Press release

NSW coal industry statistics

Sydney (Australia) – 28 March 2018

At 31 December 2017, there were 41 coal mining operations in NSW; 20 underground mines (16 longwall operations) and 21 open cut mines.

Raw coal production for the NSW coal industry fell by 1.8 per cent or 4.6 million tonnes to 245.7 million tonnes for the 12 months ending 31 December 2017. Overall raw coal production fell across all coalfields except Gunnedah and the Hunter.

A 19 per cent increase in raw coal production from underground mines during the December 2017 quarter was not enough to offset the fall in production experienced during the September 2017 quarter, resulting in a 5.7 per cent decline (3.7 million tonnes) in production for the year ending 31 December 2017. NSW underground coal mines produced 61.1 million tonnes of raw coal during the year.

Raw coal production from underground mines in the Hunter coalfield increased by 19.6 per cent to 13.6 million tonnes in 2017, while underground production from the Mudgee region saw an increase of 3 per cent to 12.3 million tonnes. Production from underground mines in the Southern region fell 31 per cent or 4.5 million tonnes to 10.1 million tonnes.

In the open cut sector, 184.6 million tonnes of raw coal was won in 2017 which was down slightly (0.5 per cent) against the 185.5 million tonnes won during the 2016 calendar year. Raw coal production from open cut mines increased 9.3 per cent to 24.4 million tonnes in the Gunnedah coalfield but fell 20.8 per cent to 1.9 million tonnes in the Newcastle region.

NSW coal exports in 2017 totalled 163.8 million tonnes for the year, down 3.9 per cent compared to the 2016 calendar year. The top four markets of Japan, China, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan accounted for 87.3 per cent of the total tonnage exported. The FOB value of coal exports for the year rose 31.2 per cent to 19.11 billion Australian dollars with an average FOB value of $116.69 per tonne. The average value per tonne was up 36.5 per cent or $31.19 on the previous year.

Overall sales to the domestic market were up slightly (0.2 per cent) on the previous year driven by increased demand from the energy sector, which continued to be the largest market for NSW coal within Australia during the year.

NSW coal industry production employment is defined as all persons working in or about the coal mine or coal preparation plant, pertaining to its operation, whether employed directly by the mine owner or the mine operator or by a contractor. During the twelve months to 31 December 2017, there was net job growth of 10.1 per cent (1,915), taking the production workforce at NSW coal mines up to 20,872 mine workers (full-time equivalent workers).

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About Coal Services:

Coal Services is an industry-owned organisation committed to providing critical services and expertise to the NSW coal mining industry. We operate a Specialised Health and Safety Scheme that provides an integrated suite of services aimed at preventing injury and illness in the workplace. These include occupational health and safety, workers compensation, mines rescue and training.

We work in collaboration with employers, workers, Government departments and other industry partners to help identify, assess, monitor and control many risks inherent in the NSW coal mining industry. Together, we work to protect the health and safety of those working in the industry through prevention, detection, enforcement and education.

We are jointly owned by two shareholders, the NSW Minerals Council and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU). Our purpose, vision and values are aligned to focus on the safety and health of our industry and its workers.