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## Resources employers welcome National Resources Statement

AUSTRALIAN Resources and Energy Group AMMA welcomes the Commonwealth Government's new National Resources Statement and particularly its focus on developing skills and workforce capabilities as one of five key actions critical to the industry's future success.

"A strategic, nationally-coordinated approach to skills and workforce development is crucial to ensuring a diverse pool of people can access the incredible opportunities available in the resources and energy industry," AMMA Acting Chief Executive, Tara Diamond, said.

"The Statement acknowledges the sector's changing future skills needs driven by automation, robotics and artificial intelligence. Most importantly, it characterises this change as an opportunity that needs to be worked through and fully realised, not a threat to the role people play in the industry.

"This acknowledgement was one of the key messages of AMMA's recent publication *A New Horizon: Guiding Principles for the Future of Work*, which explains why future work opportunities will be realised through skills collaboration, not through protectionism or heavy-handed regulation.

"It is pleasing the Statement puts the spotlight on the significant contribution made by the sector to Australia's prosperity and recognises how our nation can benefit from developing and maintaining a diverse workforce with the right skills for the future of work."

While welcoming the five key priorities of the National Resources Statement, AMMA highlighted a notable omission is the critical role a "future focused" workplace relations system will play in the ongoing prosperity of the resources and energy industry.

"It is impossible to seriously talk about the jobs and skills of the future without engaging in a meaningful conversation about workplace relations reform," Ms Diamond said.

"Australia's competitiveness in the future global economy requires a globally competitive future work system that properly balances workplace protections with productivity and efficiency considerations.

"No matter how difficult, our national policymakers must rise above present-day political point-scoring to create a work regulation system fit for the future. We can't do this when dominant political forces are seeking to take our workplace regulatory environment back to the 1970s."

AMMA also notes positive elements of the Australian Labor Party's "Future Mines and Jobs Plan".

"We welcome the ALP's commitment to establish an Australian Future Mines Centre to guide ongoing industry development. There is some irony, however, that the ALP at the federal and state level is simultaneously unable to publicly support the Adani Carmichael Mine - a major new project ready to create thousands of jobs and deliver huge economic benefits to Australia," Ms Diamond said.

"Frankly, there is little point in the ALP publicly declaring a zest to discover new mineral reserves when it won't support those already identified and committed to by investors.

"Our political leaders should not be playing favourites with Australia's extraordinarily diverse commodity reserves, particularly when coal is now our most valuable commodity export and directly employs 50,000 Australians."

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