

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

THE MINING INDUSTRY AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



# ANGLO COAL AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

## DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Anglo Coal Australia Pty Ltd (Anglo) operates coal mines in Queensland and New South Wales and is developing plans for a coal to liquid fuels plant in Victoria. The company, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Anglo American plc, produces about 41 million tonnes of coal a year and employs more than 4400 people, including contractors.

Anglo's relationship with Aboriginal people has developed over the past fifteen years in the course of consultation over plans for developing and expanding coal mines and managing their impact on cultural heritage values.

Anglo is convinced that the development of cooperative relationships with traditional owners, based on respect and recognition, is by far the most effective way for mining companies to resolve cultural heritage and native title issues. Anglo, and all of its mine sites, has therefore embraced a commitment to the ongoing development of relationship and opportunities with traditional owners.

Anglo believes in sustainability for both the business and the communities in which it operates. With Anglo mines located in often remote regional areas, there are opportunities for Anglo to work cooperatively with local indigenous communities. It has committed to the *Anglo Coal and Aboriginal People* policy on developing and sustaining relationships with Aboriginal people. To achieve this goal Anglo's policy works to:

- Establish open and constructive consultation with the Aboriginal people;
- Adopt consultation processes that are developed with the Aboriginal people;
- Assess potential cultural heritage issues;
- Support initiatives that provide Aboriginal people with fair access to employment and business opportunities; and
- Provide cultural awareness training for employees.

Anglo's commitment to this policy is evident by the success of the Woorabinda community and Anglo's collaboration in developing and implementing both the Woorabinda Shared Responsibility Agreement (SRA) and the Indigenous Training Program (ITP) at Anglo's Dawson mine. Education, employment and local enterprise development are the key outcomes of these two initiatives. Hand in hand with these achievements, come benefits such as flow on economic benefits to families and the community, creation of mentors and leaders in the community and increased self confidence.

## WOORABINDA SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT

In 2005, during a Working in Partnership Program meeting attended by Anglo representatives, Mr Steve Kemp, Community Development Employment Program Coordinator for the Woorabinda Community, sought assistance with the development of a number of community programs and initiatives. Mr Kemp's initial request was for companies to provide some professional assistance to 'kick start' some real employment and business opportunities within the community.

The SRA was developed over a seven month period to ensure the right project was identified. The community indicated it would like to pursue the development of a timber products business using the skills capability within the community and established infrastructure. The SRA was signed by all parties (community, Anglo and government) at a ceremony held at Woorabinda on 18 January 2006. It was the first of its kind in Australia involving a private industry partner.

Under the SRA Anglo provided expert personnel to assist with planning design and layout of the manufacturing area; construction of the manufacturing area; incorporation of occupational health and safety procedures; development of a business plan; and development of a marketing strategy. This collaboration worked well because enthusiastic people from both sides were involved, two-way honest feedback was encouraged and everyone involved was focused on getting the indigenous participants to the 'go line'.

Anglo's commitment is beyond direct funding or in-kind assistance, it is a mentoring role to guide the community with business strategy and project planning to support local initiatives over a longer time frame. It is important to Anglo to build the capability of the community into ongoing jobs and healthy business opportunities.

A number of positives have been created through the Woorabinda SRA:

- Local jobs for local people – a full time Manager has been appointed along with four full time employees;
- Role models with a good work ethic;
- Local people learning trade skills; and
- Profitable business which supports the community and gives the community access to furniture.

The business is viable and the production of products has commenced with items being sold to the community. A commercial contract is also in place for the supply of outdoor furniture to MAC accommodation centres in Central Queensland.



Traditional owners, Frank Budby and Liz Hardiman undertaking cultural heritage clearance work at the Moranbah North mine in the Bowen Basin

## INDIGENOUS TRAINING PROGRAM

Anglo's work on the SRA led to the idea of a pre-employment program to better prepare indigenous people wanting to apply for positions at coal mines. Subsequently, the ITP was developed with commitment from Anglo and the local community, and funding from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

The thrust of ITP is to prepare participants for work as truck drivers in the coal industry by raising awareness of the coal industry, emphasising the importance of safety, become accustomed to working and living on site, and preparing for the job application process and the actual job (production operator / truck driver position). Units undertaken in the Program include inductions, work safety, operating a light vehicle, defensive driving, risk assessment, communication in the workplace, and job interview training.

The Program pilot ran for three weeks from 22 January 2007. 15 trainees of varying ages, including four women, from Woorabinda, Yeppoon and Mackay participated. Based on the pilot's success and extremely positive feedback received from participants, Anglo has decided to run further ITP courses.

Local employment and education are the major benefits of ITP. Anglo has committed to offering 10 positions at Dawson mine to people that completed the Program. In addition, the trainees experienced personal development, increased self confidence and a sense of achievement when they completed the course and received a graduation certificate.

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