

## **National skills initiative launched to tackle mining labour shortage**

Resource industry employer group AMMA will today launch a new government-backed initiative aimed at up-skilling Australians to work on the nation's skills-strapped mining, oil and gas projects.

AMMA has partnered with the Australian Government, other peak industry bodies and pre-eminent organisations in workforce related fields to facilitate AMMA Skills Connect – an initiative to deliver specialised training and skill development programs to get more locals into resource jobs.

"AMMA Skills Connect will partner with resource employers and various training and development organisations to create programs across multiple skills, trade and qualification areas," says AMMA executive director, industry Minna Knight.

"Australia's mining, oil and gas operations are recording a phenomenal average employment growth of 25% per year.

"It's not unusual for any one project to require thousands of workers with specialised skill-sets during the critical construction phase and this demand is forecast to intensify as a \$500 billion pipeline of resource projects create 90,000 new jobs by 2016.

"With this acute skills shortage on the horizon, AMMA Skills Connect is one way the industry is working proactively to create a greater pool of Australian workers with highly adaptable qualifications and technical abilities."

According to Ms Knight, a number of successful pilot programs under the AMMA Skills Connect banner have demonstrated the initiative will deliver practical solutions to meet the industry's labour sourcing needs.

"AMMA Skills Connect recently partnered with Consolidated Contracting Company (CCC) and XLT Trainers to develop a scholarship program for Australians with little or no experience in the resource industry to become qualified to work on pipeline construction," she says.

"The first graduates, armed with internationally recognised qualifications in metals and engineering, were offered positions with CCC as trade assistants and will go on to further their skills and become experienced welders on projects including pipeline construction from the Surat Basin to Gladstone for the Australia Pacific Liquefied Natural Gas (APLNG) project in Queensland."

Partnering with AMMA to deliver the AMMA Skills Connect initiative are some of the most respected industry bodies and workforce development providers in the country, including XLT Institute of Welding, Engineering and Technology, the Master Plumbers Association, Civil Contractors Federation, National Electrical and Communications Association, IFAF and Vetassess.

"The initiative will provide resource employers with a single point of access to services ranging from school-to-work programs, traineeships, apprenticeships, verification of competency, migrant gap training and labour sourcing," Ms Knight says.

AMMA Skills Connect will officially launch at the AMMA West Coast Conference at the Perth Convention Centre at 1:30pm today (24 October).

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[Click here](#) to download the AMMA West Coast Conference program.