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## **Critical Skills Training + Women + EMAs = Reduction in Skills Shortage for Miners**

Resource industry employer group, AMMA, has recommended the triple combination of allowing more miners to access enterprise migration agreements, increasing critical skills training for Australians, and actively targeting more women for resource industry jobs as part of the solution to alleviate the skills shortage in the industry.

At a mining conference in Western Australia today, Steve Knott, AMMA's Chief Executive, welcomed the Federal Government's recent initiatives on Enterprise Migration Agreements (EMAs) but recommended the proposed criteria for access be set at more realistic levels to allow broader industry access to the fast-tracked temporary migration arrangements for a larger number of projects.

"A startling 86 per cent of AMMA members surveyed in mid-May on future workforce requirements indicated they are currently experiencing a critical skills shortage," Mr Knott said.

"If the capital expenditure threshold for employers to access Enterprise Migration Agreements was reduced to \$1 billion instead of \$2 billion, and the peak workforce requirement reduced to 500 instead of 1,500, this would allow a further 15 major projects to access these new migration arrangement."

Mr Knott said as of the end of April 2011, there were 94 resource projects at an advanced stage of development either committed or under construction, which represented a record level of capital expenditure of \$173.5 billion, requiring tens of thousands of workers to get projects off the ground.

"Despite the best efforts of industry and government policy settings of training new job entrants and encouraging interstate migration, the stark reality facing our nation is we need to look beyond traditional supply areas to access enough workers to do the job," Mr Knott said.

"With 92 per cent of AMMA resource industry employers stating they wish to employ more women, and being an industry where currently less than one in five workers are female, there are immense opportunities for Australian women to have a fulfilling and long-term career in the industry.

Mr Knott also said as the resource industry continues to strive for greater efficiencies and to take advantage of the benefits increased technology has to offer, the demand for both skilled and semi-skilled workers is only going to grow in years to come.

"Mineral and petroleum processing is becoming increasingly complex and requires more highly-skilled workers in the areas of design, construction and maintenance. Emerging industries including chemical manufacturing and sub-sea engineering also require increasingly specialist knowledge which is also rare in Australia at this point in time," Mr Knott said.

"Given this, the government's policy settings on tackling the skills shortage in both the short and long-term should include sensible and sustainable skilled migration on the understanding this reaps benefits for Australian industry, the economy, workers and their families."

Click [here](#) to view the full speech.

ENDS

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