Building the modern mining workforce

Statement from Tania Constable, Chief Executive Officer

Technology is transforming the way we mine by making mining safer and more sustainable.

Innovation is creating new roles such as drone pilot, artificial intelligence developer and data analyst while also enhancing traditional roles such as drill operator, mining engineer and field geologists. These jobs and many others will be revolutionised by artificial intelligence, data visualisation, driverless vehicles and remote-controlled systems.

More investment is needed in science, technology, engineering, arts and maths – STEAM – to build and upskill the future minerals workforce. There also needs to be a focus on developing skills in change management, critical thinking and problem solving.

I was pleased to join Rio Tinto Chief Executive Jean-Sébastien Jacques, and his executive team, at the Rio Tinto Centre for Mine Automation at the University of Sydney today for the announcement of an important initiative to help bridge looming skills gaps.

Rio Tinto has taken an important step in building the modern workforce, today announcing $10 million to create a national programme targeted at school-age learners to fast-track the development of skills needed for the digital future.

A study by EY commissioned by the MCA found 77 per cent of jobs in Australian mining will be enhanced or redesigned due to technology within the next five years.

The MCA's member companies are well advanced in anticipating the changes required to shape a better world through technology and creating the programs needed to help people, especially young Australians, make the most of future opportunities

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