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Media release:

OZ Minerals extends its reach to share benefits with the APY Lands people



OZ Minerals has today commenced a mining job training program, with guaranteed employment upon successful completion, with the people of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. The APY Lands are an Aboriginal Land Rights Act area in the North West corner of South Australia.

The “PEP6” pre employment program, OZ Minerals sixth such program, is available to the residents of Iwantja, Mimili, Kaltjiti, Pukatja and Amata communities. Today an induction will be held for the 19 selected students at Umuwa, the administrative centre of the APY Lands.

With support from OZ Minerals staff, students from these communities will participate in nationally accredited TAFE modules; Certificate 1, Resources and Infrastructure – Operations and Certificate 2, Metaliferous Mining and Operations – Open Cut. Successful graduates, who reach specified criteria in relation to health and fitness, will be offered employment at OZ Minerals Prominent Hill mine.

“To our knowledge, no mining company has ever offered a training program in the APY Lands with guaranteed employment outcomes”, explained Mick Wilkes, Executive General Manager Operations.

The APY Executive, the governing body on the Lands, has endorsed the pre employment programme, and visited Prominent Hill in December to view the site, and speak to indigenous employees about their experiences at OZ Minerals.

The 2009 pre-employment program involved the local Antakarinja community and was very successful, placing seven people in full time employment.

“We want to continue to provide regional support and aim to employ as many local and indigenous people as possible. This helps build a loyal, engaged, and culturally adept workforce, and supports the local people and their communities”, added Mick.

PEP6 is championed by OZ Minerals Prominent Hill. Partners assisting with the program include TAFE SA Regional, TAFE Aboriginal Access Centre, Port Augusta, Complete Personnel, and Bungala Aboriginal Corporation.

Some funding has been provided by the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), under the Training Initiative for Indigenous Australians in Regional and Remote Communities (TIFIARRC) initiative.

The students will study in their home community, in small groups, receiving online lessons supported by resident TAFE lecturers. They will also visit Prominent Hill mine for familiarisation, on-site classroom activities, and live work experience.

The PEP6 is scheduled to conclude on 8 October 2010.

OZ Minerals has previously run five pre-employment programs, in which 42 local and regional people were trained, 31 of whom are still employed on-site at Prominent Hill.

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