

EMBARGOED: 12:00am September 7, 2012

Government and employers discuss Tasmania's resource industry at workforce conference

GOVERNMENT and industry representatives will discuss solutions to a broad range of workforce challenges within Tasmania's resource industry, at a major mining conference in Hobart today (7th September).

The AMMA 2012 Tasmania Conference is the first time the national resource industry employer group has brought a specialised workforce event to the southern state, with all parties seeking to ensure Tasmania remains an attractive destination for resources investment.

Tasmanian Senator and Shadow Minister for Workplace Relations, Eric Abetz, will discuss the Federal Opposition's stance on industrial relations and the Fair Work Act Review. Abetz will follow another political headliner, State Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations David O'Byrne, in the morning's sessions.

Delegates will first hear from AMMA senior workplace policy adviser Lisa Matthews, who will outline Tasmania's role in the national industry and how decisions about Australia's workplace relations laws will impact employment and economic growth in the state.

"The resource industry has been responsible for the greatest creation and transfer of wealth and skills in Australia's history over the past decade, but we can't afford to take the resources boom for granted any longer," Ms Matthews says.

"In Tasmania alone, the number of people employed in the mining industry has risen by almost 30 per cent over the past two years. More than 4,000 people are now directly employed in Tasmanian resource operations and further significant investment opportunities exist in exploration, extraction and downstream processing of minerals.

"However, with a slew of Australian resource projects having recently been shelved or put on the back burner due to global and domestic economic conditions it is important that Australia continue to be seen as a great place to invest and work.

"We must remember that Australia has only 2 per cent of the world's natural resources and large companies have many options in terms of investment.

"Australia is currently one of the most expensive places in the world to do business. Now is the time to ensure that our national legislation and regulation, including our industrial relations framework, does not continue to make things more difficult and get in the way of the national interest."

The AMMA Tasmanian Conference will also feature a panel debate with former deputy president of Fair Work Australia Patricia Leary, Unions Tasmania secretary Kevin Harkins and representatives from mining companies debating the key workforce matters resonating throughout the state's industry.

Delegates will also hear from one of Tasmania's largest resource employers, Grange Resources, with insight into its Savage River iron ore mine operations and future project plans in the state.

MEDIA:

The AMMA Tasmanian Conference takes place at Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart on Friday September 7.

[Click here](#) for a copy of Lisa Matthews's speech.

[Click here](#) for a copy of the conference program.

For further information or interviews, contact Kylie Sully via Kylie.Sully@amma.org.au or 0409 781 580.