

Media Statement

Monday 29 April 2024

Better communication key to attracting Gen Z to mining

A national survey of Generation Z 15 to 24-year-olds has found almost three quarters (72%) believe mining is important to a net zero emissions future. However, many have concerns about the rehabilitation of land (77%), use of renewable energy (69%), reducing/recycling mining waste and pollution (67%), and workplace culture (77%).

The *Gen Z Perceptions of Mining* report was developed by AUSMASA in partnership with Year13. It aimed to better understand how young people perceive the mining industry and how to encourage more young Australians to pursue career opportunities in mining.

AUSMASA Chief Executive Dr Gavin Lind said the research was undertaken to assist the broader industry in addressing workforce challenges and skills shortages.

“This research has empowered us with informed insights into how to promote the mining industry as a viable career choice among 15 to 24-year-olds,” Dr Lind said.

“The results highlight opportunities for the industry to engage and retain young talent by addressing knowledge gaps around what it’s like to work in mining. This includes effectively communicating the industry’s role in shifting towards renewable energy sources, promoting the concept of sustainability within mining practices, showcasing non-traditional career paths within the sector, offering incentives for education and training, and establishing connections between mining and the resources essential for modern-day conveniences that enrich young people’s lives.”

The survey revealed what motivates young people to consider working in the mining sector. Specifically, young people want to know how mining jobs:

- Are connected to the operation of renewable energy sources and contribute to lowering CO2/methane emissions (45%)
- Are at the forefront of manufacturing some of the most innovative products and projects of the future, such as advances in telecommunications, transport and space travel (21%)
- Mean working with the latest technology and being at the forefront of technological advances in the workplace (19%)
- Allow you to make a difference in communities, including indigenous communities (15%).

Other key findings:

- Less than half (47%) of young people surveyed didn’t know there were other careers (non-traditional) in mining. Further education aimed at school leavers about non-traditional career opportunities should be a priority.

- More than three-quarters (77%) of young people have concerns about workplace culture, diversity, safety and respect when it comes to working in the mining industry. However, more than half (53%) are confident these issues can be addressed.
- Just under two-thirds (62%) of young people say they would speak with their friends and family about the positive aspects of mining, like its role in reaching net zero emissions, sustainable mining practices and how mining creates the products we use as part of a modern-day lifestyle.

Unsurprisingly, the survey also showed that young people in Western Australia were much more open to a career in mining than young people in other states. Nearly two thirds (64%) of young people from WA have friends or family working in mining, compared to less than half of young people from all other states.

“The benefits of mining are easy to see in resources-rich WA, but young people in other states need much more information on the positive aspects of mining to encourage them to work in the industry,” Dr Lind said. “These include the importance of mining in helping Australia to reach net zero, as well as its role in the manufacture of new technology and everyday items that all Australians use.”

To view the research findings, click here or visit <https://ausmasa.org.au/gen-z-perceptions-of-mining>.

AUSMASA is making this research available to vocational education and training (VET) providers and industry, so they may be better placed to attract young people into mining pathways and careers.

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AUSMASA CEO Dr Gavin Lind is available for interviews.

About the Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance (AUSMASA):

The Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance (AUSMASA) is one of 10 Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs) funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. AUSMASA is dedicated to fostering collaboration between the mining and automotive industries, driving skills development, and ensuring a skilled workforce for the future.

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