

## Teams vie for First Aid Competition title

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Newcastle (Australia), 14 April 2025 –

You sign up for a first aid course with the best intentions—hoping to gain the knowledge that could save a life. The trainers teach you everything, from how to stop bleeding to performing CPR, but with a silent, hopeful wish in the back of your mind: *I hope I never have to use this.*

Learning first aid isn't just about the skills—it's about being ready to step up when you least expect it.

The annual Coal Services Northern Region First Aid Competition, held on Friday 11 April at the Newcastle Mines Rescue station, serves as a platform for teams to test the skills they acquire through training at Mines Rescue. Eleven teams battled for top honours in a fierce and closely contested event, with the team from the Glencore Bulga Coal open cut mine being named the overall winners.

Monique Roberts, Head of Health Operations, explained that the competition is designed to test knowledge, skill and teamwork in a variety of realistic emergency situations.

'The scenarios reflect incidents that may occur at home, in the community, or in the workplace. Teams are equipped with only a basic first aid kit, like you might have at home or in the car. The idea is to treat injuries and remove other hazards until paramedics arrive.'

Newcastle Mines Rescue Regional Manager, Darren Parker, added that the day is an extension of the theory and skills learnt in the classroom.

'You never know when you might need to use these vital skills. The competition adds an element of surprise, allowing teams to practice thinking quickly and acting under pressure,' he said. 'The ability to assess and manage the scene calmly is what makes a truly effective first aider.'

Bulga team captain, Nick O'Toole, agreed and said that the competition pushed them to think beyond their training to manage each situation.

'The competition is challenging because of the realism of each scenario. The hardest one was performing CPR on a baby [CPR mannequin] while dealing with a lot of hysterical people in the room,' he explained.

'I'd like to thank Coal Services and all the volunteers – they truly make this event one that gives us a chance to learn and grow. I'd especially like to call out Hunter Valley Mines Rescue; we train there once a month, and I think that prepared us for today. We stayed consistent, we had a method that we followed, and the team did great.'

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Coal Services Pty Limited: ABN 98 099 078 234

**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



Bulga Coal team members (L-R):  
Nick O'Toole (captain), Kane Scott, Gary Quinn, Kieran Briener

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**For more information please contact:**

**Samantha Euston**—Communications Specialist Coal Services

Mobile: 0418 192 077

[samantha.euston@coalservices.com.au](mailto:samantha.euston@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.

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