



Mines Rescue



## Joint Media Release

# New South Wales' Appin team take out the 54<sup>th</sup> Australian Mines Rescue Competition

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### **Emerald (Australia), 21 October 2016 –**

The Appin team from Wollongong were named the 2016 Australian Mines Rescue champions last night at a presentation dinner held in Emerald, Queensland. The team were closely followed by Queensland's Oaky North team who came in second, and third place went to Grosvenor mine.

Rio Tinto's Kestrel Mine played host to the event, helping put 60 mines rescue brigadesmen from across Queensland and New South Wales through their paces. The competition did more than just decide the national champion; it provided Australia's most elite brigadesmen with the invaluable opportunity to test themselves against the best of the best, and reassure the underground mining industry of their exceptional skill level.

This year's competition saw eight teams from New South Wales and Queensland mining companies work through a series of scenarios designed to mirror the reality of emergency response situations. The scenarios consisted of a challenging mix of underground and pit-top scenarios. These included technical skills assessment, firefighting, search and rescue exercises as well as testing their first aid skills. A theory exam challenged the depth of teams' mines rescue knowledge and a scenario using virtual reality technology allowed the teams to simulate their application of skills and hazard awareness.

Queensland Mines Rescue Chief Executive Officer, David Carey said 'Congratulations to the winning teams, as well as to Kestrel, the organising committee, QMRS support personnel and to New South Wales Mines Rescue, on your efforts in planning and bringing this all together.'

New South Wales Mines Rescue (NSW Mines Rescue) State Manager Steve Tonegato said 'It was fantastic to see a New South Wales Appin team win the event on the day, but we should not lose sight that the real winners of competitions such as these are actually our mining communities. These events are critically important in building skills and capabilities that continue to protect our industry and its workers'.

Rio Tinto's Kestrel Mine Acting General Manager, Wouter Niehaus said 'It was a great honour for Rio Tinto and Kestrel Mine to host the competition. We may work for different mines and companies, but we are miners first and coming together like this is a fantastic opportunity to shape our industry positively. Congratulations to the winners and all the teams.'

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South 32's Appin Mines Rescue Team celebrate their victory at the 54<sup>th</sup> Australian Mines Rescue Competition.

Front (L-R): Daniel Ward, John Nellestein (VC), Trent Jelly, Phil Kelly

Rear (L-R): Scott Dennis, Malcolm Waterfall (captain), Tony Grossmann, Murray Brown

Ends.

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