



11 NOV, 2021

Huge value in mine contests

Kalgoorlie Miner, Kalgoorlie

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CME COMMENT RYAN O'HANLON



Mine rescue competitions such as the Goldfields underground event last weekend are really something to behold.

To start with there are the very realistic scenarios presented by the competitions.

Across a range of disciplines that include first aid, firefighting, search and rescue and rope rescue, participants face situations that are as close as possible to what they might encounter in the field.

For competitors it's adrenaline-pumping and also nerve-racking. For onlookers it's spectacular.

Throw in the dozens of volunteers who help make such events possible and these contests are a constant hive of activity keeping everyone on their toes.

But they are also a big part of the way mining operations prepare for the possibility that they might face an actual emergency on site.

Safety is always the number one priority at mining and resources operations in WA.

From physical safety, to mental health or COVID, the focus we start and end each day with is one of zero harm.

However, we also have to be realistic about the environments in which we operate.

And the reality is that when you are working in remote and rugged locations, often while using heavy machinery, there are potential hazards that simply do not exist if you are sitting behind a desk in an office.

Ask any member of a mining emergency response teams and they will tell you that rescue competitions allow them to test

and improve their skills in a way that just is not possible day-to-day on site.

It is also an invaluable opportunity to mix and learn from their counterparts at other mine sites in a setting that is competitive but collegial.

Nobody on a mine site ever hopes to go to work and be confronted with an emergency. But they want to be prepared as best as they possibly can be, in the event one does occur.

As one of the competitors explained to me on the weekend, emergency response skills are also very useful in everyday life away from site.

Rescue competitions in the Goldfields have a proud history stretching back well over 100 years and it was great to have them back on the schedule in 2021, underground and on the surface, after a year off because of COVID.

CME is proud to be a long-term supporter of these competitions and I personally cannot wait for the 2022 editions.

Planning is already under way.

On that note, I would like to thank the Mine Emergency Rescue Competition Committee, all of the competitors and the volunteers who contributed so much of their time to make last weekend's Goldfields Underground Mine Emergency Rescue Competition happen.

Special mention also to

Evolution Mining, which hosted the event at its Hornet gold mine at Kundana and made a massive contribution to the success of the competition.

It was really nice to see the overall winners come from our host mine, with a team that only got together a couple of weeks ago but obviously flourished under the pressure of competition.



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Eight teams from across the Goldfields competed in the 2021 Underground Mines Rescue competition. Picture: Amber Lilley