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## **Communiqué for the COAG Industry and Skills Council Meeting 20 April 2018**

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Members of the industry stream of the COAG Industry and Skills Council met in Perth today to accelerate their joint work on growing opportunities for jobs and growth. Ministers agreed to new collaborative actions to build on the joint National Innovation Objectives agreed at their last meeting.

Ministers agreed principles which support place-based innovation policies. This will help drive collaboration and innovation and ensure complementary activities in supporting innovation precincts.

To position Australia to make the most out of digital transformation and industry transition, Australians must have the skills they need to live, work and run their businesses into the future.

Ministers were encouraged by the presentation by the Box Hill Institute and the national data innovation group, Data61, on their journey on a digital skills program—a cyber security qualification—being developed and quickly deployed nationally. Ministers agreed to consider mechanisms for collective action to address emerging skills needs at their next meeting, with a view to this being a key focus of their reform agenda going forward. Noting Australian jobs also depend on importing global talent, ministers welcomed the Australian government’s visa reform initiatives, particularly the Global Talent Scheme pilot, and agreed to work together to ensure the scheme had appropriate integrity mechanisms based on a cooperative federal approach.

Ministers discussed opportunities and capabilities in the space industry and the links to the Commonwealth’s decision to develop a national space agency. The Industry and Skills Council will provide an important forum for aligning space industry activity going forward, and ministers agreed to consider that the space industry capabilities of all jurisdictions would be a key focus of the council at its next meeting.

Recent research on assisting small businesses to take on their first employee highlighted the importance of business advisors such as accountants as a key source of advice when small businesses make crucial decisions, including the decision to employ their first person. Ministers agreed to work together to find specific mechanisms to make it easier for small businesses to employ their first person, using these trusted adviser networks, and noted that all jurisdictions will pilot work in this area. Ministers also agreed to work with jurisdictions on an as-needs basis to deal with skills and labour shortages. Ministers committed to increased cooperation under the National Business Simplification Initiative, including in the key areas of simplifying business interaction with government, so businesses can focus on innovating and growing. They also agreed to a continued focus on developing frameworks for tackling new regulatory challenges as they arise.

The Industry Capability Network (ICN) Gateway has played a key role in making sure that Australian suppliers can access public and private contract opportunities, particularly in major projects. To make sure that the technology platform that supports this function is modern and effective, ministers today agreed the overarching governance, access and licencing frameworks to guide the development and

operation of a system upgrade and for officials to continue working collaboratively on the detailed specifications.

Standards are designed to help ensure products, services and systems are safe, reliable and consistent. Following a detailed investigation into access to Australian Standards, ministers considered how to make standards, including those referenced in legislation, more accessible. A more coordinated approach to collecting information about standards referenced in legislation and to purchasing standards information across governments is key to providing better solutions for community and businesses who rely on this information. Ministers agreed that recommendations on solutions to the longstanding issue of access to and charges for standards be progressed as a matter of priority, out of session, prior to the next meeting.

Ministers also considered future directions for its work program, including a concerted focus on innovation as well as industry, including the work to progress the National Innovation Objectives. The next meeting will focus on the skills required by industry, with a focus on digital and advanced manufacturing skills, and the future of work.

Ministers unanimously agreed to include a standing item on diversity in STEM.

Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, the Australian Government Minister for Jobs and Innovation, chaired the meeting. All states and territories were represented.

#### **COAG Industry and Skills Council (Industry Stream) Members**

<b>COMMONWEALTH</b>	<b>Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash.</b> Minister for Jobs and Innovation
<b>NSW</b>	<b>The Hon. Niall Blair MLC.</b> Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry
<b>NSW</b>	<b>The Hon Matthew Kean MP.</b> Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation
<b>VIC</b>	<b>The Hon Benjamin (Ben) Carroll MP.</b> Minister for Industry and Employment. Minister for Resources
<b>QLD</b>	<b>The Hon Cameron Dick MP.</b> Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning
<b>SA</b>	<b>The Hon David Pisoni MP.</b> Minister for Industry and Skills
<b>WA</b>	<b>The Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC.</b> Minister for Regional Development, Agriculture and Food. Minister assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade.
<b>TAS</b>	<b>The Hon Peter Gutwein MP.</b> Minister for State Growth
<b>NT</b>	<b>The Hon Michael Gunner MLA.</b> Chief Minister
<b>ACT</b>	<b>The Hon Andrew Barr MLA.</b> Chief Minister. Minister for Economic Development
<b>NZ</b>	<b>The Hon Dr Megan Woods.</b> Minister of Energy and Resources Minister of Research, Science and Innovation