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Media Release

Manpower Employment Outlook Survey

Under embargo until 00:01, (GMT) 8 September 2009

Manpower Employment Outlook Survey for VIC shows signs of job market recovery

The final quarter of 2009 is set to be the strongest one of the year for employment in Victoria, according to the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey released today.

The survey of 2,333 employers indicates hiring intentions for the next three months have improved, with the seasonally adjusted Net Employment Outlook at +6%, up from -1% in the last quarter. This is due to an increase in the proportion of employers planning to increase hiring (18%, up from 11% in Q.3) and a fall in the number planning to decrease hiring (9%, compared to 14% in Q.3). However, hiring intentions remain weaker than a year ago, when the Net Employment Outlook was +13%. The outlook for VIC is still weaker than NSW and the national average, both with an outlook of 7%.

“The results for this quarter demonstrate the elasticity of the Victorian job market - after experiencing the worst outlook for the year last quarter, the state has bounced back with the best outlook of the year for the coming quarter,” said Lincoln Crawley, Managing Director, Manpower Australia and New Zealand.

The employment outlook on a national scale has also improved, with the seasonally adjusted Net Employment Outlook at +7%, up from +2% in the last quarter. However, the country still has a long way to go before reaching the levels seen last year, when the Net Employment Outlook was +16%.

“Two successive quarters of improving employer forecasts are an encouraging sign that the employment market has turned the corner: the employment forecast for Australia has climbed from -1% in the second quarter to a level of cautious optimism. It’s also a testament to the resilience of the Australian labour market that we have avoided recording a negative Outlook this quarter; unfortunately, many other countries in the Manpower network have not been so fortunate,” said Mr Crawley.

Certain industries had a particularly bright outlook, with 23% of Mining & Construction employers planning to increase hiring (up from 15% in Q.3) and 20% of Transportation & Utilities employers (up from 13%).

A major change since the last survey was the finding that no industry sector employers reported a negative Net Employment Outlook. Employers in the Manufacturing, the Mining & Construction and the Wholesale & Retail Trade industry sectors all project a positive hiring pace in the forthcoming quarter.

“One of the defining characteristics of this downturn has been the way in which different industry sectors have felt the pain. For example, the Manufacturing sector suffered two consecutive quarters of negative Outlooks, although it has now returned to positive territory. Conversely, the Services sector has weathered the storm well, never straying into negative territory, with employers reporting the most optimistic hiring intentions among all of the sectors surveyed for the fourth quarter.

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“The message here for jobseekers is that it’s vital to stay flexible, retrain where possible and tap into networks for new opportunities. The economy hasn’t contracted evenly, nor will it grow again in a uniform way, so people need to be adaptable and go where the demand is,” Mr Crawley said.

While the Net Employment Outlook is yet to reach the heights seen during the boom, when it peaked at +29% (in Q.2, 2007 and 2008), Manpower believes that the war for talent is gathering pace again.

“We have already seen in our research, and in talking to employers, that skills shortages still exist in some areas of the Australian employment market, including engineers, sales professionals and trades. And while the downturn has provided a welcome respite for many organisations who had struggled to find the talent they need, it certainly won’t last forever. Smart companies will be working hard, right now, to both attract and retain top performers who will see them through the downturn and beyond,” Mr Crawley said.

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For further information and to arrange an interview please contact:

Kaley Payne, Buchan Consulting, +61 2 9237 2807, 0405 368 617 or kpayne@bcg.com.au
Belinda Thomson, Buchan Consulting, +61 2 9237 2800, 0421 193 668 or
bthomson@bcg.com.au

Note to Editors

Full survey results for each of the 35 countries and territories included in this quarter’s survey, plus regional and global comparisons, can be found in the Research Centre at www.manpower.ca. In addition, all tables and graphs from the full report are available to be downloaded for use in publication or broadcast from the Manpower Web site at <http://www.manpower.com/library>.

Note that in Quarter 2 of 2008, the survey adopted the TRAMO-SEATS model for seasonal adjustment of data.

As a result, you may notice some seasonally adjusted data points change slightly from previous reports. This model is recommended by the Eurostat department of the European Union and the European Central Bank and is widely used internationally.

About the Survey

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted quarterly to measure employers’ intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the most extensive forward-looking survey of its kind, unparalleled in its size, scope, longevity and area of focus. The Survey has been running for more than 45 years and is one of the most trusted surveys of employment activity in the world. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is based on interviews with more than 72,000 public and private employers worldwide and is considered a highly respected economic indicator.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is currently available for 35 countries and territories: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The program began in the United States and Canada in 1962, and the United Kingdom was added in 1966. Mexico and Ireland launched the survey in 2002, and 13 additional countries were added to the program in 2003. New Zealand joined the program in 2004, China, India, Switzerland and Taiwan were added in 2005, and Argentina, Peru, Costa Rica and South Africa joined in 2006. Colombia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Poland and Romania joined in 2008; Brazil and Hungary joined in 2009. For more information, visit the Manpower Inc. Web site at www.manpower.com and enter the Research Center.

About Manpower Inc.

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in the employment services industry; creating and delivering services that enable its clients to win in the changing world of work. Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2008, the \$22 billion company offers employers a range of services for the entire employment and business cycle including permanent, temporary and contract recruitment; employee

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assessment and selection; training; outplacement; outsourcing and consulting. Manpower's worldwide network of 4,100 offices in 82 countries and territories enables the company to meet the needs of its 400,000 clients per year, including small and medium size enterprises in all industry sectors, as well as the world's largest multinational corporations. The focus of Manpower's work is on raising productivity through improved quality, efficiency and cost-reduction across their total workforce, enabling clients to concentrate on their core business activities. Manpower Inc. operates under five brands: Manpower, Manpower Professional, Elan, Jefferson Wells and Right Management. More information on Manpower Inc. is available at www.manpower.com.