RIBA

Memorandum

The RIBA's monthly Future Trends Survey was launched in January 2009 to monitor business and employment trends affecting the architects' profession. Participants give monthly predictions for overall workload and staffing levels over the next three months, and are also asked about their workload predictions in key sectors: private housing, commercial, community and public sector. In addition practices are asked on a quarterly basis about their current workload and staffing levels. The Survey is carried out by the RIBA in partnership with the Fees Bureau. Results of the Survey, including a full graphical analysis, are published each month on www.architecture.com.

The following is a summary analysis of the results from the July 2013 Survey returns.

Future workload (July 2013)

How do you expect the architectural workload in the organisation you work in or own to change over the next three months

Overall

Expect	%
Decrease	12
Stay the same	53
Increase	35
TOTAL	100
Balance	+23

(The definition for the balance figure is the difference between those expecting more work and those expecting less.)

Building on last month's increase, the RIBA Future Trends Workload Index increased substantially in July 2013 to +23, up from +17 in June 2013. This is the most positive workload forecast since we began the RIBA Future Trends Survey in January 2009, and represents a welcome continuation of the upward trend we have witnessed since the beginning of 2013.

This increased level of optimism has not yet fed through into a significant overall increase in actual workloads, but when asked about work in progress our practices continue to report steady workloads on a year-on-year basis. Whilst recovery from the recession is slow the market for architects' services has clearly stabilized, and practices are seeing grounds for much more optimism about future workloads.

Medium-sized practices (11 – 50 staff) are currently most positive about the prospect of an improvement in workloads during the next quarter.

In terms of geographical analysis, all the nations and regions in the UK returned positive workload forecast balance figures this month, with the South of England (balance figure +38) and Scotland (balance figure +38) being the most optimistic.

The following graph plots the RIBA Future Workload Index over time:

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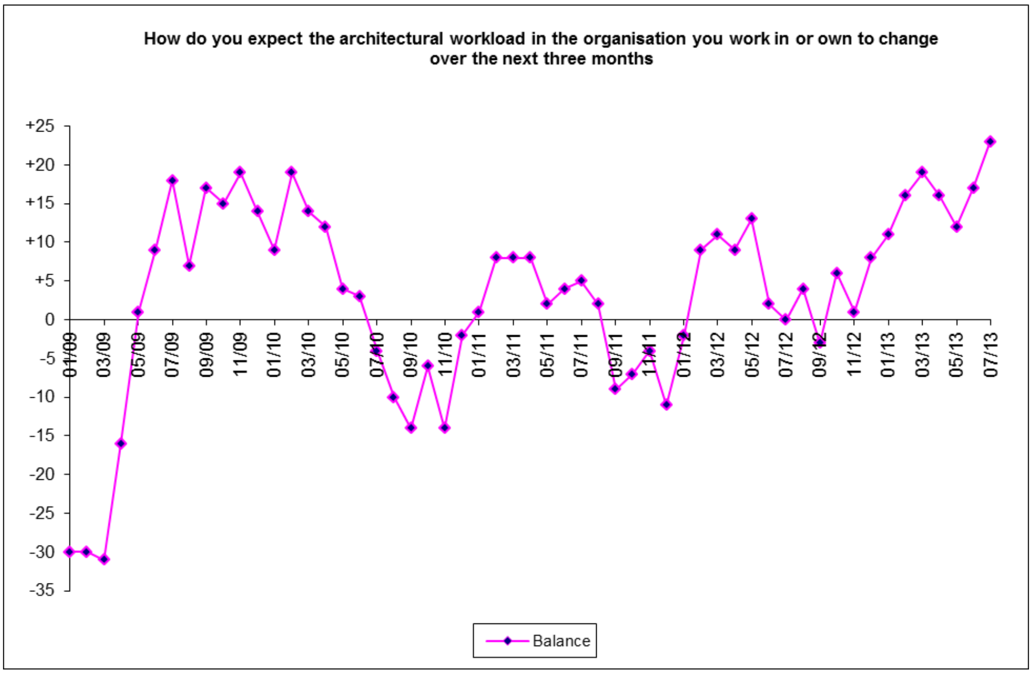
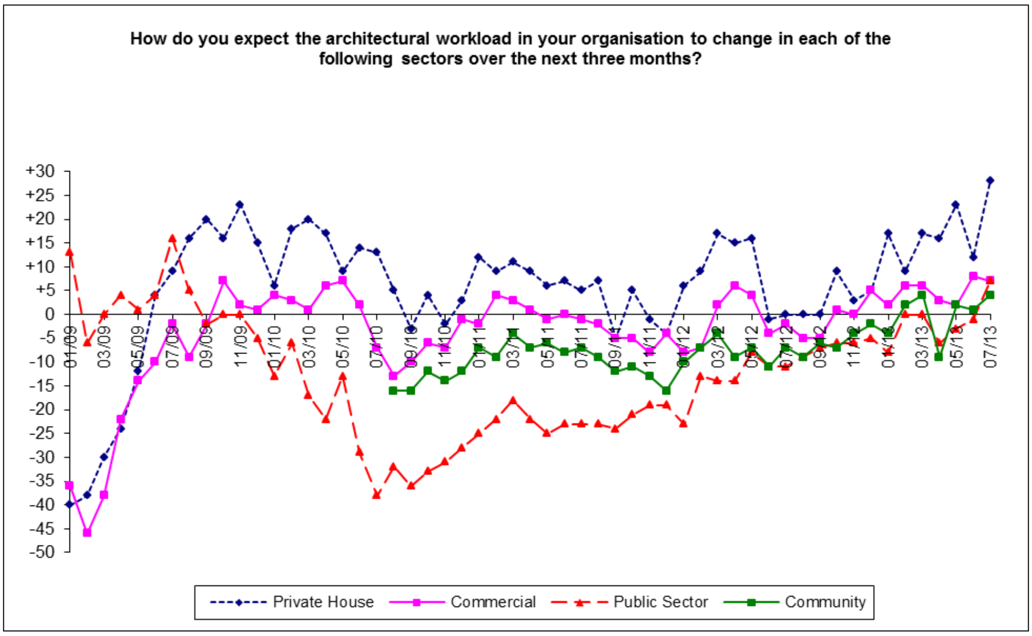


All our sector forecasts remained in positive territory this month. The private housing sector saw the most significant increase in July 2013, rising to a balance figure of +28 from its June 2013 level of +12.

The following graph tracks the sector predictions in the RIBA Future Trends Survey over time:



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Future staffing levels (July 2013)

How do you think the number of permanent architectural staff employed in your organisation will change over the next three months?

Permanent Staff	%
Decrease	8
Stay the same	79
Increase	13
TOTAL	100
Balance	+5

(The definition for the balance figure is the difference between those expecting to employ more permanent staff in the next three months and those expecting to employ fewer.)

The RIBA Future Trends Staffing Index also saw a significant increase to +5 in July 2013, compared with +1 in June 2013. This is the highest level the Staffing Index has reached since the start of the RIBA Future Trends Survey in January 2009. The positive trend in our permanent staffing forecast was mirrored in the index for temporary staffing, which also increased (up to +8 in July 2013 from +5 in June 2013).

The consolidation of the recent rises in our key staffing indices is a very positive indicator of improving conditions, with practices becoming more willing to increase their human resources.

Practices based in the South of England (balance figure +18) are currently the most confident about their ability to increase future staffing levels.

In June 2013, the percentage of our respondents reporting that they had personally been under-employed in the last month was 21%; this represents the lowest level of under-employment reported since we began the monthly RIBA Future Trends Survey.

The following graph plots the RIBA Future Trends Staffing Index over time:

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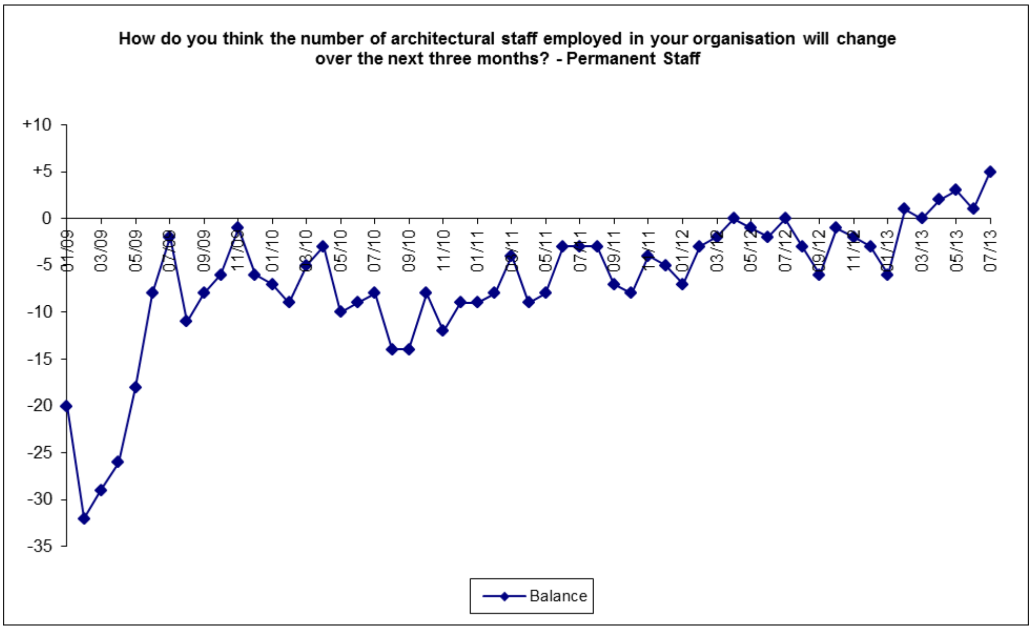

Anecdotal commentary continues to be mixed, with experiences varying greatly depending upon location and sector expertise. We continue to receive reports of intense fee competition and concerns about the complexity and barriers to entry for public sector work. Activity in the private housing sector seems to be increasing, and there is a clear sense from a number of correspondents that the overall market for architects' services is beginning to turn in a more positive direction.

The RIBA Future Trends Survey is based on a representative sample of the range of different practice sizes and geographical locations which enables analysis of the trends in sectors, size groups and by nation and region. A total of 226 practices took part in the Survey in July 2013. The development of a larger database of respondents will increase the statistical accuracy of the survey, and if your practice would like to participate in future months, please contact the RIBA Practice Department on 020 7307 3749 or email practice@inst.riba.org. The survey takes approximately five minutes to complete each month, and all returns are independently processed in strict confidence by our partners the Fees Bureau.