

SALARY GUIDE

COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION NEW BUILD



Salary & Insights Report

2025-2026

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Introduction

The Commercial Construction – New Build sector in Australia has experienced mixed conditions over the past 12 months, rather than a consistently strong project pipeline. While overall construction activity [grew by 3.5% in 2025 according to the latest Australia Bureau of Statistics \(ABS\) report](#), the nature of this growth has been state-dependent and project-size specific.

Notably, there has been a diminishing pipeline in the larger end of town, particularly in traditional commercial and residential building sectors, which are facing headwinds such as high interest rates and cautious investor sentiment. However, the small to medium-sized project pipeline has largely held up, supported by continued investment in sectors like data centres, hospitals, schools, specialised warehousing, and renewable energy infrastructure. Economic forecasts indicate varying regional performance, with states such as Queensland and Western Australia exhibiting stronger growth potential, while other major states may experience more moderate activity.

This evolving environment, coupled with heightened competition for skilled professionals and changing workforce expectations, adds complexity to how professionals evaluate their roles, workplace satisfaction, and long-term career alignment.

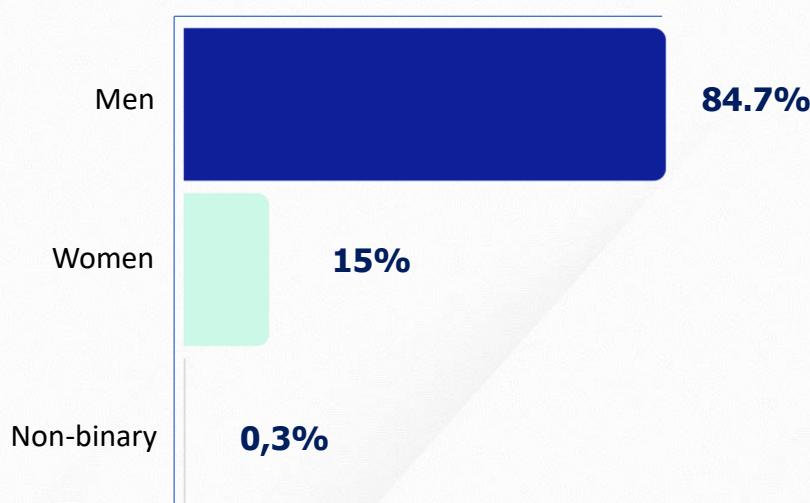
This salary guide captures feedback from professionals working directly in the Commercial Construction – New Build space, forming part of a broader national survey of more than 1,600 respondents. The result is a detailed view of how today's workforce feels about their salaries, work environment, benefits, and future prospects. For businesses seeking to stay ahead of shifting expectations and for candidates looking for transparency in a competitive market, these insights provide clear direction.



Industry Demographics

This remains one of the most male-dominated sectors in the built environment, with over **84%** of respondents identifying as men. While this figure is consistent with previous years, the lack of gender diversity, particularly in senior leadership roles, continues to limit both the talent pipeline and broader perspectives across project delivery.

Improving diversity is not just a matter of representation. Employers who prioritise inclusive policies, visible female leadership, and equitable development pathways tend to foster stronger engagement and retention. In an increasingly candidate-driven market, culture matters, especially to younger generations entering the field.



Workforce Composition and Role Levels

Our survey data reveals that the majority of respondents are experienced professionals, with Senior Specialists, Mid-level Advisors, and Department Managers representing nearly half of the dataset. While there has been a steady level of senior candidates in the market, the commercial new build sector is not saturated with talent. The reality is that, despite the presence of experienced individuals, securing experienced candidates remains equally, if not more, competitive than securing junior ones. This is largely due to widespread and persistent skills and labour shortages across the Australian construction industry, affecting both skilled trades and professional roles.

The relatively small percentage of entry-level and graduate professionals in our dataset suggests a talent pipeline that is becoming increasingly top-heavy. This imbalance is particularly concerning when considering the significant workforce demands of various construction sectors. [While Building Installation Services and Building Completion Services lead in employment](#) (318,300 and 227,100 workers respectively) and other sectors like Non-Residential Building Construction employ over 70,000 according to ABS, the documented shortages across key occupations within these areas suggest that the supply of new and developing talent is not adequately meeting the industry's evolving needs. For businesses, this unequivocally highlights a looming succession gap and a critical risk of skill shortages in the next five to ten years.

Therefore, while senior experience offers a high level of project knowledge and technical expertise, particularly valuable for navigating the complexities of current projects and tight delivery schedules, active and sustained investment in junior talent is paramount. Mentoring programs, structured onboarding, and comprehensive graduate development plans will be essential not only to rebalance the workforce over time but also to build the foundational expertise necessary to meet future demand and mitigate the escalating challenges of talent scarcity.

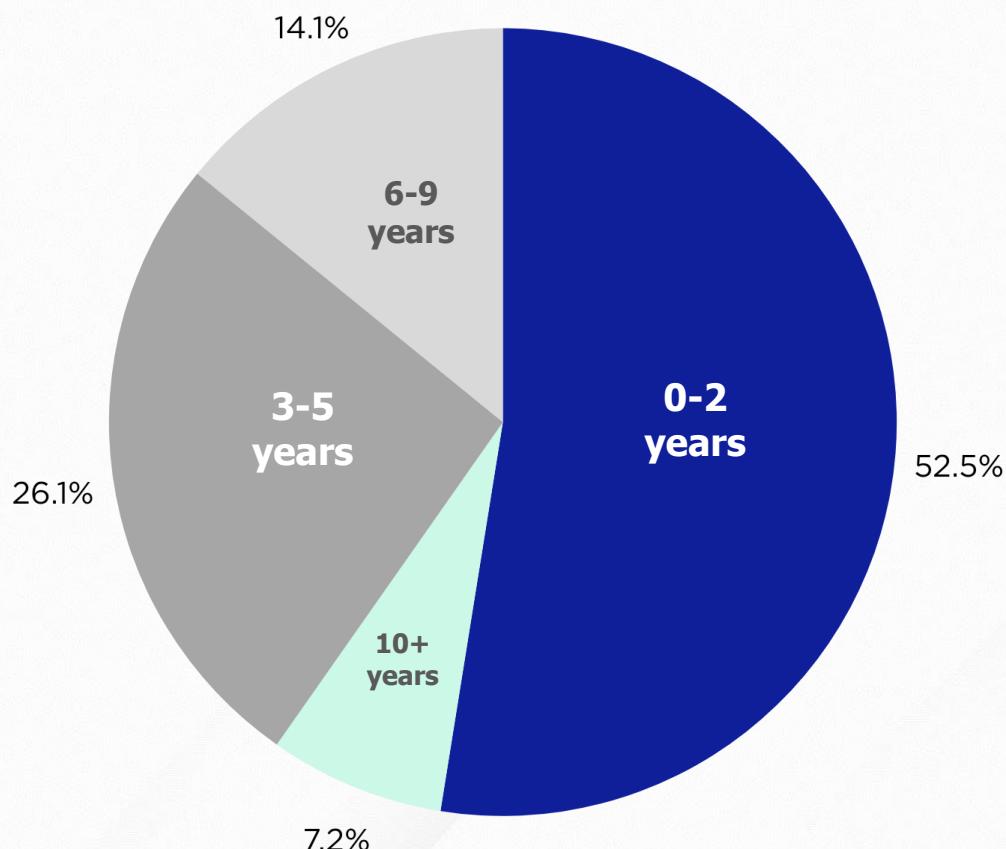
Tenure and Mobility

Over half of those surveyed have been with their current employer for fewer than two years, while only **7%** have remained for a decade or more. This signals a high degree of mobility, and perhaps more importantly, a readiness to move on when growth or recognition stalls.

In an industry where long-term project visibility and pipeline confidence are essential, frequent movement also reflects the agility of professionals seeking to align themselves with stronger reputations, better teams, or improved leadership.

Employers should take note: tenure is no longer earned solely through longevity. Structured progression, continuous feedback, and competitive compensation are key to retaining top performers.

How long have you been in your current company?



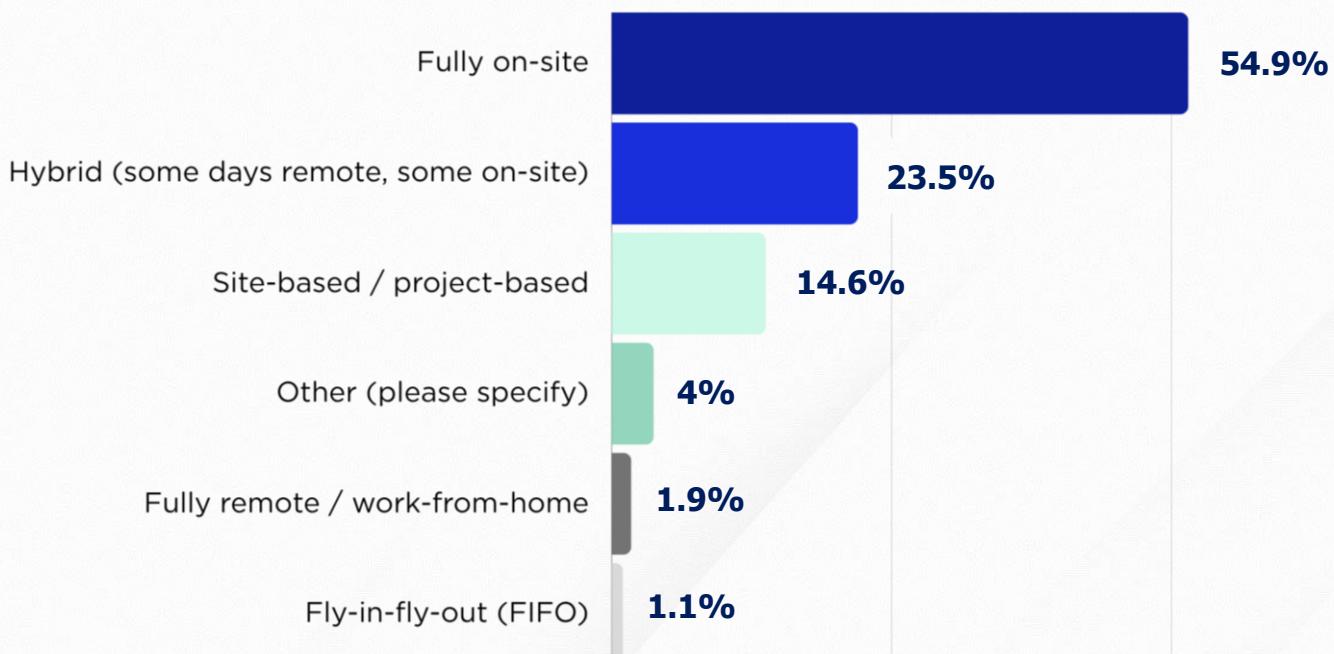
Employment Type and Work Location

The data shows that **92%** of professionals are employed in permanent, full-time roles. While this is unsurprising, given the nature of long-term project cycles, it also reveals how few businesses offer contract or project-based alternatives.

Regarding work location, over **55%** of employees are still working fully on-site, while nearly one-quarter operate in hybrid roles. Remote-only and FIFO arrangements remain niche but are gradually increasing in prevalence, particularly in planning, estimating, and design coordination functions.

The hybrid trend deserves attention. While many roles in commercial construction will always require a strong site presence, offering flexibility, even just one or two days a week, can dramatically shift how a company is perceived by candidates. For professionals in demanding roles, the option to break up the week with administrative or planning tasks from home is no longer just a perk; it's a differentiator.

Work Arrangements



Pathways Into Roles

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to career movement. Roughly **19%** of professionals secured their current position through internal promotion, while **20%** came via recruitment agencies or referrals. A notable portion was directly applied to advertised roles, and others were approached by new employers.

This illustrates that while internal mobility plays an important role in career development, a significant number of experienced hires are made through external outreach efforts. For employers, this reinforces the importance of maintaining strong employer branding and being visible in both passive and active talent markets. For candidates, the data shows that being proactive — whether through networking or direct applications — still pays off.

Promotions and Pay Reviews

Only **13%** of respondents were promoted in the past year. Nearly two-thirds say they have not progressed, despite rising workloads and responsibilities. In terms of salary, **47%** received a pay rise within the last 12 months, while more than a third report no increase at all.

This disconnect between effort and recognition is a red flag for retention. As professionals take on broader scopes without corresponding advancement, job satisfaction inevitably suffers. Particularly in a high-pressure environment like commercial construction, timely recognition through title changes, pay adjustments, or project lead opportunities goes a long way in retaining senior talent.

Many professionals expect some movement in their salaries this year. For employers, the takeaway is simple: if you're not planning ahead for reviews and benchmarking, you're already falling behind.

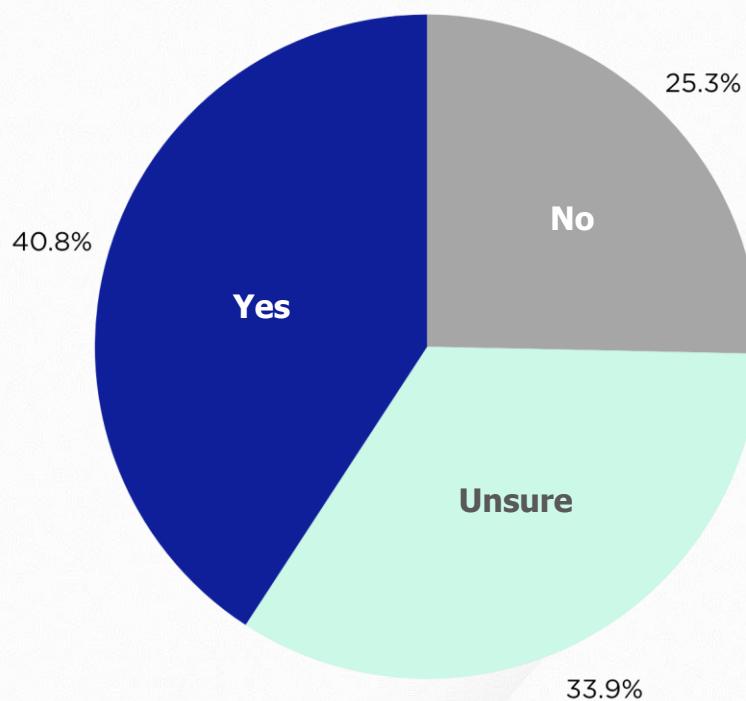
Perceived Market Alignment

Only **41%** of our audience believes they are being paid in line with the market. The rest are either unsure or believe they are underpaid.

This level of uncertainty suggests a growing lack of transparency in the sector. When employees are unsure how their salary compares, it can undermine trust and engagement, regardless of the actual figure.

For businesses, it's a strong case for clearer communication and salary banding. For candidates, it highlights the importance of benchmarking against reliable sources, particularly when preparing for review or interview discussions.

Do you think you are being paid the current market rate?



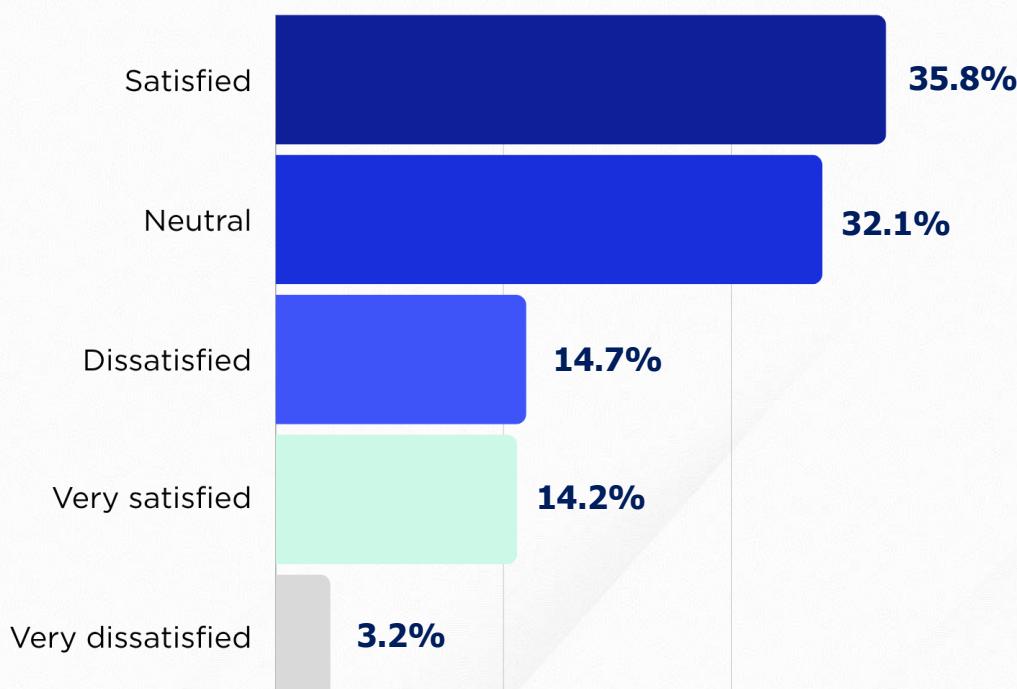
Work-Life Balance and Satisfaction

Only **31%** of respondents report being satisfied or very satisfied with their work-life balance. A further **47%** sit in the neutral category, neither struggling nor thriving. Over **20%** report active dissatisfaction.

The data reflects a broader tension in the sector. Long hours, tight deadlines, and physical demands are intrinsic to commercial construction, but they don't have to come at the cost of personal well-being. Flexible hours, mental health initiatives, and better workload distribution are business-critical retention strategies.

For candidates, this is a reminder to pay close attention to a company's culture and wellbeing commitments, not just the headline salary.

Work-Life Balance Satisfaction

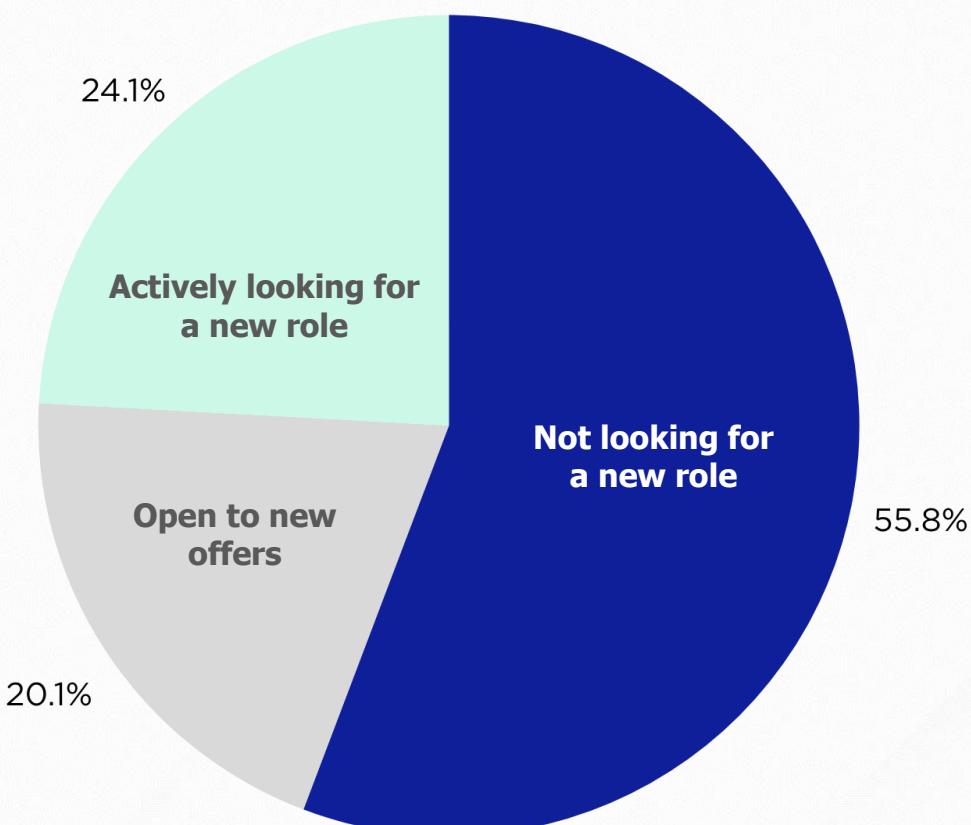


Engagement and Job Search Activity

Only **24%** are actively looking for a new role, but **20%** are open to offers. This means nearly half the market is potentially movable under the right conditions.

It's a strong reminder that most quality candidates won't apply directly to a job ad. Instead, they wait for the right offer to come to them. Recruiters, hiring managers, and talent teams must invest in relationships, rather than rely solely on reactive hiring tactics.

For candidates, staying open to new opportunities, particularly with trusted partners, can lead to career moves that align more closely with their long-term aspirations, rather than just short-term gains.



Motivations to Move: What Really Matters

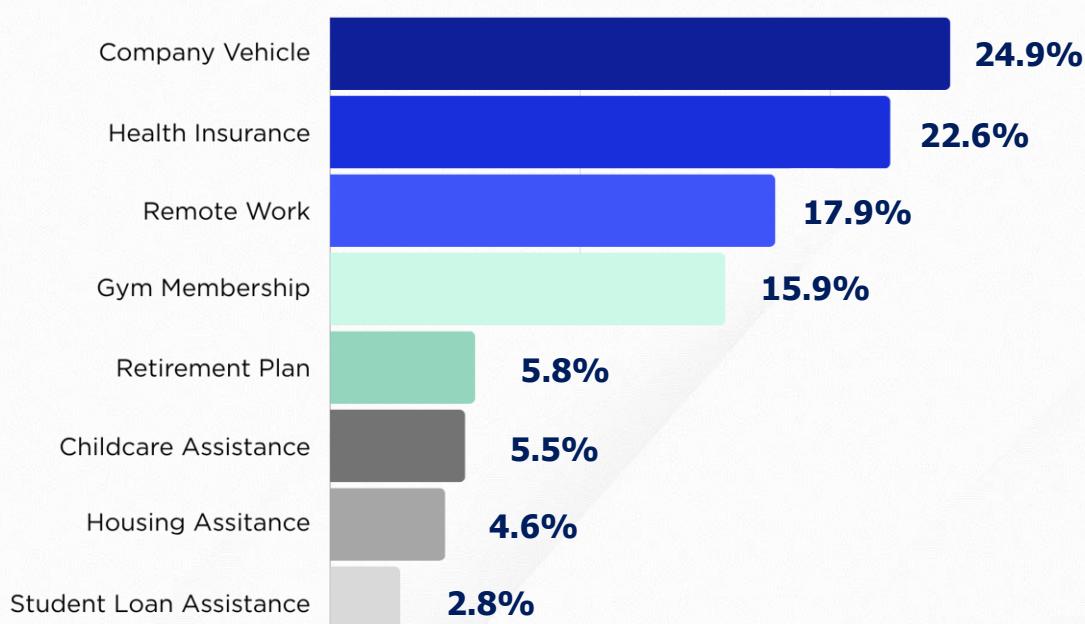
Better salary remains the number one driver, cited by **43%**. But that's only part of the story. Over one in five said flexibility was a deciding factor, while others prioritised location, culture, and leadership quality.

The message is clear. Professionals are seeking the full package: fair compensation, meaningful work, competent leadership, and a sense of balance. A strong employer offer needs to address all of these areas to stand out.

Benefits: Beyond the Payslip

Company vehicles remain the most sought-after benefit, followed closely by health insurance, remote work flexibility, and gym memberships. These are solutions to daily financial and well-being challenges.

This is particularly relevant in a high-pressure industry where commuting costs, long hours, and high physical demands are the norm. For businesses, tailoring benefits to reflect actual employee needs, rather than generic incentives, can play a significant role in overall satisfaction.



Conclusion

The Commercial Construction – New Build sector is resilient, but the workforce powering it is looking for more. Salaries must remain competitive, yes, but salary alone won't solve retention or engagement issues. Culture, leadership, flexibility, transparency, and recognition are all part of the equation.



For employers, this guide provides a roadmap for staying competitive in a rapidly evolving market. For candidates, it provides the clarity needed to make informed, confident decisions about their next move.

In the months ahead, those who listen to their people, respond to market conditions, and adapt their approach will emerge as the employers and professionals of choice.

Visit our website for further market insights, all our Salary Guides, opportunities available and more:

designandbuild.com.au



SALARY GUIDE

Project Management

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Senior Project Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$280,000 - \$330,000	\$210,000 - \$260,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$220,000 - \$280,000	\$170,000 - \$220,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$250,000 - \$350,000	\$200,000 - \$300,000
WA - Perth	\$200,000 - \$300,000	\$170,000 - \$200,000

Project Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$240,000 - \$280,000	\$180,000 - \$220,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$180,000 - \$250,000	\$150,000 - \$200,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$185,000 - \$280,000	\$180,000 - \$230,000
WA - Perth	\$180,000 - \$230,000	\$130,000 - \$170,000

SALARY GUIDE

Project Engineering

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Senior Project Engineer / Coordinator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$160,000 - \$220,000	\$130,000 - \$160,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$140,000 - \$180,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000

Project Engineer / Coordinator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$150,000 - \$180,000	\$110,000 - \$140,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$120,000 - \$150,000	\$110,000 - \$140,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$130,000 - \$155,000	\$110,000 - \$130,000
WA - Perth	\$130,000 - \$150,000	\$110,000 - \$140,000

Site Engineer

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$90,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000 - \$120,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$90,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000 - \$120,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$150,000	\$80,000 - \$120,000
WA - Perth	\$90,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000 - \$110,000

SALARY GUIDE

Services

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Services Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$180,000 - \$280,000	\$140,000 - \$200,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$160,000 - \$200,000	\$140,000 - \$170,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$210,000 - \$260,000	\$155,000 - \$210,000
WA - Perth	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$140,000 - \$180,000

Services Coordinator / Engineer

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$140,000 - \$180,000	\$110,000 - \$150,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$130,000 - \$170,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$110,000 - \$140,000	\$140,000 - \$170,000
WA - Perth	\$130,000 - \$170,000	\$130,000 - \$150,000

SALARY GUIDE

Estimating

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Estimating Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$240,000 - \$320,000	\$200,000 - \$260,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$190,000 - \$240,000	\$180,000 - \$220,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$250,000 - \$330,000	\$200,000 - \$250,000
WA - Perth	\$190,000 - \$230,000	\$180,000 - \$220,000

Senior Estimator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$160,000 - \$240,000	\$150,000 - \$200,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$160,000 - \$200,000	\$150,000 - \$200,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$190,000 - \$240,000	\$150,000 - \$200,000
WA - Perth	\$170,000 - \$200,000	\$150,000 - \$200,000

Estimator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$125,000 - \$180,000	\$105,000 - \$150,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$120,000 - \$150,000	\$100,000 - \$120,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$135,000 - \$175,000	\$105,000 - \$135,000
WA - Perth	\$120,000 - \$150,000	\$100,000 - \$120,000

SALARY GUIDE

Supervisors

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Finishes Supervisor

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$160,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$170,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$145,000 - \$185,000	\$145,000 - \$170,000
WA - Perth	\$130,000 - \$160,000	\$110,000 - \$140,000

Structures Supervisor

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$180,000 - \$220,000	\$130,000 - \$170,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$180,000 - \$220,000	\$140,000 - \$180,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$175,000 - \$220,000	\$165,000 - \$180,000
WA - Perth	\$140,000 - \$180,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000

Site Supervisor

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$180,000 - \$260,000	\$160,000 - \$190,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$180,000 - \$220,000	\$140,000 - \$180,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$185,000 - \$240,000	\$175,000 - \$220,000
WA - Perth	\$170,000 - \$190,000	\$160,000 - \$180,000

SALARY GUIDE

Contracts

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Contracts Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$210,000 - \$280,000	\$160,000 - \$220,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$200,000 - \$250,000	\$170,000 - \$220,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$210,000 - \$280,000	\$170,000 - \$220,000
WA - Perth	\$200,000 - \$250,000	\$170,000 - \$220,000

Senior Contracts Administrator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$180,000 - \$220,000	\$130,000 - \$170,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$180,000 - \$220,000	\$160,000 - \$180,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$170,000 - \$230,000	\$150,000 - \$180,000
WA - Perth	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$180,000

Contracts Administrator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$120,000 - \$170,000	\$100,000 - \$140,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$160,000 - \$200,000	\$140,000 - \$160,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$120,000 - \$170,000	\$100,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$120,000 - \$160,000	\$100,000 - \$140,000

SALARY GUIDE

Site Management

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Senior Site Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$250,000 - \$350,000	\$200,000 - \$240,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$200,000 - \$260,000	\$160,000 - \$200,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$280,000 - \$350,000	\$200,000 - \$250,000
WA - Perth	\$190,000 - \$230,000	\$140,000 - \$190,000

Site Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$200,000 - \$300,000	\$160,000 - \$230,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$170,000 - \$220,000	\$120,000 - \$170,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$220,000 - \$320,000	\$170,000 - \$220,000
WA - Perth	\$160,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$170,000

SALARY GUIDE

Design

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Senior Design Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$200,000 - \$300,000	\$170,000 - \$200,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$190,000 - \$230,000	\$160,000 - \$200,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$200,000 - \$250,000	\$170,000 - \$200,000
WA - Perth	\$190,000 - \$240,000	\$160,000 - \$200,000

Design Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$160,000 - \$220,000	\$140,000 - \$170,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$175,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$170,000 - \$200,000	\$140,000 - \$170,000
WA - Perth	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$175,000

Design Coordinator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$120,000 - \$140,000	\$90,000 - \$110,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$90,000 - \$150,000	\$70,000 - \$120,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$120,000 - \$140,000	\$90,000 - \$110,000
WA - Perth	\$90,000 - \$150,000	\$70,000 - \$120,000

SALARY GUIDE

Bids

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Bid Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$140,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$180,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$120,000 - \$160,000	\$100,000 - \$130,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$130,000 - \$200,000	\$130,000 - \$180,000
WA - Perth	\$120,000 - \$160,000	\$100,000 - \$130,000

Bid Coordinator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$100,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000 - \$120,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$100,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000 - \$100,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$100,000 - \$140,000	\$90,000 - \$120,000
WA - Perth	\$100,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000 - \$100,000

SALARY GUIDE

Costs

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Senior Cost Planner

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$180,000 - \$230,000	\$140,000 - \$190,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$190,000 - \$240,000	\$145,000 - \$200,000
WA - Perth	\$150,000 - \$200,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000

Cost Planner

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$140,000 - \$180,000	\$120,000 - \$140,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$140,000 - \$170,000	\$110,000 - \$140,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$150,000 - \$190,000	\$130,000 - \$150,000
WA - Perth	\$140,000 - \$170,000	\$110,000 - \$140,000

SALARY GUIDE

Safety

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Safety Manager

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$180,000 - \$300,000	\$170,000 - \$210,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$180,000 - \$250,000	\$150,000 - \$220,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$180,000 - \$275,000	\$160,000 - \$220,000
WA - Perth	\$160,000 - \$235,000	\$130,000 - \$200,000

Senior Safety Advisor

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$170,000 - \$200,000	\$140,000 - \$180,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$150,000 - \$180,000	\$110,000 - \$150,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$170,000 - \$190,000	\$130,000 - \$140,000
WA - Perth	\$130,000 - \$150,000	\$110,000 - \$120,000

SALARY GUIDE

Safety

AVERAGE BASE SALARY

FOR 12 MONTHS

AUD

EXCLUDING SUPERANNUATION

Safety Advisor

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$120,000 - \$160,000	\$100,000 - \$150,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$150,000 - \$170,000	\$120,000 - \$150,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$130,000 - \$160,000	\$110,000 - \$120,000
WA - Perth	\$120,000 - \$140,000	\$100,000 - \$115,000

HSE Administrator

Location	T1/T2	T3/T4
NSW - Sydney	\$80,000 - \$90,000	\$70,000 - \$80,000
QLD - Brisbane	\$80,000 - \$90,000	\$65,000 - \$85,000
VIC - Melbourne	\$80,000 - \$90,000	\$70,000 - \$80,000
WA - Perth	\$70,000 - \$85,000	\$65,000 - \$80,000