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Surge in job ads

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By Marissa Lee



The fourth quarter of 2009 saw a 12.8 per cent surge in job advertisements for professionals across the region's leading job boards and national newspapers, compared with the previous quarter. -- ST PHOTO: NG SOR LUAN

EMPLOYER confidence has returned in Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Japan, according to the latest Robert Walters Asia Job Index report.

The fourth quarter of 2009 saw a 12.8 per cent surge in job advertisements for professionals across the region's leading job boards and national newspapers, compared with the previous quarter.

The recruitment consultancy attributed the healthier hiring environment to improved consumer confidence and revival of projects that were suspended during the darkest period of the recession.

China was the main engine behind the region's growth, registering a 14.13 per cent increase in job adverts in the last three months of 2009.

Coming in 1.29 percentage points behind Japan was Singapore, which recorded 205,392 new postings for jobs in the fourth quarter - a 2.44 per cent rise from Q3's

200,496.

For Singapore, the index showed a 8.23 per cent increase from the same period in 2008, a good sign that the financial crisis is over.

Robert Walters said that the main feature of the final quarter was that all banks in Singapore are hiring again.

'Financial services has bounced back and is showing no signs of slowing down, particularly within operations, product control, risk management and project management,' said Andrea Ross, managing director of Singapore.

'There remains a talent shortage within some sectors of financial services and we will continue to see hiring of expatriates into those positions albeit on local terms.

'The IT, fast moving consumer goods, healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors remained very stable throughout quarter four and continued to hire top talent in Singapore.'