REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE
BHP BILLITON MITSUBISHI ALLIANCE
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining
University of Queensland April 2005
INTRODUCTION

It is two and a half years since BMA launched its Community Partnerships Program (CPP) as part of our vision for the long term future for the business and, consequently, for the communities in which we operate.

BMA has made significant contributions to the Central Queensland community through the CPP, but it is essential that the money is directed to areas of most need.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the program in meeting its aims, BMA commissioned an independent evaluation of the CPP by the University of Queensland, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, to provide external analysis of the various activities and areas for improvement in the CPP.

The aim of the study was to measure the impact of each of the activities under the program and to guide its further development. This abridged version of the full report provides summary information on the key findings and importantly outlines the recommendations for improving the CPP.

Being a valued member of the community is important to BMA, and we are pleased to play our part in promoting the health and wellbeing of the Central Queensland region.

JOHN SMITH
CEO - BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance
June 2005

This is an abridged version of the original report.
For a copy of the completed report go to the BMA website at: www.bmacoal.com or contact Ros Mann
BMA Community Relations Coordinator
tel 07 4950 0416 or email ros.y.mann@bmacoal.com
ABOUT BMA

The BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) was created in June 2001, as a strategic partnership between BHP Billiton and Mitsubishi Development Pty Ltd under which the two companies share equal ownership and management of seven Bowen Basin coal mines and the Hay Point coal export terminal near Mackay.

The mines - Blackwater, Goonyella, Peak Downs, Saraji, Norwich Park, Gregory and Crinum produce a broad cross-section of products ranging from high quality hard coking coals to high energy thermal coals.

In addition, the Alliance manages South Walker Creek mine on behalf of BHP Mitsui Coal Pty Ltd. Participants are BHP Billiton (80%) and Mitsui and Co (20%).

BMA operations provide major benefits to the communities in which they operate (Blackwater, Moranbah, Dysart, Capella, Nebo and Sarina/Mackay) and the wider Central Queensland region, through local employment, support for local businesses and Government taxes and charges paid.

BMA’s production accounts for almost a quarter of Australia’s annual coal exports and 30 per cent of the world’s seaborne trade in hard coking coal for the international steel industry.

ABOUT THE CPP

A feature of the BMA Community Partnerships Program (CPP), which was launched in September 2002, is the diversity of its initiatives. The BMA CPP provides support within six broad categories, namely, youth support, business and skills training, community welfare, sport and recreation, arts and entertainment, and the environment which cover most dimensions of any given community.

The aim of the CPP is to target identified needs through partnership arrangements with government, community groups and employees. The program is administered from BMA’s Brisbane office through a full time Community Relations Co-coordinator who monitors the program from Dysart. Under the banner of the CPP, BMA has to date provided support for 25 diverse activities, and another eleven will be added from July 2006. These have involved a range of partnerships with State and local government, industry groups, welfare organisations and community groups.

The primary target communities for the program are Moranbah, Dysart, Emerald and Capella, Hay Point, Blackwater and Nebo/Coppabella. There is also some involvement in Mackay and Gladstone.
The Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRM), an independent research centre based at The University of Queensland, was contracted to undertake this review.

Given the size and diversity of the initiatives funded under the program, it was decided to focus on a selection of initiatives, rather than attempting to evaluate the CPP in its entirety. In order to keep the evaluation to a manageable scale, it was agreed with BMA that the focus of the study would be restricted to initiatives that:

- had been operating for sufficient time to allow a meaningful review to be made;
- received a significant financial investment from BMA (minimum of $10,000 in cash support); and
- provided a service to the community that could be measured in some way.

Based on these criteria, twelve CPP initiatives were selected for review.

They are:

1. Dysart Youth Training Centre (DYTC)
   $36,000 over 3 years
2. Funding support for youth workers
   $60,000 per year
3. Police Citizen Youth Centres (PCYC)
   $225,000 over 3 years
4. School scholarships
   approximately $180,000 annually from BMA sites and unions
5. Learning & Development Centre for Literacy (LDCL)
   $300,000 over 3 years
6. Learning Networks Queensland (LNQ)
   $54,000 over 3 years
7. Indigenous pre-employment training program
   $30,000 per year
8. Moneycare program
   $174,000 over 3 years
9. Moranbah community radio
   $75,000 over 3 years
10. Just Walk It
    $12,000
11. Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA), ‘What a Load of Rubbish’ program (WALOR)
    $36,000 over 3 years
12. Hay Point Foreshore Project
    BMA central funding.

Each of the six CPP target areas and most geographical areas are represented. Two of these initiatives - Moranbah Community Radio and the Learning Development Centre for Literacy (LDCL) - were selected for more intensive analysis as examples of significant programs that had been successfully implemented.

For each of the initiatives selected, the study addressed three broad issues:

1. Are the goals clearly defined and are there suitable strategies in place to advance these goals?
2. How many people have utilised the services and are they from the target population?
3. To what extent and in what ways have participants derived benefits from their involvement?

Information for the evaluation was largely collected through interviews conducted by a CSRM staff member during December 2004 and in February 2005. Information from interviews with BMA personnel and individuals associated with the different initiatives was supplemented by various forms of documentary material such as outlines of goals and objectives of the organisation, and monthly or annual reports.

In some cases there was a significant staff turnover amongst community initiative staff and current staff had limited knowledge of the history of the initiative or of their position. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that several initiatives had maintained limited documentation about their activities.

Due to time and resource constraints, it was not practical to survey, or conduct interviews with, community members who had utilised services.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of Queensland, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, has made a number of recommendations about the CPP based on the key findings of the study which are summarised in this report.

BUILD CAPACITY IN THE COMMUNITY

It is recommended that BMA sponsors additional local workshops on topics such as project management, evaluation and grant writing, and recruiting and managing volunteers, to assist individuals currently involved in managing CPP funded initiatives and other community-based programs.

Building the capacity of the community groups is a practical way in which BMA can contribute to the success of the initiatives that it funds.

Skill development in these areas enhances the capacity of the individuals concerned and provides opportunities for them to network with other service providers. Partnering with other organisations to provide such services would be consistent with the CPP goals.

DEVELOP STANDARDISED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Develop a standard reporting format for initiatives receiving funding from the CPP.

At a minimum, initiatives should be required to document activities undertaken in the reporting period, report on the number of individuals who utilised the service, and indicate what strategies are in place to measure and monitor service quality and effectiveness.

BMA can assist this process by providing additional resources to build data collection and reporting capacity within community organisations.

INVOLVE EXTERNAL EXPERTISE IN INITIATIVE SELECTION

Consideration should be given to involving some suitably qualified external persons in the selection panel (eg. a community development manager from a local government authority, or a regional representative of a welfare organisation).

Care would have to be taken in the selection of suitable candidates so that no ‘favouritism’ is alleged, and no conflicts of interest are evident.

Consideration is currently being given by BMA to reducing the range of initiatives that are funded and to focusing resources on a smaller number of key longer term programs which contribute to the development of the human and social capital of the region.

ESTABLISH BMA’S TOTAL COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

It is recommended that the Company develops processes to ensure that site level cash and in-kind contributions, and other site level initiatives, are accurately captured and reported to BMA corporate.

This could be done using a pro forma internal ‘community involvement’ report that each site would complete annually. CPP and site-based contributions could be listed separately, if considered desirable.

ENHANCE LINKS BETWEEN THE CPP AND INDIVIDUAL SITES

BMA should encourage greater involvement by sites - particularly by site managers - in the CPP, to promote alignment between local and centrally funded initiatives.

The link between the CPP and individual BMA sites could be strengthened by seeking greater involvement by site managers in the selection process and making the CPP a standing agenda item at meetings of mine managers and providing these meetings with regular progress reports. Guidelines should be provided to sites on how they can ensure that locally funded activities are broadly aligned with CPP priorities.

There would also be value in providing site managers with a briefing on the outcomes of this evaluation.

UNDERTAKE A MORE DETAILED EVALUATION IN THE FUTURE

Undertake another more comprehensive evaluation of the CPP in 2-3 years time, after the program has had more time to ‘settle in’ and deliver measurable results.

To facilitate this process, initiatives should be notified well in advance of the kind of information that evaluators will be seeking and advised to establish processes for capturing this information.

Where a need can be established, BMA should consider providing additional resources to initiatives to assist with improving data collection processes.

It is also strongly recommended that the next evaluation include interviews and surveys with a cross-section of service users.
**PROGRAM DESIGN & LOGIC**

For any project to achieve success, a degree of internal consistency is required. Program logic requires that goals be clearly defined and that supporting strategies are consistent with the goals.

The initiatives reviewed were able to articulate their goals and strategies, and most had documented these formally. For the most part, there appeared to be a reasonable match between goals and strategies.

Goals are the ideal outcome sought in most programs, and are often expressed in broad, general terms, such as improved quality of life or empowerment. Strategies, on the other hand, are more concrete; they are the practical things that are done to achieve the goal.

Generally, the goals and strategies of the 12 CPP initiatives were documented in some form, although in some cases it was necessary to tease this information out during the interview. The goals of most initiatives were typically expressed in very broad terms.

For example, the LNQ goal of ensuring a better quality of life for all Queenslanders through the development of learning communities is very broad when compared with the strategies offered. Twenty-four hour internet access and short term basic skills program will certainly provide benefits for participants but there is some question as to whether these strategies will ensure a better overall quality of life.

In general, however, the strategies selected by the initiatives were activities that could reasonably be expected to meet the goals; for example, the youth worker’s strategy of empowering youth through the use of structured and unstructured activities and counselling had a clear rationale.

In summary, the majority of initiatives appeared to have a reasonably sound program logic and, at least theoretically, strategies that could contribute to achieving key goals.

---

**PARTICIPATION LEVELS**

Most initiatives had clearly defined their ‘target populations’ and most had been reasonably effective in attracting participants/clients from these groups.

The level of participation a service or program attracts, and by whom, is one indicator of whether it has selected an appropriate set of strategies to meet its goals. The 12 initiatives measured levels of participation in a variety of ways.

In most cases, these were formally documented but in some instances the information had to be elicited through interviews.

Some initiatives had very broad coverage across the region. For example, the CVA “What a Load of Rubbish” program covered 12 schools in the Bowen Basin over the three-year period and included a large number of children. Some schools were involved in two phases and some in three, which were run during normal school hours.

One of these schools commenced a rubbish-recycling program. A strength of this program is the number of children (and schools) that it covered, although a program with a one or two year follow up is far more likely to have an impact than a one-off activity.

The initiatives principally targeted women and youth, which was consistent with the broader priorities of the CPP.

There are two population groups that were identified as having unmet needs in the review conducted by BMA leading up to the program launch in 2002 - youth and women. The areas of need identified were: literacy (youth and women), IT skills (women), access to training (youth and adult) and supervised activities for youth.
The youth sector has benefitted from the CPP in the following ways:

- Literacy (LDCL, DYTC)
- Training and skill development (DYTC, community radio traineeships; camps, Youth Centre)
- Support for an academic education (DYTC, school scholarships)
- Supervised activity (PCYCs; Youth Centre; camps; fund raisers; youth workers x 3)
- Raised awareness - environment (CVA);
- Problem solving skills, empowerment and socialisation (PCYCs, Youth Centre, camps, lobbying, counseling, Just Walk It)

Women have benefitted through:

- Literacy education (DYTC)
- Training and skill development (LNQ, community radio traineeships)
- Volunteering opportunities (various)
- Access to a low cost way to improve health (Just Walk It).

In summary, the available data indicates that key target groups are accessing the initiatives funded through the CPP. However, participation alone is not a measure of effectiveness, as there must also be some beneficial outcome for participants for the investment to be considered worthwhile. This aspect is explored in the next section.

OUTCOMES/BENEFITS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Although few initiatives had formally evaluated their effectiveness, most could point to evidence - such as positive feedback from service users and individual 'success stories' - that indicated they were having a positive impact.

In general, the initiatives were able to provide more information on levels of participation than about benefits. This reflected the fact that their focus was primarily on ensuring service provision, rather than on measuring the outcomes for program participants. However, through the interviews it was possible to elicit some potential indicators of effectiveness.

In addition, many interviewees recalled specific individuals who had benefited from the initiative. Although these examples do not measure the frequency with which the initiative had a positive impact, they do provide evidence of beneficial impacts at the individual level.

In summary, there is a range of evidence of benefits to participants, although this is uneven across initiatives and much of it is undocumented. Continued participation in ongoing initiatives suggests a level of benefit to participants. Almost invariably, interviewees felt they were making a difference and were dedicated to providing the service. Nonetheless, initiatives should give more attention in future to measuring outcomes for participants.
COMMUNITY INTERACTION, NETWORKING AND PARTNERING

A strength of the CPP is its focus on partnering with existing organisations. By contributing funds to community and other organisations, BMA has linked into existing networks and enhanced the capacity of groups and organisations in the community to provide a range of services.

The level of community interaction and support also provides some indication of how successful an initiative is.

In small rural communities, the level of support that organisations can garner is very important to their success. Networking is a key to building this support.

A number of initiatives either access grants directly or receive some assistance from other organisations, often in the form of in-kind support. Such support is particularly important for the smaller, community-based organisations. The larger initiatives or those run from outside the Bowen Basin (for example the LDCL and Moneycare) perhaps do not have as great a need for community interaction to provide their service.

A specific focus of the CPP is on partnering with existing organisations to help them provide a service. By contributing funds to community organisations, BMA has linked into existing community networks and enhanced the capacity of the community to provide a range of services.

A characteristic of small rural communities is networking to access resources, more commonly described as ‘working together’. The CPP strategy of partnering is appropriate for this landscape and strengthens existing capacity. Although the CPP has not created these networks, it has increased their reach and potentially their effectiveness.

The full report illustrates the various partnering arrangements that are in place and lists the many and varied resources that are accessed through these networks.

CHALLENGES

Community organisations operating in the region face a number of challenges, including: financial uncertainty, attracting and retaining staff, recruiting volunteers, distance and a lack of government support. These factors can make it difficult for locally-based groups to develop and sustain significant community initiatives. Building the capacity of these groups is a practical way in which BMA can contribute to the success of the initiatives that it funds.

Representatives of the various initiatives identified a range of challenges and issues. These are similar to those that confront many organisations in rural and metropolitan communities.

Several initiatives have had to deal with ongoing financial insecurity such as limited sources of funding, the competitive nature of grants and their short term cycles; e.g. 6 months, 12 months. For example, the LDCL, although flagged as a success story in this study, is at risk of disappearing due to changing government policy.

Attracting and retaining competent community workers is a challenge for many rural communities including mining communities. Some occupations, such as youth work, are inherently very demanding and stressful. An added burden for rural communities is that there are typically few professionals and therefore limited professional support available. High staff turnover has implications for the organisation, including loss of corporate knowledge and lack of continuity for the client group.

Recruiting volunteers is a universal problem. Decreased levels of government funding for service provision have created a greater demand for volunteers while the culture of volunteering has also changed. Organisations now need to demonstrate to their volunteers how highly they are valued; for example, through training and symbolic rewards.

There are limited opportunities in small rural communities, particularly for women and young people, to exercise new skills and knowledge acquired through participating in some initiatives.

Although financial insecurity will continue to be a problem for many initiatives, training in grant writing may help some to be more competitive for the limited funding that is available. Increasingly sponsorship is being sought and the CPP is an example of how effective this can be. As noted above, the initiatives evaluated demonstrated a good level of networking, though it may be possible for this activity to be promoted more.
Members of the Green Corp worked to restore and protect the Hay Point foreshore.
MORANBAH COMMUNITY RADIO STATION

This initiative began with a youth worker seeking to create an alternative activity for youth not interested in sport and similar activities. For some years, the radio station operated out of a donga behind the shopping centre. The youth who became involved in the radio station, which then had a temporary community licence, took pride in their work. This energy and interest attracted more youth and in turn their parents. With adults wanting to be volunteer radio announcers as well as youth, the nature of the radio station changed to meet this need.

The popularity of this initiative increased to the point where there was a demand for an extension to the licence. The CFMEU was instrumental in this licence being granted because their members expressed a desire to hear the radio not just at home in Moranbah (the initial broadcast area), but also while they were at work.

The Moranbah community radio station is operated almost entirely by volunteers, most of whom are radio announcers who present their own weekly show. The station, which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, broadcasts national news, regular interviews with community service providers and visiting dignitaries, and community information as well as music. In a community without a newspaper, the community radio station plays an important role because it is the primary source of information on community events.

A recent initiative is to provide traineeships. Currently two women are doing traineeships, one in administration and the other in music librarianship. The adult traineeships were allocated to mature women because most of the employment opportunities in the town are targeted towards men. The traineeships will hopefully provide these women with skills that can be applied elsewhere.

Involvement of youth in the radio station continues to be of paramount importance. The station provides one youth traineeship and continues to train youth to become DJs.

The last 18 months has presented many challenges to this small community organisation. The demand for a larger transmission area, though a sign of the station’s success, has created some technical and financial challenges. The expanding radio station also needs to find new premises at a time when the unprecedented growth in the mining industry has created a shortage of residential and business accommodation.

A key indicator of the success of this initiative is the broad support that it receives from the local community. The Belyando Shire Council has shown its support through cash donations and interest free loans. Most of the businesses in Moranbah have purchased sponsorship on the radio station at some point in the last seven years, indicating a wide acceptance from the business community. During 2004, 75 different businesses purchased sponsorship and many of them did so on multiple occasions.
LEARNING DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, LITERACY

The Central Highlands LDC, Literacy (LDCL) was established to enhance learning opportunities for educators, which is part of the Queensland Government’s ‘Literate Futures’ program. The goal was to provide a centre for excellence in literacy teaching and practices to improve student learning outcomes in literacy, through supporting networks, the provision of quality learning opportunities and enhanced client access to appropriate learning regarding effective literacy strategies.

BMA approached Education Queensland to provide this service and has provided 50 per cent of the funding for 3 years. The Emerald District of Education Queensland created a unique structure for the LDCL that was considered suitable to the Bowen Basin.

The LDCL is in its final year, with Education Queensland phasing out the other LDCs as other Education Queensland priorities are being funded. Consequently, the future of the LDCL is uncertain although BMA is keen to continue its involvement.

The initial goal of the LDCL was to establish the team in the district, provide awareness raising in the schools, address individual needs of schools and their teachers, establish the knowledge and skills base of the team and set up the research project. The LDCL has a full time co-ordinator who is responsible for a cluster of schools and five part time school based literacy coordinators (SBLCs), each based in a school and responsible for a group of schools, and an administrator. The SBLCs spend the equivalent of one day per week on their LDCL work. The aim in having SBLCs placed in schools and responsible for neighbouring schools was to create a web of influence within schools and across the district more generally. An outcome of this has been the creation of networks targeting areas of interest.

The structure of the LDCL is one of the factors that has made it a success. Basing teachers in schools (or comparatively close to a cluster of schools) has provided easy access to professional development for classroom teachers.

This is a significantly better level of access to professional development than teachers in rural areas typically have. A recent foray into online professional development generally was not taken up because teachers wanted face-to-face contact.

Direct contact with teachers has led to the development of a range of learning networks where locally based teachers meet for professional development on a particular topic. This in turn contributes to the sharing of knowledge and resources. A positive benefit for the SBLCs is their own professional development from specialising in literacies in this role.

The teachers, with support from SBLCs and professional development events, developed an action learning project targeting an area for literacy improvement in their class. All teachers who presented their work at a regional seminar recorded improved literacy levels for their research subjects. The teachers involved in the project also appeared to benefit in several ways, including receiving positive feedback, learning how to make their teaching more effective, and developing research skills.

A strength of the LDCL is the collegiality between the team members, coordinator, administrator and the people who provide leadership and professional assistance. This small group of people, mostly located some distance apart geographically, has developed positive working relationships and responded effectively to the ongoing challenges of developing a unique literacy centre.
We would welcome any feedback from stakeholders about any aspects of this report.

Contact: Ros Mann
Community Relations Coordinator

Tel: (07) 4950 0416

Email: ros.y.mann@bmacoal.com