

08 December 2022

To Whom It May Concern

Email: EDU.skillssapolicyandstrategy@sa.gov.au

Re: South Australian Skills Plan Concept and Summary

The South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy (SACOME) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission on the South Australian Skills Plan.

SACOME is the leading industry association representing resource and energy companies in South Australia, including those who provide services to them.

SACOME has recently consulted with member companies, including major mining operators, large commercial and industrial (C&I) operators, leading exploration companies and service providers to identify skills shortages impacting the South Australian resources sector and provide feedback on the 2023 National Skills Priority List.

We refer to our [submission](#) to the National Skills Commissioner regarding the 2023 Priority List which should be considered as it lists the current skills shortages facing the resources sector and projected future demand.

SACOME also provides the following comments for consideration.

- 1. SACOME supports the vision that “By 2033, South Australia will have highly adaptable skilled people supported by an accessible seamless system which contributes to a successful economy in South Australia” and supports the three main focus areas of ‘Skilled People; Seamless System; Successful Economy’.**

One of SACOME’s key Pre-Election priority calls was for the development of a ‘South Australian Future Workforce and Skills Framework’ that is evidence based and maps workforce requirements across key industry sectors.

Like many other industry sectors, the South Australian resources sector also faces looming workforce and skills shortages. The combination of a global pandemic and a massive pipeline of infrastructure projects in Western Australian and the eastern States has resulted in economy-wide labour shortages.

This comes at a time where the South Australian resources sector is in a cyclical upswing with a suite of projects and buoyant exploration activity fuelling demand for workers.

In response to member concerns about labour supply, SACOME commissioned reporting in late 2021 to quantify workforce requirements for the South Australian resources sector.

Based on a combination of projects currently under construction, new projects reaching final investment decision and a consistent demand for shutdown and maintenance workers, the headline figures from this work revealed:

- Requirement for an additional 8,000 workers between Q3 2021 and Q3 2023.
- A peak shortage of 5,100 resources sector workers in Q3 2023.

While it is unlikely the current shortfall can be met, we can work to triage the worst of the skills shortage impacts and develop long term strategy to address underlying issues.

Longer-term strategic planning is essential if we are to build labour market resilience across the South Australian economy.

Strategic mapping of industry sector requirements can help to understand cross-sector workforce needs and better align training and education measures to meet them.

Such planning will also assist in coordinating worker transition across industry cycles and facilitate worker movement to new sectors in periods of downturn while ensuring they are equipped with the skills and training necessary for that transition.

A suitably skilled workforce is critical to growth of the resources sector and the broader South Australian economy.”

2. SACOME supports that the South Australia’s skills system should reflect the needs and aspirations of its users and agrees with the number of opportunities of improvements as outlined on page 3 of the ‘Concept summary for engagement’.

Rather than having multiple ‘jobs plans’ for distinct sectors such as Hydrogen, Renewables and Energy, SACOME reiterates its call for the development of a long-term ‘South Australian Future Workforce and Skills Framework’ that maps workforce requirements and industry cycles **across all** key industry sectors, existing and emerging.

Strategic mapping of **all industry sector requirements** is needed to understand cross-sector workforce needs and better align training and education measures to meet them. It would also help to facilitate worker movement to different sectors in periods of upturn or downturn and build market resilience.

A sector-wide approach would enable governments / industry to triage the worst of the skills shortage impacts across sectors and develop long-term strategies and actions to address underlying workforce issues where it is most needed.

3. SACOME emphasises the need for 'Stakeholders to collaborate to improve outcomes' in order to achieve the outcomes in Skilled People.

South Australia faces competition for labour from other States who are also experiencing the same labour shortfall issues at a much larger scale, with internal competition between South Australian projects, operations, and shutdowns for labour also likely to result in workforce 'poaching'.

By bringing together all stakeholders, collaborating across and within industries, and approaching the skills requirements across all sectors as a collectively (rather than sector-by-sector) will set the State up for future success and achieve the desired outcomes in Skilled People.

As mentioned above, strategic mapping of industry sector requirements can help to understand cross-sector workforce needs and better align training and education measures to meet them.

Such planning will also assist in paving the way for stakeholder collaboration, coordinating worker transition across industry cycles and will facilitate worker movement to new sectors in periods of downturn while ensuring they are equipped with the skills and training necessary for that transition.

4. SACOME supports the proposed drivers of change to achieve outcomes for Skilled People (Skills and industry Labs; Strengthened narrative for skills; single user portal; wholistic approach for learners and industry).

SACOME supports the proposed drivers of change and puts forward that 'Skills and industry labs' and a 'wholistic support for learners and industry' would make the biggest difference for industry.

Ensuring all learners receive the support they need, when they need it, and industry having the data, tools and support required to meet skills needs, is essential. Bringing together learners, industry and training providers in collaborative and innovative ways is also critical to ensure careers advice and skills training leads to connections and employment opportunities.

5. SACOME supports the three outcomes to continue to a Seamless Skills Ecosystem (Quality and adaptable providers; A simple, streamlined, consistent and transparent funding model; Responsive products and services).

SACOME supports all three outcomes and put forwards that 'Quality and adaptable providers,' 'A simple, streamlined, consistent and transparent funding model,' and a 'Responsive products and services' are all equally important and needed to successfully achieve the outcomes for Seamless System.

A learner – and industry- centred approach to the training experience is necessary to ensure workers have the appropriate skills needed by industry; responsive products and services that are integrated and developed collaboratively to meet local workforce demands with genuine labour market currency. A simple, streamlined, consistent and transparent funding model is required that drives quality outcomes and continuous improvement practices.

6. SACOME supports the drivers of change to achieve outcomes for a Seamless System (system stewardship, ecosystem development, quality outcomes and test, trial and innovate).

SACOME supports the drivers of change to achieve outcomes for a seamless system (system stewardship, ecosystem development, quality outcomes and test, trial and innovate) and reiterates the need for the development of a long-term 'South Australian Future Workforce and Skills Framework' that maps workforce requirements and industry cycles **across all** key industry sectors, existing and emerging.

7. SACOME supports the three outcomes that if achieved will contribute to a successful economy (Data-driven, evidence-based planning and forecasting; a skilled workforce that supports current and emerging economic opportunities in South Australia; individuals and businesses are equipped with the skills they need to innovate, grow, and succeed).

SACOME supports all three outcomes and proposes that all three outcomes are equally important and needed to successfully achieve the outcomes for a *Successful Economy*.

SACOME again reiterates the need for the development of a long-term 'South Australian Future Workforce and Skills Framework' that is evidence based and maps workforce requirements and industry cycles **across all** key industry sectors, existing and emerging.

8. SACOME supports the drivers of change to achieve the outcomes and generate economic impact (collaborative and evidence-based planning; measures aligned to success; partnerships to meet customer needs; place based and community skills strategies).

SACOME supports the drivers of change to achieve the outcomes desired and generate economic impact.

SACOME thanks the State Government for the opportunity to provide feedback to the SA Skills Plan and remains committed to ongoing dialogue in relation to these matters.

Kind regards



Rebecca Knol
Chief Executive Officer