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## **GOVERNMENT INVESTS IN VITAL EMISSIONS REDUCTION TECHNOLOGY**

Low Emission Technology Australia (LETA) notes the Australian Government's investment of \$37.2 million into ventilation air methane (VAM) abatement technology that will help to reduce fugitive emissions from Australian coal mines.

This investment is a welcome sign that the Government recognises the important role of low emission technology in reaching our net zero goals while ensuring a future for some of Australia's most critical industries.

Methane released during coal mining is a source of greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating these emissions is an important goal that LETA has been supporting for more than a decade from our initial research to the current work on implementing the technology to Australian mining safety standards.

LETA's Chief Executive Officer Mark McCallum said "It is pleasing to see the Government recognise and invest in VAM reduction technology. If deployed at scale across Australia's mine sites, this important technology has the potential to significantly reduce emissions at some of Australia's underground coal mines<sup>1</sup>.

"LETA, with the support of the industry, has been investing in VAM reduction technology for over a decade and we have identified the significant role it could play in supporting emissions reduction across the industry.

"Today's investment by Government recognises that Australia's pathway to net zero must include solutions for the critical industries that our communities and the economy will continue to rely on.

"To date, LETA has allocated a total of nearly \$60 million in VAM abatement projects that have been critical to the research and development of this technology. The Government's investment in a VAM abatement project is a positive step towards proving the capability of this technology to operate effectively at scale to Australian mining safety standards.

"LETA looks forward to continued work with Government and partners in the industry to further explore, and deliver on, the opportunities presented by low emission technology."

**ENDS**

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<sup>1</sup> In 2023, methane emissions from coal mining totalled around 24 Mt, or around 5.5 per cent of total Australian emissions. This compares to nearly 80 Mt from agriculture, or 18 per cent of total Australian emissions, and 21 Mt from oil and gas, around 5 per cent of total Australian emissions.

## BACKGROUND

Mine ventilation systems work by pumping large volumes of fresh air into mine shafts, diluting the underground gas including methane. This produces ventilation air methane (VAM), which is then vented through exhaust shafts built into the mine.

When the methane is of a sufficient concentration, the abatement of this VAM can be done with technology such as Regenerative Thermal Oxidation (RTOs). Small-scale mine trials of RTO technology have been conducted without incident in Australia, and larger coal mining applications exist that are currently operating overseas. However, to date the available VAM abatement safety control systems operating overseas do not meet Australian expectations.

For this reason, LETA is investing into this technology with the goal of verifying the safety systems required to deploy VAM abatement at large-scale in Australia. In addition, LETA is also investing into R&D opportunities to develop catalytic abatement technology which could potentially be deployed in mines which have a lower level of VAM, currently unsuitable for the deployment of RTOs.