

Press release

Rio Tinto in Mackay creates hope for cancer patients this Christmas

12 December 2009

Rio Tinto Coal Australia has given a gift of hope to cancer patients this Christmas by donating \$10,000 to Cancer Council Queensland for ongoing research and support services for regional cancer patients.

Hail Creek Mine is contributing towards the donation in lieu of what RTCA would have spent on Christmas cards.

The gift provides a much needed boost for the Cancer Council's annual Christmas Appeal, and adds to significant fundraising efforts by RTCA employees during 2009.

In total, RTCA is donating \$20,000 to cancer research this Christmas, with its Hunter Valley mines also making a similar donation to the Cancer Council NSW.

Managing director Bill Champion said he is very proud of the fundraising for cancer research and prevention programmes that RTCA employees have supported in their own time, and welcomed the opportunity to recognise and further enhance that support with a company donation.

"This year has been challenging for a number of reasons; such as flooding rains in Queensland in early 2009, and uncertain markets due to the global financial crisis," Mr Champion said.

"Despite these difficult circumstances, our workforce has been exceptionally generous in its support of fund-raising initiatives for cancer research, and I am delighted to nominate the Queensland Cancer Council as the recipient of this corporate donation."

Recent activities at Hail Creek Mine this year have included:

- A \$5000 donation towards the "Mackay Room", part of a brand new Cancer Council Queensland hospice being built in Townsville. This donation was to a charity of the mine workforce's choice, following their achievement of reaching a significant safety milestone
- A \$5000 donation towards the Mackay Cancer Council Relay for Life and Daffodil Ball. In addition, 36 employees and family members took part in the relay, while three employees provided more than 450 volunteer hours to help organise the event, along with in-kind assistance provided in photocopying and administration support
- The donation of a Hail Creek Mine tour as a prize in the Daffodil Ball charity auction, which raised \$350 for the charity
- A donation from participating in "Australia's biggest morning tea"
- Participation in Movember fundraising activities.

Hail Creek Mine general manager operations, Andrew Woodley, said: "I'm very proud of what our workforce does in their own time to support the fight against cancer. There is a strong support base at Hail Creek Mine among employees who know that they are raising funds that directly enhance the quality of life for those who have been touched by cancer."

Cancer Council Queensland CEO, Professor Jeff Dunn, said the generosity of RTCA and its staff would help the Cancer Council to expand its services in regional Queensland in 2010 and beyond.

"This year, with the help of RTCA and its people, we provided the following support to people in the Mackay region:

- ✦ Our Cancer Council Helpline responded to over 1,200 calls.
- ✦ We loaned 112 pieces of medical equipment to 104 cancer patients.
- ✦ We provided \$56,027 in much needed financial assistance to 181 cancer patients.

- * Our Wig and Turban service met the needs of 300 patients going through chemotherapy.
- * Our Cancer Counselling Service responded to 45 referrals.
- * Our Cancer Support Service devoted 348 hours to visiting local cancer patients in hospital.
- * Our Breast Cancer Support Service reached out to 34 breast cancer patients and received 15 new referrals in the local region.
- * Our Transport Volunteers provided transport for 96 locals who needed to travel to Townsville for treatment.

“With the RTCA’s Christmas donation, we will continue our work in 2010 to improve access to services such as the Cancer Council Helpline, and to continue our research into understanding why regional patients experience lower rates of cancer survival.”

In Queensland, RTCA manages the Blair Athol, Hail Creek, Kestrel and Clermont mines, which along with the head office in Brisbane are donating a total of \$10,000 to the Cancer Council Queensland for cancer research in regional areas.

RTCA manages Coal & Allied’s three mines in the Hunter Valley in New South Wales. Those sites are also joining head office in Brisbane to donate a total of \$10,000 to the Cancer Council NSW for cancer research in regional parts of that state.

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