

Industry Skills Forum in Darwin to focus on Future Skills

Digital transformation and new technologies rapidly changing the employment landscape

Darwin businesses and industry representatives, training and education providers, students and Government leaders will come together for an Industry Skills Forum at the Hilton Hotel on 16 October to discuss future skilling the workforce. With digital transformation and new technologies rapidly changing the employment landscape and the skills required for work, businesses and education providers are seeking ways to ensure workers are prepared for change.

Hosted by prominent journalist and author Kerry O'Brien, the free forum will involve industry leaders in Q&A panel discussions about future skilling in an age of digital transformation and new thinking about jobs and careers. In business and industry circles, Darwin is described as Australia's gateway to South East Asia and the world's largest emerging markets. It offers world-leading expertise in specialist fields including Defence, oil and gas, and renewable energy. The city is leveraging digital technologies to maintain a strong economy while supporting creativity, innovation, and servicing the community. Global best-practice in the use of technology is one of the keys to a sustainable competitive advantage and to making Darwin a better place to live, invest, and work.

The Darwin Industry Skills Forum is among a series being conducted by Australian Industry Standards across the country until November.

Over 1280 people have already registered their attendance at the forums, where they will have the opportunity to talk about the skills shortages and workforce challenges facing their industry.

Technologies such as automation, artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning, and Big Data have already created a significant overhaul in job descriptions and functions. Many people are working at jobs that did not exist even five years ago. Similarly, many more jobs will be created in the next five to ten years which require different skills sets. With 40% of jobs affected by digital transformation, upskilling or reskilling the current and future workforce is an absolute necessity.

The ability to anticipate and prepare for future skills requirements, job content, and changing labour markets and recruitment patterns is increasingly critical for businesses, governments and individuals. Businesses will need to put workforce planning, training and talent management front and centre of their growth.

Following the panel discussions at each forum there will be industry-specific break-out sessions focused on emerging skill needs and the barriers and opportunities to recruiting skilled employees. Participants will discuss higher-order skills for the workplace (such as management capability); cyber security; regulatory frameworks; environmental sustainability; and workforce profile and staff retention issues (including an ageing workforce and cross sector competition for staff).

AIS is a Service Skills Organisation that supports Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) in developing qualifications and skills standards for the aviation, transport and logistics, maritime, energy, water and utilities, public safety, police, Defence and corrections industries. Collectively these industries cover more than 1.3 million workers or almost 10% of the Australian workforce. More significantly, these workers add \$174 billion to the Australian economy – or 11% of GDP.

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