

BHP Billiton to join the show today to display its interactive heavy haul truck simulator

27 July 2016, Sydney, Australia - The crowds did not disappoint on the first day of QME 2016, with an estimated 1,400 people coming through the doors to see hundreds of national and international exhibitors, including from Poland, China and the U.S.

REEDMININGEVENTS' Exhibition Director Robby Clark said that despite a smaller event expected this year, on account of the downturn in the mining industry, day one of QME 2016 was a success.

"We are very pleased by the level of support not just from attendees, but from local stakeholders including the Mackay Regional Council Mayor Greg Williamson, who has graciously welcomed us back this year and has been vocal in his desire to have QME connected to Mackay for many coming years," Mr Clark said.

"Traditionally, day two of the exhibition always tends to attract the larger crowds, so we are very excited to see what tomorrow will bring."

The day kicked off a little earlier for some however, who were up at the crack of dawn to attend the Resource Industry Network's official launch day breakfast, where a sell-out crowd took in an address by ABC sports journalist and mental health advocate Craig Hamilton on mental health in the workplace.

The well-attended breakfast was testimony to the industry's clear interest in ensuring that all the right internal company structures were in place to adequately support those dealing with mental health issues.

Himself a sufferer of Bipolar Disorder, which he has successfully managed since diagnosed in 2000, Mr Hamilton says that the transparency of employees in discussing mental health problems with their managers is also very important so that this information permeates through to business owners.

According to Mr Hamilton, mental illness in the workplace currently costs Australian businesses a staggering \$6.5 billion every year.

"Ignoring the problem and believing it doesn't exist, or is too complex, is counterproductive," he said.

After the breakfast, Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports, and

Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, the Hon. Mark Bailey officially launched the start of the exhibition.

In welcoming everyone to the event, Minister Bailey, praised QME and stressed its importance not just to Mackay and Queensland, but also to the industry nationally.

“This is the twenty-third year of the event and it is very impressive to see suppliers from all over the country and internationally here today all in one spot collaborating, working together looking at efficiencies and improvements how we can make sure this is a growing sector again,” Minister Bailey said.

Feedback to Reed Exhibitions from exhibitors was that day one was busy during the morning due to the official launch, and that overall, it was a great opportunity to see existing clients and generate new sales leads.

Companies that were exhibiting or presenting today included big brands Toyota, ESS Engineering, Flexco, Metso, and Endress + Hauser and Scan Tech 3D, which showcased a live demo of a 3D arm scan which can assist the industry in reverse engineering, alignment set up, quality control, capturing data.

ESS Engineering featured its new ‘Quick Change Trac-Mount Idler’ today which boasts frames that can be slid out of a conveyor belt by just one person, rather than requiring large machinery.

More Air Group’s SMAC 40-D machines - small screw air compressors used on surface vehicles such as trucks and utes - were also on display to show case their ability to run continuously, with no downtime and in the harshest of conditions.

Safety Mitts, featured a zeroG tool arm that makes tool weightless. Managing Director for Safety Mitts, Timothy Lightfoot commented that the mitts are a user friendly, efficient and safe product that promotes industrial ergonomic design.

On the agenda for today, day 2 of QME is a surprise inclusion from heavyweight mining company BHP Billiton Coal, which invites QME visitors to test their skills on two state-of-the-art mobile equipment simulators that it has brought to Mackay Showgrounds.

The off-highway heavy haul truck simulator, located at the front of the exhibition, and the grader simulator at the BHP Billiton Coal stand, are used to familiarise and train operators with all equipment controls and operating techniques to get the most out of the machines without putting the operators or their equipment at risk.

BHP Billiton Coal said that teaching proper operating techniques to those in the industry is important to extend the overall life of mobile equipment, which dramatically reduces operating costs.