

# bryan & armstrong

health & safety recruitment, training and consultancy services

## Employment Survey 2011

Bryan & Armstrong Ltd, the specialist recruiter, and the Association for Project Safety conducted an Employment Survey to find out more about market conditions, employment trends and the industry consensus on a number of pertinent issues. Having received over 1,000 responses within 2 weeks, we are pleased to present findings from the most comprehensive survey of APS Members ever undertaken. This survey has been designed and produced for the benefit of all members of the Association for Project Safety, both individual and corporate, with an interest in the wider employment market.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took part.

## Structure and coverage

We invited the entire APS membership to answer a series of questions covering the past 12 months, the present and expectations for the next year. Some questions focus on perceptions, whilst others provide more objective detail, giving us an indication of market trends and expectations. Our report analyses the results and offers an interpretation, based on our experience in the sector.



## Results

### How long have you been a member of the APS?

This question really sets the scene for the survey and gives an indication of the level of experience held by APS Members. We found that 22.5% of respondents have held membership for over 10 years and a further 24.3% have been members for 5-10 years. Just over half of respondents (53.2%) have held membership for less than 5 years, whilst 9.4% have held membership for less than a year.

These results are encouraging because they show that whilst the APS is retaining experienced members, overall membership has been increased by an average of 10% per annum over the past 5 years. Influencing factors are likely to include the introduction of CDM 2007 and also the particularly difficult market conditions in related professional disciplines, which is likely to have encouraged individuals and organisations to develop skills and service offerings.

### In which APS region are you based?

These figures provide an overview of the geographical distribution of responses to our survey.

North West England	11.8%	South Central England	4.8%
South East England	11.3%	Scotland East	4.8%
London	9%	Scotland West	4.7%
South West England	7.8%	Ireland	2.5%
Midlands	7.7%	Scotland North	1.7%
Yorkshire	7.1%	Northern Ireland	1.7%
East Anglia	6.6%	Overseas	1%
East Midlands	6.2%	Isle of Man	0.6%
Wales	5.3%	Channel Islands	0.2%
Northern England	5.3%		

## Are you employed or self-employed?

Our results show that 78% of CDM Coordinators are employed and 22% are self-employed. The self employed figures include those running their own business on a self employed, partnership, sole trader and limited company basis.

Since 2008 we have experienced a marked increase in the number of people setting up their own businesses, often following redundancy. The main issues faced by those moving from employment to self-employment include a lack of sales and marketing skills, restrictive covenants, difficulty securing work (particularly on large infrastructure projects) and the inability to provide multidisciplinary services.

The increase in self-employed CDM Coordinators has coincided with a decrease in demand for CDM services, causing day rates to fall significantly. More competition and reduced day-rates have further increased pressure and reduced margins at larger consultancies, threatening the job security of employed CDM Coordinators. As margins have been tightened, many employed candidates have also experienced pay-freezes and, in many cases, pay-cuts. We expect that the proportion of employed versus self-employed CDM Coordinators will remain stable over the next 12 months. However, if day-rates begin to recover, it is likely that we will see a reduction in the level of self-employment as the job market begins to recover.

## What type of organisation do you work for?

Rank	Organisation type	%
1.	CDM / H&S Consultancy	16.1
2.	Construction / Utilities	15.4
3.	Engineering Practice	13.8
4.	Multidisciplinary Consultancy	11.1
5.	Architectural Practice	10.1
6.	Building Surveying	9.4
7.	QS Practice	9.0
8.	Public sector (inc. ALMO)	9.0
9.	Other	2.4
10.	Project Management	1.9
11.	Facilities / Property Management	1.8

The diversity of organisations employing APS members reflects the fact that many members have a professional background in a related discipline.

### **Overall, how satisfied are you in your current role?**

Over three quarters (77.6%) of respondents described themselves as being *satisfied* (51.6%) or *very satisfied* (26%) in their current role, whilst 13% were *indifferent*, 7.5% *unsatisfied* and 1.9% describe themselves as being *unhappy*. This relatively high level of job satisfaction is certainly encouraging and is reflected in our dealings with CDM Coordinators who, on the whole, enjoy the variety offered by the CDM-C role. The vast majority of candidates we deal with are looking for improved prospects and career progression.

### **How secure do you feel in your current role?**

Whilst this is a very subjective question, it's an interesting indication of current perceptions in the industry, as a majority (54.6%) described themselves as feeling either *very secure* (9.5%) or *secure* (45.1%). Almost a quarter of respondents (23.1%) feel either *very insecure* (7.5%) or *insecure* (15.6%), whilst the remaining 22.3% were *unsure* about the stability of their role.

This level of uncertainty is understandable considering the huge challenges faced by the construction industry over recent years. In this context, it may be interpreted as a positive sign that less than a quarter of people describe themselves as feeling insecure.

### **Have staff numbers in your CDM team changed in the past year?**

As expected, only a relatively small proportion of firms have increased headcount in the past 12 months (12.7%), with the majority remaining stable (64.5%) and over a fifth (22.8%) reducing numbers. The results reflect the current market, as companies continue to stabilise and up-skill their workforce to ensure they are well-placed to deliver as the market continues to improve.

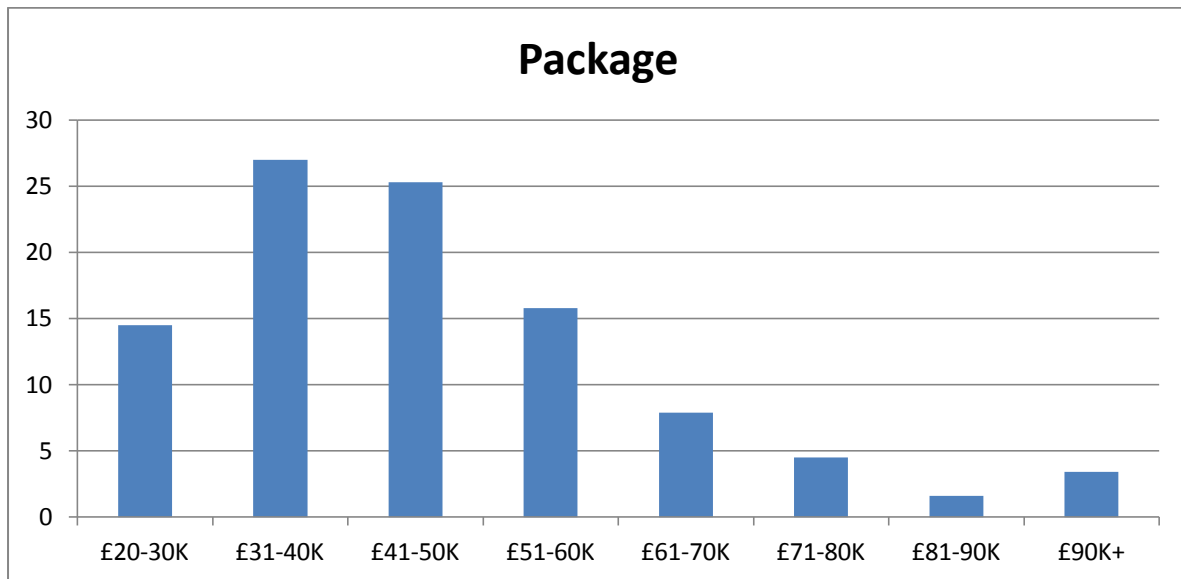
In 2010/11, compared with the previous 12 months, we have seen a reduction in the number of redundancies, along with an increase in the number of acquisitions and investments in the sector.

### **Do you expect your CDM team to grow in the next year?**

Only 9% of respondents definitely expect their team to grow in the next 12 months, whilst a quarter (24.9%) think growth is a possibility and a massive two-thirds (66.1%) expect no growth in the next 12 months. Whilst this response may seem to be negative, we must take some comfort that a third (33.9%) of respondents who said that growth is a possibility or a certainty. In the context of uncertainty and insecurity in the job market and the wider economy, it's understandable that stability is for many a more pressing concern than growth.

Many of our clients have plans for expansion and diversification of both their service offering and client-base over coming months and, as a result, we have experienced a marked increase in the number of opportunities available in the sector.

**What is the value of your total employment package (salary, car, benefits, bonus)?**

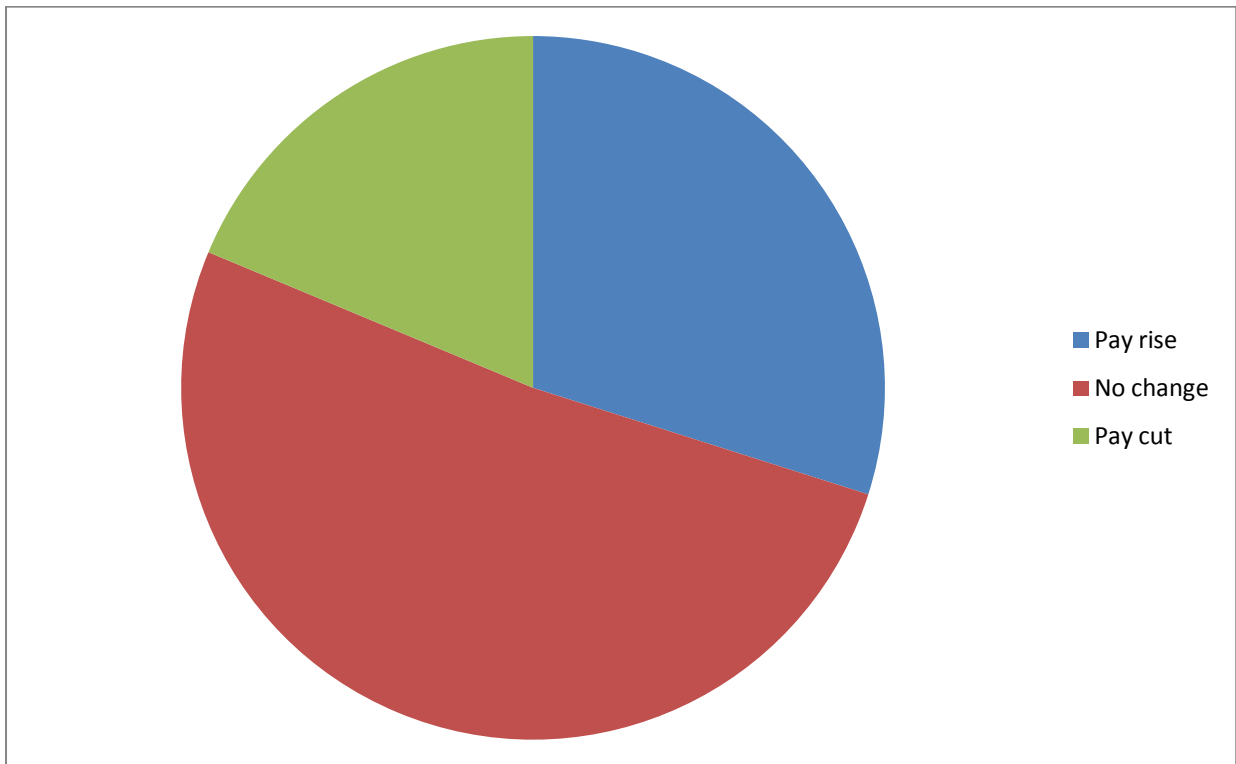


This graph shows, as a percentage, the number of respondents within each banding. We can see that the £30-50K range accounts for 52.3% of respondents, and in our experience, the majority of CDM delivery roles fall within this range. £50K-plus roles tend to include CDM delivery, management, business development and other senior management responsibilities.

Our results do take into account the earnings of self employed CDM-C's which are likely to have significantly increased mean average earnings to around £46,000. We also found that 30.4% of respondents received an increase in remuneration last year, although many of these pay-rises were below inflation, so amount to a pay-cut in real terms.

### How do you expect your remuneration to change in the next 12 months?

Whilst 69.6% of respondents have not received a pay rise over the past 12 months, 70.1% expect no increase (51.4%) or a pay cut (18.7%) during the coming year. Only 29.9% expect their wages to increase over the course of the next year. The majority of respondents expecting a pay rise predict that it will be below inflation, meaning that more than the quoted 70.1% expect a pay cut in real terms.



**When looking for a new job, please rate the following factors in order of importance (1 = least important / 6 = most important)**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1	Remuneration	4.41
2	Professional development	3.68
3	Flexible working hours	3.43
3	Location	3.43
4	Company culture	3.41
5	Type of projects	3.35

When looking for a new job, remuneration is considered the most important factor by 29.4% of respondents. Whilst it may be predictable that remuneration is considered the most important factor, bearing in mind that so many people have experienced pay-freezes or pay-cuts, in this context, it's perhaps surprising that the figure was not higher. Professional development, flexible working hours, location, company culture and project types all have a strong influence when looking for a new role – in fact 70.6% consider these factors to be collectively more important than remuneration alone.

**If you were looking for a new job, what do you think is the best way to find one?**

The most popular single route to finding a new role is to use a specialist recruiter (43.4%), followed by using personal contacts (28.5%), industry press advertisements (13.2%), web-based job boards (8.5%), APS website (3.9%) and LinkedIn (1.8%).

These results show that most people (71.9%) would use relationships with recruiters or other industry contacts to secure a new position, rather than replying to job advertisements. It is not possible to tell whether this preference is driven by the need for discretion or simply a lack of available vacancies being openly advertised.

## Conclusions

Our findings show that APS members are, on the whole, satisfied in their work, although job security is an issue and many have taken a reduction in pay, a pay-freeze or a below inflation pay-rise. As the majority of respondents have experienced a pay-cut in real terms, it's not surprising that 29.4% rank salary as the single most important consideration. There appears to be a correlation between job security and job satisfaction, as 22.4% of respondents are *not satisfied* in their work, whilst 23.1% feel *insecure* in their current role. On the other hand, 9.5% describe themselves as *very secure*, and a corresponding 9% expect their CDM team to *expand* in the next year.

Overall, we have found that there is cautious optimism across the industry as a whole, and this is reflected in our dealings with a wide range of client organisations throughout the UK.

It can only be a positive sign for the industry that the APS is continuing to attract new members from a wide range of industry sectors, whilst maintaining the existing membership, as this shows that the role of CDM-C continues to be an attractive, viable career path.

## The job market 2008 - 2010

As a result of the downturn in the construction industry from 2008 - 2010, demand for CDM services fell significantly, leading to increased competition in the marketplace and, ultimately in the job market. To remain competitive, many companies were forced to reduce their fees. Redundancy programmes, reduced working hours, and pay-cuts became commonplace in 2008 – 2009, as many employers implemented policies to reduce labour costs. Many employees were also expected to take on business development and administrative responsibilities to further improve productivity.

Whilst working harder for less is not an attractive proposition, as the alternative for many was redundancy, these cuts and changes were accepted by many as the price of keeping a job. This level of instability and insecurity throughout the sector reduced the natural churn in the job market, causing the market to become stagnant. Employers and recruiters trying to attract new staff experienced a general reluctance to move, due mainly to a lack of market confidence and concerns about being 'last in, first out'.

## 2010 – 2011

The job market has improved significantly over the past 12 months as shelved plans come back online and funding is approved for new construction projects. This increased activity has led to more demand for CDM Coordinators, and consequently, more job opportunities. Whilst employers are still cautious, many have been investing to increase capacity, employing permanent and contract staff. As confidence returns to the job market, we are experiencing an increase in enquiries from employed people looking for a new position. Despite the improvements in the market, there has not yet been a noticeable increase in salaries to reflect the increased demand for CDM services.