



AMMA MEDIA RELEASE

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RESOURCES AND ENERGY SECTOR WELCOMES SKILLED VISA REVAMP

The resources and energy sector's peak employer body, AMMA, today welcomed moves to focus on attracting more highly skilled workers into Australia.

AMMA Chief Executive, Steve Knott, said there was currently a shortfall of skilled professional staff, mechanical and electrical engineering personnel, as well as a shortage of other skilled trades in the resources and energy sector.

"Growth in the resources and energy sector remains solid, particularly in areas such as north-west Western Australia, so we welcome the decision to focus our immigration policy on skills that are genuinely in demand."

"Currently, and in the years ahead, the resources and energy sector will require thousands of skilled people to work on new projects including major oil and gas projects in Western Australia as well as other projects in the pipeline, including the massive coal export opportunity in Queensland that was announced on the weekend," Mr Knott said.

Mr Knott said the changes announced by the Federal Government, which applied to the general skilled migration category, would result in more of these migrants going straight into a job.

"Previous arrangements often ended up with so called skilled migrants either ending up on social security or working outside their qualifications in semi skilled work. The system was in need of change when the most popular skill being relied upon to enter Australia was a hairdressing qualification,"

"AMMA made submissions to, and met with, the Minister for Immigration, Chris Evans, and highlighted the flaws of the current regime and suggested amendments along the lines of those announced today."

"Accordingly, a more focused, demand-driven approach where the skill possessed is one which is actually in demand will lead to mitigating Australia's skills shortage is welcomed and the Minister's changes are to be commended," Mr Knott said.

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