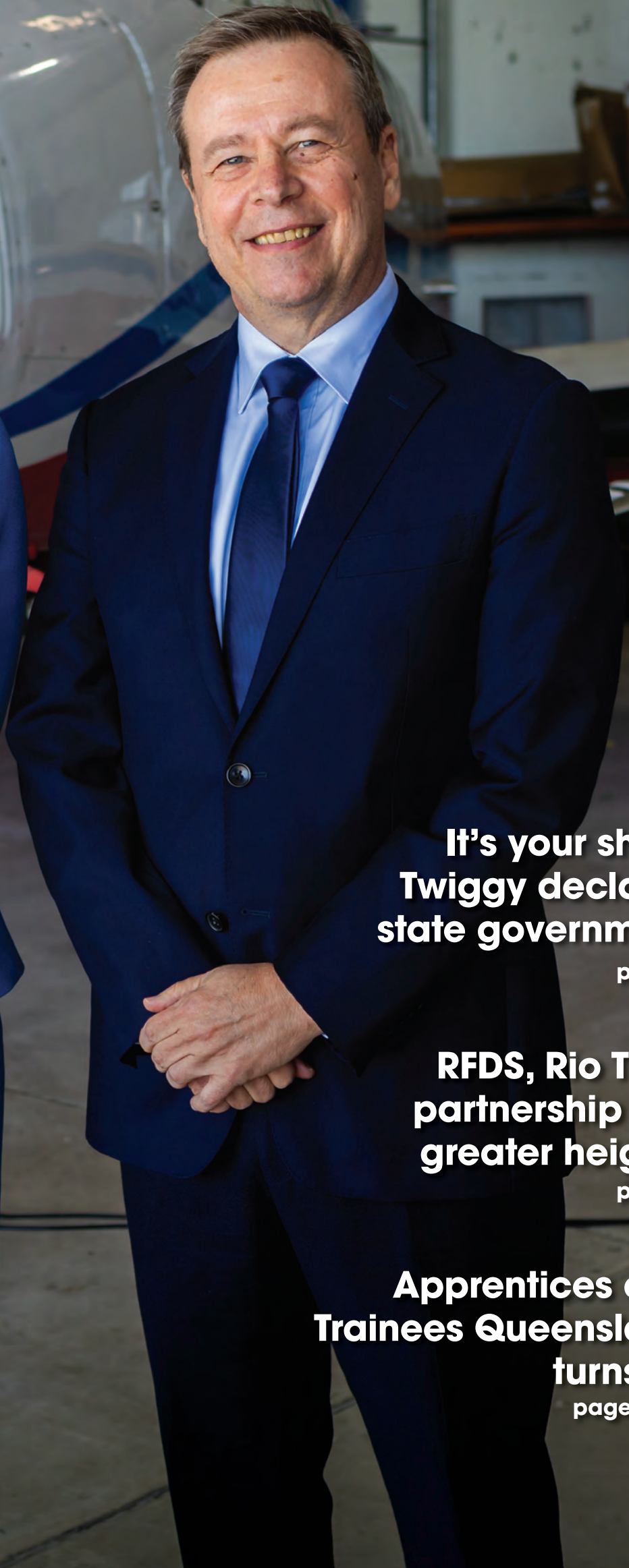


INDUSTRY *Today*

September 2025 Edition



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Same Job, Same Pay day date set for BHP workers

The Fair Work Commission has issued ‘Same Job Same Pay’ orders, setting 14 September as the date for pay rises to kick in for thousands of labour hire workers at the Central Queensland coal mines.

More than 2000 in-house workers at BHP’s Saraji, Peak Downs and Goonyella Riverside mines are estimated to receive pay rises of around \$30,000 a year.

The orders follow the Commission’s deci-

sion on 7 July in favour of Same Job Same Pay for workers employed by WorkPac, Chandler Macleod and BHP’s in-house labour hire subsidiary Operations Services.

Mining and Energy Union Queensland president Mitch Hughes said workers would be relieved to finally have a date set for pay rises to commence.

“This is great news from the Fair Work Commission,” Mr Hughes said.

“We’ve had a long legal battle pursuing pay justice for BHP labour hire workers.

“The orders issued will see long overdue raises hitting workers’ pay packets in just over a fortnight, after lengthy delays caused by BHP’s stalling tactics. BHP workers should mark 14 September in their calendars for a Same Job Same Pay celebration.”

The Commission’s orders take effect from

14 or 15 September, depending on the work group and mine site.

Mr Hughes urged BHP to drop their Federal Court challenge the Fair Work Commission’s 7 July decision backing Same Job Same Pay.

“BHP should stop wasting money on lawyers and start paying labour hire workers the industry-standard wages they are due. Time’s up - pay up,” he said.

Deal brings jobs, controversy

By Matthew Pearce

The LNP says Central Queensland is on the cusp of a jobs bonanza with the expansion of Bravus’ Carmichael Coal Mine set to deliver 600 new construction jobs over the next two years.

Thanks to an agreement with the Queensland Government allowing the mining company to defer coal royalty payments, Bravus has committed \$50 million towards an expansion of the Galilee Basin mine’s workers village, an additional water dam, a new rail network maintenance hub and additional mine site infrastructure.

But the agreement has already proved controversial, with the state opposition calling it a “sweetheart deal” and BHP saying this week it may have to mothball some of its Queensland coal mines if prices don’t improve because of the state’s royalty regime.

Visiting SMW Group at Parkhurst on Wednesday, 20 August, Natural Resources and Mines Minister Dale Last said the plans would see production ramped up from 13 million tonnes to 16 million tonnes, with the flow-on benefits reaching throughout the region, including to Rockhampton businesses like SMW and BCF Concreting Solutions.

“We are backing the resources sector, we know that it’s been battered and bruised over the last 10 years under the former Labor government, but we’re standing shoulder to shoulder with them, supporting them, with a view to streamlining approvals,” Mr Last, who is chair of Resources Cabinet Committee, said.



SMW Group director Jack Trenaman shows the rear dump trays constructed at SMW to BCF Concreting managing director Michael Davis, MPs Donna Kirkland, Nigel Hutton and Glen Kelly and Natural Resources and Mines Minister Dale Last. (Matthew Pearce: 497983)

Mr Last called the arrangement with Bravus a “one-off” and said the State Government had no intention of brokering any other royalty deferral payment schemes with any other company, despite the “challenging times with the price of coal.”

“The royalty deferral deal with Bravus was negotiated by the former Labor government on the eve of an election and we have honored that deal,” he said.

“Those royalties that are due and payable as a consequence of that deal plus interest will be paid back in full to Queensland as they should.”

Pointing out the “fully Australian made rear dump trays” constructed for Bravus by SMW, director Jack Trenaman thanked Bravus for its support.

“We are possibly the last manufacturer in Australia to still manufacture wholly and solely with Australian steel and with the Australian design and manufacturing here locally in Rockhampton that’s been a good news story for us,” he said.

“We would like to thank everyone that was a part of this announcement because it does mean genuine regional jobs here in trainees and apprenticeships.”

BCF Concreting managing director Michael Davis said the 100 per cent Indigenous-owned business was excited to be part of the announcement, having had worked with Bravus on five different occasions, two directly and three indirectly.

Regarding how much interest Bravus would

have to pay and when it would be paid back, Mr Last said the royalty deferral arrangements were negotiated in a commercial in confidence situation.

Shadow Treasurer Shannon Fentiman has called the deferral a “secret sweetheart deal to provide Adani (Bravus) with a royalty holiday” but Mr Last strongly rejected this.

“If Labor wants to go out there and scare-monger and put the fear of God into these workers and these communities around Queensland well shame on them,” he said.

“That’s a disgraceful comment from the Shadow Treasurer yesterday.

“These jobs are secure ... The resource economy is crucial to Queensland and it is absolutely crucial to places like Rockhampton and Mackay.”

Rockhampton MP Donna Kirkland said more than one third of Rockhampton’s community are directly or indirectly employed in the mining sector.

“This announcement means job security and pathways into the mining sector for the next generation,” she said.

Keppel MP Nigel Hutton said more than 5000 families across the the Keppel electorate relied on mining for “their family’s bread and butter.”

Mirani MP Glen Kelly said the investment shows Queensland, and the electorate of Mirani, is open for business.

Apprentices vying for Powerlink positions across region

Powerlink has held its annual Gladstone Apprentice Assessment Centre, with 31 aspiring locals put through their paces as part of the selection process for the 2026 apprenticeship program.

The Assessment Centre, held at Gladstone’s Central Queensland University campus on Wednesday, 20 August, brought together the shortlisted candidates to test a range of skills needed for the coveted apprentice positions.

Field and Asset Management executive general manager Emma Rogers said the program reflects Powerlink’s commitment to local employment opportunities and boosting skills de-

velopment in the region.

“The Central Queensland region plays a pivotal role in the electricity grid both in Queensland and across the National Electricity Market,” Ms Rogers said.

“There are a number of critical projects coming up in the region to reinforce our network to meet Central Queensland’s future energy needs.

“Our Gladstone-based teams also play an important role in maintaining our network across the State, ensuring Queenslanders have access to reliable power.

“Our Gladstone Apprentice Assessment

Centre is about identifying the next generation of energy workers. We currently have 12 Gladstone-based apprentices and we are looking to add five more to that team starting in 2026.”

Candidates at the Assessment Centre participated in a series of practical exercises including building mechanical structures and working from heights in a 12-metre elevated work platform.

These exercises tested each candidate’s ability to work in a team, exercise their critical thinking skills and ascertain if they are suited to the physical demands of the job.

Ms Rogers said Powerlink’s apprentice program was just one way the organisation invested in its people.

“Once joining Powerlink the learning never stops,” Ms Rogers said.

“There’s always new technologies, new equipment, new network capabilities that we’re looking to build and that’s why Powerlink is a great place to work.”

The successful candidates will start with Powerlink in January and will work with the 47-strong team based at Powerlink’s Gladstone Hub.



Powerlink has held its annual Gladstone Apprentice Assessment Centre at the university, with 31 aspiring locals put through their paces as part of the selection process for the 2026 apprenticeship program. (Powerlink)

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Bleijie hits up Fortescue

By Di Stanley

The State Government will chase billionaire miner Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest for payment of \$65.97 million to recoup money lost on Fortescue's failed green hydrogen electrolyser plant in Gladstone.

Deputy Premier Jarrod Bleijie blasted Opposition members in State Parliament last month for investing in clean energy "vanity projects".

Mr Bleijie revealed the former Labor Government had approved \$92.5m for Fortescue to build the PEM50 project in Gladstone.

"Not only was this a fanciful project of the former treasurer and Deputy Premier, the State Labor Government approved \$92.5m of taxpayer funds for that project and \$65.97m has already been paid to Fortescue under the former Labor government's terrible deal," he said.

"Former Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk now says that hydrogen is just 'too hard'.

"She has said it just 'doesn't stack up'.

"Why then did she, her government and the former Deputy Premier and now Opposition leader give Fortescue - billionaires - \$65m of Queensland taxpayers' money?

"On behalf of Queensland taxpayers, I have directed my department to advise Fortescue that the Crisafulli government will issue a notice to comply and a default notice and seek full reimbursement of the \$65.97m that went towards this now discontinued project.

"That is value for taxpayers' money, and we are going to try to get it back."

On Tuesday, Fortescue announced a 41 per cent nosedive in its annual profits after a year of falling iron ore prices.

The company recorded a net profit after tax of \$5.2 billion, compared with \$8.77b a year ago.

Fortescue flagged the closure of its 2GW



The State Government has billionaire Andrew 'Twiggy' Forrest firmly in its sights as it attempts to recover \$65.97 million from his Fortescue flagship company after a failed green hydrogen venture in Gladstone. (Supplied)

Gladstone hydrogen PEM electrolyser factory in mid-May when it laid off 30 workers at the facility. It announced it was stepping away to focus on research and development.

In the company's annual report Mr Forrest reaffirmed his commitment to developing viable green hydrogen technologies for a clean energy future.

"Green hydrogen remains critical to our future," he said.

"Its day is coming, and we will be able to switch on as much energy as we need without harming the planet and without making despots who invade other countries using energy as a weapon, richer.

"Fortescue is in the process of proving 24/7 baseload power as I write.

"Further, when the cost of producing green hydrogen inevitably reaches parity with fossil fuels, Fortescue will be ready.

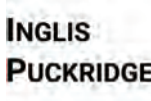
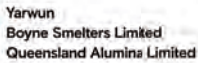
"Others are joining us on the path to Real Zero.

"I am optimistic about the future, not just because the world will catch on that continuing to burn anything we can is completely archaic when we can create all the energy we want, control it exactly as we need to with AI and deliver a green, peaceful world through nothing but finally tapping into infinite renewable energy."

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Royalties blasted

By Di Stanley

One of the Bowen Basin’s biggest coal operators has joined the growing chorus criticising the State Government’s royalty regime.

BMA’s head of operations Mariette Bylsma was in Mackay at the BMA CQ Rescue Ball when she delivered an ominous warning on the future of the industry if a royalties reset wasn’t delivered.

“The Bowen Basin and all those communities connected to the mining industry are facing hardships as a result of the Queensland Government’s coal royalties and tax and increasingly challenging market conditions,” Ms Bylsma told the gathering.

“Under this regime, in FY2025, BMA paid eight times in taxes and royalties than what we made in profit and had an effective tax rate of 67 per cent. Numbers like these are not sustainable and as you’re no doubt aware, other operators are already making difficult decisions.

“The government’s unsustainable coal taxes are now having real impacts on regional jobs and communities, and it’s costing Queensland.

“We have a responsibility to our workforce, our partners and suppliers, and shareholders – and to the regional communities where we operate – to articulate these concerns and call for change.”

Premier David Crisafulli and Treasurer David Janetzki have reiterated in recent weeks the government has no intention of reviewing the regime.

Ms Bylsma urged the mining community, towns and industry reliant on the coal industry to share their concerns with their local Members of Parliament.

The Bowen Basin and wider Central Queensland, bar the seat of Gladstone, is fortress LNP in the wake of the October, 2024 election.



Coronado Global Resources Curragh coal mine at Blackwater has paid \$1.2 billion in coal royalties in the past three years. In its full year results, released on 13 August, Coronado posted a \$73 million first half loss. (Supplied)

Ms Bylsma’s comments come after BHP warned about the impact of royalties on its Queensland mines – Goonyella Riverside, Peak Downs, Caval Ridge, Broadmeadow and Saraji – operated under the BMA banner. The miner employs 9500 people across Queensland.

“With no change to the ongoing negative impacts of extreme royalty rates, we will maintain our existing position of not investing in any further growth at BMA,” the company said in its full year financial results.

BMA reported a 69 per cent downturn in underlying earnings.

BHP chief executive Mike Henry doubled down, saying BMA’s operations were unlikely to operate in a cash-negative environment.

“There is less ability or willingness on the part of the business to see through those tough times and perhaps carry negative cash flows,” he said. “We have to act even more expediently to shut any less-making operation because we

don’t get the benefit on the other side of the equation when prices rise.”

Whitehaven, operators of the Blackwater and Daunia mines, pledged to cut between \$60-80 million from its business in the year ahead.

“The current regime is not sustainable... our expectations for change in this term (of state parliament) are low, but we think there should be discussion leading to the further terms,” Whitehaven chief executive Paul Flynn said.

In 2023-24 there were 26,995 direct coal employees and 14,678 full-time contractors in Queensland.

The Fitzroy region – Banana, Central Highlands, Gladstone and Rockhampton – generated \$4.8 billion in coal direct spending, with 1371 businesses supported by the resource.

There were 560 community clubs supported through sponsorships and grants.

Flowing to reservoirs

Water has begun flowing into the Aldoga Reservoirs for the first time, marking a significant construction milestone for the \$983 million Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline (FGP).

Construction of the two 50 megalitre reservoirs is now well progressed, allowing hydrostatic testing to begin.

This testing phase will involve filling each reservoir with water to confirm structural integrity and readiness for service. Once testing is complete, work will begin on installing the reservoir roofs.

Gladstone Area Water Board Chief Executive Officer Darren Barlow said the start of water testing at the Aldoga Reservoirs marks a turning point in the project’s construction phase.

“Introducing water into the reservoirs for the first time is a major milestone and symbolises how far the project has come,” Mr Barlow said. “This is not just a technical step, it’s a sign we’re getting closer to delivering a second source of water supply for Gladstone and reducing the region’s reliance on Awoonga Dam.

The hydrostatic testing process is essential to confirm each reservoir is ready for operational use, and it also allows the project to safely progress to the next stage, including roof construction and supporting infrastructure.

GAWB is committed to delivering the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline on time and to the highest standards.

Each milestone is a step closer to securing safe and reliable water for the industries, communities and future of Central Queensland.”

The FGP is a Queensland Government-funded project, delivered by GAWB, to provide long-term water security for the Gladstone region. It will mitigate the single-source water supply risk from Awoonga Dam and support economic growth in Central Queensland.

The FGP is expected to be completed in 2026, weather and construction conditions permitting.

Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB), as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhance the lifestyle of regional Queensland.

GAWB owns and operates Awoonga Dam, along with a network of pipelines, water treatment plants and other distribution infrastructure.

For more information about GAWB and the FGP, please visit www.gawb.qld.gov.au

Company offloads CQ energy portfolio

Following revelations in the Australian Financial Review that Central Queensland Power is selling their portfolio of renewable energy projects across the region, Mirani MP and his federal counterpart Flynn MP Colin Boyce are asking for them to come clean.

AFR reports that the Central Queensland Power renewable energy portfolio includes the Moah Creek Solar/BESS hybrid, Wooderson Solar/BESS hybrid, Mount Rainbow Wind Farm, Mount Sugarloaf Wind Farm and Mount Perry Wind Farm and a confidential solar/BESS hybrid in the Banana Shire.

Mr Kelly has called on CQP to come clean with the communities surrounding their projects as to what their plan is.

“CQP have failed to engage properly with the community from the very start of the Moah Creek project, and this is another example of failing to be upfront with the impacted communities of their projects,” Mr Kelly said.

“They snuck around and sorted out the land for the Moah Creek project, ran community consultations that were more like lectures and expected the Kalapa and Wycarbah communities to jump on board while treating us like mugs.

“Their actions showed that they clearly didn’t care about the impacted community and that’s quite clear now that they’re trying to offload the project on to someone else. “They came in, divided our community, caused significant stress on families about what their life was going to become under these massive turbines and now that they’ve done all that damage to our communities and they’re trying cash out and get away.”

All of CQP’s projects are either in the development or approval stage, with no construction work having started on these projects.

Mr Boyce said regional communities are already feeling the brunt of the reckless renewables’ rollout with the reported six projects up for sale located in the electorate of Flynn.

“There are over 90 renewable projects proposed in the electorate of Flynn which are creating a large amount of community angst and are literally turning neighbour against neighbour,” Mr Boyce said.

“Rather than engaging with communities, it appears that CQP are more eager to engage with potential bidders that have no regard for the regional communities affected by the proposed renewable projects.

“The majority stake of the proposed renewable projects will still be controlled by a developer located in the United Kingdom.

“So once again, it appears that money will head offshore for overseas investors.”

CQP is a joint venture of RES and Energy Estate, with the investor pamphlet as reported by the AFR saying that RES wants to continue on as an equity partner until the projects are up and running and would consider selling leftover stakes in the individual assets.



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It was a welcome coming together with the partnership announcement between the RFDS (Queensland Section) and Rio Tinto. (RFDS)



It was a welcome moment for Royal Flying Doctor Service (Queensland Section) chief executive officer Meredith Staib to be able to show Rio Tinto Pacific Operations Aluminium manager director Armando Torres around one of the planes.

Partnership taking flight

The Royal Flying Doctor Service Queensland section and Rio Tinto have struck a new partnership to strengthen health services across Regional Queensland.

Rio Tinto will contribute \$14.675 million over the next five years to help expand access to vital healthcare for communities in rural and regional areas.

Since 2020, Rio Tinto has supported the RFDS in Queensland, helping to enhance healthcare delivery through initiatives such as the Covid-19 telehealth response, and contributing to the development and maintenance of RFDS bases and patient transfer facilities.

Rio Tinto has also made separate donations to assist the RFDS with recovery efforts following Cyclone Jasper and this year's severe weather and flooding across Queensland.

RFDS (Queensland section) chief executive officer Meredith Staib said the new partnership with Rio Tinto will deliver real and measurable improvements for patients and communities, by strengthening and enhancing rural and remote health services, building workforce capability and contributing to closing the gap in

Indigenous health outcomes.

"I can't thank Rio Tinto enough for their commitment to improving the health of regional Queenslanders," Ms Staib said.

"This agreement will be a catalyst for change in the health and wellbeing of people living in some of the most remote parts of the state — from enabling earlier intervention and preventive care, to supporting better management of complex and chronic conditions closer to home."

Ms Staib said almost 35 per cent of the patients seen by RFDS clinicians identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

"The RFDS Best for the Bush: Rural and Remote Baseline 2023 report highlighted the glaring inequality in health outcomes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people versus non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people," she said.

"This partnership with Rio Tinto is more than funding, it reflects a shared commitment to changing the trajectory of health in rural and remote Queensland.

"It stands as a model for what's possible

when two purpose-driven organisations come together to remove barriers, improve access, and deliver care where it's needed most."

RFDS (Queensland section) general manager Virtual and Digital Health Dr Shaun Francis said the new funding would have an immediate impact.

"The ability to more effectively triage telehealth calls will be a game changer for us as it will give us the ability to deliver more services to the patients that need it most," he said.

RFDS (Queensland Section) state manager for mental health Dr Tim Driscoll said the mental health challenges facing those in regional and remote areas remained very real.

"With Rio Tinto's support, we can expand our mental health services into some of Queensland's most remote communities, placing clinicians where they're needed most and that gives individuals and families, earlier access to quality psychological care, close to home," he said.

Rio Tinto Pacific Operations Aluminium managing director Armando Torres said the global company was proud to extend its part-

nership with the RFDS to help deliver better health outcomes for rural and regional Queensland communities.

"This \$14.675 million investment will support early intervention and culturally safe psychological care in high-need areas, expand 24-7 virtual triage services, and strengthen chronic disease management to reduce preventable hospitalisations," he said.

"It will also contribute to growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner workforce, making care more accessible and culturally appropriate.

"This partnership is about making a real difference to the health and wellbeing of people living in some of Queensland's most remote and hard-to-reach areas.

"What began as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic has evolved into a long-term collaboration focused on improving health outcomes across the state.

"This next chapter reflects a shared commitment to removing barriers and expanding access critical services and building a healthier future for all Queenslanders."

Alpha HPA releases inaugural sustainability report

Alpha HPA has released its inaugural Sustainability Performance Report, highlighting how the company is working to build a cleaner, smarter supply chain for high-purity alumina and related aluminium products.

Managing director Rob Williamson said the report underscores Alpha HPA's commitment to delivering ultra-high purity aluminium products in an environmentally and commercially sustainable way.

"That thinking has shaped every decision — from the way we design our processes, to how we engage with partners, communities and the markets we serve," Mr Williamson said.

The release comes ahead of Australia's new mandatory sustainability reporting standards, set to take effect in 2026.

"With new standards taking effect in 2026, we used 2025 to build a clear understanding of

the requirements so we can deliver full compliance from day one — with a strong foundation to grow from," Mr Williamson said.

The report details progress across environmental, social and governance (ESG) priorities, including Alpha HPA's proprietary Smart SX Technology, which reduces energy use, waste and emissions. Stage Two of the company's HPA First Project in Gladstone — now under construction — will be the world's largest facility of its kind, running entirely on renewable electricity.

Mr Williamson said the technology gives Alpha HPA an edge in fast-growing markets such as semiconductors, electric vehicle batteries and advanced manufacturing.

"That efficiency isn't just good for the environment — it's a competitive advantage for our customers. It lowers costs, increases resilience

and positions us to meet the growing global demand," he said.

Other highlights in the report include more than \$8 million invested locally in FY25, the launch of an Indigenous Engagement Strategy, recognition for innovation at the 2024 Gladstone Engineering Alliance awards, and female participation across the company nearing 40 percent.

"This report shows, in black and white, the choices we've made, the challenges we face and the kind of company we are building to service these fast-paced technology sectors," Mr Williamson said.

Alpha HPA managing director Rob Williamson.



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Damning Callide C report

By Gregor Mactaggart and Karen Simmons

CS Energy has admitted to major failings in safety and governance at the Callide C Power Station near Biloela, with a damning report into April's Unit C3 incident revealing long-standing unresolved issues and inadequate risk management.

The report into the 4 April explosion at the state-owned station concluded the incident had the potential to cause serious injuries.

It found progress in embedding process safety across the organisation had been "inadequate," while identifying failures including ineffective clinker management, inherent design flaws that delayed shutdown of the unit, inadequate risk controls, poor planning and governance, operator shortages and training gaps.

CS Energy chief executive officer Brian Gillespie said the report underscored the company's commitment to transparency and accountability.

"The CS Energy board has now taken decisive action following the incident, initiating an organisational transformation, with a focus on safety leadership, clearer governance, and improved risk management," Mr Gillespie said.

"The findings released have informed our ongoing work to build a safer, better CS Energy."

Following April's incident, then CS Energy chief executive officer Darren Busine and general manager Mick Hill stood down, with a fresh team now in place.

"The CS Energy leadership team acknowledges that what happened on Unit C3 was not good enough. We have a new leadership team who is listening and acting. There is no finish line to creating a great safety culture and we are committed to being among the best in the



CS Energy has released a damning report into the 4 April explosion at Callide Power Station. The station's embattled C3 Unit is undergoing an \$80 million overhaul. (Supplied)

world when it comes to safety," Mr Gillespie said.

Mr Gillespie said the company has already completed targeted actions in response to the findings, with further initiatives underway to drive lasting improvements.

"CS Energy worked closely with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to meet their requirements for the continued operation of Unit C4 and the safe return to service of Unit C3," he said.

"All technical root causes (clinker management, boiler protection systems, combustion systems and coal quality) have been rectified. Specifically, the timing delays that were built into flame scanner control logic have been removed. The approximate cost of the repairs was \$5.4 million."

CS Energy is in the midst of an \$80 million overhaul of Unit C3 as part of its scheduled maintenance program to support the unit's continued safe and reliable operation into the future.

The Unit C3 overhaul is one of the largest maintenance projects in the station's history, with an estimated 190,000 hours of work planned.

The project involves more than 60 specialist companies and will have a peak workforce of 360 people bringing flow-on economic benefits to the local area.

The overhaul's start earlier this month coincided with new Callide Power Station general manager Malcolm Bambling's first week on site, following his appointment in July.

Mr Bambling brings more than 35 years

of experience in the energy sector having led complex power generation operations across Australia, the UK, Europe, and the United States.

The Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) seized on the findings, accusing the State Government of "flogging a dead horse" by propping up coal-fired power stations beyond their scheduled retirement dates.

QCC campaigner Stephanie Gray said the report exposed the dangers of prioritising production over risk management.

"Queensland's coal power stations were offline a staggering 78 times over the last summer period because they're old and keep breaking down," Ms Gray said.

"If the Crisafulli Government keeps pushing these coal clunkers past their scheduled end of life we're going to see more breakdowns, more outages, and more price spikes for Queensland consumers.

"The practical thing for Queensland's Energy Minister, David Janetzki, to do now is plan for the replacement of Queensland's ageing coal power stations with renewable energy backed by storage."

Callide Power Station consists of two plants: Callide B and Callide C, each with two generating units (B1 and B2, C3 and C4).

CS Energy wholly owns Callide B, while Callide C is owned through a 50/50 joint venture with IG Power (Callide) Ltd, with CS Energy operating the facility on behalf of the partnership.

Royalties could cripple Bowen Basin mines: BHP

Business behemoth BHP has taken a thinly veiled swipe at the State Government's coal royalty regime, stating it could consider the future of some of its lower margin coal mining operations in Queensland if low prices persisted.

Chief executive officer Mike Henry said the threat was not an idle one with the company's Bowen Basin operations - the Goonyella Riverside, Caval Ridge, Peak Downs, Saraji and Broadmeadow mines all operated under the BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) banner - now saddled with an effective tax rate of more than 60 per cent.

"What has happened that due to changes that were made to the royalty regime a few years ago, the benefit of any upswing in coal prices has been seriously eroded from a BMA perspective," he said.

"So, in the face of tougher times like we see currently, there is less ability or willingness on the part of the business to see through those tough times and perhaps carry some negative

cash flows, we have to act even more expediently to shut any loss-making operation because we don't get the benefit on the other side of the equation when prices rise."

BMA employs more than 9000 employees and contractors in the Bowen Basin, and in the FY2025 spent more than \$1.4 billion with more than 820 local suppliers.

In the past decade, it has paid more than \$21 billion to the Queensland Government, including more than \$1.5b in FY2025.

The Queensland coal division reported a 69 per cent fall in underlying earnings to US\$600, which Mr Henry said could lead to job losses if depressed market conditions continued.

"We've noted in the results some of the pressures we're under in Queensland, in the face of both low coal prices and recent changes to the royal regime, so depending on how coal prices play out there, that could see us need to move to take some steps there," he said.

In its full year earnings report released on Tuesday, 19 August, BHP noted that no change

to the ongoing negative impacts of extreme royalty rates, it would maintain its existing position of not investing in any further growth at BMA.

"We will sustain and optimise our existing operations. However, if low coal prices persist, options to pause lower margin areas of our operational footprint will be considered," the report stated.

As Aurizon continues its review into the possibility of selling up to 49 per cent of its Central Queensland rail network, the rail freight business will axe up to 200 management roles in a bid to rein in costs.

In a report to shareholders on Monday, 18 August, Aurizon said another 50 train driver jobs would go with the introduction of new technology.

Aurizon chief executive officer Andrew Harding said the business had initially targeted about \$50 million in savings with a further \$10m since identified.

"Importantly, all \$60m has been actioned

and will flow through in its entirety in FY2026 and includes a reduction of approximately 200 full-time-equivalent roles," Mr Harding said.

"They are in the non-operational areas ... people in management roles at all levels of the organisation and support roles.

"The reduction in 50 roles in the train driving area is a result in putting in train guard technology."

Last month, Bravus Mining announced it was pouring \$50m into expansion works at its Carmichael Mine in the Galilee Basin.

The investment will support an expansion of the mine's workers' accommodation village, a new water dam, construction of a rail network maintenance hub, new mine site infrastructure and engineering works.

The commitment will underpin the expansion of production at the mine by around one-third in the coming years, involving \$500m in additional capital investment and 600 new jobs during construction, subject to approvals.



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on 40 years of shaping
careers, strengthening
businesses, and
building communities
across CQ.





APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES
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40 Year Anniversary

12787927-J038-25

Looking at proud history

For four decades, Apprentices and Trainees Queensland (ATQLD) has been a cornerstone of Central Queensland's vocational training landscape.

As a proud, independent not-for-profit group training organisation, ATQLD has fostered safe, skills-driven pathways for apprentices and trainees without reliance on corporate or government funding.

That independence has shaped its identity, allowing the organisation to remain firmly anchored in integrity, innovation and service to the community.

From its earliest days, ATQLD has remained deeply embedded in the heart of the region, with offices across Gladstone, Biloela and Rockhampton.

These hubs ensure local businesses and individuals receive tailored mentorship, practical upskilling and steadfast support.

The organisation's presence has become a constant for employers seeking skilled workers and for young people eager to take their first step into a trade or career.

One of ATQLD's most significant milestones came in 1997 when it pioneered the school-based apprenticeship program.

That same year, 12 Year 11 students embarked on boilermaking apprenticeships as part of a bold initiative that has since become a model used right across Australia.

This pioneering spirit has carried ATQLD forward and cemented its reputation as a leader in vocational training and workforce development.

Chief executive officer Michael Walz has lived this story himself.

He began his career as an apprentice before moving into leadership roles that eventually led him to the position of CEO.

His career progression represents the very purpose of ATQLD: that apprenticeships and traineeships are more than just qualifications — they are pathways to resilience, growth and achievement.

"From my first day as an apprentice to my current role as CEO, my focus has remained the same: to champion and advance the power of training and mentorship," he said.

Michael's journey highlights the organisation's belief that the best leaders are those who understand the apprentice experience first-hand.

His ability to guide ATQLD is strengthened by his personal connection to the mission, and his story serves as an inspiration for apprentices beginning their own journeys.

While ATQLD has grown, it has never lost sight of the values that underpin its work: safety, quality and opportunity.

The organisation holds ISO 9001:2015 quality management and ISO 45001:2018 occupational health and safety certifications, and it consistently meets the national standards for group training organisations.



The ATQLD team is continuing the organisation's proud legacy. (Supplied)



ATQLD is celebrating four decades of training, mentoring and supporting Central Queensland's future workforce.

These accreditations reflect a culture of continuous improvement, but the true measure of success lies in the experiences of the thousands of individuals who have trained, worked and succeeded under its guidance.

ATQLD is also proud of its commitment to inclusion.

Over the years, it has provided opportunities for First Nations peoples, long-term unemployed individuals, people with disabilities, women re-entering the workforce, veterans

and young people at risk.

By creating pathways for groups who may otherwise struggle to find employment, the organisation has built a reputation as both a training provider and a community advocate.

The 40-year anniversary is not only a chance to look back, but also to look forward.

It celebrates the people who have shaped the organisation, the thousands of apprentices and trainees who have trusted ATQLD with their futures, and the businesses and commu-

nities that have grown stronger as a result.

As ATQLD marks this milestone, its legacy is clear. It has built more than careers; it has built futures, strengthened communities and created opportunities that continue to echo across Central Queensland.

Michael's story is a reminder that an apprenticeship can be the first step toward a lifetime of achievement, and that ATQLD will continue to walk alongside apprentices, trainees and employers for many decades to come.



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Four decades of strength

By ATQLD chief executive officer
Michael Walz

As we celebrate 40 years of Apprentices and Trainees Queensland (ATQLD), formerly Gladstone Area Group Apprentices Limited (GAGAL), I am proud to reflect on the vital role this organisation has played in shaping careers, strengthening businesses, and building communities across Central Queensland.

Since our founding in 1985, our mission has been simple but powerful: to provide real opportunities for people to gain skills, experience, and qualifications through apprenticeships and traineeships. Over four decades, we have supported thousands of individuals to take their first step into meaningful careers, while helping local businesses grow and succeed through access to a capable and motivated workforce.

What has always set ATQLD apart is our commitment to people. We believe training is not just about meeting industry demand, it's about transforming lives. Every apprentice and trainee we support represents a future tradesperson, professional, or community leader. By investing in people, we invest in the strength and sustainability of our region.

Our partnerships with host employers are another cornerstone of our success. We work side by side with businesses, large and small, to ensure they have the skilled staff they need today, while helping them plan for tomorrow. This collaboration creates a win-win: young people gain hands-on learning and career pathways, and businesses build loyalty, capability, and long-term success.

Beyond the workplace, ATQLD has always taken pride in contributing to the community. We are more than a training provider; we are



ATQLD chief executive officer Michael Walz. (Supplied)

part of the fabric of Central Queensland. From supporting local initiatives to mentoring future leaders, our focus remains on creating lasting impact that extends well beyond the apprenticeship or traineeship itself.

As we mark this milestone, I want to ac-

knowledge the dedication of our staff, the commitment of our host employers, and the resilience of our apprentices and trainees. Together, you are the reason ATQLD has not only endured but thrived for 40 years.

Looking ahead, our purpose remains clear:



Michael Walz during his apprenticeship years – the first step on a journey that would one day see him lead ATQLD as chief executive officer.

to continue championing skills, supporting businesses, and opening doors for the next generation. The industries may change, but the need for skilled, passionate people never will, and ATQLD will be here to guide them every step of the way.

ATQLD about shaping careers in Central Queensland

Apprentices and Trainees Queensland is a not-for-profit group training organisation with 40 years of experience in Central Queensland.

Operating independently without government or corporate funding, the organisation offers advanced workforce solutions, providing essential support to host companies and individuals through upskilling initiatives and tailored assistance.

The organisation offers a diverse range of programs designed to empower individuals with practical skills and pathways to meaningful employment across various industries.

The Skilling Queenslanders for Work Ignite Your Opportunities Program is an 18-week Certificate I Workplace Skills traineeship focusing on business and hospitality and Certificate I in Construction.

The Pre-Employment Pathways Program aims to elevate the capacity, skills, and exper-

tise of construction and manufacturing businesses in the region.

The CSQ Trade Ready Program is a five to six-week course blending technical knowledge with essential life skills to prepare participants for a successful career in the construction industry.

The Trade Your Future Pre-Apprenticeship Program is a 12-week initiative offering training towards a Certificate I in Engineering, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

Apprentices and Trainees Queensland is committed to supporting apprentices and trainees, ensuring they receive guidance and assistance throughout their training journey.

This includes providing information on available programs, advice on career pathways, and support during the application process.

For employers, the organisation offers a

comprehensive suite of services to support the employment and training of apprentices and trainees.

This includes monitoring progress, arranging off-the-job training, conducting performance appraisals, and advising on training needs.

Whether you want to start your career, up-skill, or find the right talent for your business, Apprentices and Trainees Queensland provides the resources and support to help you succeed.

The organisation is dedicated to fostering success through upskilling initiatives and tailored assistance, contributing to developing a skilled and capable workforce in Central Queensland.

For more information or to explore opportunities, contact Apprentices and Trainees Queensland on 1300 242 425.



For 40 years, Apprentices and Trainees Queensland has been helping individuals and businesses in Central Queensland grow skills, careers, and opportunities. (Supplied)

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What a great legacy

**By Gladstone Regional Council Mayor
Matt Burnett**

As we celebrate 40 years of Apprentices and Trainees Queensland (ATQLD), formerly Gladstone Area Group Apprentices Ltd (GAGAL), we reflect on a remarkable legacy of opportunity, vision and community.

Founded in 1985 by then-Mayor Col Brown and a group of dedicated locals, GAGAL was established to give future tradespeople the chance to gain skills and build careers in the Gladstone Region.

Col, mayor from 1979 to 1994, transformed Gladstone from a town into a city.

Among his many achievements, the creation of GAGAL stands out as one of his most enduring contributions.

From its earliest days, GAGAL was embraced by the industry.

Gladstone City Council (now Gladstone Regional Council) and Gladstone Port Authority (now Gladstone Ports Corporation) were among the first host employers, soon joined by Peachey's Engineering and Walz Construction.

Over the years, almost every major industry in our region has supported apprentices and trainees through this organisation.

I want to also recognise the significant contributions of leaders like former general manager Dave Burns and former chairman Ian Mitchell, who helped shape the organisation and strengthen its role in our community.

Their efforts, along with many others, ensured that Col Brown's vision continued to thrive.



Gladstone Regional Council Mayor Matt Burnett. (Supplied)

Through initiatives like the prestigious Col Brown Memorial Award, ATQLD continues to celebrate the achievements of outstanding apprentices and trainees.

On behalf of the Gladstone Region, I congratulate ATQLD on 40 years of service, training, and opportunity.

This milestone is a testament to the vision of our leaders, the dedication of our industries, and the hard work of every apprentice and trainee who has come through the program.

Here's to another 40 years of Apprentices and Trainees Queensland!

Incredible journey to celebrate

**By ATQLD operations manager
Angie Wilmot**

As we mark 40 years of ATQLD, formerly known as GAGAL, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey this organisation has taken, and the role it continues to play in shaping the futures of young people in our region.

Growing up in Gladstone and raising my children here, I've seen firsthand the importance of strong community ties and the value of opportunity.

My children went to school locally and have since become tradespeople themselves, which makes me a passionate advocate for apprenticeships and traineeships and the pathways they create for young people to thrive.

Although my background is primarily in finance and office administration, joining this organisation six and a half years ago was a turning point.

In that time, I've witnessed significant transformation, from our rebranding from GAGAL to ATQLD, to the exciting launch of our Registered Training Organisation, My Skills Institute.

These changes have not only modernised our identity but have expanded our capacity to support and upskill our participants.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role has been helping secure funding opportunities that enable us to offer more programs and training options.

These initiatives are vital in ensuring our apprentices, trainees, and program participants are equipped with the skills they need to succeed in an ever-evolving workforce.

There have been many exciting moments over the years, and I feel incredibly proud to be part of an organisation that continues to grow and adapt while staying true to its mission: empowering people through education, training, and employment pathways.

As we celebrate this 40-year milestone, I look forward to continuing to support our dedicated team and the next generation of apprentices and trainees.

The future is bright, and I'm honoured to be part of it.

Here's to the next 40 years!

Honouring the past, inspiring the future

**By ATQLD Rockhampton manager
Deneen Capuzzo**

As we celebrate 40 years of ATQLD (formerly GAGAL), I've taken a moment to reflect on the journey, not just of the organisation, but also my personal path to becoming part of ATQLD.

Looking back over the past few years, it's incredible to see how far we've come, particularly in the Rockhampton Region.

The growth and positive impact we've made across Central Queensland is something to be genuinely proud of.

It's not just about business success; it's about the real opportunities we've helped create for so many people in the CQ area.

Growing up in Rockhampton and completing both primary and high school here, I wasn't entirely sure what I wanted to do after graduating. But I took a chance and accepted an opportunity with a local GTO to complete my Certificate III in Business Administration, and what a great decision that turned out to be.

Being given the chance to learn the founda-

tions of business gave me a strong start and opened the door to endless possibilities.

Since then, I've had the privilege of working across a range of industries, including mining, commercial construction, manufacturing, and, for the past two and a half years, back in the GTO/RTO sector.

With each role, I've learned from some of the best in the field, lessons that have given me the confidence to keep stepping up to the next challenge.

Now, having come full circle, I feel incredibly fortunate to be back in the GTO/RTO space, supporting the next generation as they take their first steps toward discovering who they are and what they want to do.

I'm immensely grateful for the opportunities this organisation has given me, and equally proud of the role ATQLD has played in changing lives, building skills, and supporting communities over the past four decades.

Here's to 40 years of empowering people, and to many more years of making a difference.



ATQLD Rockhampton manager Deneen Capuzzo. (Supplied)



Congratulations to Apprentices and Trainees Queensland

on 40 years of serving our apprentices and trainees

This milestone is a testament to the vision of our leaders, the dedication of our industries, and the hard work of every apprentice and trainee who has come through the program.



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40 Year Anniversary

Shaping careers in CQ

Forty years strong!

ATQLD has been at the heart of building skills, careers, and community in Central Queensland.

From apprentices taking their first steps to trainees reaching new heights, this milestone is a celebration of the people, the stories, and the impact that continue to shape our region's future.

Check out some photos capturing these moments and milestones.



Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser.



GEA Industry Awards.



GEA Industry Awards.



Angie, Kristy, Michael and Shannan.



International Women's Day. (Supplied)



Leading with experience: ATQLD's team championing training and mentorship across Central Queensland.



Congratulations APPRENTICES & TRAINEES QLD

Congratulations to Apprentices & Trainees QLD on 40 years!

Thank you for your ongoing partnership in building careers in the disability and aged care sectors. Your impact over four decades is truly appreciated.

<https://www.gcla.com.au/>





Guiding the next generation: ATQLD staff supporting apprentices and trainees every step of the way.



Building futures as a team: ATQLD's community of learners and leaders.



Ash, Dan and Kristy.



Staff Christmas lunch in 2024.



Best In Business Awards 2024.



GEA MSI Networking Event.



This year's GEA Charity Golf Day.

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Col Brown Memorial Award 2011 Winner Owen Richards.



Field officer Jakob Leeson.



GAGAL opened its doors on 18 April 1985.



Trainee of the Year 2010 Kathryn Giles.

From humble beginnings

On 18 April 1985, Gladstone Area Group Apprentices Limited, better known as GAGAL, opened its doors in the most humble of settings, a caravan.

From these small beginnings, the organisation that would later become Apprentices and Trainees Queensland (ATQLD) set out to provide life-changing opportunities for apprentices and trainees across Central Queensland.

Four decades on, ATQLD stands as a pillar of the community, with offices in Gladstone, Rockhampton and Biluela.

Its story is one of growth, innovation and unwavering belief in the power of training to transform lives and strengthen communities.

The early years were marked by determination and community spirit.

Former field officer Bob Bonnell recalled beginning his journey with GAGAL back in 1998 with a car, a uniform and a big mission, but no office to call home.

"What made GAGAL special to me was the promise that every apprentice would complete their training with one employer, a unique commitment that built trust and success," he said.

By the late 1990s, GAGAL was already making a name for itself as an innovator.

In 1997, it pioneered the first school-based apprenticeships in Australia, giving Year 11 students the chance to start their trades while still at school.

This groundbreaking approach has since been adopted nationwide, setting a benchmark for how apprenticeships can be delivered.

Over the years, countless apprentices have gone on to build successful careers and even businesses of their own.

Kyle Williams is one of them.

Beginning his electrical apprenticeship in 2016 through GAGAL, he described the experience as "life-changing."

He credited the excellent supervision and the dedicated team at GAGAL for giving him the support he needed.



GAGAL field officer Bob Bonnelle. (Supplied)

Today, Kyle operates his own business, KW Electrical Services, and has taken on his first apprentice through ATQLD, completing the circle of training and mentorship.

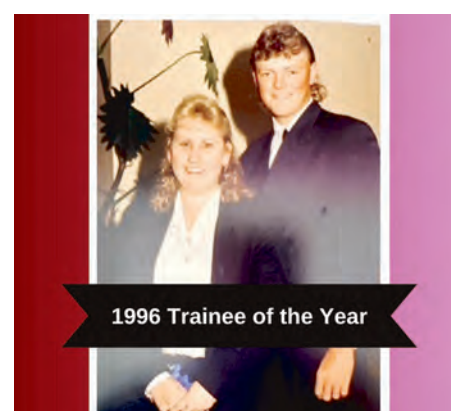
Stories like Kyle's are echoed across the region.

In 2006, David Werry completed his building apprenticeship with GAGAL before establishing Werry Building Pty Ltd with his wife Emily.

Together, they have since employed and trained apprentices of their own.

"The Werry Building Team would not be where we are today if David had not been given the opportunity to complete his apprenticeship with GAGAL," Emily said.

Former trainees have also carried their experiences into long-term careers.



Trainee of the year 1996 Deanne Litzow.

Others chose to build their lives closer to home.

Deanne Hughes, named Trainee of the Year in 1996, credited her traineeship with giving her valuable knowledge for a 15-year career in administration and payroll.

She still draws on those skills today, underscoring how deeply training opportunities can shape long-term career paths.

These individual journeys reflect the broader legacy of ATQLD.

The organisation has supported thousands of apprentices and trainees, partnered with hundreds of employers, and contributed to industries spanning construction, mining, business and beyond.

Its success has been built on strong relationships, rigorous standards and a genuine commitment to people.

From a caravan in Gladstone to a trusted organisation serving all of Central Queensland, ATQLD's history is defined by opportunity, innovation and resilience.

As it celebrates 40 years, its story is not just about what has been achieved, but about the lives it has changed and the communities it continues to strengthen.

Bryson HEAD MP

Member for Callide

(07) 4845 1100

callide@parliament.qld.gov.au

Authorised by Bryson Head MP, 64 Callide Street, Biluela QLD 4715.



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for Callide*





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1989	Scott Hinschen	2004	Jay Chopping
1990	Steven Aston	2005	Jamie Rogers
1991	Stuart Murray	2006	Shelley Black
1992	Stephen Long	2007	Jason Magee
1993	Tony Lacey	2008	Sean Thomas
1994	Anthony Moore	2009	James Brennan
1995	John Cush	2010	Michael McDonald
1996	Glynn Molloy	2011	Michael Chadwick
1997	Mathew Ramage		Jaimee Hosking
1998	Amanda Kummerow	2012	Neil Bevan
1999	Bradley Huth	2013	Renee Jones
2000	Nathan Brown	2014	Nicholas McCallum
2001	Julie Mitchell	2015	Jason Geddes
2002	Ashley Carriage	2016	Patrick Conway
2003	Damien Pukallus	2017	Zoe Jackson
		2018	Bronwyn Gurney

Apprentice of the Year honour board.

1995	Deon Stringer	2008	Charlien Cummings
1996	Deanne Litzow	2009	Sarah Bigg
1997	Leah McWaters	2010	Kathryn Giles
1998	Helen Oliver	2011	Benjamin Cant
1999	Chantelle Fox	2012	Benjamin Cant
2000	Scott Boardman	2013	Sherynne McCulla
2001	Sandra McRoberts	2014	Tyrone Cant
2002	Sarah Dundas	2015	Drue DeGit
2003	Martin Melville	2016	Luke Pearce
2004	Brooke Pickersgill	2017	Helene Schmidt
2005	Rebecca Van Den Elst	2018	Samantha Woods
2006	Priscilla Huckstadt		Lisa Davies
2007	Kate Robinson		

Trainee of the Year honour board.



GAGAL APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Finalist:

David Werry

Host employer: Ian Sharp Builders

Award sponsor: Sunsuper

AS the recipient of the Industry Trade Award for carpentry, David is a worthy nominee for Apprentice of the Year. He is a credit to the Gladstone Area Group Apprentices Ltd and his host Ian Sharp.

GAGAL Apprentice of the Year finalist David Werry.



Celebrating 40 years of growth and opportunity – from humble beginnings in a caravan, ATQLD has supported thousands of apprentices and trainees to build successful careers and stronger communities across Central Queensland.

2001	Sean Riddiford	2017	Joel Calis
2002	Teena Wait	2018	Jack Todd
2003	Graham Brambrick		
2004	Ryan Kunst		
2005	Jayson Hannant & Trevor Emerson		
2006	Barry Pamenter		
2007	Chris Rayment		
2008	Alex Upton		
2009	Madison Hogan		
2010	Owen Richards		
2011	Michael Chapman		
2012	Nathan Kucks		
2013	Lachlan Muller		
2014	Brendan Waters		
2015	Ryan McMillan		
2016			

Col Brown Memorial Award honour board.

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Meet the board of ATQLD

Meet ATQLD's board members...

DAVID GRENFELL

David Grenfell OAM has been a director of ATQLD since 2020 and chairman since 2021.

With more than 40 years in the building and construction industry, including over 20 years in senior management roles, David has been instrumental in securing and delivering major projects across Australia.

TINA ZAWILA

Tina Zawila has served as a director of ATQLD since 2017 and currently holds the position of secretary.

A chartered accountant and business advisor with a Diploma in Financial Planning, Tina is also a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders.

BILL MACDONALD

Bill Macdonald has been a director of ATQLD since 2003.

He is a senior partner of Macdonald and Michel Lawyers and a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia.

MIKE GALT

Mike Galt has served as a director of ATQLD since 2002 and currently holds the position of treasurer.

He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from James Cook University and has undertaken further study at Columbia Business School in New York.

MARK GREENAWAY

Mark Greenaway joined the ATQLD Board in 2024.

He has more than 45 years of experience across industries in Australia and the Pacific, particularly within the power sector in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

PETER MASTERS

Peter Masters has been a director of ATQLD since 2017.

He has held leadership roles across both public and private organisations, including as an elected councillor for Gladstone Regional Council.

PAULINE KELLY

Pauline Kelly has served as a director of ATQLD since 2017.

She is the owner and operator of Welcon Technologies Pty Ltd and has also been actively involved in Komset Pty Ltd and KWP Investments.

KAHN GOODLUCK

Kahn Goodluck has been a director of ATQLD since 2020.

A boilermaker by trade, Kahn has worked in local industry and is also well known as a musician, performing at community events across the Gladstone Region.

ALISON MURDOCH

Alison Murdoch joined the ATQLD Board in 2024.

She is the general manager of Gladstone Engineering Alliance, overseeing operations for the peak industry body and driving initiatives in supply chain optimisation, business development, advocacy, and industry growth.



David Grenfell. (Supplied)



Bill Macdonald.



Tina Zawila.



Pauline Kelly.



Mark Greenaway.



Mike Galt.



Hahn Goodluck.



Peter Masters..



Alison Murdoch.

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Congratulations

Apprentices & Trainees QLD!

The Gladstone Chamber of Commerce & Industry congratulates Apprentices and Trainees Queensland on their 40th anniversary. As a proud community partner, GCCI works alongside ATQLD to support the development of skills, careers, and futures in our region!

Through ATQLD,
Chloe completed an
18-week traineeship
at GCCI and is now
working towards a
Cert III in Business
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with us



Gladstone Chamber of Commerce & Industry

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The faces behind the vehicle: Faith and Furious students brought passion and precision to the track. (H2GP)



Excited and focused, the Faith and Furious team secured bronze. (Supplied)

School's world-class effort

By Shelby Gurney

Gladstone has cemented its place on the global stage after Faith Baptist Christian School's "Faith and Furious" team secured third place at the H2 Grand Prix World Final 2025 in Germany.

The team, who qualified earlier this year at the Central Queensland heats, claimed bronze in the stock category at the international school-based hydrogen racing competition, held from 20 to 27 August.

Faith Baptist Christian School business manager Albertus Du Plessis said the podium finish was a milestone moment for the students, staff and school community.

"It has been an absolutely incredible experience to see our students compete on the world stage and to come away with third place at the Hydrogen Grand Prix World Finals in Germany," he said.

"Their hard work, teamwork, and persistence have paid off, and we couldn't be prouder of the way they represented our school, our Gladstone community, and Australia."

Mr Du Plessis also praised the support team behind the scenes.

"This success is a credit to the dedication of their team leader, Mr Kallum Engstrom, the principal and staff who supported the students throughout the journey, and the parents who encouraged, guided, and cheered them on every step of the way," he said.

"Their combined support has been instrumental in preparing the team for competition at this level."

Beyond the podium finish, the international experience was an opportunity for students



The Faith and Furious team from Faith Baptist Christian School represented Gladstone at the 2025 H2GP World Final in Germany.

to grow their skills and confidence.

Throughout the project, they developed critical problem-solving abilities, deepened their engineering knowledge, and learned to collaborate under high-pressure conditions.

"Experiences like this show that innovation and sustainability are not just academic concepts, they are real-world challenges that students are actively engaging with and helping to shape," Mr Du Plessis said.

He also acknowledged the vital role of community sponsorship in helping get the staff and students to the event.

"This achievement would not have been possible without the incredible support of our sponsors. We are especially grateful to our major sponsor, Gladstone Ports Corporation, for their ongoing commitment over the past three years, and to the Boyne Tannum HookUp for their significant contribution to this year's campaign," he said.

"We would also like to sincerely thank the

many local businesses and organisations who have backed our journey, including Gladstone Airport, TM Mechanical, Budget Car and Truck Rental, Gladstone Regional Council, Locations Estate Agents, Young Contractors, Mick Man-nion Fabrications, Faith Baptist Church, and others who have anonymously helped make this dream a reality.

"Their investment in our students has not only enabled us to reach Germany but has also empowered these young people to compete and succeed on a global stage," Mr Du Plessis said.

The other Central Queensland team from Rockhampton's Kingsley College put in a strong showing.

Kingsley Kachow came within one lap of second place in Round 2 and finished 11th overall.

FINAL STOCK RACE STANDINGS – H2GP WORLD FINAL (DAY 5):

1. Cyber Speed – 1174 laps (BG)

2. Pink Hawk – 1134 laps (CZ)
3. Faith & Furious – 1116 laps (AUS)
11. Kingsley Kachow – 924 laps (AUS)

STOCK RACE – World Final Awards

Top 3 Overall:

- 1st Cyber Speed - Bulgaria
- 2nd Pink Hawk - Czech Republic
- 3rd Faith & Furious - Australia

Special Awards:

- Promo: 54 - Pink Nova Racing
Best Design: 81 - Brookfield Bees
Innovation Award: 85 - Sugar Rush
Energy Efficiency: 40 - Project Hydronova
Fastest Pit Stop: 55 - Faith & Furious
Team Spirit: 4 - Fox Racers

HYBRID RACE – World Final Awards

Top 3 Overall:

- 1st Oakwood Green - USA
- 2nd OSTROV TEAM - Slovakia
- 3rd Mach-5 - Australia

Special Awards:

- Best Promo: 15 - Las STEMateras
Best Design: 92 - Hydoracers
Innovation Award: 6 - EGE Hydrofoxes
Energy Efficiency: 73 - OSTROV TEAM
Fastest Pit Stop: 73 - OSTROV TEAM
Team Spirit: 82 - Swiss-EMF

GIRLS IN STEM RACE – Empowering the Future

Top Spots:

- 1st Kingsley Kachow
- 2nd HYDRA TEAM
- 3rd Sugar Rush

Girls in STEM Overall

STOCK:

- 1st Kingsley Kachow
- 2nd Faith and Furious
- 3rd HYDRA TEAM

HYBRID:

- Oakwood
- Las Stemateras

Denison Gas ups the ante in the Central Highlands

Denison Gas has been granted two new exploration permits in Queensland's southern Bowen Basin, giving Denison greater exposure to Australia's east coast gas market.

The new permits follow the appointment of Denison as preferred developer for three new exploration areas in the Central Highlands by the Queensland Government in June this year.

Denison now has satisfied all pre-conditions for the formal granting of permits for two of the three exploration areas, resulting in the permits for Authority to Prospect (ATP) 2073 and ATP 2075 on 16 June 2024.

The location of both the new areas enables seamless integration into Denison's existing operational activities.

ATP 2073 is immediately adjacent to Denison's existing Denison North operations and hosts an extension of the coal seam gas field currently being tested by the company near



Denison Gas is ramping up its exploration activities in the Rolleston area. (Supplied)

Rolleston.

Surrounding Denison's most southerly permit, ATP 2075 will form part of the Denison South Project. ATP 2075 is prospective for CSG, conventional and tight gas.

The grant of the third permit will follow entry into an agreement with the Gunggari People for Native Title in the area. Denison successfully entered into Native Title agree-

ments with the Gunggari People for ATP 2060 earlier this year.

"These new exploration permits form an important part of Denison's growth opportunities in the Bowen Basin," Denison managing director Zhujun Wang said.

"The new areas have the benefit of being readily integrated to our current operations, enabling us to respond to the growing de-

mand in the east coast gas markets.

"I would like to thank the Queensland Government for its confidence in Denison Gas."

Denison will be undertaking seismic acquisition in the Rolleston area utilising road reserves, Central Highlands Regional Council Property and private property in agreement with individual property owners.

All activities will take place in rural areas and will not impact the township of Rolleston.

A traffic management plan has been developed to ensure that there is minimal traffic disruption as the seismic crew will at times need to cross both local and state-controlled roads to access properties.

Seismic acquisition will be undertaken using Vibroseis, Enviro Units which have very low impact on both landowners' property and the environment.

Current state of play in CQ



August brought a mix of investment announcements, labour market stability, and workforce development initiatives for Central Queensland.

Key sectors such as resources, agriculture, education and skills training were in focus, shaping the region's economic outlook for the months ahead.

LABOUR MARKET SNAPSHOT

Central Queensland's labour market held steady in July 2025, showing some positive movement across key indicators. The region recorded 129,500 people in employment, which is 2800 more than this time last year, representing 2.2 per cent growth. The unemployment rate sat at 4.5 per cent, slightly higher than the Queensland average of four per cent and ranking seventh highest out of the state's 19 Statistical Area Level Four regions. Meanwhile, workforce participation lifted to 70 per cent, up 0.5 per cent compared with July 2024.

Source: ABS, Labour force, Australia, detailed, released 21 August 2025, 11:30 am (AEST)

BRAVUS' \$50 MILLION INVESTMENT IN RESOURCES SECTOR

Central Queensland's resources industry is set for a significant lift, with Bravus securing a \$50 million investment for its Carmichael mining project. The funding will not only strengthen the project's operations but also contribute to new local job opportunities, particularly in mining support services and supply chains. The investment underscores the ongoing importance of resources to the region's economy, providing long-term benefits in terms of business growth, community development and regional stability.

TEACHER STRIKE IMPACTS 1266 STATE SCHOOLS

Education came to a standstill in early August when Queensland experienced a 24-hour teacher strike that impacted 1,266 state schools, including several across Central Queensland. The strike, organised by the Queensland Teachers' Union, highlighted ongoing concerns around pay, heavy workloads, and teacher shortages. With schools in CQ already facing recruitment challenges, the strike sparked community discussions on the importance of investing in education to ensure quality learning outcomes and sustainable staffing levels in regional areas.

STRENGTHENED BIOSECURITY WORKFORCE

Queensland's agricultural sector is being bolstered with the announcement of 100 new biosecurity officer positions, 13 of which will be



Teachers in Central Queensland took part in the statewide strike on Wednesday, 23 August. (Matthew Pearce)

based in Central Queensland, including Rockhampton and Biloela. These new roles will provide greater on-the-ground capacity to respond to pest and disease threats, which is vital for the protection of livestock, crops, and regional trade. For CQ's farming and grazing industries, the increased workforce means improved resilience against potential outbreaks and stronger safeguards for export markets that rely heavily on high biosecurity standards.

GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL ADOPTS STRATEGIC ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Gladstone Regional Council has formalised its advocacy agenda for the year ahead, adopting the 2025/26 Strategic Advocacy publication. The plan highlights key areas such as major infrastructure investment, housing and liveability, energy transition, and economic diversification. For local businesses and residents, the document provides a roadmap of the opportunities and challenges that will influence growth and liveability in the region.

GCCI BEST IN BUSINESS AWARDS: TOP 25 ANNOUNCED

The Gladstone Chamber of Commerce and Industry has revealed the Top 25 finalists for the 2025 Best in Business Awards, with Jobs in Central Queensland's director Tim O'Brien highlighted under the Business Leaders category. The awards recognise outstanding achievements across sectors including retail, hospitality, professional services, and industry. The finalists represent excellence and innovation across multiple sectors, showcasing the strength of the local business community. Winners will be revealed later this year at the Best in Business Awards night on 1 November.



Central Queensland's labour market held steady in July 2025, showing some positive movement across key indicators. (File)

NATIONAL SKILLS WEEK - 25-31 AUGUST 2025

National Skills Week was celebrated across the region from 25 - 31 August, highlighting vocational training pathways and careers in high-demand industries. The initiative encourages both young people and those looking to reskill to explore training opportunities that align with the region's workforce needs. For employers, it was a chance to highlight career pathways, strengthen industry connections, and promote the role of skills training in building a sustainable regional workforce.

CONCLUSION

August highlighted the resilience and growth potential of Central Queensland, with strong

investment in resources, a focus on biosecurity and skills development, and recognition of outstanding local businesses. As the region continues to navigate workforce challenges and embrace new opportunities, these developments set the tone for a positive finish to 2025.

Jobs in Central Queensland is your regional online job board and proudly part of Job Skills Network, your regional recruitment partners. We help you build the right team in regional locations through a personalised Recruitment Partnership with our experienced specialists, or an advertising campaign on our online job board. For more information about local job opportunities and recruitment support, visit JobsinCentralQueensland.au.

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The value of local culture



Environmental sustainability, we have all heard the words, or is it a phrase, maybe a statement; we possibly think we know what it means, but maybe not what it fully encompasses, but we use it to justify decisions about our actions, including where we shop.

But what about cultural sustainability? Recently, a David and Goliath battle was covered in the media, the result of which prevents Australian businesses from including the word 'Ugg' in their business trading name or marketing (branding), outside of Australia and New Zealand. Leaving one Australian business now having two trading names, 'Ugg - Since 1974' for use in Australia and New Zealand. And 'Since 1974' anywhere else.

If you did not know, but can guess from the result, David (Ugg - Since 1974), got whipped. Goliath in this case is the US multi-national company, Deckers. Who use a synthetic fibre to make their shoes! (How can you call that an Ugg?)

The boot originally made in Australia, named in Australia (I mean who else can come up with a name like that), cannot be called an 'Ugg' by any Australian business making them, outside of Australia and New Zealand. Yet overseas companies can use the name 'Ugg' to sell their products in Australia!

Outside a court of law, that is cultural theft, isn't it! And how is the court's decision cultural sustainable? After all it is a decision that undermines Australia's identity and heritage on the international stage. Future generations, saturated by American social media sites, will possibly believe the Ugg boot was an American creation.

Less reported in the media, was another David and Goliath battle, on a different, smaller, field though, the ceasing of a printed regional newspaper. As you can guess, from handling it, the newspaper was not this one.

The owner/editor of the North West Weekly, based in Mt Isa, sent out an email announcing the final printed paper and all future copies will be digital. With a degree of self-control, the editor listed why his dream of publishing a printed newspaper each week was over, who he wanted to thank and blame. Naming national companies, which make a lot of money out of Mt Isa, for their 'dismal' returns to the city.

He was always going to be a David in his weekly battles, and the Goliaths were always



The front page of the final print edition of the North West Weekly. (Supplied)

going to be present, likely only to get bigger in size and number, until eventually they could not be overcome. Goliath's, the owners of this newspaper, are also struggling with.

Is the death of another regional printed newspaper a threat to our cultural sustainability, or is it just evolution, as some would have you believe?

If you visit the web site Trove and compare

what content local printed newspapers used to provide compared to digital editions with their click-bait headlines, highlights how our local cultural identity has severely eroded. Possibly contributing to where Gen Y, Z and by extension Alpha's, have arguably little emotional connection to the town they were raised, despite, or due to, their access to more media, than ever before.

If this were environmental, the outcry



The Australian made Ugg Boots.

would, justifiably, be deafening.

Most concerning is that most people will not even think, let alone care, about this. We blissfully allow, and by our very own actions aid, our local and national culture too globally (Americanly) evolve?

Hats off to those who do still believe that David can beat Goliath, or at least believe they can go toe to toe.

To Todd Watts, the grandson of the original owners of Ugg - Since 1974, hats off to continue selling their products overseas, despite the legal, financial and tariff setbacks. Visit their web site to see how they differentiate their superior Australian made products to the US imitator.

Hats off to Matt Nicholls, the editor of the North West Weekly, for having a go and not throwing in the towel, keeping the main part of his dream alive, to regularly provide reliable local news to a remote part of Australia.

And to all the other locally owned businesses, David's each one of us, who each day are prepared to have a go and fight for a dwindling market share, in daring to execute our dreams. Not perfect, but we're having a red-hot go.

Without locally owned businesses, the cultural sustainability of our towns would be even further eroded. As locally owned businesses are vital genes in each town's unique DNA, they are interwoven into its culture.

Kill off locally owned businesses and you kill part of the cultural sustainability of each town, and by extension, our country.

It is in your hands. Where did you buy your Father's Day gift from?

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Who will answer 2am call?



CONNECTING INDUSTRY
WITH KIERAN MORAN

One of the greatest challenges in business isn't strategy, funding, or even competition, it's relationships.

Not because we don't have them, but because of how we tend to approach them.

Too often, our business connections are treated as transactions: focused on the deal, the project, or the immediate need.

Once the need is met, the relationship is put back on the shelf until the next time we require something.

Rarely do we think about maintaining them, or giving back, as we would with a friend.

But relationships in business, just like in life, grow richer when we invest in them. In fact, you can picture them as a kind of pyramid.

At the base are situational relationships, the people we connect with only when a task demands it and usually only during business hours.

These relationships are useful, but fleeting. Higher up are investment relationships. Here, trust begins to form.

These are the colleagues, clients, or partners with whom you can share more than just a boardroom conversation.

You're comfortable having dinner together, meeting each other's families, or connecting outside the boundaries of work.

Climb higher and you find portfolio rela-



Kieran Moran examines who would answer your 2am call. (Connecting Industry)

tionships.

These bonds have been tested over time, where promises were made and consistently kept.

These are the people you could call late at night, confident they would answer because they know the value of standing by each other.

And then, at the very top, sit the rarest of all and what I call the 2am relationships.

These are the people who will show up whenever you need them, no questions asked.

They've seen you at your best and at your worst. You don't have to pretend with them. They "get" you.

These professional relationships often blur into deep personal ones, carrying with them a kind of loyalty and authenticity that cannot be faked.

At the start of a career, most of our relationships sit at the base of the pyramid. As we grow, prove our worth and demonstrate reciprocity, we slowly move upward. With time, expertise

and shared experiences, those situational connections can deepen into bonds of genuine trust. The real question, then, is not how many names you have in your contacts list, but how many of those names would answer a call at 2am.

Because in the end, it's not the quantity of relationships that matters, it's the depth.

And perhaps the more important reflection is this: how many people would consider you their 2am relationship?



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Santos sale revenue down

By Di Stanley

Santos has reported sales revenue of \$4 billion for the first six months of 2025, down 4.3 per cent from the corresponding period in 2024, amid lower realised oil and gas prices.

Santos, Australia's second largest oil and gas producer, agreed to give the Abu Dhabi-led XRG consortium until 19 September to finalise its proposed \$36 billion takeover bid.

The consortium has agreed to terms of the takeover offer, but it has not yet made a binding offer to Santos.

Santos, which has a 30 per cent stake in Gladstone's GLNG Curtis Island plant and operates the upstream fields, said the facility had delivered 3.1 million gross tonnes of liquified natural gas and 51 cargoes to long-term contract customers in the first half of 2025.

The Curtis Island plant achieved full reliability and maintained a strong safety performance, including the on-schedule delivery of a seven-day Train 2 shutdown during the period.

The plant continued to offer seasonable shaped gas supply to the east coast domestic market to support market liquidity.

"Our LNG marketing business continues to perform well with strong average realised prices and tier one customers, including most recently QatarEnergy Trading LLC," Santos managing director and chief executive officer Kevin Gallagher said.

"The commercial flexibility of our LNG portfolio has provided opportunities to take advantage of market conditions and further optimise the portfolio.

"Santos' equity LNG portfolio is about 90 per cent contracted over the next five years, with strong pricing driven by the high heating value of our LNG, our reliability and proximity to growing Asian markets."



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Fairways fun for great cause

The 2025 Gladstone Engineering Alliance (GEA) 2025 Charity Golf Day was a great success, bringing together GEA members and non-members for a day of networking, collaboration, and giving back to the community.

Held at the Gladstone Golf Club on Friday, 15 August, the day featured an 18-hole golf tournament, lunch with refreshments, exciting hole activities, raffle draws, and a final presentation.

Thanks to the generosity of participants and sponsors, the event raised \$7100 for The Shelter Collective, a Central Queensland non-profit addressing the urgent need for safe and affordable housing.

Funds will support ARC21, transforming long-abandoned aged care facilities in South Gladstone into 21 homes for those experiencing homelessness or rental stress.

Principal partner KAEFER Integrated Services played a pivotal role in supporting the day, alongside major hole sponsors Avis Gladstone, Kitja Services Pty Ltd, Berg Engineering Pty Ltd, and Mick Mannion Fabrications.

Minor hole sponsors Homeground Villages Gladstone, Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Limited (GAPDL), and Mammoet and promotional item sponsors Alpha HPA, BOC, Marcem Australia, Queensland Computers, and CSE Crosscom.

The 2025 GEA Charity Golf Day not only strengthened industry connections but also demonstrated the power of collaboration in making a strong impact in Central Queensland, restoring hope, dignity, and opportunity for those who need it most.



The event raised \$7100 for The Shelter Collective.



A number of teams featured players who dressed up with fun a key part of the day.



Teams took part in an 18-hole tournament.



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CapRescue Crews Respond To Multiple Emergencies

CapRescue experienced an exceptionally busy four-day period, completing nine missions between Friday 15 August and Monday morning 18 August 2025.

Over the course of the four days, the crew responded to five primary incidents, three inter-facility transfers and a large-scale search and rescue operation. In total, Rescue300 was in the air for more than 11 hours of flying time to ensure critically ill and injured patients received the urgent medical care they required.

The patients assisted ranged from a 3-year-old boy through to a 74-year-old woman, reflecting the diverse range of emergencies the helicopter responds to across Central Qld.

Heavy Toll On CQ roads

In just 48 hours, CapRescue was tasked to three serious motor vehicle accidents:

- Friday afternoon – Marlborough: A 51-year-old man was trapped in his vehicle after a rollover on the Bruce Highway. He was freed by emergency services and flown to Rockhampton Hospital with chest and neck injuries.

- Early Saturday morning – Jambin: A 23-year-old man sustained life-threatening injuries in a single-vehicle

rollover. He was stabilised by the onboard critical care team and flown to Rockhampton in a serious but stable condition. A second male patient, aged 21, was transported by road to Biloela Hospital.

- Friday morning – Leichhardt/Capricorn Highways: A 52-year-old woman from Theodore was airlifted to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital following a crash.

With Queensland's road toll climbing in 2025, these incidents highlight the continued importance of air medical support for rural and regional communities.

Other tasks across the weekend included:

- A 62-year-old man flown from Woorabinda to Rockhampton Hospital for urgent treatment of sepsis.

- A 13-year-old boy transported from Moura after being bucked from a bull.

- A 74-year-old woman airlifted from Marlborough with suspected heart attack symptoms.

- A 3-year-old boy flown from Woorabinda with burns injuries, later transferred by the Royal Flying Doctor

Service to Brisbane for specialist treatment.

- A two-day search and rescue operation for a missing 61-year-old fisherman on the Fitzroy River, with the man found safe and well on Monday morning.

CapRescue Operations Manager Kirsty Wooler said the busy weekend was a clear reminder of the vital role the service plays in the region.

"Our crew responded to a wide range of emergencies in just a few short days — from road accidents to critical medical transfers and a large-scale search and rescue. The distance, time and seriousness of these incidents demonstrate how essential Rescue300 is to our region," Wooler said.

"It also shows the commitment of our aircrew and critical care doctors and paramedics who worked tirelessly through the day and night. Without the ongoing support of our community and sponsors, none of this would be possible."

CapRescue is a not-for-profit organisation that relies on community and corporate support to provide its lifesaving helicopter rescue service, operating 24/7 across Central Qld.



CapRescue Soars At Mining Conference

CapRescue has raised an impressive \$39,000 at this year's Queensland Mining Industry Health and Safety (QMIHS) Conference, thanks to the generosity of sector professionals from across the country.

Raffle tickets, along with live and silent auction items, helped fund the service's life-saving missions, including the

operation of its dedicated helicopter, Rescue300.

The QMIHS committee welcomed CapRescue to the conference, recognising the vital role the service plays across the region and the shared priority of safety. Generous prize donations from businesses and individuals, together with strong support from conference participants, were key to the fundraising success.

Kim Walters, Communications and Engagement Officer at CapRescue, said

the response as overwhelming. "We didn't expect to raise almost \$40,000. It shows how much emergency services like ours are valued in this industry, and we're so grateful to everyone who contributed."

Ongoing support from the mining sector ensures CapRescue can continue providing aeromedical emergency assistance — because a big region needs a fast response.

To find out how you can support CapRescue, go to caprescue.org.au.




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CapRescue

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