



Mines Rescue teams vie for regional title

Wollongong (Australia), 19 August 2019 –

Seven teams from mine sites across the Illawarra region descended upon South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal's Dendrobium mine on Friday, 16 August to compete at the 60th annual Southern Mines Rescue competition. South32 Illawarra's Appin Pink team were named overall winners for the second consecutive year; closely followed by runners-up, Dendrobium Blue.

Appin Pink's captain, Dan Ward, said he was proud of the team's efforts in the lead up to and on the day of the competition.

'We built on everything we have done in the past. There was a bit of pressure this year with some changes to the team, but the guys trained really hard. It was my first year as captain and they supported me and gave me the confidence to lead them as best as I could. We also have a brand new team member who only recently completed his brigades training; he is really keen and eager and put in the hard yards to learn all the competencies. I'm really proud of the boys,' he explained.

'Thanks to Southern Mines Rescue for putting on a challenging competition again this year and also to South32 Illawarra and Appin for supporting us in training,' he said.

Appin Pink will represent the Southern district at the Australian competition to be held at Moolarben (near Mudgee) later this year.

NSW Mines Rescue (Mines Rescue) training experts designed a range of surface and underground tasks to simulate those which rescue brigades could face should they be called to duty. The emergency response skills of each team were assessed in fire fighting, search and rescue, managing trauma and first aid as well as general mines rescue techniques.

'Our mines rescue competitions aim to be as realistic as possible to truly test the skills of our brigades in high pressure situations,' explained Wayne Green, General Manager Mines Rescue.

'We are fortunate that today our industry is focused on safe work practices and the need to respond to incidents is infrequent. Our specialised mines rescue training not only prepares brigades to respond if needed, but equips them with the skills to provide safety leadership at site every day.'

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For the first time in the event's history, a predominantly female mines rescue team also competed at the event. The Dendrobium Orange team, captained by Olivia Krowka, was comprised of women from the mine who are looking to train and join the mines rescue brigades, and also included an experienced brigadesman.

'It's becoming more common these days to see women in various mining roles, so it is pleasing to welcome them to today's competition. The team are yet to complete their initial induction training which means they have been limited to the surface events, but the exposure they have gained will put them in good stead for future competitions and this increase in diversity will assist our drive to continually improve our emergency response capability.'

Mr Green also thanked South32 Illawarra for partnering with Southern Mines Rescue in hosting the competition at their Dendrobium mine.

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Mines competing at the 2019 Southern Mines Rescue competition

- Appin Pink (South32 Illawarra) – Dan Ward
- Appin Blue (South32 Illawarra) – Andrew Dent
- Tahmoor (Glencore) – Malcolm Waterfall
- Metropolitan (Peabody) – Warren Kirk
- Dendrobium Blue (South32 Illawarra) – Ben Ransley
- Dendrobium White (South32 Illawarra) – Scott Dennis
- Dendrobium Orange (South32 Illawarra) – Olivia Krowka

Facts about mine rescue brigades

- Minimum 5% industry dedicated to emergency response (1 in 20 underground workers)
- Initial 10-day induction training required for all new recruits
- Brigades enrolment is voluntary
- Six training days required per year for all brigades rescuers

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About Mines Rescue:

Mines Rescue has a statutory obligation to provide emergency response services for the NSW coal industry. They are responsible for training and maintaining a competent brigade of rescue personnel and providing expert advice and equipment in the event of an incident.

Under the *Coal Industry Act 2001* (NSW), Mines Rescue must determine the minimum number of underground workforce personnel to be trained to provide mines rescue support. This has been set at a minimum five per cent of the underground workforce (plus full-time equivalent contractors).

There are currently around 461 underground mines rescue brigades persons across NSW; which equates to just over 6 per cent of the underground workforce.

The Illawarra mining region has around 146 brigades persons trained across 6 mines.

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 services help employers to identify, assess, monitor and control many risks inherent in the NSW coal mining industry.

Our preventative and responsive services in the areas of occupational health and safety, workers compensation, mines rescue and training help to deliver on our purpose 'to protect'.

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.

Please visit: www.coalservices.com.au