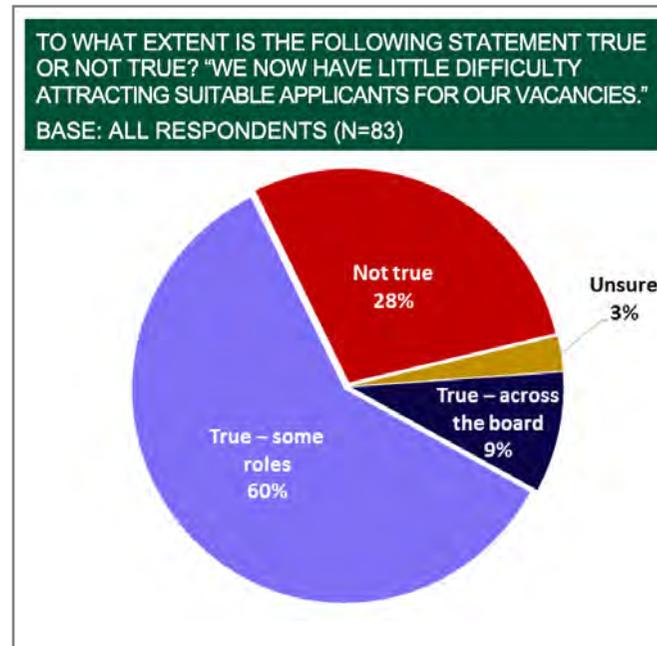


Figure 10: ????

Questionnaire

This short (5-7 minute) survey, sponsored by HRhub*, has been designed to help Council HR leaders understand recruitment trends and challenges in 2021 and beyond. Its success depends on the involvement of all Council HR leaders across Australia, so your participation will be very much appreciated.

While responses will be anonymous, all those completing a survey have the option to receive the final report. If you wish, you will also go into the draw to win one of 100 free job placements (valued at \$270 each), courtesy of CouncilJobs.

* HRhub is a collaboration of three leading Australian Council recruitment providers: Blackadder Associates, CouncilJobs and Leonards Advertising.

Q	Question type	Question	Answer options
1	Prompted	In which of the following areas are you currently experiencing a shortage of skilled applicants? (Please tick any that apply or None of the Above) Engineering Town Planning Health and Building Surveyors/Inspectors Finance Governance and/or Risk Environment WH and S Internal Audit Compliance Aged Services Information Technology Organisational Development/Human Resources	Tick boxes
2	Prompted	Are you currently experiencing a shortage of applicants in any other areas?	No Yes (Please specify)
3	Prompted	Do you believe that working for Council is more attractive to applicants than it was 12 months ago?	Yes, a lot Yes, a little No, not at all No, has become less attractive Unsure

Questionnaire

Q	Question type	Question	Answer options
4	Unprompted	(Optional) Can you expand or provide any examples on this issue?	Open answer
5	Prompted	Do you agree or disagree that good applicants are prepared to work for less money than they were 12 months ago?	Agree Disagree Unsure
6	Prompted	(If Q5 = agree) Does this also apply to senior managerial roles?	Yes No Unsure
7	Prompted – Rotate order	<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <p>Many otherwise suitable applicants do not fit our culture</p> <p>Many technically competent applicants lack the necessary leadership skills</p> <p>Many more applicants are applying for our vacancies than they were 12 months ago</p> <p>Most applicants do not meet our essential criteria</p> <p>We are finding applicants more willing to relocate now</p> <p>Short-listed applicants generally want more workplace flexibility than we are prepared to offer</p> <p>Slow recruitment processes cause us to lose good applicants</p> <p>New technology makes it too easy for unsuitable applicants to apply</p> <p>Perceived Council culture or reputation deters external applicants from applying for jobs here</p> <p>We are now more prepared to recruit from outside local government for technical and senior roles</p>	Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree Unsure

Questionnaire

Q	Question type	Question	Answer options
7a	Unprompted	(Optional) Feel free to add any comments or anecdotes to explain any of your answers to the previous question.	Open ended
8	Prompted	To what extent is the following statement true or not true? "We now have little difficulty attracting suitable applicants for our vacancies."	True – across the board True – some roles Not true Unsure
9	Prompted	Where is your Council located?	NSW Victoria Queensland SA WA Tasmania NT
10	Prompted	Approximately how many FTE staff does your Council currently employ?	1-100 101-200 201-500 More than 500
11	Prompted	How would you class your LGA?	Metropolitan Regional City Rural town/district Remote village/community
12	Prompted	And finally, how long have you been working in local government	Three years or less 4-6 years 7-10 years More than 10 years

Questionnaire

Q	Question type	Question	Answer options
13	Prompted	<p>If you would like to receive the final report, and go into the prize draw*, please provide your name and email address. (Note this information will be separated from your other answers prior to any data being analysed, to protect the confidentiality of your responses.)</p> <p>* Prizes comprise 100 complimentary ad placements with CouncilJobs, valued at \$270 each.</p>	<p>Tick box: Name Email address Prefer not to enter draw</p>

Thanks so much, that's the end of the survey. HRhub greatly appreciates your feedback.

Recruitment Market Dynamics 2021

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Background to recruitment market dynamics

A common theme of this whole report could be summarised in one phrase – Change is upon us all. Everyone copes with change differently; some are daunted, some are blasé and some are stimulated by it. 

Regardless, the first step in adapting to anything is to seek to understand it better. So, this section is designed to help you understand the scale of change in the sector you are working in. Hopefully, you will agree with us that this sector (Australian Council Recruitment) is critical and vibrant while worthy of more serious scrutiny and professional development. 

Australian Councils – the big picture 2021

Australian Councils – the big picture as of 30 June 2020

530 councils (Local government areas)	- no change in the year
25.687M Population	- 1.3% pa growth 
154,280 FTE (Full-time Equivalent staff*)	- 1.1% pa growth 
\$14.8b Employee benefits expense	- 4.3% growth 
9.8% National attrition rate	- a small increase 

Segmentation methodology

Every state has different demographic and external factors causing vastly different recruitment challenges. Within States though, councils of similar geographic location and population size seem to face similar challenges and so their results have been grouped together to explain the trends and insights being seen.

For the purposes of analysis in this report and within each state, councils have been grouped by Local government area (LGA) definition into four discrete segments of roughly similar numbers of councils identified by a combination of similar Geography, Population and Council FTE (full-time equivalent) staff numbers. 

Segment	Avg Population per LGA	Avg FTE per LGA	% of LGA's
Metro/Capital Cities	145,613	830	22%
Regional Cities	74,746	380	18%
Rural towns	11,420	140	29%
Remote and District regional areas	2,171	60	31%

Australian LGA's as of June 30, 2020

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	NT	AUS	%Total
% LGA's	24.2%	14.9%	14.5%	5.3%	13.0%	24.7%	3.2%		
Total LGA's	128	79	77	28	69	131	17	530	
Metro/Capital cities	31	31	5	5	17	25	1	116	21.9%
Regional cities	35	19	23	1	4	11	2	95	17.9%
Rural towns	57	27	16	18	14	17	6	155	29.2%
Remote Districts	5	2	33	4	34	78	8	164	30.9%

Source: State government Local Government department websites

The big picture – population

Population Dynamics

While Australia's population grew by 1.3% in 2020 over 2019 (slightly down from 1.5% growth in the previous year) ABS data shows that the population is moving away from Rural towns into Cities, predominantly Regional cities, with some exceptions in smaller states. This movement makes planning for and affording council service delivery especially difficult in Rural towns and Remote/district regional areas. 

Much has been reported on the population shift to the regional areas since the arrival of the Covid-19 Pandemic, as people seek to live and work in less-dense/more affordable communities. The fact is that this trend was well underway before the Pandemic's arrival and has only accelerated since the end of the 2019/2020 Council reporting period according to media reports. From the table below, we can see that the population movement across the last year has not been consistent across states or segments of LGA's, although Regional Cities stand out as growing significantly at the expense of all other segments, particularly Rural towns. The population movement reported here incorporates only the first four months of the Pandemic's impact, so expect to see even greater movement when the data for the 2020/2021 Council reporting year is known. We will not know for certain how much and in what areas the population has changed until we see the results of the next Australian Census to be conducted in the second half of 2021. 

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	ACT	NT	AUS
Gross Population movement									
Total LGA's	-148435	142638	382237	3213	-2948	-41304	4410	-963	338848
Metro/Capital cities	-125238	55494	130107	6909	4342	-20316	4410	-1575	54133
Regional cities	-12571	76655	260372	-1558	2385	-8189		-1414	315680
Rural towns	-10479	10433	-5782	-2075	-12032	-11461		457	-30939
Remote Districts	-147	56	-2460	-63	2357	-1338		1569	-26
% Population change									
Total LGA's	-1.9%	2.3%	6.2%	0.6%	-0.2%	-1.6%	1.0%	-0.4%	1.3%
Metro/Capital cities	-2.7%	1.2%	3.4%	3.4%	0.4%	-1.1%	1.0%	-1.9%	0.3%
Regional cities	-0.5%	5.9%	12.4%	-1.7%	1.9%	-1.7%		-2.3%	4.7%
Rural towns	-1.8%	2.7%	-3.1%	-1.0%	-5.8%	-6.4%		0.7%	-1.7%
Remote Districts	-1.4%	0.8%	-5.0%	-0.9%	1.5%	-1.3%		7.8%	0.0%

Source: ABS population forecasts by LGA for June 30, 2019 vs 2020

The big picture – Council workforce

Australian Council Workforce

As of June 30, 2020, the Australian council workforce was 154,280***, a small increase of 1634 (+1.1%) over the previous year reflecting small growth in all segments except Rural town Councils, reflecting the increased challenge of attracting and retaining talent into these communities. 

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	NT	AUS	%Total	%chg YoY
FTE Total	31.8%	22.5%	25.7%	2.1%	5.7%	10.8%	1.6%	Total		
Total LGA's	48757	34701	39597	3294	8845	16676	2410	154280		1.1%
Metro/Capital cities	20770	20956	16065	1370	5457	9025	320	73963	47.9%	1.1%
Regional cities	19600	9158	17181	286	656	3135	270	50286	32.6%	1.3%
Rural towns	8037	4455	3216	1530	1372	2176	1020	21806	14.1%	0.2%
Remote Districts	350	132	3135	108	1360	2340	800	8225	5.3%	1.9%

Source: Council Annual reports for 2018/2019 and 2019/2020

All council segments have had some employment growth overall, although the picture in each state was not as consistent, with Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and the Northern territory experiencing net losses.

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	NT	AUS
Gross FTE Movement								
Total LGA's	1472	-316	283	-78	26	385	-138	1634
Metro/Capital cities	930	-496	115	5	34	200	-16	772
Regional cities	490	95	184	-65	12	-66	10	660
Rural towns	57	81	-16	-18	14	17	-84	51
Remote Districts	-5	4	0	0	-34	234	-48	151
%FTE Movement								
Total LGA's	3.1%	-0.9%	0.7%	-2.3%	0.3%	2.4%	-5.4%	1.1%
Metro/Capital cities	4.7%	-2.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.6%	2.3%	-4.8%	1.1%
Regional cities	2.6%	1.0%	1.1%	-18.5%	1.9%	-2.1%	3.8%	1.3%
Rural towns	0.7%	1.9%	-0.5%	-1.2%	1.0%	0.8%	-7.6%	0.2%
Remote Districts	-1.4%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-2.4%	11.1%	-5.7%	1.9%

The big picture – remuneration

Australian Council Employees Remuneration

While this report is not primarily about Council Employee remuneration, it is worth looking at it by segment to see the effect of the external pressures on each segment in each state. Total council Remuneration was \$14.83b in the 2019/2020 Council Financial year. While the total Council workforce grew by only 1.1% year on year, Total remuneration grew by 4.3% or \$608m on a like for like basis across all states and segments. This compares to total Australian wages growth of 1.8% for the year ending June 30, 2020 according to the ABS Wage Price Index. The rate of remuneration growth was highest for Rural town councils reflecting their difficulties in attracting and retaining talent. 

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	NT	AUS
Remuneration \$M	31.8%	25.1%	23.4%	1.9%	5.7%	10.9%	1.3%	
Total LGA's	4711	3724	3470	275	843	1611	195	14829
Metro/Capital cities	2226	2458	1430	124	542	908	35	7723
Regional cities	1783	864	1440	28	61	286	28	4489
Rural towns	667	390	272	115	121	231	75	1871
Remote Districts	34	12	329	8	119	186	57	746
% Remuneration change								
Total LGA's	4.1%	4.5%	5.0%	5.2%	3.8%	3.4%	1.5%	4.3%
Metro/Capital cities	3.2%	4.1%	2.9%	4.6%	4.0%	1.3%	8.2%	3.3%
Regional cities	5.0%	4.6%	6.5%	5.1%	4.6%	1.6%	10.2%	5.2%
Rural towns	4.5%	6.1%	4.6%	6.3%	2.8%	16.5%	-0.3%	6.0%
Remote Districts	8.6%	11.2%	7.9%	-1.4%	3.4%	2.5%	-3.6%	4.8%

Source: Council Annual reports for 2019/2020

The big picture – recruitment

Australian Councils recruitment in 2020

Recruitment of 16,567 positions in 2020 was dominated by NSW and Victoria, while other states recruited mostly in line with existing staffing levels.

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	NT	AUS	%Total
Job Ads 2020	35.1%	24.9%	19.0%	2.0%	3.9%	12.2%	2.9%		
Total LGA's	5819	4119	3153	326	652	2020	478	16567	
Metro/Capital cities	1975	2141	766	140	310	1037	58	6427	38.8%
Regional cities	2550	1151	1686	46	70	285	120	5908	35.7%
Rural towns	1269	813	504	136	132	487	224	3565	21.5%
Remote Districts	25	14	197	4	140	211	76	667	4.0%

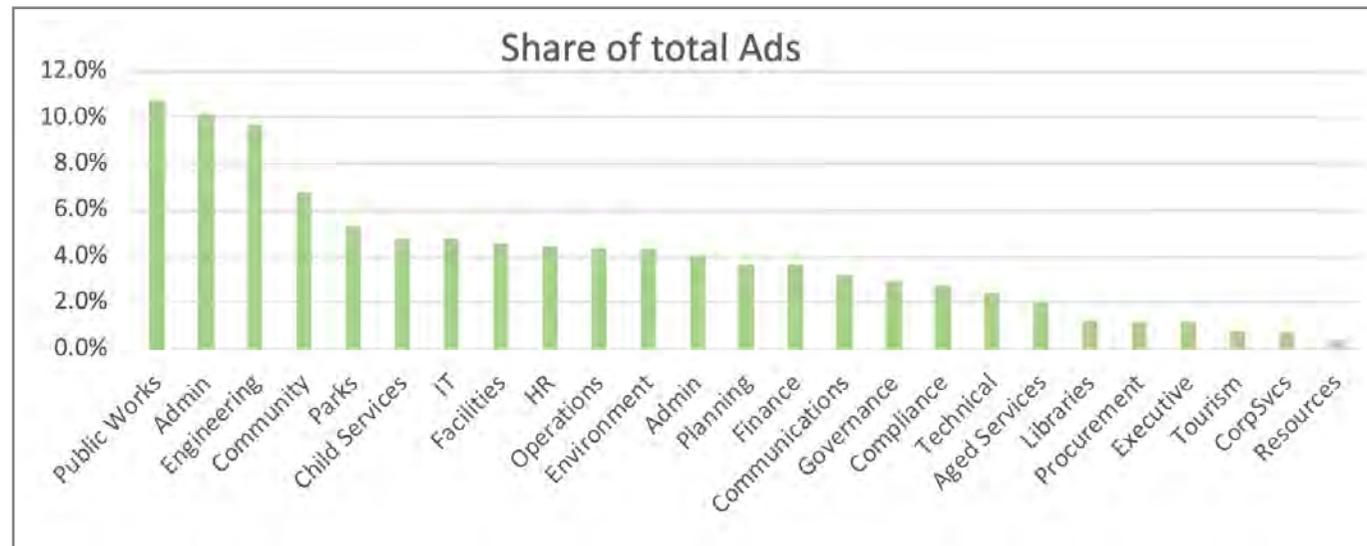
Source: CouncilJobs Website

2020 was the first time that CouncilJobs was able to accurately capture every job in the country on its website every month and so, there is no prior data to compare to, except that CouncilJobs market analysis had previously estimated that average annual recruitment was of the order of 15,600 per year. On this basis, calendar year 2020 saw at least 6.5% more recruitment than in prior years, to counter increased population and staff movement. 

Job search

Demand: Some Skills are more highly sought after

Councils build and maintain physical communities, so it is no surprise that outdoor workers were in highest demand in 2020.

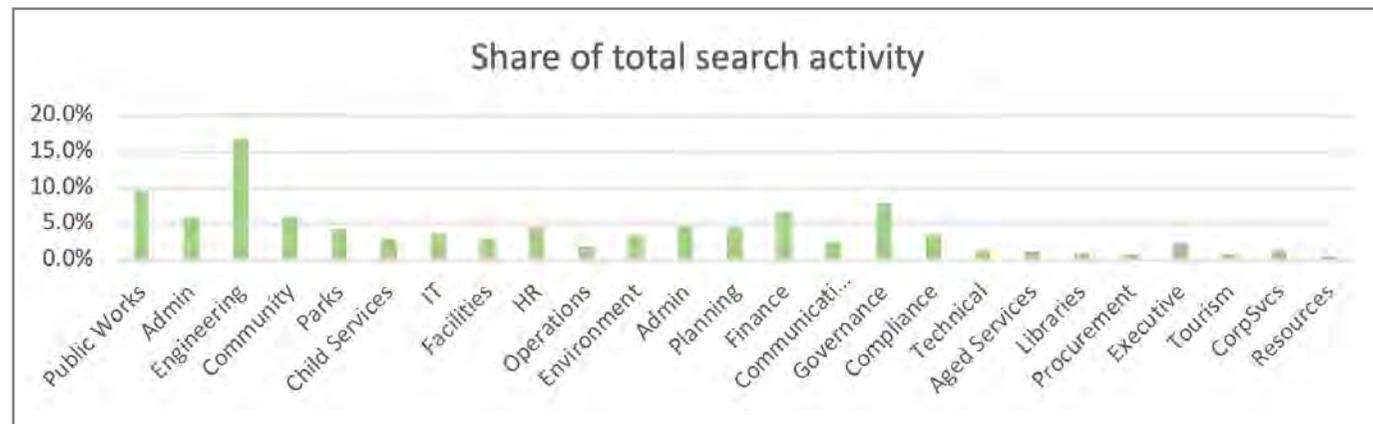


Source: Council websites recruitment pages

Job search

Supply: JobSearch in 2020

From the graph below, one can relate the priority of 'Supply' of a skillset to its demand (above). Clearly there is a mismatch in many skillsets, most notably for Admin, Parks and Child Services. While Engineering represented almost 10% of all jobs (Demand) and over 15% of all searches (Supply) this is possibly a case where Search is overstated by readers repeatedly viewing the same jobs. The data below is derived from calendar year 2020 search of all jobs in Australia as captured on the CouncilJobs website and is the closest proxy we have for national demand by Job.



Source: CouncilJobs Website search traffic 2020

What can explain the extraordinary interest in Engineering Jobs? Some possible explanations 

- CouncilJobs has long been known for its depth in all professional skillsets required by Councils and Engineers have represented over one third of all subscribers on the CouncilJobs subscriber database for several years.
- Engineers know their skills are in high demand and combined with improved attitudes towards moving locations, they're always on the lookout for their next role
- Engineers like to constantly compare their current package to the going market
- Engineers working outside the council sector use the council sector as a benchmark for pay and conditions negotiations in the private sector

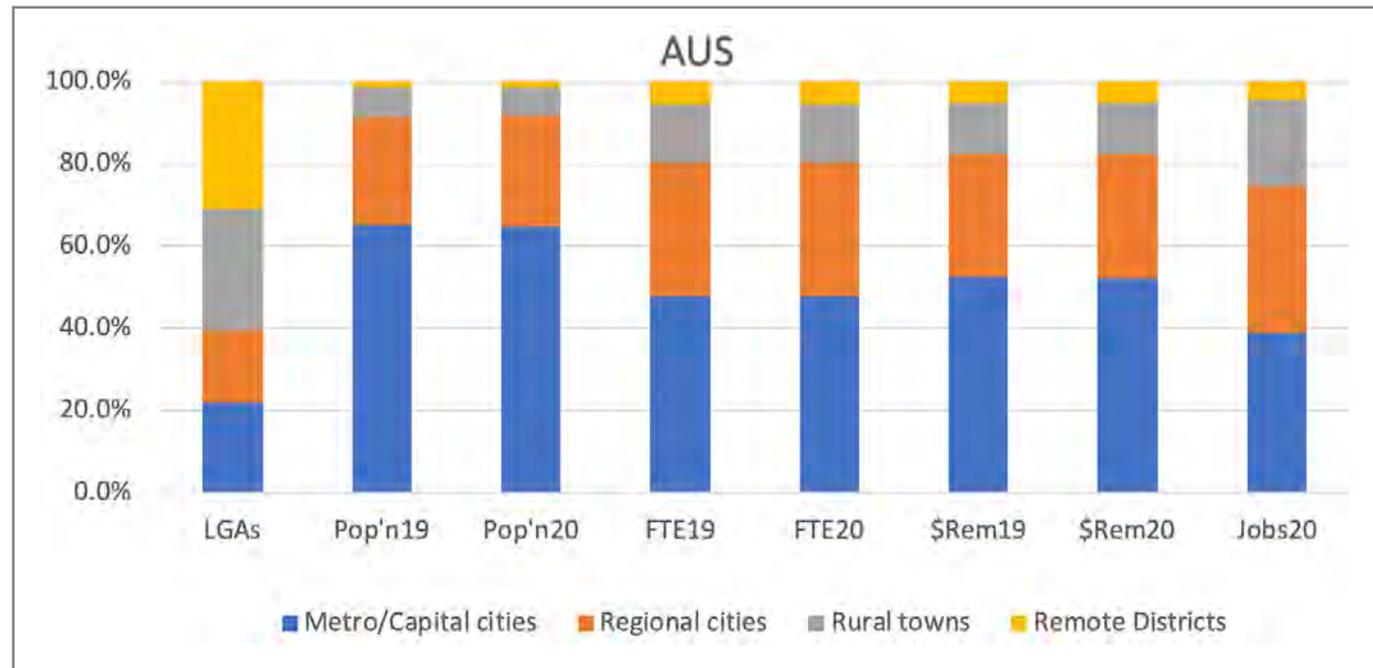
Attrition

Demographic and other major external factors (including bushfires and the pandemic, which eliminated overseas migration for at least the last quarter of the 2019/2020 Financial year) played their part in driving Council recruitment. In this section we compare states' movement in population, employment, remuneration and recruitment to identify key trends.

	NSW	VIC	QLD	TAS	SA	WA	NT	AUS
Attrition FTE								
Total LGA's	4347	4435	2870	404	626	1635	616	14933
Metro/Capital cities	1045	2637	651	135	276	837	74	5655
Regional cities	2060	1056	1502	111	58	351	110	5248
Rural towns	1212	732	520	154	118	470	308	3514
Remote Districts	30	10	197	4	174	-23	124	516
%Attrition FTE pa								
Total LGA's	9.2%	12.7%	7.3%	12.0%	7.1%	10.0%	24.2%	9.8%
Metro/Capital cities	5.3%	12.3%	4.1%	9.9%	5.1%	9.5%	22.0%	7.7%
Regional cities	10.8%	11.7%	8.8%	31.6%	9.0%	11.0%	42.3%	10.6%
Rural towns	15.2%	16.7%	16.1%	9.9%	8.7%	21.8%	27.9%	16.2%
Remote Districts	8.5%	7.8%	6.3%	3.7%	12.5%	-1.1%	14.6%	6.4%

Attrition

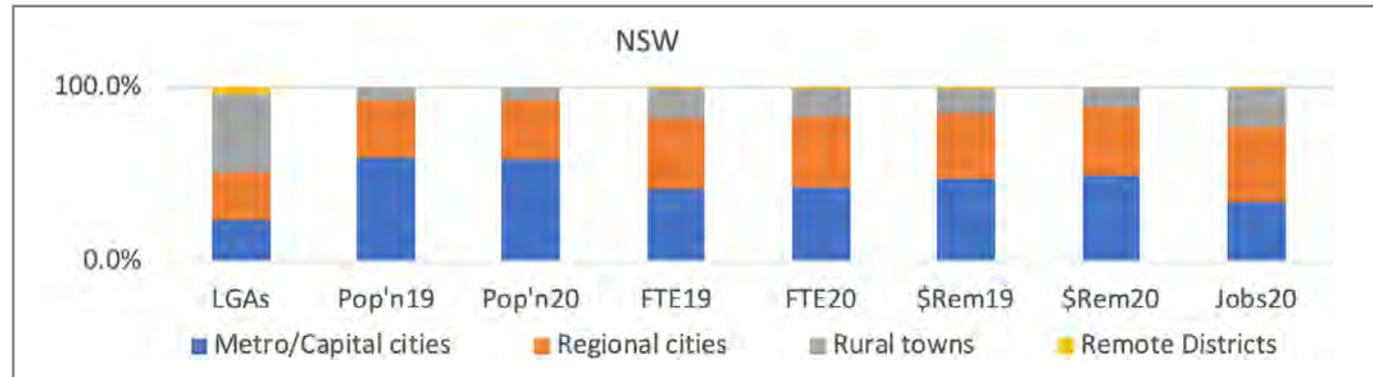
Generally, councils do not publicly report rates of annual attrition (voluntary and/or involuntary), however using the FTE data gathered for this report from Council annual reports and the calendar year job Ads data, approximate attrition rates can be calculated for all states and segments. Nationally, attrition is lowest in Remote districts at 6.4%. Historically, Attrition has been estimated for all councils to be between 5% and 10%, with smaller councils at the lower end of the range and larger at the upper. On this basis, 2019-2020 can be considered a year of significantly increased attrition.



States snapshot

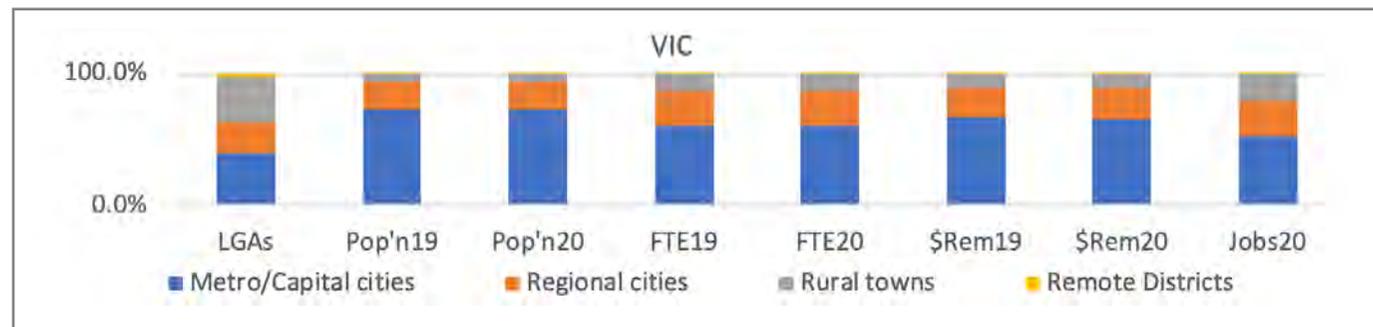
New South Wales iN

With the largest net annual population loss (almost 150,000 or -1.9% across all segments) and many small rural town councils, NSW council recruitment (the highest of all states) is dominated by the needs of its City councils, which increased overall state employment by 3.1%. Attrition is high at 9.2% pa.



Victoria iN

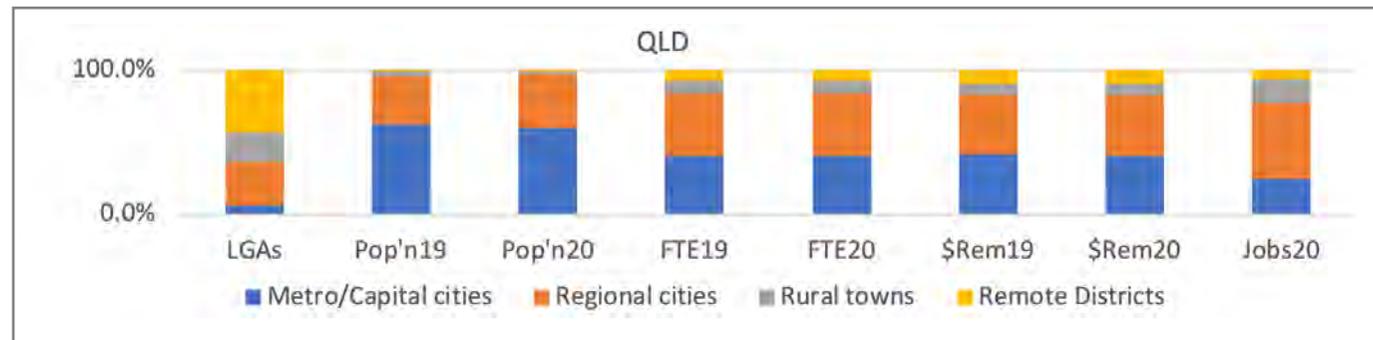
Similarly, in Victoria more than half of all recruitment in 2020 was for Metropolitan City councils to counter the exodus of staff from those councils. Of the more populous eastern states, Victoria had the highest rate of attrition at 12.7%, lead by Rural town councils at 16.7% and Metro city councils at 12.3%.



States snapshot

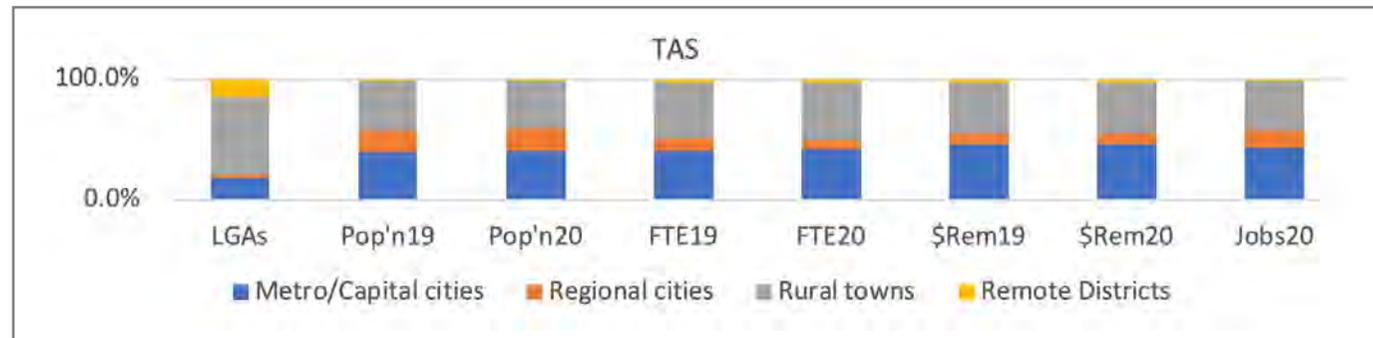
Queensland

Unlike all other states, Queensland is dominated by a small number of large Metropolitan Councils which saw only modest increases in total FTE Staffing of just 115 roles. Remuneration increased by \$164m, more than half of which was in Regional city councils. Statewide attrition was almost the lowest in the country at 7.3% and amongst the lowest in the Metro city councils at just 4.1%.



Tasmania

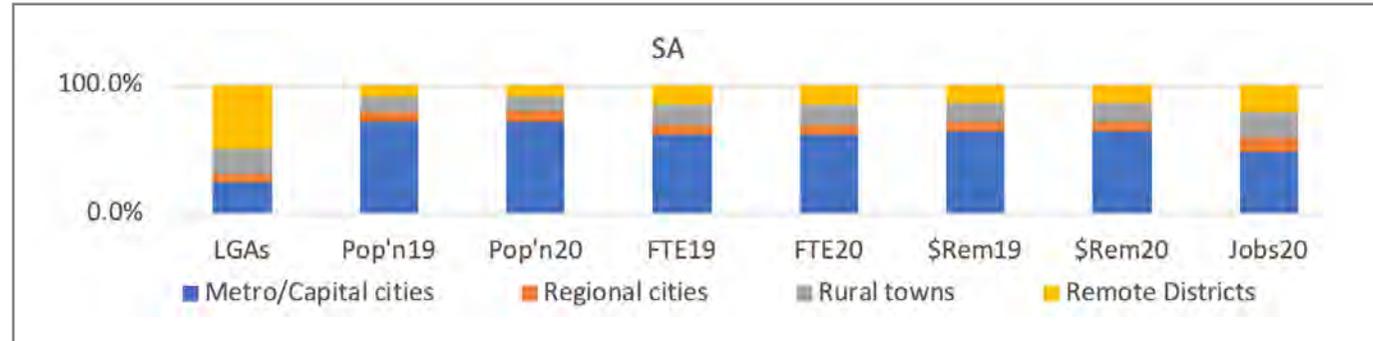
Tasmania had a population increase of 3213 (0.6%) and saw an annual decline in FTE of 2.3% or 78 FTE positions. Total remuneration increased by \$14m (\$5m in Metro city councils and \$7m in Rural towns). Statewide attrition was high at 12.0%pa.



States snapshot

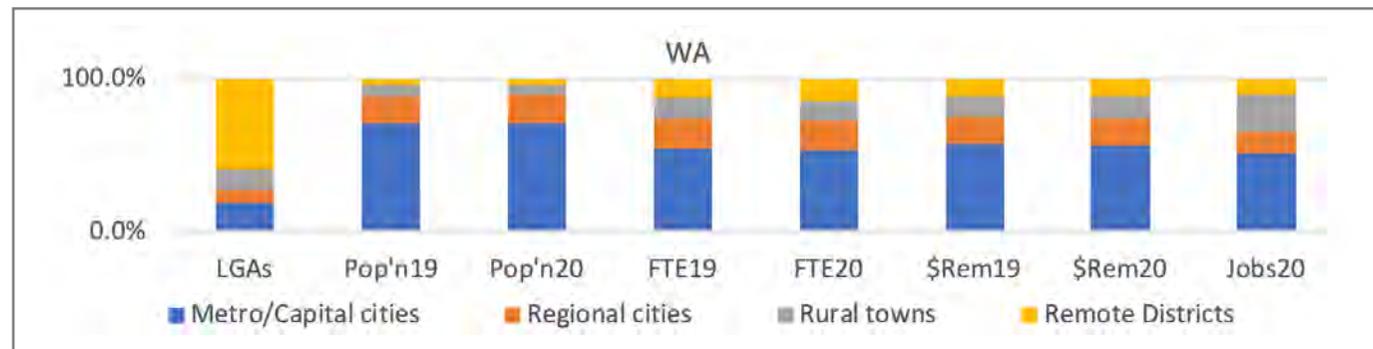
South Australia i↑

South Australia saw a net decline in population of 2948 (-0.2%), a net increase in Remuneration of \$31m (2/3rds of which was in Metro City councils) and a small increase in FTE staffing of 26. Statewide attrition was below average at 7.1% stretched by very high attrition in Remote/district councils (12.5%). ****



Western Australia i↓

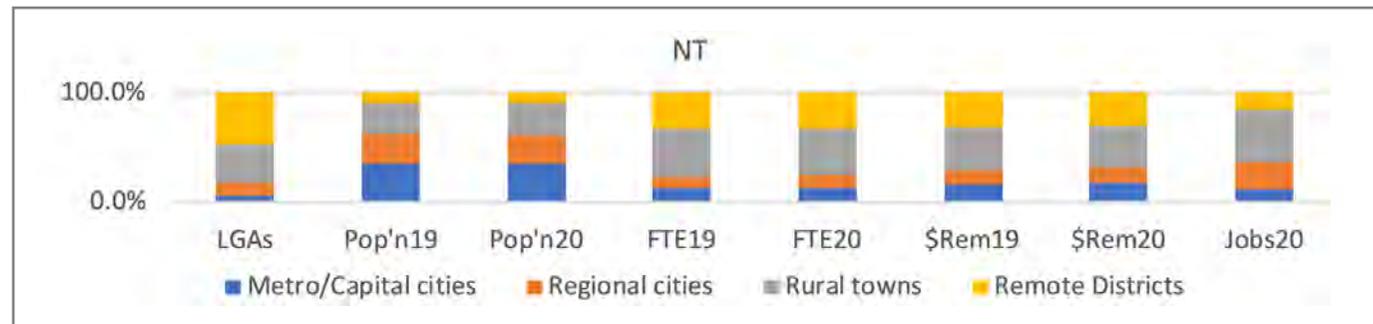
A large population decline of 41,304 (-1.6%) spread across every segment, but mainly from the Metro City councils, means the state may have lost this population to other states. Remuneration increased by \$53m, over 60% of which was in Rural towns, as FTE increased by 385 (2.4%) with Rural towns and Remote/District councils accounting for nearly all the losses. Attrition was high at 10.0%, dominated by 837 jobs lost in Metro councils.



States snapshot

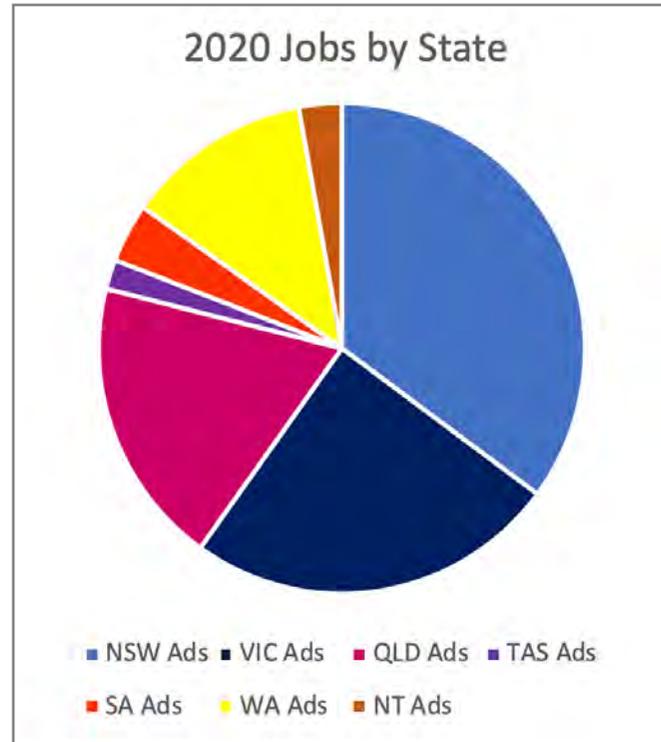
Northern Territory iN

The Northern Territory saw a net population decline of 963 (-0.4%), a \$3m increase in remuneration mostly in the cities and a net decline in FTE positions of 138 (-5.4%, mostly in Rural towns). Attrition was the highest in the country at 24.2%. It should be recognised that unlike most other states, councils in the Northern Territory are highly depended upon as an employer and facilitate project-based employment in their communities, which significantly increases staff turnover.



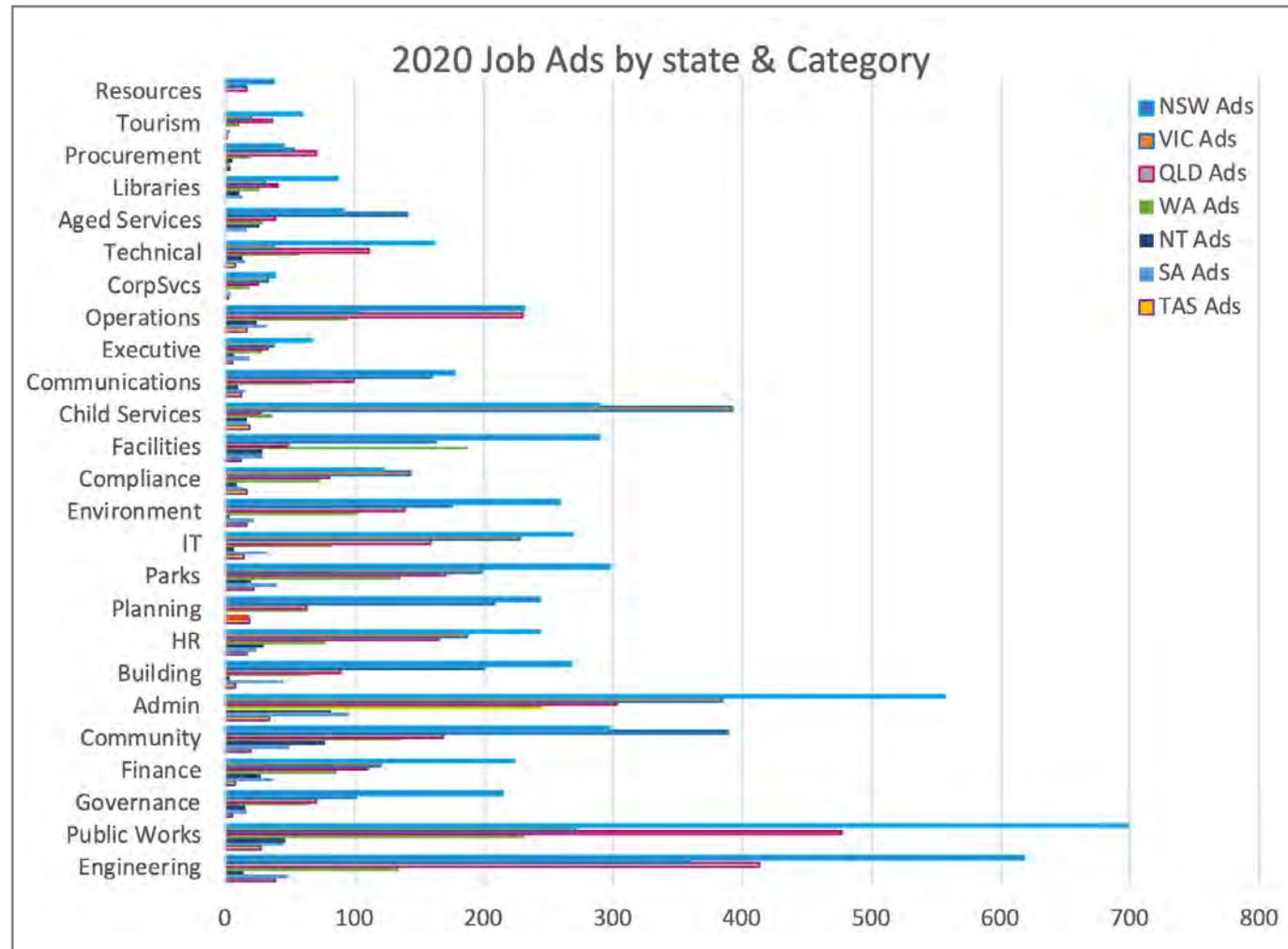
Supply vs demand

Supply and Demand Analysis by State and Job type



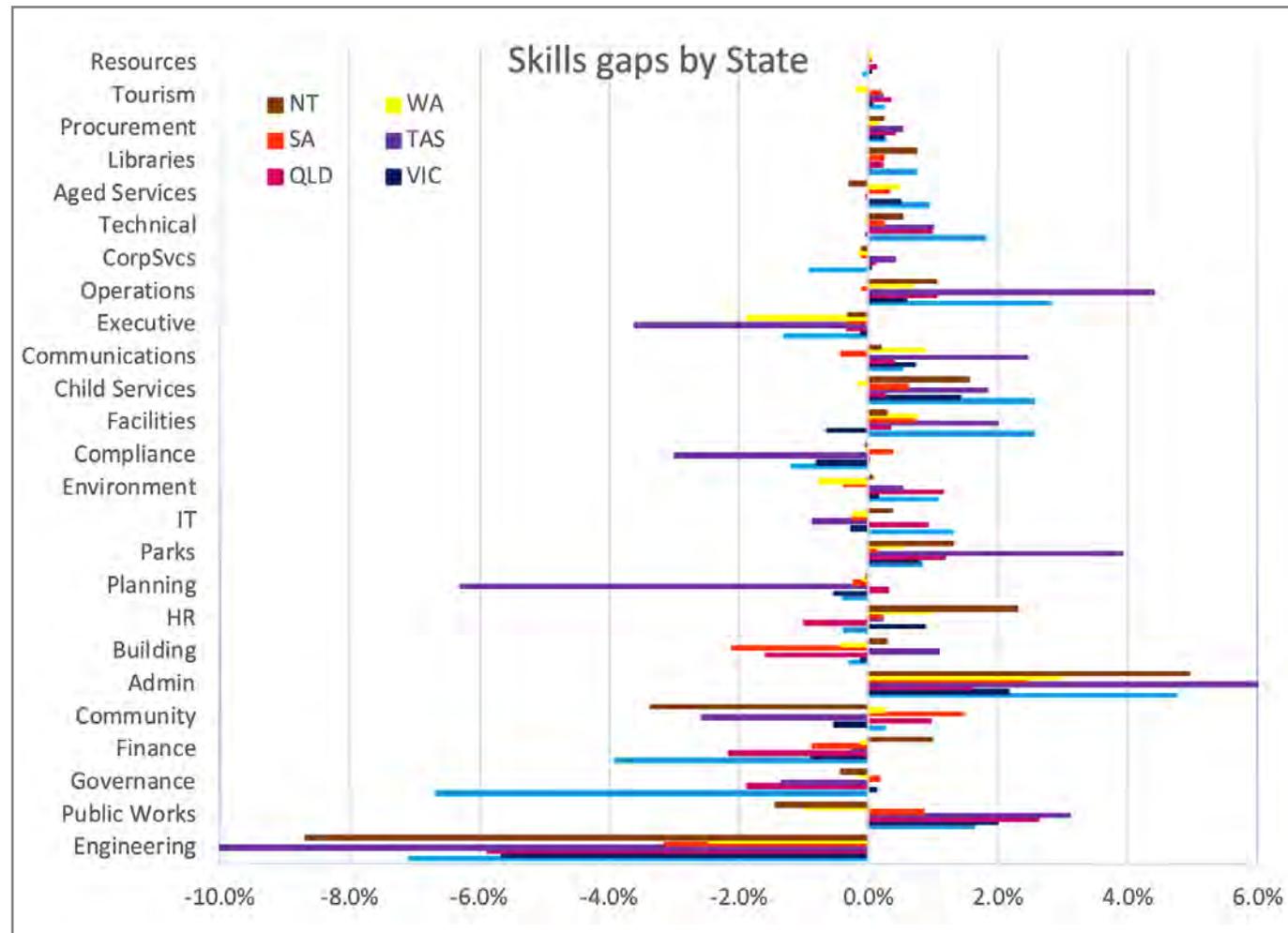
With 16,567 ads in Calendar year 2020, the most informing perspective is probably to analyse the differences between labour supply and demand between and within the states. So, if the number of ads by council Job Category is the measure of demand, and the ranking of JobSearch activity is the measure of supply, the following charts show for each state, the total Job Ads for each Job Category (Supply), ranked by frequency of JobSearch (Demand).

Supply vs demand



Supply vs demand

Looking at total JobSearch in 2020 from most searched (Engineering) to least (Resources), the following chart identifies Skill gaps by state. A negative number for a Job Category represents a Shortage for that state, while a positive represents a Surplus.



Supply vs demand

Skills shortages Insights

Shortfalls - Every state has a shortfall in Engineering and Executive. Most states also have a shortfall in Governance, Finance, Planning and Compliance and Corporate Services.

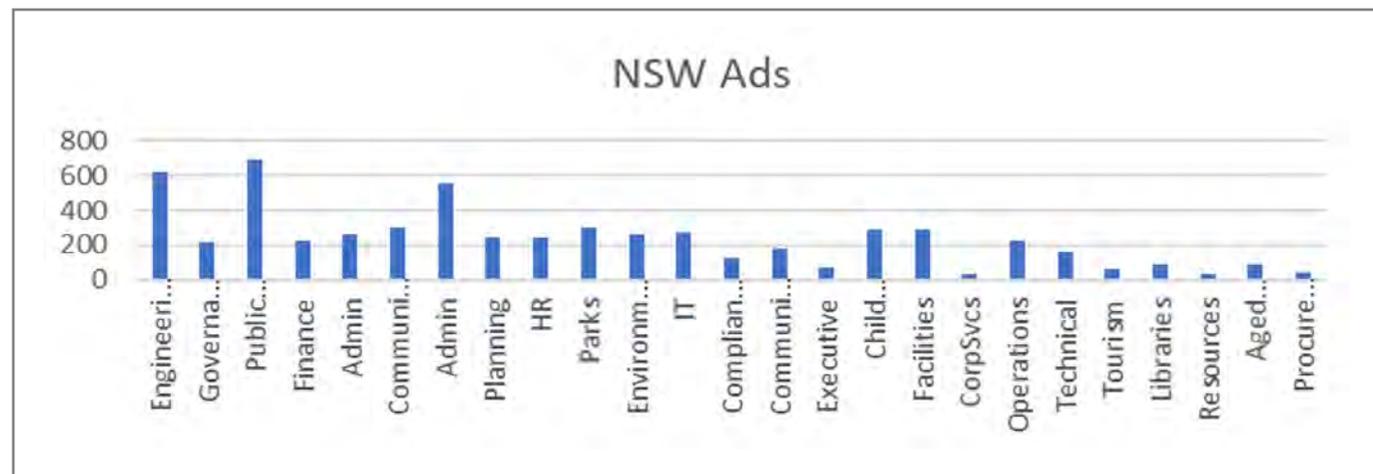
Surpluses: every state has a surplus in Admin, Parks, Public Works, Facilities and Child Services. Most also have a surplus in Operations and Communications.

For all other roles, there appears to be sufficient supply for the demand in each state.

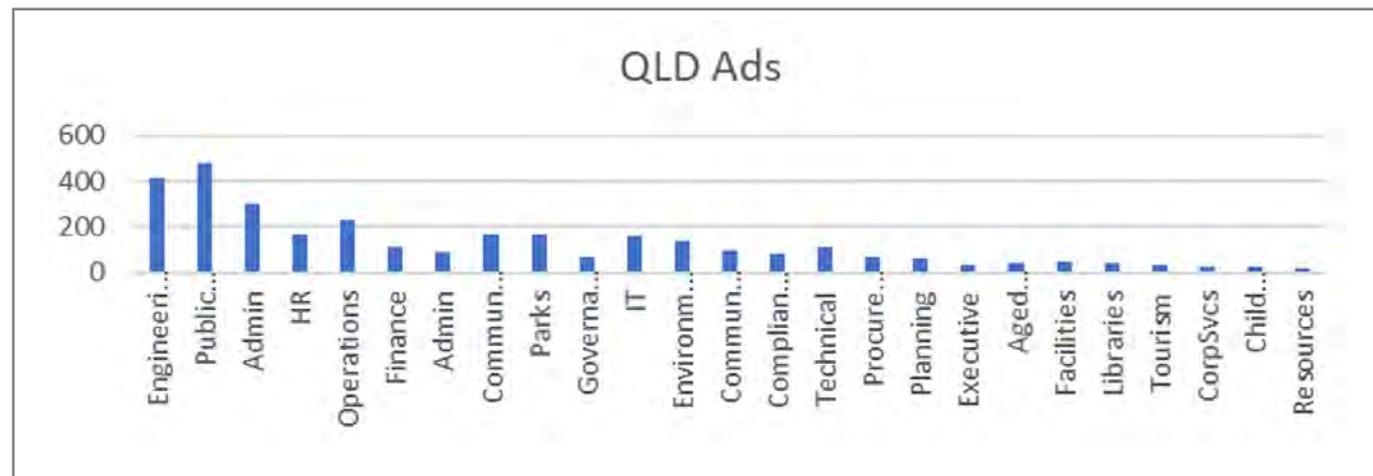
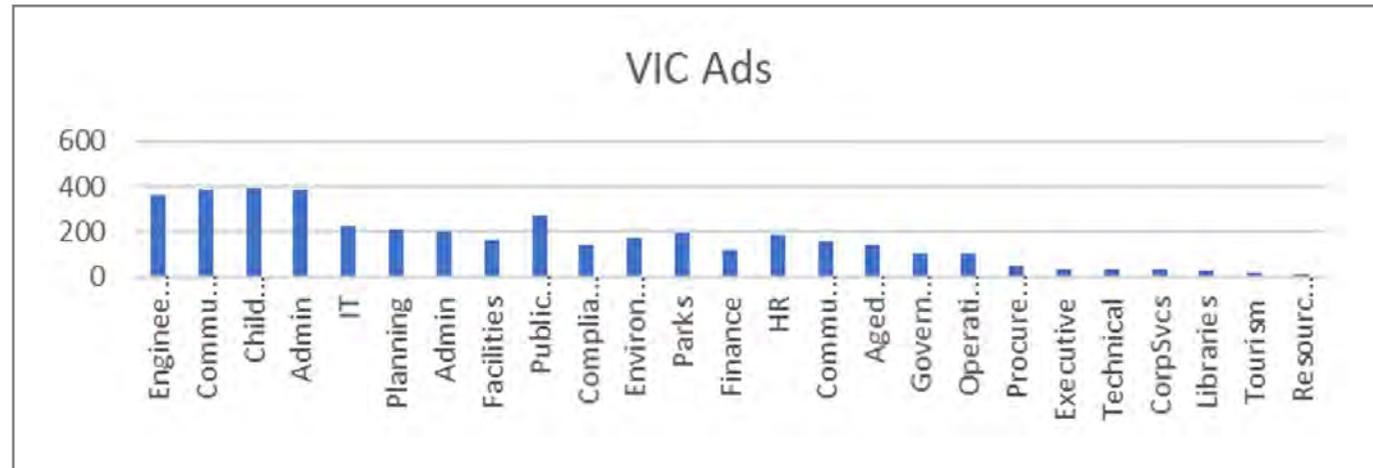
For the charts below, the size of the bars for each state represents the number of Ads for that category in 2020 and the order of display of the categories represents the search popularity of the categories, i.e. in NSW, Engineering was the most popular JobSearch category, followed by Governance and then Public Works.

In this manner and for any Job Category in any state below, a high number of Job listings associated with a low search ranking probably means there is a skills gap for that category in that state, e.g., in Victoria, Public Works ranks 5th in Jobs but only 9th in JobSearch.

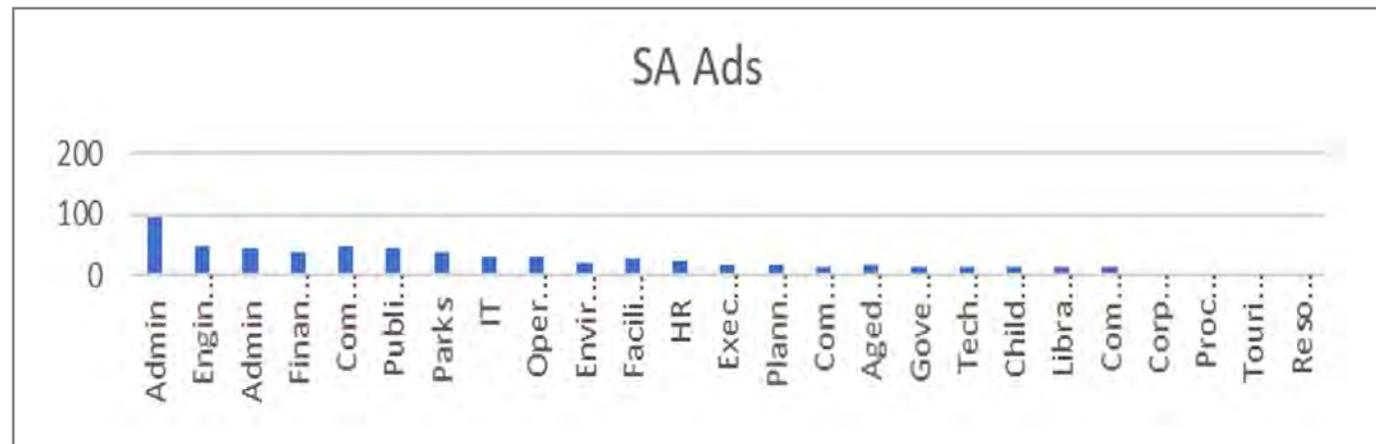
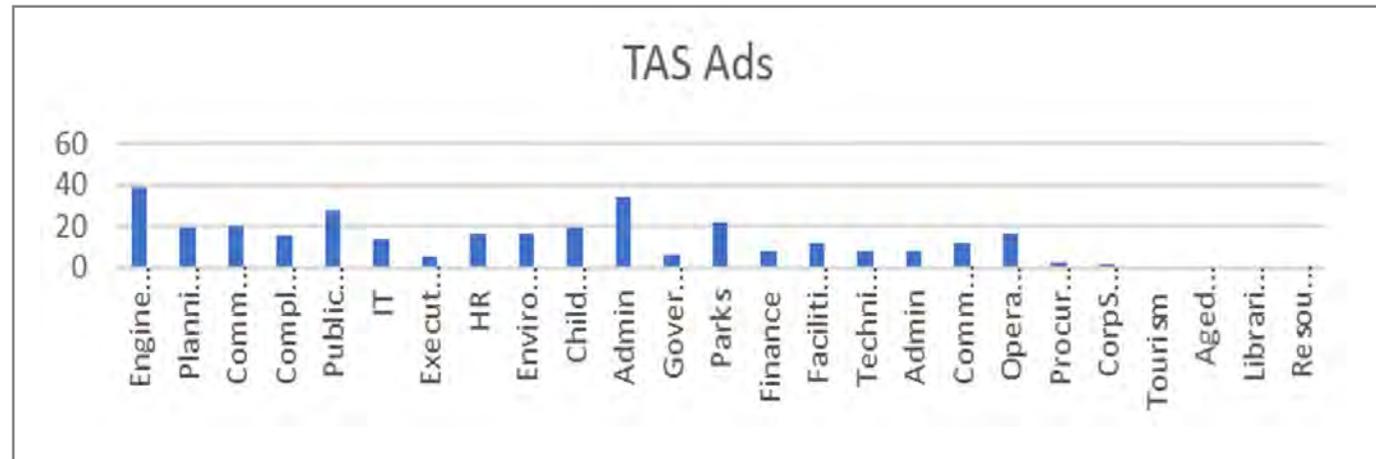
Conversely, a high JobSearch ranking associated with a relatively low number of job ads probably indicates a skills surplus for that state, e.g. the NT saw Engineering Jobs 12% of JobSearch but only 3% of Jobs advertised.



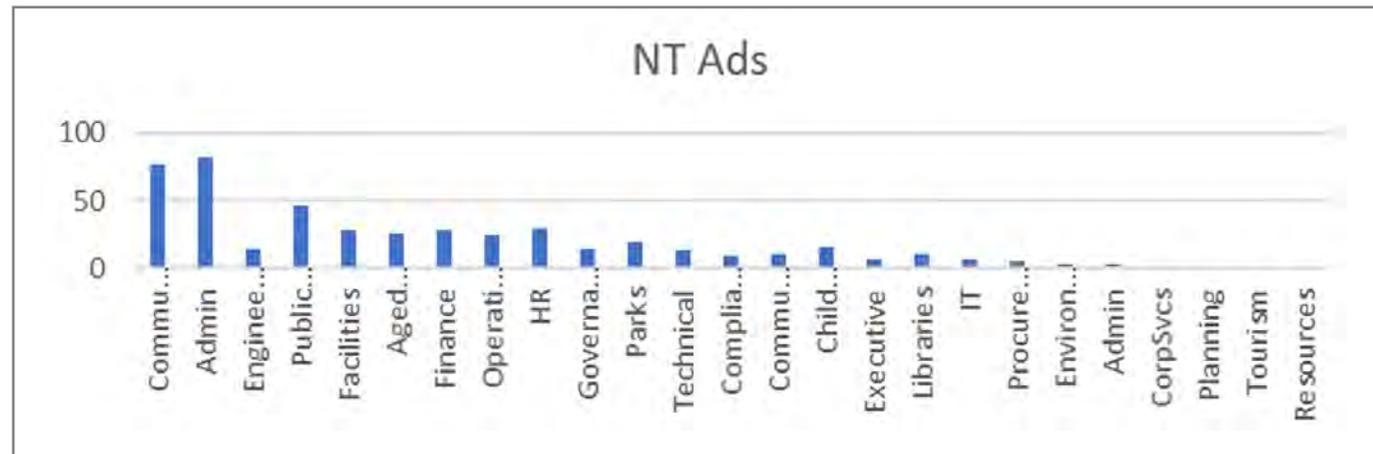
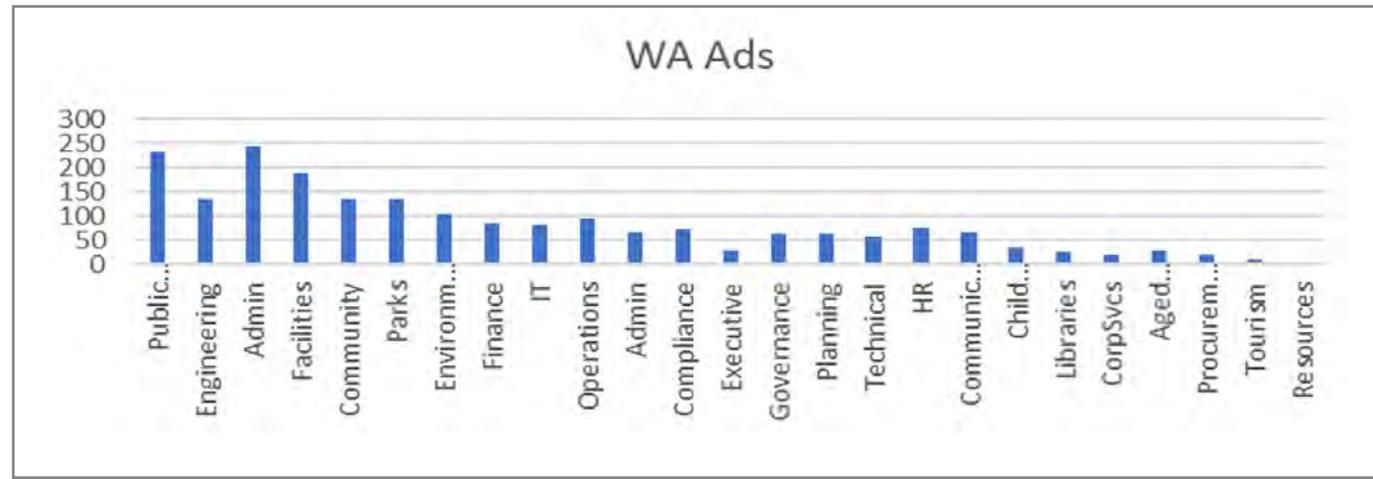
Supply vs demand



Supply vs demand



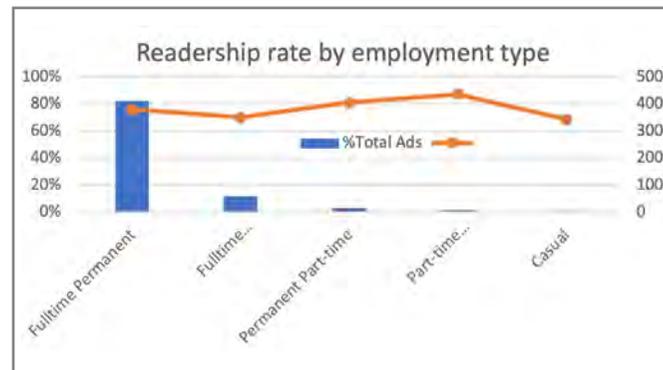
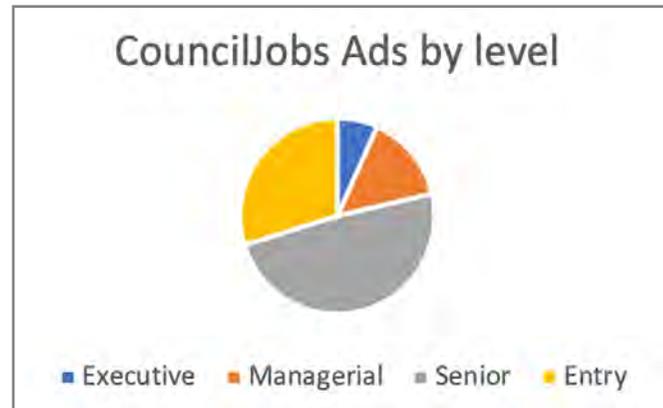
Supply vs demand



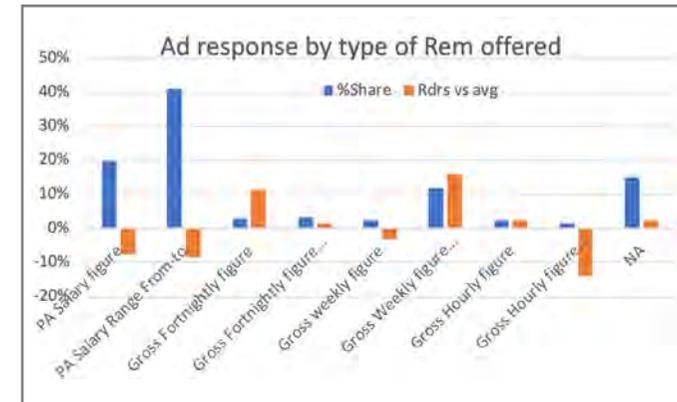
Advertising performance benchmarks

Ad Performance improvement tips

Whether and how remuneration is included in Ads can affect readership and engagement. To understand this point, we must first position the response rates to different Jobs in the context of the incidence of the different jobs in our data. 



The biggest share of total CouncilJobs Ads in 2020 were for senior or experience-required roles and ads with employment basis of Part-time temporary or contract, while only 2% of all jobs, had the highest readership rates on CouncilJobs.



Ads that include Remuneration, expressed as a Gross weekly range receive the highest readership.

80% of ads disclose Remuneration 

Ads without any disclosure of Remuneration got 15% more readers in 2020 

Advertising performance benchmarks

CouncilJobs lists two types of Ads on its website:

CouncilJobs, which are paid advertisements, and which go through its email alerts system and;

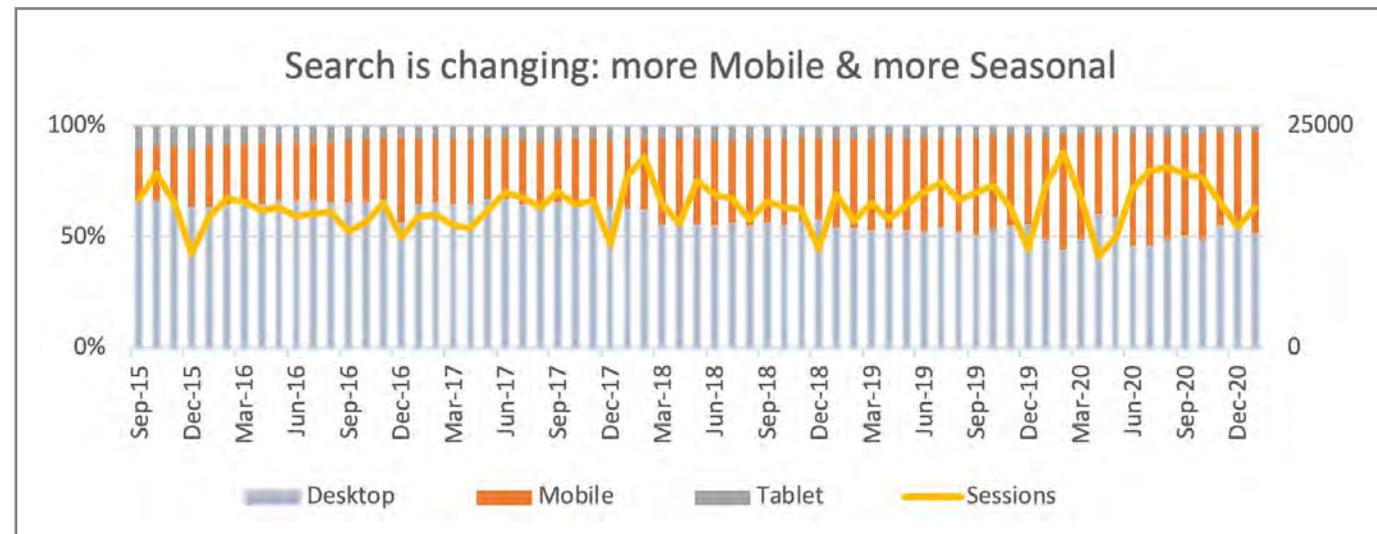
OtherJobs, which are links by location and Job type to all other jobs besides paid CouncilJobs (above) published on all Australian Council websites.

In this way, CouncilJobs invites all website visitors to explore every Council Job in Australia in one place and with one search.

CouncilJobs then tracks the performance of all ads on its platform both in terms of Readership as well as Application rates.

A Reader is defined as a visitor to the CouncilJobs website performing a search on the home page, then clicking through from the aggregate list of available jobs (Paid CouncilJobs are always listed first) to a specific Job Ad or clicking through to an individual Job Ad directly from a CouncilJobs Alert received by email or other media.

Total CouncilJobs Readership in 2020 was approximately half a million unique visits. A long-term trend in Job Search has been the move away from search on desktop computer to mobile devices, i.e.. while jobseekers are on the move, meaning that ads must increasingly be designed to stand out on small mobile devices.



Advertising performance benchmarks

An Application is defined as a Reader of a CouncilJobs Ad clicking on the CouncilJobs 'Apply Now' button under the Ad and progressing to the Council's application process for that Job, whether unique website, email or online form. It should be noted that Readers often Click on 'Apply Now' on all Job ads just to see what is involved in the application process, to read more information not included in the Ad or to start an application to come back to later. Readers who click through and apply to an OtherJob are not visible to this tracking and thus not included in Applicants.

Classifications of Roles

For the purposes of this analysis, all CouncilJobs Ads in 2020 have been classified as either;

Executive – a role of director or above, or

Manager – a role managing people or programmes, or

Senior - a role specified as senior, and/or requiring relevant experience or

Entry – a role not specifying any required experience and including Graduate and Trainee positions.

Features of Ads by type of role that performed comparatively better in 2020

Executive Roles

- 5-year contract
- executive housing with a 12-month rental subsidy
- relocation assistance

- very attractive total remuneration package including a leaseback vehicle
- 10 Manager leave days in addition to 4 weeks annual leave
- access to salary sacrificed child care

Management roles

- performance based contract
- attractive salary and conditions to attract the right person
- RDO scheme, health and wellbeing initiatives
- Option to work under a 19 day month arrangement
- A motor vehicle will be available with this position

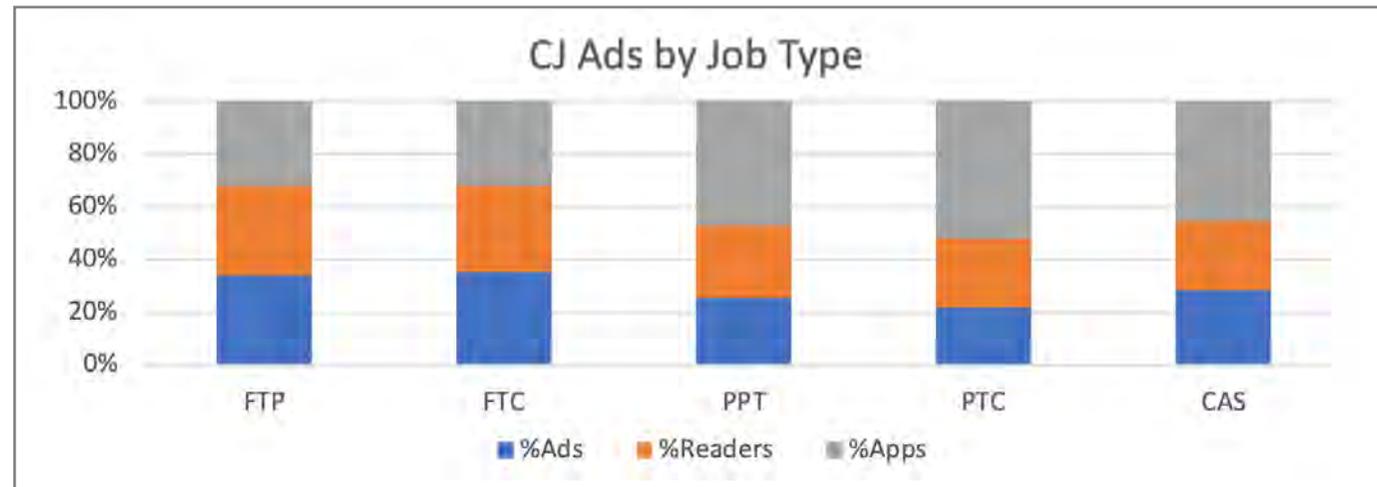
Senior level positions requiring experience in a similar role

- attractive total remuneration package incl. Base Salary + Super + Housing + Vehicle + Overtime Allowance
- 35 hours per week
- 70 hours per fortnight (weekend work required)
- working from home/rostered day off scheme/ compressed work week
- leaseback vehicle
- 9 day fortnight
- 35 hour week, Council house available at market rent, Option of leaseback vehicle

Advertising performance benchmarks

Entry Level positions not requiring experience

- 38 hour week with a fortnightly rostered day off and potential for overtime
- + leaseback vehicle
- 35 hours per week with participation in Council's flex-time system
- 9 day fortnight, Civil Liability allowance, market allowance
- rostered day off approximately every 3 weeks



FTP – Fulltime Permanent includes Senior executives on Multi-year contracts

FTC – Fulltime Contract includes Fulltime Temporary

PPT – Permanent Parttime

PTC – Parttime Contract includes Parttime temporary

CAS – Casual

%Ads – the proportion of total CouncilJobs Ads

%Readers – the proportion of total CouncilJobs Readers

%Apps – the proportion of total Applicants

Advertising performance benchmarks

Insights

Ad Style and content - general

- Ads for Fulltime roles that do not disclose any remuneration benefits details perform at least as well as or slightly better than those which do
- Ads for Fulltime roles that disclose remuneration benefit details perform better when the benefits are expressed as a weekly amount rather than Annual, fortnightly or hourly
- Ads for Part-time roles perform best when remuneration is disclosed and expressed as an hourly rate

Ads Duration

- Ads for fulltime roles perform up to x times better when they are open for four weeks than Ads only valid for one week

Remuneration offered

Remuneration advertised by role

To further assist council recruiters, CouncilJobs has captured Remuneration offered by role for all jobs advertised on its site in 2020. In line with the focus on Ads performance, we only present here the Remuneration information on the ten most popular Job types by readership. Please contact us for any broader in-depth insights, such as for other roles. Note, the information presented here is captured from online Ads and not from any linked documents, i.e. CouncilJobs investigated the incidence of and outcomes from including specific remuneration details in the Jobseeker's first view of the Job, as is the case with most Private Sector job ads.

General observations and notes about the remuneration insights following:

- Remuneration was included in 80% of all CouncilJobs Ads in 2020
- Remuneration was included as a range from and to in 53% of all CouncilJobs ads in 2020
- All Remuneration details whether specified as hourly, weekly, fortnightly or other were converted to Full-time Annual remuneration in this process for comparison purposes
- Readership ranking was calculated based on total readership per Ad and Job Categories ranked here are ranked based on highest Average readership per Ad

Remuneration insights by Role

Top 10 Job categories by readership by Council type and Job Level

Rank	Job Category	#Jobs	Avg \$Rem from	Metro	RegCity	RuralTown	Entry	Senior	Mgr	Exec
1	Governance	82	\$93,998	\$89,039	\$79,673	\$77,101	\$78,247	\$83,496	\$114,508	
2	Executive	19	\$188,941	\$122,830		\$210,978		\$77,934	\$122,830	\$277,500
3	Finance	62	\$90,533	\$97,864		\$79,079	\$70,290	\$85,763	\$129,549	
4	Resources	3	\$105,895	\$123,054		\$71,577		\$76,321	\$165,042	
5	Admin	20	\$73,481	\$69,364	\$72,471	\$80,675	\$58,438	\$90,655	\$105,828	
6	Engineering	139	\$91,171	\$92,739	\$83,387	\$90,050	\$65,417	\$92,197	\$108,394	\$130,052
7	CorpSvcs	15	\$73,008	\$79,226		\$70,343	\$62,356	\$83,650		
8	Community	41	\$86,845	\$95,307	\$47,213	\$77,790	\$70,492	\$91,992	\$105,676	
9	Building	36	\$91,546	\$101,641	\$77,640	\$85,713	\$68,525	\$92,619	\$107,332	
10	Compliance	30	\$76,240	\$77,658	\$87,875	\$69,095	\$64,960	\$78,331	\$107,770	

About the data

Notes about the data

* Many councils include elected councillors in both their reported FTE Numbers and Employee benefits expenses. This report has used the numbers disclosed in 2019/2020 Annual reports regardless of whether elected councillors are included or not.

** No attempt has been made to define Full-time Equivalent (FTE) employment status in this report. Most councils report on the figure in their annual reports under the common Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) reporting framework.

*** The ACT territory government has been included in this report for top level comparison purposes, however as no 'local government' activity is designated in the territory's reports, it has not been possible to include the ACT in any Employment or Recruitment analysis.

**** At the time of compilation in March 2021, approximately 13% of councils, including some of the very biggest in NSW and the very smallest in WA and Qld had not published any FTE data for the 2020 financial year and it is the conclusion of this author that this year, many councils chose to avoid disclosing staff numbers. In these 13% of cases, FTE has been estimated based on prior year disclosures and sector averages for similar-sized councils in their state which have published audited financial results. This is particularly relevant for WA and SA Remote/District Councils.

About the information used and presented in this report

All the data (information) presented in this section of the document is the property of CouncilJobs Holdings Pty. Ltd. The data has been gathered from the following public sources;

- CouncilJobs - Jobs advertised with CouncilJobs and sent as alerts to CouncilJobs subscribers
- OtherJobs – Jobs picked up from Council websites and also listed on the CouncilJobs website
- Annual reports – Published Council Annual reports and Financial statements from council websites
- Population data – ABS 2016 Census data and .ID population forecasts
 - o <https://www.abs.gov.au/>
 - o <https://home.id.com.au/about-us/>

Conclusion

The mountain of data analysed and presented here may suggest that one needs to be a data scientist to make sense of it all. True, the pace of recruitment is speeding up, candidates are moving faster considering job opportunities and recruiters are in competition with each other for the best talent for key roles.

Ultimately though, we are only really talking about the advertising phase of recruitment and with the right tools and processes, good recruiters can still focus on their people skills to get the right outcomes for their council.

For correspondence or inquiry about any aspect of this section please contact the author, Tony Miller tony.miller@counciljobs.com

Outsourced executive recruitment

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unpeel your potential



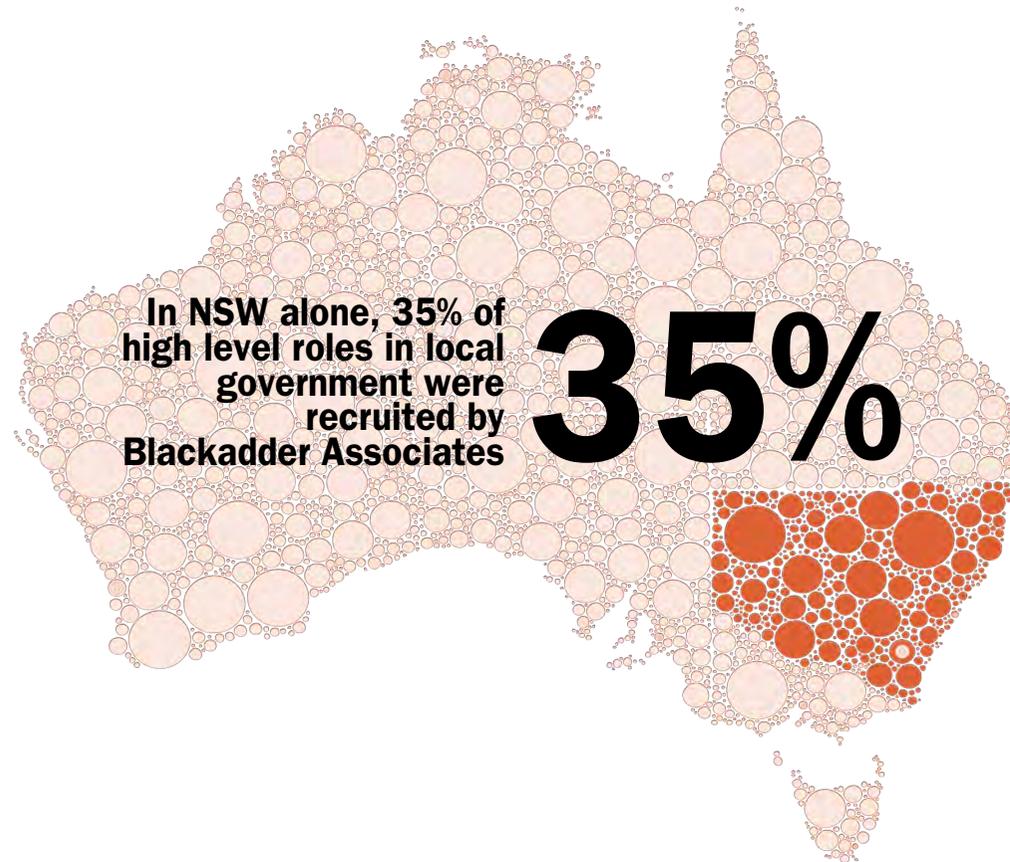
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About Blackadder Associates

Blackadder Associates are specialists in local government, providing a broad range of general consultancy services to Councils across Australia.

One of our key differences is that **we know local government and we are passionate about it**. Our key staff and all of our Associates have served in Executive positions in local government, including well over 200 years CEO/GM experience – and they have a deep commitment to delivering quality outcomes. We always seek to bring fresh and innovative ideas; professional, independent advice; and smart, practical solutions.



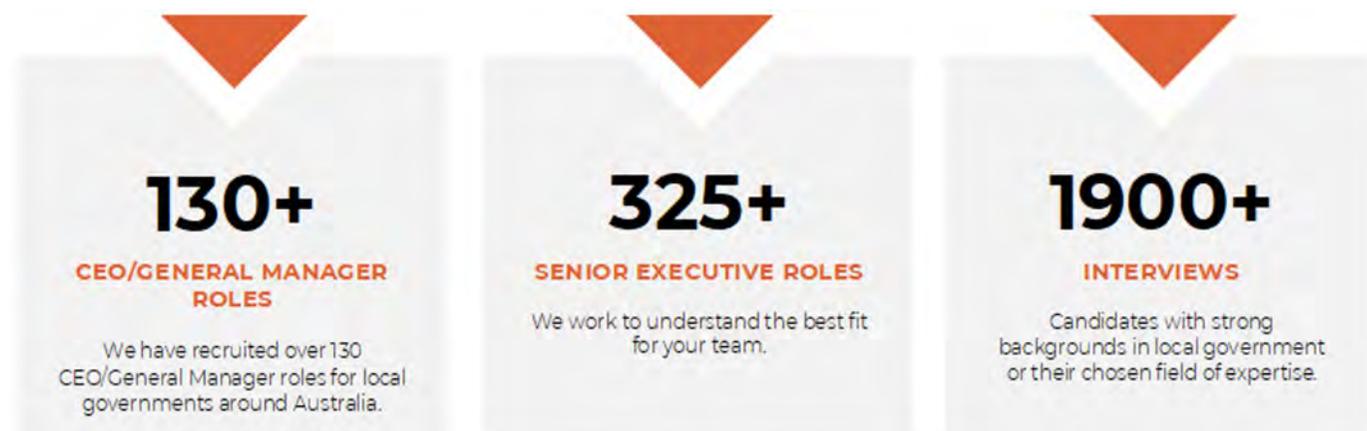
About Blackadder Associates

We work hard to help Councils and their staff.

Due to our extensive local government recruiting experience we have been invited to make comments on the current situation with recruitment in local government.

In 2020 Blackadder Associates recruited 35% of executive recruitment within New South Wales. We also recruited executive and management positions in Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

Square pegs in square holes – matching a vacancy with the right applicant, whilst generating an enhancement of the Councils reputation and leaving a very positive impression with all candidates – that’s our recruitment goal.



Three current trends

The following summarises our key observations – we hope they are of beneficial interest.

Three current trends

1 Increased use of external recruiters to relieve HR workload and further enhance Council reputation.

First, we are finding more and more Councils are looking for external recruitment assistance – whether for executive roles or professional positions. When trying to understand this, we believe there are three principal reasons:

- The capacity and resourcing of very busy HR sections may be stretched. Spending quality time seeking suitable candidates for roles is time-consuming and can be treated as a one-off expenditure for the Council, often funded by savings whilst the position being recruited is vacant. External recruiters will spend a lot of time out of hours chasing suitable candidates and providing a very professional service on behalf of Council.
- Giving this task to a recruitment firm dedicated to both the client Council and potential applicants means their reputation depends on doing a great job for both, and hence the Council’s reputation is also enhanced. We have had unsuccessful candidates who have said to us that they were so impressed by the process that they are more motivated to want to work at that Council.

- An experienced recruitment firm has an extensive database of candidates that might be suited to a role and they can follow up directly with these individuals to attain their interest. They do not rely only on responses to advertisements.

2 Families are looking to relocate to a lifestyle that might be better for their partners and children.

Second, one of the most significant trends we have observed in our recruiting assignments over recent years is the move away from the city to the regional and rural areas. Interestingly, this trend started before Covid – suggesting the busy lifestyle in the city is wearing a little thin and families are looking to relocate to a lifestyle that might be better for their partners and children. This emerged even more in 2020 with the impact of the pandemic. There is much research confirming this trend. 



Three current trends

Perhaps as a subset of the impact of Covid, we are hearing from potential candidates that they “want to get into local government”. Some of the reasons for this include - local government is seen as safe and secure employment; local government has comparatively good working conditions, including (depending on the position and Council policies) flexible working hours, contributing to relocating expenses, providing assistance with short-term or longer accommodation, provision of vehicles for private use, and proactive assistance to professional development. In local government you also have the ability to move around within Council or into other Councils.

All of this then leads to another observation – we are seeing more and better-qualified candidates competing for roles – and it then makes it even harder to break into local government, especially in well sought-after locations. However, we are also seeing a trend starting to re-emerge towards some professions being enticed away from local government - particularly in harder to get specialist professions, such as town planning and engineering.

3

We expect to see a greater and continuing use of technology for interviews

And finally, a long overdue benefit of the pandemic is our greater use of technology – Zoom, Teams, Blue Jeans, etc. Video conferencing for pre-recruitment workshops, shortlisting, interviews and selection has become the “norm” in Covid times and we expect this trend to continue to a large extent. Whilst it’s at Councils discretion to have either a face-to-face or video conferencing interview, we have found that Councils are becoming more comfortable in recruiting based on the technology interview face-to-face interview.

We expect to see a greater and continuing use of technology for interviews – and it means those who might not apply due to the tyranny of distance will be encouraged to apply if the first interview is by video conferencing. For the Council, it will mean less cost in reimbursing travel and accommodation expenses. 

A caution - it is important to keep a level playing field – if one applicant is being interviewed using technology then they all should be, including internals. 

Executive recruitment evolution

Key components of the recruitment process

Advertising

One of the most important, and often overlooked, areas of recruitment is advertising.

There is a definite trend away from newspaper advertising – due to the high cost and the fact that most applicants now pick up the vacancies through other regularly visited channels such as social media, local government-specific publications, LinkedIn, etc.

Communicating the right message in an advertisement is so important. It starts with the position title – it should immediately grab the attention of a prospective candidate and it should accurately reflect the key responsibilities of the role. We sometimes find that innovative titles are great, but they don't resonate out in the job's marketplace. In this instance, we recommend a heading that accurately reflects the role, but reference to the innovative title elsewhere in the advertisement. And job titles are regarded by many as status symbols – and career progression can depend on occupying the right role title.

We regularly hear from applicants that they are interested in a role due to the advertisement or the job title appealing to them – particularly those who may not even be in the market for a job. 

The position title is important – potential candidates express interest in a role when the advertisement or the job title appeals to them.

Advertising does work, or at least the right advertising does.

The Interview

The basics are really important. Having the right venue, having water available (or checking if the candidate has water at the start of an interview), ensuring the interview process is clearly outlined to each candidate both before and at the interview, and having good questions that relate to the selection criteria and will explore relevant aspects of the role.

The objective of the interview should be to get behind the person presented in the application. As a critical start to this process, we speak personally with every potential applicant – this means we can explain the role clearly to them and we are able to make an initial assessment of the applicant based on that interaction. This is very important, especially at shortlisting time where we are able to advise the shortlisting panel of these interactions.

Keeping a database of potential questions is a good strategy. If something relevant comes up during the interview process, updating this database and using it as a reference will be beneficial in adapting questions in future interviews.

The use of pre-interview questions and scenario questions proves to help delve further into the person behind the application.

Sending out a pre-interview question where candidates have to research and present at the start of the interview enables the panel to assess a range of attributes – research skills, understanding of the role and relevant industry aspects (eg finance, planning, local government etc), and presentation skills (which are important for many roles in local government).

Executive recruitment evolution

Similarly, providing a scenario question to be given to the candidate just before the interview (say 30 minutes beforehand) with the findings presented at the interview can also be insightful.

We are also finding that a candidate getting a “connection” with panel members is becoming increasingly important and often can be the point of difference between two similar candidates. On reflection, this is probably not that surprising, acknowledging that local government is a people business and we generally need people who are good at connecting with others in our business. Speaking directly to a panel member, using appropriate “language”, referring to panel members by their name and looking them in the eye is a lost art for some, but is nonetheless important to gaining a successful outcome.



Local government is a people business and we generally need people who are good at connecting with others in our business.

Almost without exception, particularly for management level positions but also for other roles, we are finding Councils looking for well-developed leadership skills and demonstrated achievements through the utilisation of those skills. This is critically important as we believe leadership is the major determinant of culture and if you get your culture right the people in that culture will continue to amaze you. We have seen many real and powerful examples of this. Of course, we have also seen the opposite impact where leadership is not at the standard needed. 

Leadership is the major determinant of culture and if you get your culture right the people in that culture will continue to amaze you.

An extension of this is an increasing focus not only on the candidates skillset but also the candidates ability to be a good team member and/or leader. We are advocates of using psychometric profiling to understand an individual’s personality, leadership style and values to assist the interview panel in understanding how a person may fit within the organisation and existing team members. The profiling we use is comprehensive and as accredited assessors we provide an assessment of a candidates

Executive recruitment evolution

strengths and how they will likely display their individual characteristics. Clients are now embedding this as standard practice in their recruitment process.

A quick decision on an appointment is also vital. We find that if a candidate is in for one job they may be in for others. The sooner a decision is made the less chance a great candidate will accept an alternative offer. Doing referee checks and personality profiles before an interview helps to quickly conclude an offer and appointment.

Post-interview feedback

We take great pride in being prepared to give honest and fulsome feedback to both successful and unsuccessful candidates after the interview. Why they weren't shortlisted, or why they weren't successful at the interview, or what they might do differently next time. We take helpful notes during shortlisting and at interviews to enable us to provide this feedback. We also ask panel members after the interview process has concluded if they have any particular feedback for unsuccessful candidates.

Checking of credentials

There have been some unfortunate instances in recent times where candidates have been appointed with issues in their background that might not have been brought to the panel's attention at the time of recruitment. Background checks, qualification checks, police checks, bankruptcy checks and global searches

are a vital part of this process. Whilst a finding in one of these might not necessarily disqualify the applicant, we expect an applicant to disclose these things as part of the process from a due diligence perspective. If there has not been disclosure it may lead to questions being asked of the applicant's integrity. Non-disclosure may have potential reputational damage for both the Council and the recruiter.



One more thing

Setting priorities post-employment

Finally, we are very strongly of the view that within 4 months of engagement the Council and the new recruit (be that a new CEO/GM or another position) should formally sit together and discuss some key questions – firstly, how have you found it here, is it what you expected, what has been better than expected, what do you think we could do better (remember they bring a new set of independent eyes with them and this can be insightful information if we are prepared to listen and act on it) and secondly what will we agree are your key priorities for the next 12 months (or for a period that aligns with Councils Performance Management System). We often facilitate these sessions, especially for newly appointed CEO/GM's.

New employees can bring a different perspective and an independent set of eyes which can provide insightful information if we are prepared to listen and act on it.

Conclusion

We believe most people in management would agree that the right staff are our greatest asset. Unfortunately, for varying reasons, recruitment of those staff into Councils is sometimes not given the priority it deserves.

In this article we have tried to identify the current situation with executive and professional recruitment in local government. We have shared our observations as well as, hopefully, providing some food for thought as to how individual Councils might be able to improve their own recruitment processes.

We would be very happy to provide further information on anything covered in this article – please contact Christine Georgiadis on 0439 813 310 or send an email to chris@blackadderassoc.com.au

Advertising and communications by Leonards



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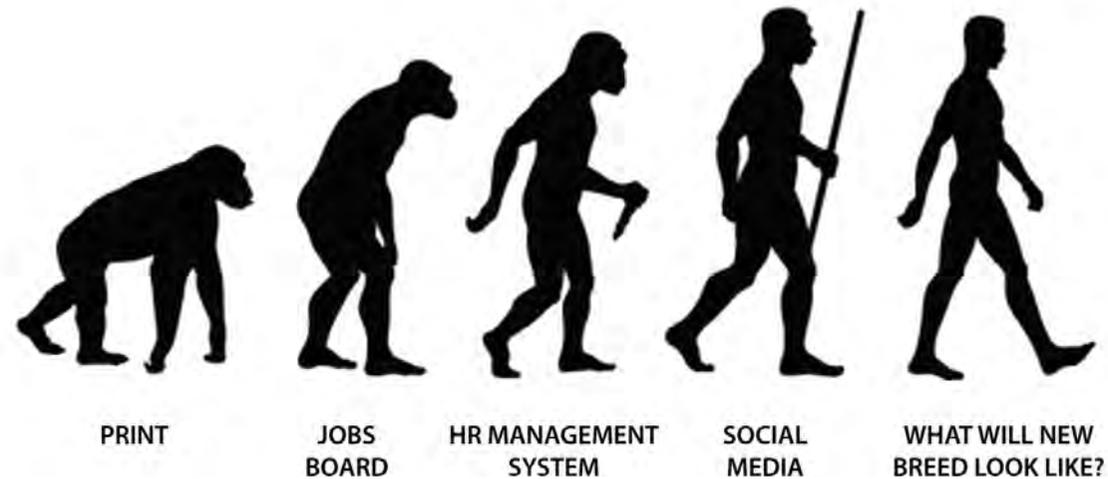
Where are we now?

Recruiting has experienced its most rapid evolution in the last 5-10 years and by far the greatest impact has been felt since John Fairfax said in 1841 “I wonder if a recruitment section would work”.

It has been primarily driven by the emergence of digital notice boards and the rapid evolution of HRIS. These are of course major developments in the internet of things. 🌐

Where are we now?

Let’s take a small step back and see how much we have evolved in the last 5-10 years.



Before focusing on Recruitment, it is useful to review the changes that have occurred in the last five to ten years that have such a profound impact on the way we purchase and recruit!

It was not that long ago that the newspapers, especially the metro weekend paper would come in two parts full of Real Estate, Car Ads and Positions Vacant. They were the publishers “Rivers of Gold” that have now been greatly reduced and largely substituted with digital notice boards with an ever-advancing search functionality. The newspaper sections still exist and can deliver value however they have been substantively subsumed into digital notice boards. 🌐

The rise of the digital notice board

Here are the main examples of print to digital substitution:



It's easy but erroneous to view this huge evolution with a linear mindset. The key benefits of digital notice boards is that there is effectively one collection point of relevant market data that can be easily and readily accessed and searched. Further the next steps of an enquiry, application or payment are very user-friendly processes; so easily grasped in fact that they became mainstream in a very short time period.

As an advertiser it was interesting to observe a great irony that the owners of the Notice Boards spend significant advertising amounts in traditional media to promote their on-line brand to become THE notice board of consumer choice.

It has not been a complete migration however with remnants of a traditional base remaining, mainly in higher value purchases such as commercial real estate or high end residential. It is interesting to note commercial property is one that has persisted in print with the major mastheads having well represented feature days for commercial property.

Focus on recruitment advertising

This print advertising value for real estate was ironically further recognised with the recent print cessation of nearly all of News Local publications except for some suburbs with high value real estate. The industry still sees value with local print publications as having value to promote their client’s property.

Lower value purchases however have been all but subsumed by web notice boards and it has only been accelerated with efficient commerce enabling direct purchase backed with an efficient on-line managed door to door dispatch.

Let’s Focus On Recruitment

The Challenge – As an employer; is to be able to attract and discern quality applicants from vast recruitment pools.

Recruitment is arguably the area of greatest digital evolution and it has still the longest way to go, mainly because we are dealing with the complexity of human relationships rather than just a transaction.

Employers are buying productive relationships which cannot always be found with sheer volume probability. In fact, it has become apparent that volume creates one of the biggest pressures in recruitment which has arisen in recent years particularly as the ease for applicants to apply has risen significantly.

Ease of application in this case presents an evolutionary challenge. Every evolutionary process has breakthroughs that lead to new problems or evolutionary challenges (EC’s). For recruitment, the main evolutionary pressure points look as follows:

Recruitment Break throughs and Evolutionary Challenges

Recruiting Challenge	Evolutionary Breakthrough	Evolutionary Challenge
Volume Jobs Boards	Great talent, high consumer acceptance and advanced search in one web location	To improve efficiency to identify quality applications while processing high volumes of variable quality applications. 
Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS)	Streamlined human resource process and greatly reduced manual process from recruitment to payroll with on demand electronic files	Ensure human discernment still plays a critical part in selection and applicant screening. The Application Programming Interface (API) can be a two-edged sword that promotes efficiency and volume while potentially opening the volume flood gate that can only be system controlled. 

Focus on recruitment advertising

Recruiting Challenge	Evolutionary Breakthrough	Evolutionary Challenge
Branding	Recruitment awareness has been focused through strong advertising on to the providers digital jobs board which has been accepted by the market (seekers and employers).	Ensure the employer’s brand value is not diminished or subsumed and the employer has opportunity to build their general market brand awareness. This is a particularly important communications opportunity for councils. 
Passive Disruption	Most digital jobs boards now have targeted emails that enter potential applicant’s mailboxes for jobs that may interest them, despite not looking, passive disruption.	Passive disruption generated by jobs board recruitment has not reached the impact of high-profile job advertisements that adorned newspapers with great effect 5-10 years ago. It is an elephant in the room and is a key reason why Recruiters (Head Hunters) are still as popular as ever. I have spoken to recruiters that still carry “Black Books” of quality applicants (more on Black Books later)! 

Next Phase Evolutionary Trends – Rise of your “Owned Space”

As consistently proven over the Age of Humanity, we are highly adaptable and always looking for opportunity and solutions. Arguably the greatest development that has occurred in the last few years has been the adeptness of businesses to utilize their OWN digital assets. These assets primarily are your web site, social media accounts, first party data and communication systems.

Councils are very well placed to greatly improve not only their ability to recruit high quality talent but also to exploit the momentous opportunity to greatly promote their OWN brand and communications. The techniques will be described below but it should be remembered this great enablement has been primarily through the advent of higher bandwidth / 5G internet.

Your Web Site for recruitment is your best asset, or problem!

Increasingly general consumer and community behaviour is to seek out the organisations website for information. An awareness is generated by a stimulus, usually created by advertising, social media or practiced functionality (such as a bank) which drives the need and search for information.

Focus on recruitment advertising

A small indicator of the general web users growing knowledge is that when they land on a web page, only 20% are clicking on the paid ads inevitably at the top of the search page while 80% are going to an organic listing often a few spaces down the page. This is demonstrating the more knowledgeable and targeted searches that are now being undertaken. Hold this thought for later!

Over the last two years there has been a marked change in applicant quality sources and also actual applicant searching behaviour. This can be demonstrated from a sample taken from our recruitment software (eziJobs) regarding jobs advertised in 2019 and 2020 where we measured the applicant source and how the application source proportionately changes from the initial application to the final cut interview stage.

Source Application Analysis for 2019/2020

The broad sample of 1,035 positions received 28,587 applications. These applications were tagged and recorded for their source e.g., Council Web Site, SEEK, Indeed, boutique web site, scraped together with many other sources.

For analysis purposes they were classified into four categories:

Paid Media – General:

This is any media purchased by council from a publisher with a general market focus. This would include SEEK, Indeed (Paid), Linked In, Career One, Newspapers etc

Paid Media – Boutique:

Specialist websites by vocation or industry e.g. CouncilJobs, LG Assist, Planners, Hoopla, Arts Hub etc

Free – Scraped:

This included primarily Indeed and Adzuna ads scraped from varied notice boards

Owned: Applications direct to the council website, from councils intranet, referred by friend/family etc

Focus on recruitment advertising

Results

Media Type	Initial Application Numbers	% of Total	Applications Interviewed	% of Total
Paid Media - General	12,314	43%	408	24%
Paid Media- Boutique	1,135	4%	93	5%
Free -(Scraped)	3,444	12%	101	6%
Owned	11,694	41%	1,130	65%
Totals	28,587	100%	1,637	100%

The table shows that Paid Media provided the highest numbers of raw applicants with only 24% making an interview. Paid Media had an inverse relationship with Owned media which demonstrated a dominant share for quality applicants where the proportion rose from 41% to 65%.

Paid Boutique maintained a steady share over for a lower proportion of 5% approximately between Initial Application and those qualifying for an interview. This demonstrates that Paid Boutiques deliver quality applicants albeit at a smaller volume.

The outstanding conclusion which is a growing trend is that not only is Councils “OWNED” media space providing strong initial numbers, but they are proving to be the primary source of quality applications. This is a trend observed in other industries where in travel for example local accommodation providers who have been under pressure from On-Line booking agents have been able to establish their OWN media space on their web sites for bookings rather than the aggregator digital booking options.

Recruitment trends

The Emerging Recruitment Trends

The one clear takeaway is that job applicants, particularly local applicants, are closely watching their local councils' jobs board. Council is a publisher with the web site being the key asset.

This finding can also be cross checked with a quick review of your Councils Google Analytics and looking at your web site user's trends and useage patterns. From observation of some large councils the recruitment page is the most visited page on Councils web site, sometimes 4 times more than its next ranking page. Clearly Council is seen by job seekers as a recruiter of value.

The other major asset that council is developing as digitization progresses is the accumulation of quality candidate data which is accumulating within their own HRIS. Of particular importance is that they now have data banks of quality applicants more on this later.

The challenge now in the next evolutionary stages is to:

- Ensure excellent User experience (UX) for the volume of quality web traffic viewing Councils website.
- Exploit technology to produce quality, low-cost volume recruitment videos that also promotes Councils brand.
- Utilize the growing data bases in Councils HRIS (Human Resources Information Systems)
- Grow data bases with quality sources of quality candidates such as proven boutique web sites.

These challenges are critical to not only being successful in your OWNED space but also so your brand, message, culture

or organization is not diluted or subsumed by a PAID publisher. This means it is as it technically known as CRUCIAL!!

For the purposes of this discussion however I will just focus on the key subject of "Recruitment" and talk about low-cost videos for recruitment. I am passionate from observing and working in advertising and recruitment from many angles that this is the best "Bang for Buck" initiative for Councils to focus on.

I can hear the objections cry out "but we already do video" with my reply being a challenge! Is it impacting, affordable while exploiting the latest game changing waves of video technology advances? Thankfully achieving these objectives its one of the easier tasks in this technological revolution.

Video is Great but It Has to be Seen

Current Problem: Video Content is costly and is Not Being Viewed

Council video is generally housed on a separate platform with little or no linking to the users web journey causing a big disconnect between relevant content and the users search journey. Linking content to the web site journey is crucial. You have to be pretty hopeful to simply- post on Vimeo or You Tube and wait for your content to go viral!

I have reviewed a lot of high quality (high cost) video content primarily on Councils You Tube accounts. Unfortunately, this content, (typically housed in an unrelated place to the normal user's web site journey) will experience typical statistics of 250 views over three years; hardly influencing content and not the original intent!

The video opportunity

The Solution: To Ensure Video is Incorporated into the Users Practical Web Journey.

This obviously requires understanding of the typical journeys and how content and (UX) can benefit. However by accepting the preeminence of the Councils Jobs Board, the obvious solution is to include great content about the individual roles into the job seekers journey. The ideal solution is to be confident e and place it within each job, not just a general content piece about recruitment that's a high level recruitment page menu option.

This means moving from generic recruitment videos to specific job videos!

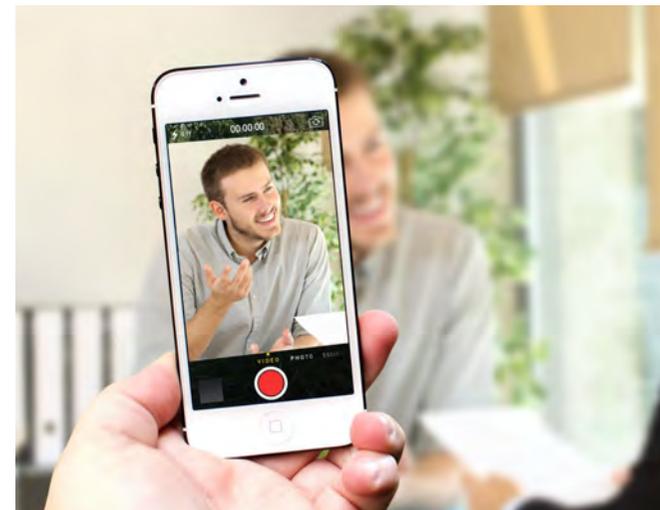
- Birth of the low-cost video Jobs Board and Council Communications Promotion

This is an easy and obvious step and can easily link in with your recruitment system. With a smooth (UX) it will become the norm for anyone serious about the position to positively view the content. The videos objectives are to

- Inform about Council culture, achievements, ambitions – The Story!
- Provide a suitability filter for the applicant, “sounds like me”.
- Start to build positive Council relationships with not only the successful candidate but also all applicants who are quite likely residents of the LGA.
- Costs similar to a Jobs Board posting – circa \$500.

The key challenge is to make it cheap (as DIY as possible) and easy, so it forms a natural part of every recruitment.

The advent of sophisticated I Phone or Android versions that have high quality video now allows Council to significantly contribute to each job video which greatly reduces the cost.



The reason cost is stressed (outside of the obvious need) is that we can evolve video into the volume side of recruitment which means it has to be affordable i.e. cheap! There are a lot of job videos around now but they are professionally shot and not practical from a cost or time perspective for most jobs. For instance, this video is a great promotion of both the company and role but is not something that can be readily afforded for general roles. It is a great video though!

www.vimeo.com/366163955/0186e01612

The video opportunity

What Features Will a Low-Cost Jobs Board Video Contain?

To be successful the following criteria must be met:

- The main body of the video is professionally produced in a one-off reusable template.
- Each individual job can be uploaded into an empty component of the template hence ensuring its reusable capacity preferable from an I Phone or Android.
- The ideal format would be a 3 frame, 90second, template based video with the following example structure:



INTRODUCTORY FRAME - Reused and Professionally Produced

Professionally produced introduction to the council. Preferably narrated by the CEO or Mayor. They would discuss the attractions and features of the council, its culture, challenges and pass to the role generally e.g. “I hope you like what you are going to hear about this position” (30 seconds)



THE JOB FRAME - Unique for each job – Council Shot

This is the video done by mobile phone and should be the manager discussing the role, type of person, extolling the culture and benefits. There are many great examples of these! (40 seconds)



THE WRAP UP FRAME - Reused and Professionally Shot

The trailer frame where CEO/Mayor finishes the video with a “Sounds like You? Then we’d love to hear from you” message

An example of one recently produced can be viewed here:

www.ezisuite.net/resonate

The video opportunity

These videos will be low cost as they:

- Maximise the reusable content by allowing the professionally scripted and produced Introductory and Wrap Up Frames to be continually reused. Another feature is to have more than one introductory frame depending on the job seeker audience e.g. Executive, Outdoor, Trainee etc.
- The Job Frame will be effectively DIY and shot with a smart phone and either internally or with professional help edited into the video between the Introductory and Wrap Up frames.
- The current council jobs board will allow for easy URL referencing to You Tube as part of the application process. This is not dependent on having a recruitment system jobs board and can be easily uploaded onto Councils own jobs board, everyone can do it!

The cost of each ad should be comparable to a standard jobs board postings of wider audience budget at circa \$500. This will allow Council to invest in its own brand and create the community awareness of its presence and achievements while helping to ensure only the best quality applicants apply.

Typically, this will focus on the Councils EDM (email) communications platforms already being used by councils to promote events and community news etc. The main evolutionary.

Conclusion

I am sure this evolution is only just beginning however while not being a futurist its plain to see that the continually improving band width is now allowing for ever improving web functionality. The emergence of video has been a dominant factor in advertising particularly in the last two years and this will only continue. It is important to incorporate this now into one of Councils most important forays into advertising, Recruitment. 

Further, data base (particularly 1st party data) and its integration into communications is becoming vital for organisational growth.

Admittedly it has resulted in the proliferation of emails competing for your consumer dollar or community attention. However the Evolutionary Challenge (EC) which is being realised is growing this first party data into a platform that provides a valued relationship driven communications. Again, Councils by having significant OWNED media assets are very well placed to take advantage of this relationship position at low cost with high value.

The next few years will see the same rapid evolution however if implemented well, it will not just create more change. It will significantly improve Councils recruitment and overall communications impact while also positioning Council to compete in the contest for skill and talent. We now all have high quality tools, it's a challenge now to use them well.

For information about this report or advice on your recruitment, please contact Richard Faithorn at richardf@leonards.net.au

Good luck!!

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