

Appin Pit Bulls clinch victory at Wollongong competition

Wollongong (Australia), 9 August 2024 —

Five Mines Rescue teams from across the region competed at the 65th Annual Southern Mines Rescue competition recently.

‘Fast-paced and gruelling’, the competing teams navigated a series of simulations across underground and surface settings.

Held at South32’s Dendrobium mine, five teams applied their specialist training in search and rescue, first aid, and firefighting.

In a tight competition, the Tahmoor Reds were named runners-up, with the Appin Pit Bulls named overall winners at a presentation dinner following the event.

On receiving the Winners Shield, team Captain, Daniel Ward, praised the efforts of the team;

‘We were told this was going to be a tough comp and it certainly was; a very hard-hitting, physically demanding few hours.

The underground portion was especially tough, physically, but we came together well. The Pit Bulls are a great team -- a tight mix of knowledge and experience, and newer teammates who are keen and hungry.

Thanks to my employer, Appin, for allowing us time to train and feel prepared. I’m looking forward to the Pit Bulls representing the Southern region at the Australian competition’.

The primary purpose of Mines Rescue is to provide emergency response to the NSW coal mining industry in the case of an emergency. Thankfully, major incidents requiring brigade response are limited.

Events like these allow brigade members to practice and hone their skills in preparation for the unfortunate circumstances where they may be called upon.

Chris Strohfeldt, Regional Manager, Southern Mines Rescue, said that these competitions are important days in the Mines Rescue calendar.

‘Our Mines Rescue competitions challenge teams with scenarios that replicate actual emergencies; testing capabilities that could be lifesaving, both onsite and in the community.

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I am immensely proud of every participant, not only for their dedication and performance under intense conditions but also for their expertise, which extends beyond the competition, and the industry, into our communities’.

Fast Facts

- There are 461 voluntary brigade members across the NSW coal industry; around 150 in the Northern region
- Minimum 5 per cent industry dedicated to emergency response (1 in 20 underground workers)
- Initial ten-day induction training required for all new recruits
- Six training days required per year for all brigade members
- A large percentage of brigade members progress into more senior mining roles

Teams competing at the Southern Mines Rescue Competition:

- Appin Green (Appin)
- Dendrobium Blue (Dendrobium)
- Appin Pit Bulls (Appin)
- Metropolitan Pit Ponies (Metropolitan)
- Tahmoor Red (Tahmoor)

- ENDS -



Back Row (L-R) – Tyler Stephens, Mark D’Arcangelo, Bobby Engel,
Front Row (L-R) – Martin Jackson, Daniel Ward (C), John Nellestein (V/C)
Missing: Trent Jelley



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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 are 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 Mining and Energy Union (MEU). Our purpose, vision and values are aligned to focus on the safety and health of our industry and its workers.

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