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## Migration critical to economic growth

The peak body representing Australia's oil and gas industry has welcomed the Australian Government's approval of its first Enterprise Migration Agreement (EMA).

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA) says initiatives that fast-track migration for large resource projects will bring significant economic benefit.

APPEA CEO, David Byers, said: "Such initiatives are very important to our industry and show the Government understands the importance of the resources sector to Australia's continued prosperity.

"Figures released yesterday by the Bureau of Resource and Energy Economics show the oil and gas industry currently accounts for 69 per cent of total Australian resource sector investment.

"Australia's gas industry currently has \$170 billion worth of liquefied natural gas projects under construction and a further \$330 billion worth of oil and gas industry projects will be considered in the years to 2020. But the success of these projects depends upon the capacity of their proponents to bring more skilled and semi-skilled workers to Australia to meet peak demand, while also increasing local training commitments and ensuring long-term jobs for Australians.

"Australia's oil and gas industry is already investing heavily in local training opportunities, but our industry needs more people and more skills in the short term if we are to capitalise on these enormous opportunities.

"The continuation of Australia's resources boom cannot be taken for granted. Actions such as that announced today show that government has an important role to play in creating the right framework within which the skills, labour and productivity issues, which threaten our capacity to maximise the benefits flowing from our industry's record investment, can be addressed."

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**The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association represents the upstream oil and gas industry in Australia. APPEA member companies produce around 98 per cent of Australia's oil and gas.**