

Hon Kyam Maher MLC

Minister for Employment

Hon Martin Hamilton-Smith MP

Minister for Defence Industries

Tuesday, 28 March 2017

Employer-led program to increase Aboriginal employment in defence industry

South Australia's defence industry has become the tenth industry to establish an Aboriginal Employment Industry Cluster program to create sustainable employment for Aboriginal people.

Defence SA Chief Executive Andy Keough will chair a team of employers who will individually and collectively leverage their professional influence within their organisations and industries to increase Aboriginal employment.

The defence cluster also introduces a new and unique role to the cluster initiative – the opportunity to identify supply chain opportunities in the Defence sector for Aboriginal owned businesses.

Background

The Governor's Aboriginal Employment Industry Clusters Program was established in 2010 to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in identified industries, and facilitate systemic change in participating industries.

Each cluster is chaired by an influential employer from that industry and focuses on four key areas, including:

- immediate employment opportunities for Aboriginal people
- increasing the participating organisations' cultural competency
- supporting Aboriginal-owned businesses to procure goods and services
- creating a pipeline of Aboriginal people studying the specialised qualifications sought by the industry.

To date the clusters have collectively supported more than 1100 Aboriginal people into industry-specific training, and more than 800 people into employment.

Quotes attributable to Employment Minister Kyam Maher

Defence is a critical sector in transforming South Australia's economy as we transition towards our high-tech, advanced manufacturing future.

We need to increase the number of Aboriginal students undertaking and completing qualifications in the science, technology, engineering and maths fields so we can ensure the defence industry has access to a supply of skilled and qualified Aboriginal people.

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To help achieve this, the defence cluster will engage with Aboriginal students in secondary schools, universities and VET to provide industry-specific information, workforce guidance and support and help to plan their career and study pathways.

It will also work with defence sector businesses to ensure they are proactively seeking to employ Aboriginal people and provide a culturally supportive workplace.

Quotes attributable to Defence Industries Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith

South Australia is home to a critical mass of world-class defence industry in the aerospace, land, systems and maritime domains, as well as hundreds of defence-related small to medium enterprises providing goods and services to defence projects.

This work can only continue if we have workers with the right skills to fill the jobs of the future.

The South Australian Government is committed to meeting this demand, and it's through collaborative partnerships with industry, like the Aboriginal Employment Industry Clusters Program, that we will achieve our goals.

Quotes attributable to the Governor, His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC

It has been my great delight to witness the creation of a number of Aboriginal Employment Industry Clusters in the last few years.

I am thrilled to launch this new cluster, which will offer opportunities to Aboriginal people in one of South Australia's most dynamic and growing industries.

While each cluster represents a different industry, they are united by the outstanding commitment of employers to make a positive difference in the lives of Aboriginal people.