

socio-economic & employees

As a natural resources group, Xstrata's activities provide basic materials and energy for social and economic development. Our operations contribute towards the economic development and wealth of their host communities and countries.





Personal safety equipment at Minera Alumbreira, Argentina

Our approach

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Financial performance

- attributable profit (net earnings) up 60% to \$1.7 billion
- basic earnings per share up 64% to 279¢
- real unit cost savings of \$19 million
- operational cash flow of \$2.8 billion, free cash flow of \$1.9 billion
- capital expenditure up 72% to \$947 million
- dividends increased by 42% To 34¢ per share
- total shareholder return of 278% March 2002 to 1 March 2006

Further detailed information on Xstrata's financial and operating performance is available in our Annual Report, available from www.xstrata.com or as a hard copy on request.

Economic contribution

Our operations contribute towards the economic development and wealth of their host communities and countries in a number of ways including:

- wages paid to employees and contractors;
- job creation through expansion of existing projects or new growth projects;
- indirect job creation at surrounding communities and towns;
- royalties and taxes paid to governments (national, state/provincial and local);
- goods and services procured for our businesses; and
- financial support for community development through Xstrata's corporate social involvement initiatives.

Xstrata's direct foreign investment in the countries in which it operates amounts to over \$10 billion since the Group's creation in 2002.

According to the Global Reporting Initiative, economic value added is the value a company creates from the materials, goods and services purchased and is calculated as the difference between revenue and total procurement costs.

Payments to providers of capital	\$m
Interest payments	115.8
Dividend payments	302.4
Retained earnings	1,404.0

Economic contribution by region \$m	Africa	Australia	Europe	Americas	Total
Revenue	1,905.7	4,086.0	1,208.6	849.5	8,049.8
Payments to suppliers (total procurement cost)	1,040.6	1,585.1	948.4	239.7	3,813.8
Economic value added	865.1	2,500.9	260.2	609.8	4,236.0
Salaries, wages and benefits	230.4	480.3	138.3	28.6	877.6
Corporate social involvement	12.5	7.8	1.3	3.1	24.7
Royalties	1.6	210.6	–	18.4	230.6
EBITDA	620.5	1,802.2	120.7	559.7	3,103.1
Tax expense*	53.6	299.1	27.1	162.9	542.7
Capital expenditure, acquisitions and investment (direct foreign investment)	328.9	604.1	44.3	1,877.1	2,854.4

*Tax expense relates to the tax charge in the profit and loss account. Tax paid in 2005 was \$380.2 million and relates to tax expensed in the previous year.



Samuel Mahlangu, participant in Xstrata Coal's commercial farming project, South Africa

Black economic empowerment initiatives in South Africa

The blueprint for the transformation of the mining industry in South Africa is set out in the Mining Charter, published by the South African Government in 2002. The charter's stated goal is "to create an industry that will proudly reflect its promise of a non-racial South Africa". Transformation describes the ongoing process to develop a sustainable, equitable society and economy in South Africa and, as one of the nation's major sectors, the mining industry has a leading role to play in this transformation.

Xstrata's Transformation Committee, chaired by CEO Mick Davis and founded in 2004, seeks to ensure Xstrata's South African business transforms in line with the spirit of the Mining Charter and Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act, and where possible, in advance of legislative requirements. Our aim is to be at the forefront of securing broad-based black economic participation and involvement in our industry.

HDSA ownership and participation

The Mining Charter sets out the aim for each mining company to achieve 26% Historically Disadvantaged South Africans (HDSA) participation in its business by 2009.

In 2004, Xstrata Alloys established a pooling and sharing venture with Merafe Resources, a black-owned and controlled company. Merafe currently has a 17% participation in

the venture; this interest will increase to 20.5% from 1 July 2006 and the venture is on track to satisfy the 26% participation required by the Mining Charter before the stipulated deadline.

In 2005, Xstrata Alloys and Anglo Platinum formed a 50/50 joint venture to develop a platinum group metals mine and concentrator on the Eastern Limb of the Bushveld Complex in Mpumalanga Province. In February 2006, Xstrata Alloys formed a black economic empowerment (BEE) partnership with Kagiso Trust Investments whereby Kagiso will acquire 26% of Xstrata's 50% share in the project. The agreement introduces meaningful black ownership of, and management participation in, Xstrata's share of the Mototolo Joint Venture.

In February 2006, Xstrata Coal signed an agreement with African Rainbow Minerals Limited to establish a new black-controlled company, ARM Coal, to be 51% owned by ARM and 49% by Xstrata. This will provide ARM Coal with an effective interest in Xstrata's South African coal business of more than 26%. To enhance ARM's participation in the South African coal industry, we have also agreed to grant ARM an option to increase its participation in Xstrata's South African coal business by up to a further 10%, resulting in total HDSA control of 36% of Xstrata's South African coal business.

Negotiations are currently being advanced to secure broad-based HDSA participation in Xstrata Alloys' Rhovan vanadium operation and are expected to conclude in the second half of 2006.

Sibongile Mokwana, student at Xstrata Coal's basic adult education and training centre



Employment Equity (EE)

The charter prescribes that HDSAs should constitute 40% of management positions in mining companies by 2009.

At the end of 2005, HDSAs represented 26% of all management positions at Xstrata's South African operations, a rise from around 20% at the end of 2004. Equity targets have been set and are monitored on a monthly basis. Our target is to increase this proportion to 45% by the end of 2007, well in advance of the 2009 target set out by the Mining Charter. Managerial positions held by HDSAs include senior supervisor, head of department, specialist manager, senior specialist, director and general manager. During the year, Xstrata Coal appointed its first black general manager and held a transformation Indaba (conference) to discuss the Mining Charter's workforce diversity targets.

The Mining Charter requires that women should account for 10% of our South African workforce by 2007. At the end of 2005, women represented 8% of the South African workforce, and 9% of management positions.

BEE procurement

The Mining Charter stipulates that procurement expenditure from BEE companies should be progressively increased and reported and defines procurement in three categories: capital goods; services; and consumables.

Wherever possible, we give HDSA-owned or controlled supply companies a preferred supplier status in all three categories. In order to promote the number and capability of HDSA suppliers, we provide various types of support for HDSA suppliers, including management training, transfer of technology and other forms of expertise where appropriate.

At the end of 2005, 42% of Xstrata Alloys' discretionary expenditure (including Merafe through the Xstrata-Merafe Chrome Venture) was from BEE-owned or controlled suppliers (or 40% on a standalone basis), while 32% of Xstrata Coal's discretionary expenditure was from BEE suppliers. These results mark an improvement over the previous year, in which Xstrata's total

discretionary expenditure from BEE suppliers represented 29% of the total. This was driven, in particular, by the adoption of a procure-to-pay procedure and policy by Xstrata Alloys and its BEE partner Merafe Resources to:

- set a framework that will assist in our compliance with the targets set by our HSEC and BEE policies;
- set a minimum policy standard that will allow our operations to strengthen existing management procedures or assist with the development of improved procedures; and
- preserve the principles of good corporate governance.

Human resource development and education

Xstrata is committed to ensuring every employee has the opportunity to become literate and numerate, and extends facilities to community members. We develop defined training and career paths for HDSA employees. Xstrata also plays a leadership role in making education available to the broader South African community and we support education at every level.

Seventy-one per cent of our employees are functionally literate and numerate and all employees have the opportunity to attend adult basic education and training. Xstrata Coal's Group Training Centre in Witbank is used by the various divisions. In addition, computer training is provided for employees and community members, with 102 community members enrolled at the end of 2005 and a further 120 who have completed training. Secretarial learnerships are provided for community members through an in-house development programme.

A community Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and skills centre in Kwa Guqa, Witbank, will be opened in the second half of 2006 to offer skills training to unemployed people as well as our employees. This learning and trade centre was developed in conjunction with the Emlalaheni Local Council.

To enable existing employees to progress into management positions, career path flow charts and individual career paths have been developed and skills matrices are completed to ensure any gaps are addressed. High potential employees are identified and

Workers at a walnut, grapevine, peach, olive and quince orchard in Belén, Argentina, which has benefited from enterprise development projects supported by Minera Alumbrera



'fast tracked', including 25 Xstrata Coal employees for whom individual career development plans were developed and 89 Xstrata Alloys employees. To encourage women to join the mining industry, Xstrata has a Sustained Gender Specific Recruitment Programme in South Africa and has made a number of bursaries available to female applicants.

Overseas placements and training programmes are provided for HDSA employees including technical visits and experiential training elsewhere within the Xstrata Group.

In 2005, Xstrata invested ZAR25.8 million in education programmes in South Africa, to support education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, as set out in the **Apprenticeships, tertiary education, bursaries and scholarships** section on page 35.

Housing and living conditions

We aim to ensure that all Xstrata South Africa's employees have the opportunity to live with their families in a normalised and sustainable social environment and to participate in wealth accumulation through the ownership of property.

Xstrata aims to eradicate all single sex hostels for employees. In 2005 we had one hostel remaining at a coal operation, which houses around 169 employees, mainly migrant workers, who are not permitted to settle in South Africa. Housing loans and education materials about the benefits of property ownership are made available and we encourage all employees to leave hostels and take up our funding offers wherever possible.

Migrant labour

Xstrata's global policies and procedures comply with national treaties and agreements on migrant labour. Our policies and procedures target the fair and equitable treatment of all employees, regardless of their place of birth.

An Alexander Forbes audit in 2003 confirmed that there is no discrepancy between the rates of pay we offer local or migrant workers in South Africa.



Matthews Ramerula, Joel Chauke, Abihaar Magodiello and Alfred Makgetle at Boshhoek ferrochrome smelter

Procurement and supply chain

Xstrata does not have a central procurement policy, preferring to allow sites to source products and services locally, or at a regional or commodity business level. This approach emphasises local procurement and we give preference to site area suppliers wherever possible. It also provides greater flexibility to our operations in planning and securing procurement.

We engage with our suppliers to assess HSEC performance and policies according to our HSEC Management Standard: Suppliers, Contractors and Partners. All suppliers and contractors are provided with a copy of our corporate policies including our Business Principles and we encourage suppliers to adhere to these principles. We pay suppliers promptly and ensure that all transactions are properly authorised and accurately recorded.

We pay and we ensure that our contractors pay the salaries and benefits to their employees at least in accordance with the legal requirements and benchmarked to industry norms in the relevant geographic regions.

Enterprise development

We seek to nurture sustainable communities by supporting local business ventures and enterprise development, as well as employment, training and education programmes that improve the skills and capacities of local people. Enterprise support and development is a significant area of support for Xstrata's community relations and corporate social involvement programmes, particularly in South Africa, Peru and Argentina. Typically our support takes the form of interest-free or 'soft' loans, donations, equipment purchase or hire, management and other expertise.



Minera Alumbraera supports primary agricultural producers to establish sustainable businesses



Minera Alumbraera is supporting a wide range of agricultural projects aimed at providing local communities with the skills needed to establish sustainable businesses. Eighty per cent of producers from the Belén District are small farmers who own between one and five hectares of arable land. The average age of producers is between 60 and 65 years and typically land is cultivated traditionally with rudimentary tools and irrigation systems, and poor-quality seeds.

To provide local farmers with an insight into modern agricultural production

techniques, Alumbraera helped to organise the First Cooperative Symposium in 2005 to provide 150 producers with training in agricultural theory. Producer associations were also established as a result to provide further training opportunities.

Alumbraera has worked in conjunction with the Irrigation Department of Catamarca and irrigation companies to distribute irrigation water in the region to increase the surface area under cultivation, improve water storage capacity and extend harvest times. As a result, in the Belén district, 12,000 hectares are now under irrigation, 80% of which is used for fruit and nut production.

Belén is the heart of the walnut region in Catamarca and, in 2005, farmers prepared a 2.5 hectare area of land for 500 plants used as root stock for grafting American walnut varieties. Alumbraera donated a cold chamber, instrumental in keeping the walnut grafts active. Eighty per cent of grafted plants have achieved significantly higher production rates and are attracting superior prices per kilogram compared with the old variety.

Following consultation with the Belén community, which identified a need to diversify crop production, Alumbraera is supporting the varietal re-engineering of agricultural products such as grapevines and nuts, and the optimisation of crops such as pepper, cumin and anise. Alumbraera signed an agreement with the Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA), the Municipality of Belén (Belén) and the Agencia de Extensión Rural in 2005 to help establish a nursery to propagate improved fruit and nut varieties.

In addition, Minera Alumbraera contributed 17,000 plants and more than 2,000 rolls of fence wire to a project to increase grape production by 1,200 tonnes. Twenty-three small-scale grape producers and their families in Hualfín worked together to prepare 30 hectares of new grapevines and stone fruit trees. The project is expected to

provide stable jobs for more than 200 people over three years and 150 permanent jobs at full production. Stage two commenced in 2005, with Alumbraera providing an additional 22 small farmers with supplies of wire for 16 hectares of vineyard plantings, petrol for use by supervising engineers, and farm equipment and agrochemicals.

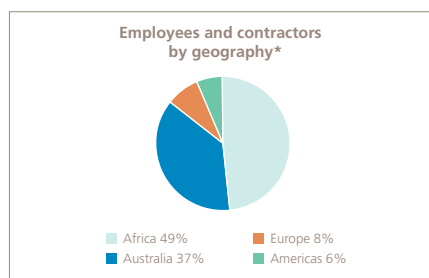
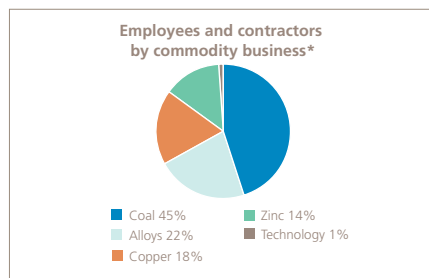
A further 300 producers from the Belén District are participating in a range of projects supported by Minera Alumbraera to produce higher quality paprika through improved training on production and drying technologies.

The Pro-Huerta Programme in Catamarca, run by INTA, provides materials for building greenhouses and permanent technical assistance and training in greenhouse vegetable production – the most efficient means of growing food in this mountain region. The greenhouses are constructed using mud bricks with a plastic covering, replaced annually. Materials are funded by Alumbraera, while the construction is performed by the community members, students and parents. Greenhouses are also being constructed as part of the Greenhouse Gardens and Farms Development and Training Programme, which enables 23 schools to produce food from greenhouses. A further three greenhouses currently under construction and another six have been provided with materials. Xstrata Provincial Affairs Manager Jorge Montaldi said the schools were located in very poor areas where most families rely on raising cattle to barter for food and clothing.

“The sale of excess produce from the greenhouses is being considered, which could help provide fresh food to families and build the schools’ economic resources,” he said. “More than 2,300 students benefit from the programme and families are starting to replicate this technique with small vegetable gardens at home.”

Employees

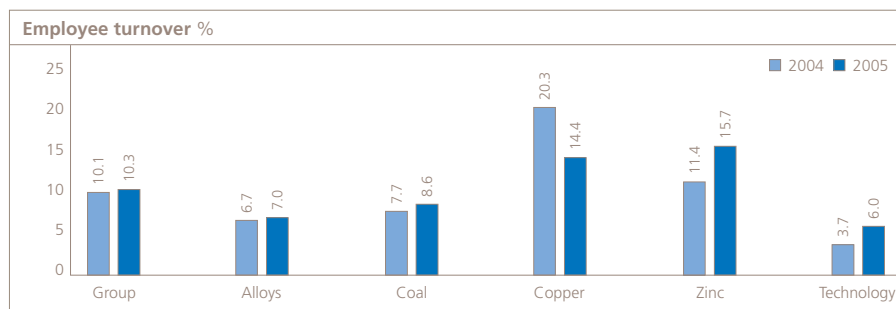
Xstrata employs approximately 24,000 people globally, including contractors. Xstrata Coal is the largest employer in the Group, accounting for 45% of the total number of employees, with operations in Australia and South Africa. At 22%, Xstrata Alloys is the second largest employer with its entire workforce located in South Africa. Almost half of Xstrata's employees are based in South Africa, with 37% located in Australia.



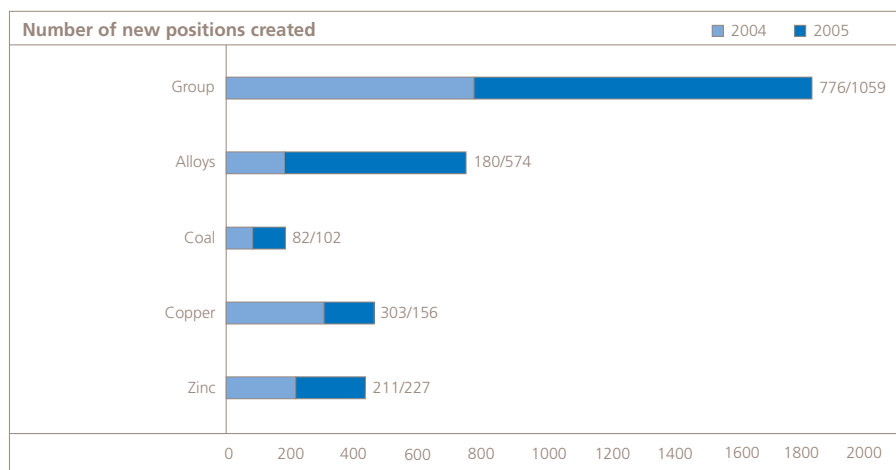
*Excludes unallocated

Human resources functions within each commodity business are headed by a General Manager Human Resources who reports to each commodity business CEO.

Employee turnover across Xstrata is relatively stable, varying from 6% in the Technology division to 15.7% in Xstrata Zinc. Overall Group turnover increased slightly from 10.1% in 2004 to 10.3% in 2005. During the current high commodity price environment, competition for skilled labour is particularly high, especially in mining areas such as Queensland and for skilled HDSA employees and managers in South Africa.



In 2005, a total of 92 days of industrial action occurred at a number of coal and chrome operations, related to wage, collective agreement or contract negotiations, including the Rustenburg and Wonderkop chrome operations and Horizon chrome mine in South Africa, New South Wales and Queensland coal operations in Australia and a one-day national stoppage which affected our South African coal operations.



In 2005, Xstrata's operations created an additional 1,059 new positions (this excludes the replacement of employees leaving) of which 1,002 or 95% were filled by people local to the operation concerned.

Workplace equality

Xstrata has comprehensive programmes and processes in place to ensure a work environment and terms and conditions of service which are free from discrimination. Clear expectations are set for management, performance is monitored against these and action is taken in response to any non-conformance. All employees receive our Statement of Business Principles in their first language and these principles form an integral part of our induction process for new employees and contractors. All employees are treated fairly and with

Employee benefits by type	
\$m	2005
Wages and salaries	718.4
Social Security and other benefits	46.6
Pension and other post-retirement costs	81.2
Equity compensation benefits (LTIP awards)	31.4
Total	877.6

respect. Discrimination is not tolerated in the workplace. Active measures are taken to promote the implementation of this policy, including the preparation of an annual plan at our Australian operations and submission of an annual report to the Equal Opportunity Commission.

All human resources policies and all decisions affecting employment and career development are based on the principle of individual merit. Policies such as the Fair Treatment at Work Policy, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Data Protection and Privacy Policy, Risk Management Policy and Fraud Control Policy are reinforced through contracts of employment, inductions, tool box talks and ongoing refresher training.

Xstrata has a grievance policy and procedure in place which all employees can access if they believe that they have been unfairly discriminated against. This process is managed at the commodity business and site level. A toll-free, confidential ethics line has also been established and this mechanism and feedback results are described in the Governance chapter.

Compliance with the Business Principles is a fundamental part of any assessment of our employees' performance and non-compliance with any element of our Business Principles automatically results in disciplinary proceedings. We have a number of systems and forums in place that encourage employee feedback and ad hoc surveys are undertaken by commodity businesses or divisions. Daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly management briefings occur at all levels of the business and are the main mechanisms by which employee feedback is elicited. We also use notice boards, newsletters, video messages and email notices to keep our employees and contractors up to date with important initiatives across the Group. Employee feedback is encouraged through a range of processes, including the performance appraisal system and monthly meetings between operational managers and employee representatives.

Xstrata's support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles



Lorena Chirivella, Environmental Officer, monitoring water near the Vis Vis River, Minera Alumbrera

Union coverage of Xstrata employees			
Country	Commodity business	Union	Percentage coverage
Australia*	Xstrata Coal	Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU)	In Australia the main union is the CFMEU. Other unions include the APESMA, ETU, AMWU. Xstrata Coal respects the right for an employee to belong to a union but does not force membership or maintain statistics on membership.
		Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia (APESMA)	
		Electrical Trades Union (ETU)	
		Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU)	
		Colliery Officials Association (COA)	
		Australian Collieries Staff Association (ACSA)	
South Africa	Xstrata Coal	National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)	80%
		United Association of South Africa	4%
		Solidarity	3%
		El Shadai Workers Union of South Africa	1%
South Africa	Xstrata Alloys	Union not specified	65%
South America, Australia	Xstrata Copper	Collective agreements	44%
Spain, Germany, UK	Xstrata Zinc	Union not specified	50%

*Collection of information pertaining to union membership is illegal in Australia because of the Privacy Act 1988.

and Rights at Work is set out in the Business Principles.

Xstrata upholds the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour and excludes the use of child labour. All sites report the age of their youngest employees and are audited through the internal audit risk management programme.

Employee representation

We recognise the right of our employees and contractors to freely associate and join trade unions and this information is shared with potential employees. We have a number of operations that have a mix of collective and individually regulated employment arrangements.

In Australia the main union is the CFMEU. Other unions include the APESMA, AWU, ETU and AMWU. Our Australian operations do not collect information pertaining to union membership as this is prohibited under the Privacy Act 1988.

Workforce diversity

Xstrata supports equity and diversity in the workplace and manages this according to the cultural and legislative requirements of the host country. Xstrata's Employment Policy respects the labour standards laid down by the International Labour Organization's Fundamental Conventions, and these commitments are found in our Business Principles.

In South Africa, employment equity programmes – particularly aimed at HDSAs and women – are required under the terms of the Mining Charter and are managed via equity plans and skills development plans (see employment equity).

Across the Group, we seek to increase the number of women in our workforce through recruitment initiatives and we are working to improve the provision of flexible work arrangements, such as flexitime and childcare facilities. In 2005, women accounted for 8% of Xstrata's employees and held 12% of all management positions. A member of our Executive Committee is responsible for monitoring our equal opportunity performance.

In 2005, all Xstrata commodity businesses increased the number of women employed compared with 2004. Xstrata Coal increased the number of women at its Australian operations from 4.4% in 2004 to 6.4% in 2005. In South Africa, women accounted for 8% of our Xstrata Coal and Xstrata Alloys employees, on target to achieve 10% by 2007. Training programmes in South Africa enable potential employees to be trained in preparation for permanent employment. In 2005, 60% of our South African education bursaries were awarded to women. Xstrata Copper has increased the number of women it employs from 10.9% in 2004 to 13.7% in 2005 and 20 of these women hold managerial roles.

Shift Overseer Naas de Jager and Monjane Dhide at the morning safety meeting at Boschmans coal operation



Training and development programmes

Xstrata is committed to working with employees to help them reach their full potential through on-the-job training, specific technical courses and leadership development programmes. Training and development needs vary from business to business and are identified through performance reviews which are conducted at least annually across the Group and from informal discussions between employees and their supervisors. In 2005, the average number of training days was 9.4 per employee.

Apprenticeships, tertiary education, bursaries and scholarships

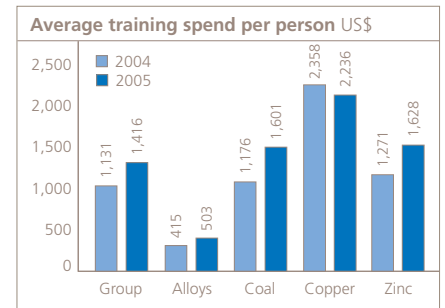
In recognition of the importance of supporting the development of future employees for the mining industry and addressing the declining trend of students entering mining-related subjects at universities, Xstrata offers a significant number of trades apprenticeships, graduate traineeships, bursaries and scholarships across its global operations and provides further support to universities to support future recruitment. In South Africa in particular, we have implemented a systematic approach to investing in the skills of our future workforce, at the primary, secondary and tertiary education levels, and through university bursaries, scholarships and the establishment of university chairs.

Apprenticeships

- 87 trade apprentices at Xstrata Coal Australian operations for electrical and mechanical tradespeople, consisting of a mix of on-site, off-site and TAFE training undertaken over four years;
- 149 trainee engineering and mining apprenticeships in South Africa;
- 'Learnerships' offered to members of the broader community in South Africa, including Mines Qualifications Authority training as apprentices;
- 59 new apprenticeships at Mount Isa Mines in 2005, increasing to an intake of 72 in 2006 and a further 70 or more apprentices starting in 2007;
- Alumbrera copper mine in Argentina offers an apprenticeship programme for students of technical schools and the universities in Tucumán and Catamarca; and
- Nordenham zinc smelter in Germany offers two apprenticeships a year.

Education support

- Xstrata launched the three-year EQUIP school improvement programme in December 2004, working with provincial government in South Africa, to improve the governance of 20 schools and the quality of primary and secondary teaching;
- 50 students from local communities in South Africa participate in a one-year residential study programme provided by Xstrata to improve students' University entrance exam results. Candidates who receive a University pass are encouraged to proceed with tertiary education and apply for an Xstrata bursary. This programme has been implemented as an interim measure, to supplement education support for those children who will not benefit from the schools improvement programme;
- Two-year training programme for 25 Australian university graduates in the fields of mining engineering, mechanical and electrical engineering, surveying, accounting, occupational health and safety, and environmental science;
- Graduate development programme at the Stellenbosch Business School, South Africa;
- Xstrata Copper's Mount Isa operations employed 42 graduates in 2005 and offered vacation employment for 41 university students;
- In Spain, Xstrata Zinc provides professional training for students on site during a summer course;
- In 2005, Minera Alumbrera provided work placements for more than 30 students from the universities of Tucumán and Catamarca, and hired 40% as permanent employees; and
- Through its partnership with Spinifex State College and the Good Shepherd Catholic College in Mount Isa, Xstrata awarded 14 students with school-based bursaries at the beginning of 2005 and a further 14 students in November 2005 for the 2006 school year.



Scholarships and bursaries

- Over 100 bursaries provided for HDSA students in South Africa and 74 work experience placements and on-the-ground training to bursars during the vacation period;
- Scholarships and financial assistance to 34 students in Australia;
- Assistance provided directly to the Universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand to assist HDSA students studying mining and related disciplines;
- Minera Alumbra provides an annual scholarship for mining engineering students at Catamarca University to study metallurgy at a Dutch university; and
- One scholarship is provided on the European Mineral Engineering Course (EMEC) at Camborne School of Mines in the UK, through a joint initiative with Anglo American and Rio Tinto to support mining-related tertiary education in Europe. Xstrata is also a member of the Federation of European Mineral Programmes.

To further support tertiary education, Xstrata funded two university chairs in 2005 – ZAR1.7 million for a Chair of Geology at Rhodes University in South Africa and AUD1.5 million for a Chair of Metallurgical Engineering at The University of Queensland.

Apprentice Electrician Krystine Cameron replaces a faulty isolator at the Mount Isa copper concentrator



The introduction of a permanent part-time shift at Ernest Henry copper mine in north Queensland has improved equipment utilisation at the mine and created family-friendly job opportunities for women in Cloncurry.

The shift operates between 9am and 3pm and was introduced to cut the amount of time haul trucks were standing idle due to breaks and shift changes. The new day shift was marketed to local mothers who were likely to have children in school or day care and who were looking for work that blended in with their family responsibilities.

Eight of the nine part-timers driving haul trucks are women, most with children at home, and the mine provides a bus to transport the part-timers from the town each day.

Superintendent Employee Services, Administration and Community Relations Andrew Upfill said it was a win-win situation.

"The permanent part-time shift has certainly been a success for us. It has kept our trucks working and material movements up. Instead of parking trucks up to have breaks, we keep them operating," he said. "This has been reflected in the percentage increases in equipment utilisation.

"One of the main challenges faced in introducing permanent part-time drivers was getting the workforce to adapt to a day shift of drivers – something that was new for everyone concerned. Over time the workforce has seen the benefits of improved utilisation of equipment on a daily basis and the value of having relief drivers has become better understood. The other main challenge was ensuring that the new trainees were safely integrated into the mine operation."

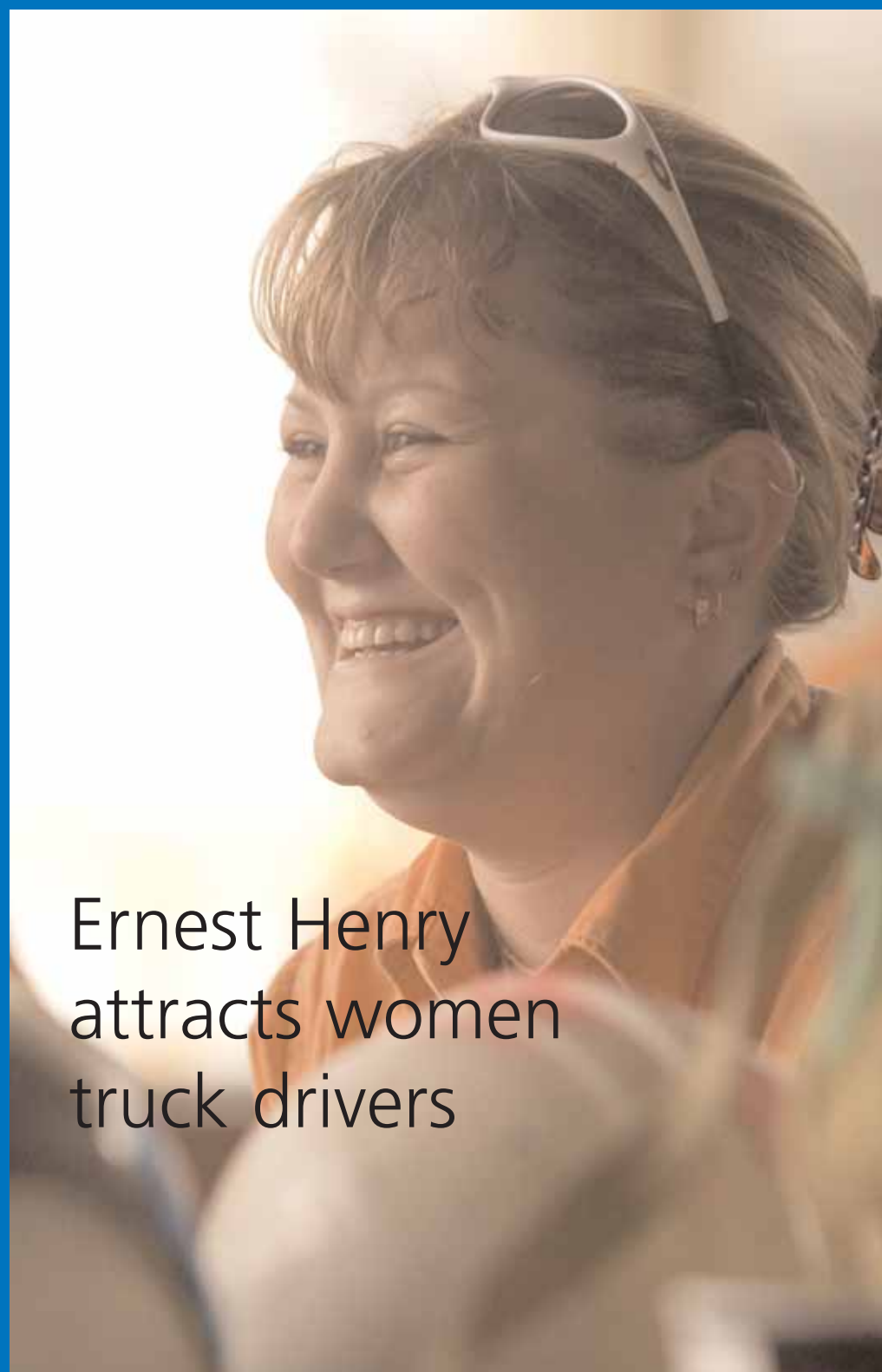
Andrew said new recruits received three weeks of intensive training before they were allowed to drive alone.

Colleen Power is one of the part-time haul truck operators. She and her husband Peter have three children – Kris (14), Adelaide (8) and Rhiley (6). She said she was looking for a change from sales and cleaning jobs and the family-friendly shifts made the job attractive.

Colleen hauls waste and ore in a 200-tonne truck that is about 14 metres long, almost seven metres high and can weigh more than 400 tonnes when fully loaded.

"I'm qualified to operate Komatsu 830E, Caterpillar 785 and Caterpillar 793 trucks, and I hope to acquire more skills. I would not shy away from working in other areas of mining as my children get older. Right now the permanent part-time work is great for me and my family."

Women comprise 30% of Ernest Henry's workforce, with several working as full-time mining technicians and 14 employed in administrative roles.



Ernest Henry
attracts women
truck drivers