

# SALARY REPORT

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**BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION +  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCIES**

**Brisbane and Gold Coast**

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**CONNECTING  
PEOPLE**

**CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES**



# An 'about us' welcome from our Director

2024-2025

Construction People provides recruitment solutions to the built environment in Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

Since our establishment in 2008, we've been dedicated to advising, connecting and creating mutually beneficial outcomes for the individuals and organisations we work with.

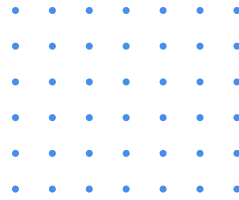
For over 15 years, we have been a trusted provider to many government and private organisations both large and small. We've supplied advice on resource planning, salaries, and introduced people who have the skills, qualifications and personalities necessary to build their teams and contribute to the continued success of their businesses.

**Ian Richardson**



**For over 15 years we have been a trusted provider to many government and private organisations both large and small.**

# About the Report



The following report outlines the salary ranges seen in the 23/24 financial year.

The figures outlined should be used as a guide only. All information contained in this report has been collated through an independent survey conducted by Construction People with a variety of builders and Project Management Consultancies in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, as well as through the work our team has done with clients and candidates over the last 12 months.

The salary figures contained in this report include the low, mode\* and high salaries currently being received in the market.

**We want to extend our genuine thanks to all the builders and consultancies that participated in our survey. Without you, these salary insights could not have occurred.**

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*\*See page [11](#) for a definition of 'mode'*

# Market Outlook

Without a doubt, this has been the year of retention. When we recently surveyed businesses and combined the data, 50% said their retention improved, 35.71% saw no change, and only 14.29% experienced a drop. At the same time, 64.29% of businesses reported more projects, 14.29% stayed the same, and only 21.42% saw fewer projects.

Overall, staffing hasn't hindered growth for most businesses over the past year. Better retention rates meant they didn't need to backfill as many positions, allowing them to expand by adding new roles and capacity. So, while many expected this to be the year of 'the great move', it turned out to be the year of 'the great retention'. The main driver? Salary incentives to switch jobs have decreased compared to previous years.

Since the height of the pandemic, we've seen people demanding more from their employers as their perception of work has changed. They want to keep their flexibility (like school pickups/drop-offs and flexible hours) and the option to work from home (WFH), while also asking for significant salary increases.

To retain staff during a time of candidate shortages, most employers have stepped up, offering many benefits and higher salaries. This means over the last year there has been less incentive for employees to change jobs, as salary and benefits have reached parity across the industry, creating a more level playing field.

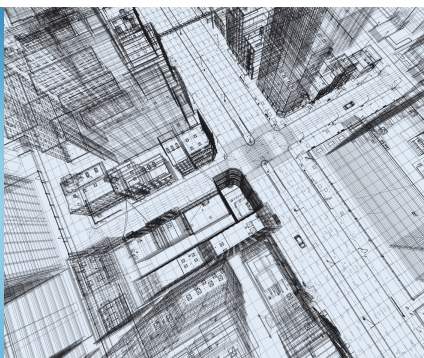


**Without a doubt, this year has been all about retention, thanks to the equalisation of salaries.**

So, it's safe to say that retention is up mostly due to salary equalisation. Other factors, like market instability, high inflation, and interest rates, have also played a role, making people less willing to take risks during uncertain times.

Additionally, the rise in companies going into administration over the past few years has impacted retention. For example, former managers have joined new companies and brought their teams along because they enjoy working together. These teams have tended to stay together for stability.

In the feedback we're receiving, there's a clear shift away from people leaving companies. Most report an improved work culture and more competence in promotions compared to previous years. Overall, people are happy where they are with their salary package and benefits. Within this general contentment, we're also hearing more about employees wanting to take on bigger projects to expand their skills, as they are starting to see retention reduce their career opportunities.



# Market Outlook

## Unintended consequences of retention and salary equalisation

We've noticed that wage bands are compressing across different experience levels for the same role, leading to less differentiation between varying years of experience in those roles. For instance, employers are now paying nearly the same salary to someone who has recently acquired a title and the subsequent responsibilities as they would to someone with many years carrying the same title and performing the role, especially for Project Managers (PMs) and Senior Contract Administrators (CAs).

Previously, a Junior PM would earn less than a PM, who in turn would earn less than a Senior PM. Nowadays, a Junior PM on their first or second project might earn as much as an experienced PM. Similarly, experienced Senior CAs used to be paid significantly more than CAs who first transitioned to a lead / Senior CA role on a project, but now we're seeing CAs earn almost the same as those with substantially more experience.

It seems more so than ever that once you are deemed to be doing the role, you are paid according to the role with less reference to how long you have been performing the position.



**Over the past year, employers have differentiated less between the salary grades of a role.**



# Salary Insights

As observed in the market outlook, salaries have remained relatively stable compared to previous years. We anticipate that as the market stabilises, salaries will likely plateau for a while. Over the past year, we've already seen significant stagnation, mainly because salaries have been set at high levels after several years of growth. According to the salary data from the past financial year in this Salary Report, most salaries are quite similar to those from the previous year.

Another challenge is the tension around supply. For example, feedback from Tier 3 companies indicates that smaller builders are facing significant price increases. Fit-out projects that were initially budgeted under \$1M are now estimated at substantially over \$1M, leading many clients to decide against proceeding with these jobs.

**There are always exceptions, especially in the Tier 2 sector this year, where salaries for certain roles have increased significantly: Senior PMs are up 27.66%, PMs by 29%, Junior Foreman by 45%, PEs by 34%, and Senior CAs by 28.23%.**

**Other mid-tier roles with notable salary gains include Safety Managers, up 31.43%, and Design Managers, up 25%.**

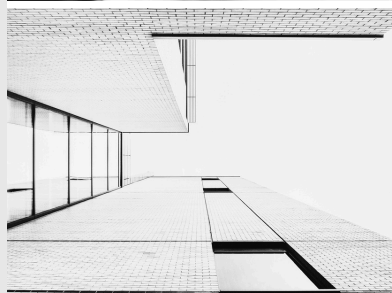
**For smaller builders, the most significant increases were for PEs, up 34.15%, Site Engineers, up 40.78%, and Services Engineers, up 35.34%.**

*(See page 11 for specific salary data)*

So, while our survey results indicate businesses have largely experienced growth and that employee retention hasn't hindered this progress, along with an increase in the number of projects compared to last year, we're also seeing a lot of companies that aren't working with the government or big businesses with their deeper pockets, facing pushback on construction costs.

Capacity constraints are also a significant issue in the market, affecting both labour and construction management roles. While labour shortages are widely recognised, it's less well-known that there are also shortages on the management side. This is evident in key roles such as Site Managers (SMs), Contract Administrators (CAs), Project Managers (PMs), and Estimators.

Many companies are struggling to balance high salaries with the level of benefits provided. And, with widespread flexibility and remote work options, it has become more challenging for employers to manage their workforce, which is impacting business operations and productivity.





# Salary Insights

So, with builders facing higher employee salary expectations, elevated supply costs, challenges in flexibility, and labour capacity constraints, something has to give. In our view, the current situation is unsustainable, and we are going to experience a slowing in salary growth over the next 12 months as employers manage their costs to remain profitable.

## What to do during a slow market

Given that the benefits offered by different companies are largely similar, now is a good time to focus on your career goals. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of working for a large versus a smaller builder and how each might support your career development. Look for projects that align with your skills and professional ambitions. Also, stay realistic about your goals and the path to achieving them. For example, while transitioning from a CA to a PM is already a significant leap, we're seeing some CAs aiming to move directly into Commercial Manager roles. It's important to break your goals into manageable steps, by setting smaller achievable milestones that gradually lead to your end goal.

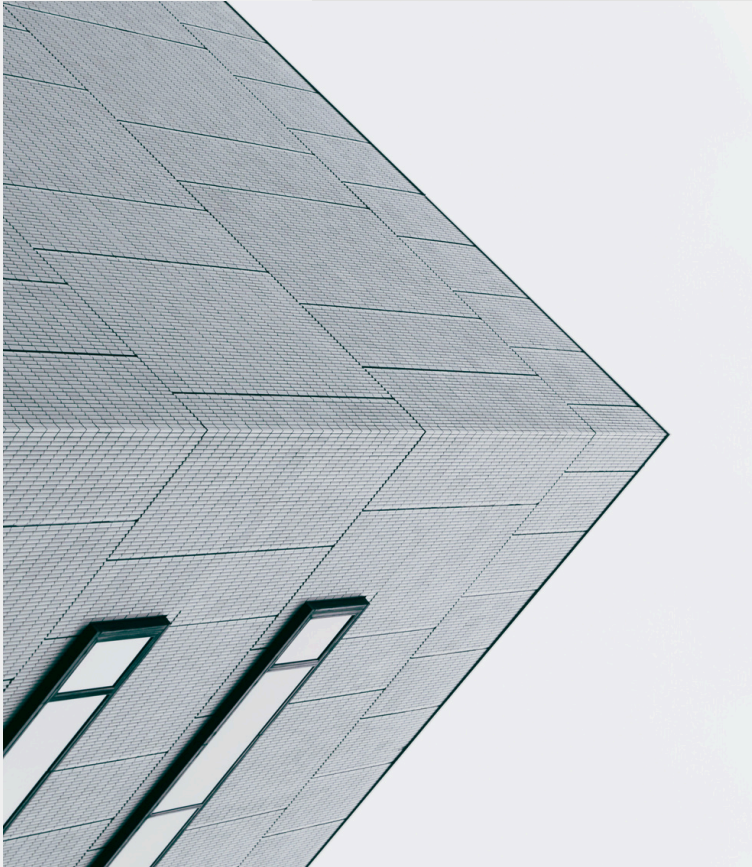
What can also help set you apart in preparation for when salaries start moving is, depending on your particular role of course, learning about the latest technologies that you can use in your day-to-day role such as BIM or Certificates / Short Courses, instead of doing extended education like Uni courses. This way you'll have those additional

skills to help you stand out from the competition and move your career forward. Do software training, and relevant certificates - so small pieces of study that you can utilise immediately. Remember, everyone in construction holds a lot of education, so the focus to stand out is more on the skills you gain or hold from bite-sized courses that assist with your upskilling.



**Wage growth seems to have topped out, which is unsurprising given how high construction industry salaries are compared to most other sectors in Australia. Overall, the industry is well-paying.**

# Important Considerations



Even if you're currently well-paid and whilst salaries are generally comparable, it's worth considering any opportunities that could improve your position. We advise you to have a genuine look because when salaries start to rise again, you'll want to be in a position to benefit from it. To prepare, this can be via undertaking those bigger projects, or a different role or title, even if it means changing companies.

So, don't overlook the importance of managing your career, and investing in yourself. A large part of that investing is to continue searching for opportunities to progress your career because the flipside of higher retention means more glass ceilings and fewer opportunities in your own business - otherwise you could risk being pigeon-holed for the next few years.



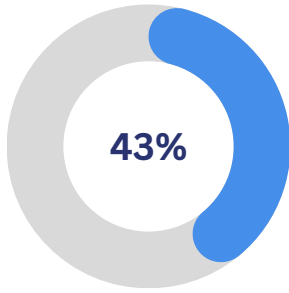
**Your focus needs to tilt from wages and benefits to career progression and projects of interest to best prepare for when salaries start to rise again.**

# Business Survey

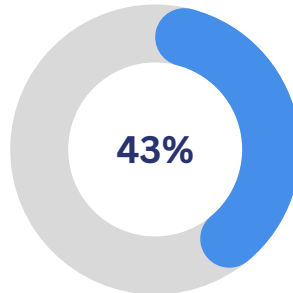
## Q&A Results

We asked several businesses which roles had been the most challenging to fill over the past year.

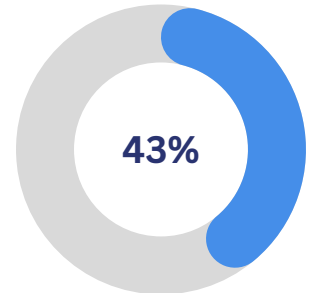
**Tier 3**  
% of businesses



Site Manager

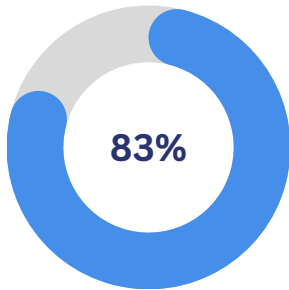


Project Manager

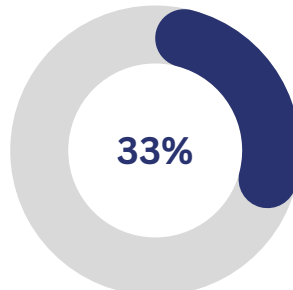


Contract Administrator

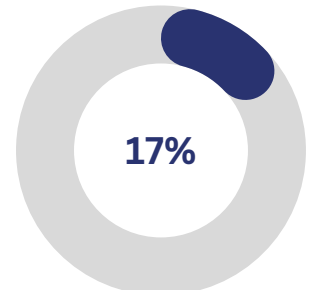
**Tier 2**  
% of businesses



Contract Administrator

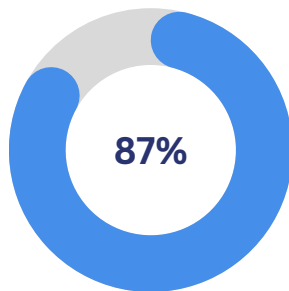


Site Manager

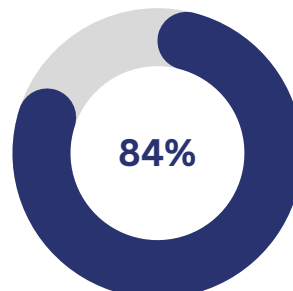


Project Manager

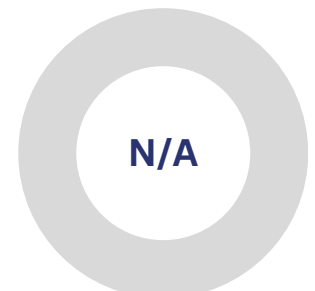
**Tier 1**  
% of businesses



Contract Administrator



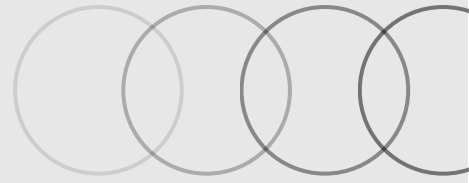
Site Manager



N/A

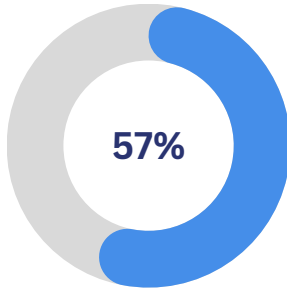
# Business Survey Q&A Results

## Retention Percentages Per Tier

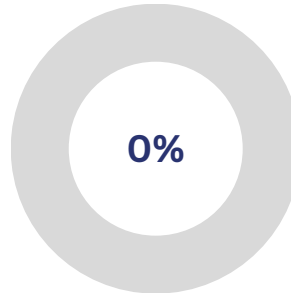


Over the past year has your retention rate increased or decreased?

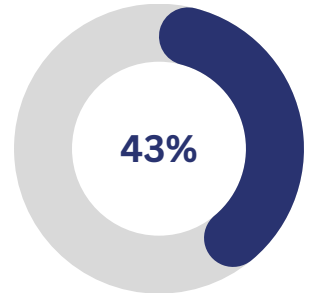
Tier 3  
Retention  
% of businesses



Increased

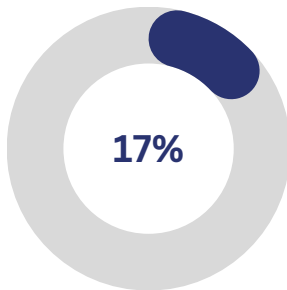


Decreased

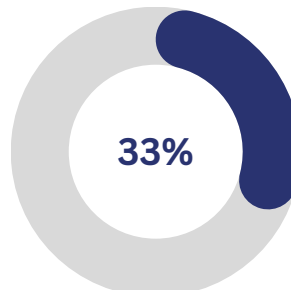


No Change

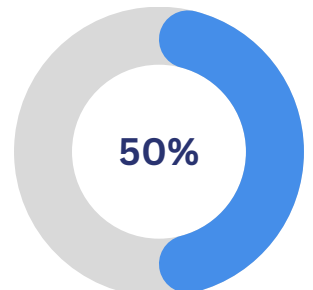
Tier 2  
Retention  
% of businesses



Increased

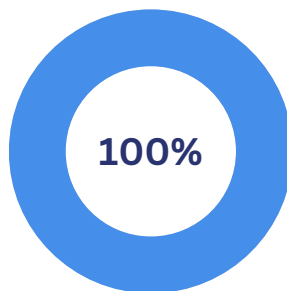


Decreased

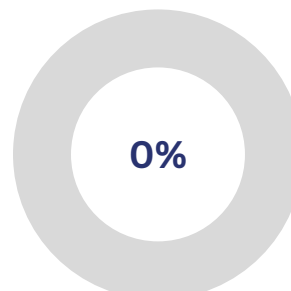


No Change

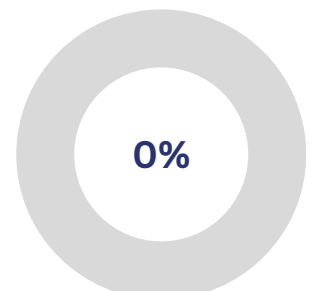
Tier 1  
Retention  
% of businesses



Increased



Decreased



No Change



# Highest Salary Growth Roles 2024

The Brisbane roles that were the exception to salary stagnation having the most dramatic salary growth over the past year are:

Junior Foreman - Tier 2 - % Increase



Site Engineer - Tier 3 - % Increase



Project Engineer - Tier 2 - % Increase



Services Engineer - Tier 3 - % Increase



Project Engineer - Tier 3 - % Increase



Safety Manager - Tier 2 - % Increase



Project Manager - Tier 2 - % Increase



Senior Contract Administrator - Tier 2 - % Increase



Senior Project Manager - Tier 1 - % Increase



# Building Head Contractors | Brisbane

All figures outlined below are based on annual salaries for permanent positions, including super. The top figure is the mode\* while the figures seen in brackets are the range of salaries reported for each position.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Operations Manager	460,000 (400 - 540+)	400,000 (390 - 415+)	385,000 (350 - 400)	260,000 (220 - 310)
Construction Manager	385,000 (350 - 460)	360,000 (290 - 390)	320,000 (290 - 370)	245,000 (220 - 260)
Commercial Manager	390,000 (385 - 390)	320,000 (250 - 360)	300,000 (240 - 330)	245,000 (220 - 270)

PRE CONTRACTS STAFF	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Business Development Manager	280,000 (265 - 310)	265,000 (250 - 310)	245,000 (230 - 260)	160,000 (110 - 210)
Estimating Manager	340,000 (300 - 390)	340,000 (290 - 350)	300,000 (260 - 300)	230,000 (200 - 240)
Senior Estimator	280,000 (240 - 310)	230,000 (200 - 260)	210,000 (170 - 210)	175,000 (165 - 210)
Estimator	230,000 (180 - 245)	195,000 (175 - 245)	170,000 (160 - 185)	155,000 (120 - 175)
Cadet/Junior Estimator	145,000 (120 - 160)	125,000 (110 - 135)	110,000 (80 - 125)	110,000 (75 - 125)
BID/Submissions Coordinator	n/a	150,000 (120 - 165)	120,000 (115 - 120)	110,000 (90 - 130)

DESIGN	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Senior Design Manager	280,000 (230 - 320)	270,000 (240 - 270)	240,000 (200 - 270)	185,000 (160 - 240)
Design Manager	220,000 (180 - 280)	225,000 (200 - 240)	220,000 (180 - 230)	165,000 (135 - 200)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Senior Project Manager	300,000 (275 - 330)	290,000 (275 - 325)	260,000 (210 - 310)	220,000 (210 - 230)
Project Manager	260,000 (200 - 280)	250,000 (200 - 270)	240,000 (180 - 265)	185,000 (180 - 220)
Junior Project Manager	225,000 (200 - 250)	220,000 (200 - 240)	210,000 (180 - 220)	130,000 (125 - 200)

This year we have included an Upper T2 category due to the increasing number of larger projects that T2s complete that require them to compete with T1s for staff. This assists with providing truer salary scales within the mid tiers, whilst also differentiating large T2s from T1s. T2 = complete projects up to \$100M. Upper T2 = complete projects up to \$200M.

\*Mode: **The most frequent number**—that is, the number that occurs the highest number of times. Example: The mode of {4, 2, 4, 3, 2, 2} is 2 because it occurs three times, which is more than any other number.

ADMINISTRATORS	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Senior Contract Administrator	240,000 (190 - 245)	220,000 (210 - 240)	220,000 (200 - 240)	170,000 (150 - 185)
Contract Administrator	190,000 (160 - 220)	180,000 (160 - 200)	155,000 (125 - 180)	135,000 (115 - 165)
Junior Contract Administrator	175,000 (150 - 210)	145,000 (130 - 160)	135,000 (110 - 150)	105,000 (90 - 125)
Graduate Contract Administrator	95,000 (85 - 120)	105,000 (70 - 115)	100,000 (70 - 100)	95,000 (60 - 100)
Project / Site Administrator	100,000 (95 - 125)	95,000 (90 - 110)	95,000 (85 - 105)	85,000 (80 - 85)

ENGINEERS	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Senior Project Engineer	230,000 (200 - 260)	215,000 (200 - 230)	210,000 (195 - 230)	NA
Project Engineer	190,000 (155 - 220)	170,000 (155 - 200)	165,000 (155 - 190)	165,000 (135 - 185)
Site Engineer	150,000 (145 - 160)	145,000 (130 - 155)	145,000 (130 - 150)	115,000 (85 - 125)
Graduate Engineer	n/a	n/a	95,000 (90 - 95)	NA

SITE MANAGERS	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Senior Site Manager	290,000 (250 - 330)	250,000 (230 - 280)	240,000 (230 - 260)	210,000 (165 - 230)
Site Manager	265,000 (220 - 300)	235,000 (200 - 250)	220,000 (175 - 240)	185,000 (140 - 195)
Foreman	210,000 (170 - 240)	190,000 (165 - 210)	185,000 (160 - 200)	125,000 (120 - 175)
Leading Hand/Junior Foreman	n/a	165,000 (140 - 180)	145,000 (130 - 155)	125,000 (100 - 150)

SAFETY	Tier 1	Upper Tier 2*	Tier 2*	Tier 3
Safety Manager	260,000 (235 - 300)	230,000 (180 - 235)	210,000 (160 - 230)	155,000 (155 - 190)
Safety Coordinator	210,000 (175 - 230)	180,000 (140 - 180)	170,000 (170 - 180)	140,000 (125 - 150)
Safety Advisor	170,000 (150 - 190)	165,000 (145 - 175)	160,000 (140 - 170)	110,000 (100 - 120)

# Building Head Contractors | Gold Coast

All figures outlined below are based on annual salaries for permanent positions, including super. The top figure is the mode\* while the figures seen in brackets are the range of salaries reported for each position.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT	Tier 2
Operations Manager	365,000 (350 - 380)
Construction Manager	310,000 (300 - 325)
Commercial Manager	330,000 (300 - 350)

PRE CONTRACTS STAFF	Tier 2
Business Development Manager	220,000 (195 - 200)
Estimating Manager	270,000 (230 - 300)
Senior Estimator	240,000 (210 - 280)
Estimator	190,000 (180 - 210)
Cadet/Junior Estimator	140,000 (140 - 150)
BID/Submissions Coordinator	155,000 (150 - 155)

DESIGN	Tier 2
Senior Design Manager	255,000 (225 - 280)
Design Manager	210,000 (190 - 240)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT	Tier 2
Senior Project Manager	280,000 (250 - 330)
Project Manager	250,000 (240 - 260)
Junior Project Manager	190,000 (180 - 200)

\*Mode: **The most frequent number**—that is, the number that occurs the highest number of times. Example: The mode of {4, 2, 4, 3, 2, 2} is 2 because it occurs three times, which is more than any other number.



ADMINISTRATORS	Tier 2
Senior Contract Administrator	220,000 (200 - 250)
Contract Administrator	190,000 (160 - 200)
Junior Contract Administrator	140,000 (120 - 150)
Project / Site Administrator	100,000 (80 - 120)

ENGINEERS	Tier 2
Senior Project Engineer	215,000 (200 - 235)
Project Engineer	190,000 (180 - 205)
Site Engineer	140,000 (130 - 160)
Graduate Engineer	80,000 (75 - 90)

SITE MANAGERS	Tier 2
Senior Site Manager	265,000 (220 - 285)
Site Manager	220,000 (200 - 245)
Foreman	185,000 (160 - 215)
Leading Hand/Junior Foreman	150,000 (150 - 165)

SAFETY	Tier 2
Safety Manager	240,000 (200 - 250)
Safety Coordinator	180,000 (170 - 200)
Safety Advisor	165,000 (145 - 185)

# Project Management Consultancies | Brisbane

All figures outlined below are based on annual salaries for permanent positions, including super.

The top figure is the mode\* while the figures seen in brackets are the range of salaries reported for each position.

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Director	335,000 (270 - 400+)
Associate Director	215,000 (210 - 280)
Project Director	295,000 (200 - 400)

## PROJECT MANAGERS

Senior Project Manager	225,000 (175 - 340)
Project Manager	140,000 (125 - 290)
Assistant Project Manager	115,000 (90 - 125)

## PROGRAMMERS

Programmers & Schedulers	200,000 (180 - 240)
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\*Mode: **The most frequent number**—that is, the number that occurs the highest number of times. Example: The mode of {4, 2, 4, 3, 2, 2} is 2 because it occurs three times, which is more than any other number.

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# SALARY REPORT

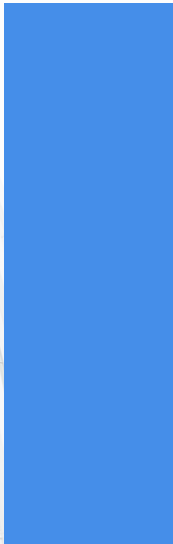


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**CONSTRUCTION**  
people

