

Dendrobium triumphs at First Aid Challenge

Newcastle (Australia), 27 March 2026 –

Teams attended multiple scenarios, with casualties suffering from burns, gas explosions, head injuries, and a buggy crash after brake failure at the Newcastle Mines Rescue Station on Friday, 27 March 2026.

Twelve teams vied for top honours at the annual Coal Services Northern Region First Aid Competition, with GM³'s Illawarra Metallurgical Coal's Dendrobium Mine named the overall winners.

Katrina McKenzie, Head of Health Programs, said the competition provides an important opportunity for teams to apply the first aid skills developed through their Mines Rescue training in realistic scenarios.

'The scenarios reflect the kinds of incidents people may face at home, in the community or at work. Using only a basic first aid kit, teams are assessed on how they respond, work together, apply their practical first aid skills, and demonstrate their theoretical knowledge of first aid and CPR,' she said.

An effective first aider must be able to quickly assess and respond to injuries while remaining aware of any additional hazards. They must also demonstrate leadership and organisation at the scene, including directing bystanders to assist and recording key information for paramedics on arrival.

Newcastle Mines Rescue Regional Manager, Darren Parker, added that the event is about learning in a safe, controlled environment.

'You never know when you might need to use basic first aid skills, which is why events like these are so important. The competition adds an element of surprise, giving teams the chance to think quickly, act under pressure, and apply their training in realistic situations. The ability to assess and manage a scene calmly, while drawing on knowledge and practical skills, is what makes an effective first aider,' he said

GM³'s Dendrobium Mine team captain, Rob Monkley, thanked Coal Services' organisers and volunteers for the time and effort in coordinating the event:

'We're incredibly proud of this win, but even more grateful for the experience. Every year, the scenarios really test our ability to respond to a range of real-world situations. This year especially, managing mass casualty situations pushed us to think clearly, work as a team, and stay calm under pressure.

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

The value of these competitions can't be overstated. They build confidence, sharpen our skills, and prepare us for moments where what we do truly matters.

We also want to thank our General Manager, Simon Thomas, and GM³ for their ongoing support with training, and giving us the opportunity to be here today', said Rob.



L-R: Aaron Donnelly, Rod Powell, Rob Monkley (captain), Brad Davidson.

Ends

For more information, please contact:

Sarah Evans—Communications Specialist Coal Services

Mobile: 0467816705

sarah.evans@coalservices.com.au

About Coal Services:

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.

Visit www.coalservices.com.au for further information.