THE HON IAN MACFARLANE MP
Minister for Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

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A NEW PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND SKILLS

The Australian Government is delivering on its plan to create a more effective and efficient skills and training system with a focus on providing practical, job-ready skills that employers want.

Australian governments have made a new commitment to ensure industry has the skilled workforce and operating environment it needs to boost the nation’s productivity and increase international competitiveness.

Australian Industry Minister, Ian Macfarlane, today chaired the inaugural meeting of the COAG (Council of Australian Governments) Industry and Skills Council in Brisbane, attended by State and Territory Ministers.

The Council was created after a streamlining of the COAG structure announced in December last year, putting greater emphasis on national priorities and delivering practical outcomes.

“For the first time today, we had Ministers responsible for industry and skills at the one table to discuss how the training sector can better support workforce needs across state and territory borders,” Minister Macfarlane said.

The Council agreed on objectives to reform the vocational education and training sector which under six years of Labor became over regulated and complicated, which has in turn discouraged businesses from undertaking new training programmes.

“The Australian Government understands that building a highly skilled workforce is central to driving business innovation and industry expansion. We want to encourage more businesses to engage in training, which will create new job opportunities and boost Australia’s international competitiveness across a range of industries,” Mr Macfarlane said.

“Through our VET reform process we’re working with stakeholders to build a flexible, high quality national training system. I am delighted that my State and Territory colleagues share that goal. I look forward to continuing to work with them.”

The Ministers also discussed a range of industry priorities, including:

- Growth sectors of the future
- De-regulation agenda
- Energy costs
- Workplace productivity

“It’s now more important than ever that the Government gets rid of the red tape, regulation and unnecessary cost burdens that are standing in the way of investor confidence to create new investment and new jobs,” Mr Macfarlane said.

“The Australian Government is moving ahead with our plans to get rid of the carbon tax and the mining tax in order to cut business costs, as well as reinstating the Australian Building and Construction Commission.”

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