

Bengalla triumphs at Hunter Valley Open Cut Competition

Singleton (Australia), 15 September 2025 –

Some of the most skilled emergency response teams went head-to-head at the annual Hunter Valley Mines Rescue Open Cut Competition, testing their capabilities in a series of lifelike, high-pressure scenarios designed to reflect the unpredictable nature of real-world mining emergencies.

From rescuing trapped individuals in smoke-filled buildings to managing diabetic events in heavy vehicle operators, teams demonstrated critical life-saving skills under extreme conditions.

The event was held at the Bengalla mine near Muswellbrook on Friday, 12 September 2025. Eight emergency response teams worked through a series of intense, time-critical challenges including extricating casualties from burning vehicles, executing complex stretcher lowering operations from significant heights, and navigating search-and-rescue missions in zero-visibility environments.

Each scenario tested not only technical skill and teamwork but also the mental resilience required when lives are on the line.

“The events were designed to simulate situations teams would most likely face should they be called to respond to a real-life incident, including exercises to test hazard awareness, vertical rescue, first aid skills, and firefighting,” explained Chad Bryant, Acting Regional Manager Hunter Valley Mines Rescue.

“Competitions like this provide an invaluable opportunity for teams to put their training into action and sharpen their skills. Hosting the event at a live mining operation an added layer of realism that’s hard to replicate, and we’re incredibly grateful to Bengalla for making this year’s event possible.”

The Bengalla team were named overall winners at a presentation dinner following the event, with team captain Scott Fulloon also winning the Best Captain award.

“Today’s event is an achievement for everyone who competed, not just our team. We are a new team, with about half the team competing for the first time today, and this is my first year as captain. This win is a reflection of the hard work and dedication that each person brings to the table and I am so proud to stand here tonight,” said Bengalla team captain, Scott Fulloon.

“I’d like to thank Bengalla for not only supporting us but also providing the time we needed to train, and a big thank you to Mines Rescue for organising this event and for their ongoing support and training. Their guidance plays a vital role in preparing us for these challenges.”

The team from United Wambo Joint Venture were runners up, Hunter Valley Operations were third.

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Teams competing on the day included:

Bengalla
Hunter Valley Operations
Mangoola
Mt Owen Glendell Operations

Mt Pleasant Operations
Mount Thorley Warkworth
Ravensworth
United Wambo Joint Venture



Above (L to R): Emma Reynolds (Team Manager); Scott Fulloon (Team Captain); Jason Allan (Team Vice-Captain); Liam Walker; Rod Howard; Matt Dunn; Tim Grainger and Kristy Orlowsky.

Ends.

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About Coal Services:

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