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MEDIA STATEMENT

SKILLS AUSTRALIA TO PROVIDE ADVICE ON NEW SKILLED MIGRATION OCCUPATION LIST

The Australian Government has asked Skills Australia to provide advice on the development of a revised list of skilled occupations to be used for general migration purposes.

The new Skilled Occupation List (SOL) will be published by 30 April 2010 and will come into effect from mid 2010. The new SOL will streamline arrangements by having in place one skills list to replace the current skilled occupation list, the Migration Occupations in Demand List and the Critical Skills List.

Skills Australia (www.skillsaustralia.gov.au) is an independent board comprised of experts from industry, economics and education. Its role is to provide advice to the Federal Government on Australia's current, emerging and future workforce development and skills needs.

The Chair of Skills Australia, Mr Philip Bullock said "A targeted skilled migration program is, and will continue to be, very important in ensuring Australia has the skilled workforce it needs for our future economic and social development and prosperity. The request of Skills Australia to provide advice on the Skilled Occupation List brings general skilled migration into the fold of national workforce planning. This will better ensure that skilled migration complements the efforts to develop Australia's existing and future workforce — through the provision of high quality education and training for new and existing employees, the effective use of the skills in the workplace and a holistic approach to workforce development in Australia."

The new Skilled Occupation List (SOL) for migration purposes will be developed by Skills Australia. It will focus on specialised occupations that require a long lead time of formal education and training and where the economic impact of not having those skills is significant.

Skills Australia will use the latest industry, education and employment statistics and trends and information supplied by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The final advice to the Government will be considered within a broader context of Australia's ongoing and future workforce development and skills requirements.

The new list will aim to ensure Australia's General Skilled Migration program is focused on high value skills that will help address future skills needs.

Media enquiries may be directed to secretariat@skillsaustralia.gov.au

