



Department of Industry, Sciences and Resources
Consultation hub email: decomroadmap@industry.gov.au

20 October 2023

Re: Roadmap to establish an Australian decommissioning industry

Engineers Australia is the peak body of the engineering profession, representing the collective voice of over 115,000 individual members. Constituted by Royal Charter, our mission is to advance the science and practice of engineering for the benefit of the community.

Engineers and engineering are indispensable contributors to Australian prosperity and lifestyles. Engineering services are embodied in almost every good or service consumed, used or traded by Australians, now and in the future. Engineers enable productivity growth by converting "brilliant ideas" into new commercial products, processes and services. Engineers also ensure society gets the most out of existing facilities by optimising their operations and maintenance.

As Australia's signatory to the International Engineering Alliance, Engineers Australia maintains national professional standards benchmarked against international norms. This includes accreditation of undergraduate university engineering programs.

Under the Migration Regulations 1994, Engineers Australia is the designated assessing authority to assess potential migrant engineering professionals' skills, qualifications, and work experience to ensure they meet the occupational standards needed for employment in Australia.

Engineers Australia is a strong supporter of developing new industries that can grow the workforce, increase trade, strengthen domestic fuel security, reduce emissions, and build resilience to climate change and extreme weather events. Accordingly, Engineers Australia welcomes the opportunity to prepare a response to the *Roadmap to establish an Australian decommissioning industry*.

An opportunity for Australia

1. Decommissioning is a \$60B opportunity for Australian industry and workers that could easily go offshore (internationally).
2. The industry needs to be regionally executed and identify areas where onshore processing can occur.
3. Planning must account for the identified peaks and troughs, and competition for skills (including specialist engineering roles), infrastructure and assets.
4. Coordinate alongside the development of offshore wind and other offshore renewables projects.

Workforce planning and skills

5. For Australia to facilitate this potential industry, highly experienced and skilled people will be required including engineers and technicians.
6. Develop engineering education to encompass decommissioning and coordinate with offshore renewables. It is currently limited in this area, with only two university courses in Australia teaching petroleum engineering.
7. Potential to develop specific higher education courses focusing on decommissioning, as skills will be transferrable to the offshore renewables industry.
8. Engineers Australia believes the engineering workforce should be as diverse as the community it serves. There is a need to make jobs in the sector attractive by focusing on gender balance and

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inclusion through pay gap analysis, representation, recruitment processes, mentoring, workplace culture reviews, and flexible working conditions such as parental leave.

9. Engineers Australia supports apprenticeship (including higher apprenticeship) programs and welcomes government initiatives in this area.
10. As well as education programs, skilled migration will remain an essential strategy for building the workforce.

Business opportunities and partnerships with First Nations people

11. The decommissioning industry must set a very high standard concerning First Nations communities, and their ongoing connection to Country, including land, sea and sky. The decommissioning industry should establish mutually beneficial partnerships that incorporate First Nations' knowledge and culture and ensure that First Nations people share in the benefits and leadership of the industry.
12. Community engagement and awareness training will be fundamental to building trust and acceptance. Sharing accurate information promptly in response to community concerns is important.

Circular economy and waste

13. Decommissioning can positively contribute to Australia's circular economy goals through processing industrial waste streams, and local recycling and manufacturing leading to recovered materials.
 - o Australia has more steel than it can recycle, and so the industry needs rapid government and industry investment to increase recycling capacity or risk losing an opportunity.

Regulatory Frameworks

14. Coordinate the requirements and responsibilities when the decommissioned material is brought into coastal waters and onshore, where regulations become the responsibility of states and territories.
15. Clarify expectations around the Offshore Decommissioning Guidelines that allow leaving infrastructure in situ where environmental outcomes are equal to or better than removal. Removal should always be the base case.
16. Clarify requirements for titleholders to submit decommissioning plans well in advance of the decommissioning process.

Next Steps

Engineers Australia is available to participate in future opportunities to discuss any issues raised in this submission. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you would like clarification or to discuss anything further at policy@engineersaustralia.org.au.

Sincerely yours

Jenny Mitchell
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