

Peabody's Wambo claim victory at Hunter competition

Singleton (Australia), 20 June 2025 —

Mines Rescue Brigades from across the Hunter region competed at the Hunter Valley Mines Rescue competition on Friday, 20 June 2025.

Held at Peabody's Wambo mine, five teams applied their specialist training in search and rescue, first aid, and firefighting across underground and surface settings.

In a tight competition, the Barbarians were named runners-up, with Wambo named overall winners at a presentation dinner following the event.

Wambo's team Captain Dave Malone praised his new team for their solid victory

"It was tough putting together a team this year, as some teammates had already moved on. We brought in three new members, and after just three days of intense pre-training, we really came together. I've competed alongside Vice Captain Trent Humby since 2019, and with over twenty competitions behind me, our experience put us in good stead".

But as with all Mines Rescue competitions, there are always some unexpected challenges.

"There were some real surprises on the day—you never truly know what you'll face. You have to trust your team and make the right decisions quickly. The underground longwall scenario was pretty unique; it's something we never usually get to experience in a competition."

For Dave, it was a memorable finish, as he reflected on his time with Wambo.

"I've been with Wambo since 2012 and joined the team two years later. I never imagined I'd end up captaining a Wambo team, let alone leading the last-ever team, so securing a win is really special."

The primary purpose of Mines Rescues 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.

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Matthew Enright, Regional Manager, Hunter Valley Mines Rescue, said that these competitions are important days on the Mines Rescue calendar.

“Our competitions put teams under intense pressure, closely mirroring real-world emergency situations. I'm proud of the commitment and professionalism our brigade members showed today and consistently demonstrate; not just in competitions, but in real-life incidents onsite, and within the community, where their training often makes a critical, lifesaving difference.”

Fast Facts:

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

Teams competing at the Hunter Valley Mines Rescue Competition:

- Wambo
- Barbarians (mixed sites)
- Dartbrook
- Malabar
- Ashton

- ENDS -



Wambo team members: (L-R) – Image 1: David Malone, Trent Humby, Coby Bacchiella, Danuel Bell, Robert Thraves, Brendan Hlad.



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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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