

case study

Australia

Community Investment Programme

BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) is Australia's largest metallurgical coal miner and exporter. BMA operates nine large mines and the Hay Point Coal Export Terminal in Central Queensland, Australia.



As the largest private employer in Central Queensland, with almost 9000 people, BMA operations provide major benefits to the nearby communities, with more than 40% of BMA's annual expenditure on equipment, materials and services spent with businesses located in Central Queensland.

Photo: Engineering Skills Centre in Moranbah (part of BMA's Skills for Growth programme)

BMA aims to make a difference in local communities by addressing key social challenges and making a tangible commitment to improve liveability.

The majority of the workforce and their families live in the Central highlands region of Queensland, in particular the towns of Blackwater, Emerald, Dysart and Moranbah, and in and around Mackay.

BMA's Community Investment Programme incorporates five levels of investment to ensure the communities that support the company continue to share in the business success (see Figure 1). The total programme exceeds A\$23 million per annum. BMA provides longstanding regional infrastructure support in the form of:

- road funding
- water supply
- special rate payments to local governments.

Furthermore, BMA is working through the Queensland Resources Council on a 'compact' with State and local Government to collectively agree key roles in Central Queensland communities.

The investment in regional infrastructure is augmented by various measures within other BMA programmes.

BMA's Community Partnership Programme (CPP) addresses social needs by developing partnerships with government, training and welfare organisations, and the communities themselves in the following key areas of need:

- Youth Development
- Economic Development/Business and Skills Training
- Community Development and welfare
- Community Safety, Sport, Wellbeing and Recreation
- Arts, Entertainment and Cultural Development
- Environment and Sustainable Development.

Each year the CPP is reviewed to ensure the programme of almost 30 partnerships is kept up-to-date and in line with community needs and BMA objectives. There is also an ongoing performance process to ensure community groups are supported in achieving their goals.

Landmark Projects

Most recently, evaluation through community feedback and specially commissioned studies has identified the need for further regional investment beyond the CPP. Areas of greatest priority centred on medical and health care services, child care and sporting, recreational and social facilities. To meet the identified priority needs, BMA has partnered with industry groups and government on major social infrastructure, or 'Landmark' projects. Two 'Landmark' projects are underway - the A\$10 million Blackwater International Coal Centre and A\$6 million Dysart Multi-purpose Sports Centre - with several others in varying stages of definition and planning.

BMA's Community Investment Programme also incorporates contributions made by each site. Significant assistance is offered by sites to the local community to support local initiatives and projects in areas such as business development, community health, environment, and sport and recreation. These contributions are selected and managed by the sites, and often are collaborative efforts, such as multicultural fairs, Indigenous cultural areas, mine open days and road safety awareness seminars.

Skills for Growth

BMA's response to the current industry-wide skills shortage has encompassed a programme called Skills for Growth, aimed at raising awareness of mining-related careers, ensuring accessibility of education and training, and improving skills development. To achieve this, BMA has committed to a number of major initiatives including financial support for two Queensland universities; a scholarship scheme; cadetship programme; engineering 'extension' programme; and funding regional institutes such as the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy ■

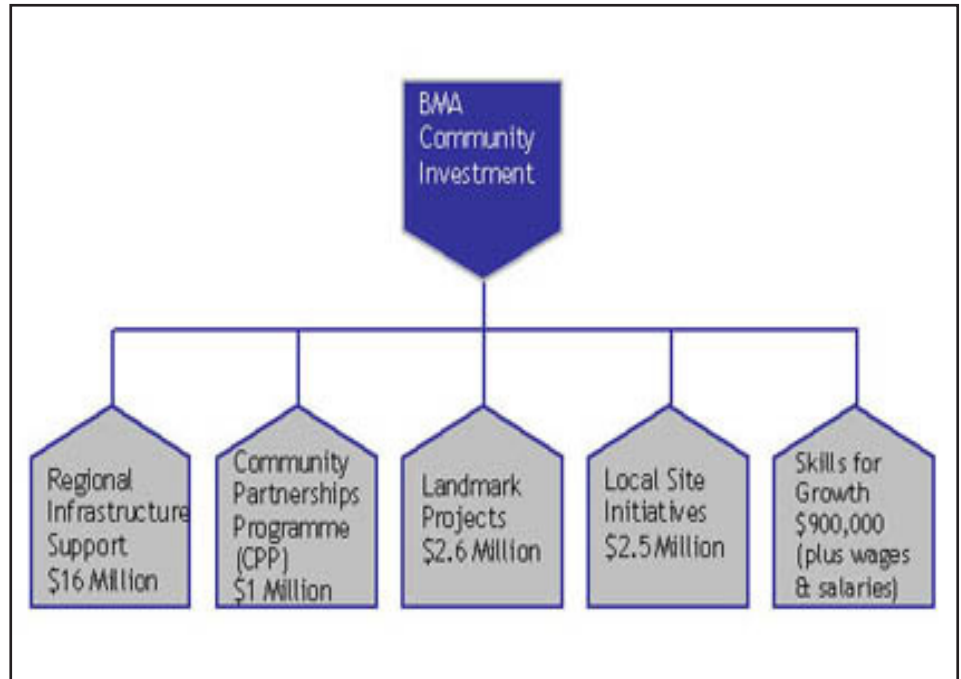


Figure 1. BMA Community Investment Structure (A\$)