

Coal Terminal loads its 250 millionth tonne

The Port Kembla Coal Terminal passed a major milestone in January 2006, when it loaded its 250 millionth tonne of coal since the current terminal was commissioned in 1982.

PKCT General Manager John Brannon said those 250 million tonnes of coal represented hundreds of millions of dollars to the regional economy and thousands of jobs in mining, transporting and loading the coal.

"We are the only coal port servicing the Southern and Western Coalfields of NSW," Mr Brannon said. "PKCT plays a crucial role in generating income for the Illawarra and Lithgow regions and jobs for residents of these areas."

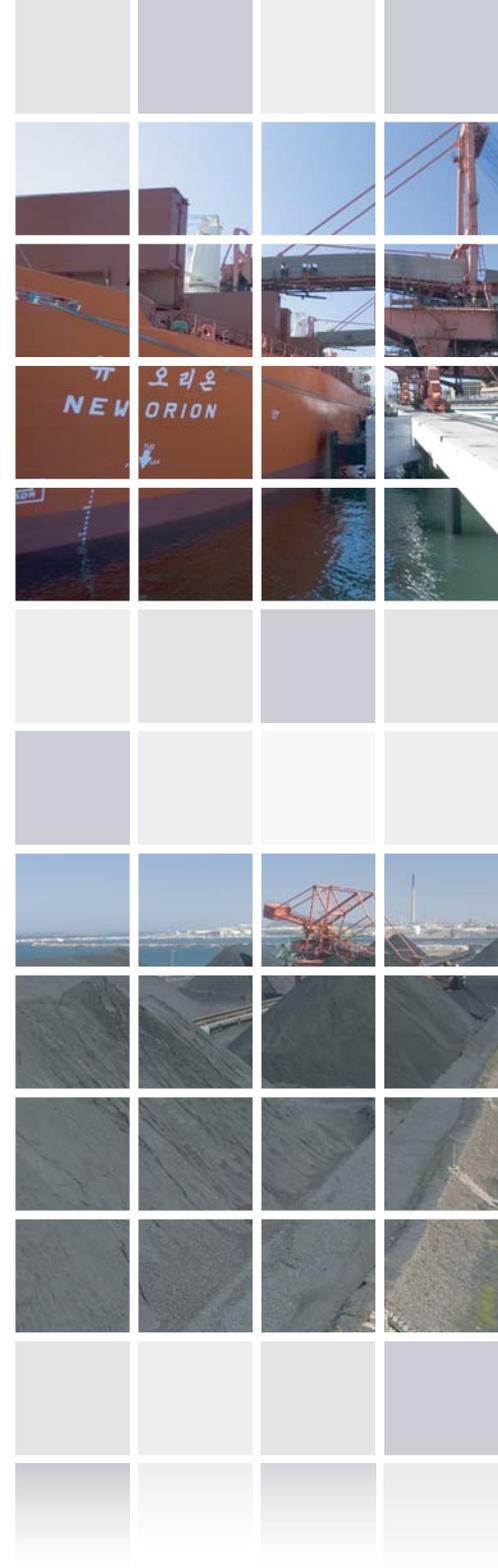
Mr Brannon said PKCT had weathered several downturns in the international coal trade that had seen a number of the region's mines close over the past two decades, but was now enjoying an upsurge in demand for the high quality coking and steaming coal produced in the Southern and Western Coalfields respectively.

"The hard coking coal produced in the Southern Coalfields is up there in quality with the best in the world," he said. "It's a highly sought-after product."

"We're seeing growth in the steel industries in China and India, resulting in growing demand for coking coal. And the expanding economies in those countries have seen a growing demand for steam coal for power stations as well."

PKCT shipped 10.3 million tonnes in 2004-2005, but is designed to handle up to 18 million tonnes. Mr Brannon said that this spare capacity positions PKCT well for future growth.

"We are offering world-class vessel turnaround times, and we're also able to be flexible in the size and types of cargoes we handle. We consider ourselves a boutique coal terminal – willing and able to handle all kinds of vessels from barges taking 5,000 tonnes to the largest Cape-class bulk carriers."



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