Media release

Building skills for modern mining workforce

Statement from Tania Constable, Chief Executive Officer

The MCA is investing more than $1 million into new university programs to create the professionals the modern mining sector needs.

Three new initiatives - with University of Queensland, Central Queensland University the University of Southern Queensland and Curtin University - will modernise the mining engineering curriculum and develop pathways into the modern mining sector.

In an industry first, Curtin University and University of Queensland will develop and offer a micro-credential package as an online professional certificate in foundations of modern mining, consisting of six individual short courses. This program advances training creation and delivery mechanisms in innovative ways when higher education environments can be somewhat restrictive.

Curtin University will also pilot, test and evaluate an overhauled undergraduate curriculum in mining engineering that has been established through extensive consultation with industry and community partners.

Central Queensland University and the University of Southern Queensland will run a curricula pilot to refresh and re-focus the Associate Degree of Engineering to reflect the modern mining sector. The associate degree provides a pathway to a professional engineering career for trade qualified paraprofessionals in engineering related industries including the resource sector.

This $1 million investment is part of the $65 million of MCA member investment into minerals-related programs at Australian universities since 2000 to ensure the quality supply of Australian graduates for the mining industry.

MCA members are increasingly seeking a broader range of professionals, like data scientists, to complement the traditional professionals base.

Modern mining is high tech and requires highly skilled people. Drone operators, virtual reality researcher, robotics technician and artificial intelligence developer are all jobs in Australia’s mining industry today.

Almost 80 per cent of jobs in Australian mining will be enhanced or redesigned due to technology within the next five years.

It has never been more important to ensure that the industry has access to and develops the professionals it needs as most jobs in mining will be enhanced by technological innovation.

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