

## ENGINEERS IN CRISIS

Industry association, Consult Australia has released data revealing significant cutbacks in the engineering industry, with the jobs market returned to post-GFC conditions.

The Association's annual skills survey found that 44 per cent of the industry is reducing recruitment activities and a quarter is making targeted redundancies.

This data is a contrast to 2010 and 2011 when 74 and 66 per cent of firms respectively stated they were recruiting and there was a skills shortage.

Consult Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Megan Motto has suggested this crisis is indicative of the Government's underinvestment in infrastructure and is symptomatic of declining business confidence in the economy.

"This is just stage one of what will become a nation-wide crisis should investment continue to fall by the wayside," said Ms Motto.

"Until governments provide a more stable and consistent pipeline of work, the engineering industry will be forced to continue cutting back staff, which will be to the detriment of Australian productivity and the overall economy.

"If we don't respond to the needs of a growing and aging population and the demands of a services-driven economy, we will be unable to compete with those countries that have had the foresight to build for the future.

"The decreasing availability of engineering positions should present a wakeup call for anyone concerned with the state of our built environment and the stability of this nation-building industry."

Consult Australia's annual *Economic Forecast* report estimates the industry consists of some 48,600 firms, employing about 240,000 people and generating revenues of \$41 billion per year.

"With no new projects in the pipeline consultants are getting singed" said Ms Motto.

"What governments need to recognise is that this is just the beginning of the fallout and it will not just be the engineering industry that suffers. The whole nation will feel the effects of this underinvestment.

"Consult Australia supports a fiscally conservative approach by governments, but recommends savings made across recurrent expenditure should be invested in productivity enhancing infrastructure projects."

### Ends

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