



## Best in class first aid showcased at Northern Coal Services' First Aid Competition

Newcastle (Australia), 07 November 2017 –

Exceptional first aid skills were the order of the day at the annual Coal Services First Aid Competition held at the Newcastle Mines Rescue station on Friday, 3 November.

Ten teams from mine sites as far afield as Ulan and Tahmoor came together to not only compete but also to test their skills learned through specialised Coal Services training. Mines rescue brigadesmen, emergency response and first aid officers participated in a series of complex, simulated scenarios ranging from burns and breaks, to amputation and snakebite. As well as live enactments, participants were also challenged through Coal Services' market leading virtual reality training capability.

The scenarios are as close to real life as it gets and require teams to manage environmental and equipment hazards as well as multiple injuries and distressed casualties. Teams are assessed on how well they respond to the scenario and the level of proficiency with which they administer first aid. There is also a theory component.

General Manager Mines Rescue, Regulation and Compliance, Matthew Fellowes, commented: 'Many of the people we train work in remote locations and it is a known fact that timely first aid can be live saving. Our real-to-life scenarios ensure maximum preparedness.

'The competition is undertaken in good spirit but teams also know the importance of what they do and the value these competitions provide.'

The purpose of Coal Services is 'to protect' and a significant emphasis is placed on prevention of injury and illness through health surveillance services and environmental monitoring, but emergency response and first aid training plays a critical role in the case of emergency.

Kristy Prior, Partnership and Innovation Manager for Coal Services' CS Health business unit, is heavily involved in the competition organisation and remarked: 'A first aider must be able to draw on a range of leadership and organisational skills under duress, as well as be effective in the identification of and response to injuries with an awareness of hazards. The competition allows them to put these skills to the test.

'The success of the day is dependent on the participation of the teams and the volunteers who help to make it happen. We would like to thank all those who took part as competitors, behind the scenes or as actors to enhance the realism.'

2017 winners were the Mandalong team captained by Iain Pattie. The team also won a number of the individual challenges and Pattie remarked: 'The Coal Services First Aid

**Corporate Office**

T: +61 (2) 8270 3200  
F: +61 (2) 9262 6090  
Level 21, 44 Market Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
GPO Box 3842  
Sydney NSW 2001

**Lithgow**

T: +61 (2) 6350 1050  
F: +61 (2) 6351 2407  
3 Proto Avenue  
Lithgow NSW 2790  
PO Box 72  
Lithgow NSW 2790

**Mudgee**

T: +61 (2) 6370 6100  
F: +61 (2) 6372 2470  
4/64 Sydney Road  
Mudgee NSW 2850  
PO Box 1156  
Mudgee NSW 2850

**Newcastle**

T: +61 (2) 4948 3100  
F: +61 (2) 4953 0541  
143 Main Road  
Speers Point NSW 2284  
PO Box 219  
Boolaroo NSW 2284

**Singleton**

T: +61 (2) 6571 9900  
F: +61 (2) 6572 2667  
1 Civic Avenue  
Singleton NSW 2330  
PO Box 317  
Singleton NSW 2330

**Woonona**

T: +61 (2) 4286 5400  
F: +61 (2) 4285 4144  
558-580 Princes Highway  
Woonona NSW 2517  
PO Box 42  
Corrimal NSW 2518

Competition is a great day and we are proud to have won amid such a competitive and highly skilled group.

‘On behalf of the team I would like to extend our thanks to a number of people. The first being Centennial Coal’s Mandalong mine for allowing us the time and equipment to train. In particular John Turner who is a big supporter of the brigadesmen.

‘We were also fortunate to have received coaching from multiple past competition winner Alex Lidwinski and we thank him for his time.

‘Finally, I would like to thank the rest of the team for their tremendous commitment: Daniel Wood, Clint Bryant, John Downie and our fifth man, Mick Cowan, who trained with us and was on call to stand in for Clint had he been called away to attend the birth of his baby. It is a pleasure to work and train with them.’

All teams demonstrated exceptional skills and the tightly contested challenges can reassure those working in the mining industry that they will be well attended to should they find themselves in an emergency situation.

**The following mine sites participated in the 2017 Northern Coal Services First Aid Competition:**

- Glendell
- Integra
- Mandalong
- Mount Owen
- Ravensworth
- Tahmoor
- Ulan Surface
- Wambo Open Cut
- Wambo Underground 1
- Wambo Underground 2

**Scenarios comprised:**

- Vehicle and bike collision
- Industrial accident
- Allergy
- Snakebite
- Burns
- Amputation
- Drug related incident

**For more information please contact:**

**Belinda Ward**—Marketing Manager

Mobile: 0419 148 135

[belinda.ward@coalservices.com.au](mailto:belinda.ward@coalservices.com.au)

## About Coal Services:

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Coal Services is an industry owned organisation committed to providing critical service and expertise to the NSW coal mining industry.

Coal Services is dedicated to working in partnership with customers and stakeholders to provide a suite of health, safety, environment and insurance solutions. These critical services support NSW coal mine workers, employers and communities and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe workplace and a healthy workforce.

Coal Services has statutory functions, as outlined within the *NSW Coal Industry Act 2001*. These functions include, but are not limited to, the provision of workers compensation; occupational health and rehabilitation services; the collection of statistics and the provision of mines rescue emergency services and training to the NSW coal industry.

Visit [www.coalservices.com.au](http://www.coalservices.com.au) for further information.