

Efficiency key to the future

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WITH the world's energy demand increasing, mining companies such as Coal & Allied are taking up the climate change challenge to find ways to achieve sustainable long-term use of coal.

Coal & Allied's parent company Rio Tinto has spent more than \$100 million on low-emission coal technologies.

In the Hunter Valley, the three Coal & Allied-managed mines are on a continuous quest to find ways to reduce their emissions and reported in 2009 a 60,000-tonne reduction in greenhouse gases.

Managing director Bill Champion said that during 2009 Coal & Allied reduced overall greenhouse gas emission for every tonne of material moved by 5 per cent.

"Our energy management program accounted for this reduction in emissions through a range of efficiency programs across our sites," Mr Champion said.

"Since the current program began in 2007, we have avoided more than 127,000 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions."

Coal & Allied also actively promotes ways for others to reduce their emissions through participation in events such as the annual Bursting With Energy Expo at the Upper Hunter Show.

Coal & Allied provides a number of interactive displays and activities at the event, including its energy bike.

"You can try out your fitness on the bike and see just how much harder you need to pedal to light a regular light bulb, compared to the energy-efficient ones, which take much less effort to turn on," Mr Champion said.

"We use this exercise bike at many of our community alliance activities.

"The bike plugs into electrical appliances and demonstrates how much energy - or in this case pedal power - it takes to turn them on.

"It really shows how we can all make a difference to the environment if we do something as simple as swapping our light bulbs for energy-efficient ones."

The Coal & Allied and Newcastle Knights community alliance also focuses on energy-awareness activities in its community programs, from "green games" at EnergyAustralia Stadium to energy-reduction messages in television commercials and competitions.

"The community alliance is committed to raising awareness about the environment and the challenges of climate change and these are some of the activities throughout the year that Coal & Allied and the Knights partner together on."

In NSW, Rio Tinto Coal Australia manages Coal & Allied's three open-cut operations in the Hunter Valley - Bengalla, Mount Thorley Warkworth and Hunter Valley.