

7 August 2006

BALLARAT GOLDFIELDS TEAM WINS VICTORIAN MINES RESCUE COMPETITION

Ballarat Goldfields is the winner of the Victorian Mines Rescue competition for 2006. Ballarat Goldfields won the event ahead of seven other teams from four states. Second was the Oscar 1 Quarry and Mine Emergency Response Team from Bendigo, and third was the Stawell Gold Mines Emergency Response Team.

The annual three-day competition, held in Bendigo last Friday, Saturday and Sunday, tested the capabilities and qualities of mines rescue and emergency response teams in firefighting, search and rescue, first aid, rope rescue and general emergency response in underground mine situations.

Minerals Council of Australia Victorian Division Executive Director, Mr Chris Fraser, said the minerals industry's number one priority was zero harm of the workforce and the communities in which mining companies operate.

"This competition is important because it is set up to improve the safety and health of all people involved in the mining industry and to improve the practical training for mine site rescue teams," Mr Fraser said. "When members of mining operations apply teamwork to the underground search and rescue, rope rescue, first aid and fire fighting skills, they become a vital emergency rescue squad. This competition provides invaluable and realistic training for the rescue squads.

Captain of the Ballarat Goldfields team, Mr Jon Holden, said the win was a great reward for the team because it was the first year they had competed.

"We came last year as observers because we wanted to learn and gain new skills," Mr Holden said. "This is very gratifying for us because workplace safety is a critical part of our operation and it is an important part of our company's culture. This competition shows just how far we have come."

AWARD WINNERS

Search and Rescue exercise – Winner, Ballarat Goldfields
First Aid exercise – Winner, Northparkes Mines
Rope Rescue exercise – Winner, Oscar 1 Quarry and Mine Emergency Response Team
Breathing Apparatus practical exam – Winner, Ballarat Goldfields
Skills Event – Winner, Ballarat Goldfields
Safety Award – Winner, Zinifex Rosebery Mine
Captain's Award – Winner, Mr Jon Holden, Ballarat Goldfields
Noel Justice Award – Winners, Mr Armin Durr and Mr Brad Brierley
Spence Herd Trophy for Teamwork – Winner, Ballarat Goldfields

The MCA pays tribute to those who contributed to the success of this year's competition, especially sponsors and supporters, volunteer adjudicators and casualties, who gave the events a sense of realism.

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