

# MARKET REVIEW FOR LEGAL SECRETARIES & OTHER SUPPORT STAFF 2013

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## Review

We are all aware of how the legal market is affected by both the economic situation, as well as simply the time of year; there is unquestionably more activity in some quarters than in others. This is not, however, restricted to just lawyers and partners, but can also be seen amongst legal secretaries, as well as other legal support staff.

There tends to be a definite trend as far as legal secretaries and other support staff are concerned in that, from a recruitment perspective, we commonly see a spike in the quantity of candidates between April and October. Conversely, during the first and fourth months of the year, we tend to see a lot less activity in this sector, usually due to salary, bonus and budget setting.

One of the reasons for this spike in the second and third quarters of the year can be put down to the fact that candidates, towards the end of each year and in the early part of the next, are waiting to receive their bonuses before making a decision about whether or not to make a move.

Similarly, firms sometimes wait to see how many of their employees resign after bonuses have been paid before they look to hire once more. Although this is not a rule set in stone and we do see a small number of legal secretaries looking to move outside of these two quarters, this is generally the norm and indeed is what we are expecting will happen this year.

## Predictions

Some law firms grew very rapidly in the last few years and as such, some are now contracting – leading to some good quality secretaries and paralegals on the market who are let go due to work volume, rather than the quality of their personal output.

This will lead to better quality candidates being available on the market.

We predict a continued growth in Business Development teams, as firms look to continue to expand their client reach across the region with a particular focus on mainland China and Australia.

We also predict a natural, slow but steady growth in HR teams over the coming year, as those law firms that continue to prosper and hire associates and partners will need more support.