

## Monitoring heat stress among mine workers to benefit northern Australia

**29 November, 2017**

Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) is teaming up with Glencore at the McArthur River Mine (MRM) to gain an accurate assessment of the effects of heat stress on the workforce and productivity at the mine site and shipping facilities in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Project leader and Menzies researcher, Emma Field said the research would contribute to effective prevention measures for all industries working in hot and humid environments.

“The 15 month project to identify the incidence, causes and impacts of heat stress in the MRM workforce began in October with site assessments and staff surveys. Physiological monitoring and work practice observations will take place in December.

“The Menzies team will provide recommendations for interventions to reduce risk of heat stress that will be practical and low cost,” said Ms Field.

The MRM is a zinc-lead mine located in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Northern Territory. In addition to the mine and processing facility, there is a concentrate storage shed and shipping facility at Bing Bong Port, 130km to the north.

There is a workforce of 1000 drawn from the nearby town of Borroloola, Darwin and other parts of Australia.

All workers stay in the accommodation village during their time on-site, working to varying rosters.

MRM General Manager, Sam Strohmayer said the collaboration with Menzies would benefit not only MRM but anyone who works outside in northern Australia.

“The reality is that some people need to work outside and they are going to be exposed to heat,” Mr Strohmayer said.

“Anything we can do to reduce the risk of heat stress will improve health and safety and contribute to a better working environment.”

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## **Menzies School of Health Research**

Menzies School of Health Research is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving Indigenous, global and tropical health. Menzies has a history of over 30 years of scientific discovery and public health achievement. Menzies works at the frontline, joining with partners across the Asia-Pacific as well as Indigenous communities across northern and central Australia. Menzies collaborates to create new knowledge, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.

Menzies School of Health Research is a member of the Heat Stress Research Partnership, which links industry with research organisations, and was formed in response to the shared concern about the challenge Heat Stress posed to the safety, health and wellbeing of the workforce in the region.

Link:

<http://www.cdu.edu.au/northern-institute/Heat-Stress-Research-Partnership>

## **About McArthur River Mine**

McArthur River Mine is located in the Northern Territory approximately 970km south-east from Darwin and 60km south-west of its closest township, Borroloola. MRM mines one of the world's largest zinc and lead deposits.

Established as an underground operation in 1995, MRM converted to open pit mining in 2006. MRM produces zinc and lead in concentrates which are primarily exported through Bing Bong loading facility on the southern coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria. The current mine life extends to 2036.

The mine provides direct employment to about 1000 people, including contractors. In 2016, we spent \$61 million on wages, \$238 million on goods and services – much of which we sourced locally – and \$1.3 million on community investment projects.