



MEDIA ALERT

Thursday 22 October 2009

Vote of NO CONFIDENCE in BHP Billiton with Uranium

News of another death under BHP Billiton's operations comes as no surprise to environmental groups. The recent death of a worker at a BHP's coal mine in South Africa raises the alarm once again around their operations worldwide, highlighting the concern of BHP potentially operating WA's first uranium mine.

Kate Vallentine, campaigner for the Anti-Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia says, "The Barnett government believes BHP Billiton's operations are 'world's best practice'. Clearly this is not the case."

"With attempts to fast track BHP's Yeelirrie uranium mining project in the Mid-West local Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal community are deeply concerned about the impacts to the workers, local community and the environment."

"You can't afford to make mistakes with uranium. This is a highly toxic and radioactive substance that will last for generations and generations."

Natalie Lowrey, Uranium Free campaigner, Conservation Council WA says, "BHP Billiton has one of the worst mining company records in Western Australia especially in terms of getting approval for massive projects which then, within a few short years go completely pear shaped with massive costs to the environment, workers and communities."

"We support the AMWU's call for a Federal Inquiry into BHP's operations. We are also calling for a Public Inquiry into BHP's Yeelirrie uranium mining project supported by Aboriginal, environment, union, health, and youth organisations."

"Even BHP's iron ore president, Ian Ashby has made a statement at the Diggers and Dealers conference in Kalgoorlie that there is a poor attitude to safety in WA. We don't believe we can trust BHP or the state government with uranium - the asbestos of the 21st century."

For more info:

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Kate Vallentine, Ban Uranium Mining Permanently campaigner, Anti-Nuclear Alliance of Western Australia, 0403 765 177

SEE BELOW - BHP Billiton's record in Western Australia 2008-2009

BHP Billiton's record in Western Australia 2008-2009

28 June 2009 – A driller was trapped underground at Perseverance mine in Leinster for two and a half hours after a rock fall.

10 June 2009 - A 37-year old man was trapped underground at the Perseverance mine in Leister for 16 hours after a rock fall.

19 March 2009 – A 45-year old contractor died in hospital after he fell about 12m from machinery at Mt Whaleback mine in Newman.

24 February 2009 – A 56-year old track machine operator was killed when he was hit by a train on the Tabba line 74km south of Port Hedland.

4 September 2008 – A 19-year truck driver was killed when a light vehicle and a haul truck collided at the Yandi mine, 140km north-east of Newman.

25 August 2008 – A 29-year old man suffered fatal injuries in a workshop accident at Yandi.

29 July 2008 – A 52-year old man was killed when a hydraulic lift fell on him at the Nelson Point operations in Port Hedland.

[source: The West Australian Thursday July 2, 2009]

<http://safetyatworkblog.wordpress.com/2009/07/23/bhp-billitons-safety-record-is-again-in-the-australian-media/>