

Springvale to represent Western mining district at national competition

Lithgow (Australia), 2 September 2024 –

Mines Rescue teams from Springvale and Moolarben Open Cut mines took first place honours at the Western Mines Rescue competition held on Friday, 30 August 2024.

Seven teams from mine sites across the Lithgow, Mudgee and Gunnedah mining regions competed at the annual event which included both underground mines rescue exercises and emergency response for open cut operations.

The teams navigated a range of scenarios to assess their emergency preparedness, teamwork, and communication skills under high-pressure conditions. These exercises were crafted to mirror real-life incidents they might encounter in actual emergencies.

All teams were assessed on their theoretical knowledge and fire-fighting prowess. For underground mine rescue brigades, exercises involved handling a mass casualty first aid situation, search and rescue operations, monitoring mine conditions, and managing hazards. Surface teams focused on responding to a vehicle crash, performing vertical and confined space rescues.

Centennial Coal's Springvale team won the underground competition and will represent the district at the Australian Mines Rescue underground competition to be held in Newcastle next month. Springvale team captain, Luke Smith, praised his team for their performance which secured their win for the second consecutive year.

"I am so proud of the Springvale team. Two of our extremely experienced guys moved on after last year's competition so we had two new guys join. They were big shoes to fill, but today's efforts are a credit to all the work that the team has put in. Thanks also to Centennial for providing the opportunity to prepare for the comp; and to Mines Rescue for putting on a competition that reflects reality and the situations and environments that we are trained to prepare for."

Yancoal's Moolarben Open Cut team were named the best open cut team on the day. Simon Marchant, who captained the Moolarben Open Cut emergency response team, reflected on their achievements.

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"The team was outstanding today; I'm fortunate to also get the best captain award, and that's thanks to the collective effort and dedication of my team. We've been working together for the past three years, and on days like today, everyone simply excels by playing to their strengths," he said.

"These comps are always a great day and give us a chance to apply our training in a different environment. The scenarios were excellent and really tested our training and skills, especially the confined space exercise which was tricky to navigate. A big thank you to Mines Rescue for organising such a smooth event and to Yancoal for allowing us the time to participate."

The primary purpose of Mines Rescue is to provide emergency response to the NSW coal mining industry in the case of an emergency.

"Fortunately, major incidents requiring brigade response are limited but events like these allow brigade members to practice and hone a range of skills that can be used at work as well as in the community," explained Mark D'Elboux, Regional Manager Western Mines Rescue.

Mr D'Elboux also thanked Centennial for partnering with Western Mines Rescue to the competition at their Angus Place mine.

"A great deal of preparation and organisation is required to make these competitions as realistic and lifelike as possible. I would like to thank everyone from our team and from across the industry who contributed to the day's success. Being able to use the Angus Place facilities enabled us to take the competition to another level," he said.

Mines Rescue brigade members across the district, not just those competing, were also recognised for their dedication and commitment at the presentation dinner.

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Mines competing at the 2024 Western Mines Rescue competition

Underground teams	Open Cut teams
Centennial Coal <ul style="list-style-type: none">AirlyClarence (runners up)Springvale (winner - underground) Glencore <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ulan West Whitehaven <ul style="list-style-type: none">Narrabri	Peabody <ul style="list-style-type: none">Wilpinjong Yancoal <ul style="list-style-type: none">Moolarben Open Cut (winner – open cut)



Springvale

Back L-R: Nick Mostyn, Gavin Monaghan, Aaron Kelso, Ben Smith
 Front L-R: Luke Smith (Captain), Paul Staines (Manager), Michael Case



Moolarben Open Cut

Back L-R: Will Wakeling
 Front L-R: Nic Kenny, Simon Marchant (Captain), Brad Fry
 Absent: Dan Hood, Al Fittler

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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 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. Our purpose, vision and values are aligned to focus on the safety and health of our industry and its workers.

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