

Federal Labor Policy Statement - Jobs and the Future of Work

October 2019

On Tuesday 29 October 2019, Labor Leader Anthony Albanese addressed the Committee for Economic Development of Australia in Perth.

In his first policy statement, Mr Albanese outlined Labor's strategy to address the industrial relations challenges in emerging labour markets and identified key industries to invest in to maintain long term economic growth and employment.

Summary

If elected Labor would establish a new statutory body, '**Jobs and Skills Australia**' to provide independent research and advice to all levels of government and industry on the projects and reforms Australia needs to fill skills and training gaps in the present and emerging employment markets.

Labor plans to host a **Creative Industries Summit** in mid-2020. The summit will bring together key players from across the creative industries sector to chart a course for sector expansion.

Labor is **reviewing industrial relations laws**, to address increasing workforce casualisation. Albanese called for consultation on flexible IR laws with unions and industry.

Labor has **committed to a 50% renewable target for households by 2030**, as well as support for the hydrogen and rare earth minerals sector.

Albanese has called on the Morrison government to bring forward infrastructure investment and provide an **Upgraded Investment Guarantee** and tax concession for new investments.

Jobs and Skills Australia

Labor has committed to establishing a new statutory body to address skills and training needs in the growing sectors of the economy, with an emphasis on technology industries. This body will also forecast skills assessments for majority government-funded services like the National Disability Insurance Scheme, aged care and health.

'Jobs and Skills Australia' will be modelled on '*Infrastructure Australia*', which was set up by Albanese during his term as Infrastructure Minister in 2008. The body will work in partnership with business leaders, unions, regional experts and federal, state and territory governments to develop "*a collaborative model to guide investment in human capital*".

Other key undertakings of the proposed statutory body include:

- Workforce and skills analysis.
- Capacity studies, including for emerging and growing industries.
- Specific plans for targeted cohorts such as the regions, workers aged over 55 and youth.
- The suitability of Australia's vocational education sector.



Creative Industry Summit

The Creative Industries Summit will promote the Creative Industries sector and employment opportunities for Australians.

The Summit will engage creative industries such as architecture, design, software, digital content, advertising and marketing - as well as cultural production including film, game and app development, television and radio, music and performing arts, publishing and visual arts.

Led by Shadow Minister for Communications, Michelle Rowland, the Summit will examine areas of targeted investment, training, employment opportunities, government funding and policy adjustments that could assist these industries.

The summit will be held in the first half of 2020.

Flexible IR Laws

Mr Albanese noted the structural challenges the growing '*gig economy*' presents to industrial relations. He called for new, "*flexible*" forms of worker protections to fit a 21st century workforce.

Labor will consult with both unions and industry to help flexibly safeguard traditional workers entitlements and ensure employer obligations.

One option is 'portable entitlements' that can be taken from job to job. Shadow Industrial Relations Minister, Tony Burke will lead the development of the policy.

Reaching Renewable Targets

Mr Albanese affirmed Labor's commitment to a 50% renewable target for households by 2030. He noted as global and domestic markets 'de-carbonise' the opportunities in developing Australia's renewable energy production, consumption and export capacity.

The Labor Leader noted that a global energy transition can be linked to an increase in secure jobs whilst sustaining employment in the resources sector. In order to capitalise on employment opportunities in the emerging energy market - Australia needs greater investment in education and training.

Albanese called for investment and exploration in liquefied natural gas, rare earth extraction, and hydrogen production. As well as, promoting the export opportunities of lithium, rare earths, iron and titanium given their role in the supply chain of renewables infrastructure.

Upgraded Investment Guarantee

Mr Albanese called on the government to bring forward investment on infrastructure projects across Australia.

He also proposed an upgraded Investment Guarantee as part of a "measured" economic stimulus package.

The Investment Guarantee would utilise an accelerated depreciation for new investments.



National Centre for Artificial Intelligence

Labor also recommitted to its pre-election policy of establishing a national centre to drive investment in artificial intelligence.

Labor plans to use the centre as a space for AI talent from industry, academia and non-government organisations to gather and solve some of the issues facing the technology.

This includes investigating the impact of technology on jobs and preparing for the future, as well as using AI to build stronger businesses.

Further information

For more information, please contact your Hawker Britton consultant Simon Banks on +61 419 638 587.

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