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## Open and flexible regulation will unlock ‘future of work’ opportunities, new report finds

**Australian Resources and Energy Group AMMA has today released a new report sparking a fresh debate on workplace regulation.**

AUSTRALIA should adopt a multi-tiered approach to future workplace regulation that allows high-earning employees to largely “opt out” of the legislative system, according to a new report from resources and energy employers.

[\*A New Horizon: Guiding Principles for the Future of Work\*](#), finds the only way forward for Australia’s future workplaces is less regulation, fewer restrictions and through policymakers resisting the push for intervention and protectionism.

Drawing from a national employer survey and interviews with resources executives, the report explores how technology, demographic and competitive factors are influencing the future of work in the resources and energy industry, and puts forward 12 principles to guide future policy making.

“With significant change taking place in their workplaces, resources and energy employers have long called for a future-focused vision for work,” AMMA Chief Executive Steve Knott said.

“Rapid advancements in technology are creating more diverse employment arrangements and demanding higher levels of technical skills and education. There is less homogeneity in the workforce, demographics are shifting and new generations of digitally-enabled employees are more individually engaged and self-motivated.

“Based on these trends, we have set out guiding principles for a new horizon of work in our nation, one that better supports the competitiveness of our industries and businesses, and better aligns to the increasingly individualised motivations and work patterns of future workforces.”

A key message is that employment arrangements in high-paying, innovation-driven sectors of the economy should be subject to far less regulation than those in lower-paying areas.

Arguing the majority of existing regulation becomes unnecessary once a certain salary is reached, it calls for a mechanism to enable high-paying employers to completely remove the risk of protected industrial action in their workplaces.

“Less regulation for those personnel above a nominated high income threshold, and less regulation for high-paying employers would unlock significant productivity and efficiency while also reducing regulatory burden for the highest-performing areas of Australia’s economy,” Mr Knott said.

“This concept should not be viewed as overly remarkable, given areas of Australia’s present work regulation system, most notably the unfair dismissal provisions, already recognise that certain protections are not needed above a certain remuneration level.

“The extension of this rationale to the wider work system is not only logical, but would lift regulatory burden and productivity barriers for employers and employees in the top tier of Australian industries.”

AMMA notes Australia is at a critical crossroad, with significant forces misconstruing change as a threat, rather than an opportunity, and exploiting fear and uncertainty for political purposes.

“Now, more than ever, discussions about the future of work are having a polarising effect,” Mr Knott said.

“Change must be embraced as an opportunity to improve business performance and innovation, develop the next generation workforce skills, lift employee engagement and deliver greater individual job satisfaction and reward.

“We call on those with an interest in ensuring Australia remains an attractive place to invest and work, to seize the opportunity to create a new system of regulation fit for a prosperous, productive and competitive future.”

To view the report click [here](#).

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## **AMMA’s Guiding Principles for the Future of Work**

*To guide future policy making...*

1. Australia’s approach to future work regulation must be grounded on creating and sustaining high quality, flexible and collaborative job opportunities.
2. Australia’s prosperity will depend upon future policymakers rising above present-day politics to create a work regulation system fit for the future.

*To support future work practices...*

3. Future work practices can be supported through collaboration and skills development, not through protectionism and policy intervention.
4. Australia’s approach to regulating work should recognise there is greater individualised skills and less homogeneity in the workplace.

*To align with future workforces...*

5. The regulatory framework should align with the trend toward greater individual motivation and direct engagement in the workplace.
6. Australia’s work regulation must support greater innovation and flexibility required by the diverse and dynamic workforces of the future.

*To be competitive in the future global economy...*

7. A globally competitive future work system properly balances workplace protections with productivity and efficiency considerations.
8. Australia must facilitate competitive workplace practices to secure and sustain the next wave of major project investment.

*To usher in a new horizon of work...*

9. Future of work regulation must move beyond outdated assumptions about workplaces and employer/employee relationships.
10. Australia needs simple, balanced and efficient minimum standards that apply across all industries.
11. Australia should adopt a multi-tiered approach to work regulation that would free employers and employees in high-income areas from unnecessary regulatory burden.
12. Open and flexible regulatory models will be critical to unlocking the opportunities created by the future of work.