

Overview

Illawarra Metallurgical Coal Mines are located in the southern coalfields of New South Wales. In 2007, BHP owned Illawarra Metallurgical Coal Mines, and in 2015, South32 acquired 100% ownership. South32 operates two underground metallurgical coal mines producing high-quality metallurgical coal for steelmaking: Appin Mine and Dendrobium Mine, along with West Cliff and Dendrobium Coal Preparation Plants (CHPP).

The Challenge and the Solution

In 2007, Roobuck pioneered the concept of the cordless miners' cap lamp in Australia. We recognised there was a need in the market for this form of cap lamp technology to resolve operational, cost and Work Health and Safety issues. BHP also recognised that it needed a cordless cap lamp option for their miners and made the pivotal decision to provide practical support in assisting Roobuck with the design and development of the first IECEx certified cordless LED cap lamp powered by lithium battery and its associated charging bank. During this time, BHP provided lots of feedback in the areas of design, material assessment, battery and LED light observations.

The Outcome

The Roobuck-BHP partnership resulted in Roobuck's first model of the cordless cap lamp, KC3D-Ex, along with its 100-unit charging bank, JY98, both released in late 2007.

Since 2015, South32 Illawarra Metallurgical Coal Mine continued to contribute significantly to further refinements of our cap lamp technology with the evolution of the KC3E-Ex cap lamp, along with the new CB* Series of charging banks.

South32 uses Roobuck's Value Series KC2M-Ex cordless cap lamp for its surface operations and CHPP.

KC3E-Ex became the flagship model, earning an excellent reputation as a reliable and trusted performer in underground coal mines globally. In 2020, taking advantage of the latest technology in materials and electronics, Roobuck developed its latest flagship model KC4E-Ex cordless cap lamp for coal mines, along with the new CB*E series of charging banks. Today, South32 Appin Mine uses the new KC4E-Ex. Many more coal mines will follow.

Since 2007, BHP and South32 have purchased over 10,000 Roobuck cordless cap lamps.

