

Media release

New mining skills hubs to supercharge future workforce

Statement from Tania Constable, Chief Executive Officer

Three new mining skills project hubs announced today will deliver better training and assessment faster to help create thousands of new apprenticeships and supercharge the development of Australia's future minerals workforce.

Australia's minerals industry already has a highly skilled, highly paid workforce that is better trained than many other sectors. However, the combination of technology adoption, industry and learner expectations and skills availability pressures will test how tradespeople are trained for and inducted into the mining industry.

These new project hubs in digital transformation, apprenticeships and attraction and retention – part of the industry-led Mining Skills Organisation Pilot (MSOP) being delivered by the MCA and partners across the entire industry and supported by the Australian Government – will deliver training faster to accelerate skills development and make Australia's apprenticeship system even more relevant to industry and learners.

They will also boost opportunities for new talent entering the Australian minerals industry and allow existing mining workers – as well as workers from other industries– to access new skills, enabling them to move into mining or shift to new types of jobs if already working in the sector.

The skills project hubs include:

- An apprenticeships hub with an initial goal of at least 5000 new apprenticeships to modernise trades training, education and development, with an initial focus on in-demand Heavy Duty Diesel Fitters and developing content, delivery and assessment models that better align industry need and apprentice knowledge (apprentices make up around four per cent of the mining workforce – nearly double the average of other industries)
- A digital transformation hub for faster delivery of training products for automation and the application of digital technologies, with the goal of integrating existing automation training products into Australia's training package framework
- An attraction and retention hub to identify and test strategies that make a career in the industry attractive to those with partial or transferable skills and qualifications by aligning the skills necessary for a successful career in mining with those in other industries through a Mining Fundamentals skill set.

Australia's minerals industry already has a strong relationship with the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector, with ABS data showing more than one-third of the mining workforce holds core trades qualifications at Certificate III or Certificate IV level.

A more responsive and flexible VET system which improves skills delivery and enhances the learner's experience will ensure the industry has access to the skilled talent pipeline it needs to continue creating highly skilled, highly paid jobs and making a significant contribution to the national economy.

With the pace of technological change accelerating, the future minerals workforce must be skilled in technology adoption, confident in using and applying technology, adaptable and flexible to thrive now and into the future.

Through MSOP, the mining industry has the flexibility to trial innovative new approaches to skills development and acquisition to complement and enhance the current system so responsive pathways and skills acquisition can create and sustain job opportunities as Australia recovers from COVID-19.

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