

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Government extends funding for women in resources mentoring program**

HUNDREDS of women are set to benefit from an innovative online mentoring program developed to help boost gender diversity in the resource industry following today's funding commitment from the Australian Government.

Addressing a room of resource industry employers at the AMMA National Conference in Perth, Minister for Employment and Minister for Women, Michaelia Cash, announced an additional \$490,000 to ensure the successful *Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) e-Mentoring Program* continues until at least mid-2018.

The program has already connected more than 200 women with experienced male and female mentors thanks to ongoing funding from the Commonwealth since 2013.

AMMA's executive director of industry services, Tara Diamond, said the government's extended funding would support the resource industry to be more competitive through workforce diversity.

"Australia's resource industry is heavily male-dominated, with women comprising just 17 per cent of the national workforce compared to 46 per cent across all industries," Ms Diamond said.

"Despite a challenging operating environment, the resource industry still employs almost 100,000 more people compared to 10 years ago, and opportunities abound for women to play a greater role in the industry's growing production capacity.

"As the only national program offering mentoring to women via an online platform, AWRA e-Mentoring is breaking down the barriers that in the past have prevented some women receiving valuable professional guidance, such as remote locations and non-traditional work schedules.

"The program will continue to be a critical part of the resource industry's multi-faceted approach to support the career development of women across multiple occupations, particularly technical and trade roles in which women have been traditionally underemployed.

"A key focus for AWRA over the next two years will also be to facilitate greater mentoring opportunities for women from culturally diverse backgrounds, including Indigenous Australians."

Minister Cash said the government is committed to support a range of private sector initiatives that support women to succeed in traditionally male dominated roles and industries.

"This program is an example of what can be achieved by government collaborating with the private sector to obtain mutually beneficial outcomes." Minister Cash said.

"To truly empower women's workforce choices, we must remove barriers for women to enter and succeed in traditionally male dominated industries, such as the resource industry.

"I congratulate AMMA on this program, which is supporting women to succeed in a male dominated industry and promoting greater choice and opportunity for Australian women. Such partnerships are essential if we are to obtain greater workforce equality and in turn, reduce the gender pay gap"

[AWRA](#) is a national initiative facilitated by Australia's peak resource industry employer group AMMA (the Australian Mines and Metals Association).

**MEDIA CONTACT:** AMMA media adviser Kylie Sully on 0409 781 580 or [Kylie.Sully@amma.org.au](mailto:Kylie.Sully@amma.org.au).