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# Tomorrow's Workforce for Tomorrow's Workplace

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A presentation by  
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## Introduction

Our industry sectors namely:

- Metalliferous Mining
- Coal Mining
- Civil Construction
- Construction Materials and
- Drilling

spend more dollars on training and provide more training hours per person than any other private sector of industry.

Traditionally, these sectors have satisfied their own training needs financially and physically with the exception perhaps of trade training.

We should remember, 80% of people working in these sectors are not trades people and or tertiary qualified personnel.

They are however

- Highly Skilled
- Operate very expensive capital equipment
- High Value

and the vast majority do not have any qualification.

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## Resources & Infrastructure

These sectors of the Australian economy employ approximately 500,000 people across a wide range of occupational categories. With approximately 4% of the workforce we contribute more than 50% of exports and about 30% GDP.

The infrastructure sector interfaces with the mining sector through contractual arrangements. In some cases being the main operator at mine sites. Our research and industry intelligence feedback indicates that all five sectors covered by Skills DMC ie. infrastructure, mining (Coal and Metalliferous), drilling and quarrying are all very busy across the Australian economy.

Our research tells us, we will require approximately 50,000 new recruits for the next five years to maintain and grow our workforce.

We are advised through formal and informal channels, the resources supercycle and infrastructure boom will continue for at least another 5 to 7 years. \$150 billion will be invested in the infrastructure sector over the next 5 years.

In South East Queensland (alone), we are told tens of billions of dollars will be invested in the same period as that of the resources boom.

Billions of dollars invested in infrastructure equates to thousands of jobs over that same period of time.

While Queensland's population is growing, one would have to ask questions, will it have enough people (labourforce) to satisfy the market? Will it have the skills profile to satisfy the market? In the event that these projects receive the go ahead, will we see substantial movement of labour from the coal fields and other mining operations?

I'm aware of strategic research being carried out by Construction Training Queensland to answer some of these questions. However, we also must ask what is happening in the other States and Territories? Besides, Australia is not alone where labour and skills shortages are concerned.

A report in the Wall Street Journal (18/6/07), noted the difficulty for construction industry to secure cranes for infrastructure construction. To satisfy the demand for cranes, one organisation (Manitowoc Inc) has added 500 new employees to its 6,000 strong workforce.

Another major manufacturer with a backlog of \$1.4 billion (US) complained about the shortage of related items such as steel, tyres, gear boxes and other components supplied by other organisations.

The report goes on to relate stories from other parts of the USA, Europe, Middle and South East Asia and China. The message from this and other reports is, the skills pools from which organisations have been dipping into for the past fifteen years or so have not been replenished through the traditional means. In South Africa, the number of apprentices in one sector has dropped from over 13,000 to less than 4,000.

There was a time (some say long ago) when organisations expected to do everything themselves and employed and trained a workforce, just in case the need arose. J.I.C.

We have also experienced a period of “just-in-time” management systems and this included just-in-time skills development. J.I.T

We have, for 4 years or so experienced and still benefit from the resources supercycle. In labour and skills development terms, we're operating in a period of "just-in-crisis". J.I.C.

In other words, we've gone from "just-in-case" to "just-in-time" and now "just-in-crisis".

The workplace of today is so different from that of just a few years ago. And I'm not only referring to technological change. The workplace and work organisation of tomorrow will be equally different to what we have now.

To satisfy the workplace of tomorrow, the Irish Government has adopted a policy to lift all workers "one step up" to the next qualification to maintain its economic position. The Leitch Report (UK) also demands all School Leavers reach Level 2 in their qualification structure.

Other countries, our competitors are ramping up their skills development programmes.

We in Australia, need to consider how we wish to skill the workforce of tomorrow for the workplace of tomorrow.

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This means that we consider how the three main stakeholders wish to interact with future labourforce development and economic demands. Any long term sustainable strategy must consider how we organise and fund future programmes.

□ Governments

Provide support (physical and financial) for programmes that promote a skilled and credentialed workforce, particularly at entry level.

□ Organisations

Invest in and provide support for employee development and commit resources (at job) to learning initiatives that support short, medium and long term business goals and strategies.

□ Individuals

Take responsibility and financially support their own skill development relative to their lifestyle and career choices.

What this means is, Australia having adopted a new system of vocational education and training (competency based), to seriously consider the demand side of skill requirements and ensure Australia has a managed and properly resourced structure to provide the:

RIGHT SKILLS

RIGHT AMOUNT

RIGHT PLACE

RIGHT TIME

RIGHT COST

Following on from the Review of the 10 Industry Skills Councils (ISCs), we were considered a higher performing ISC, solution focused and innovative.

I like to consider your ISC as an innovator and not an imitator.

Here are some of the activities we are conducting on your behalf.

## Certificate I in Resources & Infrastructure Operations

This has been a phenomenal success and support from industry has been exceptional. We have supported “pilots” in Moranbah Queensland, Mildura Victoria, Tasmania, NSW and South Australia.

Many of the graduates have already been snapped up by industry and we are well on the way to repeating the programme in these and other areas.

The programme will be available on-line by the end of the year.

## Future Workforce Manager

We've spent almost two years working with industry stakeholders to develop this product.

Information is power, the Workforce Manager will provide workplaces with data directly related to their workforce now and into a planned future.

We expect to have the product available to all five sectors by the end of this year.

## Skills Maximiser

This is an IT based programme to assist organisations to identify and quantify their training needs against the industry derived units of competency.

This programme is part of our systematic approach to implement competency based training at enterprise level.

The programme will be integrated with the Workforce Planning Tool to create a very powerful planning instrument.

## Training Resources

One of the important items of information extracted from the Skills Maximiser is a list of units of competency critical to a wide range of organisations.

We are now able to prioritise where we should place our development funds.

We're already working on some areas such as shotfiring, safety, process operators and others.

## Industry Interface

Consultation with industry stakeholders culminated in the establishment of RIISC and now SkillsDMC.

We are the nationally recognised organisation to promote the benefits of the national system.

To service our industry and VET stakeholders, we have established Regional Offices in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and in the process of supporting a resource in Adelaide.

## What does all this mean?

The economic commentators tell us the present level of business activity will continue for some time.

This means we will require many thousands of trained and qualified personnel to replace those leaving the industry (natural attrition) and those required to continue our rate of expansion.

Our contribution to the problem of growing and maintaining tomorrow's workforce for tomorrow's workplace is predicated on the best industry intelligence and a systematic approach to implement the nationally recognised competency based system.

To finish my talk, I believe we've already started to make a contribution to attract, train and retain the workforce of tomorrow for the workplace of tomorrow.

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