

## Isaac Plains expansion kicks off

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**THE Isaac Plains open cut mine in Queensland's Bowen Basin received state environmental approval to ramp up to 3.6 million tonnes per annum of raw coal output.**

The mine near Moranbah is owned 50:50 by Brazilian mining giant Vale and Perth-based Aquila Resources, with the joint venture partners planning to use "industry leading" dust control monitoring systems as part of the expansion.

In lifting production from its present 2Mtpa, the JV will spend \$36 million over the next nine months after already spending \$50 million on the purchase and refurbishment of a dragline.

The government approval comes almost a month after the Isaac Regional Council struck a deal with Vale to ensure there were strict conditions on the dust and environmental controls.

Council chief executive Mark Crawley labelled the agreement as a really good result that pushed the boundaries of what was achievable under the state's Mining Act while a Vale spokesperson said the conditions were stringent but achievable.

The mine is operated by Leighton subsidiary John Holland.

Isaac Plains produces metallurgical and thermal coal, and ramped up to production capacity of 2.8Mtpa last year.



The Isaac Plains mine owned by Bowen Central Coal, a 50:50 joint venture of Vale and Aquila.

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