

The Reserve Bank has cleared up the facts, now let's keep this boom going

NOW the Reserve Bank of Australia has demonstrated the full breadth of the resource industry's contribution to Australia's economic and employment well-being, it's time to recognise that the industry is already 'spreading the boom' and support employers in keeping the sector strong.

Resource industry employer group AMMA (Australian Mines and Metals Association) says the data released yesterday in the RBA's *Industry Dimensions of the Resource Boom* research paper should put to bed any demonisation of Australia's mining, oil and gas employers.

"The resource industry continues to be the fastest growing source of employment for Australians, having created 130,000 direct jobs over the past five years and 28,500 new Australian jobs in 2012 alone," says AMMA chief executive Steve Knott.

"The RBA has now produced incontrovertible evidence backing what the industry has been saying for a long time - the indirect flow-on effects of the Australian resources sector have far wider employment and economic benefits than it is given credit for.

"Trade unions should stop spending members' funds on expensive political campaigns designed to mislead the Australian public on matters like the distribution of wealth and skilled migration."

Mr Knott says the RBA research report's reference to a 'resource economy' is highly reflective of the wider flow-on benefits of the industry's heightened investment activity. Key findings include:

- **Around 1.1 million Australians are employed due to resources activity:** the resource economy accounted for 9.75% of total employment in 2012 through flow-on job creation in servicing sectors;
- Three times more Australians are in employment due to the resource industry than first thought;
- The resource economy accounts for 18% of Australia's gross value add – or approx \$250 billion of the nation's annual output;
- Total employment accounted for by the resource economy is estimated to have doubled since the mid 2000s; and
- 'Direct employment' in the resource extraction sector, as measured by the ABS, accounts for only one-third of total resources employment.

"Department of Immigration figures also show more than 92% of new jobs created in the resource industry are taken by Australian workers, debunking negative claims regarding the role of migration in the sector," Mr Knott says.

"The RBA has highlighted how beneficial a strong resource industry is for long-term employment. As a nation we should be developing more effective policies to sustain these benefits, not stifling growth through heavy taxation and increased red-tape.

"It's now time to move beyond treating Australia's resources investment as a temporary 'boom'. Government needs to work cooperatively with industry to foster long-term sustainability, increase our international competitiveness and get our productivity on par with other nations."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Contact Tom Reid on 0419 153 407 or Tom.Reid@amma.org.au