



MEDIA RELEASE

MINERALS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Minerals Council of Australia welcomes commitment to continued OH&S reform

Statement by Mitchell Hooke, Chief Executive Officer, Minerals Council of Australia

The Minerals Council of Australia has welcomed the decision by Australia's workplace relations ministers to agree on the content of a Model Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The Ministers agreed to the vast majority of recommendations for a Model Act presented by an expert review panel engaged by the Federal Government, taking a critical step towards uniform OH&S laws across Australia.

The MCA maintains that OH&S laws that provide the same rights, protections and responsibilities for every worker in Australia are fundamental to improving safety outcomes.

OH&S regulation in the minerals industry is currently based on 10 separate state and territory legislative regimes, with varying degrees of prescription that results in inefficiency, complexity and uncertainty, and above all sub-optimal safety and health performance.

These are issues that deflect business from the practical safety and health initiatives that need to happen every day in the workplace.

Federal Workplace Relations Minister Julia Gillard has shown considerable determination in pursuing harmonised OH&S laws and her efforts are welcomed by the mining industry. The MCA strongly backs the Federal Government's pursuit of this major reform

The MCA has long advocated for OH&S reform to enhance, rather than diminish, the protections of workers. The minerals industry maintains that:

- all fatalities, injuries and diseases are preventable;
- no task is so important that it cannot be done safely;
- all hazards can be identified and their risks managed;
- everyone has a personal responsibility for the safety and health of themselves and others;
- safety and health performance can always be improved; and
- every worker on any piece of land, and in any industry, is entitled to the same level of protection.

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