

1 August 2018

Industry comes together to celebrate AMMA Centenary

(Embargoed until 9.45pm, 1 August 2018)

MORE than 500 industry leaders and key members of the political, business and industrial relations community gathered on Wednesday night (1 August) in Melbourne to celebrate the centenary of Australian Resources and Energy Group, AMMA.

Noting AMMA's 100 years of support and leadership, AMMA President and Chairman of ExxonMobil Australia, Richard Owen, spoke of the employer group's critical role in the development of Australia's resources industry throughout the 20th century.

"The Association was formed in 1918 as employers faced transformative social and industry change, and for the next 100 years AMMA would remain by employers' sides," he said.

"The great period of industrial reorganisation post World War 1 was a significant part of a challenging period for Australia's mining industry.

"AMMA assisted employers through change including the setting of industrial awards, regulating employment conditions for the first time, milestone strikes in the iron ore and coal sectors, and the introduction of the 44-hour standard working week and various employee entitlements."

Mr Owen explained how from the 1950s AMMA began to grow from a modest industrial relations organisation to the diverse and national employer group it is today.

"The industry began to realise the truly enormous value of Australia's mineral deposits, which facilitated huge growth, by the late 1960s, transforming Australia into a world force in coal and various metals," he said.

"AMMA also played an important role in the development of Australia's oil and gas industry as the Bass Strait and North West Shelf became new frontiers and contributed significantly to Australia's prosperity.

"More recently, AMMA had a significant role during the resources investment and construction boom, helping alleviate labour shortages, address policy and legislative issues, and assist with the unprecedented pressures on skilling, resourcing and people development strategies."

Mr Owen said AMMA's unwavering focus on its members would continue to be its greatest strength as the national resources and energy sector contributes to a brighter future for all Australians.

In his closing address at the AMMA Centenary Gala Dinner, Chief Executive Steve Knott explained how proud he was of the group's place in Australia's history, and its diversification in recent decades.

"AMMA was formed in 1918 largely to provide support and advice when the mining industry's industrial relations battles broke out, but it also had a big role in repatriating Australian soldiers returning from The Great War back into productive and well remunerated work," he said.

"Today workplace relations remains a core business activity, however we have developed with the industry and changing needs of employers to now specialise in an array of people development, diversity, mental health and industry promotion initiatives.

"We take a keen interest in our sector's needs and the political environment that surrounds us. On behalf of our members, we pursue the policy requirements necessary to make our industry a good place to work, to invest, and to do good for the nation."

Key dates in AMMA's history

1918 – AMMA is formed in Melbourne to assist employers facing transformative social and industry change. One of the key early priorities of the Association is repatriating Australian men returning from service in The Great War back into productive and well remunerated work. AMMA's first President was Broken Hill Mining identity G.C. Klug. The decades following proved challenging for Australia's mining industry during a period of great industrial reorganisation post World War 1.

1950s – New mining projects sees AMMA begin its growth from a modest industrial relations organisation to the diverse and national employer group it is today. Offices opened in Queensland and Western Australia.

1960s: The true value of Australia's mineral deposits were realised and huge growth transformed Australia into a world force in coal, iron ore and other metals. AMMA increases its national presence.

1970s: AMMA plays an important role in the development of Australia's oil and gas industry as the Bass Strait and North West Shelf became new frontiers for employment and national wealth creation.

1980s: Commercialisation of Bass Strait and the NWS, along with big growth in the gold sector sees AMMA expand its influence. In 1988, it releases *The Way Ahead* as a blueprint for industrial relations reform.

1990s: AMMA supports employers as Australia sees a consolidation of the growth in mining and oil and gas seen in prior decades. It provides a strong voice of support for the big reforms to workplace regulation during the 1990s.

1999: AMMA releases *Beyond Enterprise Bargaining: The Case for Ongoing Reform of Workplace Relations* in Australia, a report which creates a national conversation on the future of workplace regulation in Australia.

2000s: AMMA's advice and support is critical to the resources and energy industry as record investment and major project construction activity drives huge increases in employment and national value.

2015: AMMA contributes extensive resources and energy sector evidence for system change as Productivity Commission reviews workplace system.

2018: AMMA celebrates 100 years of industry support and leadership.

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