

ALABC ANNUAL CANBERRA  
NETWORKING DAY 2022

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**MEETING SUMMARY AND KEY  
TAKEAWAYS**

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## LETTER FROM THE CEO

As the Australia-Latin America Business Council (ALABC) looks ahead to the next few years, it is clear that there are a number of key areas that will drive our agenda and shape our focus. These takeaways, outlined below, have been identified:

1. The mining sector is particularly important for both regions Australia and Latin America, as it is a key driver of economic growth and plays a vital role in efforts to decarbonise the economy. Collaboration in the mining sector could include sharing information and best practices on sustainable mining practices and addressing climate change.
2. Education and research are also areas of potential collaboration, with a growing number of joint research publications and increasing numbers of international students from Latin America studying in Australia. Opportunities for further collaboration in education and research could include expanding transnational education programs and developing new forms of service delivery, such as short courses and micro-credentials, to meet specific skills needs.
3. There is potential for collaboration in the hydrogen sector, including through the sharing of information and best practices on the production, storage, and use of hydrogen as a clean energy source.
4. It is important to increase efforts to facilitate visa processes for Latin American students and professionals to study and work in Australia. Exempt Latin Americans from paid visas in reciprocity for visa-free travel for Australians to Latin America.
5. Increasing engagement and cooperation at the government level, including through initiatives such as the G20, APEC, and ASEAN, can help deepen the bilateral relationship with Latin America. Work with Latin American countries through trade and investment agreements, such as the World Trade Organisation, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Pacific Alliance, and the Australian Central American Caribbean Business Cooperation Council.
6. Facilitate interactions between Australian stakeholders and Latin American countries in strategic sectors, and host events, webinars, seminars to promote trade and investment and further engage with key players in both regions.
7. Encouraging the participation and representation of all states and territories in efforts to deepen the bilateral relationship with Latin America is important to ensure that the needs and priorities of all regions are considered and addressed.
8. Take advantage of the accelerated pace of digital transformation and growing interest in addressing climate change and transitioning to clean energies to create opportunities in various industries.
9. Consider the need for diversification at the company, country, and state level in the face of ongoing challenges such as supply chain disruptions, closed borders, geopolitical tensions, and inflation.
10. Promote the establishment of new direct flights or improved existing flight connections between Australia and Latin America to facilitate travel and stimulate economic activity.
11. Food security: Supporting the development of sustainable agricultural practice, technology and innovation. Work to resolve biosecurity measures that may be impacting trade between Australia and Latin America and consider streamlining procedures to increase efficiency,

12. Encourage Latin American businesses to consider expanding into Australia, particularly in sectors such as mining, carbon reduction, and new energy.

If you would like to be involved in the 2023 ALABC Canberra Networking Day and have the opportunity to shape the future of business with the region, please let us know. We will provide further details on the event as they become available. As the CEO of ALABC, I want to assure you that we will continue to engage in more cooperative work with public and private sector representatives of the Australia-Latin America business community. If you have any feedback on the event or suggestions for topics or speakers for future events, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Thank you again for your continued commitment to ALABC.

Kind regards,



**Marcelo Salas**

Chief Executive Officer

**Australia-Latin America Business Council**

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**Richard Andrews**  
Chairman, ALABC

**Introduction:**

- Businesspeople are adopting a watch and see attitude around the world and Latin America is no different. At ALABC we found that the Australian companies doing business in Latin America will continue to do so, and they continue to look for opportunities there. We are also finding that a lot of companies from Latin America are coming to Australia now and looking for opportunities in Australia.
- Student numbers dropped during the pandemic but that's coming back, the engagement is improving every month. We have several members who are involved in migration and international education, bringing students to Australia, and again, we're seeing numbers increase.
- We have some wonderful businesses who've come from Latin America to do business in Australia, and they're going from strength to strength. From ALABC's point of view, we feel that the engagement is something that we want to continue, we want to strengthen and we have a number of plans.

**HE Eduardo Peña-Haller**  
Ambassador of Mexico  
Dean of the Latin American Ambassadors

- Latin America is an immense and complex region. 20 million square kilometres, comprising of 34 countries. It is almost as large as the US and Canada together and has 1/3 of the world's freshwater reserves, 1/5 of the world's natural forest 12% of the world's arable land. Abundant biodiversity and ecosystems of global climatic importance and substantial resources linked to the mining sectors.
- Latin America has close to 667 million inhabitants which **160** million are young people. It comprises 8.6% of the global population and 5.6% of GDP. Latin America is a remarkable melting pot. It has been marred by the process of interracial and intercultural mixing over time between the ascendance of Native Americans, Europeans, Africans, and people of Middle Eastern and Asian origin.
- Latin Americans are also increasingly calling Australia home. In 2022, more than 200,000 people from all over Latin America, were living in Australia. Most of them are skilled professionals, students, entrepreneurs, and family members of Australian citizens. Latin America shares with Australia important values such as the promotion of democracy, human rights, the struggle for world peace, the defence of multilateralism, sustainable development, the fight against the adverse effects of climate change, and international cooperation for development, as well as the defence of the free exchange of trade, technology and investment.
- In terms of trade It is important to note that from January to September 2022, according to ABS data, Australian exports to the region, were 4.4 billion while Australian imports from Latin America were 5.7 billion which suggests that there is a great potential for increased trade flows.
- It is a region eager to intensify its relations with Australia. Generally speaking, we have identified common topics:

1. Continuing to work together through trade and investment agreements, like the WTO, the CPTPP, the Pacific Alliance and the Australian Central American Caribbean Business Cooperation Council.
2. Promoting trade and investment by reinforcing cooperation, facilitating interactions with Australian stakeholders in strategic sectors and hosting seminars.
3. Resolving biosecurity measures affecting trade. Processes can be achieved more efficiently in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture. We are ready to support any efforts toward the streamlining of procedures, that today take on average a decade.
4. Fostering tourism flows between the region through the flexibilization and harmonization of the different visa schemes in Australia towards Latin America and the Caribbean region. In most cases, Australians do not require a Visa to visit Latin America and are not charged for them. It will be desirable in reciprocity to exempt Latin Americans from paid visas.
5. Furthering Economic Cooperation and Development by promoting a Latin American plan similar to the Colombo Plan adapted to the region. Such a plan will allow young Australians, the businesspeople of the future, to get to know Latin America.
6. We think it is necessary that Australia promotes the signing of cultural exchange agreements and offer scholarships for Latin American students in reciprocity with those offered by our country's fifth.
7. Finally, Australia has focused on strengthening ties within the Pacific region, which does not consider Latin American countries as part of it, even though many of our countries have a coast along that ocean. Therefore, and given that we share many things in common with Australia. We strongly believe that the conditions we're currently facing worldwide provide us with the opportunity to promote the diversification of our mutual ties so that we can provide better opportunities for our citizens to intensify our changes in all areas.

**Ms Pamela Wearing**  
**Senior Regional Manager – Americas**  
**Global Victoria**

ALABC has been a long-time partner to Global Victoria and plays an important role in advancing trade and investment. We are proud to have them as one of our partners through the Global Victoria trade Alliance.

- Victoria's engagement with Latin America: We've had a long-standing commitment to the region and diversifying our trade and our engagement with Latin America. We have our globally connected [Latin America trade and investment strategy](#), which was released in 2018, about strengthening our engagement, facilitating business opportunities and fostering connections.
- We're continuously looking at what are the next emerging opportunities in the region and how we can work together. Victoria does have the largest trade and investment Network of any state or territory in Australia.
- Our team in Latin America led by Commissioner Nigel Warren, based in San Francisco is a strong advocate for the region, having formerly been on the board of COALAR and previously posted with his roles in the Australian Government to Latin America as well.
- Over the past year, we have expanded our team in the Americas, increasing our ability to connect our Victorian companies with trade opportunities in the region. Two new education consultants are in the region, our education director based in Santiago and consultants based in both Colombia and Brazil, which are two largest markets for students, but looking to have students from all parts of Latin America.
- One of our new hires in our New York office has come from a role previously with Pro Mexico. Our US team can also support our team in Latin America, particularly for countries like Mexico, which has such a close alignment to the US and Canadian markets.
- Invest Victoria, which is our investment attraction agency is helping international companies looking to establish in Victoria.
- COVID disruptions to supply chains, closure of international borders, geopolitical tensions, inflation are still challenges, but there's also a lot of opportunities. We have seen the accelerated pace of digital transformation across so many industries and growing interest to address climate change, and the transition to clean energies.
- The need for diversification at a company level, a country level, and at a state level. Victoria's economy is diverse and that creates an enormous scope for a broad range of opportunities in Life Sciences and Health, in digital technology, education infrastructure, advanced manufacturing and mining.
- Victoria has a strong research and development ecosystem and a strong skill base that can provide those skills for companies looking to set up in the area. We have been seeing growing momentum and interest from Latin American companies looking to invest in Victoria.
- [Breakthrough Victoria](#) is a new entity that was established in 2021 by the Victorian Government. It is looking at new and innovative companies and how they can provide transformation, how to support those companies and invest in those companies. They have the ability to invest in all stages of product development and

commercialization, with the funding that has come from the Victorian Government. It is an independent body and management board that's running it. They're open to expressions of interest from all markets, and we are really keen to see some Latin American projects come into the mix and create those better connections with Victoria.

- Merchandise trade: In 2022, we've seen the highest merchandise trade between Victoria and Latin America. It's valued at 2.8 billion. 2.3 billion of that as imports and 530 million exports. Our exports to the region have grown substantially in the last year. Approximately half of that growth, was Victorian barley exports finding new markets. Looking at disruption in the global market, barley exports, that were no longer able to go to China have now found new markets in Latin America and other places around the world. Victorian barley exports to Latin America were valued at \$121 million last year (predominantly to Mexico, Peru and Ecuador).
- From a trade perspective we are seeing opportunities across a range of sectors, mining and METS, many areas of technology, renewable energy. There are also quite a number of beauty and wellness companies that are based in Victoria. We are also exploring opportunities for innovative Victorian companies in the beauty and wellness space.
- Mining and Mets continues to be important sector, between our economies. Last year, it really was a sector that's been the lead of our trade activities. It was our first physical Trade Mission to the region of Peru in September. We are looking to go to EXPOMIN in April and we've done through the pandemic several virtual trade missions, helping our Mets companies extend into predominately Chile and Peru.
- Global Victoria Trade Alliance. This was a project that was part of the export recovery package announced back in 2021 to help our exporters in Victoria find new opportunities and pivot to new markets. We have done three projects with ALABC. We did Mining and Mets in Mexico, FinTech opportunities in Chile, Brazil and Mexico and clean energy and renewable energy and hydrogen markets in Chile and Brazil.
- **Fintech** is growing sector, lots of opportunities for Australian Fintechs and Victorian ones. Through the project with ALABC, we've identified a few companies keen to access opportunities in Latin America and we're able to support them and finding those that do have the right skill set and the capability to expand to the region.
- **Technology**: Melbourne and Victoria are seen as the tech capital of the country. The tech sector has grown enormously over the last couple of years, and they're looking to position Melbourne as the Asia Pacific hub for Edtech. We're also the largest games marketplace for digital games. Over half of the digital games companies in Australia are based in Victoria. We do have a Colombian a games developer that's set up in Melbourne.
- We have a really thriving start-up sector. Over the past year, it has doubled in size for the 2021/2022 period from 10.5 to 23.6 billion.
- **Clean energy** is obviously a sector that is going to continue to grow and become increasingly important as economies are looking to decarbonize and achieve Net Zero targets. Victoria is looking at those connections and supporting particularly with our research and development ecosystem and also in the hydrogen industry.

- Latin American and Australia both have huge food and agriculture sectors. Victoria is the largest food manufacturer and are also the largest exporter of food products within Australia. Another sector which is really important to our economy is **AGTECH**. There are a lot of good opportunities for cross collaboration and sharing of technologies that can suit both the agriculture sectors in both markets. There's also some really fun new things coming in the food sector, you get all the alternative proteins and all sorts of native foods. Another trend we're seeing in that space is the focus on where food is sourced from, both from the supply chain trust and also the environmental impact.
- **International students:** Prior to the pandemic Victoria had about 20,000 students from Latin America. Presently, Colombia is our fourth largest source of students in Victoria for international students. Brazil is also up there around 17<sup>th</sup>. We are looking at the recovery for those numbers and bringing more students back. Latin American students provide a lot of diversity and a lot of value to our community and our classrooms. We recently launched our international education recovery plan which also sits within Global Victoria, to support increased diversity and equitable access while improving pathways to global careers for international Victoria's international graduates.
- The Melbourne Student Centre just reopened in the CBD and had virtual offerings during the pandemic. It offers free confidential and independent services. If you do have students coming to you with questions, there is support for students in Victoria and they offer programs focused on helping students develop their entrepreneurship, employability and leadership skills.
- We have a new program that is coming soon that's going to look at employability, helping international students gain employment in their field of study. For ALABC members in the room it could be a good program.
- Direct air connectivity is a key part of making all this happen. If it's too difficult to get a flight to people won't come. So, we really see this as critical for the recovery of our trade, education, business, and people to people to connections.

**Mr Richard Emerson Elliott**  
**Assistant Secretary – FTA Goods Branch**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Update on some of our free trade agreements from DFAT's perspective:

- Australia's trade policy is reflected in the Minister's speech to the [APEC Study Center last week](#). There are four principles underlying Australia's approach to trade policy as outlined by our Minister:
- The first principle and the one that is guiding our trade policy agenda is to deepen and diversify Australia's trading relationships, particularly within our own region. As we all know, there are significant risks on over reliance on one trading partner alone.
- The government is looking towards a trade diversification policy. That doesn't mean just diversifying who we trade with but also the products we trade with and how we trade them as well. This also relies on us seeking greater investment into Australia and Australia seeking growth through investment outside of Australia as well. Encouraging two-way investment is very important part of that.
- We need to seek trade agreements that reflect modern approaches to trade, that incorporate digital trade, and then incorporate services and investment.
- Our agreements with Latin America, have created new flows of investment and trade between Australia and the Latin American region. Two-way trade with Latin America was worth around 4.8 US billion dollars in the year to September 2022. That's more than our trade with Canada with Spain. And it comes close to our bilateral trade with France. It is a very important region for Australia and a very important trading area. Importantly, year on year growth our two-way trade balance was close to 43% over the year to September 2022.
- Our first Latin American FTA was with Chile in 2009. It was the fifth FTA that Australia signed. We now have over 16 and looking now to bring in two more. The agreement with Chile has created new opportunities, as there are now 150 Australian companies operating in Chile and our total trade stands at a billion dollars a year. That's up from around \$300 million in 2009. We also have an agreement with Peru signed in 2020. Our trade growth with Peru has grown 30% since the FTAs came into force from fiscal year 2019 to 2022. Agricultural trade grew over 10-fold. The trade in barley and malt, which grew from zero to \$55 million is a great example of trade to first diversification in action, as blockages in China created new opportunities and were able to diversify into Latin America.
- We also have an agreement with Mexico through the CPTPP. The Comprehensive Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership which also involves Peru as well as Chile. **We are hoping that Chile will ratify CPTPP soon.** Entry into force for Australia and Mexico of that agreement was in 2018 and for Peru in 2021. Mexico has become Australia's largest trading partner in Latin America the eighth largest investor in Mexico. Our agricultural trade has grown 658% from \$36 million to \$275 million and a great deal of that has come through barley trade.
- Through the CPTPP, citizens from Peru, Mexico and Chile once ratified, [will benefit from enhanced certainty on entry and length of stay for intra corporate transfer as contractual service suppliers and investors and short term business visitors into Australia](#). It's these people-to-people links, which FTAs deliver more and more these days and something that we seek in FTAs.

- Australia's also committed to a most favoured nation clause with Peru on [labor market testing waivers](#). In short, we're seeing increased trade and investment following the FTAs entering into force with our Latin American partners.
- For the Pacific Alliance, Australia is involved in negotiations with Pacific Alliance members launched in June 2017. The negotiations have however, paused since 2020, due to COVID 19 and to allow for some consultations between Pacific Alliance members. We're still engaged with Pacific Alliance members and we're still looking to conclude a high-quality agreement with the Pacific Alliance. Australia does have FTAs with all Pacific Alliance members aside from Colombia. This is something that's not unusual for Australia to pursue multiple FTAs across different platforms with the same paths, **but a new FTA with Colombia would provide new opportunities into that region.**
- There's been political changes in some of the Pacific Alliance members which both opens new opportunities to look at progressive trade issues such as labour, gender and environment potentially, but also can create more problems in terms of seeking trade liberalization. So, this is a negotiation we are continuing to focus on and to remain in touch with specific members, but it's not an active negotiation at present. It's something that is there ready for us to do when everyone is ready.
- A short update on the CPTPP. Right now, we have an ongoing accession negotiation with the United Kingdom and the CPTPP. That remains Australia's priority and the priority for the membership. We are seeking to build a strong accession precedent, which will be in all our interests. We're very pleased to see that Ecuador, Costa Rica, Uruguay have all announced intentions to apply for accession. To these days, no decisions have been taken on these new accession requests. That includes the other accession requests from China and from Taiwan.
- We're working with CPTPP members to consider all the requests which will need to go forward on a consensus basis.

**The Honourable Tim Watts MP**  
**Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Thank you Richard, for inviting me here today. You, Marcelo and the Board have been wonderful stewards of ALABC through the pandemic. And of course, champions for productive business relationships between Australia and Latin America for many years now, a very worthy cause.

I thought I'd take this opportunity to give you a bit of a big picture snapshot of the new government's approach to working with and in Latin America:

- Australia's relationship with Latin American countries is diverse, spanning sectors from mining to education, to renewable energy to environment and marine protection. Our focus from an economic standpoint, is promoting our high-quality exports, our attractiveness as an investment destination, and our reliability as a partner with shared values. But at its heart, the Australian government's approach to Latin America is fundamentally about people. It's about people like you, who build those relationships across countries. It's about the people who travel between continents to study and to work. And this constitutes a new wave of people with the right cultural and linguistic experience and understanding to bridge the geographic distance between our continents.
- There are currently more than 34,800 students from across Latin America is studying in Australia. And last financial year, we granted nearly 5000 working holiday visas to Latin American nationals from six countries. These programs are always oversubscribed, showing just how keen young Latin Americans are to come to study and work in Australia. We will continue to work to broaden the opportunities available for young Latin American people to come here to study and to work and vice versa.
- These kinds of personal connections are so invaluable as we work to grow and trade and investment links with countries across Latin America. They go beyond the transactional and deepen the fabric of our business relationships. People are at the heart of what we do. Governments like to negotiate trade agreements but it's not governments that transact business. It's not even really companies that transact business. It's people with relationships of trust, who understand each other. That's what we need to promote in rooms like this. People are also at the heart of what we do.
- You only need to look at the turnout from Latin America at the recent International Mining and Resources Conference in Sydney, or the number of Australian delegates at PERUMIN in September, where we held country partner status for the first time or the cutting edge work of CSIRO Chile, with some of Australia's leading scientists are unlocking the value of satellite data for Earth and marine observation to help solve environmental and other international challenges.
- The Australian Government believes that climate change is the single greatest challenge to our region and to our world. Of course, the challenge of climate change is important to countries across Latin America. Most recently the incoming Brazilian President Luis Ignacio Lula de Silva, has pledged to fight for zero deforestation of the Amazon. Chilean President Gabriel Boric has campaigned and championed a turquoise foreign policy agenda, combining the blue of the ocean and the green of the environment into one, recognizing that they are connected.

- Everyone here would understand the Albanese Labor government didn't waste a moment in legislating our carbon emissions reductions targets a minimum of 43% by 2030 and a net zero by 2050. We want to be a renewable energy superpower. The way we handle the energy transition is deeply important if we're to meet these climate goals. We need to manage the transition in a sustainable way that's supported by long term not short term thinking, with environmental community and social factors at its foundation, and crucially, with trusted partners.
- All of this needs to be done in a way which respects the Indigenous peoples of the land on which we work and live here and in countries across Latin America. Australian mining companies are already doing this sort of work in Latin America. They're good at it, and will continue to support this work, including by working with our Latin American partners and friends.
- Australia is seeking to become a top global supplier of hydrogen by 2030 and will work with Latin American countries to significantly up our research and development resources to kickstart hydrogen production globally. Another area where we can cooperate in building those connections and partnerships that will support the sustainable mining of critical minerals like lithium, cobalt, and silicon, all of course, essential minerals, to the technologies that we need for a sustainable future. It's in all our interests. It's in everyone in the world's interests that Australia and Latin America succeed in scaling up the extraction of these critical minerals in a sustainable way.
- Australian companies like Fortescue, Rio Tinto, and Lake Resources are investing in Argentina and Australian METS companies are bringing their expertise, exploration, software safety and community engagement to Argentina. We are already beginning to see a two-way investment relationship between Australia and Chile. Chile's SQM has entered a number of joint ventures for lithium exploration projects in Australia and in the other direction. Australia's Lithium Power International is contract in constructing Chile's third lithium mine in Maricunga, and has announced that its operations in Chile are moving to 100% renewable energy.

### **Q&A with Assistant Minister Watts**

Q: Do you envision the possibility of re-establishing a program of scholarships for postgraduate students from Latin America?

A: People to people connections, is what we're trying to build. So, part of that is the creation of my role. I've been tasked specifically by the Foreign Minister with promoting direct engagement with Latin America. I've already travelled once to Latin America and as soon as the parliamentary schedule for next year concludes, I'll be working to plan my next trip to South America in the new year. And the real point of the creation of my role, the first the starting point is to listen and in the future, we'll turn that listening into action.

Education is clearly an important fundamental part of our connection with Latin America.

### **Ambassador of Brazil:**

Latin America and Australia have a major challenge in terms of sustainability because they are major powers in areas which are very carbon intensive, like mining like agriculture, energy. You mentioned green hydrogen, investments in Argentina in Brazil and Chile. We have other experience like agriculture in Brazil, which is very good because it's much less carbon intensive in terms of agriculture in general.

The dialogue between the governments of Australia and Latin American has been lagging behind these initiatives. In Brazil and Australia, we are going to have governments that are more sustainability oriented. And this is a very good sign for the two countries. Because we are facing in the international arena claims for restrictions against exports, for example, from agriculture, of some countries. It's a concern for Australia for Brazil and other countries. And we managed in a way for example, in the Cairns group of the WTO to correct some of the distortions about the question of carbon intensity in Brazil, India and Australia and other countries.

The production of agriculture in Brazil, Australia, in Argentina and Uruguay is responsible since they are net exporters of food, they are responsible for feeding the world in a very productive way.

The governments of Australia and governments in Latin America should be more, proactive in terms of strengthening this dialogue because we have many areas in which the push from the government would be very good for these for making these business advances in sustainability go even further. This is an area in which Latin America and Australia have the most convergence interest because our production systems are concentrated in the same areas.

Of course, \$5 billion between Australia and Latin America is very low, but it's natural, because we have, the same areas of high competitiveness in international trade. But at the same time we have huge potential for reciprocal investments because we are good in those same areas. We should streamline our narrative about the advances in terms of sustainability we need a more institutionalized structured dialogue between our areas of Environment, Energy, and of course Foreign Affairs because these is closely related, should be very useful from that respect.

**Jose Blanco**

**Q:** Is there any possibility or any intention to review the structure of DFAT so that rather than have a Latin American East European branch, you have a Latin American branch?

**Tim Watts**

**A:** Currently a capability review being undertaken within DFAT. That review is really determining what are the capabilities that we need. We are trying to engage in the world, but not just as observers or commentators we're trying to influence and engage and shape the world.

**JB:**

If we really are serious about deepening the engagement or all levels, it should have a different structure that makes allowance for that.

**TW:**

One of the most visible examples of the government's interest in Latin America is through the Council on Australia Latin America Relations COALAR. We will encourage the department to look at that issue of the budget for COALAR.

**Richard Andrews:**

It would be wonderful to have a trade delegation going to Latin America, potentially having you lead that.

**Mr Daniel Boyer**  
**Deputy CEO**  
**Austrade**

- Our core mission is to help enhance Australia's economic prosperity by supporting Australian exporters to expand internationally and by attracting productive foreign direct investment.
- These past few years have been a challenge for all of us, particularly for those of us trying to transact business in a complex global climate, closed borders, trade tensions, shifting geopolitics, disrupted freight logistics and supply chains. It's been tough for business, especially in a country like Australia that relies on trade and investment to feed its economic success. One in four Australian jobs depend on trade and one in 10 depend on foreign investment.
- The increasing quality and scale of the economic flows between Australia and Latin America are some of our core areas of cooperation and opportunity. Mining, carbon reduction, new energy and people to people links. Two way trade is going well, though starting small.
- Over the last 10 years Australian exports to Argentina, Brazil and Chile have more than doubled, reaching over 4.5 billion last financial year. Merchandise imports from Latin America reached almost 7 billion last year, up from just over 6 billion in 2021. Imports from Mexico have doubled over the last 10 years totalling almost 4 billion last financial year.
- The 2020 Peru Australia Free Trade Agreement has launched a new chapter in economic relations between Australia and Peru, one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America over the last decade. Investment into Australia from Brazil and Mexico has increased almost 500% over the last decade together totalling just under 5.5 billion last financial year. Meanwhile, Australian companies hold more than 8 billion of foreign direct investment in Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Colombia and Peru. This exceeds our investment in India, Korea and Vietnam combined.
- Australia and Latin America also share decarbonization and sustainability goals. A lot of the leadership has come from the private sector, particularly potentially when you look at our two countries, Brazil and Australia. Australia is investing big in our energy transition and business has been leading the way. A couple of examples, as part of BHP is global transition to net zero by 2050. They have contracts in place to supply mine sites with 100% renewable energy and are promoting renewable energy storage at remote mine sites and working in partnership to develop hydrogen powered vehicles. Australian engineering firms Thiess and Mining 3 are working with the hydro consortium to pilot the first hydrogen fuel cells powertrain prototype.
- On the other side of the Pacific, it's great to see that large miners in Chile have also pledged to reduce emissions on their mine sites to net zero by 2050. The Colombian oil and gas companies like ours have begun transitioning towards net zero. To help in this transition, it is very encouraging to see companies like AME from Chile, looking to apply their capabilities here in Australia and for Australian companies like Fortescue, Woodside and Worley applying their knowhow in Latin America.
- To date, the Australian government has invested over \$1.2 billion into the hydrogen sector, supplemented by \$1.6 billion of private investment across the hydrogen value chain, providing the foundation of expertise for a competitive export industry.

Australia is already an energy export superpower and is building on that infrastructure for putting hydrogen into the global energy mix, helping to drive down prices and emissions. Centrepiece of the Australian value proposition is a globally innovative and distinguished track record in clean energy, introducing new technologies, systems and processes to create cost efficient value going forward. We have expertise and infrastructure that can be leveraged to develop hydrogen energy export supply chains. In 2020 alone, five of the world's 13th largest newly announced renewable hydrogen projects were in Australia. Australian green energy developers are active in Latin America, including Fortescue Future Industries, who plan to develop high grade hydrogen in Brazil and in Argentina as well.

- The flow of human capital and knowledge sharing between Latin America and Australia is steadily increasing. The Latin American population in Australia now exceeds 200,000 people, increasing an average of 5% per annum over the last decade. We are delighted to see the Latin American community in Australia growing.
- Like most markets, we are affected by the global shortage of tech and engineering talent. But this has not stopped Brazilian software giants CI & T investing in Australia with ambitious growth plans. More broadly were encouraged by 351 global talent visa granted to Latin Americans since the government's global talent attraction work began in late 2019. Australia values your students and we are delighted with the new work study visa or arrangements we have with Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru and Uruguay.
- The Latin American education industry was worth \$2.3 billion to the Australian economy in 2019 and has been the fastest growing educational region for Australia since 2004. Several major engineering medical and tech companies have said to us that they would love to see more Latin American students coming in here and staying.

**Prerana Mehta**  
**Executive General Manager – Global**  
**CSIRO**

[Powerpoint >>](#)

- CSIRO is the Commonwealth science industrial research organization. We are Australia's national science agency. We are unique in this part of the world and certainly in other parts of the world because we fund science, we do the science and we implement the science. We work closely with institutions and governments, industry and private sector across the world as well to do what we do.
- We conduct and encourage translation of Australia's world class scientific research. We've got a key area of focus on our national laboratories, and we've got several national labs across Australia, but we also have national labs located in Montpellier in France, and of course, our presence in Chile.
- We also look after national infrastructure on behalf of other governments. In Canberra, we look after NASA infrastructure and our space equipment's critical infrastructure owned by the Americans, that we maintain and look after for them.
- And lastly, our role is to really stimulate and catalyse the Australian innovation ecosystem. We want to bring the innovation ecosystem together to be able to really master and try and attack some of these global challenges that we face.
- In terms of challenges, we work around **six global challenges**:  
  
Health and wellbeing, food security and quality, resilient and valuable environment, sustainable energy and resources and future industries. In future industries, we put big data, AI robotics and space.
- We work across all disciplines in CSIRO. We have state of the art research infrastructure, and we look after other people's infrastructure we all utilize and partner up with particularly for example, United States. We measure what we do by impact and so far we have delivered \$7.6 billion of benefit to Australia in the financial year of 21/22.
- Innovation capitalists: We work with about 492 or close to 500 international customers and collaborations with over 70 countries. We have many collaborations in the Latin America region. We engage with multiple partners in industry and governments.
- In Australia, we're incredibly short of talent and expertise. We partner with countries in Latin America. We inject more than 35 million to research and development, specifically with small and medium sized businesses. We set up a venture fund focused on commercialization. We have specific programs in place to help them identify and validate their technology. We match them with a researcher and we can also invest, because we have a VC fund called Main Sequence, and we will invest in building that start-up to be able to then commercialize and sell products.
- But if our work doesn't fit within a challenge, we don't do it because it's got to come back to the benefit of Australia and Australia's national interests as well.
- In addition to our six challenges, we have missions and missions is terminology which I'm sure many of you would be familiar with. We have about 13 missions at the

moment, six that are currently in development. Hydrogen, drought resilience, future proteins, trusted agri-foods, ending plastic waste and transition towards NetZero, which also blends in with our hydrogen industry as well.

- We're setting up a data cube in Latin America, which will work hopefully with several countries to be able to use satellite information to identify agricultural benefits, water, oceans, climate change and the impact that might have on society. The idea is that through that data, we're able to actually build a much more cohesive picture of some of that impact on societies.
- Climate Resilience enterprises, infectious disease, resilience, and critical energy metals. The critical energy metals have actually become a new mission. That's actually become a focus on things like direct air capture, batteries, battery storage, and so we're looking at the entire value chain from mining right through the processing through to green steel processing.
- These programs are not short term, they're about five to seven years in making. They must engage with government, industry and research partners to get a mission off the ground. And they must have funding models from all sources, so we will only embark on a mission when we have guaranteed interest and commitment. We know that we can't do it on our own. We can only do it in partnership, and those partners need to be committed to be able to embark on a mission and we do that through collaboration.
- We are funded by the Australian Government, but we are required to be a fully sustainable organization. What we're doing a lot more of is partnering. We have a number of people that we bring into the organization as affiliates, and they include visiting researchers and postdocs as part of that number as well.

**Q:**

We are familiar with CSIRO and the great work they're doing Chile in particular, been there for now about 15 years now, any aspirations to any other countries within the region?

**A:**

We set up in Chile because of mining and that was our key driver. It really must fit within our challenge, and it needs to fit within a mission. We are very much looking not just at Chile, but what is happening in the region. How can we scale some of our programs that may have started in Chile or may have started in Uruguay or in Colombia? And how can we multiply that across different countries? And how can we do that in a way that it meets Australia's objectives in and around our challenging missions, but also meets the objectives of the region and or the country that we're partnering with.

We really want to partner with universities and use their talent and bring our knowledge we spoke of bringing knowledge into the room. To bring knowledge from the Australian side of things but build expertise and capability in the country as much as possible.

The way we would approach the discussion is that would be firstly wanting to understand what the challenges are that you are facing. We would then review those challenges and we would try and bring a lens to say okay, do we have the right expertise, or do we not have the right expertise? If we've got the right expertise, but not the full knowledge base, we would put up to you and ask you: Who in your country has the other half of that knowledge, and then we would love to partner with them and as part of that, we would look at models that would be the best place for us.

**Ngairé Tranter**  
Head of ESG  
RPM Global

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- RPM is a global organization headquartered in Brisbane. We have 25 offices globally. Latin America is a significant area of business. We have a software business and we have an advisory business.
- I head up ESG and carbon and climate globally and I also support our software strategy in terms of what are we going to do with sustainability initiatives globally. What are the trends? What do we need to be building into our existing product suite and what are the future demands that our clients are going to need address.
- We work for most of the world's largest financial institutions, helping them make decisions around the investments they're going to make into mining assets.

**What are the trends:**

- There's three key things and they are global themes, but they are unique and nuanced in every jurisdiction in which we operate.
  1. Mining and low carbon transition
  2. Emerging ESG trends
  3. Increased demands for mining technology and skills to meet these emerging requirements.
- In Australia, we really do have that deep knowledge of mining and we can really support that growth that is anticipated to come.
- We've heard a lot about climate change, changing to a low carbon economy. And what does this really mean? Well, for Latin America, this means more mining of metals and minerals, a lot more exploration and in that context, we're trying to balance out social and environmental impacts. We're trying not to have any net biodiversity loss.
- It's no surprises that EY has flagged for 2023 the top mining risk is being ESG. There is no coincidence because as we go through this transition in our economy, we move away from fossil fuels and are looking for those new economy minerals. We're going to have to go into areas that we've never been before. If you look at areas such as Brazil, towards the Amazon and that brings really difficult conversations and a delicate balance that needs to happen, and it needs to be done with foresight and clarity on that. By the flip side, it does offer increased opportunities for prosperity for nations. Australia is a wonderful nation built off the back of a strong resources sector. It can be done if you can learn the lessons from what we've been through and how we've managed it as well.
- ESG is essentially the score boarding, on what's going on with the game of sustainability. Essentially, it's the score cutting so everyone in the audience knows that the rules are the same, that the outcomes are the same, and we're all playing the same game.
- So what is sustainability and ESG?

Our climate, our biodiversity, our water. It's all those things that go into making our world the wonderful world that is. In the mining context, we have additional areas in there which is our impacts: acid mine drainage, changing the visual amenity when you knock down trees and you put up a giant line that is changing your views. There's noise in there. So you can see it's all those fundamental principles, which are quite easy to monitor.

- But if we look at the social side, that's a lot harder. It's social performance is a really challenging area to get a grasp on because it is about that continuing social license to operate ensuring that your mind or your operation is not blockaded.
- And how do you get there? It's things like human rights, making sure that the way that the material is mined, meets those international standards. It's labour relations, it's modern slavery. It's things like stakeholder engagement, and social reporting. There's quite a lot that goes in there and you could go on and on into the details of basically the fabric of society what's going on and how are you influencing those dynamics.
- We also have governance is the one that we don't hear a lot about, but is actually quite a powerful component of the broader ESG principles that are going on. So that's about reporting and communicating and ensuring that every layer of your organization has a robust visibility and participation in what you are committing to in that space. It's also making sure that you are advocating for strong governance in the countries that are operating as well.
- All of those three working together and the biggest thing about ESG is when people outside of our various industries, when society at large is talking about ESG they're saying be transparent. They're not saying be 100% gold stars, you know, be the best. I mean, they'd love it if we got there, but they're asking you to be transparent about we're here today. And we're heading this way tomorrow and we will continue to talk to you about what our performance has been. That's the most important part.
- It's not about hearing terms like greenwashing going on and that's where people put these very, very ambitious statements out. With no backing, they talk to no one and then all of a sudden they're not performing.
- **What is Net zero in this context?** We've heard a lot about it. Net Zero is not carbon neutral. Carbon neutral is where what you put out is what you put in, in terms of offsetting, it's not carbon neutral.
- NZ is a process for reducing your emissions over a period of time. Now most nations go for 2050, we've seen India come out with 2075. It is that process of reducing, but what you can see with the mining industry is that we still have an emissions profile. So it's for us it's an ambitious target. It's actually about getting as low and as close to no emissions or neutral emissions as you can and then offsetting at the end. So it's really important to be clear with that.
- It is different to carbon neutrality where you might want to look to reduce those emissions and just offset. So offsets are a complicated beast, but they need to be certified. There needs to be a process for those as well. But you can see that as you're going through reducing there's opportunities for offsetting those emissions as well.
- What does it mean for the resources sector? Basically, we've got some really strong tailwind. Those ESG and carbon reporting requirements actually give the opportunity

for green business cases to come through new sources of capital and new opportunities, things like investing in hydrogen renewables projects, looking at how you mine in a different way. So there's a lot of upside there. It's not all negatives when we start looking at ESG coming in and it's not all cost base.

- There's headwinds as well that fossil fuel projects are declining shareholder value. There is a retraction in capital for insurance and ongoing investments beyond set periods. So that becomes something quite challenging. And there's carbon pricing coming in and that's affecting project valuations as well. When you start putting a price on carbon, it starts to sway economics and then there's this uncertainty piece.
- So the legal carbon disclosure requirements, so your net zero ambitions, those disclosure requirements are moving quite fast. We're seeing governments all over the world really rapidly change the policy on that, which is challenging and you might think, well, in Latin America, we know what each country is doing, and that's okay. But if you start having a trading partner in the EU and you want to trade into that market, you're going to have to have awareness of what you need to be capturing to report into that.
- **What are we doing in that space?** Well, we know that transparency is important. And we believe in the fundamentals of Data Capture. So we've been investing in capturing the mostly the E at this point because those metrics are far easier. To capture, we have products like emissions manager, which is GHG Protocol compliance, and is suitable here in Australia for reporting where it automates that process rather than the old Excel spreadsheet, which many people are still using for this type of reporting.

## Simon Troeth

Manager, Government and Industry Relations  
Newcrest Mining

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- Newcrest is a very proud member of ALABC. Probably the favourite of our eight industry associations of which we're a member
- The presentation today is about Newcrest operations around the world, particularly in Latin America, the company's efforts to reach net zero by 2050 ourselves and the role our company has in producing the commodities that are required for a Net Zero future.

### **There isn't yet no net zero future without mining.**

- I would also like to acknowledge the representatives of the government of Ecuador who would be joining us today and their efforts over the past several years in transforming the investment climate for mining in that country. It's certainly not easy to diversify an international economy to attract and sustain high quality foreign investment in an already crowded field. Ecuador is firmly on the radar of the global mining industry. And the future is promising in spite of short-term economic headwinds.
- **About Newcrest:** We have a strong presence in Australia. We run Australia's biggest underground mine at Cadia which is about 30 kilometres out of Orange. We've got the Telfer mine, one of the most remote mines in Australia. It's 400 kilometres southeast of Port Hedland and well in the middle of the great sandy desert.
- On the other side of the world, we've just become the biggest gold miners in British Columbia and Canada where it gets down to minus 50. We're about 100k from the Alaskan border. So there's some pretty challenging environmental conditions in which we operate.
- In Fiji we're involved in a joint venture with a couple of Japanese partners developing the MOC copper mine over there, which is a smaller mine and of course in Latin America where in Ecuador, we've got a 32% of Fruta Del Norte, which just celebrated its third anniversary and continues to have some very promising discoveries. We are also involved with BHP with the Solgold mine, which if it goes ahead and we hope it does, will be a very, very significant part of not just the Ecuadorian, but the Latin American economy.
- Over the past decade, we've strategically repositioned our portfolio by expanding our exposure to tier one jurisdictions and domestic non-core operations. Our growth strategy is focused on key anchor districts including grassroots exploration target areas in the northern and southern Andes Mountains and we've acquired high quality operating assets in whole or in part weather investments in Lundin Gold, which operates Fruta Del Norte and the acquisition of Pretium Resources in Canada which is in Brucejack.
- Newcrest appreciates that mining is much more than a commercial operation. The investments that we make in Latin America, especially Ecuador for the long term require a shared vision with the Ecuadorian government, and community if they

succeed. We understand that we're going to be called upon to mine responsibly, produce less waste, safer processes, incorporate new technologies, promote the well-being of local and indigenous communities, curb emissions and strengthen environmental stewardship, if we're going to keep operating not just in Latin America but around the world.

- We continue our exploration program in Ecuador with drilling programs expected shortly. We maintain corporate offices in Quito and in Santiago, Chile. We're also regularly talking to other governments in Latin America to assess future projects. **So if you've got a project that you think is worthy of our consideration, please come and see us.**
- **Mining and Net Zero:** The Minerals Council of Australia graphic outlining uses often demand for some of the minerals which are mined across the world, especially copper and lithium in Latin America.
- Key stats include world copper consumptions doubled on average every 25 to 30 years, a result of increased access to electricity, growing incomes and rapid advancements and take up of new technologies. To give you just one example, an electric vehicle requires six times as much copper as an internal combustion engine vehicle. There is about 1.6 kilometres of copper wiring in your average electric vehicle. And if we're looking at the ambitious targets that global governments have got in place for take up of electric vehicles, that means a lot of copper in the future.
- Demand for lithium used in lithium ion batteries by car manufacturers is surging as they release more models or the rising use of renewable energy requires greater use of energy storage technology. Commodity insights who do a lot of work for the MCA forecast growth in lithium demand of 368% to 2030. So, there's huge demand and not enough supply. That is a good picture for companies in the game. But there's been underinvestment in mines and part of that is a result of very slow permitting processes.
- In terms of the way mining companies are not retail companies. We don't operate shop fronts. So we sell commodities, but increasingly miners are focused on the community and the consumer, because it's now about the end product. Copper and gold are used in electronics. Silver is used in solar panels. Molybdenum which we run Australia's only molybdenum plant at Cadia used in Chrome Moly tools use as a lubricant in high tech alloys. It's an extract from copper concentrate, and that's just one of the world's critical minerals.
- There is a big opportunity for Latin America to get out in front on the Net Zero Revolution by becoming a leading player in the production of these commodities and other commodities, some of which have not even been discovered. I would urge your governments to talk to mining companies like ourselves and BHP and the other Australian companies that are practice responsible mining. We are the standard bearers of responsible mining across the world. That doesn't mean we're perfect. There's a lot of improvements that we can undertake. But we're very proud of the role we play in lifting the bar for responsible mining across the world, including in Latin America.
- Where are companies moving more into copper? We're probably about a fifth copper at the moment we'll probably be a third copper in the future. And of course BHP is currently negotiating to take OZ Minerals which is a leading copper producer in Australia and is has indicated that it's taking more of an interest in copper as well.

- It's important to note that this investment does not happen by chance or on a whim. While mining companies like Newcrest depend on favourable geology and exploration results to decide on where to mine, the regulatory and legislative environment plays a huge role in investment decisions. Jurisdictions that encourage responsible mining with fair and equitable taxation regimes, efficient environmental and regulatory approval processes and consultation by governments with communities will in turn encourage companies like Newcrest to invest in their country.
- Now 12 or 18 months ago would have said Australia is the gold standard pun intended for mining regulation. Unfortunately, it's looking less like that in 2022.
- In Australia at the moment, the government is looking at raising taxes, particularly on coal and gas companies making workplace laws less flexible and more cumbersome and lengthening the time taken to get environmental approvals. It already takes between eight and 12 years in Australia to get our mines approved and up and running. And that means billions and billions of dollars in investment before one cent of profit has been made.
- Mining is already the most heavily regulated industry, certainly in Australia and certainly around the world. In most jurisdictions, there is an opportunity by looking at how regulation can be made more efficient, and more attuned to reality and less punishing of companies with high taxes. High taxes means fewer jobs, means less investment in communities, means a smaller industry. Bigger mining industry when conducted responsibly strengthens the economy, strengthens communities, and makes for enduring long term investment.
- In Latin America, as in the rest of the world, we need governments that value certainty, stability and pro mining policies to ensure we can maintain and grow our mining of copper, gold, silver, and other commodities.
- I talked before about the issue of illegal mining versus responsible mining. Encouraging small scale artisanal and small-scale miners who were doing it for the right reasons to mine more responsibly by leading the way, by lighting the path and that's a very, very important distinction that we can make. So, I'd ask your governments to continue working with us on that very important mission.
- Let's be clear without miners, there is no energy transition just or otherwise. According to the International Energy Agency, total mineral demand for use in clean energy solutions alone is expected to increase by 300% by 2040 under a sustainable development scenario. By weight mineral demand in 2040 is dominated by copper, graphite and nickel. In a world of clean energy solutions, copper is crucial to more solar PV bioenergy networks, electric vehicles, and battery storage according to the IEA it's also important for hydro nuclear power and concentrating solar power are playing a role in geothermal and hydrogen. Copper is the future V8 engine of an electrified world.
- The forecast vary, but according to Australian government research, 31.1 million tons of copper will be consumed in 2030, but only if it can be supplied. That's an increase of 26% on estimated consumption in 2022. An S&P Global Report this year put 2050 demand at 53 million tons. That means we're on track to add in 28 years, roughly the same level of copper demand as the previous 122 years.

**Yan Flageul**  
Senior HR Advisor  
Mazars Australia

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## **International students are facing hurdles and the challenges in Australia.**

### **Why are these figures here today?**

- With a 3.5% of unemployment rate, pretty much every Australian that wants to work has got a job. Yet, there are about 310,000 job vacancies that are not filling, so that is a real problem. On top of that, you've got the problem of 286 occupations that are now facing skill shortage. On that note, this is not just Australia, in Latin America, on average, 65 to 70% of employers in each nation is facing skill shortage as well. This is a global crisis.
- Where are the people with a talent? How do we find them? And more importantly, how do we keep them? That is where international education comes into play. What is interesting to see is that even if the numbers have dropped a little bit because of COVID, we still have a huge amount of international students that come to Australia.
- The latest figures was about 30,000 students from Latin America, in the census in August. What is interesting to see is that there are 230,000 international students in Vocational Education and Training. The issue is not just about higher education. We don't need just engineers and doctors and programmers. We need people that can cook, we need people that can build and repair and this is all over the world. The attention should be put also on these tradies that we need.
- Only 3% of the international students come from Latin America, the vast majority from Brazil, and Colombia. We don't want to drain Latin America from your talent and just keep it here. There are ways to bring the students here, grow them, build them having skills, knowledge and work experience and send him back home with that package. The fact that we're bringing half of the knowledge and you bring half of the knowledge that is a true spirit of collaboration between countries. That is the way that we should see International Education.
- If we look at Latin American students, the numbers have dropped. What is very important is to see that the higher education so degrees or post graduate and Masters is pretty much consistent. The impact of COVID was felt in the trades and the short courses, ELICOS as the English Language Intensive Courses.
- For study employment rates so the students have graduated, once they built up the skills and at the moment, only small percentage of international students will actually stay, they will stay on and then try and find work. That means the vast majority of them go back home. That's a fact. It's not a judgment. Why are they not tempted to stay? For instance, those who are learning English, why would they not want to actually learn something else? One of the reasons is online learning. So instead of coming to Australia, now they're learning from home. That is a problem that is created.
- When people have passed that hurdle of the language barrier, it is difficult for people who speak Spanish to come here and learn in English, and vice versa. So why don't we help these students who've learned to grasp the English language medium, and then try and encourage them to learn more and build more skills?

- Latin American languages in Australia, there were about 170,000 people that were speaking Spanish at home that represent about 6% of the population. And coincidentally, there's about 5% of the student population that is studying Spanish at school.
- If there are so many people who speak Spanish in the world, and so many countries where people from Australia could actually go to, we need to increase that number. If we don't increase that number of people who are going to be able to speak Spanish and Portuguese for that matter. We're not going to be able to send them to learn in your countries. It's just not going to happen. That is one of the things that upstream we need to solve.
- Looking at skill shortage. What are the skills that are in shortage? First thing, registered nurses and IT specialist programmers and then you'll find also a lot of trainees such as chefs.
- If we look at the people that have graduated and the outcome in full time employment if they're coming from Australia, 84% of them are actually going to work. But then it drops to 43% for international students. People who are wanting to work. Why is that?
- When you look at how much they are paid when they are international students compared with domestic students doing other graduate courses, they get paid \$15,000 less. That is something that needs to be addressed and investigated. Why is this happening? Looking now at the graduated so postgraduate, people with master's and the gap, nearly \$40,000 difference.
- As an international students, why would I stay here? If I'm going to be exploited? That's as simple as that. So why is that happening?
- The reason why it is happening is that when people are trying to find managerial or professional jobs, the reasons why they cannot find these jobs is because number one for the undergraduate, they don't have permanent residency. When they go on LinkedIn, or they go on SEEK they tick the box permanent residency No. Then the software will make the first selection and then you simply do not exist. The HR advisor will never read your resume. We're never going to read your letter of application and you're going with a red flag.
- The other aspect is for the graduates not so much for the limited English proficiency, which by the way, they've just graduated in English. The cause of the problem is their lack of relevant local knowledge. They have not worked in Australia.
- Students have become now employees between 20 and 24 years old. They're not going to stay more than one year in their job. Where does it matter that they don't have permanent residency? All we want is to have them more than one year, and you're going to be better than the locals. We want to find people; we want to keep people, we want to grow people. Let's not look at permanent residency.
- Why? Why do you need to be permanent resident, it doesn't make any sense. We need to increase the number of skilled migrants as well. So having people that learn from overseas, come here, we need to welcome and so the government is at the moment, increasing the number of visas and that's really, really good.

- One of the problem that we will find though, is that the length of time that it takes to process the visas. The subclasses 485 is a post study visa. If you have studied in Australia and you graduated, then you're going to be given 18 months for VET students. If you're a PhD you can stay for 2,3, 4 or five years in Australia after your studies and that's helping. However, it takes about eight months to get your visa.
- Home Affairs is injecting 36 million in helping that processing to be faster with 500 more staff. That is the sort of solution we want to see that are applauded because this is the heart of the problem. Because who can survive for eight months until you can get a job. These people not only did we leave the country but will never come back. Once they're gone, they're gone. So where is the collaboration? Where is we're going to grow these people give them some local knowledge, give them some work experience so that they can go back home with that wealth of experience and skills. These are the sort of solutions that I'm thinking we could explore.
- We need to also align the wages. Now, I don't know how this is going to happen. But I think that it's very important that someone investigates that and finds out why this is such a difference, and it should not be allowed. Because if you want a good way to declare forever, people coming to work here because remember, the power of social media. It will just be very quick for people to know that if you come here, you'll be paid 40 grand less than the locals. That's not helpful. So, there is maybe something to do there.
- Why do we only give 18-month visa sub subclass 485 to the tradies, but we give four to five years to someone who's got a master's? We don't need a nation which is doctors and engineers. We need a nation with people who can fulfill the 286 occupations that are in skill shortage. So, I think that should be exactly the same. These people who have built up the trades and learnt here should be given the same opportunity to work for four years and then after that, we can have these trade agreements with skills where we can send people back and send them back with absolute beautiful knowledge, skills and experience.

**Marcelo Medel**  
**Managing Director**  
**Duratrax International**

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- Our business group has been around for more than 49 years. In 2001, we purchased Duratrax direct from Pacific Dunlop, and we became the first large scale Chilean investment in Australia. We manufacture and design high efficiency mining trucks bodies. The difference that these ones have to the rest of the of the other competitors is that they are made out of rubber, 50% of the trays made out of rubber, so it's also suspended.
- When we purchased the company, we were in eight countries. Since then, we have expanded our operations to more than 37 countries. We are in Miami, UK, Canada, Ukraine, Angola and in Congo. As you can see, our footprint goes broadly in Australia, but we also have manufacturing facilities in China, Indonesia, Turkey, Canada, Peru, Chile, South Africa, and our main offices are in Miami. We are launching our new office in Madrid in April 2023. We are working on an electric truck. The first is the first electric truck on the world, unfortunately, it can only it can only run for eight hours.
- We purchased the technology for small trucks from Pacific Dunlop and then we create our own technology mixed with this to make it for the 400 toners that you can have in every single country where we are at.
- Last October, we launched our new company Nexus Mine, bringing the fourth industrial revolution to mining through our digital devices that improves our client productivity, safety and environmental performance. Basically, Nexus build digital devices that work together with our trays in order to measure the performance with an analytic device in every single truck. There is going to be a real significant effect in the productivity. We can increase productivity in terms of how many cycles the tracks do because we will monitoring every single truck, how many trucks how many times a week, a month a year they get refueled, they go to repair, etc, etc. The gap between the high performance truck with the low performance truck in just one minute is more than 20%. We can monitor that without using the data of the OEMs.
- Another thing that we do with Nexus nine is that we monitor every single piece of the equipment, so we can predict failure and we can again increase productivity. At the same time those trucks right there they have sensors, so we will monitor the emissions of every single truck.
- We're manufacturing the dump body for the electric truck that will go to your ad tones. Today, the state of the art it's only 30 toner. But the problem with that is that the trays, even if they're made from rubber or made from steel, that is too heavy for those trucks. We are working with some of the guys that work with Formula One. It's going to run in October 2023 in a South African mine and from then onwards, we're going to change how we do mining in the world.
- We will start with South Africa, then we will come to Australia and we will explore these technologies to 37 countries where we are at right now. And this is not the only thing that we're going to do because this is going to be autonomous. So, these things right here as they are done with fiberglass, we are pretty confident that we will be able to use them in order to dig deeper rivers and to create our shores.

- We are going to do that at our new facilities in Victoria with 10% of our investment that was granted by the Victorian government. The reason why we needed this new facility is because our current facility is just for rubber and steel, so we needed a bigger one with new technology for fiberglass that we are developing with Deakin University.
- We are in full employment in Australia and the problem is that we don't have any good mechanics order to get them on board. What we can talk about are the special visas for the unique staff that we have in every single one of our clients. We need people that we can trust. We need a skill that we can trust and there's nothing that we can do for them. It's a long and expensive process. It should be easier if we're bringing money because that's what we are doing. In terms of R&D collaborations, university, government, private triangle for us work so perfectly. There are so many grants that the university are entitled to so when they engage with the private sector, it's been a great model for us. The fiberglass dump body was made because of that.
- We've been talking with different companies from Chile in order to create a Chilean Mining Hub that is not only the soft landing, it's also to make them understand the ecosystem that is here in Australia and also to understand the ecosystem integration so they can be here for a long time.
- The Chilean Mining Hub would be the dealer, the distributor of the technology from Latin America. That is also the way that we can make the students remain in Australia and have the experience of working here.

## **Stephen Trengove Jones**

**Director – Partnerships Development, International Division  
Department of Education**

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- We have seen significant growing interest in Latin America and we believe that this will continue in future years.
- The International division, Partnerships Branch, is responsible for bilateral engagement and qualifications recognition, including with Latin America and also responsible for engagement with Southeast Asia. The recognition of qualifications is fundamental to student mobility, academic mobility, professional mobility, and hence to the formation of university partnerships, whether it be academic and research. And then we have a multilateral policy team which looks after engagement and focuses on engagement in the G 20, in APEC in ASEAN.
- We work closely with Austrade, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and with other departments across the Commonwealth Government and the state and territory governments. Our focus being on government to government engagement, both here in Australia and offshore, through our counselors in the region.
- Through work domestically and overseas, what we seek to do is share policies systems, look at ways in which we can work together to harmonize and make our policies systems more compatible, thereby removing barriers to education, research engagement, and by sharing information with your international education sectors in your countries. An example of that and you can see that is in that picture is the signing of an MOU recently with Colombia on education cooperation.
- The increase in education engagement as reflected in Universities Australia data between Australia and Brazil on the one hand and Australia and Mexico on the other end, it shows a significant increase in agreements. Our engagement with other countries such as Peru, Chile, and Colombia has also expanded.
- Regarding research, in the last five years, the number of joint research publications between Latin America and Australia has almost doubled from around 9,600 to around 17,500 from 2020 to July 2022. Brazil was the eighth and Colombia the ninth largest countries of origin for international students in Australia.
- The number of international students coming to Australia is simply one indication of the importance of our relationship. We believe that now the pandemic is waning and borders are opening their opportunities for us to expand our education engagement with Latin America, including through transnational education, new forms of service delivery, for example, short courses, micro credentials to meet specific skills needs and for example, through ideas such as collaborative online international learning.
- Those bilateral engagements complement our whole government engagement as I mentioned, for example, through the group of 20 and through APEC. We are working with Peru on qualifications, recognition, and an MOU we signed with Brazil's confederation of state funding bodies for research in 2020. And this has led to a number of virtual research collaboration events between ourselves and Brazil.
- In terms of our intelligence, some of the key trends that we see that federal approaches to international education and research vary across countries and understandably so. In some countries, state level engagement seems to be

particularly important. For example, the state of Sao Paulo Parana and Rio Grande Du Sul in Brazil, and the states of Nueva Leon and Jalisco states in Mexico.

- There's growing emphasis in your countries on access to education, equity in access, regional education, the importance of distinguishing between regional needs, skills development, and National Qualifications frameworks. And we've also seen some significant evidence of the role of peak bodies the role that they play in complementing the actions of your government in terms of policy development, systems development.
- Another trend that we have observed is an increasing interest in international collaboration on research. And our data indicates that for Australia as an example, in terms of research impact, as evidenced by citations the impact is less for Australians doing their own research as compared to when Australians collaborate internationally, the citation index increases significantly indicating that the quality and relevance of that research has increased. So for us, that's a key reason for us to engage internationally in research where there is mutual benefit.
- Whether it be through student exchanges research dual degrees, online exchanges, we have an interest in collaborating with your countries. We can learn from mutual exchange in policy development to improve and maintain our policies at a leading edge internationally, ensure that we are attractive partners in higher education and research.
- There is a growing interest in collaborative online international learning and basically that's where academics develop and deliver a course to classes in two countries. They crafted by the institutions collectively, they therefore meet both country's needs. And they are in a sense, a cost effective way of engaging internationally as compared for example to establishing a campus in country as compared to establishing a new totally new partnership. These can build greater and deeper, long-lasting relationships accessing international networks that already exist can also help and reduce the time and effort required to establish new networks.
- We see opportunities for research. We have much in common with Latin American countries in the research space for example in water, land, clean energy, and university industry links also offer opportunities. We have an Australia Latin America Water Alliance, which is been growing over a number of years in conjunction with research institutions in Latin America and has become self-sustaining and is forging ahead.
- With Brazil, the first being to look at COVID-19 and its impact and how when much three research address the health issues that it raised, the second being donations, and the third being on food security.
- There was a couple of presentations that mentioned skills formation and skills engagement. Many of you may know that following the election of the new government in May there was a machinery of government change, whereby the department responsible for Employment and Workplace Relations was established, separate to the Department of Education, and that department has responsibility for international engagement on employment, skills and training. The arrangement that we have put in place is that our counselor network retains responsibility for international engagement on skills and training. So here in Australia, the Department of Employment Workplace Relations has policy responsibility and responsibility for driving the direction of international engagement on higher education and research. And our counselors have responsibility for international engagement in country for

both. So we are working very closely with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to ensure a coherent, consistent approach and ensure that it's manageable by our counselor network.

- We do have several ongoing projects in the vocational education space. For example, we ran a project on recognition of prior learning in the VET space with Brazil, whereby it was informing Brazilian VET turning 60 Brazilian providers of our approach to recognition of prior learning, which is fundamental to education, mobility, both in country and internationally.
- We've also been for a number of years undertaking a project on skilled occupations in tourism and hospitality. And this is working with Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Peru, on a number of occupations in tourism and hospitality, with a view to firstly identifying critical skills needs, then developing occupational standards, then validating those occupational standards in country, with government and with the sector, with industry, and then developing pilot to courses, vocational courses that will address those needs skills. needs, and piloting them in country.
- Latin America Mining Skills Project: We have begun using some program funding that we have under the international education innovation fund. This is a project whereby we have contracted an organization to manage the delivery for us with policy oversight from ourselves the Department of Employment, workplace relations, and counselors in Latin America. Essentially this project is about working with government and industry, in your countries to identify the skills needed current and future in your countries in the mining industry, undertaking depth research and the advice of your governments and your mining industry, and then working through a process which is basically identifying priorities skills needs, develop occupational standards, then look at working with your training sector and with your industry and government in country to look at developing curricula for training products, and then piloting those and then testing to see how those work and whether they meet the needs and deliver the skills that your mining industries need. We have done the first phase or we're reaching a conclusion of the first phase, which was the skills gap analysis.
- A few key messages I'd like to leave you with is we are really interested in hearing from you. As to where you see the opportunities for engagement in education and research are where you see the priorities aren't and what you see as the key challenges and working both with your governments and with your sector, our sector here in Australia to work out strategies for collaborating on international education and research.

## Daniel Quinn

General Manager of Resources Strategy Branch  
Department of Industry, Science and Resources

- My branch's role is to represent the interests of the resources sector and to try and grow the resources sector in whole of government processes. So we're getting involved in other departments trying to give them reality checks on various things.
- Mining is really at that tension point, particularly in Australia, it is so key to our economy. Last year 70% of all our goods and service exports from this country were mining related and around \$440 billion worth of exports. If we include metal companies and mining companies, they employ over a million Australians. They employ more First Nations people as proportion of their workforce than any other sector in the economy. They are out there at the forefront of interacting with First Nations people and I know that that's a common feature in Latin America, with your resource companies as well.
- If we look at climate change, we need mining companies to get to net zero. If we don't grow it, we mined it and we don't grow solar panels and we don't grow wind turbines. We don't get to net zero without mining. And, we don't get there without Australian mining and after today on extend that are also to Latin American mining.
- We often compete with each other in terms of exports, but due to the similarities of many Latin American economies and Australia's economy, in these challenges on how we maintain social licence and how we address climate change, these are not competitions between us. These are opportunities for us to work together to address these challenges.
- In Australia, over 60% of Australian mining operates on land that is subject to a native title claim. That means that the First Nations people here have been recognized as the traditional owners of that land. Mining companies play a key role in the economic development of those communities. They also play a broader key role in the economic development of our regional areas outside of our cities. But at times, there is still room for improvement.
- The mining sector does get a really bad rap with one or two cases and all this great work that is done in these remote communities is often ignored. There are opportunities to economically empower First Nations peoples with mining, if we look at a lot of the places where our mining companies operate, and we've heard about that today. A lot of it is so remote and so desolate, that there isn't any other economic opportunity in that area in Australia. We're not going to get tourists out into the middle of the desert very often. There's not a big university there to attract international education. But what we do have is rich resources that can create economic opportunities for those communities. And when we get that balance, right, we see that so it'll move on to in a bit more depth, the decarbonization angle.
- Mining and particularly in the critical minerals, but it's broader than critical minerals, it's also minerals that don't make it on the critical minerals list because they're not particularly concentrated.
- We estimate in Australia that **we are going to have to triple the size of our electricity network**. So how do we build all those power lines without all that copper, but at the same time 70% of facilities in Australia that produce over 100,000 tons of co2 equivalent are mining related.

- These companies subject to what we call the safeguard mechanism and the Australian Government in legislating its net zero target is initially focusing on driving down our mission through that safeguard mechanism. Mining companies are at the forefront of the challenge and we see quite a few resource companies responding really aggressively to this challenge, grasping the opportunities from these challenges. We see companies that have previously produced oil and gas starting to turn their minds to becoming carbon management companies, particularly through the role of carbon capture, use and storage.
- We have some fantastic geology here in Australia, for those purposes. We estimate we have over 20 billion tons of co2 storage in this country. We are seeing our first direct air capture project trialled in Australia now they're only looking at 365 tonnes in one year. But it's a demonstration of that technology and the demonstration of the economics. Because if we don't hit the targets that we're looking at here, in terms of net zero, there will be pressure for us to start thinking about going net negative. Even if we are to get to net zero, some areas of our economy and some areas of our industry will find it really difficult to get to zero emissions. So again, in terms of offsets, there are opportunities for us to take it out of the air and put it into these geological storage cabins that have held it for billions of years. So these are all opportunities and you see the resource companies really at the tension point there.
- I'd like to expand just a little bit on decarbonization, because we often talk about co2. I think increasingly what we're seeing around the world now is a focus on methane. In Australia, it's around 25% of our emissions, so it's not insignificant. I imagine several countries in Latin America, particularly those with big agricultural sectors like Brazil would have similar profiles where methane is a really big emission source. Now, anything over 20 years has a global warming potential. So as a result, if we can drive down methane, it will buy us time to get to the net zero transition without the worst effects of climate change. And around the world, we're saying the US, EU and others really turned their minds to this. And just last month, Australia signed the global methane pledge, saying that we would work to try and drive down our methane emissions by 30% by 2030. As part of that commitment, the Australian Government announced in their recent budget \$10 million for a Fugitive Methane Technology Fund. We are looking to invest in early to mid-stage research that is going to give us new tools in mitigating methane. And that I think is a real opportunity for us to collaborate. I also think that the work the Australian government is now doing on direct air capture and carbon capture and storage is another area where there are real opportunities for us to work together.

**Jose Blanco AM**  
**Chairman Emeritus**  
**ALABC**

- It is important to remember why we gather at these events and it is because of our desire to contribute to a deepening of the bilateral relationship between Australia and all of the countries that make up the region that we know as Latin America. Here we are 21 years later, visas are still on the agenda.
- On the positive side, we should draw enormous satisfaction and pride from the improvement in those numbers of merchandise trade and investments and international students. When we look at the percentage year on year increase, that is where we should draw inspiration going forward.
- It was great to have the Assistant Minister present, it was great to have all of the different stakeholders from a number of government departments and another number of institutions both federal and state present to provide their perspectives. Likewise, representatives of particular companies that are here with us today that have either presented or be in attendance to listen, this to me, resonates what is or what I see as the role of the Australia Latin American Business Council to champion and drive initiatives that helps us all to achieve our common goals.
- We all suffer from a lack of resources, be they financial, be they human resources, or be they allies in wanting to work towards our common goals. At the end of the day, another factor that hasn't changed over all the years is that the only way that I believe we will make sustainable progress in achieving our goal is by working collaboratively. The success of any one entity, any one country is the success of all of us. I would also encourage you to bear in mind that the success of any one of you contributes to the success of all of you, and therefore, working collaboratively is the only way that I think we all need to go forward.
- I would simply like to encourage all of you to come together as we've done today, but I don't know that we've really utilized the day in terms of its full potential, because it would have been a day when we could have shaped a shared policy or shared action plan where we can each put forward directives, strategies and then decide upon a shared one going forward. I mean yes, the Assistant Minister was here. But then on the other side of the ledger, I think we were all thinking well, where was Minister Penny Wong? Where was Minister Don Farrell? Where was the New South Wales Government equivalent of Global Victoria? So that to me, highlights the challenges and the work that remains to be done. We give thanks for those that came. But we also cast an envious eye towards those that didn't come and that we would like to come.
- The presentation by Global Victoria was very insightful. They have a published strategy paper on what they are doing with Latin America and it's been around for a number of years. It's a readily available document. It's been no doubt nurtured, tweaked from time to time, but it is there.
- They have put their presence into the region and they are scoring goals. Unfortunately, Trade and Investment Queensland couldn't be here today, but they were even earlier into the region than Global Victoria. But as I listened to all the reasons why Victoria was engaging with Latin America, I asked myself, New South Wales has many of those qualities. We'll debate the merits of each state at a different time but New South Wales has many of these qualities. Why is New South Wales not

in the region? They've said on countless occasions, we are going to open an office in the region. I think it's several years that we've been listening to this so I don't want to single out anyone, but I would encourage all of us to work together to say one of our objectives is to get New South Wales over the line.

- The education performance in the bilateral relationship is quite impressive. It is the value of the students. But it has to be more than that, because if all we want to do is to bring students from the region to Australia, not only to study but even to stay, it's not an equitable equation. We as Australia need to contribute to the education effort in Latin America. And we can only do that through the research which is happening. That's a very big positive, but we need to try and encourage more of our students, our talented people to go to the region. Is it as easy as them coming to Australia? Possibly not? But that is the challenge because if we don't make it more equitable, it remains a purely or significantly one-sided equation. It is not going to deliver this sustainable growth that we aspire to. I would encourage each of you on behalf of the Business Council on behalf of Embassies on behalf of other institutions that have an interest in the region, to work collaboratively.
- The variables happened when the people change. Those of you that would know the efforts of people lobbying using their connections to influence. When you find someone who's got that passion, it is noticeable how you get far more traction. So what we need to do is find what people are passionate about Latin America, support them and nurture them and they will help us to deliver the goals.

## **Richard Andrews**

**Chairman  
ALABC**

- It wouldn't be an ALABC function if I wasn't to say a couple of words at the end. Thank you, Jose, as always Jose's very forthcoming with his comments. I think the one thing that I've gotten out of this is that it is a relationship business. And I think as we were talking earlier, you build the relationship first, and then you do business and those relationships stay with you for life. The one thing that's very encouraging from my point of view is that every government representative that we've had engagement with from this new government, is supporting Latin America, and they're recognizing that Latin America is an opportunity and that it is a new in some respects, a new frontier for the government and are actually putting some resources into it. We are very grateful with respect to Minister Penny Wong, she has given that mantra to Assistant Minister Tim Watts, and he is taking that up.