

The force of Mother Nature

The summer floods during December 2010 to January 2011 were a great reminder of the force and unpredictability Mother Nature can have along with the planning that needs to be in place for such events. While many local businesses and organisations in Chinchilla and surrounding areas learnt that the hard way, Linc Energy came out fairly well. Linc Energy site manager Denis Kruger said although the company did go underwater, preparations had been in place since the beginning of operations for such events. "Our business suffered from water 500mm deep, local road access was cut and the major highway access we use was interrupted," he said. "The Chinchilla Research and Development site was cut off from the

township for a month and there was flooding at the Hopelands district as well." Mr Kruger said the Linc Energy Chinchilla site was lucky not to be severely damaged due to careful planning and construction. "With advice from local flood records and information from local landholders the office was built so that all major infrastructure was above flood level and due to this there was no damage," he said. "The only major cost incurred was for a helicopter charter to keep fresh people at the operation." Unlike many other businesses, Linc Energy's site operations remained continuous throughout the floods by rotating staff on a five to seven day turnaround depending on helicopter availability. Clean up was also only a minimal task.

"The staff members that could not make it to work or were not required but rostered on reported to the SES and local council to assist clean-up crews elsewhere in places such as Chinchilla, Dalby, Ipswich and Brisbane until access to our site was available," Mr Kruger said. Looking back one year on, Mr Kruger said Linc Energy continues to build clean energy and clean fuel technology in full operation. "We are better now...the site was fully operational within 48 hours of road access being available," he said. The ability of Linc Energy staff to work under adverse conditions with limited resources was praised by Mr Kruger. "The whole event was a great team building exercise and bonded the staff together, some lifelong friendships were forged that might not have happened under normal circumstances," he said.



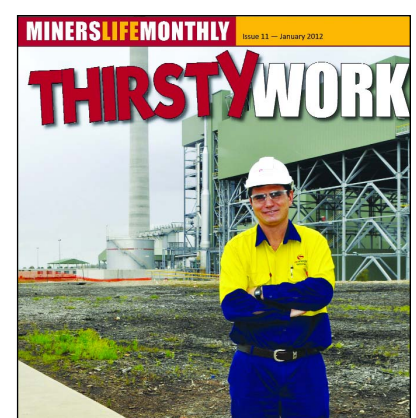
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