



MINERALS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

SUBMISSION TO INDIGENOUS SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM DISCUSSION PAPER

10 SEPTEMBER 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minerals Council of Australia is pleased to add the perspective of a major employer of Indigenous Australians to Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP) design considerations.¹

With its member companies accounting for the majority of national minerals production, the MCA represents Australia's exploration, mining and minerals processing industry. MCA member companies share a common commitment to support sustainable development for current and future generations.

Traditional Owners and host Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are core partners in mining and the social and economic contribution it makes to Australia.² The minerals industry is also a major stakeholder in the economic development of partner Traditional Owners and communities.

The minerals industry deeply values its relationships with Traditional Owners and communities and is working to better support the social and economic aspirations, prosperity and wellbeing of partner communities.

The MCA strongly supports the Australian Government's new National Roadmap on Indigenous Jobs, Skills and Wealth Creation. MCA Chief Executive Officer Tania Constable is leading the minerals industry's contribution as an Industry Champion.³

Long-term partnerships for jobs, skills and opportunity

Indigenous Australians make a significant and valued contribution to the minerals workforce.

Employing Indigenous Australians creates shared benefits. It provides a committed workforce, diverse perspectives and knowledge and contributes to formal and voluntary industry commitments. Communities benefit from tailored approaches to providing employment opportunities. Workers also gain skills transferrable to other sectors, which benefits other industries.

For decades, industry and Traditional Owners, communities, Indigenous organisations and governments have jointly developed Indigenous employment, skills and procurement pathways.

Pathways in remote and regional areas, for young people to return to or work on country and for entry-level roles are particularly important to communities. Indigenous work readiness and transition programs tailored to local needs, long-term work opportunities and community preferences often support positive outcomes.

Many industry programs aim to address social and economic barriers, such as the adjustment to the workforce (or mining workforce), the need to develop foundational safety, health and workplace skills and limited transportation. These programs aim to build on strengths, including work interest areas and links to community and country.

Work readiness and transition programs usually have led to permanent employment in operational roles or traineeships and apprenticeships for participants.

From an employer perspective, programs are most successful when:

- Designed and delivered with or in consultation with local Traditional Owners, communities and/or Indigenous organisations
- Community, social and economic circumstances, including local skills availability, travel requirements and additional support where necessary are accounted for
- Supported by a culturally-safe and respectful workplace
- Supplemented by ongoing mentoring and support by trusted personnel
- Designed to provide long-term employment opportunities

¹ Indigenous Australians is used to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this submission consistent with language used in the discussion paper.

² In this submission, communities is used to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

³ See T. Constable (Chief Executive Officer), '[Mining will help build more Indigenous skills, jobs and wealth creation](#)', media release, Minerals Council of Australia, 24 August 2021.

- Shared benefits for industry and communities are recognised.

Shared focus has resulted in the minerals industry employing a higher proportion of Indigenous Australians than any other sector. Progress is positive. Yet there is more to do, particularly to increase the number of Indigenous Australians in mining leadership, trades and technical, and science (including environmental management), technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) roles. The growing minerals workforce relies on these roles.

Work readiness and transitional programs will remain an important pathway alongside new initiatives to increase leadership and STEM representation. Industry will continue working with Traditional Owners, Indigenous organisations, the education and training sector and governments to achieve these priorities, and prepare for the future.

Working together to improve engagement, skills and employment outcomes

Building on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the new National Roadmap on Indigenous Jobs, Skills and Wealth Creation will create a shared pathway to support Indigenous Australian economic aspiration and excellence. The National Agreement and Roadmap are complementary initiatives that, together, will address the social determinants of health.⁴

ISEP development provides opportunity to better connect the 1,800 job seekers currently receiving additional support through tailored programs to rewarding and long-term employment.⁵

Focusing on industry work readiness and transition programs, this submission adds the perspective of a major employer of Indigenous Australians to ISEP design considerations. It highlights Indigenous Australian participation in the minerals workforce and future workforce opportunities. It also provides comment on findings and elements proposed to inform ISEP design.

Recommendations

Drawing on minerals sector experience the MCA recommends the Australian Government:

- Prioritise place-based, locally-informed and demand-driven design elements
- Consider funding suited to local context, community needs and long-term employment outcomes
- Develop a toolkit to assist employers to provide a culturally-safe and supportive workplace – for which the minerals industry can provide examples of policies, programs and initiatives
- Map changes so stakeholders can see how ISEP works alongside other initiatives
- Draw on minerals industry lessons and experience to inform design options
- Develop an assessment tool or matrix to inform tailored service delivery responsive to specific population needs, transition points, regional opportunities and employment barriers
- Support continuous improvement of industry structured employment program design by sharing data, findings and information underpinning final ISEP design.
- Explore collaborations with the minerals industry to pilot new approaches in mining regions
- Communicate successes to reinforce both the potential and value of the Indigenous Australian workforce to other employers, using case studies from mining and other sectors

The MCA would welcome the opportunity to facilitate industry engagement for relevant activities.

⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [Social determinants of health, Australian Government](#), viewed 9 September 2021.

⁵ National Indigenous Australians Agency, [Indigenous skills, engagement and employment program \(ISEP\)](#), Australian Government, Canberra, 2021, p. 5.

1. CONTEXT

- Indigenous Australians make a valued and significant contribution to the minerals workforce
- More than 6,600 Indigenous Australians work in Australia's minerals industry – a 2.5 times increase from 2006
- Indigenous employment programs can involve targeted recruitment, a job readiness component, ongoing mentoring and support and longer-term job opportunities
- Increasing the number of Indigenous Australians in leadership and STEM roles is a priority.

The minerals industry underpins Australia's economy

As Australia's largest industry, the minerals industry is integral to the community and economy.⁶ Mining accounted for 60 per cent of total exports in 2019-20.⁷ In 2019-20, the minerals industry paid \$39.3 billion taxes and royalties.⁸ Mining accounted for one-third of company tax revenues, funding essential services and infrastructure.

The resources industry directly employs 256,000 people in highly-skilled, highly paid and secure jobs, with most regional Australia.⁹ Together, the mining and mining equipment, technology and services sector account for 1.1 million fulltime roles in the Australian economy or one in 10 Australian jobs.¹⁰

The minerals industry invests in the next generation of trades and technical professionals. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, mining apprenticeships and traineeships rose to the highest level in seven years in 2020. Industry employs more than 9,000 trainees and apprentices - about 4.4 per cent of the workforce.¹¹

Global consumption of minerals and energy commodities will grow as, driven by rising incomes and rapid development in emerging economies. Demand for steel and technology in Asia has already driven record Australian iron ore and coal exports. There will be even greater opportunities as new energy, transport and health care technologies emerge.¹²

The minerals industry's ongoing economic strength will remain critical as Australia recovers from pandemic's social and economic impacts.

A fundamental partnership with Indigenous Australians

Traditional Owner custodianship is recognised over the majority of lands on which the industry operates. Indigenous communities located near 60 per cent of resources projects.

Economic independence through jobs, training and business opportunities is a long-standing priority for partner Traditional Owners and communities. This is especially important due to past exclusion from mainstream economy, which limited employment, business and wealth creation.¹³

Following national and local Indigenous leader engagement, the minerals industry became one of the first sectors to implement Indigenous employment and procurement targets, policies and programs. Some directly link to or build on company land use agreement commitments in. Many are voluntary.

Industry has learnt many lessons aiming to deliver on these commitments.

⁶ ABS, [Australian System of National Accounts](#), released 30 October 2020

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, [International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia](#), released 2 December 2020

⁸ Deloitte Access Economics Pty Ltd, [Estimates of royalties and company tax paid by the minerals sector](#), Deloitte, Australia, May 2021, p. 2.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, May 2021](#), released 24 June 2021, EQ06.

¹⁰ Deloitte Access Economics, [Economic contribution of the mining and METS sector: Australian estimates](#), Australia, 3 June 2021.

¹¹ T. Constable (Chief Executive Officer), [Mining sector apprenticeship and traineeship commencements surged in 2020](#), media release, Minerals Council of Australia, 2 July 2021.

¹² See [Advantage Australia](#), Australian mining's plan for jobs, communities and investment.

¹³ National Indigenous Australians Agency, [Discussion paper: Increasing economic opportunities for Indigenous Australians](#), Australian Government, Canberra, 2021, p. 8.

Mining uses various pathways to attract, retain and support Indigenous Australian workers. These include targeted advertising, localised recruitment, work readiness programs and apprenticeship, traineeship, operations and cadetship pathways.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander minerals workforce participation

The 2016 Census found at least 6,600 Indigenous Australians work in Australia's minerals industry – a 2.5 times increase from 2006.¹⁴ The MCA expects 2021 Census data to show a further increase.

This represented 3.9 per cent of Australia's mining workforce – the highest Indigenous Australian participation rate of any sector nationally. In Queensland, Indigenous Australians represent about four per cent of the resources sector workforce.¹⁵

Between 2011 and 2016 the minerals industry became the largest employer of Indigenous Australian men in remote areas, accounting for approximately 18 per cent of total cohort employment.¹⁶

Box 1: Promoting mining careers and supporting workforce transition in Western Australia

Get into Mining is an Indigenous employment program delivered by Aboriginal-owned mining and civil contracting company Carey Mining at the Tropicana Gold Mine with support of mining contractor Macmahon Holdings and Tropicana Joint Venture partners AngloGold Ashanti Australia Ltd (70% and manager and Regis Resources Ltd 30%). Macmahon and Carey Mining provide contracting services at Tropicana, located 330 kilometres east-northeast of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia.

The tailored program comprises a blended delivery of training in the classroom, at a simulated worksite and via practical activities at Tropicana. It is structured to enable a phased transition into the fly-in, fly-out working environment. Successful participants qualify for a Certificate II in Surface Extraction Operations and move into traineeships at Tropicana.

Information sessions held in Kalgoorlie typically attract more than 50 applications for the eight positions available. By the second half of 2021 *Get into Mining* had been conducted six times at Tropicana. Most graduates remain employed in the mining industry. Significant preparation and planning by the Carey Mining, Macmahon and AngloGold Ashanti teams underpin the program.

AngloGold Ashanti also partners with Clontarf Foundation, Curtin University and the Western Australia School of Mines on the Mining in the Lands initiative

Now in its fourth year, the five-day camp raises awareness about mining careers among Aboriginal boys and young men participating in the Clontarf Program.

AngloGold Ashanti charters a flight for selected students each year so they can spend two days at either its Sunrise Dam or Tropicana Gold Mines. Students experience life on a mine site, learn about TAFE and university pathways and talk to employees at the site.

More than 40 students have participated in the program since 2017. In April 2021 the company also supported the inaugural Mining in the Lands program for female Aboriginal high school students.

Apprenticeship pathways support skills and career development and develop Australia's mining workforce. 9.7 per cent of all apprentices and trainees are Indigenous Australians, above the all-industries average of 7.3 per cent.¹⁷ This increases in some regions and mines. A Western Australia resources sector survey found about 22 per cent of apprentices were Indigenous Australians.¹⁸

¹⁴ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Closing the Gap Report 2018*, Australian Government, Canberra, 2018, p. 78.

¹⁵ I. Macfarlane (Chief Executive Officer), '[Qld resources lead ways in Indigenous employment](#)', media release, 2 June 2021.

¹⁶ D. Venn & N. Biddle, [Employment Outcomes: 2016 Census Papers](#), Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Canberra, May 2018, p. 12.

¹⁷ National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) – *Apprentice and trainees 2020 – March, June, September and December quarters*; and ABS 6291.0.55.001 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, March 2021.

¹⁸ Chamber of Minerals and Energy Western Australia, [Diversity in the Western Australian Resources Sector](#), CME, Perth, 2020, p. 25.

The 2016 Census data also provides further insights into Indigenous Australian participation in mining. High-level analysis found:

- 55 per cent were in operational roles (e.g equipment and infrastructure operations)
- 24 per cent were in trades and technical roles (e.g electricians, mechanics, diesel fitters, carpenters, plumbers, environmental technicians, processing technicians and carpenters)
- Six per cent were in labouring roles (e.g site maintenance and support)
- Five per cent were in professional roles (e.g geology, engineering, community performance).

Box 2: An organisational wide approach leads to success to Whitehaven Coal

Whitehaven Coal and local Traditional Owners have worked closely to achieve 20 per cent Indigenous Australian employment at the Maules Creek mine in New South Wales. Indigenous Australians make up about 10 per cent of the population in the area.

From an employer perspective, Whitehaven attributes this outcome to:

- A strong and consistent focus and commitment by company and site leaders
- Recognition that all team members are responsible for supporting each other
- Active and ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners, including jointly celebrating success and identifying new opportunities
- A respectful workforce culture.

Most of the 150 Indigenous Australians working at the mine are in operational roles. Whitehaven is focused on upskilling and providing future career pathways.

Building on this success, Whitehaven and local Traditional Owners are working to attract Indigenous Australians from other mining regions to the site.

About nine per cent of Whitehaven's overall workforce are Indigenous Australians.

Source: Whitehaven Coal, [Sustainability Report 2020](#), Whitehaven Coal, Australia, 2020, p. 53.

Tailored industry employment and training programs

There is no one-size-fits all approach to tailored Indigenous employment programs to support transition to the minerals workforce. However effective programs often involve:

- Being a designed or delivered with or in consultation with local Traditional Owners, communities and Indigenous organisations
- Promoting the program locally to encourage and support local applications
- Accounting for community, social and economic circumstances, including local skills availability, travel requirements and additional support needed
- Being supported by company-wide measures to provide a culturally-safe and respectful workforce, including site and company leadership engagement
- Supporting ongoing mentoring and support by trusted personnel with strong local connections. Direct mentoring and support cannot replace a holistic approach to providing a culturally-safe and respectful workforce
- Providing employment and training opportunities that align with direct workforce needs, meaning most graduates transition to full time work with the company or a contract partner
- Celebrating the success of participants and graduates, establishing future role models
- Recognising the shared benefits of Indigenous Australian workforce participation.

2. FUTURE MINERALS INDUSTRY WORKFORCE

- Australia's minerals industry has a bright future as global demand for its high quality minerals and energy commodities continues to grow
- Increasing Indigenous Australian participation will help meet long-term workforce needs
- Work readiness and transition program will remain an important pathway alongside Indigenous executive, leadership and professional pathways in the future.

A highly skilled, high wage workforce

The Australian minerals industry is sophisticated and technologically advanced, requiring a highly skilled and adaptable workforce.¹⁹ Australian minerals jobs are high-value, high-wage jobs, located mostly in regional Australia. Median weekly earnings for resource sector were \$2,325 in 2020, double the median for all industries (\$1,150 a week).²⁰

The minerals workforce includes various scientific fields and professional occupations. It is the largest total employer of mining engineers, geologists and geophysicists, industrial, mechanical and production engineers, production managers, metallurgists and physicists.²¹ It is the third-biggest employer of environmental scientists, employing more than 9,326 directly and indirectly.²² Chemical engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science, and data science roles will grow over the next five years.

Box 4: Partnering for long-term outcomes in Cape York

Traditional Owner Elders and Rio Tinto worked together to develop a long-term plan to protect cultural heritage sites, enable environmental conservation and to support the Wik-Waya peoples aspirations. Associated with its Arumn project, the plan aims to support young people to understand their culture, responsibilities and connections to country.

Traditional Owners wanted to establish a standalone conservation program. The Wik-Waya people and Rio Tinto worked together to establish a tailored environmental management program to support this aim.

The program is currently operated within Rio Tinto's land and rehabilitation department. This supports local people to further develop the skills required for a standalone program. It supports Rio Tinto to apply local Indigenous knowledge as part of environmental and rehabilitation activities.

Over time, the intention is for the environmental management program to transition into a standalone operation delivering services and expertise to the mine and the region. It is a unique approach that is supporting long-term cultural, environmental and employment aspirations.

Importantly the program assists employees to gain skills in areas of future growth (environmental services and management) and sets the foundation for a community-controlled organisation.

Preparing for the workforce of the future

Almost 70 per cent of workers hold a Certificate III level qualification or higher. All workers must undertake significant foundational safety, health and operational training.²³

¹⁹ Department of Jobs and Small Business, op. cit.

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2020, released 11 December 2020, tables 2 and 3.

²¹ Department of Jobs and Small Business, [Job Outlook](#); MCA calculations, viewed 7 September 2019. NB these figures are estimates of the total number of workers directly and indirectly employed by the resources sector.

²² *ibid.*

²³ Minerals Council of Australia, [Advantage Australia](#) 2020.

Demand for highly skilled employees will only grow. An additional 1,100 mining engineers are needed domestically up to 2024, with an estimated demand for up to 5000.²⁴ Industry added 40,000 jobs in the past five years and aims to create 5000 new apprenticeships.²⁵

Additionally, specialist skills associated with innovation and technology adoption will influence industry skill needs and further shape demand.

A key area of industry focus is increasing Indigenous Australian representation in senior management and Board roles. Noting engineers are often in leadership roles, the MCA will work with Indigenous organisations, governments and the education sector to support Indigenous Australians to choose engineering careers and join and stay in mining. This will also help meet future skills demand.

Box 5: Make Your Career in Mining Careers Guide

Released during National Skills Week, the MCA's new careers guide highlights the diverse and exciting career opportunities across Australia's minerals industry.

[Make Your Career in Mining](#) emphasises opportunities for Indigenous Australians and partnerships with First Nations organisations. Features include:

- An overview of industry approaches to mining in partnership with First Nations communities
- A map of diverse mining careers across the project lifecycle
- Information about mining awareness programs, such the Mining in the Lands partnership
- Information about Indigenous traineeship, apprenticeship, cadetship and graduate programs.

The changing nature of work

When, how and where people work is changing. In the past, people had one career or worked in a one sector. In the future, people will continually reskill, adapt and develop a mix of skills from different workplaces and sectors.

EY research found technology will enhance or redesign 77 per cent of mining jobs over the next five years.²⁶ Changes to job roles and how people work are already evident. Technologies (e.g. cloud, automation, artificial intelligence, blockchain and connectivity) are already used by industry, augmenting and reshaping roles in every aspect of value chain.

For example, truck drivers are now operating automated vehicles at some sites. Drones and other technologies are used for tailings storage facility and environmental inspections. Data analytics, robotics and artificial intelligence are also creating new roles in specialist disciplines.

Continued innovation and advances with digital mining could change what is possible in industry.²⁷ Many mining operations are now accessible due to technology adoption and autonomous operations including those that are currently hazardous or uneconomical.²⁸ Adoption of autonomous technology adoption will require a larger resources workforce.

Skills shortages

Access to a highly skilled workforce will be critical as the minerals industry reinforces its reputation as a supplier of choice to the world.²⁹ Skills shortages became evident in late 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated concern about meeting additional workforce demand and skills levels.

²⁴ Department of Employment, *Employment Projections 2020*. Provided by Skilled Occupation List (SOL) Team during 2019-20 SOL Stakeholder Consultations.

²⁵ T. Constable (Chief Executive Officer), [Australians urged to make their career in mining](#), media release, Minerals Council of Australia, 25 August 2021.

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ EY, [The Future of Work – The economic implications of technology and digital mining](#), page 52

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ T. Constable (Chief Executive Officer), [Minerals industry focussed on attracting and retaining highly skilled workforce](#), media release, Minerals Council of Australia, 27 August 2021.

Despite the pandemic, labour is highly mobile and the STEM skills labour market globally competitive. Without radically increasing the number of STEM students, current skills shortages could affect Australia's status as a world leader in minerals.³⁰

Throughout 2021, significant activity and engagement has contributed to increasing enrolments, pathways and participation in education skills and training. The MCA and its members have worked with key partners including Curtin University on a mining engineering curricula pilot, Central Queensland University and the University of Southern Queensland on an associate degree curricula pilot, University of Queensland, Murdoch University and Curtin University on a metallurgical partnership, University of Adelaide on the National Exploration Undercover School program, University of New South Wales to increase mining engineering enrolments.

Directly linked to STEM study a school based Year 6 and Year 8 gamification initiative supported by Core Foundation and BHP is aimed at increasing understanding and relevance of earth, space and environmental sciences has been rolled out to 57 primary and secondary schools around Australia.

Supporting existing programs

In addition to many individual company partnerships, the MCA supports existing Indigenous education and employment programs such as:

- Clontarf Foundation: provides support and mentoring to assist Aboriginal boys and young men to attend school, complete Year 12 and enter employment.
- Stars Foundation: provides full time, in-school mentoring and engagement programs for First Nations young women in secondary schools. The Stars mentoring program currently supports students in 15 high schools across Australia, with plans for expansion.
- Indigenous Australian Engineering Schools (IAES) program: delivered by Engineering Aid Australia the IAES encourages Indigenous students to pursue a career in engineering – the MCA was a foundation sponsor of this program and our support spans 20 years.

Mining Skills Organisation Pilot

The MCA championed establishment of an industry-led skills organisation to support more flexible, higher quality and responsive training and workforce development. This resulted in the MCA incubating the [Mining Skills Organisation Pilot](#) (MSOP), delivering a stable governance structure, project planning, specialist procurement and project hub activation.

Over almost two years the MCA has worked to support MSOP on behalf of resources sector employers. This has involved working with vocational education and training sector and government to improve the quality and range of training available to industry.

The pilot is focused on four critical [project areas](#): apprenticeships, digital transformation, workforce attraction and retention, and qualifications reform. Digital transformation focuses on speed to market issues-developing mechanism and process to get accredited courses into training packages within a 90 day period. The apprenticeships area will develop a mining sector fit for purpose heavy duty diesel fitting qualification. Development of an accelerated delivery methodology will allow the apprenticeship to be delivered in two years instead of four. On the attraction and retention project- initial focus is on transferable skills and development of a fundamentals of modern mining skills set in the vocational education and training sector. Qualifications reform- aligned to the apprenticeships project and centred upon making qualifications less complex and more industry driven with providers less compliance focused and more responsive to industry need.

With the pilot ready to transition into a standalone entity early, the MCA and MSOP have demonstrated the importance of industry involvement to meet worker and employer needs. It also shows how responsive and flexible pathways can be co-designed.

This could provide a model for regionally-focused pilot programs.

³⁰ *ibid.*

3. CONSIDERATIONS FOR ISEP DESIGN

- Interim evaluation findings generally align with the MCA's understanding of key elements of successful Indigenous work readiness and transition programs
- Overarching program design should recognise the importance of addressing local barriers to employment in a culturally-appropriate and holistic manner
- Building interest and skills in areas aligned with local employment opportunities during primary and secondary school education will support successful post-school transitions.

Interim evaluation findings

The MCA provides the perspective of a major employer of Indigenous Australians in people in remote and regional areas to inform ISEP considerations below.

Interim evaluation findings highlighted in the discussion paper generally align with elements of successful minerals sector-related Indigenous employment programs. Specific comments on the interim findings are provided below:

<p>A flexible approach that adapts to region-specific needs</p>	<p>The number and type of positions available in minerals industry Indigenous employment programs are usually based on specific workforce needs. As a result, the successful completion of program generally leads to longer-term employment with a company or one of its contracting partners.</p> <p>Minerals companies may also require or support suppliers and contractors to implement tailored Indigenous recruitment, training and/or employment programs. This increases the number and broadens the type of opportunities available to Indigenous Australians.</p>
<p>High quality mentoring and support services</p>	<p>Mine sites and companies may employ mentors with strong local connections to support program participants with their transition to the minerals workforce. Support may continue after program completion. Mentoring and support are most effective when complemented by broader company actions to provide culturally-appropriate workplaces.</p>
<p>Delivery of services in partnership with the local Indigenous communities</p>	<p>Over time the minerals industry has shifted towards programs in partnership with Traditional Owners, communities and Indigenous organisations. There is no one-size-fits-all approach with programs tailored to the local context. For example, Aboriginal-owned mining contractor Carey Mining delivers the Get into Mining Program at Tropicana Mining while Glencore's Queensland Metals business operates and fully funds its own Indigenous Employment Program.</p>
<p>Upfront investment in job readiness</p>	<p>Companies such as AngloGold Ashanti, Glencore, BHP and Newcrest use tailored work readiness programs to support participants to transition into apprentices, traineeships or other roles. Financial literacy, life skills and other support is often available where needed.</p>
<p>Culturally-appropriate workplaces</p>	<p>As noted in the Whitehaven Coal example, programs are most effective when all leaders and employees recognise their role to support safe, respectful and inclusive workplaces. This a key focus for the sector.</p>

Principles for a new model

The proposed ISEP principles generally align with the minerals industry's approach to tailored Indigenous employment programs. The table below includes high-level comments on the principles.

Principle	Comments
Address specific barriers to employment and regional and local needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas for support can include transportation, assistance to obtain a drivers' licence and raising awareness of fitness for work requirements • There are innovative solutions for these challenges. For example Newcrest's Telfer operation established a dedicated transportation service for workers in remote Martu communities.
Work with local communities to identify existing and emerging engagement and employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some minerals companies work with Traditional Owners and Indigenous organisations to develop a skills register, documenting what skills are available locally for job opportunities as they arise • There is also opportunity to better connect tailored Indigenous employment services into broader regional development planning.
Respond to emerging regional labour market needs and opportunities for both job seekers and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating lessons on disciplines aligned with regional labour market needs in primary and secondary school curriculum will assist future job seekers and businesses. For example, the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy (QMEA) enables secondary school students at 80 schools to gain real experience with resources-related careers.³¹ QMEA also helps build teacher knowledge and students develop an understanding of VET and tertiary education pathways.³²
Target specific cohorts of Indigenous Australians based on data and evidence, supplemented with local knowledge and need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing specific support for particular cohorts may assist the transition from secondary school into further education and training. For example, the Glencore Girls for Mining Mentoring Program connects year 12 students with experienced professionals in Mount Isa, Cloncurry and Townsville.³³ • Promoting role models can also assist to promote jobs, skills and employment pathways to specific cohorts. For example, the Queensland Resources Industry Indigenous Awards recognise an Exceptional Indigenous Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy Student. The student becomes an ambassador for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students about career pathways.³⁴
Support employers to understand and release the potential of the Indigenous workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could involve recognising and celebrating the importance of diverse perspectives, the value of a local and committed workforce and the opportunity to draw on and apply Indigenous knowledge (where agreed with Traditional Owners). • The minerals industry would welcome the opportunity to reinforce the potential of the Indigenous workforce to other sectors.

³¹ QMEA, [About Us](#), Queensland Resources Council, viewed 17 August 2021.

³² QMEA, [Our Schools](#), Queensland Resources Council, viewed 17 August 2021.

³³ Glencore, [Girls for Mining Mentorship Program](#), Glencore, viewed 12 August 2021.

³⁴ Queensland Resources Council, [QRC Indigenous Awards](#), QRC, viewed 17 August 2021.