

QLD NEWS

Online fundraiser for injured Moranbah miners reaches \$70,000 in hours

More than \$70,000 has been raised in just hours for the families of the five men still clinging to life after the Grosvenor Mine disaster near Moranbah. HOW YOU CAN HELP

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Subscriber only | May 8, 2020 11:07am

FIVE miners caught in a Moranbah coal mine explosion are clinging to life in a Brisbane hospital but their colleagues have rallied around their families, raising \$70,000 in just hours.

Four of the men injured in the Grosvenor Mine explosion remain in a critical condition on ventilators, while the fifth is in an improving condition.

The five men were members of the mine's A crew longwall team. Yesterday their colleagues working in the mine's B crew an [online fundraiser that has raised more than \\$70,000](#).

Fundraiser organiser Robin Buchanan, with six others, last night thanked the overwhelming support for his workmates after the disaster.

[Mine explosion triggers historic state action](#)

[Moranbah gripped by 'ripple effect of mine tragedy'](#)

['Worst nightmare': Four critical after mine explosion](#)

"This accident has shocked us all, and this is the least we can do to assist their families," the fundraiser read.

"Together let's assist the families of the boys affected by the incident that occurred at Grosvenor.

Four men this morning remain in a critical condition on ventilators fighting for life with burns covering their torsos and inundating their airways after an underground explosion tore through a Moranbah mine in one of the state's worst mining accidents in decades.

The men, aged 43, 45 and two aged 51, along with one other, 44, who was yesterday in a stable condition, were flown to Brisbane late on Wednesday after surviving the blast at the Anglo American owned Grosvenor mine.

The 44-year-old's condition is continually improving, according to a spokeswoman from the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Wednesday's accident is believed to have been sparked by a gas ignition on the long wall of the Grosvenor mine around 3.15pm.

The men were flown to Brisbane in a joint recovery effort by RACQ LifeFlight and the Royal Flying Doctor Service before they were taken to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The Courier-Mail has been told four of the five men had to be placed into induced comas to travel.





📷 Dr Deborah Simmons (front) with Moranbah Hospital nursing staff. Picture: Daryl Wright

One woman who assisted with critical care in the moments following the explosion has been hailed a “hero” for her efforts in keeping the men alive while waiting for the planes to arrive.

Senior medical officer Dr Deborah Simmons was coincidentally in the Moranbah area at the time of the blast.

Dr Simmons, an anaesthetist with Mackay HHS, had just left Moranbah Hospital after training staff for COVID-19 when heard there had been an explosion.

“It was just lucky that I was in the area at the time,” Dr Simmons said.

“As an anaesthetist myself I know that with facial burns and airway burns that the priority is trying to intubate these patients to make sure they’ve got a breathing tube down, otherwise their airways swell up very quickly.”

Dr Simmons said the men were calm at the hospital.

“They were just talking about the fact that they were in pain,” she said.



📷 An injured mine worker is transferred from an air ambulance to be taken to hospital in Brisbane on Wednesday night. Picture: Josh Woning/AAP

Dr Simmons applauded the extraordinary efforts of all the Moranbah nursing staff in dealing with the tragedy.

“I think the real heroes are the nursing staff that stepped up to a job that nobody should be confronted with and they did marvellously,” she said.

“It was this small rural hospital that has a two-bed emergency department that managed four patients that needed to be intubated and ventilated for three hours and had them ready for the retrieval teams to pick up.

“They are the ones that saved those people’s lives.”

Mines Minister Dr Anthony Lynham yesterday described Dr Simmons and the local nursing staff as “heroes for what they did.”

The explosion is one of the biggest events to rock the mining industry in recent years and comes just 15 months after Bradley Hardwick was killed at another Anglo American-owned mine in the Moranbah region.

INSIDE THE EXPLOSION: ‘IT WAS SO CLOSE TO CATASTROPHIC LOSS OF LIFE’

Although a life-changing event for the five men and their families, the mining and energy president of the Construction Forestry, Mining and Energy Union said it could have been much worse.

“There were literally hundreds working underground yesterday,” Stephen Smyth said. “Day shift is the most popular shift, and with the work going on it could have potentially caused catastrophic loss of life and damage to that mine.

“I hate to (say) they dodged a bullet – the five workers haven’t clearly – but certainly other workers have.”

Anglo American CEO Tyler Mitchelson thanked Dr Simmons and other first responders, including the company’s mine rescue team.

He said staff were in shock following the explosion.

“I have been with some of our team at the mine today. There is a great deal of shock and concern for our colleagues, and we are providing all the assistance we can,” he said. “Our focus right now is on supporting our injured colleagues and their families to ensure they have everything they need. Our injured colleagues are receiving the best possible care at the Royal Brisbane burns unit.”

Mr Mitchelson, who is in charge of the company’s metallurgical coal business in Australia, said a thorough investigation would take place.

“We will work through this step by step with the authorities to understand what went wrong, drawing on the best possible expert advice,” he said. “Our priority still remains the safety and the care of our people.”

[Near-misses soar at Qld mines months after safety reset](#)

[Mine worker killed in machinery accident identified](#)

It is the second serious incident to rock the region in recent months after Grosvenor’s sister mine in Moranbah North, also owned by Anglo American, had a roof collapse in January. No one was hurt.

Queensland’s chief inspector of coal mines Peter Newman told the ABC yesterday that safety concerns had been raised with the Grosvenor mine after an inspection was carried out last month.

“As in all inspections undertaken at mine sites, whenever you bring a fresh pair of eyes to an operation there are always either recommendations for improvements in certain aspects of the mine, or a directive in terms of the mine taking particular action,” he said.



Injured workers from an explosion at Grosvenor coal mine at Moranbah arriving in Brisbane. Picture: Josh Woning/AAP

He stopped short of suggesting the safety concerns were linked to the explosion.

“Until such time that the monitoring and analysis of gas readings determines that there is a safe environment for people to return underground, it’s premature for me to speculate what the nature and cause of this incident was,” he said.

The CFMEU’s Mr Smyth said many workers were distressed after the explosion.

“It’s had a massive ripple effect, not just at the Grosvenor mine but across the Bowen Basin – it’s hit people like a tonne of bricks,” he said.

Investigations into the explosion are expected to take months. The State Government is considering a board of inquiry into the incident.



A patient is transferred from a RFDS plane to a waiting ambulance in Brisbane. Picture: Josh Woning/AAP