

THE NUMBER OF ENGINEERS IN AUSTRALIA

1. QUESTION: How many engineers are there in Australia?

This question is about the supply of engineers or the engineering labour force.

The best statistics to answer this question are from the Population Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Using the definition of the engineering team given in FAQ 1:

- In 2006, there were 200,615 people with recognised qualifications in engineering actively engaged in the Australian labour force. This comprised 179,448 men and 21,167 women.
- In 2011, there were 263,890 people with recognised qualifications in engineering actively engaged in the Australian labour force. This comprised 232,802 men and 31,088 women.
- There was an increase of 63,275 or 31.5% over this 5 year period, equivalent to compound growth of 5.6% per year. The increase in the number of men was 53,354 or 29.7%, equivalent to compound growth of 5.3% per year. The increase in the number of women was 9,921 or 46.9%, equivalent to compound growth of 8.0% per year.

There are, of course, people with engineering qualifications who are not actively engaged in the labour market. Most are older people who have retired from the labour force, but many are younger men and women engaged in full time studies and therefore likely to re-join the labour force and others have taken time out to raise families.

- In 2006, the total population with recognised engineering qualifications was 245,631 and 45,016 (37,892 men and 7,124 women) were not actively engaged in the labour force.
- In 2011, the total population with recognised engineering qualifications was 322,523 and 58,633 (48,285 men and 10,348 women) were not actively engaged in the labour force.

The participation rate measures the proportion of the population that is actively engaged in the labour market. In engineering, the participation rate is higher than for other professions:

- In 2006, it was 82.6% for men, 74.8% for women and 81.7% overall.
- In 2011, it was 82.8% for men, 75.0% for women and 81.8% overall

If you need further details about this answer two options are available. Either

- Look at the Policy Note “Changes in the Australian Engineering Labour Market”, November 2012 at www.engineersaustralia.org.au/
- or send an email to policy@engineersaustralia.org.au and ask your question.