

Need to know something about underground coal mining in Australia? Then log onto www.undergroundcoal.com.au, the industry's premier collection of up-to-date underground mining practice data and events.

www.undergroundcoal.com.au went live on 28 August 2010 with the following content:

- Introduction to coal mining practice sub-module;
- Outburst module;
- Online forum;
- Roadway development benchmarking survey;
- Handbook of Roadway Development Practice – Improving Roadway Development sub-module;
- Active consultants serving the industry;
- Roadway Development Operators' Workshop presentations 2006-2009;
- Calendar of future events;
- Research updates and useful information; and
- Industry links.

Located on a single domain website, this highly visual, interactive learning environment provides appropriate material for mining engineering students through to highly experienced practising mining engineers.

It was developed by the University of Wollongong's Centre for Academic Systems and Resources (CASR) – on behalf of the Faculty of Engineering's Mining Unit – for ACARP. It is being maintained by CASR.

Project advisor Gary Gibson said the recommendations from a 2005 Review of Current Roadway Development Practice (another ACARP project) provided the impetus for the establishment of the website. The review recommended that industry develop "a body of knowledge" as a means of capturing current roadway development practice and sharing across the mines.

"The review found that there was little information transfer across mines, even mines within the same company, and that mines were unaware of developments in roadway development practice, equipment and technology," Gary said.

"Mining academics at the University of Wollongong identified the potential for utilising the web as a means of developing the body of knowledge, and originally scoped the project as a roadway development website. It was extended to include the Outburst website (developed by the University of Wollongong) then expanded to include all facets of underground mining, including a new longwall section."

The objective of the project was to develop a high class, professional website that could also be used as an interactive learning medium for mining engineering students. The content of the two existing websites was then extensively reviewed, updated and incorporated into the www.undergroundcoal.com.au website. Other content, such as roadway development, is still being developed and progressively loaded onto the site. A small editorial panel comprising mining academics and experienced mining professionals was responsible for developing the basic structure of the site and reviewing the content.

The site also includes presentations from the Roadway Development Operators' Workshops, which were another initiative of the 2005 review. Gary said the workshops had been conducted six monthly since 2006.

"They provide an invaluable opportunity to share development and improvements in roadway development practice, to learn of emerging R&D and development of equipment and technology by original equipment manufacturers, and to network across the industry," he said.

In parallel with these activities, CASR incorporated a mini search engine into the site which enables all resources related to of coal mining practice to be readily searched by both title and content. CASR is also continuing to develop other features such as links to coal mining industry-related sites and resources, and an industry calendar of events.

ACARP

Australian Coal Industry's
Research Program
PO Box 7148 Riverside Centre
Qld 4001 Australia

Phone 07 3229 7661
Email acarpmatters@acarp.com.au