

ACCESS TO SKILLED PERSONNEL IMPERATIVE TO RESOURCE PROJECT PROGRESSION

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The Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia (CME) acknowledges the announcement made by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Hon Chris Evans regarding the changes to permanent migration intake and the Critical Skills List.

According to CME Chief Executive Mr Reg Howard-Smith, the focus of the Western Australian resources sector will always be primarily on training and employing a local workforce wherever possible.

"Even in the current environment, there are commodities performing strongly and project development and planning occurring, resulting in the sector continuing to experience a shortage of skilled operators and professionals.

"It is imperative for the industry to have the right skill-sets, at the right time to ensure skill demands are met, projects progress and the industry moves forward," said Mr Howard-Smith.

"Where the industry cannot source appropriately skilled and experienced staff locally, access to suitably qualified people through the temporary skilled migration scheme is necessary," Mr Howard-Smith continued.

"Without experienced staff, projects would be delayed resulting in a detrimental effect on the Western Australian economy and job prospects.

"It is crucial that the skills migration scheme is market driven, timely and does not disadvantage business operations," he said.

CME considers it is necessary to ensure the Critical Skills List is responsive and targeted to ensure access to skilled workers and for industry and Government to further discuss the opportunities of temporary skilled migration reform which ensures Australian job opportunities and economic development are not squandered.

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