
Communiqué for the COAG Industry and Skills Council Meeting 3 October 2018

Members of the industry stream of the COAG Industry and Skills Council met in Adelaide on 3 October 2018. The Commonwealth Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, the Hon Karen Andrews MP, chaired the meeting. State and territory ministers and officials with portfolio responsibility for industry represented their respective jurisdictions. The Government of New Zealand is also a member of the council and was represented. The meeting focused discussions around sectors of competitive strength and strategic priority, including the space economy, employment and innovation precincts, and standards accessibility.

Dr Megan Clark AC, head of the Australian Space Agency, delivered a presentation on space capabilities across Australia. This guided a discussion on how these capabilities can support the growth of the other sectors of the economy. The Australian Space Agency's purpose is to transform and grow a globally respected Australian space industry that lifts the broader economy, inspires and improves the lives of Australians – underpinned by strong international and national engagement. The agency engaged with all jurisdictions on their space capabilities earlier in the year and will provide advice to the Australian Government on the agency's long-term location and investment plan by the end of the year. The COAG Industry and Skills Council will provide an important forum for aligning space industry activity going forward.

Successful employment and innovation precincts encourage increased collaboration and innovation, which in turn promotes sustainable economic growth and job creation. An economic precincts policy framework can assist with the global positioning of leading Australian employment and innovation precincts to international businesses and investors.

Ministers agreed to develop a policy framework to coordinate and prioritise state, territory and Commonwealth government support for employment and innovation precincts. Ministers also agreed to consider how state, territory and Commonwealth programs can be better coordinated to enhance nationally and internationally significant employment and innovation precincts. The framework will recognise that employment and innovation precincts can make significant contribution to local economies and the importance of a competitive process and an equal playing field.

Dr Bronwyn Evans, CEO of Standards Australia, attended the meeting to discuss Standards Australia's international activities, distribution challenges and digital change agenda. Ministers also considered options to progress towards a more open and cost effective approach to accessing standards, as discussed at their last meeting. This includes continuing to support public access to standards for non-commercial users through national and state libraries.

The global economy is going through rapid technological change that presents challenges and opportunities for the future of work. The long-term productivity and global competitiveness of Australian industry will be dependent on how well Australia transitions industry and workforce

requirements into Industry 4.0. Ministers agreed to work together to respond to the challenges and opportunities for industry and the economy presented by technology and digitalisation, demographic change, the changing nature of work and the increasing importance of transferrable skills and lifelong learning.

Ministers also received updates on progress on the development of metrics for measuring innovation and from the Building Ministers' Forum.