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## **State's mine safety innovation standards soaring skywards**

*NSW Miners from the Illawarra/Wollondilly and Hunter Valley regions awarded top honours*

The standard for mine safety innovation across the State has reached new heights, NSW Minerals Council Stephen Galilee said today.

NSW Miners from the Illawarra/Wollondilly and Hunter Valley regions have been awarded top honours at the highly coveted 2012 OHS Innovation Awards in front of around 550 of their peers.

### **2012 OHS Innovation Award Winners:**

- **2012 OHS INNOVATION AWARD**  
BHP Billiton Illawarra Coal (West Cliff Mine)  
Illawarra/Wollondilly Region  
***Ultra Lightweight Ventilation Tubes***  
*In a first for a NSW underground coalmine, trialling new carbon fibre ventilation tubes in place of traditional fibreglass significantly reduces their weight (from 35-40kg to just 9kg), increasing productivity and minimising heavy lifting risks like muscular-skeletal injuries.*
  
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED**  
Centennial Coal (Myuna Colliery)  
Hunter/Newcastle Region  
***SOTO Tow Hitch System***  
*This innovative rigid towing device minimises the risk of safety incidents by increasing control of movement while towing heavy mine equipment underground. It can be used in all conditions and can be operated by just one person.*
  
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED**  
BHP Billiton Mt Arthur Coal  
Hunter/Newcastle Region  
***The 'Marnett' Belt Lifter Bracket***  
*This specialised bracket allows conveyer belts without a mechanical belt lifter to be periodically changed without manual handling and pinch point hazards. It saves time by around 25 per cent, can be used on any conveyor and costs less than \$300 each.*
  
- **PEOPLE'S CHOICE** (Voted by conference delegates)  
BHP Billiton Illawarra Coal (West Cliff Mine)  
Illawarra/Wollondilly Region  
***Ultra Lightweight Ventilation Tubes***  
*(Also winner of the major 2012 OHS INNOVATION AWARD)*

Presenting the trophies to the winners at the Monday night ceremony, Mr Galilee said that the bar was set higher each year as both the competition and awards grew in stature and prestige.

"Our Innovation Awards encourage miners to identify areas where health and safety can be improved and then develop and road test creative solutions that can be adopted at other mining operations," Mr Galilee said.

“It’s important to recognise our high achievers and it’s wonderful to see a real competitive spirit emerging amongst our member companies, who keep innovating and improving all the time.

“The creativity and ingenuity emerging from these awards reinforces the fact that safety is our number one priority.”

Photos of winners are attached and all ten finalists **listed below:**

### **2012 OHS Innovation Award Finalists:**

#### ***Hunter /Newcastle Region:***

- BHP Billiton Mt Arthur Coal – The ‘Marnett’ Belt Lifter Bracket
- Centennial Coal (Myuna Colliery) – SOTO Tow Hitch System
- Centennial Coal (Mannering Colliery) – Hydraulic Pressure Drain Valve for the QDS Pod Lifter

#### ***Illawarra/Wollondilly Region:***

- Peabody Energy (Metropolitan Colliery) – Metropolitan LHD Work Platform with Extendable Deck
- BHP Billiton Illawarra Coal (West Cliff Mine) – Ultra Lightweight Ventilation Tubes

#### ***Central West Region:***

- Centennial Coal (Charbon Colliery) – Place Changing Development at Charbon with Mono-Rail Cable Handling System
- Centennial Coal (Angus Place Colliery) – Bulk Grout System
- Xstrata Coal NSW (Ulan Underground) – Steel Swan’s Neck – Support Overcasting Activities

#### ***Western Region:***

- Newcrest Mining (Cadia Valley Operations) – Application of 33KV in a NSW Underground Mine
- Rio Tinto (Northparkes Mines) – Liner Handling Device

ENDS.

Editors Notes:

- *The theme for this year’s Occupational Health and Safety Conference (29 April – 2 May 2012) is “What does health and safety mean to me?” A major focus this year is mental health in mining.*
- *Keynote speakers include the Hon Andrew Robb AO MP and rugby league legend Andrew Johns. Both will provide some insights into their own mental health challenges.*
- *The 43 page report **Mental Health and the NSW Minerals Industry**, prepared by the University of Newcastle and the Hunter Institute of Mental Health, through Newcastle Innovation, reveals the impact of mental health on mining. This is available on request.*
- *The NSW Minerals Council’s **Courteous and Safe Driving Guide** was officially launched by NSW Minister for Resources and Energy Chris Hartcher on Sunday evening*
- *Both the driving Guide and official conference program can be found on our website [www.nswmin.com.au](http://www.nswmin.com.au).*

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