



VICTORIAN MINE RESCUE COMPETITION

20 years
A Commemoration





VICTORIAN
DIVISION

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Introduction

From humble beginnings 20 years ago, the Victorian Competition has emerged as a well respected, highly competitive event.

With teams entering from across the nation, the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition has become a truly national event.

Teams come from sites that extract the multitude of commodities that Australia is famous for, testing their skills against teams operating in quite different environments.

The sharing of knowledge and experience enables mine rescue personnel to be called upon not only in their own operations but operations throughout the state and across the country. Having a significant pool of highly trained rescue personnel across Australia contributes greatly to the minerals industry's commitment to zero harm.

Victoria - a small State geographically has much to be proud of. From the large open cut coal mines that provide almost all of Victoria's power generation needs, to the historic gold fields that have been operating on and off for over 150 years and significantly contributed to prosperity of the State, to the mineral sands sector with world class deposits and the reemerging base metals sectors in the eastern part of the State.

With such a long and proud mining history, along with a significant potential to grow the industry and contribute to the development of Victoria, the commitment to safety and health in the minerals industry is paramount. Mine rescue capability further provides the assurance that on the rare occasion that an incident occurs on a mining site, we have the best people in place to respond.

Mine rescue personnel are without doubt the most dedicated individuals I have the pleasure of knowing. The absolute commitment to their colleagues in times of significant duress is admirable indeed.

It is with awe, pride and gratitude that as a Victorian I am assured that the minerals industry is in very safe hands indeed.

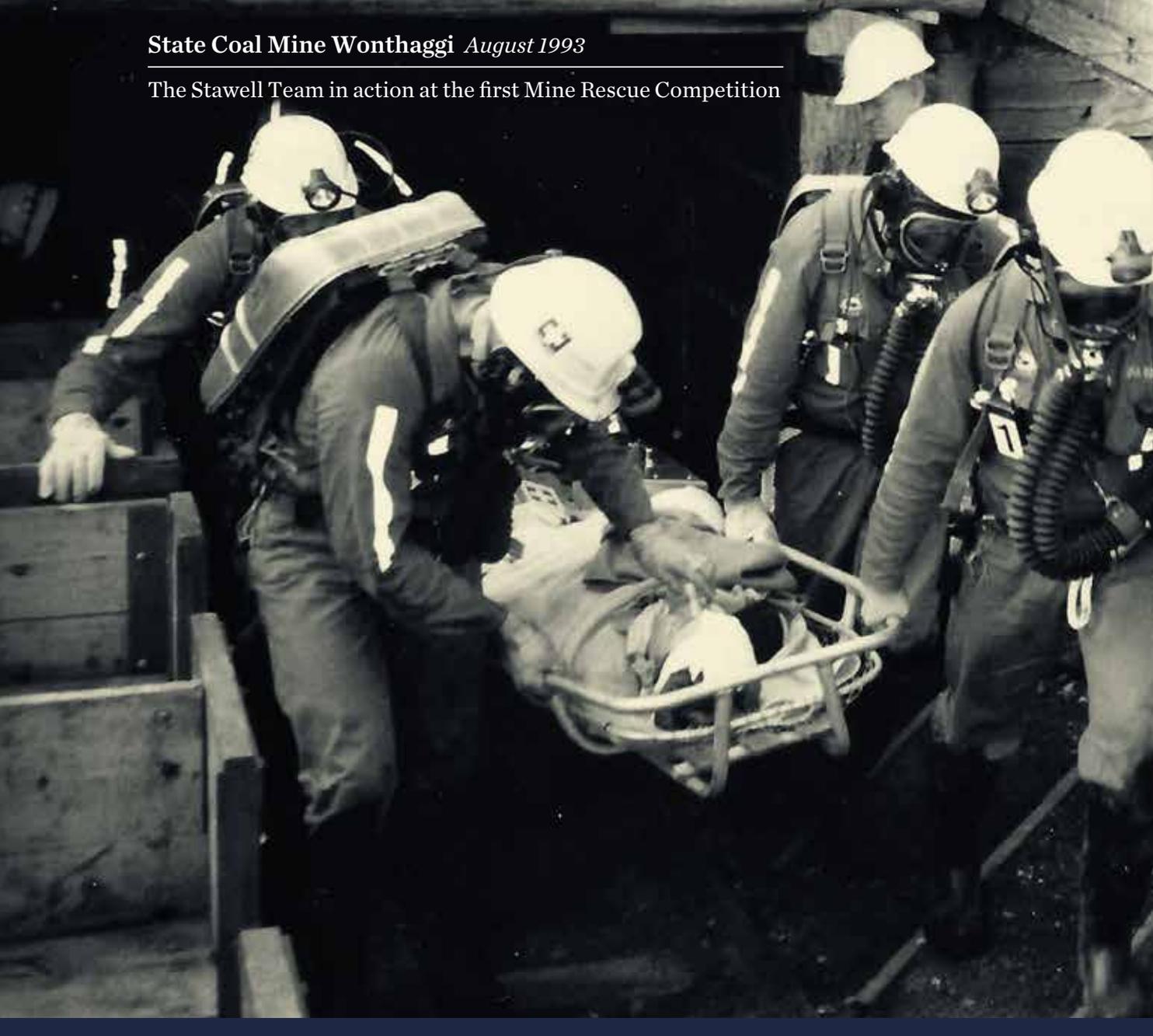


Megan Davison
Executive Director
Minerals Council of Australia
Victorian Division

The Early Years

State Coal Mine Wonthaggi August 1993

The Stawell Team in action at the first Mine Rescue Competition



NOTICE
DANGER
PLEASE KEEP OFF
THE TRACK AT ALL
TIMES





Early History of the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition

Early in 1993 at the State Coal Mine Reserve at Wonthaggi, the local Displan (Disaster Response) organisations held a rescue exercise in the old mine. One of the local members suffered an asthma attack and suddenly proceedings were thrown into disarray.

The Mines Inspector at that time, John Davidson, threw his arms up in the air noting that something needed to be arranged in the area of a mine rescue team.

A short time later Spence Herd from Orica Australia and John Davidson organised a meeting of interested people to discuss the issue.

What started out as a demonstration of mine rescue techniques became the inaugural Victorian Mine Rescue Competition, when Orica Australia and Drager Australia, represented by George Opaninis, put forward trophies for the event.

Three teams were invited to participate: Stawell Gold Mines and Benambra Mine from Victoria, and Woodlawn Mine from N.S.W.

Due to an incident at the Benambra Mine the week prior, they were unable to compete.

From that initial incident at Wonthaggi, the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition has become one of Australia's leading competitions with teams coming from across the nation each year to test their mine rescue skills.

Some of the highlights through the early years include:

- The first Australian female mine rescue team from Renison Ltd. (Tasmania) competed in 1995.
- 1997 saw all the teams on stand-by for the Thredbo disaster.
- A visit during competition by the Premier of Victoria, The Hon. Jeff Kennett in 1998.

“What started as a demonstration of mine rescue techniques



State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi
August 1993

The Stawell Team in action at the first Mine Rescue Competition.

Central Deborah Gold Mine, Bendigo
1995 & 1996

Newspaper reports appearing in the *Bendigo Advertiser* (1995 and below right, 1996) and bottom right, the Renison 'Green' All Female Team Card.

Mine crews display their rescue skills

From — Page 1

Mr Justice said about 90 percent of participants on standby during the weekend were volunteers, having worked their skills outside working hours, providing a precious life saving community service.

About 60 mine rescue workers from across the nation gauged their skills through rigorous competitions at Central Deborah during the weekend.

Mr Justice said the event helped set emergency rescue standards for the next year.

His judges scored each team for search and rescue, first aid, rope rescue, fire fighting, breathing apparatus, slawcy and skills during exercises.

Volunteers applied this

information when prioritising areas which needed further attention, Mr Justice said.

Mr Justice said while those entering the mining industry begin as a serviceman learning the skills required in a mining operation, there was scope for specialisation later.

However, 90 per cent of those practicing mine rescue were volunteers who learned and applied the skills outside working hours, he said.

Teams from various mines in Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Tasmania competed in the day, continuing to

After all the du it was the 'Red from the Coles Mine who took



Elite mining teams compete in Bendigo

IF THERE was ever a good time to get stuck down a mine, the weekend was it — as Australia's elite mining teams converged on the Central Deborah Gold Mine for the 1996 Victorian mine rescue championships.

This is the fourth year of competition, and the third to be hosted by the Central Deborah Gold Mine and the firefighting exercise was held out at the Bendigo CFA complex.

Teams competed in a range of exercises including tunnel, slawcy, fire and breathing apparatus, search and rescue, rope rescue, search and rescue and fire fighting.

Each team is made up of an

annual event, which was sponsored by ICE Minerals.

The competition was marked out on levels six, nine and 11 of the mine, allowing the varied levels to remain open for visitors.

Competition organiser Noel Justice said night and the competition had gone very well.

"The weather hasn't been the best for the time of year and I believe the teams have had a good time," Mr Justice said.

The overall winner was the Renison A team from Tasmania, the winning captain was Bendigo's southern region mine rescue team

The 2000 competition had the then closest winning margin, achieved by Yilgarn Star (Sons of Gwalia, WA) on 526.57 points against Stawell Gold Mine (Vic) on 525.25 points - a very small margin of 1.32.

Very few records or photographs are available from these early years; however this booklet, in part, is an attempt to ensure that the history of such an important part of the mining industry is recorded and available for generations to come.

The story of the Competition will be told in pictures, facts and figures, and the reminiscences of a few of the Competition legends and stalwarts. Enjoy!

RENISON LIMITED TIN MINE
'Mines Rescue Team'
GREEN

TEAM POSITION

1 Yvonne Weisenthal (Capt)	1 = Captain
2 Felicia Bernard (Vice Capt)	2 = Vice Capt, Ropes 2nd First Aider, Branch 1
3 Shannon Youd	3 = Branch 2, Cases
4 Debbie Tuzworth	4 = 1st First Aider, Hose 1
5 Jodi Pringle	5 = Hose 2, Roulmarker
6 Colleen Moore	6 = Pumpin, Equipment, 3rd First Aider

became the inaugural Victorian Mine Rescue Competition.

“

Rob Stewart

remembers...

Upon return to employment at Stawell Gold Mines in November 1992, our Emergency Response team were in Kalgoorlie competing in the Eastern Goldfields Underground Mine Rescue Competition.

Following their return to site, Barrie Lovely convinced me to attend Mine Rescue training, which he religiously held on Wednesday afternoons for a couple of hours, commencing at four PM. The stories filtering back from the Western Australian goldfields were somewhat inspiring, not only regarding the competition itself, but also the obvious devotion to recreational team building activities whilst away. There was also a clear air of determination to “do better next comp”, and a definitive message that Stawell would “take no prisoners” when it came to pursuit of competitive victory. This mindset has never changed.

Whilst coming to terms with Mine Rescue training in general and the competition disciplines in particular, the concept of a Victorian based competition was being bandied about. Barrie and Noel Justice were in discussion with Spence Herd, who I soon came to know as our ICI (now Orica) explosive supply representative. These guys provided the determination and efforts to place the first Victorian event on the calendar. Although the inaugural event in Wonthaggi

is now distant history, a last moment withdrawal of the Benambra team following workplace fatality still stands as a grim reminder of our place within the Industry. That first event came and went, with just Woodlawn and Stawell competing, but a firm resolve to grow the competition, friendships, and skills had thus been established.

Successive years led to a regular migratory pattern of teams across the Nullabor, Bass Strait, and the Murray River. I fell into the role of team Captain whilst still wet behind the ears, (and somewhat unaware of just how that eventuated). But I was happy to do my bit. Western Australian participation in the Bendigo based events became firmly entrenched very early in the piece. KCGM became the competitive threat hissed through Stawell’s clenched teeth when the team lists emerged. They were also the team to strive to beat on their native turf. I don’t think that happened, but our steady improvement in WA throughout the mid nineties rattled them on occasions. In actual fact, Peter O’Loughlin, and his team members were held in high esteem by us.



Stawell Stalwarts
*20th Anniversary Competition
Presentation Dinner (2012)*

Clockwise from top left:
Steve Bryant, Brad Evans,
Andrew McIntosh, Rob
Stewart, Barrie Lovely and
Chris Finch.

“

Successive years led to a regular migratory pattern of teams across the Nullabor, Bass Strait, and the Murray River. I fell into the role of team Captain whilst still wet behind the ears... but I was happy to do my bit.

”

On one particular early year (the exact year I have finally managed to forget), the unthinkable happened, with the Victorian overall winner's trophy going to the West! That winning team announcement produced simultaneous hand clapping mixed with a hollow feeling normally bestowed on us mere mortals when informed of the death of a close acquaintance. Amid the grief and devastation, immediate resolve was formed to resurrect rightful trophy placement in the successive year.

Stawell entered the top three placings in the eighteen to twenty team WA comp during the late nineties, which grew physically tougher and tougher by the year.

Each Search and Rescue Event organiser seemed hell bent on outdoing the previous year's counterpart, pushing teams to the point of exhaustion in order to cross the "finish line". Wheels appeared on stretchers,

Continued next page

Rob Stewart remembers...

and later, Infra red cameras emerged which could seek out an otherwise elusive casualty's whereabouts. Stawell reverted to a Victorian Competition only calendar after 1997, having formed close training relationships with the NSW Mine Rescue Service, which have lasted to the present day.

Meanwhile, Tassie had always been well represented in Victoria, with Rosebery, Renison and Henty as regular starters. As such, the Boat Race event was duly added to the post competition formalities in the early years. Stawell also competed in the Tassie comp on regrettably infrequent occasions and I enjoyed adjudicating at Hellyer in the year when their production activities were to cease.

Local mines later emerged within Victoria, and the training commonalities and networking enabled by the Competition facilitated development of formal mutual aid agreements. This eased the previous isolation (in the mining sense) felt here at Stawell. We also gained a sister mine in Fosterville. Meanwhile, mines from New South Wales, South Australia, and Queensland continued to populate the competition with both short and longer term involvement.

A little boring perhaps, but my twenty years of involvement feels like about twenty years really. I've been privileged to meet hundreds of good people, many who continue to "pop up" long after their involvement with Mine Rescue (or Emergency Response for the sake of political correctness).

The Mining Industry really is a very small entity in the grand scheme of things. Many former team members have progressed from "entry level" work roles here at Stawell to

some very high places. From my perhaps "old fashioned" perspective, the fact that young professionals were once "expected to participate" in ER training did nothing but good for rounded professional development within their chosen careers.

Of course there have been far too many characters involved within the yearly chapters of the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition to mention here. And, (rightfully so), the Minerals Council would reasonably be obliged to exercise the DELETE key with some of the stories that tend to come to mind.

Well done to each and every soul who has contributed to our cause, in whatever capacity that may have been.

As underground production finally winds to a close at Stawell, I wish everyone the best for the continuation of the Victorian Competition well into the future. Not necessarily a goodbye though, as I hope to be able to remain involved in one capacity or another.

Keep up the good work!

Rob Stewart

Rob Stewart holds the unique honour of having been involved, either as a competitor, Team Manager, volunteer or adjudicator for every one of the 20 Competitions this booklet celebrates.

Rob is currently the OHS and Training Manager at Stawell Gold Mines.



Central Deborah Gold Mine 1996

The Pasmenco Mine Rescue Team (top left) and a competitor team (above).

CFA Huntly Training Ground 1996

Left, a fire fighting exercise at the CFA Huntly Training Ground.

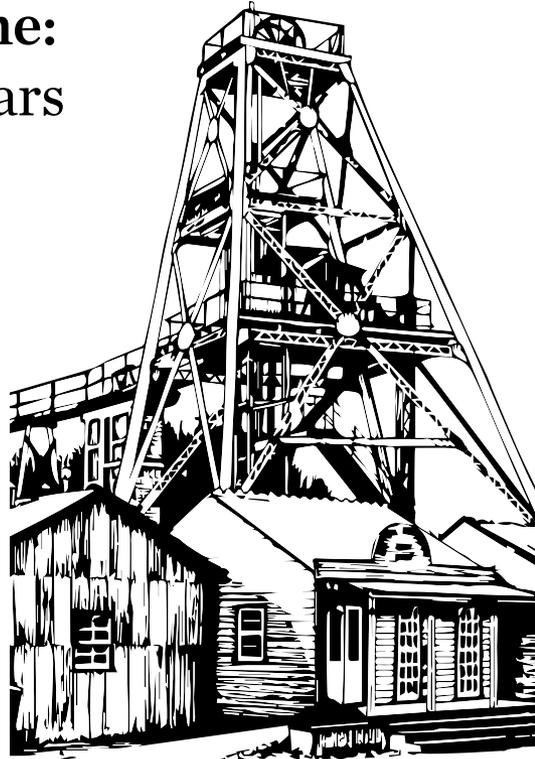


Central Deborah Mine: Home for the early years

Central Deborah Tourist Gold Mine in Bendigo was the home of the Victorian Underground Mine Rescue Competition from 1994 to 2008.

With its immediately recognisable poppet head, the Mine became somewhat of an ‘emblem’ for the competition.

With the fire fighting exercise conducted at the CFA Huntly Training Ground, the competition gradually outgrew Central Deborah, and with the generous assistance of MCA Member companies with sites in the Bendigo region, the competition farewelled Central Deborah in 2009.



My highlights ... Jol Jardin

- Winning the first Competition at Wonthaggi State Coal Mine with the Stawell team
- Being part of the Stawell Mine Rescue Team, a team who in the early days saw too many call outs.
- Many years later having the young guy who volunteered as the casualty at the first competition – Simon Longstaff, as my safety manager at Angas Zinc Mine for me as the mine manager.
- Assisting to run the comp at Stawell, with the fire fight underground at the Wonga Mine, complete with fishing rods and BA.
- Ben Ingham from Golden Grove where I later worked, hoisting himself as high as he could onto a rope swing then launching himself at his eagerly awaiting team, huddled on a 1 foot carpet square, legs spread wide to rap around the team on impact, yelling out to his captain (Dick) – “WHERE DO YOU WANT ME DICK”. The entire team and all adjudicators and onlookers subsequently rolling around on the ground in tears laughing. (They got extra points for entertainment).
- Meeting wonderful and dedicated people
- Kate (my daughter) helping me as an adjudicator assistant in 2011
- While fighting fires with CFA - Assisting to pull Pa Cooper out of old mine shaft at Deep Lead during New Year’s Eve fires around Stawell with Paul Rouse and Stawell SES members (who helped adjudicate the comp for many years). Surrounded by burning trees working with great people to save lives, right on midnight.
- Going on to establish South Australian Rescue Competition, now in its 4th year.

Competing:

- 1992 Member of winning Stawell team at first competition at Wonthaggi
- 1993 Dropping SRT down a totally dark winze in the central Deborah for the rope rescue event.

Adjudication:

- 1994 Can’t remember them all!
Adjudicating First Aid and Skills
- 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005
- 2006 Skills – Central Deborah, trapped under overshot loader, use air leg etc.
- 2008 Skills – persons trapped in conveyor at Bendigo Plant
- 2009 Skills underground at Fosterville
- 2011 Skills at UME – the dreaded collapse and Ventbag
- 2012 Skills at Huntly.

Low lights:

- Benambra not being able to compete in the first comp due to a fatality.
- Getting the phone call that the team from Angas had been disqualified before starting.

Jol Jardine

Competitor, volunteer and adjudicator for 15 years – an amazing effort!

“

Noel Justice

remembers...

I first got involved with mines rescue when I was employed at the Stawell Gold Mine in Victoria in the late 1980s. I was captain of the Stawell mines rescue team in 1992 and in 1993 helped organise the first Victorian Mine Rescue Competition at Wonthaggi.

For me this sounded a fairly straight forward project, so off I went to Wonthaggi to inspect the mine prior to the competition, and to plan the exercise. On arrival I introduced myself to Lou, the man in charge, but Lou wasn't prepared to let me go underground, because he thought that I was a spy for the Stawell team! After some "Extra Encouragement" on my behalf, we finally come to an understanding and it was all go. On the day all things went well and the local emergency services had a much better understanding of what was involved with mines rescue. Sadly Benambra wasn't able to be there.

The following year it was agreed to hold the competition in Bendigo. This was my first full blown competition with interstate teams and seven exercises to organise. I had decided to do most of this work by myself, using my previous experience gained attending other mines rescue competitions. The one thing I often found in organising these competitions, there were always some issues and usually a person out there who needed that "Extra Encouragement" to

make it all come together on the weekend of the competition.

I was so lucky to have had good help with the exercises from people who became involved, especially two ex-members of my 1992 team (Barrie's Dream Team as he called us) that went to WA. I would take them over to Bendigo and have a look at where the exercises were to be and what changes I needed to make. Over the next few years there were a number of challenges to overcome and one that particularly comes to mind, was the year the first-aid exercise was almost derailed on the Friday afternoon. This was due to a couple of adjudicators who had not seen eye to eye over this exercise, again I had to give that "Extra Encouragement" in my room with them and all was well again.

The year of 1995 was a very memorable occasion for everyone, which was "The Last Rescue" (as they named it) of the Benambra

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“The ‘Last Rescue’ of the Benambra mines rescue team *had a*

mines rescue team. To me it had a special place in the history of the Victorian Mines Rescue Competition. Their beginning in 1993 was with that tragic event, but on the weekend of their Last Rescue, they finished on a high, and you must remember, the mine had officially closed before the 1995 competition. If my memory is right, they received a standing ovation on presentation night.

On the same night I was presented with a trophy struck in my name from Renison Ltd in Tasmania, for my commitment at the time to mines rescue in Victoria and Australia.

It was a great honour and gave me great pleasure to present the Benambra team with that award.

The other thing that comes to mind is that Renison set the standard for dress at the presentation dinner in the early days - to see the boys dress in dinner jacket and pants, the girls dressed in dinner jackets and skirts, what a sight - they did their company proud. To me they had set the standard for dress at the Victorian mines rescue competition and most teams followed this trend.

Also about this time I helped with getting Oscar 1 up and running and I am told that they were granted official CFA Brigade status in early 2013. That is a good outcome for them and the Bendigo district.

In 1997 the year of the Thredbo disaster, I received a phone call from a man about 7.00pm on Friday night asking, would we be available for backup to the rescue operation? This question came without notice, which put me on the spot. So without any consultation with the mines rescue teams' managers, the answer was yes. As a captain of a mines rescue team or whatever, you have to make those calls often, that's the way it is.

The exercise that I thought was my masterpiece, if I may call it that, was the first-aid exercise in 1998 on level 2 at the Central Deborah Tourist Mine in Bendigo. This exercise had it all - the teams were to be up against it, right from the very start. At the team briefing, the captain was given very little information as to what had occurred. The first person they were confronted on level two not far from the plat couldn't speak English. After overcoming this problem, there were concerned family members to deal with, quiet



special place in the history of the Mines Rescue Competition”

people who offered no information, people who had too much to say, the usual ‘get in the way’ person and, just to add a bit of a twist, was the famous pregnant mother to be. To most of the teams being confronted with a real six to seven month pregnancy was just too much and if memory serves me correctly, six births occurred, because the teams did not get her out in time! If you have ever seen the mines rescue team’s first-aiders in action with a pair of scissors during a secondary survey, there is not much left on the patient, and the clothing rendered useless after. The team captains were instructed at the Friday afternoon briefing that in the first aid surveys, they would be able to cut clothing off to the undergarments of casualties. Wendy Cook travelled near and far to find the lady concerned with the required number of bikinis to do the job. Just remember that this lady had been hit by falling timbers and not one piece of clothing was cut off. (The power of a pregnant woman over a miner)!

One of the most daunting tasks I had was in 1998, the year that the then Hon. Jeff Kennett Premier of Victoria, made a visit to the Central Deborah Mine. I had to explain to him the

ins and outs of mines rescue and describe to him the rescue that was being demonstrated on the head frame some 10 to 15 meters above the collar. Again after some “Extra Encouragement” to me this time, all was well.

In 1999 the competition was moved to Stawell and was to be my last managing the Victorian Mines Rescue Competition. So, after all those years you are on home ground, and what a challenge. The pressure to make it the best competition ever, as the people I worked with for many years are waiting to see what I am made of. Can he pull it off and do Stawell Gold Mine proud? They are all eager, from Brian Phillips, Director of Mining to Barrie Lovely to Fur Ball (yours truly Ronny Biggs all round miner), who was never shy on a word or two.

Finally at home knowing every inch of the place, organising the exercises was easy, but of course there is again a person, to which I had to have a chat with at the last minute. Well after that “Extra Encouragement” in his office, all was well.

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Central Deborah Gold Mine, Bendigo 1998

Then Victorian Premier Jeff Kennett, with MCA Victorian State Councillors, watches a Rope Rescue demonstration before addressing the crowd. Also pictured (immediate left) are three former Presidents of the Victorian Minerals and Energy Council (later to become MCA Victoria), from left: Brian Phillips, Dick Sandner and Doug Buerger.



Noel Justice

Noel was the Competition Manager from 1993 to 1999

Noel Justice, centre, pictured with Wendy Cook and Graham van Damme.

“

The ambos and nurses got good therapy out of this, because in their real jobs they have to be serious. I'm sure the teams didn't think it was fun at that time.

”

After the competition was over, that was it for me and mines rescue and I left the mining industry, but the next year my wife and I were invited back to Bendigo to attend the competition as official guests.

For a number of years from 2001 on, I adjudicated in the first-aid exercise doing captain and team assessments. We had a lot of fun in this crew of ambos, nurses, patients and makeup artists. I thought that the ambos and nurses got good therapy out of this, because in their real jobs they have to be serious. I'm sure the teams didn't think it was fun at that time.

On another such occasion the exercise was being run in the back shed at the Central Deborah, where the old stamper is. As usual we were always having fun between ourselves with all of the challenges (for some teams, horrifying challenges) and there was a patient laying on the shaker table and resting quietly you might say. A team had gone through the exercise and had not

noticed them laying there, (like one team member coming within less than a couple of metres and even glancing that way). When it was brought to the team's notice at the end, (and remembering as adjudicators we were 99.9% of the time taking the task at hand seriously), but on this occasion what do you say or how can you ask what happened? So without much being said, one of the adjudicators (an ambo and a bit of a character), gave the captain a cardboard splint (when laid flat it reassembled a coffin) with R.I.P. scribed on it. All I can say is that after that moment the captain let fly an unprintable response! ! Maybe I should have given him that (where I go again) "Extra Encouragement".

In those early 2000's Steve Bryant of UME ran the technical side of the competition until his work commitments forced him to hand over to Graham van Damme. Graham had been in mines rescue in his early days, but not in this role. He asked me if I could help him, which I did, but I missed being with the group from the first-aid exercise and the fun times we had. Graham and I worked together until I officially retired this time from my involvement in 2009.

In 2002 myself along with Spence Herd were elected to Life Membership of the then Victorian Minerals and Energy Council Inc. (now MCA Victorian Division) at a General Meeting of Members on 27th May 2002 in recognition of outstanding services to the Victorian mining industry through our participation in the establishment and operation of the annual Victorian Mine Rescue Competition.

There were so many people I have had the

pleasure of knowing over those years, the list is long and to try and remember them all to thank is impossible. Those adjudicators that gave their time to me and the competition I appreciated always and I am sure all the mines rescue teams did too.

I would like to thank to Barrie Lovely and Wendy Cook for all those years of friendship and support and also on behalf of all those people involved in mines rescue to thank their wives, partners and families as well.

Last I would like thank the Minerals Council of Australia, Victorian Division for giving me the opportunity to share some of my experiences with you and to take this time to make special thanks to my wonderful wife Margaret, for all the help with the competition and the many sacrifices for me, especially in the early years of my involvement .

**Noel Justice, Life Member
Minerals Council of Australia
Victorian Division**

The Adventures of Barrie Lovely

By Rob Parr, Vice Captain – Stawell Gold Mines Rescue

Barrie was mined, not born. He was found in a coal seam at Ballina, NSW in 1939. His first words were “about bloody time you got here, now back to work!”. There is also a rumour that he was the first boy born in the new Ballina Hospital. A girl beat him by a few minutes.

Baz lived in Ballina for four years until his stepfather (a miner) decided to look for work up north. From 1943-46 Baz and family roamed Qld, NT and WA. They stopped at Tennant Creek and Kalgoorlie for a while but finally settled down at Norseman.

From 1946-52 Baz attended school and left quite the young scholar, aged 13.

1953 was quite a turning point for Baz because a sly butcher in Norseman suggested he become an apprentice jockey in Perth. So Baz packed his bags and was indentured to a Mr Treffone for the princely sum of 10 bob per week.

Jockey's were starved in those days to keep their weight down. For breakfast they had a single boiled egg which they quickly grew sick of. So Baz and his mates decided to poison all the chooks with ratsack and pollard. Gradually, all the chooks died, but Trelfone took one to a vet and discovered the rort. All jockeys were called into a room where Treffone picked up a piece of pipe, brought it down on a table and smashed it to pieces, “who's poisoned by bloody chooks?!” No-one owned up. They never had eggs for breakfast again – just baked beans on toast for the next five years. This became a legend amongst the sporting fraternity and was immortalized by ‘Rigby’ with a cartoon in the West Australian.

After five years, Baz left the horse racing industry and moved back to Norseman and commenced work in the mining industry as a sampler. This lasted for two years until in 1959 he joined the army and spent the next six years in an anti-tank regiment.

1965 saw Baz back in Norseman again where he worked as a miner at both the ‘Royal’ and ‘Mud Hole’ mines. This is when Barrie first began his association with Mine Rescue or first aid competition as it was known then.

In 1968 Barry moved to the Regent Shaft at Norseman and rapidly rose through the ranks to become a shift boss, production foreman, and then at the grand old age of 35, Baz became Western Mining Corporation's youngest ever foreman.

During this time, in 1974, Norseman won the First Aid Competition from ‘Lake View and Star’ at the Kalgoorlie Town Hall. Vic Wills was the coach of that team and Barry was involved with the win.

1979 saw Barry move to Vatulaula Mine in Fiji as foreman, where he was heavily involved with first aid. Fond memories of Fiji included impromptu visits underground in the early hours of the morning while still wearing his red pyjamas. This earned him the unusual nickname of ‘The Poisonous Red Dwarf’. Baz also remembers the court



A Winning Team
*Victorian Underground
Competition Presentation*

Barry Lovely pictured
with the winning Stawell
team in 1999.

sessions where everyone drank the local beer or 'Kava' during proceedings. This led to some unusual judgements and sentences but at least the prisoners and jury were nice and relaxed about it all.

In 1982, Barry was transferred to Stawell where WMC were establishing a new mine. He worked as the Production Foreman and also established First Aid Teams and Procedures there.

He was only there one year when in 1983 Barry was transferred back to Fiji as Foreman. 1985 was a bad year for Baz as he was involved in a serious rockfall suffering internal injuries. He was rushed by ambulance to the nearest hospital with only one stop along the way. The driver was thirsty and needed an orange juice. He was kind enough to ask Baz if he wanted one, but he declined. It seems ambulance drivers are casual all over the world. Baz spent the next 12 months in hospital and had 2 years off work in total.

When Baz was fit enough to work, he was sent to Goodall in the Northern Territory

to establish another new mine. Baz was also the First Aid Officer there, and became involved with the local community SES.

In 1991, Barry moved back to Stawell as the Safety Officer and Mines Rescue Co-ordinator and was there until his retirement to a warmer climate on the Gold Coast.

Highlights of Baz's time at Stawell include winning the first ever Victorian Mine Rescue Competition (1993), 5th at the 1994 WA Mines Rescue Competition and winning the 1995 Victorian Competition amongst a strong field.

Baz did have another six months off work in 1992 when he was accidentally blown up – but that's another story. All in all, Barry has been involved in First Aid/Mine Rescue for over 30 years – a grand effort indeed.

The following is a reproduction of parts of an article in *Eastern Goldfields Mine Rescue Western Australia: A History* on the legend of Victorian Mine Rescue, Barrie Lovely. Reprinted with the permission of Peter O'Loughlin.

2000

Central Deborah Gold Mine

Members of the Northparkes Mine Rescue Team during a search and rescue exercise; the breathing apparatus exercise and a search and rescue exercise.



2003

Central Deborah Gold Mine

The rope rescue exercise.



2003

Central Deborah Gold Mine

Skills and search and rescue exercises.





“

George Opasinis

remembers...

I can recall so vividly driving home, on Saturday morning over 20 years ago; when my old hard wired phone rang only to have a then much younger Spence Heard excitingly talk about starting a mine rescue competition to be held in Wonthaggi, Victoria.

At that time, I had just begun my career with Dräger and whilst I had some hesitation, the excitement in Spence’s voice about the upcoming mine rescue competition intrigued me.

After gaining approval from management to sponsor this two team competition and outlaying about \$100.00 for what was effectively one case of beer and some peanuts, 21 years later I find myself with the same emotional involvement, just on a larger scale. They say that the first is always the one you remember the most. This first competition still holds my most treasured memories as I stood, a young man, rubbing shoulders with what I saw as very elite people. I spent the entire day side by side with men whom I’d found such an admiration for and it’s no surprise that I was able to make some strong and lasting acquaintances.

The tragic part of this period was that I never had the opportunity to meet the squad from the third team which was meant to attend. Tragically, there had been a death in the third teams’ mine and they were unable to compete

in the inaugural event. Gazing into the faces of this close knit community of miners brought to light the very significance of holding such events. They were now honouring a fellow colleague who had lost his life in the very environment these men would be walking back into in their daily lives as miners. I knew then that we had to continue to be part of this event for as long as it would continue.

Well here I am now, a much older man still attending and watching those that first started as competitors now sitting it out and helping the teams with the wealth of their experience. The one thing that resonates in my mind is the friendship between opposing teams and the close respect they hold for one another.

I came to realise some time ago how much I love my job when it involves being with these wonderful men and now also women, who display extraordinary skills that deserve such recognition. I count the days down for the next time I would drive to sunny Bendigo for yet another weekend of adventure where I get to meet the new team members competing for the overall

Outstanding Service

Noel Justice Award presentation (2009)

George Opasinis (right) receives the Noel Justice Award on behalf of Dräger for outstanding services to the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition. Presenting the award named in his honour, Noel Justice.



trophy for the winner of the Mine Rescue Competition for another year.

It's not until one gets to see the passion from the teams winning any event that one gets to feel the satisfaction of helping out by way of sponsorship. They need our support but I've come to realise how much more we need theirs.

In a few short months from now I will be standing again watching teams pit their skills against others and now more than ever realise they are not really competing, yet working together to hone their invaluable skills that may one day be called upon again.

What does being personally involved mean to me? I don't know that I can say much more other than it's not a chore, it's my preference to attend and I will always raise my hand to be the person to hand out yet another award on that Sunday night. However it's not about the award rather the reward I get from such a fun filled weekend.

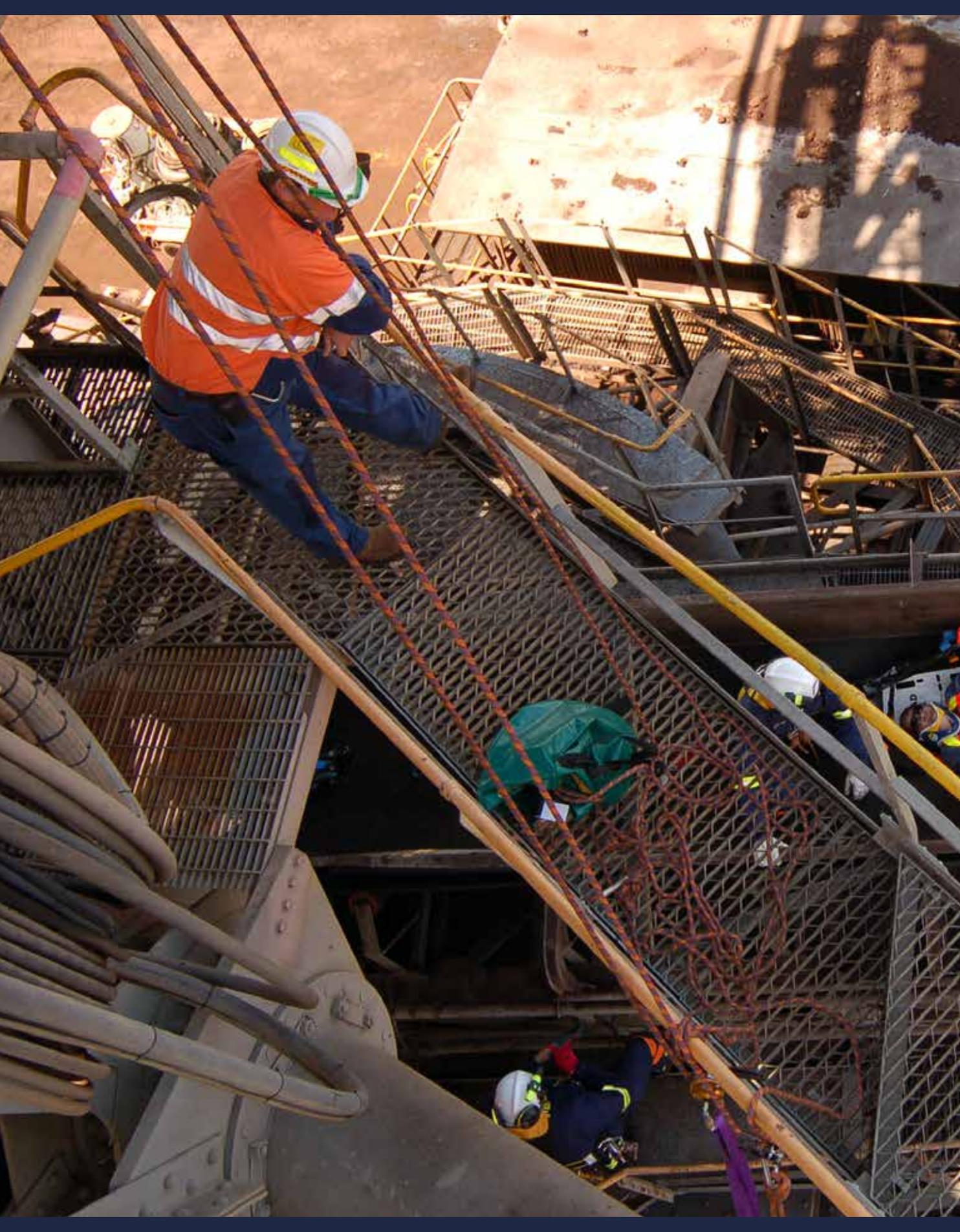
George Opasinis
Territory Manager
Dräger Safety Pacific Pty Ltd

Dräger

Dräger. Technology for Life®

Dräger is an international leader in the fields of medical and safety technology. The family-owned company was founded in Lübeck, Germany, in 1889. Over the past five generations, Dräger has evolved into a publicly traded, worldwide group. The company's long-term success is based on the four key strengths of its value-driven culture: customer intimacy, professional employees, continuous innovation and a commitment to outstanding quality.

"Technology for Life" is the guiding philosophy. Whether in the operating room, in intensive care or emergency response services, Dräger products protect, support and save lives.





The Next 10 Years

Location?? 2009

A surface rescue skills competition.

2005 Competition

Members of the Olympic Dam ERT during a search and rescue competition.



2007 Competition

A search and rescue exercise; the Spence Herd exercise testing the communication skills of blindfolded team members; and behind the scenes in the administration centre, collating the all important scores.



2008 Competition

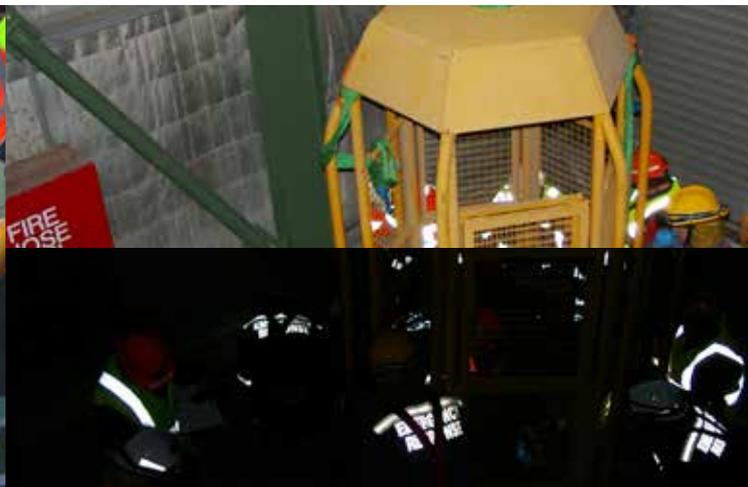
Head Adjudicator Brendan Walker conducts the all important team debrief; a skills exercise; and a first aid exercise conducted in pitch black (the bottom half shows actual lighting conditions.)



2006

Presentation night

Fire fighting exercise winners Stawell Gold Mines with Head Adjudicator, John Cutting (left).





Oscar 1

Oscar 1 were granted official CFA Brigade status in early 2013 assuring its future.

Oscar 1

What is now known as Oscar 1 commenced in the mid 1990s as a collaborative emergency capability for two gold mining companies, Bendigo Mining and Reef Mining.

The combined rescue unit was the recommendation of the local Inspector of Mines as neither mine had the internal capability to effectively resource and meet the obligations under the Mine Safety regulations of the time.

The formation of the combined Mines Rescue team provided an internal capability for both mines. It was manned by employees of both companies and included some volunteers from the local CFA and SES brigades. In 1999 the Victorian Chamber of Mines (now Minerals Council of Australia, Victorian Division) assumed responsibility for the Oscar 1 Mines Rescue unit and the equipment including a 4WD vehicle and breathing apparatus. MCA Victoria and the Department of Primary Industries provided some funding for equipment on an annual basis and the mining companies provided the operational resources required for the squad to train. Over time the number of company members declined and the number of volunteers increased.

In 2004 the Victoria Police Regional Superintendent in his capacity as

the Divisional Emergency Response Coordinator (DERC) formed a small committee using authority under the Emergency Management Act 1986. The committee comprised representatives from the MCA, DPI, SES and CFA with an aim to determine a more appropriate management arrangement for the mines rescue unit. The DERC sought expressions of interest for the CFA and SES to build upon the emergency response capability provided by the local mines rescue unit. Some of the drivers for this included the need to provide legislative protection for the volunteers. Another reason for formalising the local capability was the need to service the Central Deborah Tourist Mine and concern with responding to emergencies associated with the numerous derelict mines in the District.

Formal responses were provided by the SES and CFA and evaluated by the RERC committee which resulted in the appointment of the CFA as the appropriate organization. The group was named after the title of the Police Region – Oscar 1. MCA then transferred the mines rescue equipment to CFA.

“ *CFA*

John Cutting

remembers...



I first got involved with mines rescue when I was employed at the Stawell Gold Mine in Victoria in the late 1980s. I was captain of the Stawell mines rescue team in 1992 and in 1993 helped organise the first Victorian Mine Rescue Competition at Wonthaggi.

Our site has always been the ‘ABC Mine’ which has gone from being either on care and maintenance or in full production. We have been asked several times what it is that we actually mine. It has ranged from Gold to Scones – as in the Goodies sketch – the Jam and Cream mine was just up the road!!

We at the training ground have been dubbed “Bastards Incorporated” – we see this as a term of endearment. This is probably because we are always able to provide a little twist on the exercise which at times catches some teams out.

The exercises have always been challenging and the speeches I have had the privilege to make at the presentation evenings, I believe, have been very well received by the audience – It was stated by a CEO of the CFA that he didn’t think that he was attending a comedy club evening and I needed to be more serious!! He is no longer the CEO – but I am still the head adjudicator - go figure.

Visibility is always a problem at the underground Mine, I remember when one team was throwing rocks “down the Mine’ too see how deep it was – unfortunately for

Ken Enright he was on the receiving end of the rocks.

We have had many fantastic adjudicators from all parts of the country and along with the CFA Pad staff, we always have a great time getting to know each other and becoming a really effective team over the weekend.

I am very well aware of the dangers and challenges that are faced by those that provide Mine

Rescue services across the country and whilst the competition is sometimes light hearted, I have an extremely high regard for those of you who train so hard and risk your lives to save others.

‘Cutts’

John Cutting was the CFA Operations Officer for the Bendigo Region. Along with his wife Kim, who also volunteers,

John is a regular adjudicator for the Victorian Mine Rescue Competitions.

2009

Competition

Members of the Rosebery Team competing in the fire fighting exercise at Huntly; Adjudicator Scott Symons briefs the captain and a search and rescue exercise.



2010

Competition

Thinking outside the square with this Spence Herd exercise. The Spence Herd exercise is designed to utilise the skills and training of ERT's in unusual situations; Peter Redshaw, aka Jabba, one of the competition's amazing First Aid crew, keeps smiling while waiting to be rescued in the First Aid exercise at UME Australia Pty Ltd; and a rope rescue exercise underground at Fosterville Gold Mine.

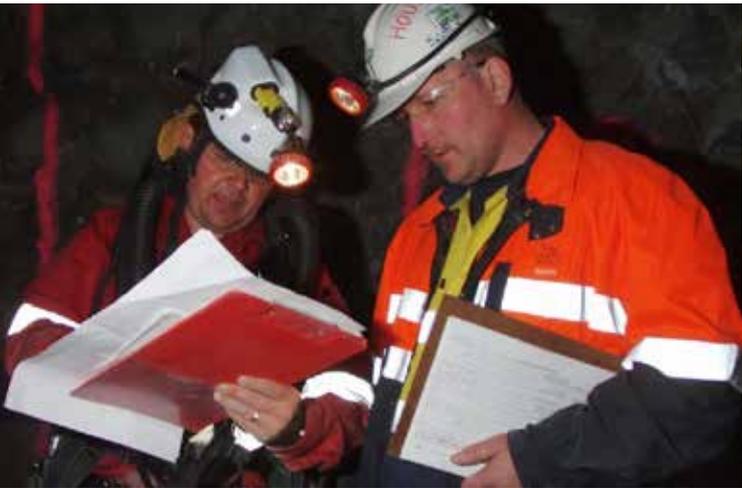


2011

Competition

The fire fighting exercise adjudicators – otherwise known as Bastards Incorporated; the skills exercise and a rope rescue exercise.





“

Wendy Cook

remembers...

Sometimes the smallest thing can have the biggest ripple effect. For me, it was a small note on the crib room notice board at my work.

I was a tour guide at the time at the Central Deborah Gold Mine and the note was asking for volunteers for a forth coming event. I wasn't working and it sounded intriguing. A mine rescue competition was going to be held and some staff were required to help out. I was then selected as a marshal to assist Stawell Gold Mine Rescue team, and as they say, the rest is history.

I was so impressed by the dedication and skill of these teams and was amazed that no one seemed to know about these teams and their capabilities. Over the next seventeen years it was an absolute privilege to be working with these very amazing people.

Memorable moments for me were so many and varied. The formation of Oscar 1, the last time Benambra competed, the all-girl team from Roseberry, the first surface competition, all the teams being on call when the disaster at Thredbo occurred, all the teams going underground at the Central Deborah down the old shaft, taking the competition to Stawell and being stopped by the police with all the trophies in the boot of the car.

None of these competitions came stress free but they all had a massive fun factor. The first

aid exercises were a visit to Monty Python. The patients and adjudicators spent the competition planning the next years exercise. We had patients practising for weeks. One "patient" could hold a mouth full of vegetable soup for 20 mins before "placing" it on the tending first aider's shoes. No one has ever forgotten our very pregnant patient- especially the poor first aider from WA who had the baby actually kick him when he felt the "pillow under the jumper". An amputated hand caused mayhem another year and two patients gave the first aiders grey hairs when tending first aiders passed the "severed hand" by them. Several teams simply forgot the obvious patient one year and shook their heads when shown the now 'deceased' victim.

The fire fighting adjudicator's team enjoyed a mateship that has continued on and the "Dodgy Brothers Electrical Service" has become well known. As the adjudicators have said on repeated occasions 'never assume, always check'.

The adjudicators have come from all over Australia with the same enthusiasm every year, arranging their schedules and personal lives all to attend. Local volunteers from Bendigo and Latrobe Valley were also a

“

None of these competitions came stress free but they all had a massive fun factor. The first aid exercises were a visit to Monty Python.

”

great asset and added to the experience for the teams.

The competition has come a long way also. Originally the scores were all delivered to a separate area in long tubes and added up by hand and triple checked. All this has now been computerised using a rather unique access and excel spread sheet system. Alcohol and drug testing done before entering mine sites has also become the norm. Photography and team photos, competition shirts all became part of the competition experience. A professional makeup artist and his team added another dimension to the first aid exercise that other competitions envy.

No one who has been part of this experience leaves without regrets. I miss so many of the friends that I made during those years, the fun and laughter and just pure mischief of my scouting friends that are still helping out even now.

I wish all the teams the very best of luck now and in the future and pray they never have to use their skills in a real scenario. May the next 20 years be just as exciting as the last.

Wendy M Cook

Wendy Cook was the Competition Manager from February 2000 through to December 2009.

It is impossible to overstate the massive contribution Wendy made to the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition, taking it from a small, mostly intrastate event through to the truly national event it has become.

With her right hand man, husband Phil, Wendy set the friendly tone and culture of the event, whilst always maintaining the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

There is no doubt the mining industry in Victoria, indeed in Australia, is a safer place thanks to Wendy's passion and commitment to the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition.



Competing Teams – Underground and Combined Competitions

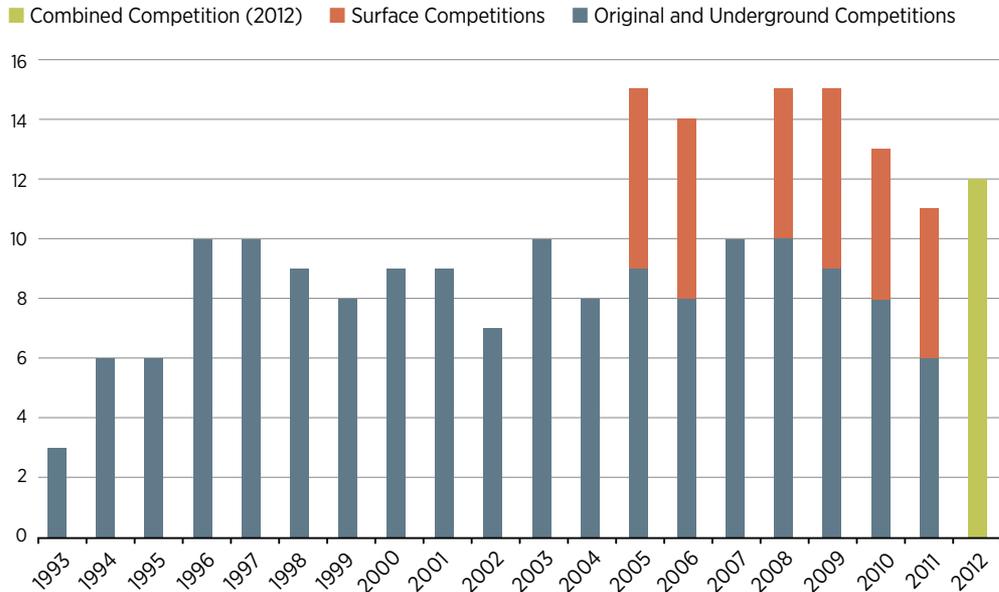
TEAM	YEAR	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
		Wonthaggi	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Seymour	Bendigo	Bendigo
Stawell		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Benambra		1	1	1	1					
Woodlawn		1	1	1	1	1				
Renison			1	2	2	2	1	1	1	
Kambaida			1		1	1		1		
Mount Lyell			1							
Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines						1	1			
Kanowna Belle/KCGM Combined				1						
Pasminco					1	1				
Broken Hill									1	
Roseberry							2			1
Hellyer					1	1	1	1		
Northparkes					1	1	1	1	1	1
NSW Coal					1					
Yilgarn Star						1	1	1	1	
Oscar 1							1	1	1	1
Cadia								1		
Black Swan									1	
Golden Grove									1	1
CSA Cobar									1	1
Marvel Loch										1
Peak										1
Kundana										
Leonora										
Aurion										
Deanmac										
Beaconsfield										
Placer Dome Kalgoorlie										
Henty										
Gympie										
Olympic Dam										
Jundee										
Barrick										
Ballarat										
Fosterville										
Endeavour										
Cowal										
Bendigo										
Bendigo/Oscar 1 Combined										
Angas										
Cobar Combined										
Savannah										
TRUenergy Yallourn										
AGL Loy Yang MSS										
TOTAL		3	6	6	10	10	9	8	9	9

Note: 2012 was the first combined Underground and Surface Competition

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTALS
Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Seymour	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	Bendigo	
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	20
											4
											5
											10
											1
									1	1	3
											2
											2
					1						2
1		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	12
											4
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	16
											1
											4
1	1	1	1	1	1		1			1	12
1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	11
											1
					1						3
	1					1	1				5
											1
					1						2
1											1
1											1
											1
	1	1	1	1							4
	1										1
	1										1
	1										1
		1				1			1	1	4
	1										1
	1	1	1	1			1				5
			1								1
			1								1
				1	1	1				1	4
					1	1	1	1	1	1	6
					1						1
						1				1	2
						1	1				2
								1			1
							1				1
								1			1
										1	1
										1	1
7	10	8	9	8	10	10	9	8	6	12	

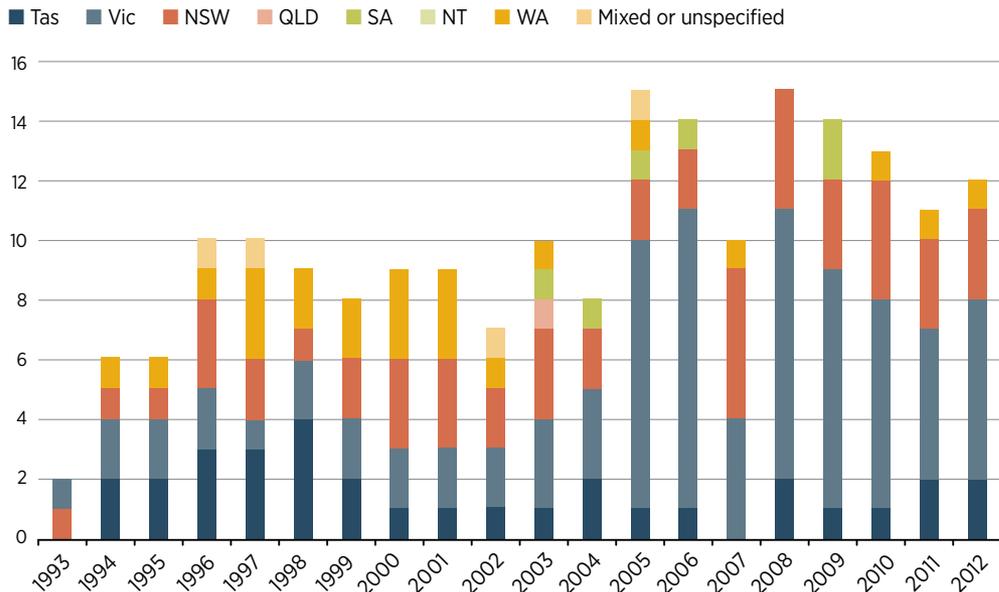
Victorian Mine Rescue Competitions

Number of Teams



In the first 20 years of the Victorian Mine Rescue Competitions exactly 200 Teams have competed.

Team Origin by State



The Surface Competition commences...

The late 1990s and early 2000s saw an increased interest in the Underground Competitions from traditionally Surface operations.

One team from the Latrobe Valley, Deanmac, travelled to Bendigo to observe the Underground Competition, and subsequently competed the following year. Quite a challenge for surface miners to adapt and compete underground.

This interest coincided with a desire from the brown coal MCA Members to hold their own rescue competitions, above and beyond the emergency response exercises on critical State infrastructure held regularly with the mines, power generators, government agencies and emergency services.

In 2005 the MCA Victorian Division State Council determined that a dedicated Surface Competition designed for teams operating at Surface operations would be trialed.

The first Surface Competition was held in the Latrobe Valley in 2005 and included our colleagues in the Quarrying Industry.

The 2006 Competition was hosted by Alcoa in Anglesea, and subsequent competitions were held in the Latrobe Valley.

Competing Teams – Surface Competition

	YEAR	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	TOTALS
Location		Latrobe Valley	Anglesea		Latrobe Valley	Latrobe Valley	Yallourn	Loy Yang	
Deanmac		1	1		1	1	1	1	6
Oscar 1		1	1		1	1	1	1	6
Estate Services		1	1		1	1	1	1	6
Readymix		1	1						2
Barro Group		1							1
Boral Metro Quarries		1	1						2
Alcoa Anglesea			1						1
International Power Hazelwood					1	1	1		3
International Power Loy Yang B					1	1			2
Cadia								1	1
Cowal						1	1	1	3
	TOTAL	6	6		5	6	5	5	

Surface Competitions

The inaugural Victorian Surface Mine Rescue Competition was held at Yallourn Mine in 2005.

The Latrobe Valley mines alternate hosting duties for the Competition and on occasion, exercises were held at the Deanmac Training Facility in Traralgon.

The Trophy pictured right was crafted by Spence Herd for the Surface Competition Overall Competition Winner.



2005 Competition

Teams compete in first aid exercises and far right, a rope rescue exercise.



2006 Competition

Oscar 1 competing in the industrial rescue exercise and far right, the fire fighting exercise.





Surface competition

Chris Finch with his 'make-up' injuries still manages a smile.



“

Caz Sinclair

remembers...

I don't remember exactly how I got involved with MCA and the Rescue Competitions. Somehow, about 5 years ago, I found myself having a conversation with Wendy Cook about participating as a First Aid Adjudicator for the Surface Mine Competition in the Latrobe Valley. Being an ambo, I figured... 'why not – could be fun'.

This turned out to be one of the most enlightening and enjoyable experiences I had participated in for a long time. I knew nobody, but was made to feel so welcome by the entire team. The scenario revolved around an explosion that had occurred in an office area at a coal mine site, resulting in multiple patients being affected; 4 of which were Japanese non-English speaking tourists.

The ability of everyone to have so much fun whilst remaining professional amazed me. I felt like I had just gained a new family. Needless to say, when I heard about the Underground Competition in Bendigo a couple of months later, I almost begged to be included, and luckily for me, I was.

The next year, after some behind the scenes discussions between Wendy and Brendan Walker (MICA Paramedic, and First Aid Scenario designer/head adjudicator extraordinaire), I found myself as designer and head adjudicator of the First Aid scenario for the Surface Competitions. Although initially terrified, with my work based in the

Latrobe Valley it made sense as it removed some of the workload from Brendan.

I still have as much passion for these comps as I did when I started. I enjoy seeing the growth in the Competitors' abilities and their willingness to treat the scenarios as 'real life' in order to increase their learnings to better assist them should the real job arise. The Competitors' professionalism and the overall teamwork and dedication across all teams is motivational. I love the anticipation of what 'bastardry' the scenario designers have cooked up for the competitors. I love the tireless and 'can do' commitment of everyone involved.

From a First Aid perspective, we have had some memorable moments; the seizing patient with steel capped boots on the roof of a steel container making so much noise in a desperate bid to be noticed by the competing team and yet remaining unattended; the patient buried under foam rocks in the scoop of a piece of underground mining equipment not being discovered;

Make-up magic

PJ's make-up magic adds realism to the scenarios.



the 'unconscious' patient who had a team member about to perform CPR; the patient who vomited all over a rescue team member (vegetable soup is such a great invention); the bleeding artery which continued to spurt 'blood' but didn't get noticed; and who could forget the heavily pregnant patient who went into labour?!

Let's not forget the make-up team's amazing abilities, lead by the fabulous PJ and Essy, and their troupe of volunteer patients who get painted, stabbed, buried, tied up, dragged, killed and/or pronounced dead (over and over again) and on occasion, are just completely ignored! Without them the competition would not happen.

Then of course are the unforgettable moments 'behind the scenes' which are filled with chocolates, laughter, chocolates, singing karaoke, chocolates, more laughter, scoring, chocolates, and of course the inevitable First Aid Team motto of 'suck it up princess'!

All this culminates in the Presentation

Dinner - a rewarding night of recognising the hard work and dedication of everyone involved, a time when the stress is over, the relaxing can begin and the funny stories of the weekend can be told.

Teamwork and comradeship incorporating dozens of people from varying levels and the different roles who all aim toward the same objectives:

- Share knowledge and experiences in order to learn;
- Practice skills with the aim of being the best at what they do; and
- Having FUN!

Thanks for the memories!

Caroline (Caz) Sinclair is a Paramedic with Ambulance Victoria, based at Morwell in the Latrobe Valley, and is now a regular First Aid Adjudicator.

Surface Competitions

2008

Competition

A breathing apparatus exercise and rope rescue exercises.



2009

Competition

Words of encouragement from an Adjudicator to a weary competitor; a fire fighting exercise and an industrial rescue exercise.

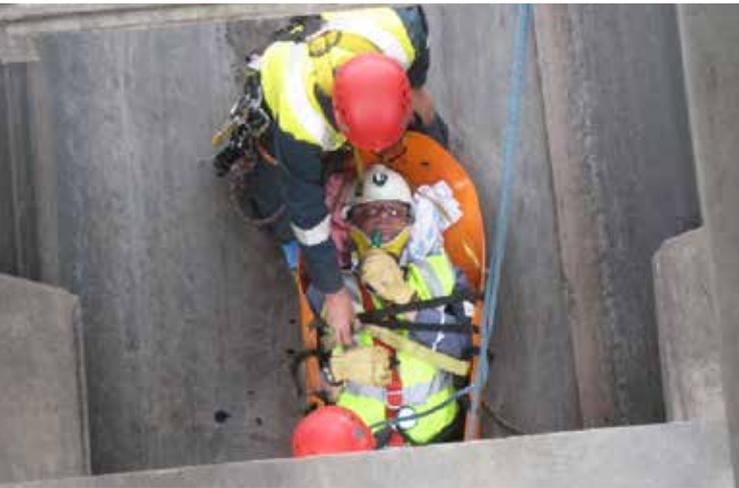


2010 & 2011

Competition

A first aid exercise; a fire fighting exercise and in 2011, the industrial rescue exercise with the Loy Yang Coal Mine walls in the background.





2012

The 20th Anniversary Year of the Victorian Mine Rescue Competitions

In 2011, the Minerals Council of Australia Victorian Division State Council decided that for 2012 and beyond, the underground and surface competitions would merge to become the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition.

This combined competition would be held annually with the venue alternating between Bendigo, the traditional home of the Underground competition, and the Latrobe Valley, the venue for the Surface competitions.

Fittingly, in the Competition's 20th Anniversary year, 2012 saw 12 teams (the largest ever number) compete.

2012 Competition

Adjudicator Caz Sinclair keeps a close eye on the competitors during the first aid exercise; one of the twists the First Aid Crew is (in)famous for – a volunteer casualty actually missing his left foot!; and the Henty Team about to begin the Breathing Apparatus Exercise.



2012 Competition

Casualty retrieved and in the capable hands of the Medic from Henty ERT; the Rosebery Team compete in the Spence Herd Exercise; and one of the teams hitches a ride on a vintage fire engine from the collection at CFA Training Ground, Huntly, the venue for a number of exercises.





Thank you The competition could not exist without the support of our sponsors over the years, or the Companies equipping and supporting their ERT teams, so thank you!
 Above centre, the coveted VMRC Overall Winners Trophy.



“

Acknowledgements

Production of this booklet would not have been possible without the help of the following:

Wendy Cook and Noel Justice – who captured the early history before it was lost entirely.

Dick Livingstone – who created many of the tables included.

Gayle Brown – the official Competition photographer for a number of years, and who took most of the photos included.

Eastern Goldfields Mine Rescue Western Australia – History – from which we have borrowed.

John Reynolds and Chris Fraser who were instrumental in both establishing and supporting the Victorian Mine Rescue Competition.

Megan Davison and the MCA Victorian Division – who proposed the idea of this booklet, and facilitated its production.

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VICTORIAN MINE RESCUE COMPETITION

20 years

A Commemoration

The Victorian Mine Rescue Competition would not be celebrating its 20th Anniversary without the amazing skills, dedication and commitment of a large number of people.

To all the volunteers and adjudicators who have given countless hours to the competition – *thank you.*

To all the Teams, and the Companies that have supported them – *thank you.*

To all the Sponsors who have so generously supported the Competition over the years – *thank you.*



VICTORIAN
DIVISION

