

Dear All,

Just a short note that may need further investigation.

Some time last year I was undertaking some work in Perth when the skills shortage was explained to me in the engineering profession. It appeared that when a project was at tender stage several contract hire and labour hire companies would advertise for staff in anticipation of their clients winning the tender. Of course this boosted the job vacancy numbers. When the contract was finally let only one of the 4 or 5 tenderers needed the staff. Many engineers I worked with supported this view that work was not as plentiful.

Thus there was a distortion in the number of vacancies versus the actual roles needed to be filled.

Further examples of the distortion of numbers comes in the 457 visa system. Employers have been known to advertise for engineering vacancies with ridiculously low salaries or contract hire rates. When no one applies for the role they go on to claim that there is a skills shortage and apply for a 457 visa for the position. Employers can then pay substantially lower wages to the foreign engineer. The foreign engineer may eventually return to their country with skills from Australia and thus become a competitor.

The local engineer ends up working in other industries and roles. This not only allows a foreign worker into the country with the advent of his wealth being exported but it denies the local engineer the use of his skills. These skills have been derived at the expense of the Australian tax payer.

I operate as a specialist consultant in fluid mechanics. Where is my work at present? It is in Indonesia and Sri Lanka as there is none in NSW!

Should you need any expansion on these matters please contact me.

Kind regards

**Geoffrey D Stone**