



Joint Media Release

Grosvenor named champions at 62nd Australian Underground Mines Rescue Competition

Newcastle (Australia), 23 October 2026 –

The Hunter Valley has hosted the **62nd Australian Underground Mines Rescue Competition**, bringing together the best mine rescue teams from New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland to demonstrate the skills, teamwork and professionalism that are critical in mine emergency response.

Eight teams, comprising four NSW regional champions and four Queensland representatives, competed in a series of realistic, high-pressure emergency scenarios designed to test technical expertise, decision-making, hazard management and teamwork under pressure.

Held in the region where the first NSW mines rescue station was established in 1926, the competition formed part of the centenary celebrations of NSW Mines Rescue, marking 100 years of service to the mining industry through emergency response, training and safety leadership.

Throughout the day, teams faced a range of underground and surface simulation exercises that replicated real-world emergency situations. Competitors were assessed on their performance in hazard awareness, underground search and rescue, firefighting, first aid and the effective use of specialist rescue equipment.

The competition, jointly organised by NSW Mines Rescue and the Queensland Mines Rescue Service, provides an important opportunity for rescue teams to sharpen their skills, share knowledge and reinforce best practice across the industry.

At the conclusion of the competition, the Anglo-American Grosvenor mine team were named overall winners, narrowly edging out NSW's GM³ Dendrobium team by just 1.4 points.

The win marks a return to the top of the podium for the Grosvenor team, which finished second in 2025 and previously won the national titles in 2023, 2022 and 2019 (the competition was not held in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

Grosvenor Mines Rescue Team Captain Boyd Buschmann said the victory was the result of months of preparation and teamwork.

"This win reflects the hard work and commitment of the entire team, as well as the support we receive from Anglo American and our families, who make the significant training commitment possible.

"Competitions like this are about more than winning. They're an opportunity for teams from New South Wales and Queensland to share knowledge, learn from each other and continue improving our emergency response capability for the benefit of the whole industry."

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Grosvenor Mine General Manager Shane McDowall said winning the national title on interstate soil was a fantastic achievement for the team and a strong result for Grosvenor.

"Earlier this year, the team competed against the world's best in Zambia and brought home silver in the skills and obstacle race. That experience showed the strength of the team's skill, fitness and teamwork. They have carried that same commitment into this competition.

"These mines rescue competitions help build skills to support our emergency readiness, to ensure that when people are called upon to respond to the unexpected, they have the skills, confidence and support to achieve the best possible outcome," he said.

Erin Lee, General Manager NSW Mines Rescue, said there's an enormous amount of work that goes into preparing for the competition.

"We thank Ashton Coal for hosting the event and acknowledge the tremendous contribution of the organising committee, volunteers, assessors and officials whose efforts made the competition possible," she said.

"These competitions are about far more than winning. They are an opportunity to test skills, challenge ourselves under pressure and demonstrate the teamwork that sits at the heart of effective mine emergency response.

"In Mines Rescue, trust is everything. We train together, learn together and stand ready to support one another when called upon. Over time, those relationships become more than just teammates – Mines Rescue becomes a second family.

"Seeing teams work through complex scenarios with confidence, knowing each other's strengths and backing each other every step of the way, is one of the most rewarding parts of the competition. The standard this year was outstanding, and every team should be proud of what they achieved."

Queensland Mines Rescue Service General Manager Operations Ray Smith has been involved in Australian competitions since 2004 including 11 years as chief assessor. He said the competitions are a learning opportunity for everyone involved, including the people assessing the teams.

"Everyone is trained to the same knowledge and skill base, whether it's NSW or Queensland, but how you execute that comes down to experience, exposure and confidence. You'll see eight teams do it eight different ways, and there's a lot of value in seeing how other teams approach the same scenario."

Ray said the competition also gives both states confidence in each other's capabilities should they ever need to work together during a major mine emergency.

"Queensland and NSW have a long history of collaboration in mines rescue, and it is encouraging to see that spirit of cooperation continue through events like this.

"Historically, it's been a way of determining that our skill levels in both states are on par. If there's a large-scale event and we have to call NSW for assistance, we know the people turning up have the right skills and confidence, even though we don't train together.

"But fortunately, we're not seeing the big deployments of teams going in to rescue people because we're actually stopping incidents at the coalface. Mines rescue members are integrated into crews, where they can identify problems early, stop incidents from escalating or provide first aid quickly and get someone to casualty care on the surface.

"That's where the real importance is."

Ends.

Representing NSW:

- Composite team (Newcastle)
- Yancoal Ashton (Hunter Valley)
- GM³ Dendrobium (Southern)
- Centennial Springvale (Western)

Representing Qld:

- Argo Carborough Downs
- Anglo-American Grosvenor
- Anglo-American Moranbah North
- Glencore Oaky North

Overall winners: Grosvenor



Front row, L-R: Kane Ricketts, Boyd Buschmann (C), Glen Perry (VC)
Back row, L-R: James Green, Michael Morris, Jonas Pirak, Te Awa King, Tim Lawrence (Team Manager)

Second place: Southern Mines Rescue (Dendrobium)



Front row (L-R): James Sproates (VC), Rob Monkley (C), Ben Oxenbridge
Back row (L-R): Brian Walker, Aaron Donnelly, Pokaia Matthews, Bradley Davidson

Third place: Carborough Downs



Front row, L-R: Kerrod Sulter (VC), Matthew Harris (C), James Fegatilli
Back row, L-R: Lachlan Grant (NSW Mines Rescue), Brent Tokoli, Jack Anderson, Jai Brown, John Oliver

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