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## Women in Mining award winner breaking down barriers for the industry

The 2014 NSW Mining Outstanding Woman of the Year is Cate Sims, a Specialist in Aboriginal Relations with Rio Tinto, awarded for working tirelessly to breakdown employment barriers and promote diversity within the NSW mining industry.

“For over 8 years Cate has been promoting and implementing initiatives to improve the diversity of the NSW mining industry. She is the leading individual in indigenous affairs and engagement for Rio Tinto and for our industry and a most deserving winner,” NSW Minerals Council CEO Stephen Galilee said.

Cate’s work through the Aboriginal Community Development Fund supports school programmes in the Hunter and has seen young Aboriginal women strive for professional careers and emerge as strong representatives of their school and wider community.

“This award recognises the commitment that Rio Tinto has made to a body of work that requires vision, time and patience to realise,” Cate said.

“I’m elated to win and I’m extremely proud that my work is being validated in this way. It feels fantastic to win this award, because it shows the value of the work that I have done and will keep doing for my company, the mining industry and the communities where we live and work.”

Cate is also a valuable member of the Steering Group charged with implementing the Industry Based Agreement on Aboriginal Employment and Enterprise Development.

The 2014 NSW Women in Mining Awards gala ceremony in Sydney last night celebrated the achievements of all four Award winners and finalists who contribute so much to the industry and their community.

The NSW mining industry is also celebrating the achievements of ‘Aspiring Star’ Abbey Sheridan (Technical Services Vacation Student, Coal Assets Australia, Glencore), and ‘Rising Star’ Alice Sila (Mining Engineer, Peabody Energy). Theiss also received the ‘Outstanding Initiative’ award for its industry leading initiatives to attract and retain women in the mining sector.

“On the eve of International Women’s Day it is fitting to acknowledge the achievements of all the amazing women working in NSW Mining,” Mr Galilee said.

“Mining has long been considered a male dominated industry, but the NSW Women in Mining Award winners are pioneers for a stronger and more diverse mining industry.”

*Detailed information on all four Award Winners is shown below.*

**Attachment:** Cate Sims with Minister Anthony Roberts. Photographs of winners available on request.

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**Outstanding Woman Award | Recognises the achievements of a woman working in, or for, the NSW Mining industry for five years or more in ANY occupation or profession.**

***Winner - Cate Sims, Specialist Aboriginal Relations, Rio Tinto Coal and Allied***

Cate has been the leading individual in indigenous affairs and engagement for Rio Tinto and the state's mining industry for more than 8 years. Her commitment to indigenous employment, business development and to community relationships has put indigenous community engagement at the forefront of Rio Tinto's operations. Cate's work through the Aboriginal Community Development Fund-supported school programmes in the Hunter has seen young Aboriginal women strive for professional careers, including in the mining industry, and emerge as strong representatives of their schools and the wider community. Cate is also an important member of the Steering Group implementing the Industry Based Agreement on Aboriginal Employment and Enterprise Development in NSW.

**Aspiring Star Award | Recognises a young woman who has undertaken vacation or short term work in, or for, the NSW mining industry and shown potential to become a future innovator.**

***WINNER - Abbey Sheridan, Technical Services Vacation Student, Coal Assets Australia, Glencore***

Abbey enrolled in a Mining Engineering degree at the University of Wollongong because it would offer her a stable, exciting, challenging and dynamic career. In her first year, Abbey was awarded an Xstrata (now Glencore) Scholarship, which has led to three summer vacation placements at Glencore coal mines in NSW. Abbey has been involved in The AusIMM Illawarra Student Chapter since 2011, holding the position of Vice President for the past 2 years. She is also an ambassador for the industry, speaking to high school and university students about mining career opportunities.

**Rising Star Award | Recognises exceptional achievements by a woman who has been working in, or for, the NSW Mining industry for one to five years in ANY occupation or profession.**

***WINNER - Alice Sila, Mining Engineer, Peabody Energy***

Alice graduated from UNSW with Class 1 Hons in Mining Engineering & Bachelor of Science (psychology) in 2011. During this time she held executive positions for the UNSW Mining Society and was Secretary of the AusIMM Sydney branch. She gained practical experience with Donaldson Coal & Peabody Energy and joined Peabody Energy's Graduate Program in 2012. Alice has worked at Wilpinjong and Wambo and is currently based at Metropolitan in Helensburgh in southern Sydney where she is working on the Joy Longwall Implementation project. Alice is the current Peabody Energy Graduate of the Year.

**Outstanding Initiative Award | Recognises companies who have put in place initiatives in NSW to attract and retain women in the industry.**

***Winner - Thiess***

In 2011, women only comprised 8% of the Thiess workforce. A full-time Diversity Officer was appointed to ensure greater resources were available for engaging its mining business in a long-term change management program. Thiess has since become an industry leader in female employment and is now on track to go beyond a 20% female employment target by 2020. This has been achieved by empowering women and encouraging female participation. Amongst many exciting projects, Thiess has launched Women's Focus Groups, undertaken Site Audits, established a Oothungs (Women) in Mining Operator Training Program and is implementing flexible work arrangements.