

Giant zinc-copper mine adopts new training approach

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For Immediate Release

ADVANCED simulator training technology is now being employed at one of the world's biggest zinc and copper mines to improve the safety and productivity of mining equipment operators.

Peru's Compañía Minera Antamina SA (CMAS), operator of the Antamina mine, 270km north-east of Lima in the Andes mountains, selected Immersive Technologies to supply a Semi-transportable AE (Advanced Equipment) Simulator and Caterpillar 785C, 789C, 793C, 797 Haul Truck Conversion Kit after evaluating available training simulator options. CMAS has also engaged Immersive Technologies under a five-year service agreement to support the AE Simulator and ensure maximum availability of the unit.

Jointly owned by BHP Billiton (33.75%), Falconbridge (33.75%), Teck Cominco (22.5%) and Mitsubishi Corp (10%), the Antamina openpit mine and 70,000 tonnes-per-day mill commenced operation in October 2001 after a \$US2.2 billion construction phase.

The mine, which employs more than 1400 people, has a projected life of more than 20 years. In its first 10 years of operation, it is expected to produce about 675 million pounds of copper and 625 million pounds of zinc annually. Mining is by conventional truck-and-shovel open-pit methods.

The concentrator features the world's largest single-circuit SAG milling operation.

Immersive Technologies recently extended its South American sales and service presence in response to rising demand for its AE Simulator solutions from mine operators in the region. Antamina's AE Simulator is expected to help CMAS address local industry skills shortages, which is also among the key challenges for mining companies in Latin America.

Mine operations manager at Antamina, Daniel Gurtler said he expected the site to use its AE Simulator extensively to achieve uniform high-level results from training of new operators, and to improve the skills of existing operators.

"We are looking forward to incorporating the Immersive Technologies simulator into our training program at Antamina," he said.

"We expect the simulator to deliver us more consistent training results, especially with regard to improving our operators' abilities to deal with unusual situations. These unusual situations don't occur often in the mine, but can be simulated to ensure that the operators will be able to respond correctly.

"Our current plans are to keep the simulator in use 24/7."

Immersive Technologies Latin America sales executive Alfonso Castaneda said major mine operators such as BHP Billiton – which is ramping up its use of Immersive AE simulator technology globally – were increasingly investing to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operator training.

"The placement of a simulator in Antamina shows that mines in Latin America are very serious about safety, reducing costs and optimising production and that Immersive Technologies products and support are at the forefront of mine simulation," he said.

"The Americas office is dedicated to supporting the spread of this vital technology in Latin America."

About Immersive Technologies

Established in 1993, Immersive Technologies is the leading global provider of operator training Simulators to the mining and earthmoving industries.

With more than 65 AE simulators deployed in 14 countries around the world, the company's simulators are integral to the operations of many world-leading mining companies who use the technology to improve operational safety and efficiency while driving down maintenance costs. Immersive Technologies' exclusive alliances with several leading original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) ensures its extensive range of AE simulators achieve a superior level of realism and accuracy through the use of exclusively licensed proprietary data and machine technical information from the OEM.

The company's expanding customer support base includes offices in Australia and the USA. For more information about Immersive Technologies, visit www.ImmersiveTechnologies.com