

Mines Rescue teams put emergency response skills to the test

Newcastle (Australia), 22 May 2026 —

Mines Rescue Brigades from across Newcastle competed at the Newcastle Mines Rescue competition on Friday, 22 May 2026.

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

In a tight competition, the Blue team, captained by Jordon Mearns, was named the overall winners at a presentation dinner following the event.

This was a third-time victory for Jordon, who praised his team for their solid victory.

"We all felt very comfortable on the day, even though there was the pressure of going for a third win in a row. But on the day, it's about the team and their individual efforts. The team were all passionate and committed, and I couldn't be prouder. They were just very competent men".

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

"My team really came together for the search and rescue scenario. It was very physical, especially having to stretch someone out 3 kms uphill. Very demanding. Anyone can perform well when they're in their comfort zone; it's when you're under duress, in an extreme physical environment, that's where you get to see what teams are really made of," Jordon maintains.

The primary purpose of Mines Rescues is to provide emergency response to the NSW coal mining industry in the case of an emergency. Thankfully, due to the safety systems and training in place at mine sites, 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.

Darren Parker, Regional Manager for Newcastle Mines Rescue, said these competitions are important days on the Mines Rescue calendar.

"These competitions test more than technical skill. They challenge teamwork, communication and decision-making in scenarios that reflect real emergency situations. Our Brigade

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
18 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

members demonstrated the professionalism and commitment we see from them every day, whether they are competing, responding onsite or supporting their communities”, said Mr Parker.

Fast Facts:

- There are 468 voluntary Brigade members across the NSW coal industry
- Minimum 5 per cent of industry is 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

- ENDS -



Blue team members: (L-R)

Matthew Pantalone, Travis Dukes, Dylan Dukes (VC), Jordon Mearns (Capt.), Benjamin Sheehan



For more information, please contact:

Sarah Evans — Communications Specialist, Coal Services

Mobile: 0467 816 705

sarah.evans@coalservices.com.au

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.

Please visit: www.coalservices.com.au.