

First Watch

Promoting health and safety initiatives in the resources sector

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BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina – Community road safety initiative

Project Summary

Road safety has been identified as a major priority by BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina, its workforce and the communities in which it operates.

This prompted Worsley to develop the Industry Road Safety Alliance, a partnership with local police, government agencies, industries and communities which took in The Griffin Group, Premier Coal, Verve Energy, Boddington Gold Mine alongside Main Roads, WA Police, the Office of Road Safety and the shires of Boddington, Collie and Harvey.

The public road safety project was hailed by the Office of Road Safety as a model worthy of adoption by other industries and communities.

Location

BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina: Alumina Refinery 190 km south-east of Perth, Bauxite Mine 130km south-east of Perth, Western Australia.

Number of employees

2000 permanent employees and contractors
Additional employees and contractors involved in expansion project

Key Learning

Learning factors focus on the commitment to extensive consultation and collaboration between stakeholders representing local communities, other major road users and road authorities such as police, road safety groups and government agencies.



Worsley Alumina

BHP Billiton Worsley Alumina, Western Australia



FirstWatch case studies are produced by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia to highlight occupational health and safety innovation and best practice in the WA resources sector. For more information, or to nominate a project, contact the CME Executive Officer – Occupational Safety and Health on (08) 9325 2955. Find the complete collection online at www.cmewa.com.au



The Challenge

Worsley's employees, contractors, and service providers travel long distances from towns throughout the South West and Peel regions. The road network servicing the area is becoming increasingly busy and aged.

No single stakeholder has ownership of road safety with different players having different needs and priorities. Infrastructure upgrades are costly and the approval processes are varied and time consuming. Positively influencing driver behaviour for employees, contractors and other road users on a public network is a challenging and never-ending task.

The Solution

An independent road safety report commissioned by Worsley identified major construction projects in the region would add more than 4500 vehicle movements a day to the already busy local road network in the next few years.

The report's recommendations ranged from capital works programs to driver behaviour campaigns. In order to meet the tight timeframes dictated by these major projects, it was important to secure the commitment and buy-in of major road users and road authorities to progress in a timely fashion.

Worsley played a leading role in bringing together members to form the Industry Road Safety Alliance, a group of key regional decision-makers and stakeholders to address all aspects of road safety.

Parallel to this initiative, Worsley established its own internal support networks to consider how it could improve conditions and the behaviours of its own workforce. This resulted in the formation of four high-level committees, which developed and implemented on-site improvements and campaigns to be integrated with the wider community initiatives.

Road safety improvements achieved by the Alliance to date include street lighting, car parks and road upgrades through to heavy haulage curfews, bus services, speed restrictions and driver education campaigns.

The Results

The key measurable achievements of the Alliance include:

- Developing a collaborative road safety approach between road users and authorities;
- Addressing regional road safety black spots and hazards before or as they arise;
- Targeted police patrols at peak travel times;
- Heavy haulage curfews to reduce the impact on the commuting public and local communities;
- Establishing and implementing a regional calendar of road safety topics with supporting public education and promotion materials;
- Creating awareness of peak holiday traffic using media and workforce campaigns;
- Working with the State Government to implement its new Road Safety Strategy – Toward Zero;
- Providing a complaints system for road users to report dangerous driving to police;
- Receiving positive feedback from police and other road users about Alliance initiatives helping to improve driver behaviour and attitudes; and
- Alliance initiatives credited with contributing to a reduction in road trauma statistics over Christmas/New Year 2008-09 and Easter 2009.

