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MEDIA RELEASE

QAL Acknowledged for Training Excellence

The training at Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) has once again been recognised as one of the best in the region as a central Queensland finalist for the Employer of the Year award category in the 2009 Queensland Training Awards.

Acting Pump Crew Supervisor Michael Pope has also been recognised for his efforts as a finalist in the Trainee of the Year category for the work he carried out whilst completing a Certificate IV in Competitive Manufacturing.

Selected from 640 nominations, this is the fourth year that QAL has been recognised as a finalist in the Awards, which rewards the outstanding achievements of individuals and organisations within the vocational education and training sector who strive for excellence, best practice and innovation.

Human Resources Superintendent Keith Greatrix said QAL's ability to develop the skills of employees in a wide range of areas, such as safety, career progression, technical training and personal development, has led to it being recognised again as a finalist in the Awards.

"The training philosophy we have at QAL is to develop both the needs of the business and our employees. In order to do this we not only offer training for skills that are required now, but we identify where the skills gaps are and what may be required in the future,"

"Michael is one of the many success stories as a result of QAL training and his nomination is a testament to his hard working performance and strong leadership skills." Mr Greatrix said.

Employed at QAL for three years as an Alumina Producer, Michael's studies saw him implement projects which entrenched the ethos of business improvement within the pump crew team. Capturing best practice methods through the innovative use of new media, Michael worked with students from CQ University to develop a system of processes and procedures that would be available for future generations of Alumina Producers for years to come.

Michael said he was surprised to be nominated for the Award and also pleased to receive recognition for the work he carried out as part of his traineeship – something that he would not hesitate to do again.

"I received a great deal of support during the course, with mentors at QAL assisting me throughout the process. While the course was challenging, it was also rewarding to see the improvements you implement make such a difference out in the field." He said.

Managing Director Phil Campbell said the Awards demonstrated that QAL and Gladstone are one of many key players leading the state in providing exceptional training and skills development.

"As one of the region's largest employers, QAL is providing our workforce with the skills base to take Gladstone forward into the future. With so much new industry coming to the area, Gladstone has a diverse and skilled workforce already living and working here, which sets a solid foundation for future growth." Mr Campbell said.

The Awards are first contested at a regional level, with winners then competing at a state level. State winners are then eligible to nominate for national honours at the Australian Training Awards. The winners will be announced at the central Queensland regional final presentation ceremony held in Mackay on Saturday 18 July.

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Caption: Acting Pump Crew Supervisor Michael Pope is a finalist in the Trainee of the Year category for the central Queensland region in the Queensland Training Awards

About Queensland Alumina Limited:

Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) commenced operation in March 1967 with an annual production rate of 600 000 tonnes of alumina. Today QAL is one of the world's largest alumina refineries, producing 3.95 million tonnes of the world's best smelter grade alumina per year. With an average workforce of 1050 employees, QAL is one of the region's largest employers and annually contributes approximately \$200 million directly to the local economy.

For further information and copies of images contact:

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