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Recruitment campaign to support Russell Vale mine and Illawarra economy

Wollongong Resources has launched a recruitment campaign to expand its workforce in support of operations at the Russell Vale mine in the Illawarra region of NSW.

The employment drive is one of the biggest in the Illawarra since the COVID-19 pandemic and will increase the workforce at the Russell Vale mine to more than 300 – significantly more than forecast when the operation restarted last year.

As it continues to ramp-up operations at Russell Vale, Wollongong Resources is expanding the mine's workforce by 17 per cent, seeking to fill an additional 50 positions to cover a range of skills required at the mine. The jobs will support existing employees, building the Russell Vale workforce to about 340 by the end of 2022.

The recruitment campaign for full-time positions, which include mine operators, fitters, electricians and deputies in mine supervisory roles, comes as Wollongong Resources is converting its operational staff from contractors to permanent employees.

Wollongong Resources Chief Executive Officer Greg Pawley said supporting our people, partners and communities was fundamental to the successful operations of the Russell Vale mine.

"We are fixing the 'help wanted' sign to the front of the Russell Vale mine and seeking to fill these skilled positions immediately. This represents one of the largest individual jobs callouts in the Illawarra since the pandemic and is great news for Russell Vale mine, our people and the regional community in terms of employment and economic benefits.

"Back in 2022, when we planned the recommencement of operations we projected a full-time workforce of 250. We have already exceeded that forecast and with these 50 additional jobs, we'll have a workforce of about 340 by the end of the year, 36 per cent higher than our original projections.

"The overwhelming majority of our people live locally. Many of the company's employees have returned to the Illawarra from coal mining operations in the Hunter and regional NSW, helping add high-skilled jobs to the Illawarra region. In our recruitment processes, preference will be given to local Illawarra region residents.

"I've received strong feedback from our people about the culture we are building at Russell Vale. While Wollongong Resources has some of the most competitive pay rates in NSW mining, our employees recognise the additional advantages of working in the mining sector so close to their homes and community in the Illawarra."

At the Russell Vale mine, Wollongong Resources has successfully adopted the 'bord and pillar' extraction method, an innovative mining technique with no or very low environmental impact.

The recruitment campaign comes as Wollongong Resources is converting the status of its operational workforce from contractors to permanent employees.

The company recognises the additional attraction for its people of a permanent employment position but the approach is also underpinned by a commitment to a strong workplace culture, which helps drive high safety, operational and environmental standards.

About Wollongong Resources:

Wollongong Resources is a mid-tier producer of unprocessed steelmaking coal from the Wongawilli Seam in the Illawarra region of NSW. The company owns two mines in the Illawarra - Russell Vale and Wongawilli – which are well known for producing high-quality metallurgical coal. Both mines are among the oldest mines in Australia, with the origins of Russell Vale dating back to 1887. In supplying high-quality product, Wollongong Resources is committed to safe and sustainable operations and actively supports the communities in which its people live and work.

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