



Media Release - 11 September 2006

XSTRATA COAL WINS NSW ENVIRONMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD

Xstrata Coal has won the NSW Minerals Council Environment Excellence Award for Environmental Management Application.

Announced last night, the prestigious State award was presented by the Hon. Ian Macdonald, Minister for Primary Industries, Natural Resources and Mineral Resources, to Xstrata Coal for the successful rehabilitation of the former New Wallsend Colliery underground mine site.

Xstrata Coal was also named runner-up in the same category for the development and implementation of its new continuous environmental monitoring system at its Mt Owen open-cut operation.

"Xstrata Coal is immensely proud of the New Wallsend Colliery closure and rehabilitation project, and believes it is a leading example of how effective sustainable development practices can help establish a positive legacy for future generations once mining has been completed," said Xstrata Coal NSW Chief Operating Officer, Mick Buffier.

"By winning first and second place in the category of environmental excellence, we are clearly demonstrating our commitment to establishing and enforcing the highest standards of sustainable development and environmental management practices across all our sites.

"We invested substantial resources to ensure the final land use of New Wallsend met both Government and community expectations, and introduced a continuous monitoring tool at Mt Owen to assist with the proactive management of potential noise and dust in a timely and cost effective manner."

Completed in June 2005, the New Wallsend project was undertaken over a two and a half year period, at a cost of approximately AUD9 million.

The New Wallsend site is currently undergoing a care and maintenance phase to facilitate regulatory sign-off and ensure the rehabilitation project is sustainable for the long term.

The future land use strategy for New Wallsend was developed in consultation with local and state Governments as well as the local community, and may comprise of a balanced mix between conservation areas and urban development. With a large part of the site comprising of bushland, the site may also offer opportunities for biodiversity conservation.

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“Xstrata Coal considers the New Wallsend closure, decommissioning and rehabilitation project to be a significant achievement. We have proactively remediated a significant parcel of land affected by 150 years of coal mining to a stable condition that will now support a range of land uses,” said Mr Buffier.

“Throughout each stage of the development and implementation of the rehabilitation project, Xstrata Coal consulted with key stakeholders, including regulatory authorities and the community, to ensure we were creating a site which could meet the many diverse needs of future potential landowners.”

Xstrata Coal was required to create and implement a number of innovative techniques to meet the site’s rehabilitation challenges, including: the removal and treatment of contaminated material to eliminate potential exposure and consequent harm to human health and the environment; the re-sealing of previously filled adits to be consistent with the latest industry standards; stabilisation of a landslip associated with the former trial box-cut; and the re-establishment of Maryland Creek and its associated riparian ecosystem.

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