From The Director

As outlined in our March newsletter, in 2003 we were successful in obtaining external funding for several new projects. Thanks to the dedication of the Centre’s research staff, ten months later all of these projects are still on track (more or less!) and within budget. The task of managing these projects has been made easier by the excellent cooperation and support that we have received from participating companies and sites.

Looking to 2005, the major challenge for the Centre will be to continue building the research program, while striving to be financially self-sufficient by 2006. A priority is to extend the work that we have been doing in the broad area of Aboriginal employment and mining, and to become more involved in the design and evaluation of sustainable development programs. We will also continue to energetically pursue opportunities to expand our education and training activities.

Since the last newsletter, two members of our Advisory Board, Mick Roche and Peter Argust, have tendered their resignations. Mick has recently moved from Cannington Mine to another position within BHP Billiton and Peter has returned to Rio Tinto London after a two year stint at Comalco as Sustainable Development Manager. We wish Mick and Peter well in their new roles and thank them for their support and wise counsel over the last two years. We would also like to welcome to the Board Alexis Fernandez, who joined Comalco earlier this year as General Manager, Communications and Sustainable Development.

With only two months of the year remaining, this is a good opportunity to thank everyone who has assisted the Centre in 2004. It has been a productive and rewarding year and, with your continued support, we look forward to an exciting and challenging 2005.

David Brereton
Director, CSRM

Feature Project

Monitoring the Impact of Coal Mining on Local Communities

This project is being conducted in the Upper Hunter Valley region of New South Wales, using Anglo Coal’s Drayton mine as the case study. Drayton is one of several large mines located in the Shire of Muswellbrook.

One of the main project tasks is to help Drayton to put together a community impact monitoring and management strategy. We are also using this case study as the basis for developing advisory materials for wider use in the industry. Funding for the project comes from the Australian Coal Association Research Program (ACARP) with additional cash and in-kind support from Anglo Coal Australia.

There is a strong focus in the project on engaging with the local community to identify issues and concerns. We interviewed 27 local stakeholders during July and August and held a well-attended half day stakeholder workshop at the end of August. What we have learned from our discussions with the community is that:

- Most people recognise that Muswellbrook has benefited economically from mining; however, they would like to see a greater focus on employing locals and supporting local businesses, and more employment and training opportunities for young people.
- Indigenous groups feel that they have largely been excluded from the economic benefits that mining has brought to the region.
- There is considerable concern in Muswellbrook about the ‘cumulative’ impacts of intensive mining activity on the community and the environment.
- There is a generally negative perception of 12 hour shifts and the impact that they have had on families and community involvement.
- Many people remain sceptical about how committed mining companies are to voluntarily improving their social and environmental performance.
- The community would like to have more engagement with the industry, particularly around issues relating to closure.
External stakeholders have useful ideas about how mines should be monitoring and reporting on their performance.

We are now working with Drayton on strategies to address these issues. In parallel, we are writing up the process so that it can be adapted for use by other mines. Another project output will be a sourcebook of community impact indicators.

David Brereton and Peter Forbes, HSEC Manage for Drayton, will be presenting a progress report on the project to the 2004 MCA Sustainable Development Conference at the end of October. This paper will shortly be available for downloading from our website.

The final report on the project will be available in early 2005.

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**Site-Level Community Engagement Processes in the Australian Minerals Industry: A Comparative Analysis**

The Community Engagement Project is investigating how large mining companies manage relations with their local communities and how community engagement practices in the industry can be improved. The study is being funded by the Australian Research Council BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto and Newmont, and involves researchers from the CSRM, the UQ Business School and the UQ School of Social Sciences.

So far this year the research team has completed three site visits, with a fourth planned for November. Three more sites will be visited in 2005. Each site visit takes 4-5 days, during which time interviews are conducted with site personnel, community representatives and other stakeholders, and a survey distributed to a sample of employees. Where possible, researchers also take the opportunity to observe community consultative committee meetings and other engagement processes.

Richard Parsons, the project’s PhD student, is presenting a poster display on the project at the upcoming MCA Sustainable Development Conference.

**Mining Projects and Indigenous Tourism**

Several mines in Northern Australia are located in or near areas that have high tourism potential. For example, Rio Tinto’s Argyle diamond mine is in the spectacular East Kimberley region of Western Australia, not far from the shores of Lake Argyle and within driving distance of the Purnuluulu (Bungle Bungles) world heritage area. Zinifex’s Century mine, in far north-west Queensland is only a short distance from Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park and Riversleigh fossil deposits (another world heritage site).
Both of these mines, in turn, are located in areas with large, culturally diverse, Aboriginal populations. This project, which is being funded by the CRC for Sustainable Tourism and Rio Tinto Australia, is looking at how mining projects in such areas can directly or indirectly assist Aboriginal people to become involved in tourism ventures. The project involves collaboration between researchers from CSRM, the UQ Aboriginal Environments Research Centre and Southern Cross University.

Through the project we have identified a range of ways in which the mining industry can support Indigenous tourism. These include:

- having Aboriginal people involved in conducting mine site tours
- giving local Aboriginal tourism ventures access to airstrips and other transport infrastructure
- providing Aboriginal people with training and employment opportunities in tourism-related occupations (e.g., catering, administration)
- converting mine accommodation camps into tourist facilities when the camps are no longer required.

A key focus of the project is on identifying practical ways of taking advantage of these opportunities.

With our research partners, we have completed a wide ranging literature review, undertaken three site visits (to Argyle, Century and Comalco Weipa) and are now writing up the results. The final report should be available in early 2005.

For further information about this project, contact David Brereton at d.brereton@epsa.uq.edu.au or visit our website.
SOTA

SOTA, which stands for ‘Sustainability Opportunity and Threat Assessment’, is a process designed by the CSRM and the Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre (MISHC) to help sites identify practical ways to improve their environmental and social performance. The centrepiece of SOTA is a site-based workshop in which participants identify key sustainability issues for the site and possible strategies for addressing these issues.

Earlier this year we completed a further SOTA review, involving a large open cut coal mine in Queensland’s Bowen Basin. This review included consultations with external stakeholders and representatives of the company’s main shareholders.

Mid-year, we launched the SOTA workbook, which provides an easy-to-use guide for sites on how to conduct their own SOTA review. Copies of the workbook can be downloaded free of charge from our website at www.csrm.uq.edu.au.

We have also identified opportunities to extend the methodology to other industry applications and are currently engaged in discussions with external stakeholders and representatives of the company’s main shareholders.

Aboriginal Employment and Mining

Since early 2003 the CSRM has been working with Century mine in North Queensland on improving employment outcomes for local Aboriginal communities. In late 2003 Tanuja Barker and David Brereton completed an initial research paper on Aboriginal employment at the mine. An overview of the research was provided to a meeting of senior Queensland public servants in Brisbane in December and to the Century Mine Employment and Training Committee in February 2004.

Key findings of this study included:

- Close to 20 per cent of Century’s workforce are local Aboriginal people, which is high by industry standards.
- Around 30 per cent of Aboriginal employees at Century are female, which is also well above the industry average.
- High turnover at the mine, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees alike, is a significant obstacle to further increasing the representation of local Aboriginal people.
- Only a small proportion of Aboriginal employees are employed in trades or other positions that require formal qualifications. However, Century’s continued investment in apprenticeships should help to elevate the skill profile of Aboriginal employees during the coming years.

As part of the project, we also made a number of recommendations to Century about how to improve the collection and use of Indigenous employment data. Most of these recommendations are in the process of being implemented by mine management.

This year, we received funding from the Queensland Department of Employment and Training to conduct a follow-up study of local Aboriginal people who have voluntarily left employment at Century. Results of this research will be used to help develop strategies to increase retention rates amongst Aboriginal employees at the mine. The study will also provide valuable data about the benefits which local people have obtained from working at the mine. We plan to begin data collection shortly, using Century’s Community Liaison Officers to conduct the interviews for the study.

If you are interested in finding out more about this project, please contact Tanuja Barker at t.barker@epsa.uq.edu.au. A copy of the initial research paper can be found at - http://www.csrm.uq.edu.au/docs/Public_Century_Report.pdf.
NEWS

CSR in Small and Medium Mine Companies

Last summer two final year social science students Anne Beresford and Amanda Chan – undertook a project that examined how Australian-based small and medium mining companies are managing social and environmental issues. Anne and Amanda collected information from web-based sources on 136 companies and also conducted face-to-face and telephone interviews with representatives of 12 companies based in Brisbane and Sydney.

Key findings from their study were:

- around one third of the companies had off-shore operations, with the most common locations being Asia, Africa and North America
- the companies were concentrated in the gold and oil and gas sectors
- only six per cent of companies reported publicly on their social and/or environmental performance
- most provided little other public information about what they were doing in these areas
- the majority appeared not to have any kind of formal environmental management or community relations policy
- most of the managers interviewed saw formalised industry codes and standards as largely irrelevant to their businesses – ‘on the ground experience’ and ‘know how’ were seen as much more relevant
- most managers considered that their shareholders were mainly interested in the financial, not the environmental or social, performance of the company
- some companies had a good practical understanding of sustainable development principles and how to apply them, but others viewed sustainability in quite simplistic terms.

The full report of the study will soon be available on our website.

CSRM out and about: Conference papers and presentations


David Brereton, ‘Turnover and Retention of Mining Professionals’ presented to AusIMM workshops on Attraction and Prevention of Professional Staff: the Future of the Industry held in Perth in June and Brisbane in October.

Rhys Worrall ‘Legacy mining areas on the urban fringe: a study of Ipswich’ JKMRC International student conference, Brisbane, September.

In May, Robin Evans co-presented a half-day workshop on ‘Eco-efficiency Assessments’ at the Green Processing 2004 Conference, Perth

Upcoming

Centre staff and students will be involved in three presentations at the MCA’s Inaugural Global Sustainable Development Conference to be held in Melbourne at the end of October:

David Brereton and Peter Forbes (Drayton Coal Ltd) ‘Monitoring the Impact of Mining on Local Communities: A Hunter Valley Case Study’

Deanna Kemp, ‘The Emerging Field of Community Relations: Profiling the Practitioners Perspective’

**Policy Contributions**

Where the opportunity arises the CSRM seeks to participate in, and contribute to, industry change processes.

Early in the year we provided a detailed written commentary on the draft principles and certification criteria prepared by the Mining Certification Evaluation Project (MCEP). You can read what we and others had to say by going to the MCEP website at [http://www.minerals.csiro.au/sd/SD_MCEP.htm](http://www.minerals.csiro.au/sd/SD_MCEP.htm).

In March, David Brereton attended a stakeholder workshop in Sydney on the MCA’s ‘Operational Framework for Sustainable Development’. Subsequently, we provided a written submission on the consultation draft.

In July, David Brereton participated in a Queensland EPA workshop on the development of mine closure criteria.

In August, we made a submission to the ICMM on the draft Mining and Metals Sector Supplement to the Global Reporting Initiative 2002 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines.

In September, Robin Evans represented the CSRM at an MCA Sustainable Development Extension Group Roundtable on ‘Developing the skills to maximise our contribution to the community’.

**Centre Visitors**

We have had several visitors to the centre this year.

**Hua Jianwei**

Hua Jianwei was a visiting scholar in the Centre from April to September. Jianwei is a Senior Geologist in the Geological Survey of Jiangsu Province in China. He has considerable experience in mineral exploration and development planning and is interested in building a career as a specialist in the area of environmental management in the mining industry.

During the six months he was with the CSRM, Jianwei conducted a research project into the regulation of quarries, under the supervision of David Brereton. He has since completed two academic papers, comparing rehabilitation efforts in Jiangsu, China with those in Australia and other western countries.

We thank Jianwei for his contribution to the work of the CSRM and look forward to an ongoing association with him.

**Other Visitors**

In July we welcomed to the CSRM Marina Welker, a PhD student in Anthropology at the University of Michigan. During her time here, Marina gave a seminar on her research, which is focused on Newmont’s Batu Hijau mine in Indonesia.

In August, Sean Desserault, an Assistant Professor in Mining at the University of Arizona, presented on ‘The Impact of Sustainability on Political Risk’.

Also in August, Josh Annear, Senior Business Analyst with Argyle Diamonds, gave a presentation on ‘Argyle and Sustainability’.

**Upcoming Events**

**The Community Practitioner Summer School**

Community Service and Research Centre, The University of Queensland, Ipswich, Queensland

23 - 24 November, 2004

For more information and to register visit [www.uq.edu.au/csrc](http://www.uq.edu.au/csrc), then click on Community Practitioner School, or contact Jim Cavaye [cavaye@bigpond.com](mailto:cavaye@bigpond.com), or the University at 33811410.
Conferences

Beyond Exploration - Aboriginal Engagement and Sustainability Conference
8 - 9 February 2005
Vancouver Exhibition & Convention Centre
Vancouver, Canada
Conference details can be found at:
http://www.cbsr.ca/csrevents/cbsrevents.htm

Risks and Rewards in Public Participation - IAP2 Asia Pacific Conference
6 – 8 March 2005
Sydney, Australia
Details for the IAP2 Asia Pacific Conference can be found at:

Sustainable Development Indicators in the Mineral Industries - 2nd International Conference
18 - 20 May 2005
Institute of Mining Engineering, Aachen University
Aachen, Germany
Conference details can be obtained at:

International Conference on Engaging Communities
14 - 17 August 2005
Brisbane, Australia
The International Conference on Engaging Communities is an initiative of the United Nations and the government of Queensland, Australia. This event will explore all issues related to community engagement and address the experiences, challenges and research that effect citizens, governments and organisations alike. More information about the conference, including submission details for papers, can be found at:

Activities

CSRP Scholarships
Community and Regulatory Responses to Industrial Synergy Initiatives
The Centre for Sustainable Resource Processing (CSRP) is offering top-up scholarships for PhD and Masters students who have earned an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) or other competitive grant. One of the topics identified by the CSRP is ‘Community and Regulatory Responses to Industrial Synergy Initiatives’.

Funding can be up to a maximum of $7,500 per year and is renewable upon annual review. These scholarships are open to all Australian citizens and permanent residents. Successful applicants will also have access to funds to cover travel and other costs associated with their projects.

CSRM Postgraduate Students

Our feature student this issue is Richard Parsons.

Richard Parsons

Richard joined the CSRM at the beginning of this year, when he was awarded an Australian Postgraduate Award - Industry (APA) scholarship, associated with our ARC Linkage grant project on Site-Level Community Engagement Processes. Richard is enrolled in the UQ Business School, and is supervised by Dr Bernard McKenna and Professor David Brereton.
Richard’s research involves the use of two sites as case studies to address the broad research question:

"Is community engagement changing assumptions regarding the purpose and responsibilities of business?"

He is using an interpretive approach to explore what both minerals company employees and community members understand by ‘community engagement’. He is also using a critical approach to analyse how the discourses surrounding community engagement and social responsibility have shaped people’s understanding of them.

Previously, Richard has completed a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Queensland University of Technology, and a BA (Hons) Economics and Public Policy from Leeds, UK. He has also worked variously in project management, social research, bookmaking, plant propagation and speciality food production.

Research and Consulting Services

The CSRM is able to offer a wide range of research and consulting services, including:

- advising on community and stakeholder engagement strategies
- designing social performance indicators and monitoring and reporting systems
- constructing socio-demographic profiles of communities
- designing and evaluating corporate-community programs
- survey design and analysis
- assisting sites to review and improve their sustainability performance
- research on workforce management issues (e.g. employee surveys, analysis of recruitment and retention data)
- developing tailored training courses and materials for the industry.

The Centre is in a unique position to collaborate with other University of Queensland Departments and Research Centres. For further information about any of these services, contact David Brereton, on (+61) 7 3346 9223, or at d.brereton@csrm.uq.edu.au.

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