

QUEENSLAND LEGAL SALARY SURVEY REPORT 2010

A guide to salaries and recruiting trends for the Queensland legal profession.

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING

We would like to express our gratitude to all who participated in the collection of data for this year's survey. Your contribution has ensured that we can produce an informative report to help support and inform your business decisions.



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Published by

Hays Legal
Level 17, Riverside Centre, 123 Eagle Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

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‘It is heartening to see that it appears Australia may well have seen the worst of the financial crisis.’



Noela L'Estrange

Chief Executive Officer, Queensland Law Society

It is heartening to see that it appears Australia may well have seen the worst of the financial crisis, and the negative impact this had on the employment market. It has been a difficult 12 months for firms and employees alike. The global financial crisis' impact on the legal profession meant considerable changes were made to human capital resourcing. We saw a variety of processes implemented by firms to try and reduce human capital costs, including:

- redundancies;
- transfers to part-time employment; and
- directions to take annual leave.

The economic climate, and its impact on the profession, saw a reduced level of employee movement, and as a result employee initiated turnover decreased. The market certainly shifted away from an employee-centric market to a more employer-centric one. With this, employees could no longer expect the salaries and benefits previously negotiated.

This Queensland Legal Salary Survey Report 2010 aims to provide valuable information to both employers and employees. The report features relevant, up-to-date market data that could help inform firm and employee decisions regarding salary packages. It will also enable a clear comparison year on year of the impact the global financial crisis has had on salaries and benefits.

The Queensland Law Society strives to develop initiatives that assist and support members. The Queensland Legal Salary Survey Report 2010 demonstrates our continued commitment to providing members with meaningful products and services.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey. I also thank our Human Resources team and Hays, who have worked diligently to ensure the success of this project. I trust you find this a valuable tool, and I encourage you to provide feedback to assist us to continue to improve this report.



Peter Liaw

Manager, Hays Legal

Now in its second year, the Queensland Legal Salary Survey Report 2010 aims to provide Queensland's most comprehensive review of salaries in the legal industry. This year, at the request of respondents from the 2009 survey, the inclusion of salary data for secretaries and other legal support functions aims to make the survey a more useful tool.

The survey was completed in early 2010 as the economy showed signs of emerging from a recession which impacted the entire legal industry. While counter cyclical areas such as litigation, insolvency and insurance boomed, much of the legal industry batted down the hatches for most of the 2009 calendar year. 2009 saw a weak legal job market which impacted salaries greatly including salary freezes and minimal pay increases across a large proportion of the industry.

With this backdrop, respondents to the survey overwhelmingly identified salary as the leading reason they would look for another job. More than ever, this makes getting salary levels right in 2010 a key driver behind staff retention. Equally however, candidates need to be realistic in expecting reasonable salary increases as the market is only recently emerging from a recession. While many employers are optimistic about the coming 12 months, most employers only expect to raise salaries between 1-6 per cent with only exceptional cases receiving higher increases.

With the prospect of a much brighter economy as this report goes to print, we would like to thank all of those who participated. We hope you find it a useful guide in reviewing your salaries this year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

‘There are certainly reasons to be cautiously optimistic about what 2010 may bring.’

Following the success of the inaugural 2009 Queensland Legal Salary Survey, the 2010 survey saw employers and employees across the Queensland legal industry surveyed in February 2010 with respondents separated into geographical regions and firm size to provide a comprehensive survey of salaries and benefits in the Queensland legal industry. This year we received responses from 1,225 employee lawyers and 193 employers with some interesting results particularly when compared to last year’s survey.

There are certainly reasons to be cautiously optimistic about what 2010 may bring. As evidence of the improving economy since late 2009, some 36 per cent of employers actually increased staff levels in the last 12 months. Almost half of employers surveyed saw a positive increase in business activity in the last six months. Looking forward, 42 per cent expect the next six months to be positive as compared to just 27 per cent in 2009. Given this increasing employer confidence, over 47 per cent of employers expect to increase staff levels over the next 12 months which will no doubt see an increase in competition for talent and possibly also pressure on salary later in the year.

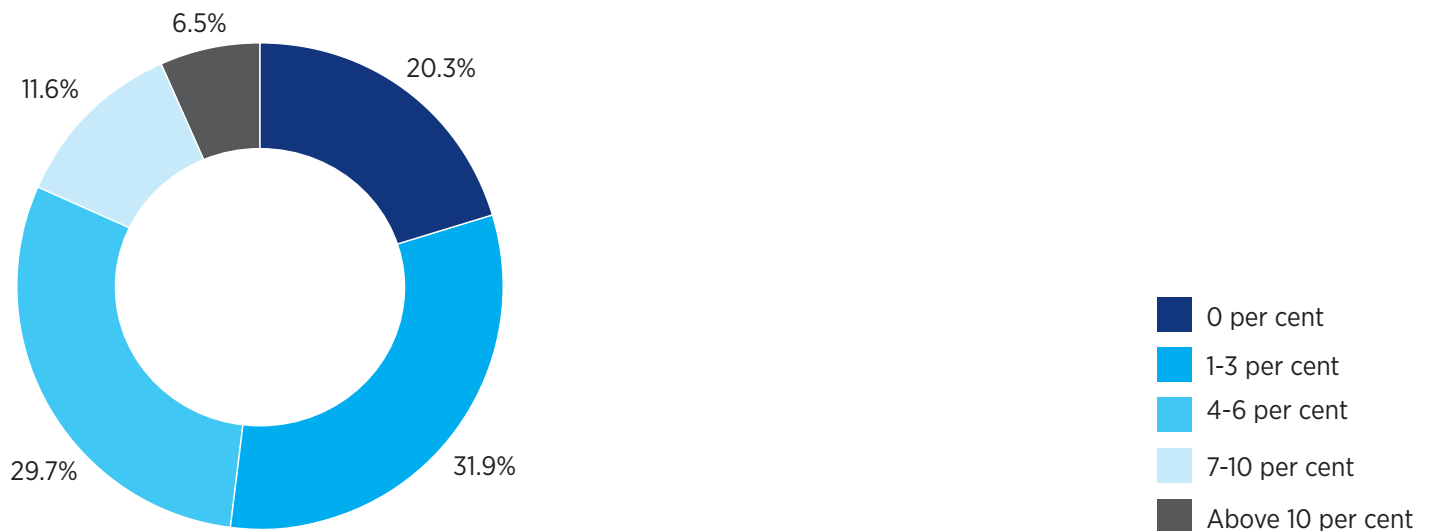
With this in mind, as with last year’s survey, salary is the most common reason among employees for considering a move from their current employer. When comparing the data from last year, it is clear that salary increases in 2009 were modest when compared to 2008, except for exceptional “high performance” cases.

In 2010, there is clearly still caution in the market with the majority of employers expecting to increase salary by between 1-6 per cent. It is clear that salaries have flattened particularly when compared to the sort of increases that were coming to be “expected” in the boom years prior to 2009. It is important that employees remain realistic this year on the issue of salary as increases may only be modest in many cases as shown by the data. Equally, employers are going to have to walk a careful line in ensuring salary increases are sufficient to retain their high performers. As the economy improves this is going to become increasingly important as firms jostle for talent both domestically and internationally. While few employee respondents to the survey are looking to work overseas, as the world economy improves this may change and put increased pressure on retention and therefore salary.

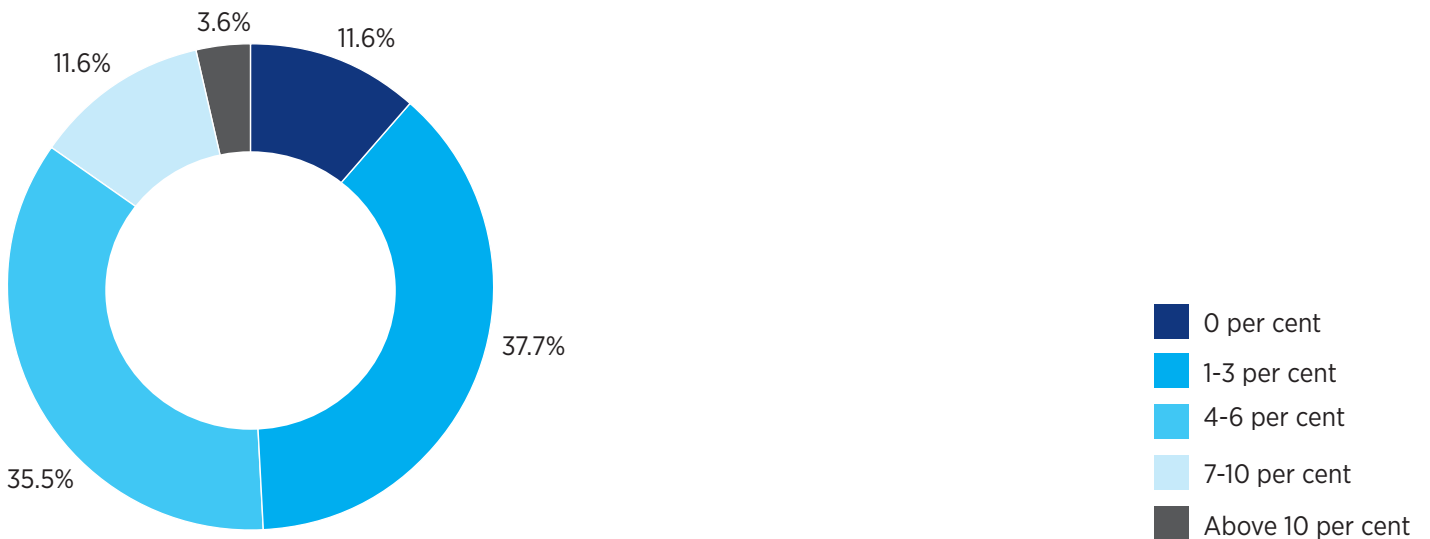
With signs of economic recovery showing early in 2010, it is positive to see that the legal industry is back in growth mode across most areas.

SECTION ONE: **MARKET OVERVIEW** **& TRENDS**

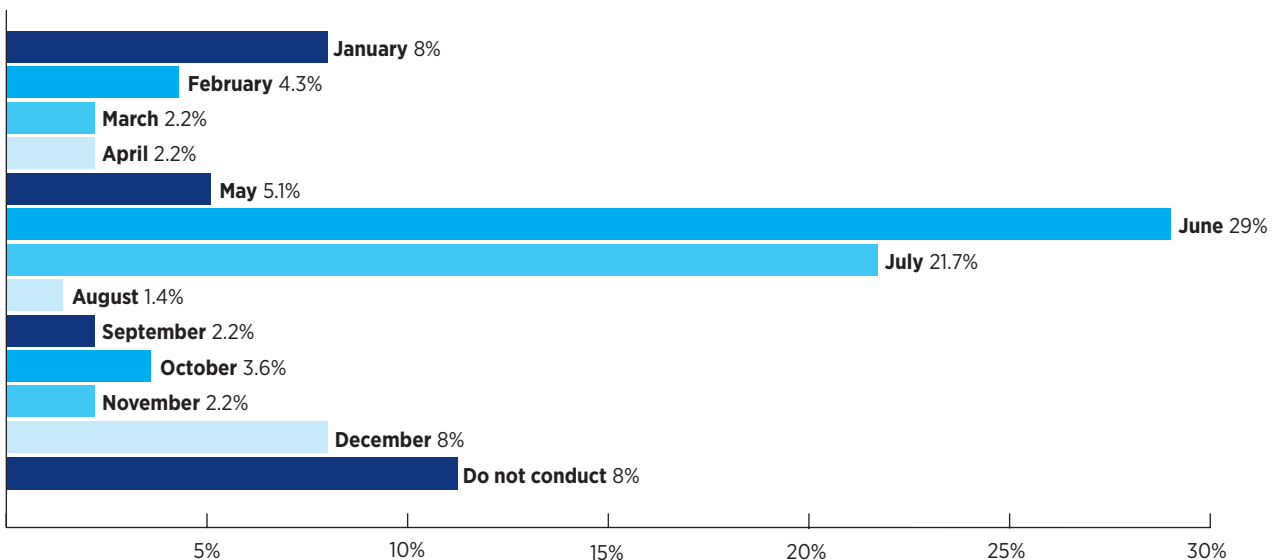
2009 Average increase in staff salaries



2010 Expected salary increases



Month in which annual salary reviews are held

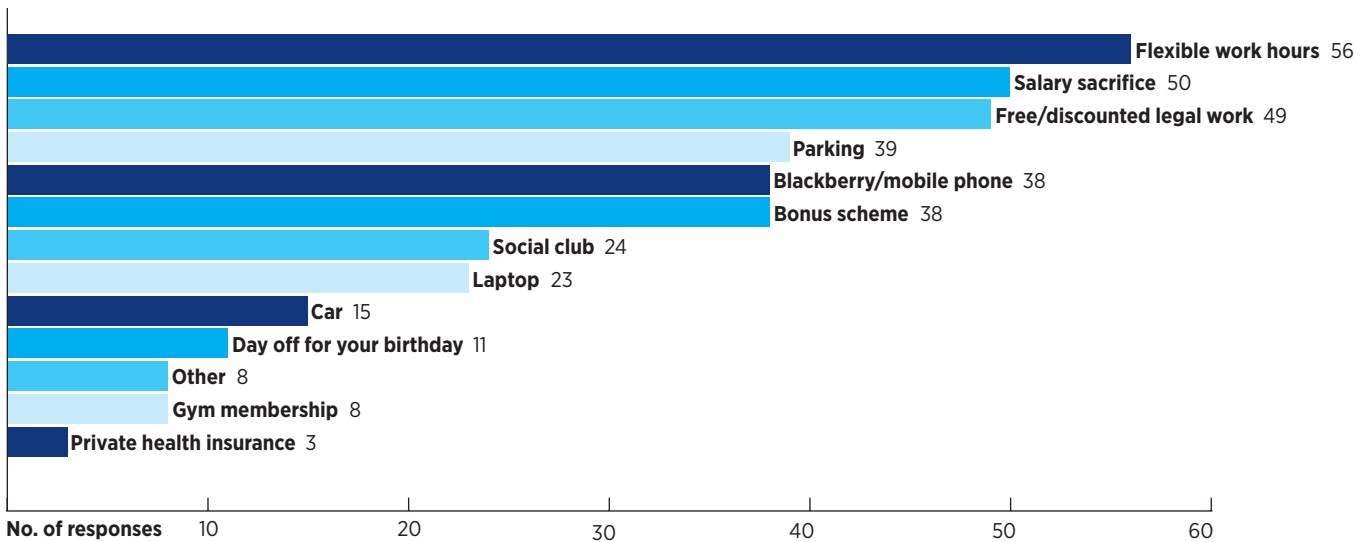


'In 2010, there is clearly still caution in the market with the majority of employers expecting to increase salary by between 1-6 per cent'.

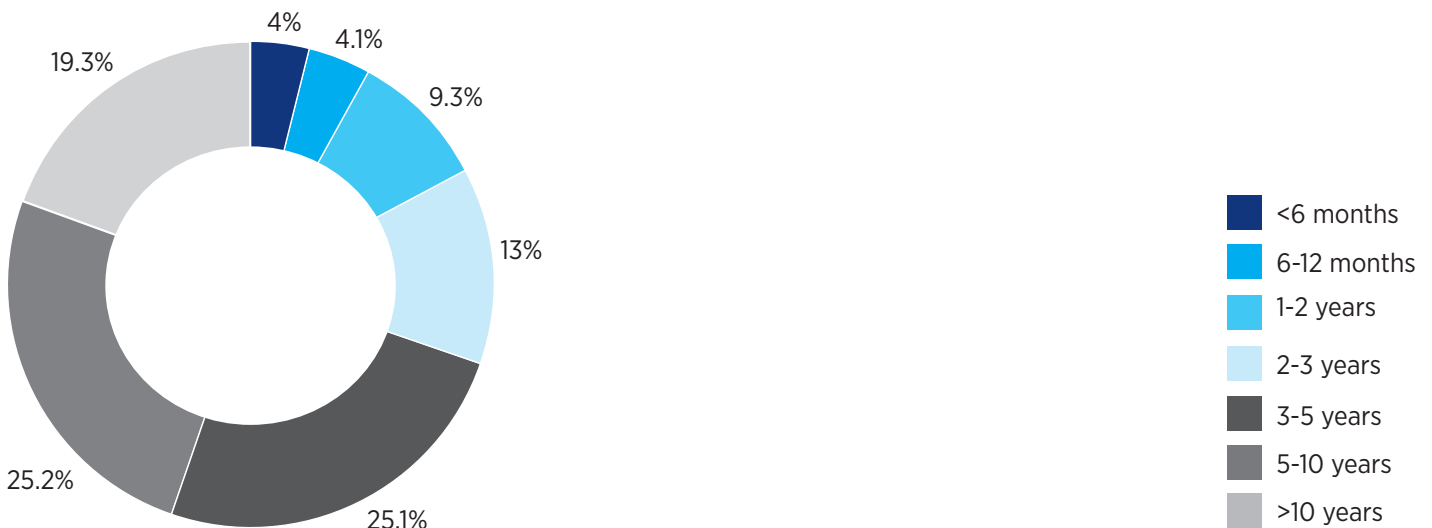
Employers offering flexible salary packaging/fringe benefits



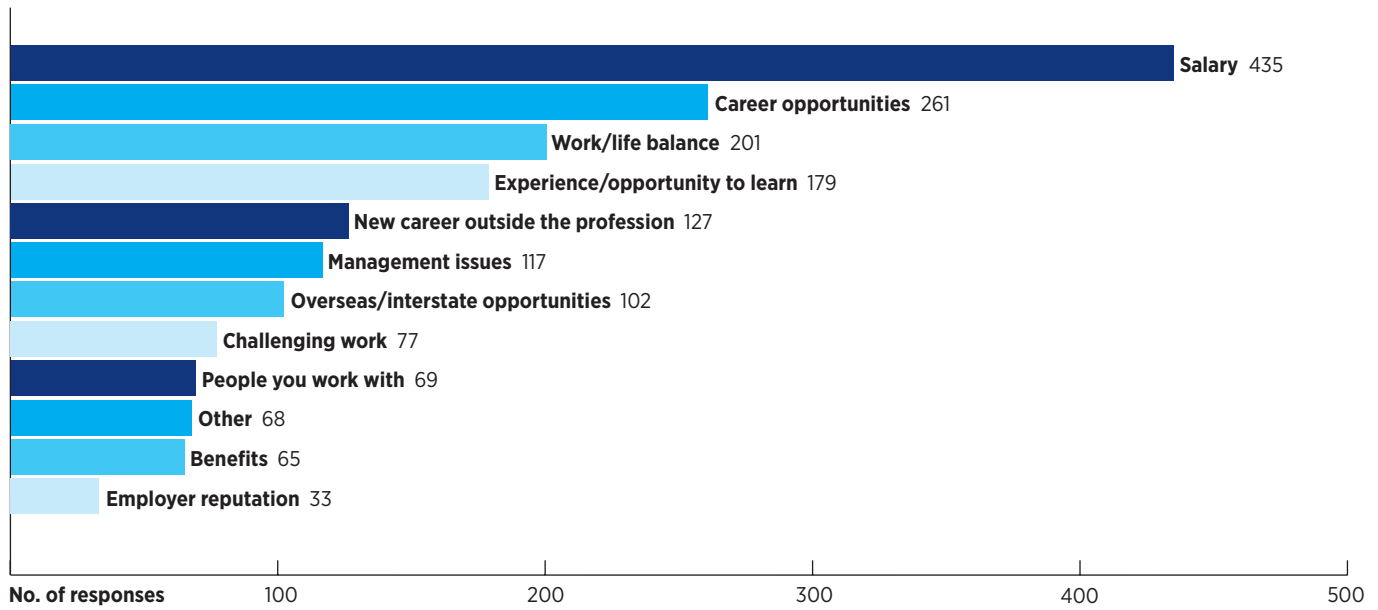
Typical benefits received



Employees' intended length of tenure with current employer (total time employed)



Employees' key reasons for considering moving on from current employer



‘...as with last year’s survey, salary is the most common reason among employees for considering a move from their current employer.’

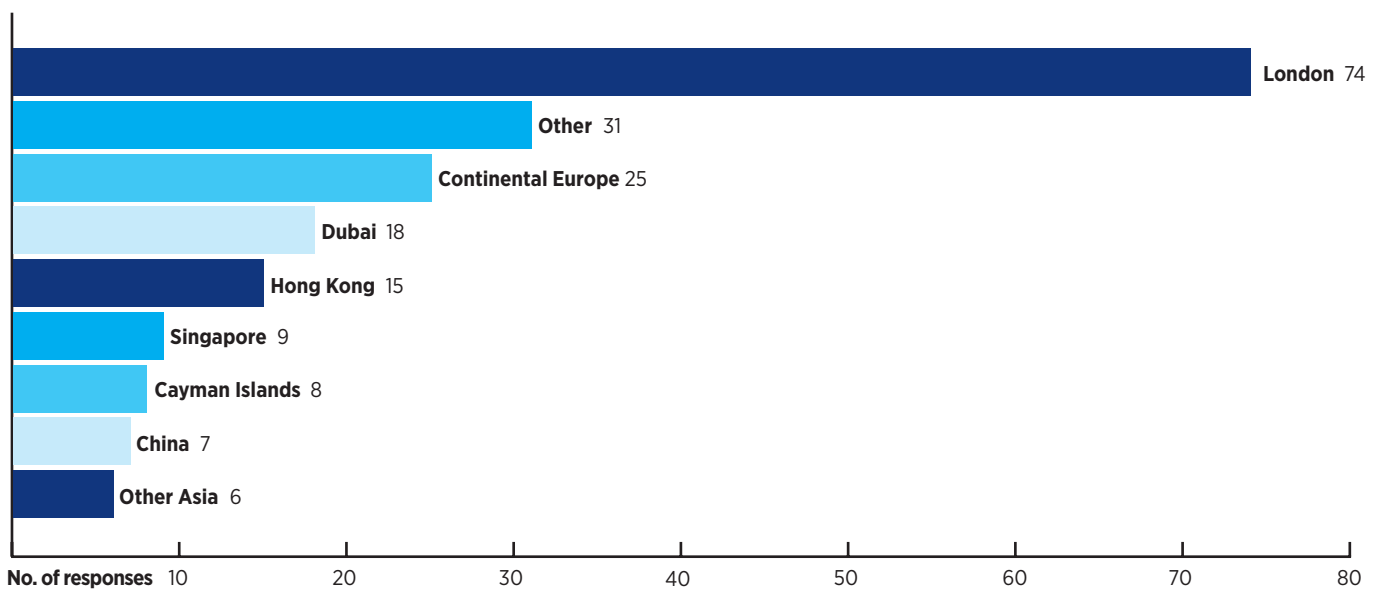
Employees' key reasons for staying with their current employer



Employees considering moving overseas



Employees' preferred choice of overseas location

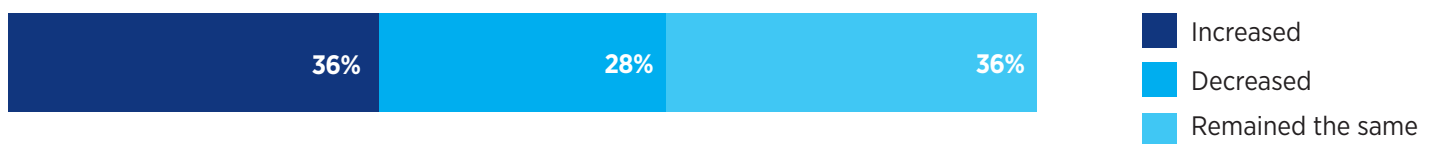


Percentage of employees working on a part-time basis



‘...over 47 per cent of employers expect to increase staff levels over the next 12 months which will no doubt see an increase in competition for talent and possibly also pressure on salary later in the year.’

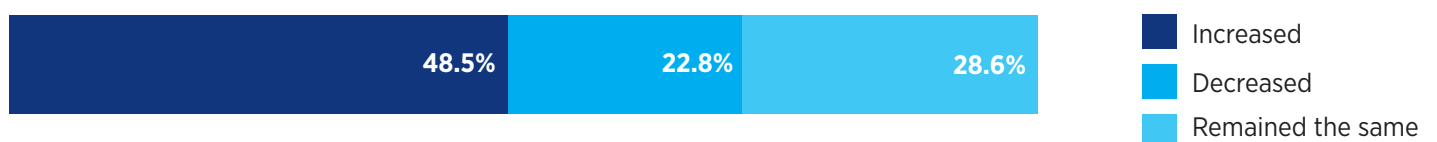
Change to permanent staff levels in the last 12 months



Anticipated changes to permanent staff levels in the coming 12 months



Past six months business activity increase/decrease



Outlook over the next six months



SECTION TWO: SALARY INFORMATION

Using our salary tables

Data for the salary survey has been collected from regions, which have been grouped as follows:

| Region | Postcodes |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | 4000-4004 |
| Gold Coast | 4210-4299 |
| Other South East Queensland (SEQ) | 4005-4209, 4300-4349, 4500-4601 |
| Wide Bay Burnett | 4405, 4602-4679 |
| North East Queensland: Townsville, Mackay, Whitsunday, Rockhampton, Gladstone | 4680-4819 |
| West Queensland: Mt Isa, North West Region, The Central West, South West and Darling Downs | 4350-4404, 4406-4499, 4824-4850 |
| Cairns & Far North Queensland (FNQ) | 4820-4823, 4851-4899 |

The size of law firms were categorised as follows:

| Large law firm | Medium law firm | Small law firm |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Greater than 20 Solicitors | 10-20 Solicitors | Less than 10 Solicitors |

Salary package ranges are in 000'. The bold number represents the typical salary package. The number(s) underneath represent the salary range. Refer to the notes section under the salary table to determine if superannuation or other benefits are included. Where N/A is used there is insufficient data.

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager | Graduate Trainee Solicitor |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$35,000 25-40 | \$46,000 40-47 | \$58,000 47-50 | \$55,000 50-70 | \$150,000 107-250 | \$55,000 45-65 |

Salary package range

Typical salary package

‘When comparing the data from last year, it is clear that salary increases in 2009 were modest when compared to 2008 except for exceptional “high performance” cases.’

Top tier law firm

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager | Graduate Trainee Solicitor |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$35,000 25-40 | \$46,000 40-47 | \$58,000 47-60 | \$55,000 50-70 | \$150,000 107-250 | \$55,000 45-65 |

| | 0-1 year PAE | 1 year PAE | 2 years PAE | 3 years PAE | 4 years PAE | 5 years PAE |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$63,000 56-70 | \$70,000 60-78 | \$78,000 65-85 | \$88,000 70-95 | \$95,000 75-103 | \$105,000 88-120 |

| | 6+ years PAE | Associate | Senior Associate | Special Counsel | Consultant | Partner |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$120,000 90-130 | \$105,000 82-116 | \$150,000 99-215 | \$170,000 146-180 | N/A N/A | \$190,000 140-216 |

Packages indicated include superannuation/professional memberships.

PAE: Post admission experience

National mid tier law firm

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager | Graduate Trainee Solicitor |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$35,000 25-40 | \$45,000 40-50 | \$55,000 47-60 | \$54,000 44-62 | \$100,000 73-150 | \$51,000 45-61 |

| | 0-1 year PAE | 1 year PAE | 2 years PAE | 3 years PAE | 4 years PAE | 5 years PAE |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$61,000 51-69 | \$67,000 55-80 | \$74,000 65-90 | \$84,000 73-91 | \$90,000 80-106 | \$100,000 80-115 |

| | 6+ years PAE | Associate | Senior Associate | Special Counsel | Consultant | Partner |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$110,000 102-120 | \$105,000 88-163 | \$135,000 105-192 | \$150,000 102-196 | \$150,000 100-175 | \$170,000 115-205 |

Packages indicated include superannuation/professional memberships.

PAE: Post admission experience

‘It is clear that salaries have flattened particularly when compared to the sort of increases that were coming to be “expected” in the boom years prior to 2009.’

Large law firm

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager | Graduate Trainee Solicitor |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$35,000 25-40 | \$45,000 40-47 | \$55,000 40-70 | \$55,000 52-73 | \$94,000 56-168 | \$50,000 40-55 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$35,000 25-40 | \$45,000 40-47 | \$54,000 47-54 | \$48,000 48-55 | \$91,000 91-120 | \$40,000 40-50 |

| | 0-1 year PAE | 1 year PAE | 2 years PAE | 3 years PAE | 4 years PAE | 5 years PAE |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$58,000 52- 64 | \$66,000 55-75 | \$75,000 65-91 | \$86,000 70-113 | \$90,000 80-101 | \$100,000 80-115 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$50,000 50-50 | \$54,000 50-60 | \$62,000 50-80 | \$73,000 N/A | N/A N/A | N/A N/A |

| | 6+ years PAE | Associate | Senior Associate | Special Counsel | Consultant | Partner |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$115,000 88-154 | \$110,000 83-135 | \$140,000 95-170 | \$170,000 105-210 | \$145,000 100-188 | \$200,000 120-250 |
| Cairns & FNQ | N/A N/A | \$80,000 72-90 | \$105,000 100-109 | N/A N/A | \$160,000 150-163 | \$180,000 175-200 |

Packages indicated include superannuation/professional memberships.

PAE: Post admission experience

Medium law firm

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager | Graduate Trainee Solicitor |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$34,000 25-38 | \$44,000 40-48 | \$55,000 51-69 | \$61,000 55-65 | \$77,000 50-115 | \$45,000 36-50 |
| Gold Coast | \$32,000 25-52 | \$42,000 38-47 | \$54,000 48-57 | \$52,000 47-63 | \$75,000 60-200 | \$45,000 35-58 |
| Other SEQ | \$21,000 21-35 | \$35,000 35-43 | \$48,000 48-50 | \$50,000 50-50 | \$100,000 100-110 | \$47,000 35-55 |
| North East Queensland | \$26,000 21-33 | \$36,000 29-46 | \$52,000 50-53 | \$46,000 42-52 | \$78,000 57-90 | \$40,000 35-49 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$35,000 25-35 | \$39,000 37-47 | \$49,000 45-50 | \$55,000 N/A | \$90,000 90-100 | \$40,000 40-45 |

| | 0-1 year PAE | 1 year PAE | 2 years PAE | 3 years PAE | 4 years PAE | 5 years PAE |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$52,000 38-71 | \$62,000 42-80 | \$70,000 55-90 | \$81,000 60-109 | \$87,000 70-105 | \$95,000 69-112 |
| Gold Coast | \$50,000 40-65 | \$56,000 43-76 | \$63,000 50-76 | \$76,000 50-80 | \$80,000 60-95 | \$90,000 60-120 |
| Other SEQ | \$47,000 40-57 | \$57,000 52-60 | \$65,000 50-67 | \$77,000 70-85 | \$77,000 70-85 | \$80,000 70-90 |
| North East Queensland | \$50,000 37-70 | \$45,000 39-50 | \$59,000 40-74 | \$69,000 60-75 | \$85,000 78-92 | \$70,000 62-90 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$45,000 45-45 | \$55,000 45-72 | \$59,000 57-60 | \$75,000 60-80 | \$80,000 70-80 | \$80,000 70-100 |

| | 6+ years PAE | Associate | Senior Associate | Special Counsel | Consultant | Partner |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$115,000 75-144 | \$110,000 76-145 | \$121,000 80-158 | \$175,000 135 -239 | N/A N/A | \$158,000 91-200 |
| Gold Coast | \$107,000 87-120 | \$105,000 85-115 | \$113,000 89-148 | \$150,000 129-180 | N/A N/A | \$150,000 150-200 |
| Other SEQ | \$105,000 85-125 | N/A N/A | \$130,000 110-130 | N/A N/A | N/A N/A | \$147,000 140-150 |
| North East Queensland | \$90,000 73-90 | \$89,000 71-119 | \$115,000 103-128 | N/A N/A | N/A N/A | \$139,000 130-150 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$91,000 N/A | \$88,000 N/A | \$104,000 104-120 | N/A N/A | N/A N/A | N/A N/A |

Packages indicated include superannuation/professional memberships.

PAE: Post admission experience

Small law firm

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager | Graduate Trainee Solicitor |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$29,000 17-36 | \$43,000 29-54 | \$54,000 46-65 | \$50,000 33-73 | \$75,000 45-198 | \$48,000 32-62 |
| Gold Coast | \$30,000 23-38 | \$41,000 30-48 | \$54,000 45-70 | \$58,000 45-75 | \$75,000 45-100 | \$45,000 35-52 |
| Other SEQ | \$31,000 18-38 | \$39,000 26-53 | \$50,000 34-67 | \$45,000 38-48 | \$60,000 33-98 | \$45,000 30-65 |
| Wide Bay Burnett | \$29,000 24-34 | \$37,000 36-39 | \$43,000 37-53 | \$57,000 39-70 | \$65,000 61-90 | \$43,000 40-45 |
| North East Queensland | \$27,000 26-28 | \$35,000 31-43 | \$50,000 48-51 | \$44,000 38-52 | \$48,000 42-55 | \$38,000 35-40 |
| Western Queensland | \$37,000 37-37 | \$50,000 50-50 | \$52,000 51-52 | \$47,000 35-52 | \$86,000 56-116 | \$51,000 47-55 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$30,000 17-38 | \$37,000 26-43 | \$47,000 30-57 | \$46,000 40-55 | \$68,000 49-95 | \$41,000 30-47 |

| | 0-1 year PAE | 1 year PAE | 2 years PAE | 3 years PAE | 4 years PAE | 5 years PAE |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$51,000 25-71 | \$54,000 45-76 | \$64,000 45-79 | \$74,000 60-117 | \$81,000 60-113 | \$90,000 74-150 |
| Gold Coast | \$48,000 32-55 | \$56,000 40-75 | \$62,000 49-77 | \$70,000 55-93 | \$78,000 55-95 | \$89,000 75-150 |
| Other SEQ | \$51,000 35-88 | \$54,000 40-76 | \$60,000 41-91 | \$68,000 50-101 | \$78,000 55-99 | \$90,000 40-181 |
| Wide Bay Burnett | \$44,000 39-50 | \$50,000 45-55 | \$60,000 46-75 | \$69,000 63-75 | \$75,000 60-75 | N/A N/A |
| North East Queensland | \$47,000 35-68 | \$50,000 43-60 | \$60,000 54-93 | \$70,000 65-104 | \$77,000 51-104 | \$85,000 53-188 |
| Western Queensland | \$60,000 50-71 | \$55,000 46-76 | \$67,000 63-70 | \$71,000 65-80 | N/A N/A | \$85,000 85-85 |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$46,000 32-50 | \$50,000 33-60 | \$58,000 30-70 | \$65,000 60-70 | \$77,000 70-100 | \$78,000 75-85 |

| | 6+ years PAE | Associate | Senior Associate | Special Counsel | Consultant | Partner |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$96,000 70-137 | \$104,000 65-187 | \$116,000 80-150 | \$140,000 120-200 | \$150,000 76-200 | \$150,000 139-200 |
| Gold Coast | \$94,000 68-120 | \$98,000 65-130 | \$100,000 75-150 | \$120,000 60-150 | \$168,000 168-168 | \$163,000 102-200 |
| Other SEQ | \$100,000 63-132 | \$95,000 78-110 | \$118,000 90-208 | \$120,000 50-150 | \$150,000 96-170 | \$101,000 100-200 |
| Wide Bay Burnett | \$80,000 50-84 | \$85,000 65-100 | \$120,000 90-190 | N/A N/A | \$130,000 98-150 | \$117,000 113-120 |
| North East Queensland | \$90,000 50-140 | \$89,000 67-109 | \$95,000 86-104 | N/A N/A | \$150,000 106-170 | \$150,000 100-150 |
| Western Queensland | \$90,000 70-100 | \$80,000 65-93 | N/A N/A | N/A N/A | \$120,000 98-130 | N/A N/A |
| Cairns & FNQ | \$86,000 61-100 | \$93,000 75-110 | \$106,000 100-110 | \$120,000 N/A | \$150,000 N/A | \$180,000 N/A |

Packages indicated include superannuation/professional memberships.

PAE: Post admission experience

‘It is important that employees remain realistic this year on the issue of salary as increases may only be modest in many cases as shown by the data. Equally, employers are going to have to walk a careful line in ensuring salary increases are sufficient to retain their high performers.’

In-house

| | Junior Legal Secretary | Intermediate Legal Secretary | Senior Legal Secretary | Paralegal | Office Manager/ Practice Manager |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$35,000 30-40 | N/A N/A | \$55,000 55-70 | \$65,000 65-85 | N/A N/A |

| | Graduate Trainee Solicitor | 0-1 year PAE | 1 year PAE | 2 years PAE |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | N/A N/A | \$68,000 65-82 | \$72,000 66-78 | \$80,000 70-89 |

| | 3 years PAE | 4 years PAE | 5 years PAE | 6+ years PAE |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Brisbane CBD & Fringe | \$90,000 80-120 | \$95,000 85-125 | \$120,000 77-185 | \$140,000 74-250 |

Packages indicated include superannuation/professional memberships.

PAE: Post admission experience



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