



MEDIA RELEASE

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Approval to Sustain 275 Jobs at Austar

The Austar underground coal mine near Cessnock has welcomed State Government approval of a proposal which will ensure continued operations for another two decades.

Austar Senior Site Executive Frank Fulham said the extension of operations would sustain around 275 jobs at the mine for 20 years, as well as 60 jobs in construction.

"The approval is great news for our workforce, and secures the future of this mining operation which began in 1916" Fulham said. "Cessnock was one of the first coal-mining areas in Australia and is once again leading the nation in new coal recovery technologies."

Austar uses the latest in longwall underground technology (Longwall Top Coal Caving) recovering over 90 percent of the Greta Seam compared with traditional longwall extraction of around 50 percent.

Approval of the Stage 3 extension in the former Southland mine allows extraction of up to 3.6 million tonnes of Run of Mine coal a year from the Greta Seam at depths of 400 to 750 metres.

Coal will be transported underground from Stage 3, processed at the existing coal handling and preparation plant, and taken to the Port of Newcastle under existing approvals.

The project also includes construction and operation of new pit-top facilities on mine-owned land off Quorrobolong Road south of Kitchener.

These facilities include an access road, ventilation shafts and fan, bathhouse, workshop, electricity substation, offices and store.

Austar is wholly owned by Yancoal Australia Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of Yanzhou Coal Company Limited, one of China's largest and most respected coal producers.

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