



## RESA Skills Summit 2025 – Unearthing Skills Solutions Wrap Up

Thank you for your participation in the RESA Skills Summit 2025, and for those who were unable to attend on the day we are pleased to provide this Wrap Up for your information.

### Scene Setting



L to R: Jodie Badcock, Paul Martyn, Christine Charles Chair RESA Board and MC, Rebecca Knol

**Paul Martyn**, Chief Executive of the [Department for Energy and Mining](#) highlighted the economic significance of the mineral resources sector in South Australia and the connection to initiatives for renewable energy, green steel opportunities and sovereign capability for resource processing. Paul highlighted the scope of mineral exploration and developing projects across the sector and the

importance of strategic responses to workforce demand.

**Rebecca Knol**, outgoing CEO of the [South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy](#) provided greater details of the economic contribution of the mining and energy sector to South Australia including \$9.5 billion in direct and indirect spending and from the 18 member companies who directly employ 11,919 employees and support 43,046 full time jobs. Rebecca highlighted SACOMEs advocacy for a cross industry approach to workforce planning for better utilisation of skills across projects and industries. SACOME projects in critical skill and workforce initiatives were also presented including the primary school STEM Digital Technologies Program, Playford Trust Scholarships, Youth Careers Campaign and Community Awareness Campaign.



**Jodie Badcock**, RESA CEO, highlighted the role of the [Resources and Engineering Skills Alliance](#) in providing strategic advice to inform responses to workforce demand with a focus on *'finding the gaps'* and addressing barriers in developing capability and connecting talent to industry to address workforce priorities. Jodie emphasised the importance of the South Australian lens RESA provides to national and state policy and workforce initiative frameworks and understanding demand at the occupational level

grounded in the needs of South Australian operations and opportunities for South Australians to benefit.

Jodie also provided a preview of the RSEA career profiles in development for secondary school students and the early years mineral resources engagement project for primary school aged students (8 – 12 year olds).





## Panel 1 - Attraction and Retention



Our critical skills and priority occupations panel with **Steve Durkin** (Australian Association of Mining and Metallurgy – [AUSIMM](#)), **Claire Chakrabati** ([Accelerating Women in METS](#) Manager – [Austmine](#)), **Ben Colley** (General Manager South Australia -[Stone and Chalk](#)), **Dr Janine Piip** (Director, [SkillSmart](#)) and **Professor David Lewis** (Executive Dean – Faculty of Sciences, Engineering & Technology – [Adelaide University](#)) explored professional development and the exceptional standard of Australian professionals on an international scale, the diversity in demand for skills across the METS sector and the experiences of interns, scaling up for innovators, attracting and retaining skilled migrants and new directions in tertiary education for Adelaide University.

**Geogina Windley**, Acting Director Workforce Capability - [Department of State Development](#), provided an overview of the [Upper Spencer Gulf Workforce Strategy](#) released on the 4<sup>th</sup> August providing a road map for supporting workforce priorities across the Upper Spencer Gulf. The strategy encompasses the Jobs and Skills Hub and the [Regional and Industry Partnerships Program](#) initiative which will

bring a central, regionally co-ordinated capacity to respond to regional workforce priorities to be managed by the Department of State Development and facilitated by the Regional Manager, Robin O’Dea.

Georgina also drew attention to the work the Department for State Development is supporting to provide centrally co-ordinated understanding of workforce priorities through the Workforce Strategy and projects team.

South Australian Skills Commissioner **Cameron Baker** introduced the [2025 2030 Strategic Plan](#) and highlighted the work the [Skills Commission](#) is doing to promote SA capability nationally and internationally through participation in WorldSkills. Cameron also highlighted SA’s nation leading innovation in the introduction of Degree Apprenticeships and the focus on apprentice attraction, retention and completion and advocacy for broader recognition and support for employers and apprentices.



L to R: Commissioner Cameron Baker, Jodie Badcock, Georgina Windley





## Panel 2 - Critical Skills and Priority Occupations



L to R: Jodie Badcock, Dr Claire Chakrabati, Dr Janine Piip, Ben Colley, Professor David Lewis, Steve Durkin

Our critical skills and priority occupations panel with **Steve Durkin** (Australian Association of Mining and Metallurgy – [AUSIMM](#)), **Claire Chakrabati** ([Accelerating Women in METS](#) Manager – [Austmine](#)), **Ben Colley** (General Manager South Australia -[Stone and Chalk](#)), **Dr Janine Piip** (Director, [SkillSmart](#)) and **Professor David Lewis** (Executive Dean – Faculty of Sciences, Engineering & Technology – [Adelaide University](#)) explored professional development and the exceptional standard of Australian professionals on an international scale, the diversity in demand for skills across the METS sector and the experiences of interns, scaling up for innovators, attracting and retaining skilled migrants and new directions in tertiary education for Adelaide University.

**Steve Durkin** highlighted the emerging priorities of mine closure and management of environmental impacts and the significance of the professional community on a national and global platform. This

could perhaps a unique selling point for attracting global talent to our industry and sector.

In addition to highlighted the broad range of opportunities across STEM disciplines within the METS sector **Claire Chakrabati** highlighted the uncertainty students faced in their own professional competence when embarking on an internship and the importance of mentoring and support to assist in understanding workplace culture and expectations along with measuring success. This was reflecting in student feedback pre and post placement indicating a significant increase in confidence and understanding.

**Ben Colley** reflected on the importance of being able to support connection to the vision of innovators to attract skilled talent to start up enterprises and the focus on being able to 'get shit done' as a powerful engagement factor. He also highlighted the agility and empowerment to make decisions and act quickly of start-ups as highly appealing.



**Dr Janene Piip** reflected on the Engineering Futures program supported by the SA Department for State Development to assist overseas engineers in connecting to employment in Australia. Janene highlighted the importance of understanding the differences in recruitment strategies and processes including the value of networking and building relationships, customising applications to employer requirements and demonstrating the capacity to ‘fit

in’ with evidence based CV’s, cover letters and interview skills.

**Professor David Lewis** provided an update on the transition to Adelaide University and the complete refresh of courses and pathways being undertaken to align with industry priorities and emerging requirements. This includes the introduction of a post graduate Masters degree for mining engineering building on a cross sector undergraduate program.

### Panel 3 - Building a Workforce for the Future



L to R: Anita Kuss, Andrew Copus, Lauren Conceicao, Dr Gavin Lind

**Lauren** highlighted how a focus on identifying transferrable skills, developing industry responsive skill sets, focussing on supporting transitioning economies and effective workforce planning can support workforce readiness for emerging skills. Lauren also raised the opportunity for industry to invest in workforce capability building in their region of operations and into the supply chain through alternative approaches to long term, sustainable, regional contribution.

The Future Workforce panel **Lauren Conceicao** (Director – [Skills Frontier](#)), **Dr Gavin Lind** (Chief Executive Office [Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance](#)), **Anita Kuss** (Chief Executive Officer – [Uni Hub Spencer Gulf](#)) and **Andrew Copus** (Director, Industry Engagement and Training – [Department for Education](#)) highlighted the importance of doing things differently to respond to rapid change across industry with a focus on supporting regional participation and responding to technological advances and changes in how things get done.

**Gavin** provided a summary of insights from the Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance (AUSMASA) [2025 Workforce Plan – Evolving Together](#) which reflects youth perceptions are not supportive of industry growth, an aging workforce gender diversity as key challenges. Awareness of career pathways was at 61% but 60% of students had not had a key influencer discuss the mining industry as a potential career path despite the industry being well supported through formal structures with industry support for VET degrees, degree apprenticeships and cadetships to



fast-track pathways, enable early engagement and build capability. The impact of AI in mining operations was also highlighted with 7% of industry indicating the impact is already noticeable, 48% indicating it will be in the next 1-5 years and a further 26% in 6-10 years. AUSMASA have identified emerging priorities of: technological advancements, safety and regulatory requirements, electrification and sustainability and cross-sector applications.

**Anita** highlighted how the industry led University Hub model is providing pathways for regional residents to have access to professional pathways and supporting professional development in industry critical skills. The successful model provides learning and study support to students and establishes partnerships with higher education providers who have the will and the capacity to deliver programs remotely – in areas

aligned to the industry needs of the region including surveying, health care and allied health services and engineering.

With the official opening of the [Port Augusta Technical College](#) on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August **Andrew** detailed how the industry engagement model is supporting the connection of regional students to career pathways through the Tech College model. The Port Augusta Technical College is supporting regional participation with residential facilities, block release competency based training, industry supported resources and training programs and delivery - while enabling students to maintain enrolment for SACE studies in their own schools and communities. Andrew also highlighted the Industry Engagement staff providing industry with opportunities to connect with schools and students.



## RESA New Initiatives Launched

### RESA Industry Career Advisor, Josephine Breede



RESA CEO Jodie Badcock, announced the appointment of Career Advisor, Josephine Breede. Jo has six years' experience in underground mining within South Australia, working in a variety of operational and technical roles. She is passionate about helping people discover and access opportunities within the mining industry.

We welcome Jo in joining us to share her story and inspire the next generation of mining professionals

### Responsible Use of AI Licence Scholarship Program

**RESA RAIL  
Scholarship Program**

RESA has partnered with RAIL Initiative to provide a limited number of **full-fee scholarships** to the Responsible use of AI Licence (RAIL) online certification course.

 **RAIL  
INITIATIVE**

RESA recognises the need for South Australian's to keep up with emerging technologies. RESA has established a partnership with the RAIL Initiative to establish the [Responsible Use of AI Licence Scholarship Program](#).

With our focus on Skills and Workforce and Regional Capability we are delighted to provide this opportunity to **South Australian residents** that meet one or more of the criteria below:

- Regional Business
- Regional Resident
- Aboriginal Business
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Not-for Profit Organisation
- Education Provider
- Mining Equipment & Technology Services supplier



## Workshop Feedback

We asked delegates to provide us with feedback in the two areas of attraction and retention highlighting: What is working? What is needed? Who should be involved?

We then provided an opportunity for delegates to highlight what they believe to be the Top 3 priorities for delivering a skilled workforce to support industry.

Our initial evaluation of feedback has identified 6 key themes for attention:

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### 1. Workforce Attraction

- Need to attract younger generations and career changers into the resources sector.
- Better promotion of career opportunities, diversity of roles, and sector visibility.
- Marketing strategies, brand recognition, and government attention to boost appeal.

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### 2. Skills & Training

- Local training delivery, tailored programs, and flexibility to suit rosters and regional needs.
- Better career pathways from school → VET → university.
- Industry-relevant and accredited training, plus ongoing upskilling and lifelong learning options.

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### 3. Industry–Community–Government Collaboration

- Stronger communication and cooperation between industry, local communities, and government.
- Community involvement in industry activities (e.g., open days, skills incubators).
- Alignment of workforce planning across industries and regions.

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### 4. Retention & Workforce Culture

- Professional development, mentoring, and coaching for leaders and supervisors.
- Improved workplace culture to keep employees engaged.
- Managing career transitions during industry ebbs and flows.

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### 5. Local & Regional Focus

- Building local capacity and workforce through community-led initiatives like Uni Hub.
  - Solutions tailored to local challenges rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.
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## 6. Strategic & Long-Term Planning

- Planning for skills needs in growth sectors like renewables and critical minerals.
- Over-training to support supply chains and anticipating workforce changes.
- Mapping resources for education and employment pathways in SA.

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We are thankful for the valuable feedback we have received and look forward to providing further updates on how we use this to inform our strategy and forward work plan.

### Keep the conversation going...

Contact [info@resa.org.au](mailto:info@resa.org.au) if you would like to be connected to the key contacts from our panels or have connections from the RESA Skills Summit you would like to follow up with an e-introduction.

### Contact Us:

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