



**Victorian  
Municipal Building  
Surveyors Group<sup>INC</sup>**

Safety • Integrity • Advocacy

Building Inspectors  
& Building Surveyors

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# Salary Survey 2024



# Welcome

Planned Resources are pleased again to collaborate with the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group ([www.vmbsg.com.au](http://www.vmbsg.com.au)), to produce a follow-up to the 2023 salary survey. To our knowledge this is the only current survey of its kind, that not only splits Building Surveying out from other Building professions, but also separates it further to specifically interrogate salaries within the local government sector as distinct from the private sector.

We are frequently asked to provide input into market salaries at briefing stages of recruitment campaigns, as well as specific ad-hoc advice to both clients and candidates for benchmarking and salary negotiations. Having accurate information based on solid data is extremely helpful in being able to justify our recommendations. Surveys of this nature are even more important in sectors like Building Surveying where pressure from the private sector and talent shortages have put salary expectations out of kilter with traditional local government bandings.

We had 60 respondents (31 metropolitan and 29 regional) this year giving us what we feel is a fair representation of the 79 Victorian councils.

We would like to thank the VMBSG committee for their help in disseminating the survey amongst its members, their profile within the sector is a major reason that we have the number of respondents we have for this survey.

We would also like to thank the individual respondents, without whom there would be no survey! We appreciate the time taken out of your busy schedules to complete the survey and hope the results enclosed are of interest to you.



# Building Inspectors

## Building Inspector – Limited

The average salary for an IN-L was a total package of \$120,531, (\$127,037 for metro and \$112,545 regional). This is substantially higher than the 2023 results where the average salary was reported to be \$107,250.

The results suggested that the average salary to appoint a new IN-L in 2024/25 would decrease to \$114,800 over the next 12 months. Although there is a large discrepancy between the data with approximately 50% expecting to pay a modest increase to attract new candidates, 15% of the councils have hired resources at the peak of the market and are paying wages at the peak of this legacy, feeling that they could get new INL's for up to \$40K cheaper.

## Building Inspector – Unlimited

The average current salary for an IN-U is \$124,052, (\$127,280 metro and \$117,846 regional) with councils expecting to pay \$130,061 to attract a new IN-U to their team. Salaries for IN-U's have risen by around \$13K from \$111,424 last year.

Unlike the IN-L overall results, the IN-U's were very consistent with most councils demonstrating similar trends with the data not showing the same large discrepancies between current and expected salaries.

# Building Surveyors

## Building Surveyor – Limited

The current salary for a BS-L is \$131,795, (\$134,111 metro and \$128,118 regional) a \$10K increase on the previous years \$121,147. Councils expect that they would be required to pay in the area of \$140,884 to attract a new BS-L to the team, suggesting a likely increase of around \$10K again this year.

## Building Surveyor- Unlimited

A BS-U is presently paid \$150,289 with councils expecting to be required to pay \$160,300 to attract a new BS-U. It is noticeable that the differential between a BS-U in the metro region (\$152,125) and regional (\$147,142) is only \$5K, significantly less than the \$13K it was in 2023.

Regional BS-U salaries have increased by \$27K from last year's survey. Anecdotally, Planned Resources have found that regional councils have been far more willing to negotiate on salaries for BS-U's in the last 12 months in order to resolve some of their long term vacancy problems.

## dMBS and MBS Salaries

Looking at Deputy MBS's councils are currently paying \$162,650, whilst they are expecting to pay \$172,142 to source a new Deputy in this current market.

The average salary for a Municipal Building Surveyor is \$189,166, this is split between a regional MBS of \$168,579 and a metropolitan MBS of \$208,285. The survey indicates for council to source a new MBS they would need to pay a salary in the area of \$206,000, (\$185,687 regional and \$227,035 in metro Melbourne).

# Salaries at a Glance

## Overall

Year (Overall)	2023 Average	2024 Average	Increase from last year	Percentage Increase	Expected Salary to source new candidates
IN-L	\$107,250	\$120,531	\$13,281	12.4%	\$114,800
IN-U	\$114,424	\$120,974	\$6,550	5.7%	\$130,061
BS-L	\$121,147	\$131,795	\$10,648	8.8%	\$140,885
BS-U	\$134,171	\$150,289	\$16,118	12.0%	\$160,300
DMBS	\$145,969	\$162,250	\$16,681	11.4%	\$171,771
MBS	\$171,317	\$191,132	\$19,815	11.6%	\$206,821

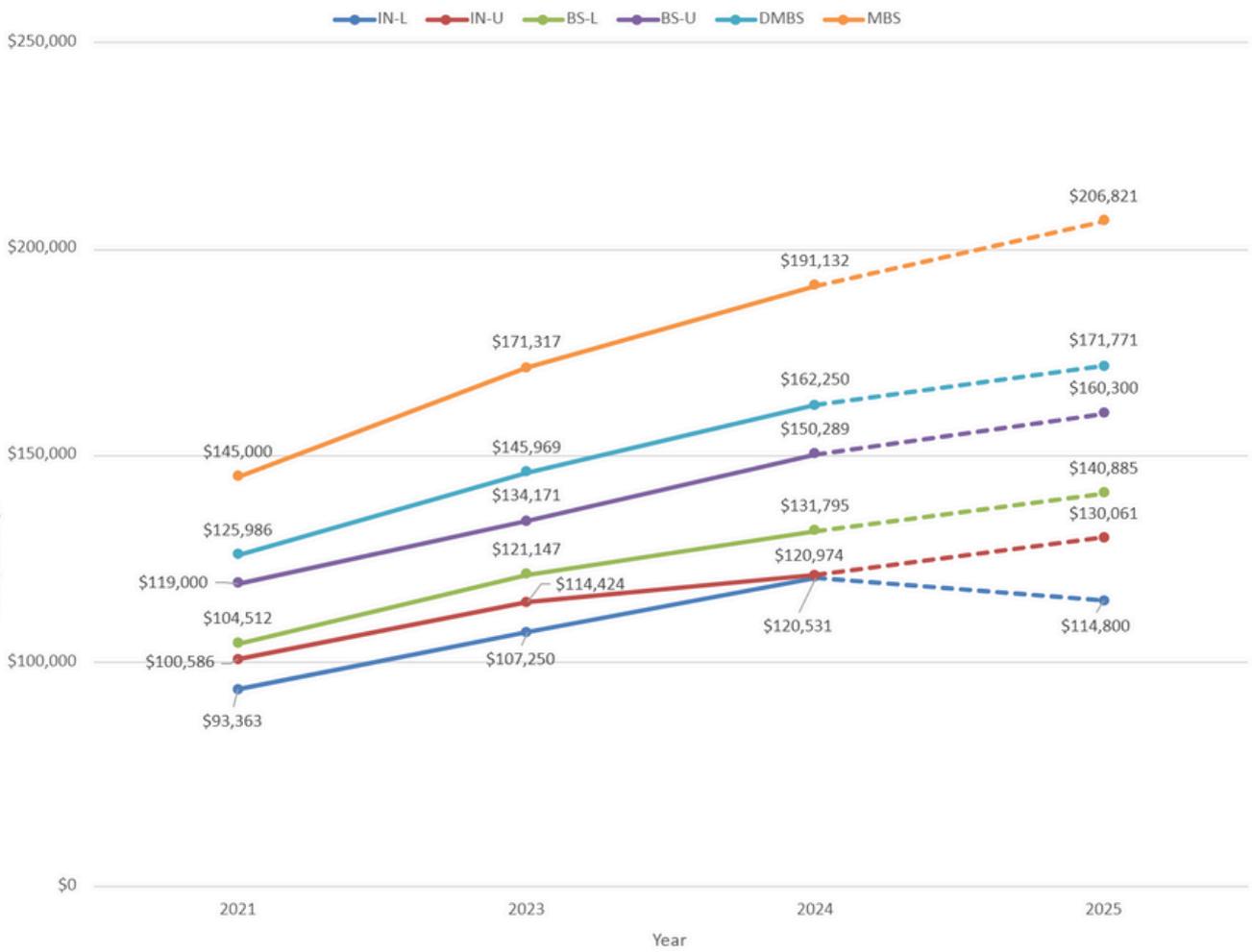
## Metro

Year	2023 Average	2024 Average	Increase from last year	Percentage Increase	Expected Salary to source new candidates
IN-L	\$108,087	\$127,037	\$18,950	17.5%	\$119,704
IN-U	\$116,150	\$127,280	\$11,130	9.6%	\$133,308
BS-L	\$124,238	\$134,111	\$9,873	7.9%	\$141,577
BS-U	\$137,050	\$152,125	\$15,075	11.0%	\$161,769
DMBS	\$156,000	\$171,480	\$15,480	9.9%	\$182,077
MBS	\$189,739	\$208,286	\$18,547	9.8%	\$227,036

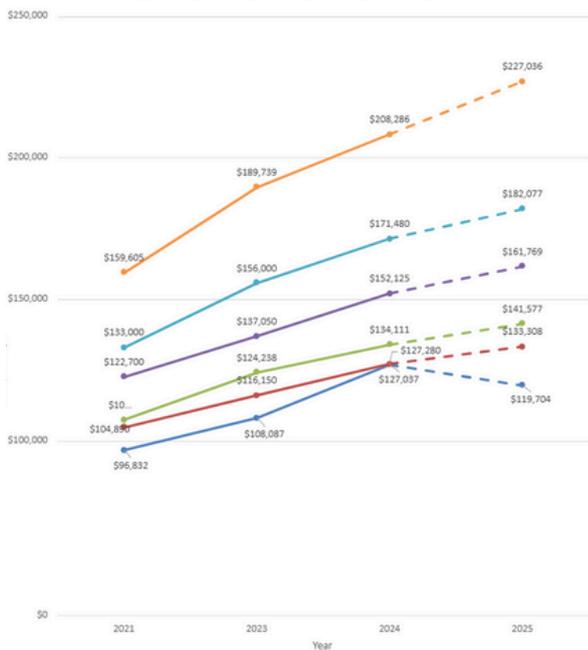
## Regional

Year	2023 Average	2024 Average	Increase from last year	Percentage Increase	Expected Salary to source new candidates
IN-L	\$105,762	\$112,545	\$6,783	6.4%	\$110,071
IN-U	\$104,154	\$109,714	\$5,560	5.3%	\$126,391
BS-L	\$116,000	\$128,118	\$12,118	10.4%	\$140,192
BS-U	\$120,546	\$147,143	\$26,597	22.1%	\$158,708
DMBS	\$125,000	\$152,600	\$25,600	20.4%	\$159,591
MBS	\$147,779	\$171,920	\$24,141	16.3%	\$186,607

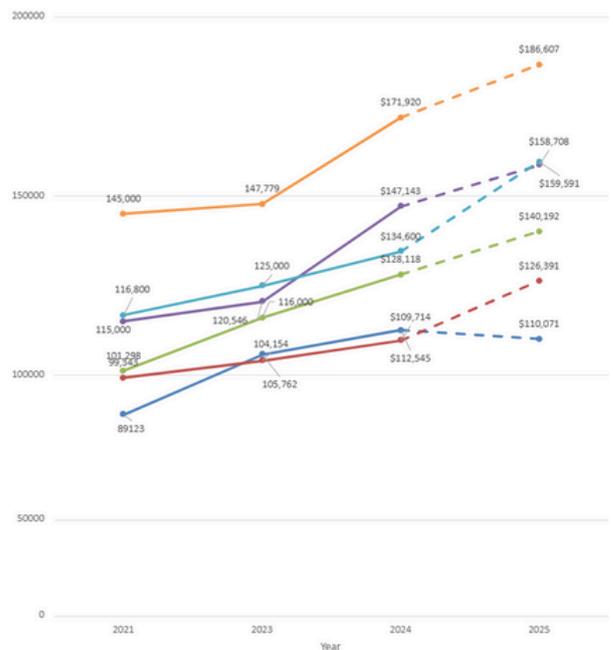
# Overall Melbourne Salary Trends



## MetroMelb Salary trends

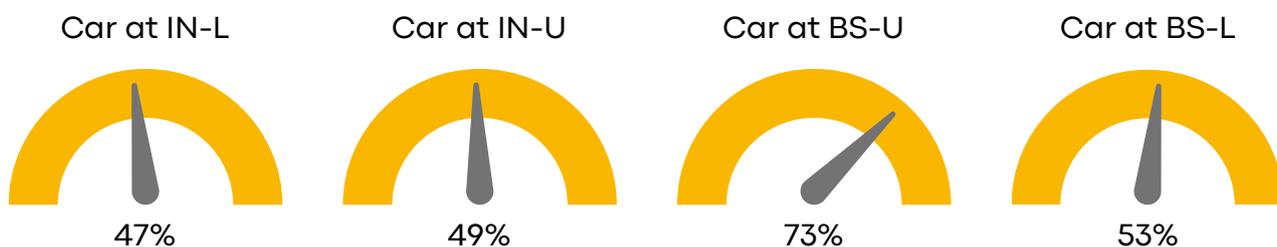


## RegionalMelb Salary trends

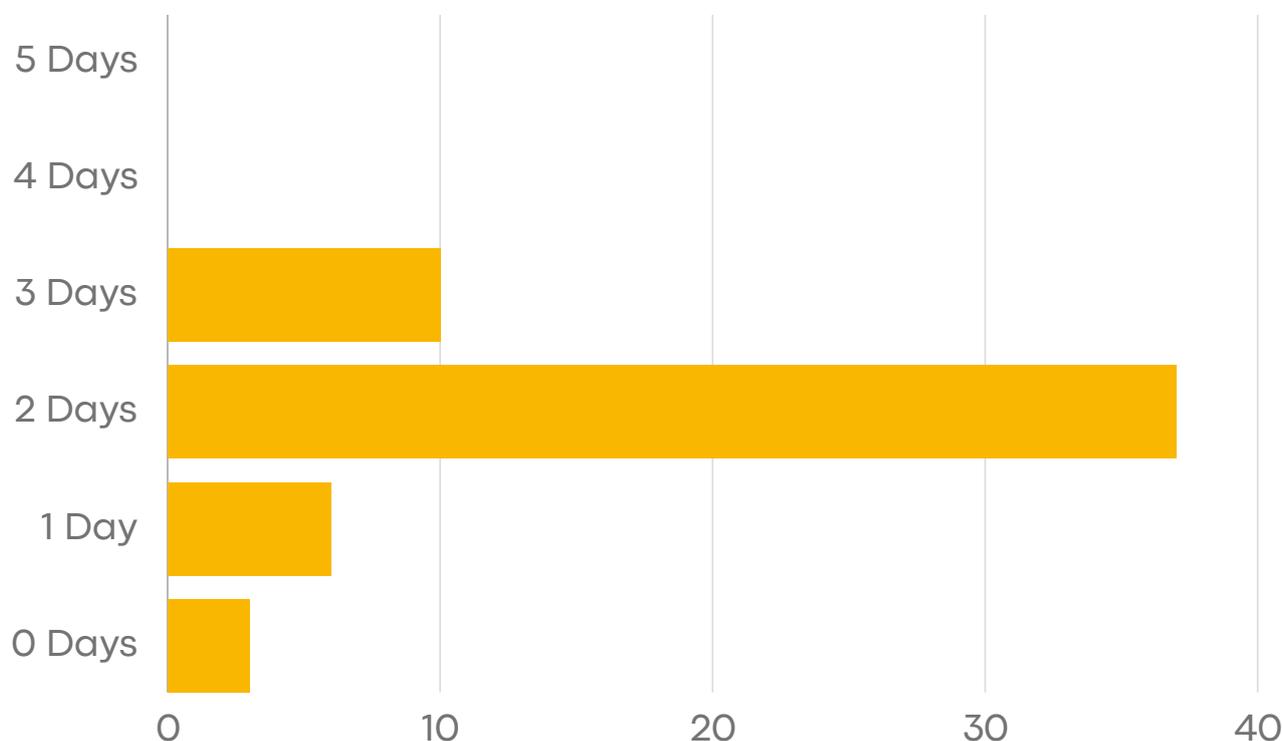


# Overtime, Flexibility & Cars

## Cars included in Salary



## Number of Working from Home Days



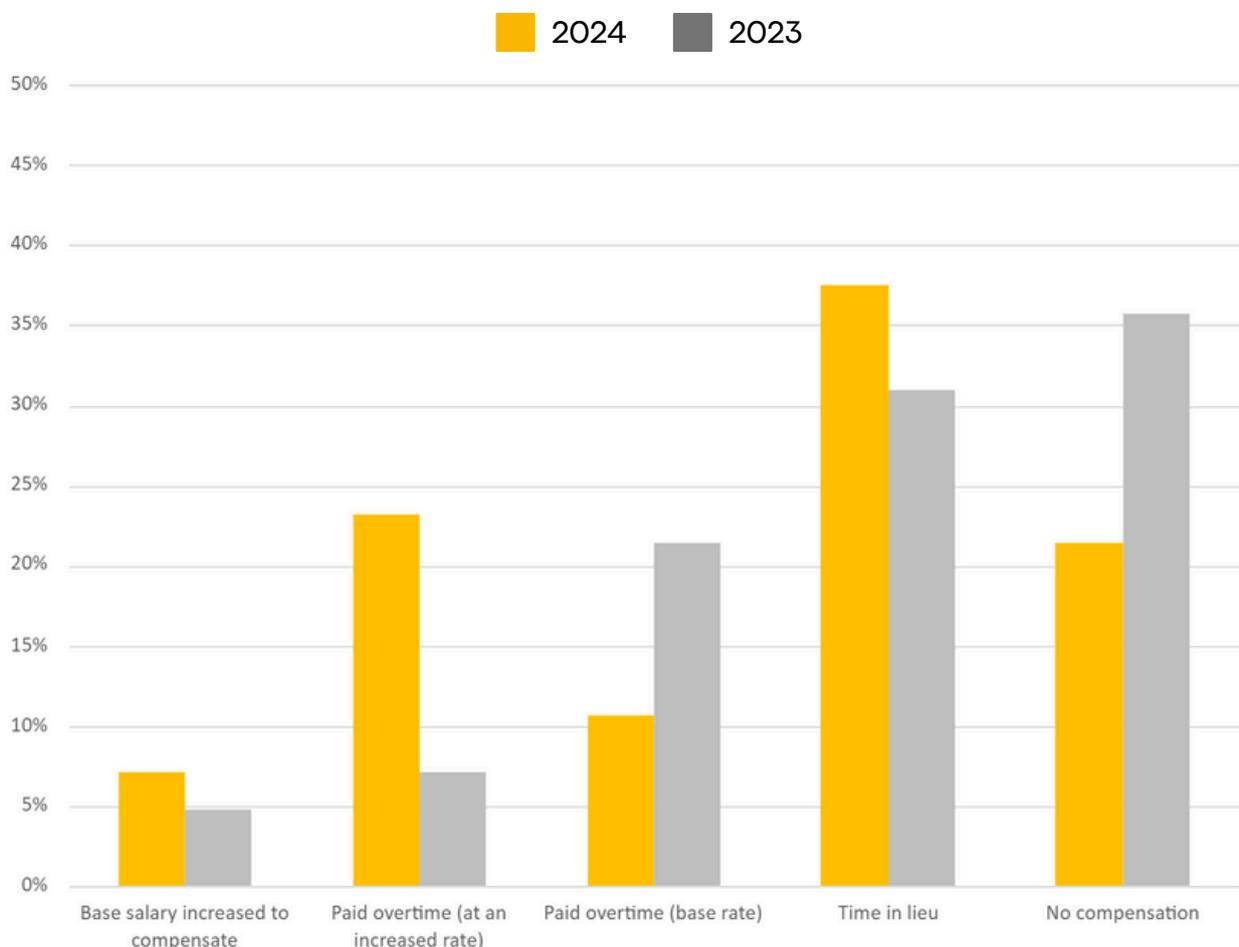
## Overtime Hours

Exploring overtime hours staff members are likely to perform an average of two and a half hours overtime. This is lower than the 2023 salary survey of 3.75 hours overtime. There was also a shift in the number of councils requiring their staff to work some level of overtime hours. In 2023 67% of respondents said that their staff worked some level of overtime but this dropped to 50% this year.

## Average Overtime Hours

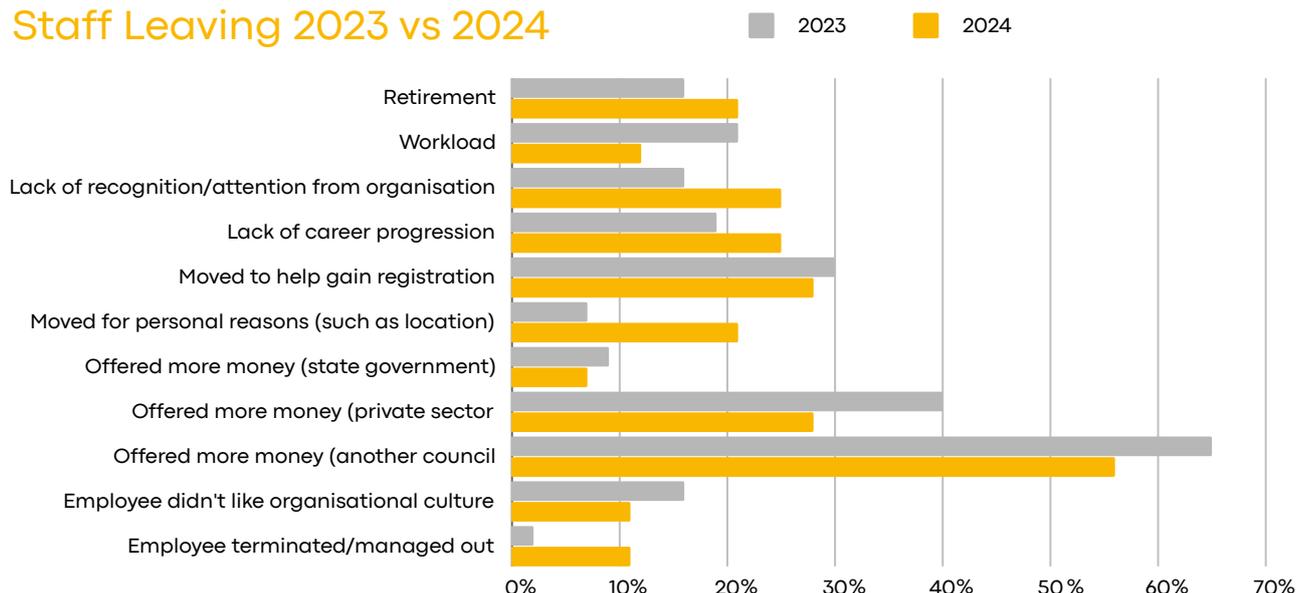


## Types of Compensation for Overtime



# Attracting and Losing Candidates

## Staff Leaving 2023 vs 2024



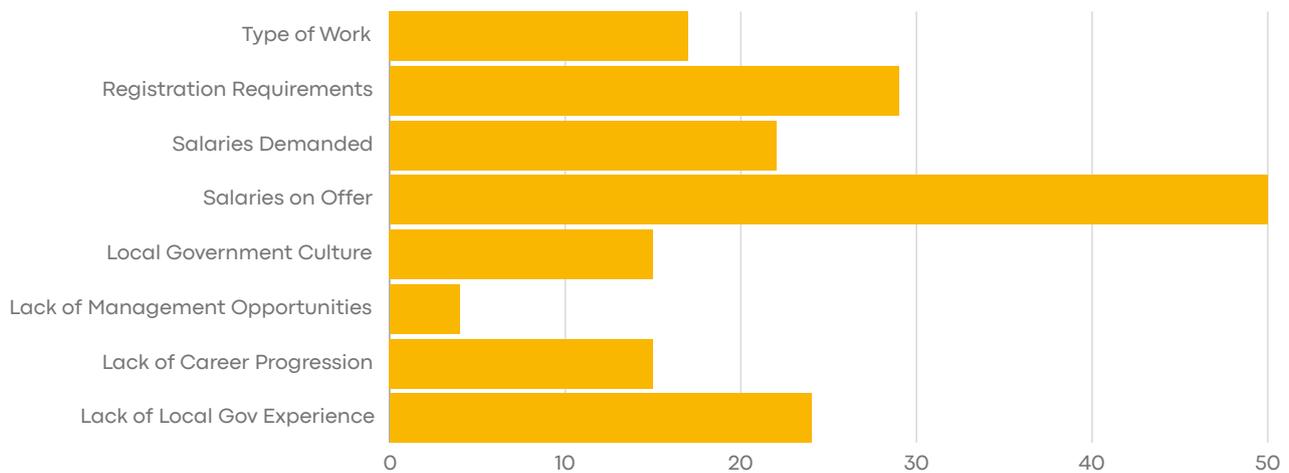
Over the last 12 months councils lost staff for several reasons. Salaries remained the most prominent reason that staff left a council in many of these cases the employees left for another council, mirroring the 2023 survey and in our opinion, this indicates that Surveyors and Inspectors currently in local government remain interested and committed to working in local government.

Noticeably, compared to the 2023 survey, whilst salaries remained a key reason why people changed jobs, it was less of a factor compared to last year's survey, which is in-line with what you would expect from a cooling construction sector.

One positive of the cooling sector was a decrease in staff leaving due to workloads. As Planned Resources have seen in other sectors though this decrease in day-to-day activity is causing candidates to consider the broader employment opportunities on offer from employers, as well as how their work impacts on a candidate's broader lifestyle. Factors like recognition and career progression increased in prominence as well as candidates leaving for personal reasons. We feel that the soft-skills of MBS' will become increasingly important in staff retention over the next 12-18 months.

The increase in non-salary related reasons for employees leaving suggests to us that salaries are reaching an equilibrium and whilst previous information demonstrated that Surveyors/Inspectors felt that they were underpaid in a very competitive market. The recent increases in their salaries over the last couple of years and the general slowdown in the building sector means that salaries are taking a backseat in a candidates' decision making as they look at the broader employment offering in particular career progression and recognition.

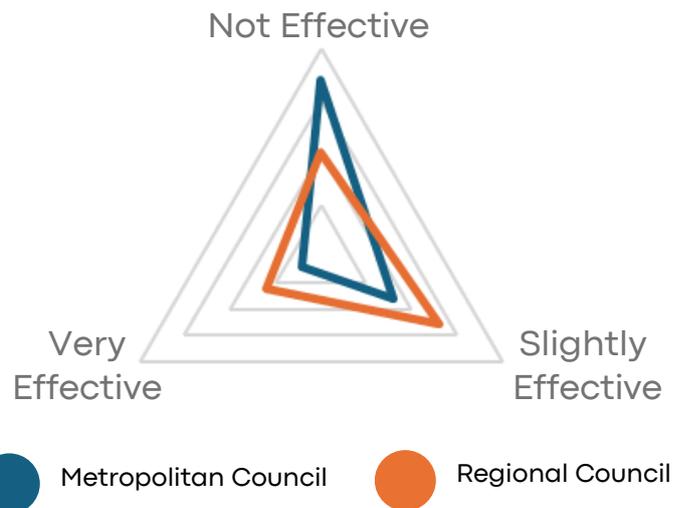
### Barriers as entry into a local government role



Managers still saw salaries as a barrier for entry into the local government sector, although over a third of respondents suggested that candidates had unrealistic salary expectations.

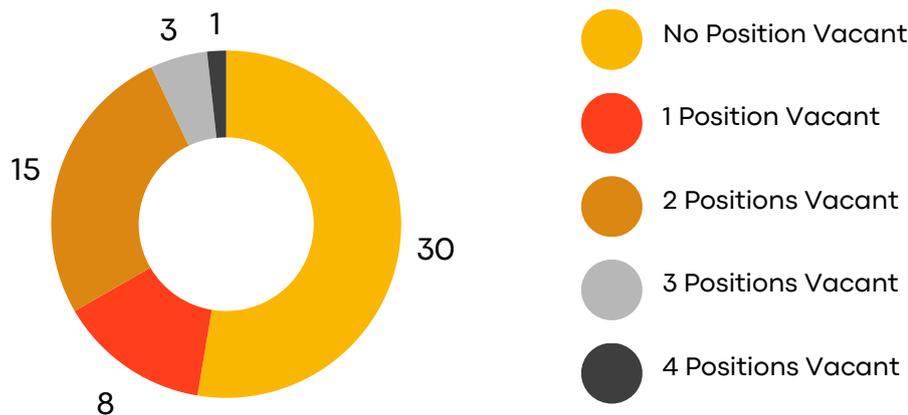
An inability to gain VBA registration remained a key reason why managers felt some candidates wouldn't consider a career in local government. Equally for those candidates who had gained registration within the private sector that lack of local government experience was a concern.

Whilst mutual recognition has boosted the pool of overall candidates in the sector and relieved some pressure on the system there remains some concern over the quality of candidates this has produced. On the whole regional councils have seen mutual recognition as beneficial whilst there remains some skepticism amongst metro councils.



# Vacancy Rate

## Number of Current Vacancies

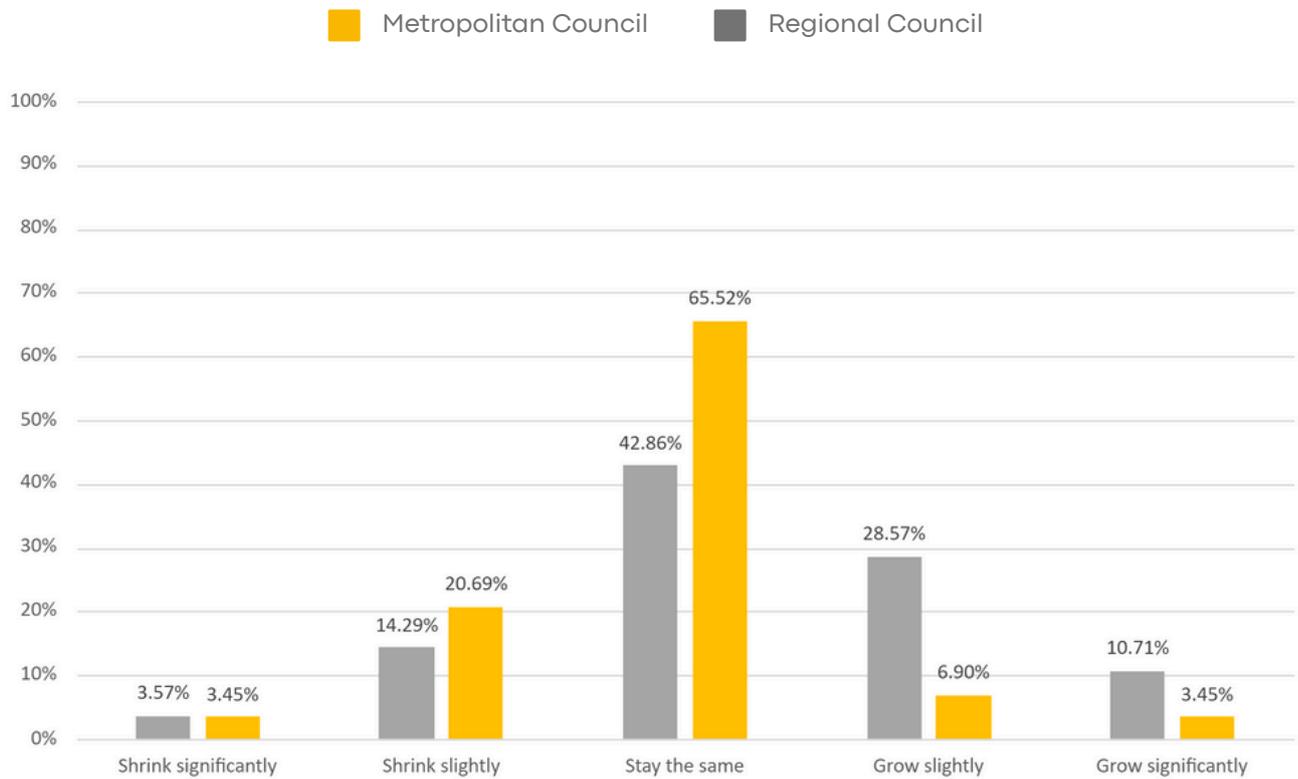


Vacancy numbers have dropped off with councils reporting on average just under one vacancy (0.91) per council, back to the numbers we saw in the 2021 survey and down from 2023 where the vacancy rate was 1.54. The vacant roles remain stubbornly so, with councils reporting that on average these positions are unoccupied for 13.2 months

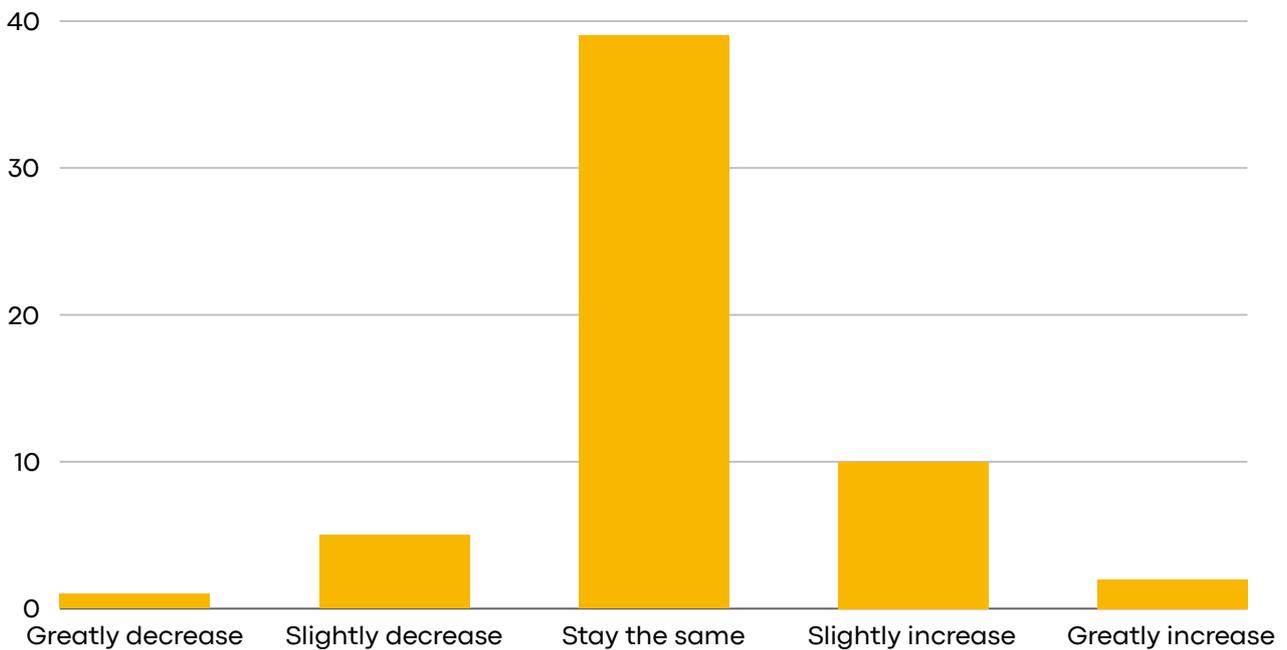
Overall, respondents had mixed views on their staffing plans for the 2024/25 year. The survey suggested a static year for the industry generally, with the majority of councils looking to stay the same, councils looking to grow potentially have the ability to source candidates from councils looking at slightly downsizing. These plans are very different to the 2023 survey where over 45% of respondents expected growth. This static market is likely to manifest itself in salaries for the 24/25 year with only modest salary increases likely.

There remains a number of councils (38%) with staff near retirement age, around a third of these have succession plans in place. We suggest that this remains an area of concern for the market and is likely to see senior BS-U candidates remain in demand and able to command higher salaries as 52% of councils supplemented the workforce in their Building team with additional resources such as agency staff or sole traders. Respondents suggested that the use of contract/agency staff is likely to remain the same for the 24/25 financial year and were slightly stronger on this figure compared to their plans for permanent staff, suggesting that short-term solutions are likely to compensate for any increases in workload.

## Team size for the next 12 months



## Contract staff over next 12 months



# Conclusion

Wages across the local government Building Surveying/Inspector sector grew again in 2023-24. This growth was around 9.75% on average across all the sectors, significantly higher than the national average salaries have grown. Increases over the next 12 months though are likely to be more conservative which is to be expected in a slowing building market.

The Building slow-down is most likely to affect salaries at the IN-L level, where an extremely hot residential market has forced local government to compete with the private sector in an almost unsustainable manner. As the private sector has cooled off we expect to see a readjustment at this level.

Within the regions salaries for BSU's increased, (both acting in a non-managerial function and those acting as the MBS). This has been a trend over the last 2-3 years and has rectified a significant discrepancy between salaries on offer between BSU's in the regions and their counterparts in metro Melbourne. Planned Resources do feel that the legislated requirement councils have for an MBS combined with the difficulty in attracting qualified candidates to the regions will still see this as one area where salaries will continue to significantly grow.

Despite the market we still expect to see modest salary increases across the rest of the Surveying/Inspecting sector over the next 12 months as the number of qualified candidates is still below what the market requires.

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