

Putting Australia on the METS map

BY CHLOE VELLINGA

As the resources sector continues its struggle with the current commodity market downturn, industry-led, government-funded growth centre METS Ignited is looking to the future to restore growth and confidence within the industry.

At the International Mining and Resources Conference in November last year, a 10-year sector competitiveness plan was launched as a result of extensive research by METS Ignited, federal and state governments, industry peak bodies and Australia's national resource industry employer association AMMA.

The overall goal of the plan is to strengthen the Australian METS sector and help invigorate Australia's position as the global hub for mining innovation.



"The 10-year competitiveness plan for the METS sector provides a clear roadmap for the development of a sector that is poised to drive significant economic and employment opportunities for Australia," AMMA Director of Industry Services

Tara Diamond said. "Australia has an opportunity to be at the fore of an increasingly important global industry that is driving technology advancements, productivity and efficiency improvements across all key resource markets."

The plan takes a 10-year view and proposes five broad programs the industry needs to work on, which include aligned strategy, improving global brand, making the industry internationally competitive, being collaborative and innovative and looking forward to being a skilled workforce for 2026.

Through extensive research and a glance at the current economic context troubling the sector, a number of consistent views were presented; for example, tighter margins, limited cash flow, comparatively high exchange rates and low prices in the majority of commodities.

METS Ignited and all involved in the METS Sector Competitiveness Plan hope talking about these problems and creating valuable solutions for the future will help create smarter relationships and collaborative leadership within the industry.

"It is a report that aims to start a conversation, it explores and challenges us to think about what is possible and what initiatives could create a different future," METS Ignited Chair Elizabeth Lewis-Gray and Chief Executive Officer Ric Gross said in a company statement.

"As you undoubtedly know, Australia is blessed with mineral wealth and despite being a young nation has managed to build a world leading, competitive mining industry and METS sector.

"However, there is much work to be done to develop and enhance this legacy for our nation's future," the statement said.

"We have an exciting and unique opportunity, with the support of the Australian Federal Government, to work together positively and collaboratively to develop and lead the METS industry in Australia and internationally."

As a contributor to the 10-year plan, AMMA Head of Policy Scott Barklamb said the organisation looked forward to working with METS Ignited to increase productivity, social licence to operate, skilling, human resources and other people-related matters.

"Governments and regulators also have a significant role to play in reforming regulatory processes that impose unnecessary costs and compliance burdens on Australia's METS industry," he said.

"This includes an unproductive and often cumbersome workplace relations system, inconsistencies in OHS laws, serious issues in exploration and mining project approvals and a lack of protection against increasing vexatious environmental and social activism." **NMC**



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