



Rare Snow Bunnies on a visit to Lithgow Ski Resort

By Ajay Maira, Manager Electrical Low Branch

Well not a ski resort but a local coal mine at Lithgow. All four members of the Electrical Explosion Protection Branch at TestSafe, took a break from their daily life of assessing and testing of intrinsically safe equipment to see the life that this equipment has when it reaches the 'coal face' (pun not intended).

The team was very impressed by the safety induction process that they went through before entering the colliery. I think the photo speaks for itself. The induction process



From L to R: David Fraser, James Zhao, Ajay Maira & Mohamed Abdelkrimi, Electrical Engineers on a visit to Lithgow Underground Coal Mine.

was very informative regarding the location of telephones to be used in case of emergency, the numbers to be dialled, the policy on use of drugs and alcohol, the use of cap lights and breathing apparatus, and most importantly, to be close to the colliery supervisor taking us around!

Collieries have such a comprehensive induction and training system to meet their Occupational Health and Safety obligation. Usually collieries require a generic induction that covers primary risks that may be encountered on all mine sites. To

compliment the generic induction, a further site induction is generally required to cover specific on-site risks.

Once we were down the shaft its was like a whole new world. The equipment we certify has to live its life in a dark and damp atmosphere, with plenty of dust from the coal being sheared, and water from all possible angles. It has to maintain performance in this harshest of work environments.

Connections have to be made in the beam of a caplight, impacts have to be borne from the life of being connected, operated, then disconnected and being moved as the coal winning advances from one block to another.

Miner's lives are dependent on the safe and correct operation of this equipment, and we came back with the view that comparatively life at TestSafe is not really bad, after all, but we are now more determined to give the equipment hell before releasing compliance reports for them!