

Industry Manual Handling Expo

Across all members of the Gladstone Industry Leadership Group (GILG), safety is the

INDUSTRY UPDATE

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number one priority. As manual handling injuries typically account for about 40% of serious industry injuries, senior industry managers are determined to stop these preventable manual handling injuries.

One way that they have put this priority into action is through the Rio Tinto Manual Handling and Ergonomic Expo. This Expo was held for the second time at Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) on 9 and 10 May this year.

The Expo shared the manual handling challenges and achievements of each of Rio Tinto's sites in Queensland and the Northern Territory. The aim of this information sharing is to ultimately make industry workplaces safer. This is because the best practice improvements made on one site can be replicated across multiple industry sites and thus the safety benefits spread and maximised.

The Expo also displayed a wide variety of material handling products and anti-vibration tools and equipment from over 20 suppliers.

One such area that I found impressive was valve automation technology. In this age of high tech touch phones and computer controlled systems, it's easy to forget that there are still demanding physical jobs on industry sites. This includes the effort needed to open, close and maintain the control valves that direct the flow in the hundreds of kilometres of heavy pipe on each industry site.

The consistent message of the Expo was how these and other common physical jobs can be done smarter.

A real strength of the Expo was that it was hands on. It was not just glossy pictures of equipment. It gave participants the opportunity to see how equipment can be used in real work situations and thus the difference that the equipment can make to everyday tasks. Industry employees got hands on with pneumatic guns, jackhammers, air compressors and hand tools of all descriptions.

On behalf of the many hundreds of industry employees who had the chance to try out new equipment and learn about the manual handling initiatives on other sites, I would like to thank the Expo's organisers for an outstanding event.

If you would like to see pictures of some of the equipment on display, please go to the link on the GILG home page www.gilg.com.au. You can also join our forum topic and share your thoughts.

I look forward to hearing from you soon, cheers, Kurt.



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