

EnergyFocus

The next time you're in a pub ordering a pint, there's a slim chance you'll be served by a highly qualified 50-year-old oil and gas engineer taking time off from his £90-95,000 per annum day job.

We don't know whether he's trying to make ends meet or if it's always been his dream to own a pub, but that's just what one of the engineers we surveyed at the end of 2007 claimed to have as a second income stream.

How your package compares...

DAVID TAYLOR, EPCGLOBAL

...and why some engineers like to pull pints on the side – a survey by engineering staffing specialist EPCglobal

Our salary and benefits survey was conducted for *The Times* newspaper in the UK amongst 1,500 engineers on our international database, at all levels of seniority. One of the subjects it covered was secondary income streams, where our part-time publican made his confession. Read on for a peek into the pay packets of your industry peers and to learn what gets them out of bed in the morning.

Earning a good salary was the single most important thing in engineers' careers, with 30% citing it as the top factor, followed by balancing my work and personal life (29%) and having stimulating and interesting work (26%). British engineers were the most likely of all nationalities to cite the salary factor as most important, at 40%.

At 27% British engineers are also a lot less likely to cite 'balancing my work and personal life' than their Australian and Canadian peers (for whom it was the top factor at 40% and 41% respectively), although this factor does also win out amongst power and energy engineers globally.

It comes as no surprise perhaps that UK national engineers have the greatest proportion earning over £55K (63%), followed by Canadians (62%), US citizens (52%) or other Europeans (40%), sub-Saharan Africans (37%), Middle East/North Africans (26%), South Americans (19%), Indians (16%), Chinese (0%) and Other Asian (16%).* Or that UK engineers are the most 'entirely happy' with their incomes, at 18%. The least entirely happy group are sub-Saharan African engineers (at 2%).

The sectors with the greatest proportion earning over £55K are oil and gas (55%)

then rail (47%), power and energy (42%), telecomms (40%), commercial (35%) and civil (33%). Internationally and across all fields, 29% of women earn over £55K, compared to 46% of men.

The single most common earnings brackets for power and energy engineers (excluding oil and gas) in each age band are shown in the table below:

- 71% of engineers aged 21-25 had a rise in the previous year. The joint equal

reasons were an increase in responsibility and an annual inflation/cost of living increase. These engineers were also the most likely to have had a rise of 20%+;

- 36% of contractors are in the £70,000+ earnings bracket, compared to 17% of permanent employees. 15% of contractors earn over £100K, compared to 5% of permanent employees.

Telecomms engineers are the most likely to be contractors (63% are contractors), followed by oil and gas (62%), rail (56%),

power and energy (51%), civil (51%) and commercial (41%).

The proportion who are permanent staff decreases gradually as engineers get older: 64% of 26-30-year-old engineers are permanent, compared to only 29% of 61-65 year olds (where the remainder in each case is contractors).

Who has most benefits – contractors or perms? Permanent staff, on virtually every score. Pensions (48% of permanents vs 15% of contractors), private health/disability/life insurance (74% vs 39%), childcare (9% vs 4%), shares/options (20% vs 5%), company car (22% vs 19%), flexible benefits (24% vs 11%), education/training (39% vs 16%).

Engineers aged 21-25 were amongst the most interested in trading salary for a better work-life balance, benefits package, to work in a more interesting field or to do charity/voluntary work. Only 28% would not trade any salary for the above, with the most popular option being a better work/life balance (43%). Otherwise, those wanting a better work-life balance most were aged 41-45 (33%). The most likely to want to take a cut to work in a more interesting field were 26-30 year olds (24%). Those most wanting to take a cut to do charity work were aged 21-25 (14% would take a pay cut).

In conclusion, it's fair to say that the current shortage of talented engineers globally has been putting an upward pressure on incomes. This is good news for the largest segment of engineers, who are motivated by money and prove the most satisfied when they are rewarded well, but employers can't ignore the other key factors connected to job satisfaction (including a work-life balance and being engaged in stimulating work).

In terms of field, oil and gas has witnessed the greatest uptake in incomes in the last ten years or so. If engineers are as motivated by earning good money as the results suggest, the next generation should consider seriously power and energy because a number of large scale projects will be initiated in the next ten years.

Either that or becoming a publican of course, although our figures suggest that the most common sources of secondary income streams include consulting part time or on the side, looking after investments, pensions and lecturing. ●

* NB UK engineers in this sample are amongst the oldest group, with 69% aged 46 or over, compared to an average of 59%. This will affect average earnings



| Age | Wage £ | % |
|-------|--------|-----|
| 21-25 | 25-30K | 100 |
| 26-30 | 25-30K | 25 |
| | 30-35K | 25 |
| 31-35 | 45-50K | 22 |
| 36-40 | 40-45K | 19 |
| 41-45 | 55-60K | 24 |
| 46-50 | 40-45K | 21 |
| 51-55 | 50-55K | 17 |
| 56-60 | 55-60K | 21 |
| 61-65 | 50-55K | 28 |
| 66+ | 45-50K | 133 |

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