



THE HUDSON REPORT

EMPLOYMENT AND HR TRENDS

Australia
Employment Expectations

FROM GREAT PEOPLE TO GREAT PERFORMANCE®

JANUARY-MARCH 2012

Hudson

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

At the start of 2012 it's fair to say we are facing another year of change with continuing turbulence in global economies and rapidly changing market conditions closer to home. With 2011's patchwork economy driving broadening differences between sectors, these chasms persist at the beginning of the new year. However, the results of this quarter's Hudson Report indicate Australian businesses hiring intentions remain on track.



We are daily reminded of Australia's place as part of a global economic landscape as we consume reports of European fragility and continuing sluggish recovery in America, which is in turn affecting Asian economies critical to our own economic growth. However, despite these significant headwinds our economy continues to be robust. This is reflecting in this quarter's positive hiring expectations. In particular, a strong 35.9% of employers are intending to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012.

Major infrastructure developments and sustained demand continue to contribute to strong hiring intentions in resources, construction/engineering and property, transport and professional services. In particular, the uplift in hiring intentions in New South Wales is an encouraging sign of the underlying strength of the nation's hiring intentions, overall with the state lifting from fifth to fourth overall among Australia's states and territories. In contrast, retail, manufacturing and FMCG are likely to remain comparatively subdued reflecting global uncertainty, the strong Australian dollar and as consumers continue to save rather than spend.

Now more than ever, in the current economic climate, the cost of a bad hire is crippling. It is essential that employers have a robust process in place to rigorously assess and secure the best people for their businesses. People are the key to driving sustained business performance.

I trust these findings will provide an insight into the employment market as we begin 2012. On behalf of Hudson Australia, I'd like to extend a warm thanks to the 4,338 employers who gave up their time to contribute to this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Steyn'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Mark Steyn
CEO Hudson, Asia Pacific

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The Hudson Report is based on in-depth and nationwide research. Released every quarter, the report uncovers and analyses the hiring expectations of Australian employers over the forthcoming quarter and provides insights into a range of human resource issues currently impacting business and the broader Australian economy.

Combining robust data on employment expectations with economic commentary and extensive market knowledge from Hudson's conversations with employers nationwide, The Hudson Report is the leading source for business leaders on the relevant trends and issues in the Australian labour market.

METHODOLOGY

The Hudson Report has established a reputation as a key socio-economic indicator in the Australian market. It captures employers' hiring expectations for permanent workforces over the forthcoming three months.

The Report's quarterly findings on permanent employment expectations are built on the premise that the expectation to increase or decrease permanent staffing levels represents a significant indication of employers' optimism for the growth of their organisations.

The Hudson Report frequently refers to the term 'net effect'. The net effect figure is calculated by taking the percentage of employers surveyed that expect to increase permanent staff levels during the forthcoming three months and subtracting the percentage of employers surveyed that expect to decrease staff levels.

The Hudson Report combines the expectations of key employment decision makers from all major industries across small (<20 employees), medium (20–200 employees) and large (>200 employees) organisations, and analyses the findings in relation to other key economic indicators (e.g. interest rates and housing figures).

For the January to March 2012 period 4,338 employers were personally surveyed by Hudson recruitment and consulting professionals. Participants were surveyed from 19 core industry groups as detailed below:

- L Advertising/Marketing/Media
- L Construction/Property/Engineering
- L Education
- L Financial Services/Insurance
- L FMCG
- L Government
- L Healthcare (excluding government)
- L Healthcare (government)
- L Information Technology
- L Manufacturing
- L Non Profit
- L Professional Services
- L Resources
- L Retail
- L Telecommunications
- L Tourism/Hospitality
- L Transport
- L Utilities
- L Wholesale/Distribution.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- ▬ *The Hudson Report: Employment Expectations* survey for January to March 2012 shows national sentiment among Australian employers weakened over the quarter.
- ▬ Hiring intentions slipped 2.2 percentage points (pp) over the past three months to net 25.7% (from 27.9%) and dropped 7.4pp year-on-year to their lowest point since October to December 2009.
- ▬ All sectors continue to report positive employment expectations ranging from 10.7% (manufacturing) to 57.7% (resources).
- ▬ 54.0% of surveyed employers nationally are planning to maintain current headcount, increasing 2.0pp over the quarter. The proportion of employers intending to increase permanent headcount (35.9%) dropped 2.0pp from October to December 2011. Hiring managers reporting plans to decrease permanent employees in the next three months remained steady (up a fractional 0.1%) at 10.1%.
- ▬ New South Wales rose in the national rankings (from fifth in October to December 2011) to become the nation's fourth most confident state at net 23.5%, with employer sentiment rising 2.4pp over the quarter.
- ▬ Despite dropping 11.9pp over the quarter, Western Australia remained the most positive state or territory with sentiment at net 45.1%. Employer confidence in the west is down 5.3pp year-on-year.
- ▬ Queensland retained its position as the nation's second most confidence state at net 35.4%, down 3.8pp over the quarter and down 6.2pp year-on-year.
- ▬ Hiring intention in the ACT remained steady over the quarter, dropping a fractional 0.6pp over the three months to net 27.8% and down 16.9pp year-on-year.
- ▬ South Australia was the only state or territory to record a lift in sentiment year-on-year, rising 1.7pp from the same time last year. However, hiring intentions in the state dropped 2.1pp over the quarter to net 20.5%.
- ▬ Victoria remained the nation's least confident state or territory dropping 12.7pp year-on-year and slipping 3.1pp over the quarter to net 17.8%.
- ▬ The top three sectors, those with the highest hiring intentions, remain unchanged quarter on quarter. At net 57.7%, the resources sector remains the nation's most confident with employer confidence remaining steady over the quarter (down a fractional 0.6pp). Professional services retained its position as the second most confident sector with employer confidence at net 44.7%. While hiring intentions in the sector dropped 6.1pp over the quarter and are down 11.2pp year-on-year, professional services continues to benefit from strong development in the resources sector. Information technology at net 39.7% is Australia's third most confident sector with hiring intentions slipping 3.0pp over the quarter.
- ▬ The transport sector recorded the highest rise in sentiment over the quarter, lifting 7.0pp to net 33.3%, followed by FMCG with hiring intentions up 4.4pp to net 11.4%. Manufacturing experienced the greatest drop year-on-year, plummeting 28.4pp from the same time last year to net 10.7% to become the nation's least most confident sector.
- ▬ Sentiment in tourism and hospitality also experienced a significant drop year-on-year, down 24.5pp from January to March 2011 to net 19.2%.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

OVERALL

At the beginning of a new year, Australia remains well placed to withstand issues impacting Europe and the US with key economists predicting the Australian economy to continue to grow by 3% to 4% per annum over the next few years¹. In an address to the 24th Australasian Finance & Banking Conference at the end of last year, Ric Battellino Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia said 'Australia, like other countries, will be affected by the events in Europe, but its strong government finances, healthy banking sector and relatively limited direct trade and financial exposures to Europe make it one of the countries best placed to weather the situation'.²

As mining companies pursue aggressive infrastructure development and expansion in response to high commodities prices³, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures

revealed the Australian economy grew 1.0% in seasonally adjusted volume terms in the September quarter 2011.⁴ In the biggest jump since 1988, private capital expenditure lifted 12.9% adding 2% points to growth.

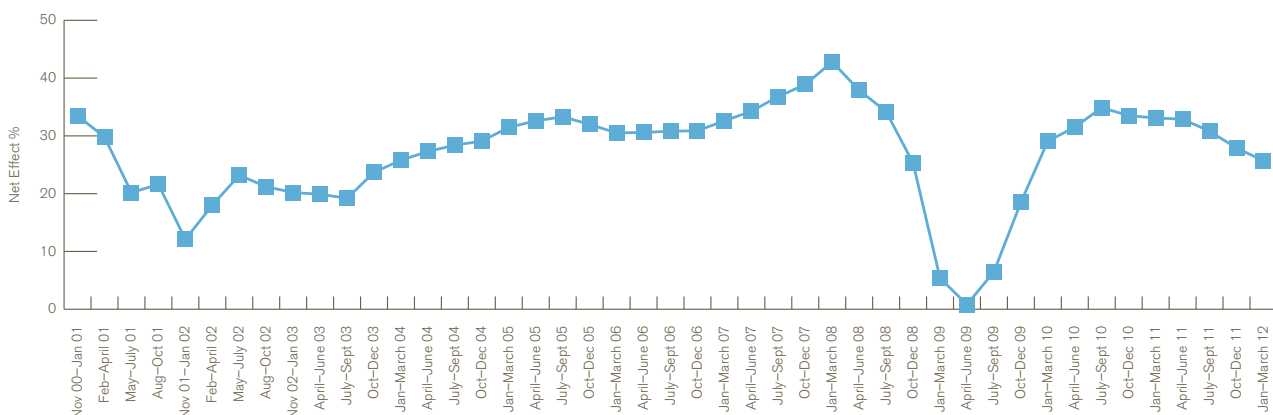
However, sectors not benefiting from the investment boom face mixed conditions at the beginning of the year as turbulence in European financial markets continues and as growth in Asia eases.⁵ The latest Hudson Report survey findings reveal employer confidence dropped 2.2pp over the quarter to net 25.7% and is down 7.4pp year-on-year from 33.1% in January to March 2011. Hiring intentions across the nation are at their lowest since October to December 2009. However, 89.9% of surveyed employers are reporting intentions to either increase or hold permanent headcount steady in the three months to end of March 2012.

Despite easing growth in China and as Europe experiences recessionary conditions¹, a strong 35.9% of surveyed employers across Australia are reporting intentions to increase the number of permanent employees in the first three months of 2012. Over half, at 54.0%, are planning to keep headcount steady over the same period. At 10.1%, the number of employers planning to decrease permanent staff in the first quarter of 2012 remained unchanged over the quarter.

Sentiment in the resource rich states of Western Australia and Queensland remains strong at net 45.1% and 35.4% respectively. Just under half (49.9%) of surveyed employers in Western Australia are planning to hire permanent employees before the end of March 2012 with a robust 43.5% in Queensland planning to increase permanent headcount over the same period. Employer confidence in New South Wales lifted 2.4pp over the quarter to net 23.5% pushing the state to fourth place overall from fifth most confident state or territory last quarter.

NATIONAL PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

November 2000–March 2012



¹ BIS Shrapnel. *Economic Outlook November 2011*.

² Reserve Bank of Australia. (2011, December 14). Address to the 24th Australasian Finance & Banking Conference, Ric Battellino, Deputy governor. 'European Financial Developments'.

³ Australian Financial Review. (2011, December 8). 'Mining boom keeps crisis at bay'.

⁴ Australian Bureaus of Statistics. (2011, December 7). *Media release*. 'Australian economy grows 1.0%'.

⁵ Westpac. (2011, December 2). *Australia & NZ Weekly* — week beginning 5 December 2011.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

While hiring intentions in Western Australia and Queensland remain buoyant, underlying wage inflation as measured by the Labour Price Index 'continued to ease in the September quarter 2011'.⁶ In total seasonally adjusted terms, total hourly pay rates increased just 0.7% and dropped to 3.6% from 3.8% in the year to June.⁶ Royal Bank of Scotland economist Kieran Davies said '... annual growth in unit labour costs has slowed from a 7.4% peak at the start of the year to a still strong 4.1%'.⁷

The latest employment statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics reveal jobs growth decelerated 'to its slowest pace since

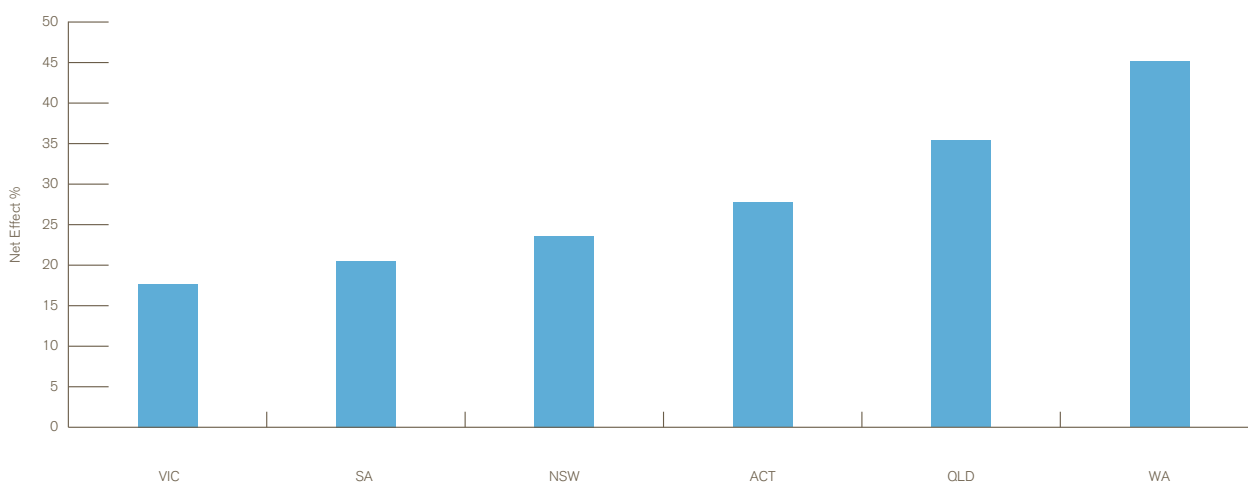
the GFC despite the resources boom'.⁸ Australia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased 0.1% to 5.3% in November 2011.⁹ The Reserve Bank of Australia's Governor Glenn Stevens, in his monetary policy decision statement for December stated '... with labour market conditions now softer, the likelihood of a significant acceleration in labour costs outside the resources and related sectors in the near term has lessened'.¹⁰

However, offsetting these latest unemployment figures, economists are forecasting 'a recovery in employment in the first half of 2012'.⁶ With the labour market expected to tighten in some sectors as the

year progresses, we recommend employers approach workforce planning carefully and ensure teams are best placed to maximise productivity and maintain high performance. In particular, when hiring people in the current environment, it is critical to select individuals with the characteristics needed in your organisation to perform better and stay longer. The cost of a bad hire in the current market can be crippling in turbulent market conditions.

NATIONAL PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

January–March 2012: By State/Territory



⁶ BIS Shrapnel. *Economic Outlook November 2011*.

⁷ *Australian Financial Review*. (2011, December 8). 'Mining boom keeps crisis at bay'.

⁸ *Australian Financial Review*. (2011, December 9). 'Job shedding trend gathers pace'.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011, December 8). *Media release*. 'Australia's unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage points to 5.3 per cent in November 2011'.

¹⁰ *Media release*. (2011, December 6). 'Statement by Glenn Stevens, Governor: Monetary Policy Decision'.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

BY INDUSTRY

With business investment up 12.9%, its largest jump in 13 years, Australia's terms of trade rose 2.7% in the September quarter 2011, reaching a fresh 140 year high.¹¹ In addition, quarter four company profits exceeded expectations rising a strong 4.8%¹² despite negative financial news offshore and patchy consumer confidence nationally. Against this backdrop, The Hudson Report survey revealed employer sentiment across sectors while still positive, maintained its broad scope ranging from net 10.7% in manufacturing to net 57.7% in resources.

As major expansion and infrastructure development projects progress from feasibility to construction, the **resources** industry is once again the nation's most confident sector at net 57.7% – a strong 32.0pp above the net national average. Hiring intentions remained steady over the quarter

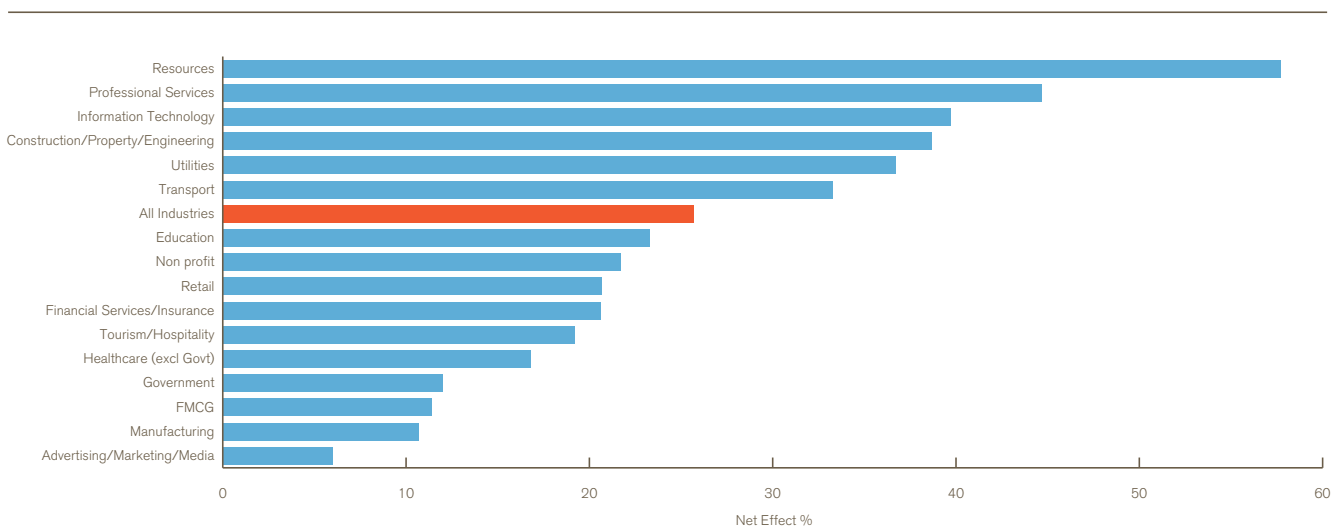
(down 0.6pp) with a robust 62.4% of employers planning to increase the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012 – the highest of any sector. Mining and oil and gas producers are showing strong employment growth with sentiment across the sector lifting 1.5pp year-on-year from 56.2% in January to March 2011. 32.9% of hiring managers expect headcount to remain unchanged over the quarter.

Employer sentiment in **professional services** dropped 6.1pp over the last three months to net 44.7% but remains one of the nation's most confident. Just under half of employers in the sector (48.1%) plan to increase permanent headcount over the coming quarter. Reflecting the strong rebound of professional services post GFC, sentiment slipped 11.2pp year-on-year from

a high 55.8% in January to March 2011. We believe the drop indicates a correction in line with current consumer confidence. Hiring intentions in professional services remain 19.0pp above net sentiment with employer confidence driven by the resource rich states of Western Australia and Queensland as legal and accounting firms build capacity in line with resources sector investment.

At net 39.7%, employer confidence in **information technology** dropped 3.0pp over the quarter but is Australia's third most confident sector. A strong 48.1% of employers intend increasing the number of permanent employees. Following a number of quarters of consistent growth, 43.6% of surveyed employers in information technology are planning for headcount to remain steady over the same period.

NATIONAL PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS January–March 2012: By Industry



¹¹ Australian Financial Review. (2011, December 8). 'Mining boom keeps crisis at bay'.

¹² Australian Financial Review. (2011, December 9). Job shedding trend gathers pace.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Customer facing skills including business development, account management and customer service remain in particular demand. Demand is also high for technical specialists and consultants, project managers and delivery managers.

With the latest GDP figures revealing private capital expenditure lifted 12.9% – the biggest jump since 1998¹³ – employer confidence in **construction/property/engineering** is a strong net 38.7%. Despite dropping 3.2pp over the quarter a robust 44.8% of employers in the sector are reporting plans to increase the number of permanent employees in the three months to March 2012. While sentiment is down 6.7pp from the same time last year (45.5%) hiring intentions are behind only resources, professional services and information technology. This employer confidence reflects the 5% expansion in construction work with the sector contributing 0.4 % to the latest 1.0% lift in the growth of the economy¹⁴.

At net 36.7% employer confidence in **utilities** remains robust lifting a fractional 0.3pp over the quarter as investment in the sector continues. A healthy 43.8% of employers are planning to increase permanent staff by the end of March 2012. Just under half (49.2%) of surveyed hiring managers are planning for headcount to remain steady over the same period. Hiring intentions lifted a fractional 0.1pp year-on-year from 36.6% in January to March 2011. The continuing push for cleaner energy is playing a major part in the strength of the sector with strong activity in product development, engineering and infrastructure driving positive hiring intentions.

Employer sentiment in **transport** lifted a strong 7.0pp over the quarter to net 33.3% and is up 3.5pp year-on-year from 29.8% in January to March 2011. This sector experienced both a quarterly and a year-on-year rise in hiring intentions. 37.5% of surveyed employers reported plans to increase headcount in the three months to end March 2012.

With a net sentiment of 23.3%, hiring intentions in **education** rose a fractional 0.8pp over the quarter. Employer confidence in education is up 5.4pp year-on-year from 17.9% in January to March 2011. Despite sentiment in the sector settling 2.4pp below net national sentiment, 31.0% of employers are intending to increase the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012 with 61.2% planning for headcount to remain steady over the same period.

Hiring intentions in the **non-profit** sector dropped 7.8pp over the quarter to net 21.7% – the second highest quarterly drop of any sector nationally. Sentiment slipped 9.4pp year-on-year from 31.1% in January to March 2011. Despite the drop, a healthy 30.2% of hiring managers in non-profit enterprises intend increasing the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012, with 61.3% planning no change.

Despite reported drops in consumer sentiment at the end of 2011¹⁵, employer confidence in **retail** lifted 1.4pp over the quarter to net 20.7%. A respectable 29.7% of employers are intending to increase permanent headcount in the three months to end of March 2012. Sentiment in the sector remains steady year-on-year, down a fractional 0.3pp from 21.0% in January to March 2011.

With continued volatility on foreign currency markets hiring intentions in the **financial services/insurance** slipped 5.4pp over the quarter to net 20.6% and sentiment is down a significant 12.2pp year-on-year (from 32.7%) – the third highest annual drop of any sector nationally. Employers are focusing on cost containment to maintain shareholder value in response to the increased cost of credit in offshore markets. 87.1% of employers report intentions for permanent headcount to either increase or remain steady over the coming three months.

Employer confidence in **tourism and hospitality** dropped a significant 24.5pp year-on-year to net 19.2% and is down 12.3pp over the quarter. 12.5% of employers plan to decrease permanent headcount in the coming three months to end of March 2012 with 31.7% reporting intentions to increase the number of permanent employees over the same period.

¹³ *Australian Financial Review*. (2011, December 7). 'Big banks feel the heat over rate cut.'

¹⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2011, December 8). *Media release*. 'Australia's unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage points to 5.3 per cent in November 2011.'

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Sentiment in **healthcare (excluding government)** dipped 1.6pp over the quarter to net 16.8% and is down 10.5pp year-on-year from 27.2% in January to March 2011. 26.3% of employers plan to increase headcount with 64.1% intending for headcount to remain steady – the highest of any sector.

At net 12.0% hiring intentions in **government** remained steady over the quarter – lifting a fractional 0.2pp but slipped 7.4pp year-on-year from 19.4% in January to March 2011. The recently announced 2.5% increase in the efficiency dividend across a majority of government departments is expected to remain a consideration for hiring managers throughout the first half of 2012.¹⁵ 64.0% of employers are planning no change to headcount over the three months to March 2012 with 24.0% intending to increase the number of permanent employees over the same period. 12.0% of surveyed hiring managers in the sector are reporting plans to reduce permanent headcount prior to the end of March 2012.

Sentiment in **FMCG** lifted 4.4pp over the quarter to net 11.4% and is up 3.0pp year-on-year from 8.4% in January to March 2011. Hiring intentions rose for the first time since January to March 2011 with 25.2% of employers planning to increase permanent headcount in the first quarter of 2012. However, 13.8% of surveyed hiring managers are reporting plans for the number of permanent employees to decrease – the third highest behind only advertising/marketing/media (19.4%) and manufacturing (16.9%).

Hiring intentions in **manufacturing** lifted 1.2pp over the quarter to net 10.7% with the latest GDP figures revealing manufacturing output increased by 1.9% adding 0.2% to GDP 'in a sign that a growing number of companies are filing orders to feed mining and construction work.'¹⁶ However, sentiment slipped a significant 28.4pp year-on-year from 39.1% in January to March 2011. 16.9% of hiring managers in manufacturing plan to decrease permanent headcount in the three months to end of March 2012 – the second highest of any sector (behind only advertising/marketing/media).

¹⁵ Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Finance and Deregulation. (2011, November 29). *Media release*.

'Driving Efficiency Savings Within Government'.

¹⁶ *Australian Financial Review*. (2011, December 7). 'Big banks feel the heat over rate cut'.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

- Hiring intentions across the Territory steady over the quarter (dropping a fractional 0.6pp) to net 27.8%.
- Employer sentiment in government lifts 3.7pp in the past three months.
- Sentiment drops 16.9pp year-on-year.

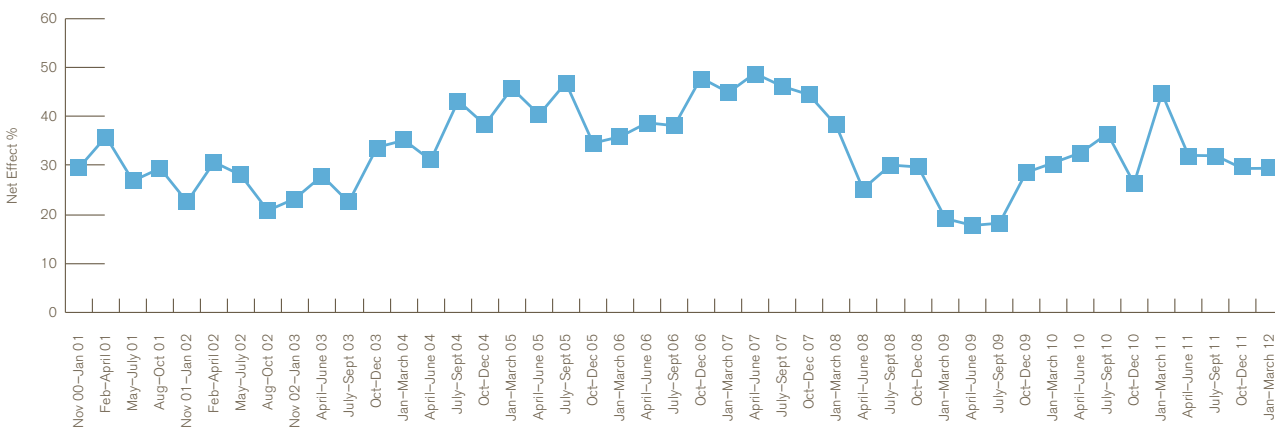
The ACT slipped from third to the fourth most confident state or territory nationally over the quarter in the wake of the Federal Government's announcement of an additional 2.5% efficiency dividend on top of the existing efficiency dividend of 1.5%.¹⁷ The move affects a majority of Federal Government departments with indications the decision will result in

'reductions in the use of consultants and contractors'.¹⁷ However, a healthy 36.3% of hiring managers across the Territory reported intentions to increase the number of permanent employees in the first three months of the year. A majority of 55.2% are planning for permanent headcount to remain unchanged to the end of March 2012.

At net 18.3%, employer confidence in **government** lifted 3.7pp over the quarter with 30.4% of employers in the sector planning to increase the number of permanent staff before the end of March 2012 – up 6.6pp over the quarter. A majority of 57.4% of surveyed hiring managers plan for headcount to remain steady,

down 9.5pp over the previous three months. 12.2% are intending to decrease the number of permanent employees over the same period (up 2.9pp over the quarter). With some government departments needing to deliver on major policy initiatives in 2012 – including the carbon tax, we are seeing continued demand for policy and program staff, accounting and financial professionals and experienced managers across the public service. Sentiment in the sector is a significant 21.1pp down on employer confidence during January to March 2011 (39.4%).

ACT PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2000–March 2012



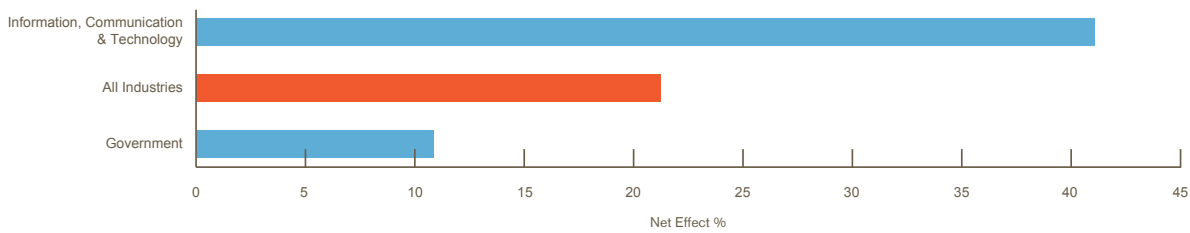
¹⁷ Senator the Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Finance and Deregulation. (2011, November 29). *Media release*. 'Driving Efficiency Savings Within Government'.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Employer confidence in **information technology** slipped 12.8pp over the quarter to net 42.0% reflecting the Federal Government cutting \$20 billion from government revenues and increased scrutiny of capital expenditure for the current year.¹⁸ A significant 50.0% of employers are planning to increase the number

of permanent employees in the first three months of the year with 42.0% planning for headcount to remain unchanged. 8.0% are planning to decrease the number of permanent employees over the same period.

ACT PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS January–March 2012: By Industry



¹⁸ Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer the Hon Wayne Swan MP. (2011, November 29). *Media release*.
¹⁹ Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2011–12.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES

- Employer confidence rises 2.4pp over the quarter to net 23.5%.
- A robust 34.8% of hiring managers in the state are planning to increase permanent employees in the first quarter of the year.
- New South Wales lifts to fourth place overall (from fifth place) from all Australian states and territories.
- At net 37.1% hiring intentions in transport are the highest recorded in the history of The Hudson Report.

Hiring intentions among surveyed employers in New South Wales lifted 2.4pp over the quarter to net 23.5% with the state rising in the national ranking from fifth most confident state or territory to fourth place over the quarter behind resource rich Western Australia (net 45.1%) and Queensland (35.4%). New South Wales' unemployment rate edged lower to 5.2% in November (from 5.3%).¹⁹ The number

of surveyed hiring managers reporting plans to hire additional permanent employees in the first three months of 2012 lifted 1.0pp to 34.8%. Reflecting the Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force statistics which confirmed unemployment in New South Wales remained steady in November¹⁹ the percentage of employers intending to keep permanent headcount unchanged over the first quarter remained steady, lifting a fractional 0.4pp to 54.0%. 11.2% of employers in New South Wales reported intentions to decrease the number of permanent staff over the same period, dropping 1.4pp over the quarter.

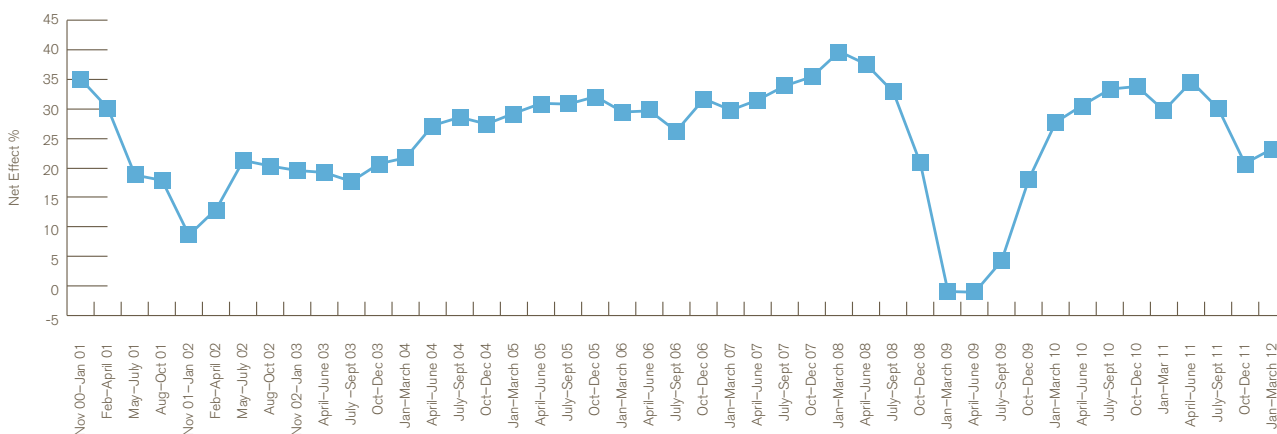
We are expecting the labour market to tighten as the year progresses and this is expected to drive strong employment growth in construction/property/engineering, resources, utilities, healthcare and some areas of professional services in coming months. In contrast, we are expecting a

contraction in financial services/insurance, telecommunications and retail in the first half of the year reflecting volatility internationally.

Professional services remains the state's most confident sector with employer sentiment a healthy net 55.7% – a strong 30.0pp above the net national sentiment (25.7%). Hiring intentions in the sector lifted 4.4pp over the quarter and are up 8.0pp year-on-year. A decisive majority of 59.5% of surveyed hiring managers are planning to increase the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012 with hiring intentions at their highest since January to March 2008.

We are seeing private practice demand for roles in corporate mergers and acquisitions driven by buoyancy in energy, resources and infrastructure development. Strong demand for litigation, medical negligence and professional indemnity professions in the insurance sector is also expected to continue throughout the first quarter of 2012.

NSW PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2000–March 2012



¹⁹ Westpac. (2011, December 9). *Westpac Australia and NZ Weekly* – week beginning 12 December 2011.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

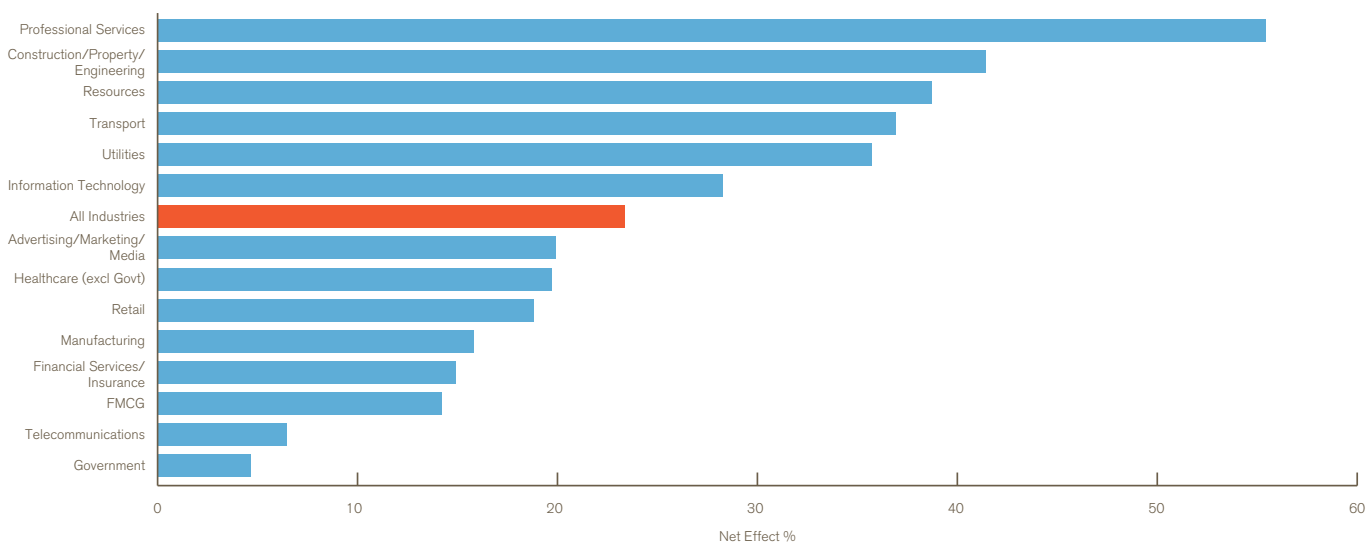
Continued strong infrastructure investment in the resources industry contributed to employer confidence in **construction/property/engineering** lifting 3.7pp over the quarter to net 41.6%. Hiring intentions in the sector are up 2.8pp year-on-year from 38.8% in January to March 2011. 47.7% of employers are planning to increase headcount with 46.3% intending for the number of permanent employees to remain steady throughout the first quarter of 2012.

Hiring intentions in **resources** lifted 1.9pp over the quarter to net 38.9% with a strong 47.2% of hiring managers in the sector reporting intentions to increase permanent headcount before the end of March 2012. Sentiment is up 2.2pp year-on-year from 36.7% in January to March 2011.

At net 37.1% hiring intentions in **transport** lifted 8.6pp over the quarter with a healthy 42.9% of hiring managers planning to increase permanent headcount in the coming three months. Sentiment is up 6.6pp year-on-year (from 30.6%). Contributing significantly to the buoyancy in the sector, is the formation of the new integrated transport agency – Transport for NSW – which commenced 1 November 2011.²⁰ Senior ranks of the new divisional structure are progressively being filled. The government changes have also created significant demand in the private sector as organisations partner with government. The move is driving strong demand in engineering and infrastructure systems as well as project delivery. We expect strong hiring intentions to continue in the first half of 2012.

Employer sentiment in **utilities** lifted a strong 12.6pp over the quarter to net 35.9% and is up 13.2pp year-on-year. As part of moves to fund projects, some utilities have undergone major restructures, selling off assets and part of their business to the private sector. On 1 March 2011 Origin purchased Integral Energy's retailing business²¹ and Endeavour Energy was established as the new brand for the publicly owned electricity Network consisting of the 'pole and wires' business of Integral Energy. The continuing push for cleaner energy and need for upgrading and growing the network is playing a major role in the strength of the sector with firm demand for specialist skills to support product development, engineering and infrastructure.

NSW PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS January–March 2012: By Industry



²⁰ Transport for NSW. (2011, November 1). *Media release*. 'New era in transport from today'.
²¹ www.integral.com.au. (2011, December 15). Origin website 'about us'.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Hiring intentions in **information technology** remains a strong net 28.4% lifting a fractional 0.1pp over the quarter. 42.1% of employers in the industry are planning to increase permanent headcount prior to the end of March 2012 with 44.3% reporting intentions for permanent staff numbers to remain steady over the same period. Employer sentiment in the sector is down 11.0pp year-on-year from 39.4% in January to March 2011.

At net 20.0% employer confidence in **advertising/marketing/media** remain steady over the quarter. 92% of employers in the field are planning to either increase or make no change to headcount in the first three months to the end of March 2012. Sentiment dropped 2.6pp year-on-year (from 22.6%) to reach its lowest point since April to June 2010.

Hiring intentions in **healthcare (excluding government)** is net 19.8%, lifting 1.0pp over the quarter with 29.6% of hiring managers planning to increase permanent headcount prior to the end of March 2012. However, sentiment plummeted a significant 22.8pp year-on-year (from 42.6%). The drop followed the loss of patents in 2011 by some major pharmaceutical companies directly accounting for major organisational restructures in the sector.

Net sentiment in the **retail** sector dropped 6.1pp over the quarter to net 18.9% with 29.7% of hiring managers planning to add permanent headcount in the coming three months. 59.5% of employers in the sector are intending for headcount to remain steady. Sentiment is down 1.9pp year-on-year (from 20.8%) and is at its lowest since July to September 2009 (2.9%).

Employer confidence in **manufacturing** lifted a healthy 15.0pp over the quarter to net 15.9%. 30.5% of employers are planning to increase permanent headcount and 54.9% are keeping headcount steady to the end of March 2012. 14.6% plan to decrease permanent headcount in the same period. Sentiment is down a significant 29.8pp from 45.7% in January to March 2011.

At net 15.0% employer confidence in **financial services/insurance** fell 2.4pp over the quarter and is down 13.6pp year-on-year from 28.6% in January to March 2011. A significant 18.2% of employers plan to decrease headcount with 48.7% intending for headcount to remain unchanged. Sentiment is at its lowest since July to September 2009 (-2.8%).

Employer confidence in **FMCG** lifted 1.3pp over the quarter to net 14.3% and is up a healthy 14.3pp year-on-year (from 0.0%). 25.0% of hiring managers are planning to increase permanent headcount with 10.7% intending to decrease the number of permanent employees over the same period.

Employer confidence in **telecommunications** plummeted 25.1pp over the quarter to net 6.5% and is down 12.5pp year-on-year (from 18.9%). 16.1% of surveyed hiring managers intend reducing the number of permanent employees with 22.6% increasing the number of permanent staff. Sentiment in the sector is the lowest since October to December 2009 (4.8%). As global market conditions have softened growth in the sector has been muted. We are seeing large telecommunications vendors taking a 'wait and see' approach to hiring decisions with carriers also remaining cautious and choosing to evaluate demand in 2012. The National Broadband Network will continue to drive activity in parts of the telecommunications sector, however hiring activity in this area is slowing and unlikely to be significant in 2012. 61.3% of surveyed employers in the sector are planning to keep headcount steady throughout the first quarter of 2012. Hiring intentions are expected to remain static in the medium term.

Hiring intentions in **government** lifted 9.4pp over the quarter to net 4.7% with 86% of employers planning to either increase or keep headcount steady in the three months to end of March 2012. 14.0% plan to decrease the number of permanent staff over the same period. Sentiment in the sector is up 1.4pp year-on-year (from 3.2%) in January to March 2011.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

NEWCASTLE/HUNTER/CENTRAL COAST

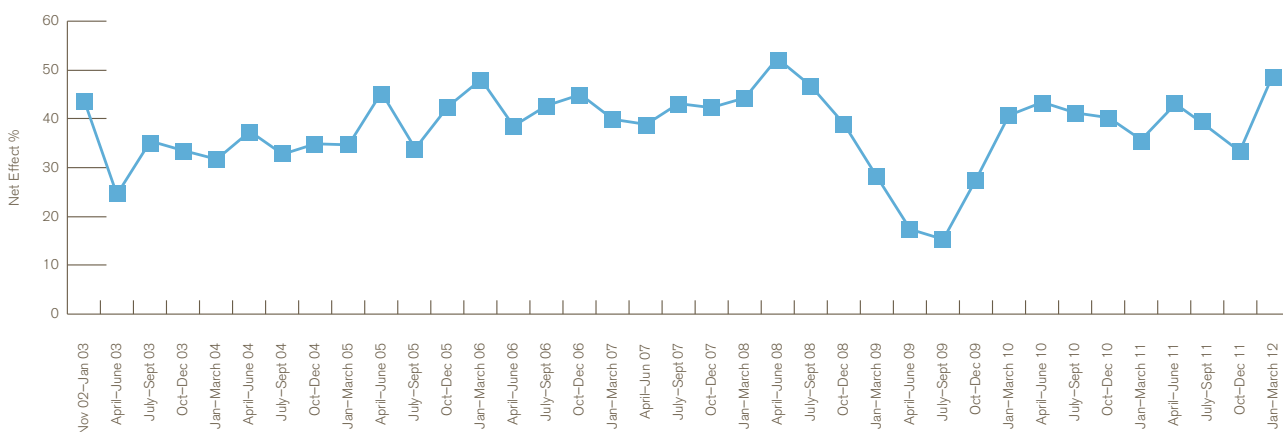
- Employer confidence in the region lifts a strong 15.4pp over the quarter to net 48.9%.
- Sentiment in the area lifts 13.5pp year-on-year (from 35.4%) reaching its highest level since April to June 2008.

Hiring intentions in the Hunter/Central Coast region lifted a strong 15.4pp over the quarter to net 48.9% - a healthy 23.2pp above net national sentiment. Employer confidence is up 13.5pp year-on-year, from 35.4% at the same time last year with hiring intentions in

the region the highest since April to June 2008. Over half (52.7%) of surveyed employers are reporting plans to increase the number of permanent employees in the first three months of the year – lifting a strong 10.1pp over the quarter. The number of employers planning for headcount to remain unchanged in the first quarter of 2012 fell 4.8pp over the quarter to a healthy 43.5%. Just 3.8% of surveyed hiring managers in the region are intending to decrease permanent employees over the same period, dropping 5.3pp over the past three months.

Employer confidence in **construction/property/engineering** lifted a significant 26.8pp over the quarter to a net 75.5%. A robust 77.4% of surveyed hiring managers in the sector are reporting intentions to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012. 20.8% are planning to keep headcount steady. Hiring intentions are up a significant 41.0pp year-on-year from 34.4% in January to March 2011.

HUNTER/CENTRAL COAST PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2002–March 2012

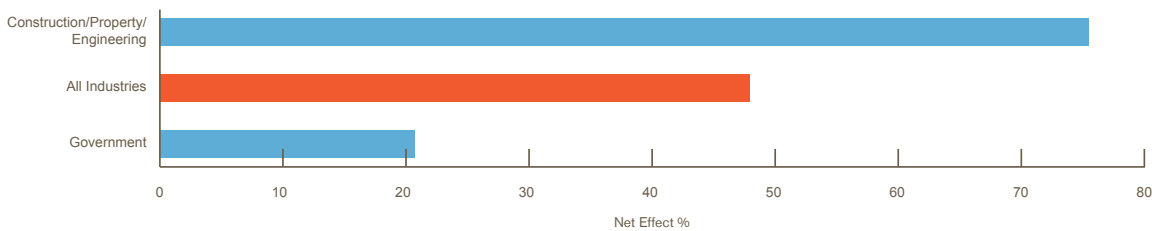


PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Sentiment in **government** is a strong net 20.8%, lifting 15.4pp over the quarter and up 17.2pp year-on-year (from 3.6% in January to March 2011). 27.1% of hiring managers in the sector are intending to hire permanent employees before the end of March 2012

with 66.7% planning for headcount to remain steady. Only 6.3% of employers in government are intending to decrease the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012.

HUNTER/CENTRAL COAST PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS January–March 2012: By Industry



PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY

Employer confidence lifts 9.4pp over the quarter to net 13.0%.

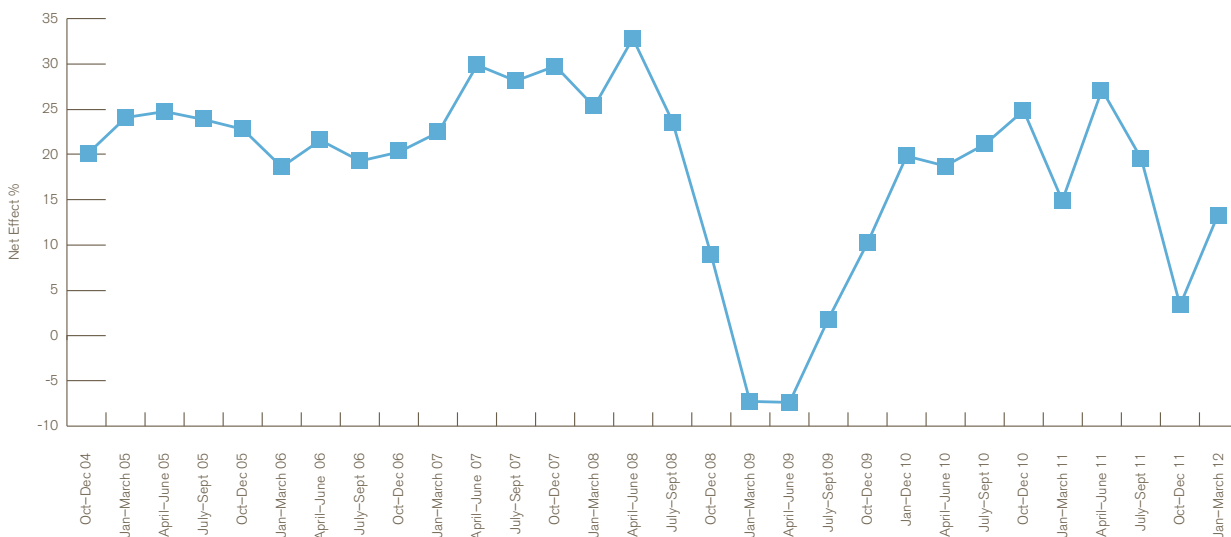
Hiring intentions slips 1.8pp year-on-year.

Employment sentiment in Greater Western Sydney lifted 9.4pp over the quarter to net 13.0% but dropped 1.8pp year-on-year from 14.9% in January to March 2011. A strong 67.1% of employers in the area are intending for the number of permanent employees to remain unchanged in the first three months of 2012 – up a significant 18.7pp over the

quarter. Just under a quarter of surveyed hiring managers in the region, at 23.0%, are intending to increase permanent staff levels over the same period. The number of hiring managers planning to decrease permanent staff dropped a significant 13.5pp over the quarter to 9.9%.

Hiring intentions in **construction/engineering/property** are at net 17.7% with 29.4% of employers in the sector planning to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012. 58.8% intend for headcount to remain steady over the same period with 11.8% of surveyed hiring managers reporting plans to decrease permanent headcount over the same period. Sentiment in the construction/property/engineering slipped 29.4pp over the quarter and is down 10.0pp year-on-year (from 27.7% in January to March 2011).

GWS PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS October 2004–March 2012

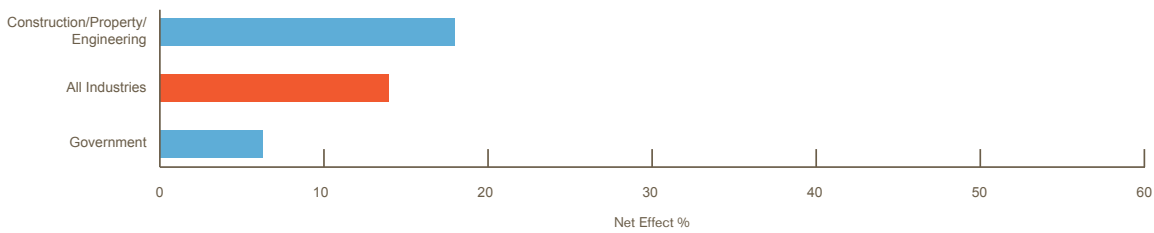


PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

At net 6.1% employer sentiment in **government** lifted a remarkable 23.7pp over the quarter with a strong 18.2% of employers in the sector intending to increase permanent headcount before the end of March 2012. 12.1% of hiring managers

are planning to decrease the number of permanent staff over the same period. Sentiment is up 22.7pp year-on-year.

GWS PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS January–March 2012: By Industry



PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

QUEENSLAND

- Employer sentiment slips 3.8pp to net 35.4% and is down 6.2pp year-on-year.
- Resources remains the state's most confident sector at net 60.0%.

As the state prepares for a forthcoming state election, employer sentiment across Queensland dropped 3.8pp over the quarter to net 35.4% and fell 6.2pp year-on-year. Sentiment is reflected in the state's unemployment rate which lifted in November to 5.8% (from 5.7%).²² However, Queensland remains the nation's second most confident state or territory. The number of surveyed hiring managers intending for permanent headcount to remain unchanged in the first three months of 2012 lifted 2.9pp over the quarter to 48.5% with a healthy 43.5% planning to increase the number of permanent employees over the same period.

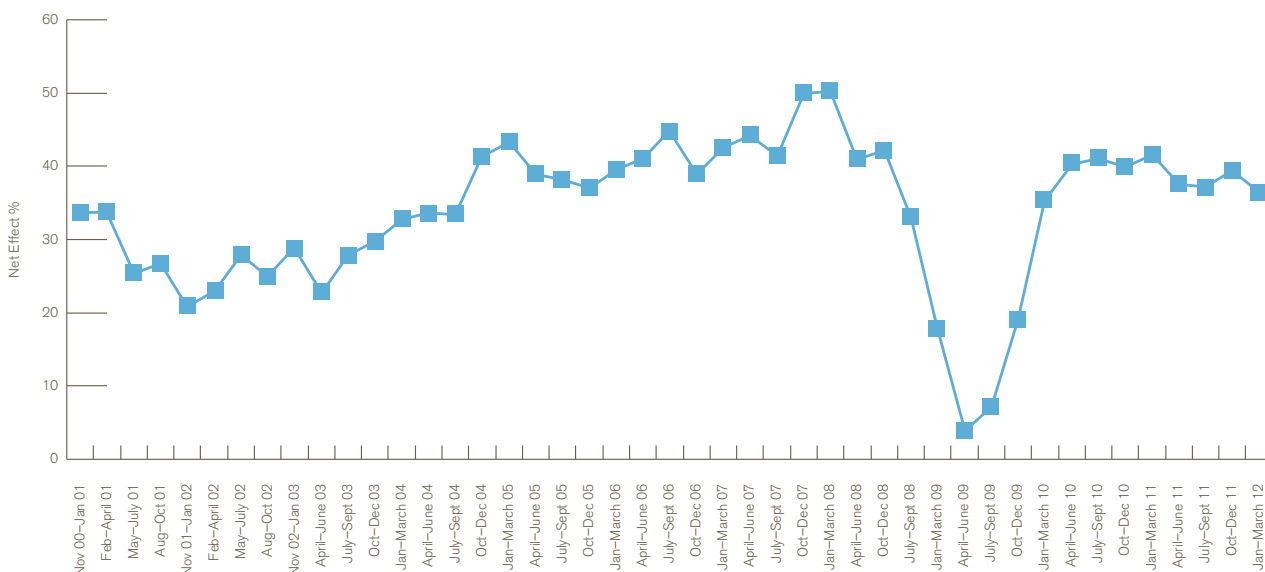
Employer sentiment in **resources** remains strong at net 60.0% with a remarkably healthy 65.9% of hiring managers in the sector seeking to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012. In comparison, only 28.2% are planning for headcount to remain steady. Sentiment dropped 7.9pp over the quarter from 67.9% - one of the highest sentiments on record. Given previous strong growth in hiring intentions, employee confidence in the sector is down 10.8pp year-on-year (from a very high 70.8% in January to March 2011).

We are seeing strong demand for skilled professionals in resources and this is expected to continue well into 2012. With sentiment at near record levels, hiring managers in the sector need to be prepared to pay significant salary increases and

bonuses in order to attract and retain high quality talent with experience in the industry. This is proving challenging for employers less able to offer enhanced rewards and conditions. However, long-term benefits such as individual development, better rosters, interesting projects and secondments are each beneficial in attracting and retaining good people.

Hiring intentions in **information technology** are a healthy net 50.0% - with over half of all surveyed hiring managers (56.7%) reporting intentions to increase the number of permanent employees in the first quarter of 2012. 36.7% are planning for headcount to remain unchanged over the same period. A reflection of previous strong hiring intentions in the sector, sentiment slipped 12.2pp over the quarter and at its lowest since July to September 2010.

QLD PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2000–March 2012



²² Westpac. (2011, December 9). *Australia & NZ Weekly* — week beginning 12 December 2011.

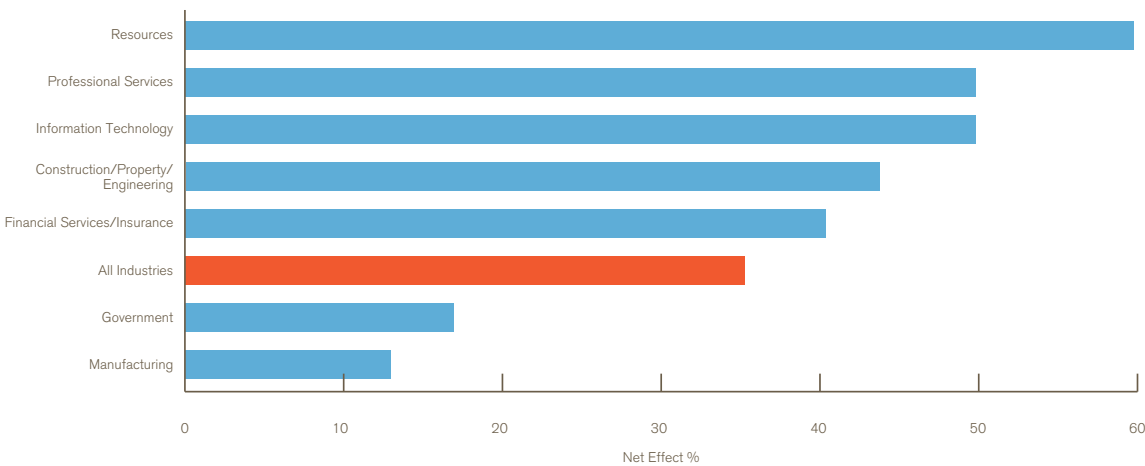
PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

At net 50.0% employer confidence in **professional services** is equal to that in information technology as infrastructure development in resources creates labour demand in this diverse sector. Over half of all surveyed employers in professional services (52.2%) are planning to hire additional permanent employees before the end of March 2012 with 45.7% intending for headcount to remain unchanged. Sentiment lifted 7.1pp over the quarter and is down 26.7pp year-on-year from a very high 76.7% in January to March 2011.

Hiring intentions in **construction/property/engineering** rose 2.6pp over the quarter to net 43.9%. Just under half of all surveyed hiring managers, at 47.6% are planning to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012 and 48.8% are planning for headcount to remain steady. Employee confidence is down 8.8pp year-on-year from 52.7% in January to March 2011.

Employer confidence in **financial services/insurance** remained steady over the quarter (down a fractional 0.6pp) to net 40.5%. 51.4% of hiring managers plan to increase the number of permanent employees and 37.8% are planning for headcount to remain steady in the coming three months.

QLD PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS October–March 2012: By Industry



PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Confidence slips 2.1pp to net 20.5% however remains up 1.7pp year-on-year.
- Hiring intentions in manufacturing lifts a strong 12.8pp over the quarter to net 15.4%.

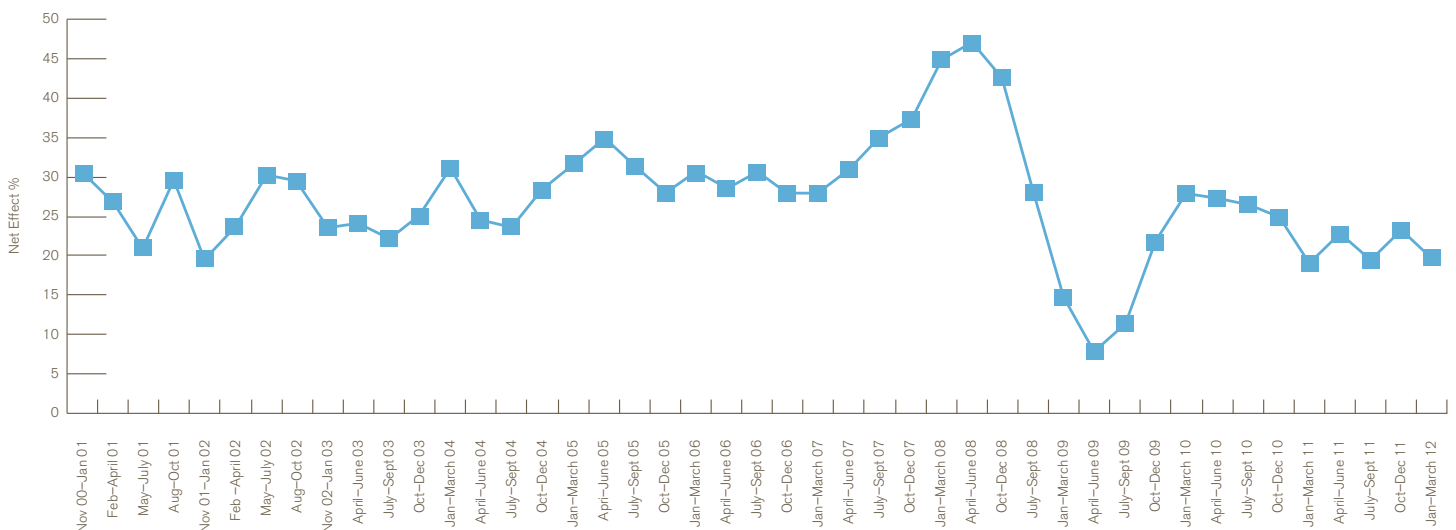
Employer sentiment in South Australia dropped 2.1pp over the quarter to net 20.5% (from 22.6%) but remains 1.7pp above hiring intentions at the same time last year. A healthy 29.3% of employers across the state are planning to increase the number of permanent employees in the first quarter of 2012. In an indication that hiring intentions across the state remain stable, a hefty 61.9% of surveyed employers in South Australia

are intending for headcount to remain steady to the end of March 2012 – up 4.1pp over the quarter.

We expect the recent expansion of the Olympic Dam project to create a significant boost to infrastructure spending in the region, stimulating general confidence across the state. The flow-on employment benefits of this major infrastructure project are expected to be felt across many sectors in the next two to three years.

At net 15.4% hiring intentions in **manufacturing** lifted 12.8pp over the quarter with 33.3% of surveyed hiring managers in the sector intending to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012. 48.7% of employers in manufacturing are planning for permanent headcount to remain steady over the same three month period. However, 18.0% of managers intend reducing the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012. Sentiment is down 15.4pp year-on-year from 30.8% in January to March 2011.

SA PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2000–March 2012



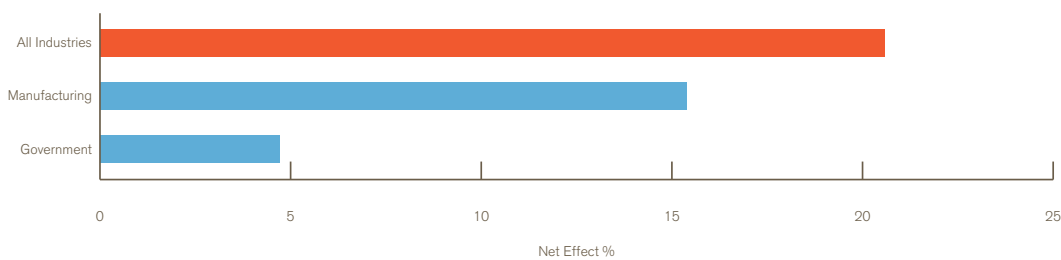
PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Hiring intentions in **government** is at net 4.8% slipping 10.0pp over the quarter to its lowest since July to September 2011. A strong majority of 76.2% of employees are planning for headcount to remain steady with

14.3% reporting intentions to increase the number of permanent employees in the three months to the end of March 2012. Sentiment in the sector lifted 16.4pp year-on-year from -11.71% in January to March 2011.

SA PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

January–March 2012: By Industry



PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

VICTORIA

- Employer confidence in Victoria drops 3.1pp over the quarter to net 17.8%.
- Hiring intentions in utilities remain robust at net 38.9%, lifting a significant 38.9pp year-on-year.
- Employer sentiment in retail rose 11.1pp over the quarter to net 17.4%.
- Employer confidence in the state falls 12.7pp year-on-year from 30.6% in January to March 2011.
- Victoria remains the nation's least most confident state or territory at 7.9pp below net national sentiment.

Employer sentiment in Victoria fell 3.1pp over the quarter to net 17.8% (from 20.9%) and is down 12.7pp year-on-year. The number of

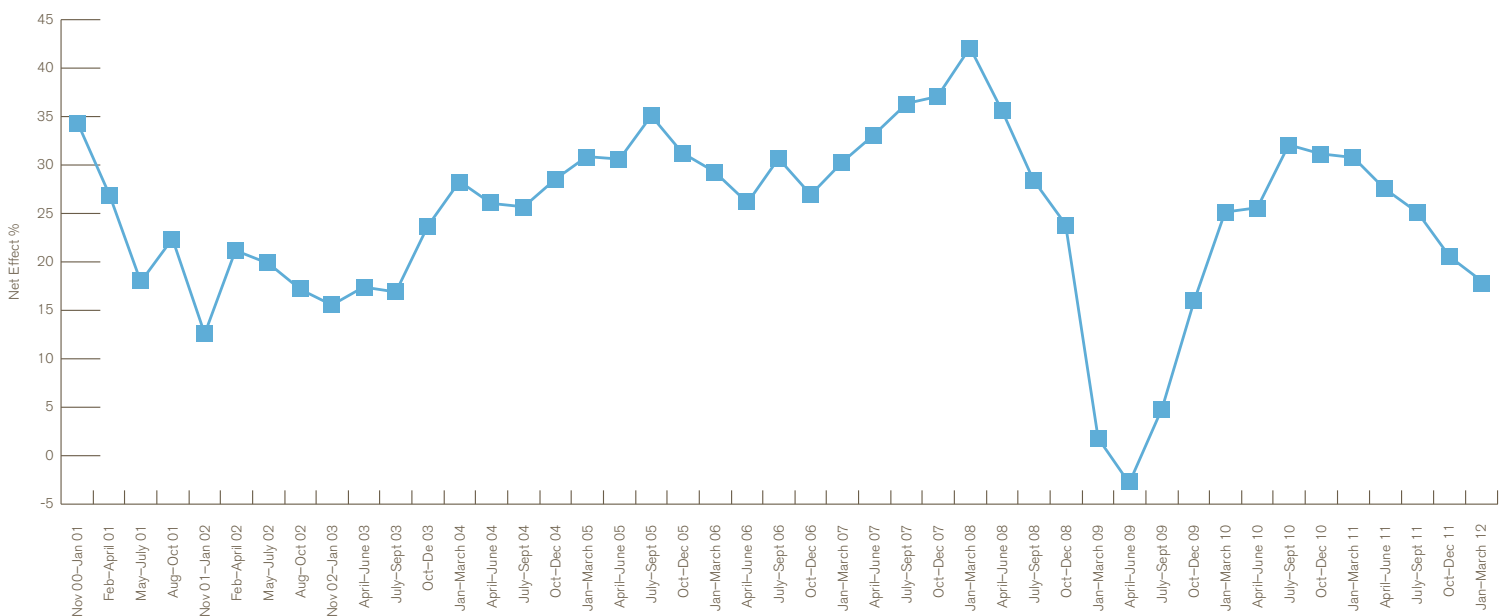
employers across the state planning for headcount to remain unchanged over the first quarter of 2012 remained steady at 57.4% (up a fractional 0.5pp over the quarter). Over a third of employers in the state (30.2%) are planning to increase the number of permanent staff before the end of March 2012. 12.4% are intending to decrease permanent headcount over the same period, lifting 1.0pp over the quarter.

We have seen recent currency fluctuations having a major influence on hiring intentions in the state's local manufacturing sector as well as in tourism and hospitality. Sustained volatility on foreign financial markets is also contributing to subdued hiring sentiment in the financial services sector as employers forestall hiring new permanent employees.

Sales and marketing professionals in growth sectors are in strong demand as well as technology professionals such as developers, technical consultants, architects and project managers.

Sentiment in information technology remains particularly strong and is the state's most confident sector, lifting 8.3pp over the quarter to net 45.2%. Hiring intentions in education also rose strongly, up 9.8pp over the quarter. Reflecting the needs of the ageing population, employer confidence in healthcare (excluding government) lifted 9.0pp over the quarter to net 21.6%. However, a significant quarterly drop in utilities (down 21.1pp over the quarter) as well as wholesale and distribution, down 16.3pp over the quarter offset lifts in other sectors contributing to the overall drop in employer confidence across the state.

VIC PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2000–March 2012



PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

The key opportunity facing employers in the current labour market is ensuring current teams are best placed to deliver the performance, innovation and change required to succeed, and if not, capitalise on local and overseas markets to attract and select the right talent to achieve company objectives. We are seeing an increasing number of highly talented jobseekers arriving from overseas. This trend is evidenced by figures in the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's annual report which reveals the 2011 intake was the highest on record for the 457 visa program, with a 38.2% increase in primary visas.²³

At net 45.2% **information technology** is Victoria's most confident sector with hiring intentions lifting 8.3pp over the quarter. Just

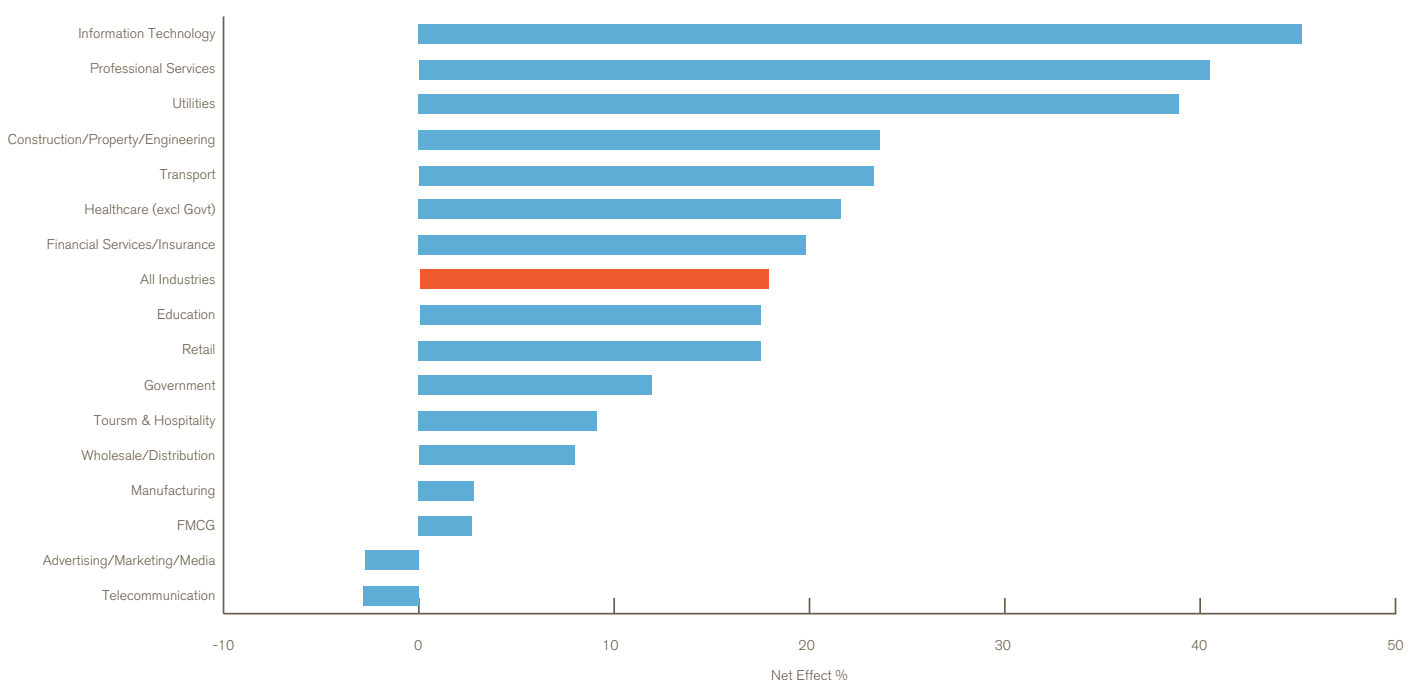
under half (49.5%) of hiring managers in the sector are planning to hire additional permanent employees before the end of March 2012 with 46.2% intending for headcount to remain unchanged over the same period. Sentiment in information technology is up 12.1pp year-on-year (from 33.0% in January to March 2011) and the highest since April to June 2010 (47.8%).

Employer confidence in **professional services** slipped 8.3pp over the quarter but remains at a strong net 40.5%. A majority of 56.5% of hiring managers in this diverse sector are intending to keep headcount steady during the first quarter of 2012 indicating many employers now have teams in place. Specialist skills remain in demand even as employers maintain a 'wait and see' approach to hiring at the start of 2012.

Employer sentiment in **utilities** slipped a significant 21.1pp over the quarter to net 38.9% but remains the state's third most confident sector. A healthy 50.0% of employers are reporting plans to hire permanent employees in the first quarter of 2012 with 38.9% intending to make no changes to permanent staffing levels. Sentiment is up a significant 38.9pp year-on-year.

Hiring intentions in **construction/property/engineering** dropped 7.2pp over the quarter but remain a healthy net 23.5% with 33.8% of employers in the sector reporting plans to increase the number of permanent staff in the first quarter of 2012. Over half of hiring managers (55.9%) are intending the number of permanent employees to remain steady.

VIC PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS October–March 2012: By Industry



²³ Department of Immigration and Citizenship – www.imi.gov.au. Annual Report 2010–11.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

Sentiment plummeted 22.7pp year-on-year from 46.2% in January to March 2011 and is at its lowest since July to September 2009 (4.1%).

At net 23.3%, employer confidence in **transport** lifted 4.8pp over the quarter. 27.9% of hiring managers in the sector report plans to lift headcount in the first quarter of 2012. 67.4% are planning no changes to permanent staffing levels with sentiment down 14.2pp year-on-year.

The increasing needs of the state's aging population continue to drive hiring intentions in **healthcare (excluding government)** with employer confidence in the sector lifting 9.0pp over the quarter to net 21.6%. A dominant 91.9% of hiring managers intend either increasing or keeping headcount steady in the first three months to end of March 2012. Sentiment in the sector is up 11.4pp year-on-year from 10.2% in January to March 2011. While slightly down on levels throughout most of 2011, hiring intentions remain above those seen in the sector throughout 2009 and for much of 2010.

With continuing turbulence in international financial markets, employer sentiment in the **financial services/insurance** sector slipped 10.7pp over the quarter to net 19.8%. 31.1% of surveyed employer's intend hiring additional permanent employees before the end of March 2012. Specialist skills in financial planning, underwriting, mortgage lending, retail banking and sales are in demand as banking sector targets increase in retail branches on the back of enhanced customer service offerings. 57.6% of surveyed hiring managers are intending

for staffing levels to remain unchanged from January to end March 2012. Sentiment is down 18.0pp year-on-year (from 37.7%) at the same time last year.

Employer confidence in **education** lifted 9.8pp over the quarter to net 17.5% with 32.5% of employers planning to increase the number of permanent staff in the first three months of 2012. Over half (52.5%) are intending for permanent headcount to remain unchanged over the same period. However, 15.0% are planning to decrease the number of permanent employees with sentiment down 17.5pp year-on-year.

With household consumption rising a solid 1.2% in the September quarter in the sharpest quarterly rise since June 2009²⁴, hiring intentions in **retail** lifted 11.1pp over the quarter to net 17.4%. While 64.0% of hiring managers in the sector intend making no changes to the number of permanent employees, 26.7% are planning to hire permanent staff in the three months to end of March 2012. Employer sentiment is down 2.0pp year-on-year from 19.5% in January to March 2011.

Employer confidence in **government** slipped 7.1pp over the quarter to net 12.0% with 89.4% of hiring managers intending for the number of permanent employees to either increase or remain unchanged over the coming three months. Sentiment is down 13.5pp year-on-year from 25.4% in January to March 2011. The sector has only once experienced lower hiring intentions in the ten year history of The Hudson Report – when sentiment slumped to 11.3% in July to September 2011.

At net 9.1% sentiment in **tourism and hospitality** lifted 2.4pp over the quarter with 27.3% of hiring managers intending to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012. Sentiment is up 9.1pp year-on-year. However, 18.2% of employers in the sector are planning to decrease the level of permanent employees over the same period.

Employee confidence in **wholesale/distribution** slipped 16.3pp over the quarter to net 7.9%. A dominant majority of 71.1% of hiring managers in the sector intend the number of permanent employees to remain steady to the end of March 2012. However, 18.4% plan to increase staffing levels over the same period. Sentiment is up 7.9pp year-on-year.

At net -2.9% sentiment in **telecommunications** lifted 20.4pp over the quarter (from -23.3%) but is down 2.9pp year-on-year. 31.4% of hiring managers intend increasing permanent staff with 34.3% planning on no change to the end of March 2012, while 34.3% are intending for staffing levels to decrease.

²⁴ Australian Financial Review. (2011, December 8). 'Households splash out extra cash'.

PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

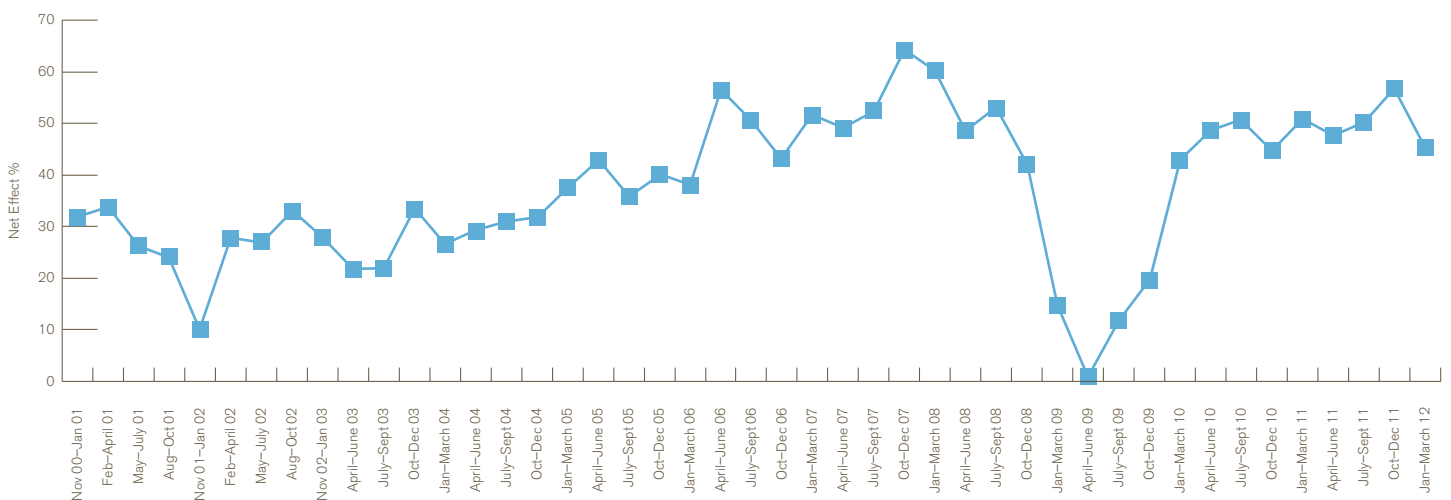
- Western Australia remains the nation's most confident state or territory over the quarter with sentiment at net 45.1% – 19.4pp above the net national sentiment (25.7%).
- Employer confidence slips 5.3pp year-on-year from a particularly high 50.5% in January to March 2011.
- Resources remains the state's most confident sector at net 67.1%.

Employer sentiment in Western Australia slipped 11.9pp over the quarter but at net 45.1% is the most confident state or territory in the nation. Hiring intentions dropped 5.3pp year-on-year from a particularly high

50.5% with a remarkable 49.9% of surveyed hiring managers across the state planning to increase the number of permanent employees before the end of March 2012. The percentage of employers intending for headcount to remain steady lifted 10.2pp over the quarter to 45.4% indicating employers have added to headcount after many quarters of strong hiring intentions. Just 4.8% of employers across the state are planning to decrease the number of permanent employees in the first three months of 2012.

Continued strong hiring intentions in the state indicates a lack of necessary investment in developing local talent as the labour market continues to tighten across a number of key disciplines and for specialist roles in the resources industry. We expect rising costs and increased salary expectations, high turnover and lack of training to impact hiring intentions into the first half of 2012.

WA PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS November 2000–March 2012



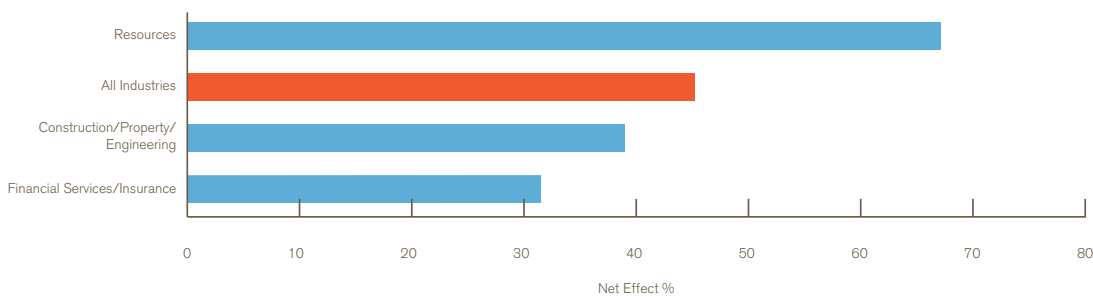
PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

With a net sentiment of 67.1% the **resources** sector remains the state's, and the nation's, most confident. A remarkable 69.9% of hiring managers in the sector intend to increase the number of permanent employees in the three months to end of March 2012. In comparison, just 27.4% are planning for headcount to remain steady over the same period. Hiring intentions dropped 1.2pp over the quarter but remain up 3.6pp year-on-year from 63.5% in January to March 2011.

Hiring intentions in **construction/property/engineering** dropped 44.8pp over the quarter from an historic, and arguably unsustainable, high of 83.8%. The sector remains the state's second most confident with 45.8% of employers intending to raise the level of permanent employees in the first quarter of 2012. 47.5% are planning to make no changes to permanent headcount. Sentiment is down 23.9pp year-on-year from 62.9% at the same time last year.

Employer confidence in **financial services/insurance** slipped 9.1pp over the quarter to net 31.3%. Over half (56.7%) of hiring managers in the sector intend making no changes to permanent employee numbers in the first quarter of 2012 with 37.3% planning to lift permanent staffing levels over the same period. Sentiment is down 3.0pp year-on-year from 34.4% in January to March 2011.

WA PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS January–March 2012: By Industry



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