

Blackstone releases its FY2022 Sustainability Report

Blackstone Minerals Limited ("Blackstone" or the "Company") is pleased to release its **FY2022 Sustainability Report**.

The report supports the Company's commitment to **transparency** in the business and the development of an **industry leading, low CO₂ emission Green Nickel™ sulphide project** in Vietnam to supply into the growing Lithium-ion battery industry.

Through the Company's 2021 Materiality Assessment process, we identified activities and actions that are critical for the business to focus on from an Environmental, Social and Governance ("ESG") perspective.

Highlights of the FY2022 Sustainability report, providing a progress update on these activities and actions, include:

- Results of a **Life Cycle Assessment** showing our Ta Khoa project has the **lowest Global Warming Potential** compared with the different combinations of energy sources and alternative raw material sources and processing routes modelled (9.8 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811);
- Undertaking a **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment** to advance the understanding of our baseline emissions prior to project development and enabling us to **address climate related risks and identify reduction opportunities**;
- Selecting and onboarding a whistleblowing reporting platform as a robust, independent and accessible service to **support our Speak up Culture**;
- Establishing a **structured Remuneration Framework** with an equity incentive plan to reward, incentivise, attract, and retain high calibre people to the business;
- Introducing a personal **Health and Safety pre-start program** (Take-5) with the help of our workforce.
- Building a Communities and Social Performance team to support our commitment to **Community Development and Engagement**.

Scott Williamson, Blackstone's Managing Director, said:

"At Blackstone we are passionate about creating the world's leading green battery supply, enabling a solution from mine to consumer. To support this, our plan is to develop our Ta Khoa Project in Vietnam utilising the assets that we have close to us: a supportive neighbouring community and abundant renewable energy sources. This is important because with increasing expectations about the Environmental Social and Governance performance of auto manufacturers supporting this transition, come increased expectations around those companies that supply them with products, such as Blackstone. Our commitment to Green Nickel™ underpins the strong mandate ESG has in our business and the initiatives we are taking to understand our environmental and social footprint."

Blackstone continues to maintain its commitment to high-quality governance, transparency and ethical business practices across the organisation. For this report, we have worked to include Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) alignment where possible, and will continue to increase these alignments in the coming years.

Shareholders can access the report [here](#).

Authorised by the Managing Director on behalf of the Board.

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About Blackstone

Blackstone Minerals Ltd (ASX: BSX / OTCQX: BLSTF / FRA: B9S) is focused on building an integrated upstream and downstream battery metals processing business in Vietnam that produces Nickel: Cobalt: Manganese Precursor products for Asia's growing Lithium-ion battery industry.

The Company owns a 90% interest in the Ta Khoa Nickel Project ("TKN"). The TKN is located 160km west of Hanoi in the Son La Province of Vietnam (refer Figure 1) and includes an existing modern nickel mine built to Australian standards, which is currently being used to process nickel ore delivered by the underground bulk sample program. The nickel mine successfully operated as a mechanised underground nickel mine from 2013 to 2016.



Figure 1 Ta Khoa Nickel Project Location

Blackstone's TKN and Ta Khoa Refinery ("TKR") are the two major cogs in the Company's vertically integrated development strategy (together - the Ta Khoa Project). The Company's development strategy is underpinned by Blackstone's ability to secure nickel concentrate and Ta Khoa is emerging as a nickel sulphide district of enviable scale with several exploration targets yet to be tested.

In February 2022, Blackstone completed a Pre-Feasibility Study for the TKN and presented this on an integrated basis with the proposed TKR development (refer ASX announcement from 28 February 2022). The TKR is being designed to have a refining capacity of 400ktpa, with feedstock provided from a combination of concentrate from the TKN and third-party feed sources. Pilot Plant testing and Definitive Feasibility Studies are underway and will continue to technically de-risk the Ta Khoa Project.

At both the mine and refinery level, Blackstone is focused on a partnership model and is collaborating with groups who are focused on sustainable mining, minimising carbon footprint and implementing a fully vertically integrated supply chain.

Forward Looking Statements

This report contains certain forward-looking statements. The words "expect", "forecast", "should", "projected", "could", "may", "predict", "plan", "will" and other similar expressions are intended to identify forward looking statements. Indications of, and guidance on, future earnings, cash flow costs and financial position and performance are also forward-looking statements. Forward looking statements, opinions and estimates included in this announcement are based on assumptions and contingencies which are subject to change without notice, as are statements about market and industry trends, which are based on interpretations of current market conditions. Forward looking statements are provided as a general guide only and should not be relied on as a guarantee of future performance. Forward looking statements may be affected by a range of variables that could cause actual results or trends to differ materially. These variations, if materially adverse, may affect the timing or the feasibility of the development of the Ta Khoa Project.



BLACKSTONE
MINERALS

Sustainability Report

FY 2022



Looking Forward. Mining Green.

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Introducing Blackstone and Green Nickel™



Introduction

Health and Safety

Responsible Business

Our Environment

Our Communities

Our People



Managing Director's Report

As we continue on our sustainability journey at Blackstone Minerals, I am proud to present our FY2022 Sustainability Report.

This report supports our commitment to transparency in our business and our development of Green Nickel™. Our values of Agility, Unity, Transparency, and Integrity drive us to be open around the risks, successes and challenges to our business.

Blackstone is passionate about creating the world's leading green battery supply, enabling a solution from mine to consumer. To support this, our plan is to develop our mine site, the Ta Khoa Nickel Project in Vietnam utilising the assets that we have close to us: a supportive neighbouring community and abundant renewable energy sources, namely the nearby Hoa Binh hydro-electric power plant whilst also developing our Ta Khoa Refinery. The Ta Khoa Nickel Project and the Ta Khoa Refinery together will form the Ta Khoa Project. We will supply into a jurisdiction that is developing into a battery manufacturing and Electric Vehicle (EV) hub. Many of the activities listed in this report are focused on the key priorities for our current phase of the project, including gaining the Social License to progress the project approvals.

With the world's need to accelerate an energy transition, the adoption of EVs as a clean mode of transport becomes essential. Class 1 nickel, or nickel sulfides, offer a higher-purity ingredient for the nickel cathodes that are critical to Lithium-ion batteries, compared to nickel pig iron and laterite ores, the most dominant global nickel resources. Blackstone is uniquely positioned to contribute to the global supply of high-purity nickel sulfides that create the materials for longer-range EVs.

We understand that with increasing expectations about the Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) performance of auto manufacturers supporting this transition, come increased expectations around those companies that supply them with products, such as Blackstone. Our commitment to Green Nickel™ underpins the strong mandate ESG has in our business and the initiatives we are taking to understand our environmental and social footprint.

This report provides a progress update on the activities and actions identified through our 2021 Materiality Assessment process. The Materiality Assessment identified several areas critical for our business to focus on from an ESG perspective. Since this assessment, we have worked hard to address risks such as bribery and corruption, through practical approaches for example renewing our Anti-Bribery and Corruption (ABC) policy, implementing community donations procedures, onboarding a whistleblowing service and training of our corporate team on ABC. Also completed during the period were major milestones including our Pre-Feasibility Study (PFS), undertaking a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) to understand our environmental footprint, and commencing a partnership with Circular, a service provider for Blockchain Tracking Technology.

Despite this progress, there are other areas that we need to develop further, including the completion of Environmental and Social Impact Assessments; a Human Rights Risk Assessment; and further tracking of our alignment to the TCFD (Taskforce on Climate related Financial Disclosures).

We are also working to understand our ESG risks and areas for improvement alongside internationally accepted standards, such as TCFD and joining the United Nations Global Compact as a member.

As our maturity around sustainability progresses, our understanding of our ESG risks deepens and our data collection grows, so too does our alignment to industry sustainability reporting frameworks and assurance guidelines. For this report, we have worked to include Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) alignment where possible, and will continue to increase these alignments in the coming years.

By learning from and aligning our company with industry leaders such as the Electric Mining Consortium (EMC) and the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre (FBICRC), we aim to develop our frameworks and approach around best practice industry knowledge. Our strategy involves a number of approaches: the electrification of our mining fleet, researching green hydrogen technologies that can be applied to our operations, utilising renewable hydropower and gaining the Social License to operate in the unique regions our work is conducted in. I strongly encourage you to reach out with questions, concerns, or recommendations for disclosures and further information in our next report.

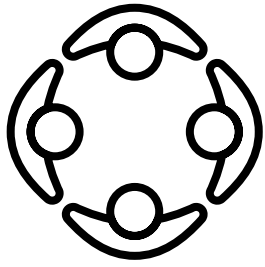
Scott Williamson
Managing Director



**"Undertaking initiatives
to understand our
environmental and social
footprint means that ESG
has a strong mandate in
our business."**

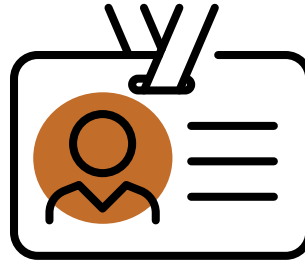
2021-2022 Highlights





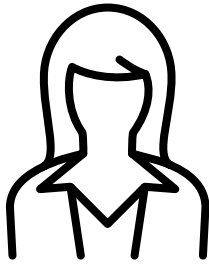
99%

of mine site-based roles were filled by Vietnamese nationals



100%

of employees received annual performance reviews



55%

Female employees occupied 55% of leadership roles in the Hanoi Office



\$3,362,755

spent with Vietnamese businesses



Life Cycle Assessment showing NCM precursor production at

9.8kg CO₂ eq per kg



2326

Local villagers received a second Covid-19 vaccine supported by Blackstone

About this Report

This report describes Blackstone's past approaches and forward-looking intentions around key material ESG issues identified by the Company. The report covers the 2022 Financial Year (FY2022) and builds upon past community initiatives that have built strong foundations for our ESG approach to the community.

It is our intention to align future reports to international reporting standards to ensure comparability to our peers and demonstrate the value of transparency which is central to Blackstone's sustainability approach.

All references to the 'year' mean 2022 Financial Year, unless otherwise specified. Key data around health and safety, employee hours and carbon emissions has been captured across all of Blackstone's activities and offices (Vietnam, Australia, Canada). Of note was Blackstone's spinout of its Australian non-nickel assets into Codrus Minerals Limited during the reporting period. This report covers Blackstone's activities,

and those of Codrus and Cobalt One Energy where the activities or data is material for the reporting period. The inclusion of Codrus and Cobalt One Energy is highlighted in the relevant report sections.

At this point in time, no external assurance of our reporting has been conducted, however we expect this to change as our project develops.

The Audit, Risk and Environment, Social, and Governance Committee oversees final review and approval of this Sustainability Report. We welcome any feedback on our report, and recommendations or questions about our ESG approach more broadly. Please forward any comments or ideas to admin@blackstoneminerals.com.au



About Blackstone

Blackstone Minerals Ltd. (ASX: BSX / OTCQX: BLSTF / FRA: B9S) was incorporated in August 2016 and obtained official admission onto the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) in January 2017 to explore and develop gold and nickel sulfide deposits primarily focused on Western Australia.

As Blackstone's strategy evolved and recognition of the looming EV revolution became more apparent, the Company added to its mineral portfolio by acquiring assets in Canada (primarily for cobalt) and then later in northern Vietnam, being the flagship Ta Khoa Nickel Project.

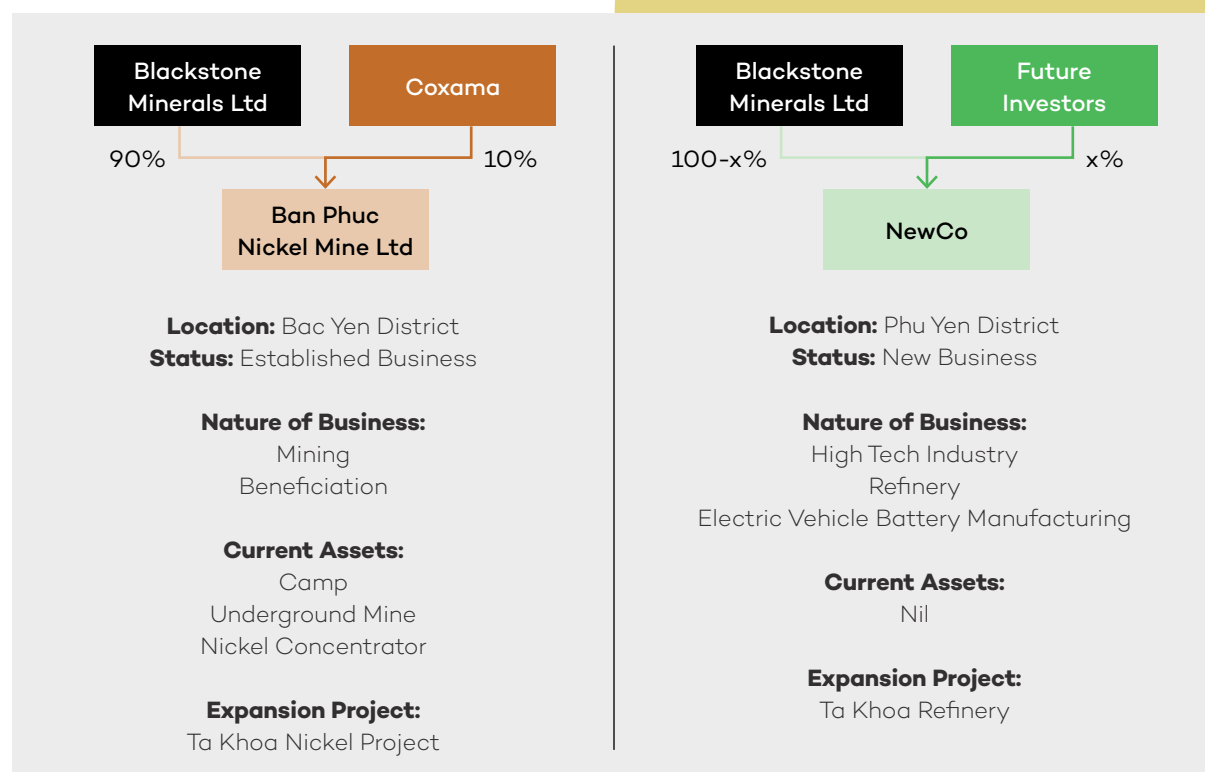
Blackstone is working towards building a future-focused business in Vietnam that produces Nickel: Cobalt: Manganese (NCM) Precursor products for Asia's growing Lithium-ion battery industry. The Ta Khoa Nickel Project involves mining nickel sulfide deposits, then processing mined ore to produce a concentrate that can be sold to a chemical refinery. The Ta Khoa Refinery involves upgrading

nickel concentrates into Class I nickel products suitable for use in Lithium-ion batteries (i.e., NCM811 Precursor).

The Ta Khoa Refinery is being designed to accept nickel concentrates from Blackstone owned nickel sulfide deposits as well as third party feed sources, to produce NCM811 Precursor. Following a review of its non-core assets, and upon further defining our commitment to producing NCM Precursor to supply the burgeoning EV sector, Blackstone divested its Australian non-nickel assets via a spin-out into Codrus Minerals Limited (ASX: CDR).

The Ta Khoa Project

Two Companies – Two Projects – One Goal
Green batteries. Brighter future.

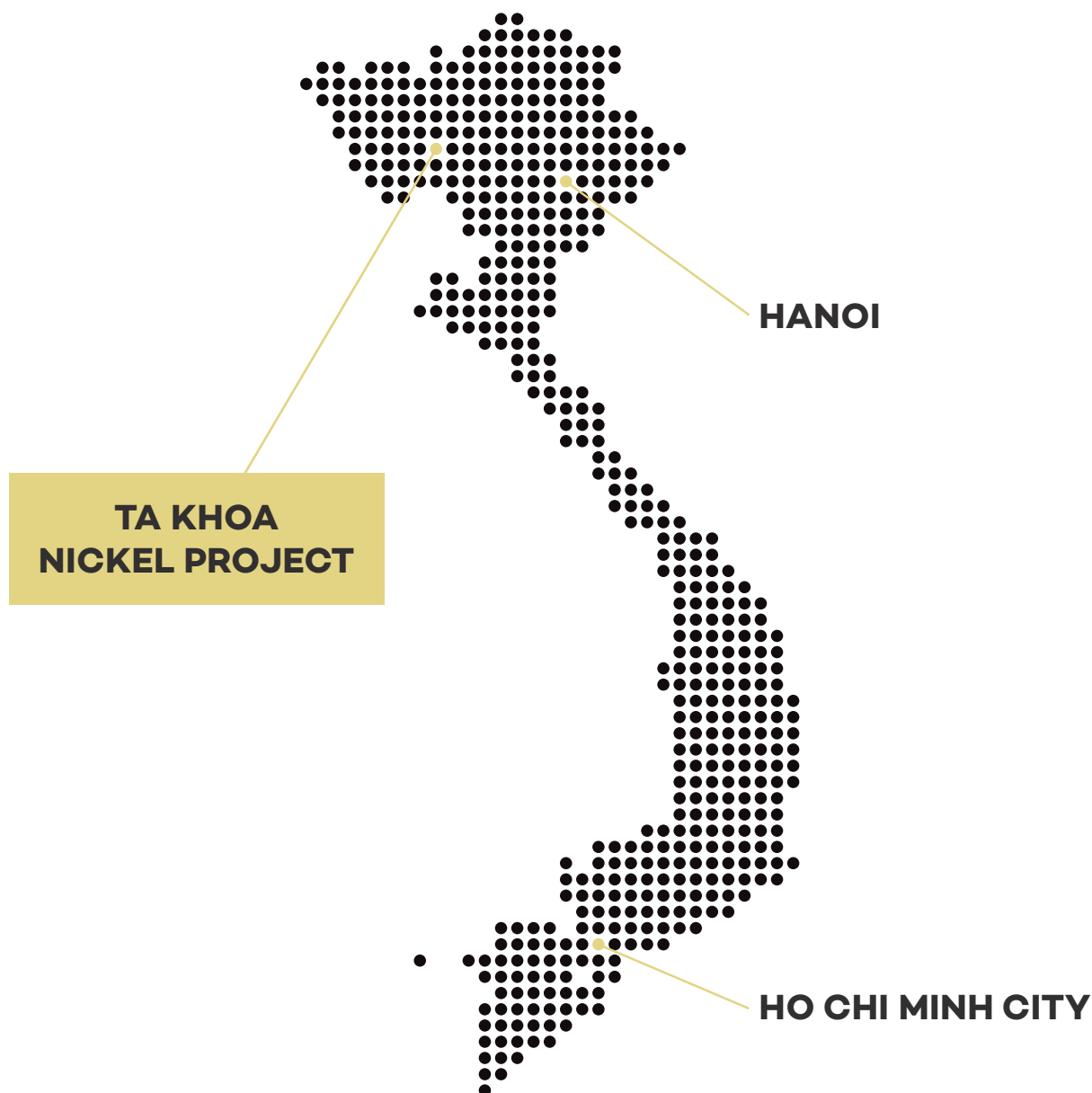


History of Ta Khoa

Blackstone acquired existing infrastructure and dedicated significant resources to explore the highly prospective Ta Khoa Nickel Project in Vietnam.

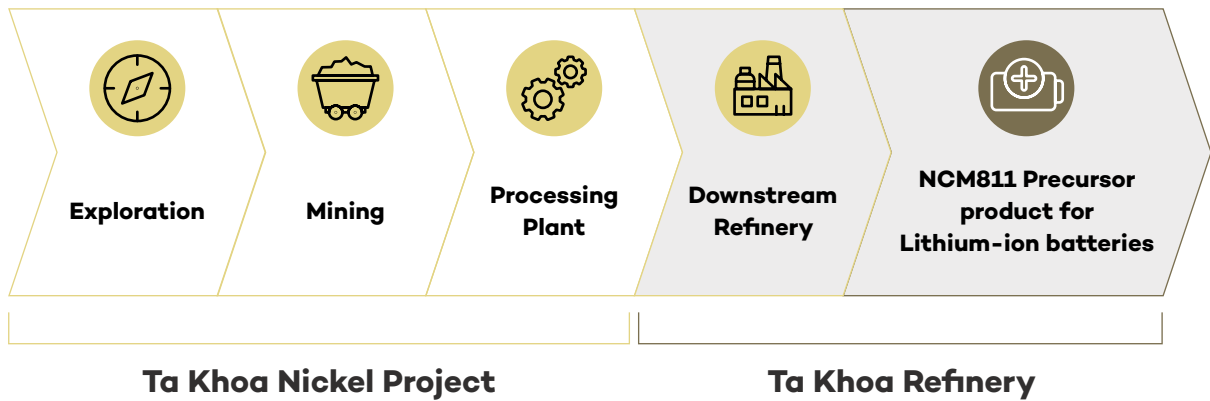
Blackstone owns 90% of the Ta Khoa Project through its interest in Ban Phuc Nickel Mines (BPNM). The mine is located 160 kilometres from Hanoi, in Son La Province. The previous owners mined the Ban Phuc Massive Sulfide Vein (MSV) underground deposit and treated approximately 1Mt over three years through a 450ktpa nickel concentrator.

The Ta Khoa Nickel Project includes the underground mine and concentrator which were operated until 2016. With existing infrastructure built to Australian standards, it was purchased with the view to develop further, given it is located within a premier nickel sulfide district encompassing multiple unexplored targets.

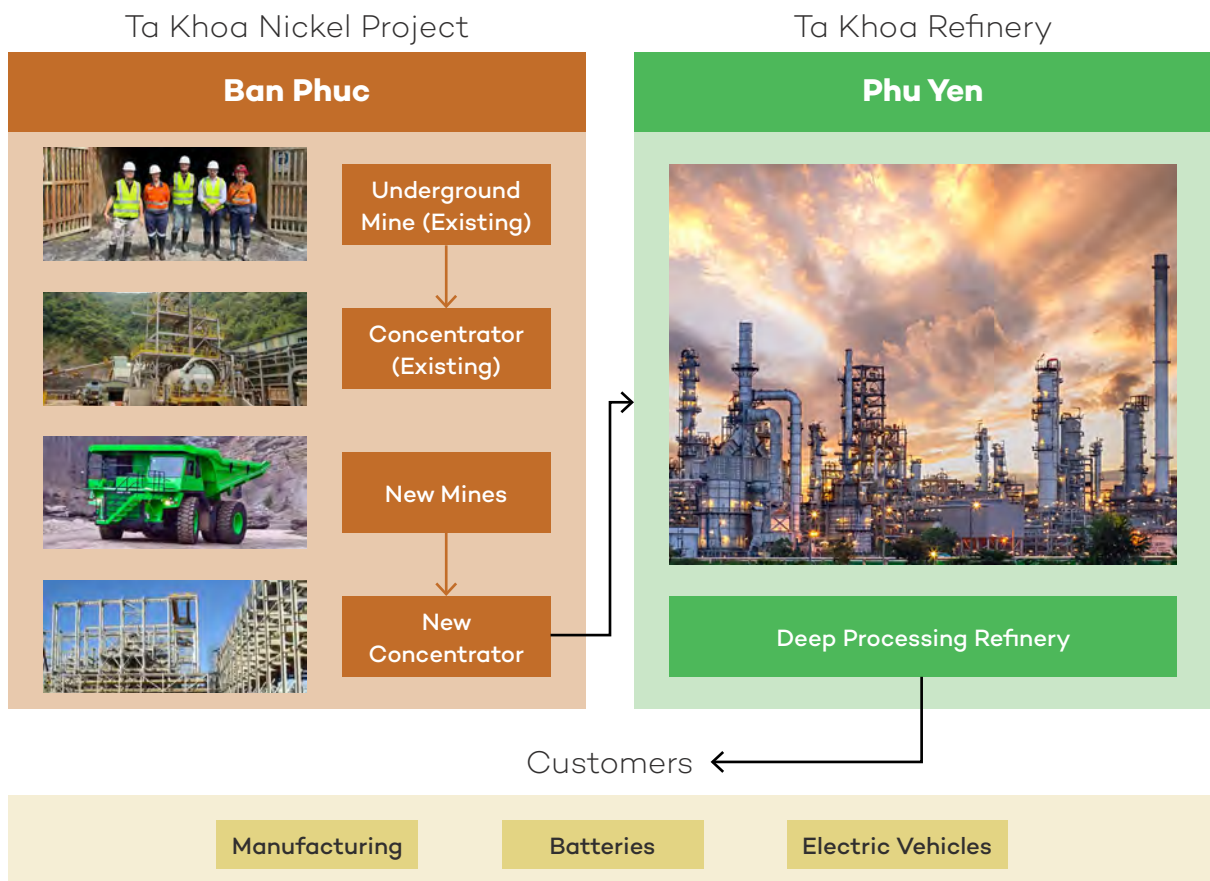


Project Plans

Blackstone will use the existing mining and concentrator infrastructure to extend the scale of our business, in addition to building a new refinery to support the processing of NCM811 Precursor Cathode Active Material.



Components & Processes

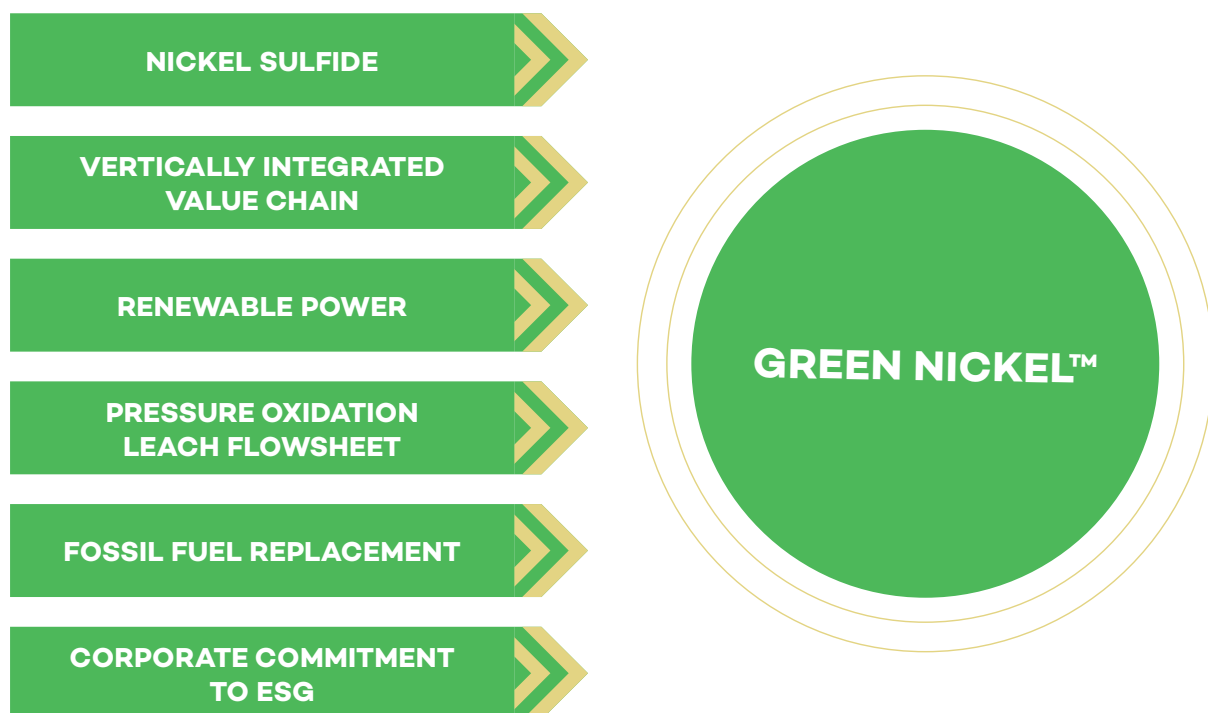




Green Nickel™

2021 and the first half of 2022 have proven to be a busy time for Blackstone's activities in developing a foundation for Green Nickel™.

We have focused this year's activities on "putting values into action", translating the work of our Materiality Assessment and Company mission and values, into tangible steps towards our goal of Green Nickel™.



Nickel Sulfide

Nickel sulfide is a critical to our definition of 'Green Nickel™'. Firstly, nickel sulfide is specifically suitable for upgrading through mineral beneficiation processes such as froth flotation. In comparison to other nickel such as laterites, nickel sulfide ore requires minimal processing input. A simpler downstream refinery flowsheet is another element of nickel sulfide given it generates its own acid and heat and does not require significant production inputs.

Vertically Integrated Value Chain

Sourcing the raw material and building processing facilities in Vietnam that produces a final NCM Precursor for Asia's growing Lithium-ion battery and EV industries results in a product which has traveled a far shorter distance by the time it reaches the customer. The environmental footprint of the product is therefore reduced. Our Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) and Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions Assessment details anticipated and current GHG emissions for our project (refer to Environment chapter).

Renewable Power

Blackstone aims to develop a project that works towards net zero-carbon emissions. A key method in our strategy is to utilise nearby hydroelectric power sources. Our current operations source power from the biggest hydropower plant in Southeast Asia: Son La Hydro Electric Dam.



Pressure Oxidation Leach Flowsheet

Blackstone's refinery will use Pressure Oxidation Technology (POX). Relative to other nickel project technologies, such as High Pressure Acid Leach (HPAL) and Pyrometallurgy, Blackstone's approach is favourable with regard to energy intensity, cost (operating and capital) and technical risk.

	Ta Khoa Refinery POX Hydrometallurgy	HPAL Hydrometallurgy	Smelter Pyrometallurgy
Typical Feed Ni grade %	~10	0.8-1.5	>10
Mineral Type	Sulfide concentrate from sulfide ore	Oxide - laterite ore	High grade Ni ore, typically sulfide ore
Extraction process conditions	150-210 degree C, high pressure oxygen	250-270 degree C high pressure steam and high acid	1100-1700 degree C furnace - Energy intensive + Coke
Capital investment	Low - exotic material not required for construction	Very High - exotic material, acid plant, steam boiler, very large equipment need for high tonnage	Low - Medium
Technology	Mature since 1960's - low risk	Since 1990s - high risk	Mature - low risk
Ore Sensitivity	Robust	Sensitive with acid consumption	Sensitive with arsenic, magnesium, and sulfur

Fossil Fuel Replacement

Wherever practicable, Blackstone will identify opportunities for fossil fuel replacement. As evidenced in our LCA results (refer to Environment chapter), the electrification of vehicles onsite to replace diesel transport options offers a tangible reduction in the emissions associated with our final product. Further, Blackstone intends to conduct a green hydrogen study to understand the opportunities for using a hydrogen fleet. Local fabrication and goods, where possible, in addition to the considered design of the sites, will allow for a reduction in the use of transport required.

Corporate Commitment to ESG

The final element of our Green Nickel™ strategy is seen through our overall activities and commitments to ESG as a business. These activities and commitments to support ESG as a key part of our Green Nickel™ strategy are listed in the following chapters.



Sustainability and Shared Value



We feel strongly that we have a responsibility to develop our project using best practice approaches and addressing the most pressing material ESG issues related to our project. The first step in understanding these, was to conduct a Materiality Assessment in 2021. This charted our path in terms of risk management, understanding emerging concerns and trends, and identifying where our ESG strengths are.

As a result, this report identifies the most material issues named by our stakeholders as having the most potential for significant impact upon Blackstone's sustainability commitments and operations. We conducted our initial materiality review in several phases, and in 2022 have added one additional phase to best capture the feedback of our stakeholders:

Phase One: We engaged an external consultant to identify the issues most material to nickel exploration and production and mining more broadly. This review was completed with guidance from the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) to support the materiality methodology. Our Phase One investigation included an assessment of key documents including: policies and standards, past Environmental and Social Impact Assessment results, Annual General Meeting results and feedback, our inaugural Risk Assessments, External Audit findings and Media and peer interest, feedback and priorities.

Phase Two: Key internal and external stakeholders were approached for interviews around material ESG concerns. The interview groups were diverse and included local leaders from in and around the mine site as well as residents who had expressed concerns around aspects of the mine, in addition to shareholders, employees and Board.

Phase Three: The next phase was to collate the responses and develop findings that could then be reviewed by the Blackstone Leadership team and key personnel to define the most material issues. In addition to the interviews, other data assessed in this phase included a review of recent media items, as well as several key ESG or industry-led publications.

Phase Four: A final workshop was held with the Blackstone Leadership team in Vietnam and Australia and included a number of Board members, to validate the most material ESG priorities of the business.

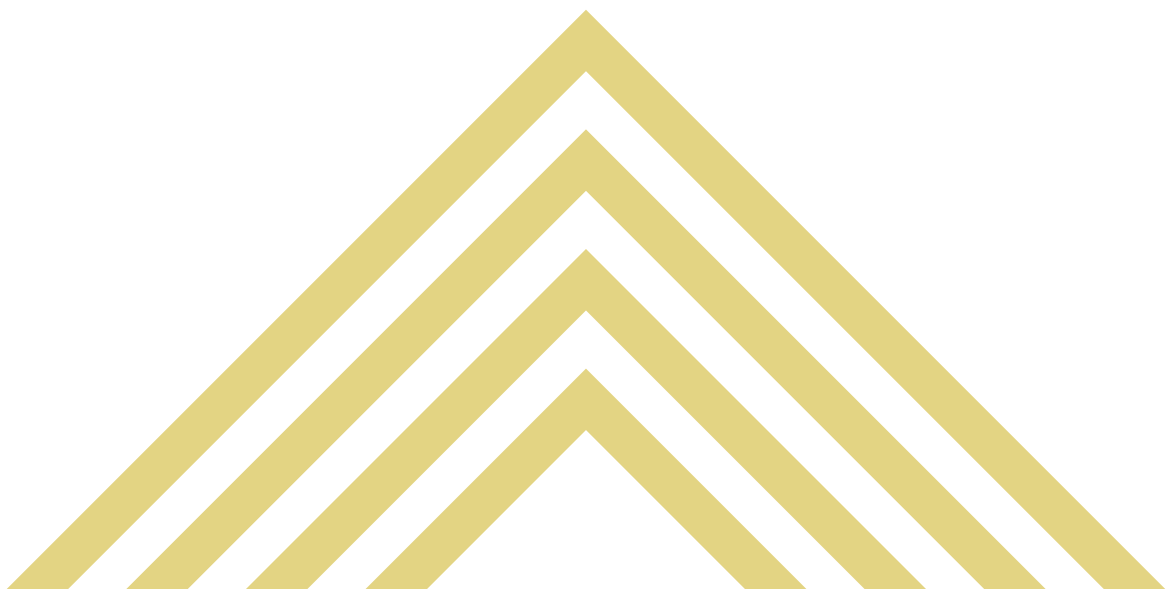
Phase Five: Gather feedback on our report from the original contributors to our Materiality Assessment. The feedback from our stakeholders this year placed Climate Change and Resilience as being higher significance than last year.

Given the diversity of stakeholders who take an interest in our project, Blackstone considers a broad range of internal and external stakeholder concerns and feedback. We engage these stakeholders through a variety of means that are appropriate for the audience, location and their background knowledge of our projects. In some cases, translators are used to communicate with certain stakeholders. So far, this has been conducted through:

- » Community feedback through representatives on-site and in the community, with follow up actions tracked through our new stakeholder management system;
- » Meetings with government officials at all levels, as well as permitting processes etc;
- » Materiality Assessment interview process and feedback;
- » Media engagement and social media platforms;
- » Blackstone's mailing list;
- » Ongoing engagement with institutional and retail investors.

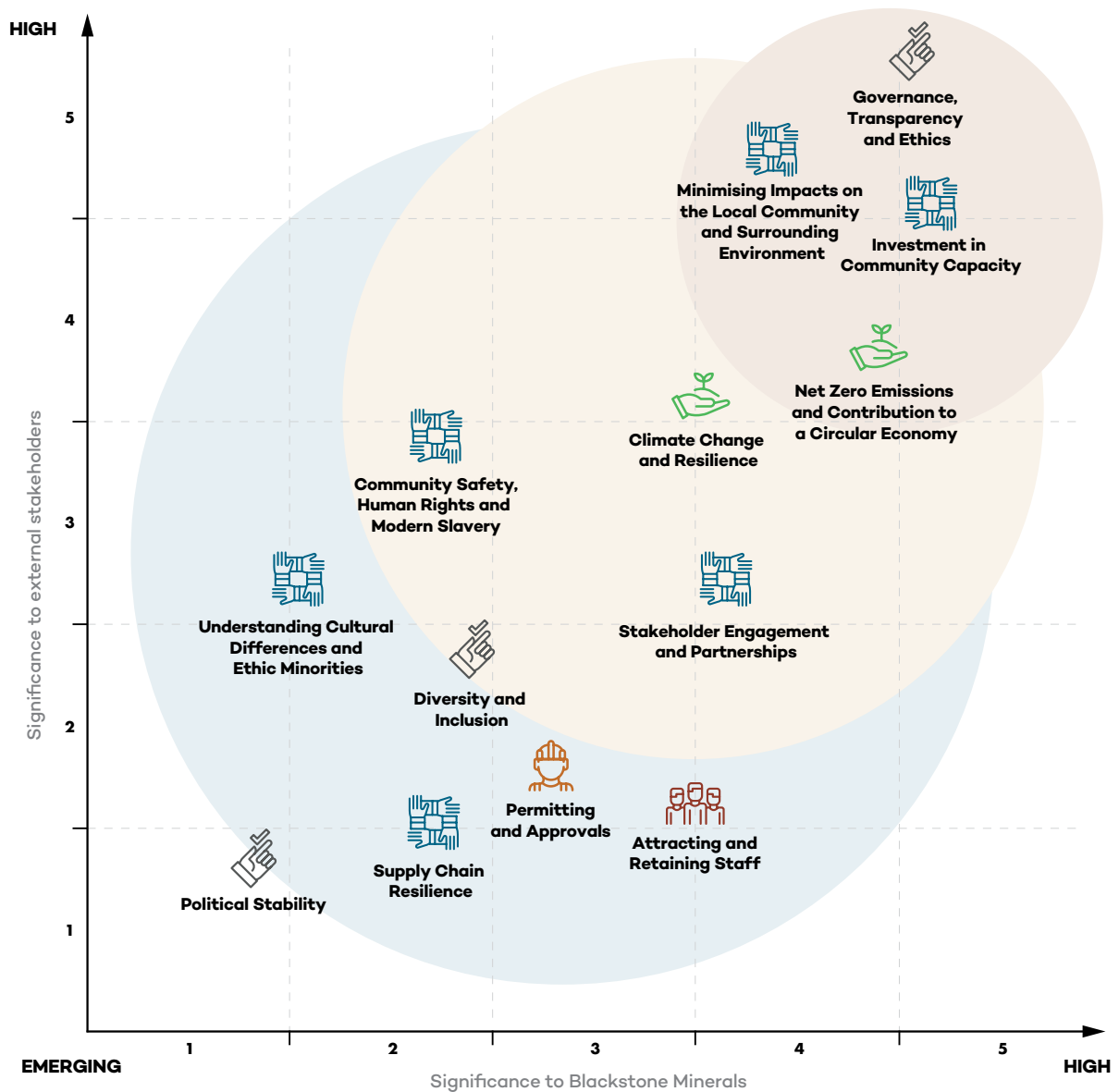
Stakeholders	Key interests or concerns	Our contribution to shared social and economic value
Community <i>Communities near our exploration and operations</i>	Employment opportunities for local communities Local supplier opportunities and development Training and capacity building Migration and retention of residents Community investment initiatives Infrastructure development and repairs Shared partnerships Social License Water Stewardship and management Climate Change Pollution	Providing working conditions that respect Human Rights Career progression opportunities Training and development opportunities Creating a stimulating and enjoyable working environment Community investment in infrastructure Salaries generated by employment Revenue for local goods and service providers
Employees <i>Vietnam (mine site and offices); Corporate; Canada</i>	Employment opportunities and pathways Transparency, Anti-Bribery and Corruption Community investment initiatives Employee benefits, engagement and retention Diversity and inclusion Water Stewardship and management	Providing working conditions that respect Human Rights Career progression opportunities Training and development opportunities Creating a stimulating and enjoyable working environment Salaries and employment

<p>Shareholders</p> <p><i>Institutional and retail investors</i></p>	<p>Climate Change</p> <p>Carbon emissions reporting and plans</p> <p>Community engagement and Social License</p> <p>Employment opportunities for local communities</p> <p>Local supply chain opportunities</p> <p>Financial sustainability</p>	<p>Opportunities to invest in projects with a strong commitment and focus on ESG</p> <p>Dividends and company growth</p>
<p>Government</p> <p><i>Commune, provincial and central government representatives in Vietnam; Australian government</i></p>	<p>Employment opportunities for local communities</p> <p>Local supply chain opportunities</p> <p>Training and capacity building</p> <p>Community investment initiatives</p> <p>Water Stewardship and management</p> <p>Pollution and environmental hygiene</p> <p>Migration and retention of local residents</p>	<p>Alignment of projects and business strategy to development objectives</p> <p>Compliance to government E&S requirements</p> <p>Building the capacity of local communities within their jurisdiction and local businesses</p> <p>Revenue and tax</p> <p>Community investment</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Utilising suppliers</p>
<p>Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)</p> <p><i>Local and Global NGOs and advocacy organisations</i></p>	<p>Transparency, Anti-Bribery and Corruption</p> <p>Employment opportunities for local communities</p> <p>Climate Change</p> <p>Community engagement and Social License</p> <p>Partnerships with local institutions, NGOs and agencies</p>	<p>Advancement of ESG priorities through partnerships</p> <p>Financial memberships or funding opportunities</p>



Our Most Material ESG Issues

These valued stakeholders helped us to identify their concerns or interests as our project progresses. This report goes on to identify and detail how the highest material concerns, charted below, are being addressed by the business.



-  Health & Safety
-  Our Employees
-  Our Communities
-  Our Environment
-  Ethical Business

Governance, Transparency and Ethics

- » Transparency
- » Remuneration and Board composition
- » Company strategy, policies and standards
- » Anti-Bribery and Corruption
- » Code of Conduct

“First and foremost, governance...”

“Using the annual report to reassure people that we are an organisation that understands and mitigates its risks...”

“Anti-Bribery and Corruption are the biggest risk.”

“Our core values of transparency and integrity are key to the way we operate in Vietnam.”

Minimising Impacts on the Local Community and Surrounding Environment

- » Biodiversity
- » Mine closure planning and rehabilitation
- » Environmental compliance
- » Water Stewardship
- » Land use and management
- » Tailings management
- » Resettlement

“We need to get an environmental baseline early... and think about closure early...”

“Our biggest risk from an environmental perspective is tailings.”

Investment in Community Capacity

- » Training and education
- » Capacity building
- » Indirect economic impact (local communities and regional economies)
- » Social value creation
- » Social capital
- » Community contributions
- » Livelihoods and quality of life
- » Local procurement

“If we can keep people in the region, provide jobs and prevent them having to travel, then it makes most sense.”

“Our biggest opportunity is to leave a legacy, improve the livelihoods of those in Vietnam... contribute to socioeconomic impact...”

“We want to build skills in the local community –the next generation of mining engineers...”

Net Zero Emissions and Contribution to a Circular Economy

- » GHG emissions
- » Decarbonisation
- » Net zero
- » Renewable energy
- » Physical and transition related risks of Climate Change
- » Supporting community resilience

“Delivering a product that helps with the greater good is important to us.”


“Building resilience of a community to the future through local infrastructure...”

“Demand for responsibly-sourced minerals is increasing; with phrases like “build back better” being common.”

Health and Safety



Materiality Index:

» Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing – **Medium** 



The Year in Review

In 2021 and into 2022, the development of our safety processes came into view, with a spotlight shone upon areas for improvement.

As our maturity as a company developed, our safety results suggested a number of key areas within our Vietnamese operations that require further development and attention. We have sought to rectify these as soon as they have occurred and are investigated, in areas including:

- » Vehicle operations on site and general road safety
- » Health and Safety training and competency processes
- » Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) selection and use
- » Socialising safe working behaviours
- » Managing safety during Covid-19 restrictions.

2021 - 2022 Safety Performance	CY 2020	CY 2021 (01 Jan to 30 June)	FY2022
All indicators are calculated per 1,000,000 hours worked			
Total Work Hours – Vietnam – Employees	298,127	49,274	80,559
Total Work Hours – Vietnam – Contractors	28,553	2,263	24,918
Total Work Hours – Canada – Employees and Contractors	No project hours	-	-
Total Site Work Hours – Australia (Red Gate, Middle Creek, Silver Swan South) – Employees	718	-	-
Total Site Work Hours – Australia – Contractors	2075	-	-
All sites: Lost Time Incidents (LTIs)	0	2	0
All sites: Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR)	0	1.91	1.17
All sites: Fatalities	0	0	0

During FY2022, Blackstone recorded no fatalities or workplace injuries - requiring more than simple first aid - for either employees or contractors. 90% of the presentations to the clinic have been for non-work-related issues, with the majority related to Covid-19 assessment and/or the treatment of symptoms.

We recorded two significant safety incidents, both related to ground control (surface) within the exploration activities. Both occasions were classified as near misses where the ground moved in an unplanned manner when impacted by weather conditions. For both instances, no worker was in harms way. From these – we have integrated support from engineering when establishing drilling locations which are close to highwalls or where drill pad preparation involves more than ground clearing.

Actions Taken

Some of the actions taken during this period to address Health and Safety gaps identified in 2021/2022 include:

- » In Q4 2021 Blackstone appointed an experienced expatriate HSE professional in the role of Mentoring OHS Lead to support the Vietnam team and implement good industry practice across all sites;
- » During the reporting period, the Company has also deployed an experienced Vietnamese Senior Supervisor for Health and Safety in order to increase their practice and undertake all duties in relation to the need to improve and maintain sufficient coverage to the sites;
- » Establish a Health and Hygiene Management Plan in accordance with our internal standard;
 - » Key elements of this plan are:
 - » Strengthening project Health and Safety standards
 - » Occupational hygiene monitoring
 - » Monthly health topics which include mental health and common lifestyle illnesses
 - » Medical surveillance



How We Manage Safety

Our safety culture is a continuation of the Vietnamese culture of 'you are my family'. As our field and operational activities increase, so has the focus of ensuring the health and wellbeing of our workforce. We develop and design activities to work collaboratively and with unity, one of our values. We ensure that physical, and mental workloads are evenly distributed and ensure there are always recreational activities to keep a good work life balance even when not at home.

Our Health and Safety Policy was updated at the beginning of 2022, and alongside the leadership from our Board and Executive Team, supports the drive to improve safety practices across our business units. This has resulted in the development and introduction of an Integrated Management System (IMS) approach which aligns our theories with our practices. There is still work to do, however we believe these are important steps in improving, and maintaining our safety

performance. The framework for management of Health and Safety processes and data has been designed to be mapped to ISO 45001 and ISO 9001. As we grow, we continue to map our processes with other industry best practices and international expectations. This means that not only are systems being designed to a certifiable standard, but our workforce also receives the best international advice for ensuring their safety and the safety of others, including any contractors and consultants working with us often raising their standard of work practice through new/different expectations and participation in our in-house training programs.

We recognise the importance of understanding unplanned outcomes and this year we have started formalising our process which looks at near misses to ensure we have captured and applied all learnings.

CASE STUDY

Hazard Identification and Capacity Building

This year Blackstone introduced a personal pre-start program (Take-5) with the help of our workforce. Instead of a top-down management approach, we collaborated with the workforce to develop the template and used both the safety professionals and other workers to deliver the training presentations.

The intention of the personal pre-start is for each worker to self-assess the risk of the task they are about to undertake. They can implement, or confirm, all controls which provide safe practices before commencement, then all tasks can be delivered easily and safely.

From this program we have seen the work crews take ownership of their workplaces and equipment. Team members report feeling empowered to delay a task until they have the right equipment or will notify their supervisor if they do not think they are competent for high-risk activities. As an organisation we have celebrated these occurrences to embed the 'Speak Up' culture.



A work crew undertakes a Take-5 process in Vietnam, before starting work at the drill site

Health Services On-site

Health and Safety staff on site support the ongoing implementation of the Health and Safety system. Their responsibilities include public health and workplace safety messaging, investigations and support of incident investigations, audit participation, and risk management. Personal Health and Safety information for all employees is maintained through the Human Resources system, which ensures privacy of their personal records. With the assistance of our health partner, International SOS, we upskilled a large section of our workforce with basic first aid skills.

While first aid is reactive control, we mapped the potential injury types and mechanisms with tasks through collaboration with our workers. This encouraged workers to consider the potential harm of their tasks to themselves or others and the importance of the Take-5 process. Together, with the medical professionals, we developed specific in-house first aid training for each work group

focusing on the potential injuries they identified. Next year we plan to increase this training to provide a more comprehensive first response capability. We also consider first aid a take-home skill which provides support to the broader community.

A due diligence assessment, with a focus on Health and Safety, amongst other ESG factors, has been created during the reporting period to assess and manage any Health and Safety risks with prospective suppliers and business partners. With a fuller application of this due diligence tool to support suppliers, it is expected that health related risks will be identified and addressed.



Covid-19 Pandemic Response

As the Covid-19 Pandemic continued in the reporting period, Blackstone adapted its practices and operations to support the wellbeing and health of our global teams. We thank our employees, contractors and suppliers for complying with the structures put in place to support their wellbeing.

Of particular importance, has been our response to the pandemic in Vietnam, as our project progresses on site and in Hanoi. For site-based personnel who were infected with Covid-19, a number of measures were enacted to treat and isolate them promptly. The recovery rate sat at 100% for all cases.

As the virus extended across Vietnam, resulting in nation-wide lockdowns, Blackstone worked closely with local government and district health authorities to rollout vaccination programs, and support the movement of our workers to site, as well as supporting the local authorities in their own rollouts of vaccination programs including:

- » Partnering with the local medical centre and Bac Yen Hospital to support public health messaging
- » Having a full-time site-based clinic nurse to support Covid-19 testing initiatives on site
- » Cooperating with the provincial health public authority to ensure the Health and Safety of our employees remain the top priority within camp and community as well as providing care for those who have tested positive, have been quarantined and were actively monitored
- » Demonstrating proactive leadership, commitment, self-sacrifice, and service to our people during times of uncertainty
- » Observing mandated lockdown measures in Vietnam in both Hanoi and Son La Province, including compliance with travel restrictions
- » Continuing to keep our project the safest from Covid-19 and continuing to keep safe as we move forward alongside the rest of the world in adapting to a “new normal”
- » An agreement with the local health clinic, saw Covid-19 positive personnel transferred to the local clinic in order to receive treatment there, before returning home. This assisted with limiting transmission from the mine site to the local community.

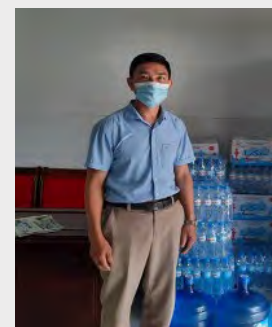


Health information session with onsite ISOS staff

CASE STUDY

Community Vaccination Program

In October and November 2021, we partnered with the local Bac Yen Health Centre and the Muong Khoa People's Committee to support the community Covid-19 vaccination campaigns. The first campaign supported the vaccination of 1707 local people from the Commune. 2326 villagers received a booster Covid-19 vaccine in the second campaign from November 26-27. Of these numbers, there were 292 of our workers. Our medical staff, Mr. Dat spent three days to support the vaccination activities, and our administrative staff provided food and logistical support.



2326
 Muong Khoa Villagers
 received a second Covid-19
 vaccine supported by
 Blackstone



Safety Training Programs

Health and Safety development continues to be a strong focus for Blackstone on site and in office locations. Onsite training programs focused on theoretical and practical training that builds awareness and skills and the majority of courses were delivered in Vietnamese. From 2021 through to June 2022, there were eight general Health and Safety training courses held for employees and contractors. Training needs are assessed against role and site requirements and provided free of charge.

We engaged both external and internal training providers for these programs, to address identified gaps in our employee skill sets, or to meet our internal training requirements for particular roles.

These courses included:

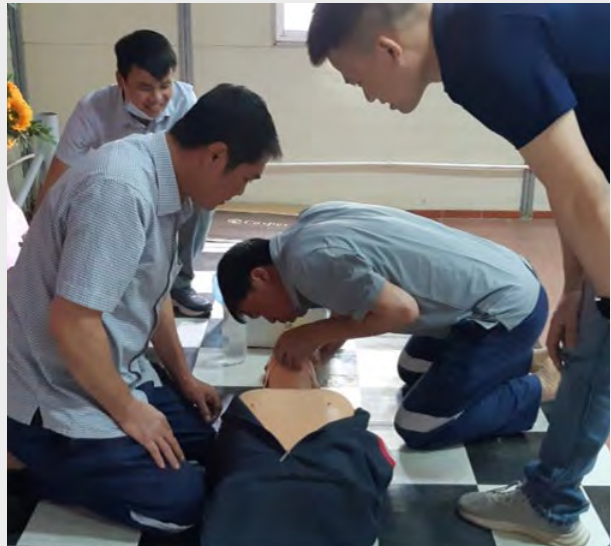
Course	Employees trained	Training delivery
Occupational Safety and Sanitation	319 staff	External
Fire Extinguisher Training Course	30 camp service staff	External
Food Safety Training Course	5 camp service staff	External
Exploration and Drilling Safety Training Course	248 exploration and geology staff	Internal
Back Safety and Manual Handling Safety Training	98 site staff	Internal
Lockout and Tagout Training	38 processing staff	Internal
First Aid Training (Level 1)	102 staff	Internal



CASE STUDY

First Aid Training Program

In 2022, 102 site-based staff completed First Aid Training, delivered by the qualified medical staff of International SOS, who has professional capability to run the training. This training covered a range of critical first aid topics including shock, head, spinal injuries, how to perform CPR, how to use pocket mask, definition and type of bandages, wound care, bleeding, how to manage minor incidents, and learn how to treat an unconscious breathing casualty, medical conditions, bone and joint injuries - upper limbs – fractures, muscles strains, sprains, and manage minor cuts, bleeding and burns, allergies, insect/snake bites and stings, and how to carry, transport and secure the injured person on stretcher. Our employees reported having enjoyed the opportunities to practice their skills through role-plays and simulations as well as the practical ways/actions used to help them learn the training content. Overall satisfaction with the training course was high and trainees reported feeling more confident.



“The basic skills I learnt like CPR, stopping bleeding in dire situation, assisting in a choking emergency, are very helpful. I am confident I can support my co-workers, family members, and villagers in community with immediate medical attention when an emergency happens”



**- Mr. Lu Van Tung,
Exploration Team Member**

Responsible Business

In line with our company vision, mission and values, operating our business ethically and establishing good governance at all levels is our highest priority. In the past year, we've placed a focus on "putting our values into action" to ensure the practical application when establishing our processes and practices across our operations.



Materiality Index:

- » Governance, Transparency, and Ethics – **High** 
- » Community Safety, Human Rights and Modern Slavery – **Medium** 
- » Diversity and Inclusion – **Medium** 
- » Permitting and Approvals – **Emerging** 
- » Political Stability – **Emerging** 

OUR VISION

Blackstone is passionate about creating the world's leading green battery supply. Enabling the solution from mine to consumer.

OUR MISSION

Green Batteries. Brighter future.

Our vision and mission are built upon our values, which provide the foundation for the way that we choose to act and communicate.



VISION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Our Values



"I would say Integrity for me is the value shown clearly. For example, we say no to bribery. There is a connection between what we say and what we do."



"Transparency is my favourite value - and whilst I don't think we are perfect; I do think we make a genuine effort and overall want to continue to learn from mistakes and improve."



"One thing I value at Blackstone is the way everyone is respected regardless of position. I have always thought this was important in an organisation. Blackstone are already doing this."



"We are able to turn attention to priority tasks or opportunities. One reason - they're usually more exciting things but the culture drives one to support your comrade to get it done!"

Our Board

A diversity of backgrounds and experience in our Board remains a priority as Blackstone progresses its agenda.

Director



Hamish Halliday

Years Tenure: 5

Role: Non-Executive Chairman

Qualifications: B.Sc (Geology), MAusIMM

Hamish has more than 20 years of corporate and technical experience. He is the founder of Adamus Resources Ltd, an AUD \$3 million float which became a multi-million-ounce emerging gold producer and resulted in the eventual takeover by Endeavour Mining for >\$160 million.



Alison Gaines

Years Tenure: 1

Role: Independent Non-Executive Director

Qualifications: Honorary Doctorate, MA (Public Policy); Grad Dip Legal Practice; B. Laws; B. Arts (Politics hon) FAICD; IDP-C INSEAD

Alison is a Director with 20 years' experience in Australia and internationally. Experienced in the roles of Board Chair and Board Committee Chair, particularly in remuneration and nomination, and governance Committees.

Director



Dr Frank Bierlein

Years Tenure: 1

Role: Non-Executive Director

Qualifications: PhD (Geology), University of Melbourne, Fellow of the Australian Institute of Geoscientists (AIG), Member of the Society of Economic Geologists (SEG) and the Society of Geology Applied to Mineral Deposits

Frank is a Geologist with 30 years of technical and corporate experience, focussing on grass roots to mine-stage mineral exploration, target generation, project management and oversight, due diligence studies, mineral prospectivity analysis, metallogenic framework studies, and mineral resources market and investment analysis.



Hoirim Jung

Years Tenure: 2

Role: Non-Executive Director

Qualifications: B. Econ, KICPA (Korean Institute of Certified Public Accountants)

Hoirim has more than 10 years of financial management experience, specifically in financing and feasibility studies for new projects. He holds a Bachelor of Economics from Seoul National University and is qualified through the Korean Institute of Certified Public Accountants (KICPA).



Scott Williamson

Years Tenure: 4

Role: Managing Director

Qualifications: B.Eng. (Mining), B.Com, MAusIMM

Scott is a Mining Engineer with a degree in Commerce from the West Australian School of Mines and Curtin University and possesses more than 10 years experience in technical and corporate roles in the mining and finance sectors.

Corporate Governance in Practice

As our business grows, so too does the development and refinement of our policies for good governance and business practice.

Committees

Leveraging the expertise of our Board, Committees have been established to bolster oversight of Blackstone's risk management, audit, remuneration, people and diversity and ESG work. For further detail, Committee Charters outline the responsibilities and scope of these groups' work and are available on our website (blackstoneminerals.com.au). Each Committee is overseen by a Blackstone Board member, in addition to advisors from within and outside the business.

Committees	
Audit, Risk and Environment, Social, and Governance Committee	This Committee has the mandate of monitoring Blackstone's key operational, safety and financial risks; in addition, it assists the Board to understand and manage Blackstone's ESG performance and compliance to ensure best-practice standards in environmental, social and corporate governance performance are consistently implemented across corporate and operations functions. The Committee monitors the effectiveness of the audit process and makes recommendations to the Board on improvements.
Nomination Committee	This Committee works to provide assurance that the Board has the appropriate composition, size and experience to be an effective decision-making body. The Committee conducts searches, monitors Board memberships and structures and develops a process for evaluating the performance of the Board to ensure the directors discharge their duties with regard to the law and the highest corporate governance standards. It supervises Board and Executive succession and MD performance management and ensures there is a performance system for Executives in place.
People, Remuneration, Culture and Diversity Committee	This Committee works to monitor and fairly reward the performance of the Executive in line with market remuneration expectations, and to attract and retain talent amongst Blackstone's employees. The Committee aims to monitor Blackstone's record in developing a workforce culture that achieves corporate goals and maintains a culture of continuous improvement. The Committee also monitors the Company's performance in valuing a diverse and highly skilled workforce that champions inclusive practices and behaviours and that provides equal and fair employment and career development opportunities for all staff.



Corporate Governance Framework

In addition to the oversight of our Board, a Corporate Governance Framework that supports better business performance is followed by the organisation.



Our policies and charters are developed in accordance with the fourth edition of the ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations. A summary of these in relation to underpinning ESG at Blackstone are listed below. We also acknowledge that many of our most important stakeholders are Vietnamese native speakers; as such, translated versions of these documents are available on our website.

	Governance	Social	Environment
Corporate Governance Charter	✘	✘	✘
Anti-Bribery and Corruption	✘	✘	
Audit and Risk Committee Charter	✘	✘	✘
Board Charter	✘	✘	✘
Code of Conduct	✘	✘	✘
Continuous Disclosure Policy	✘	✘	
Diversity and Inclusion Policy		✘	
Nomination Committee Charter	✘		
Remuneration Committee Charter	✘		
Performance Evaluation Policy	✘	✘	
Selection, Appointment and Rotation of External Auditors Policy	✘		
Risk Management Policy	✘	✘	✘
Shareholder Communications Policy	✘		
Social Media Policy	✘		
Statement of Values	✘	✘	✘
Sustainability Policy	✘	✘	✘
Security Trading Policy	✘		
Whistleblower Policy	✘	✘	✘

Blackstone's Board, various Committees and allocated leads are responsible for the review and sign off of these policies and charters to ensure they reflect our accountabilities and that they are applied consistently.

Underpinning the above, there is a collective responsibility towards ESG at Blackstone, with each team member having a role to play.

Collective Responsibility



Risk Management

In line with the fourth edition of the ASX Governance Principals to recognise and manage risk, Blackstone has a Risk Management Policy and framework to support governance of risks to the business and the communities in which we operate. Our Board oversees and guides the integrity of our risk management processes. Further, a Risk Committee has been established to provide direction and additional oversight of risk management at Blackstone and informs the Board of any matters related to risk management and the business.

Remuneration Framework and Improvements

In 2021, there was a 25% 2nd strike received in response to our FY 2020 Remuneration Report.

Since receiving the second strike, the Board engaged with key stakeholders in order to further understand the concerns raised with the FY 2020 remuneration structure and disclosures within the FY 2020 report. Some of the actions from this strike have included:

- » The engagement of BDO Remuneration and Reward Pty Ltd to undertake Board, Executive, Key Management Personnel (KMP) and Employees salary benchmarking against its peers and establish a structured remuneration framework with an equity incentive plan to reward, incentivise, attract and retain high calibre people to the business. This has provided a process for determining remuneration.
- » Our remuneration strategy has been designed according to applicable jurisdictions, whilst ensuring the principle of consistency across the Company and the scrupulous application of local labour laws. Strong consideration is given to gender and diversity parity and the intent to build internal capacity within our workforce.
- » In addition to this, in FY 2021 the Board has established a People, Remuneration, Culture and Diversity Committee as well as a Nomination Committee to provide appropriate Board governance and oversight.

Reporting and Responsibilities

In line with ASX Listing Rule 4.7.3, Blackstone lodges an annual report and corporate governance statement with the ASX. Blackstone's Shareholder Communication Policy recognises the importance to communicate and report back to our shareholders. For both shareholders and other stakeholders, all announcements, notices of meetings, reports, results and other investor presentations are uploaded to the website in accordance with the policy.

Ethical Business

Identified as a clear material risk to our business, efforts to develop robust processes and policies toward Anti-Bribery and Corruption has remained a strong focus this year. In Australia and in the other host countries that we operate in, we are committed to our values of Transparency and Integrity.

Blackstone has a zero-tolerance approach to unethical business conduct, including bribery and corruption. We understand that this position is only as good as the policies and practices we have in place. During this year, while no instances of bribery and corruption were uncovered or reported, we strengthened a program of further work to demonstrate ethical practices and staff understanding and awareness. These activities included:

- » The review and update of our Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy identifies who are the responsible persons to address bribery and corruption and provides guidance on identification and reporting;
- » Our recruitment and due diligence processes in Vietnam, Australia and Canada ensure we prioritise potential candidates who display ethical business practices;
- » The development of our due diligence process for new suppliers to assess for bribery and corruption risk, in addition to a due diligence assessment for community investment projects and donations to assess for the same risks;
- » Conducting online training with our teams with a leading Vietnamese business integrity and anti-corruption Not-for-Profit-Organisation.

Fostering a Speak Up Culture

To foster a Speak Up Culture at Blackstone, where employees and stakeholders feel confident to raise concerns confidentially and that they will be addressed, the Company has undertaken a number of steps this year. Firstly, Blackstone has reviewed its Whistleblower Policy to support the reporting of unethical and/or illegal behaviour and conduct. The Company maintains this Policy for: employees, (e.g. permanent, part-time, fixed term or temporary employees, interns, secondees); managers; current and former directors; suppliers of services or goods

(whether paid or unpaid) including their employees (e.g., contractors, consultants, service providers and business partners); associates; as well as relatives, dependants or spouses of the individuals mentioned above.

In support of this Policy review, the reporting period saw the implementation of a number of practical steps to support the Policy, including:

- » Business integrity training delivered by Toward Transparency for all senior members of our team in Australia and Vietnam;
- » The availability of this training for new, incoming staff to be made aware of the business integrity risks where we operate;
- » The onboarding of the reporting platform, Whispli.

Whilst there have been no reported instances of bribery and corruption during the period, we understand that our Speak Up Culture program is in its early stages. During this reporting period, we continued to strengthen response to the most material risk identified during our ESG strategy development: business transparency and integrity. An important practical step was to select and implement a whistleblowing service that could be used by our colleagues and communities across multiple jurisdictions to report cases of misconduct around business integrity and wrongdoing including, but not limited to, unsafe, unethical and unlawful behaviour. Operating in Vietnam, Canada and Australia presents a variety of different governance considerations; however, a focus across all is the promotion of a Speak Up Culture with regard to business integrity and transparency, which is underpinned by the Company's core values, Health and Safety and other areas of the business and operations. As such, the Whispli reporting platform was selected as a robust, independent, and accessible service to support our Speak Up Culture. At the date of publication, an internal working group has been established to facilitate the rollout and orientation of the Whispli hotline amongst employees and

relevant stakeholders to ensure that the service is understood and accessible. The working group has selected CurbyMcLintock to assist with implementing the Whispli platform. Using a third-party will further strengthen the independence and integrity of our Speak Up Culture, ensuring

Whispli's founder and CEO, Sylvain Mansotte, states that adopting a disclosure platform at this stage of a company's development works to establish a strong Speak Up Culture:



"I am a whistleblower myself on a \$20.7m fraud and the idea behind Whispli is for anyone to feel comfortable speaking-up. More often than not, we don't engage in difficult and courageous conversations due to feelings such as fear, shame or guilt.

By using this platform, you are assisting Blackstone uncover potential hidden risks and are helping protect its people, brand and reputation.

Whispli makes that process a lot easier and it contributes to building a sustainable and more robust Speak Up Culture."

confidentiality is maintained and the investigation of all reports is truly independent. Blackstone is also committed to the continued reinforcement and education around the ongoing use of the platform, beyond initial inductions.

Blackstone's General Manager People and Culture, Janine Collier, speaks to the platform's importance at this stage of the Company's journey:



"The early introduction of a Speak Up Culture is testament to Blackstone's dedication and commitment to our people and demonstrates the importance we place on living our values, Whispli is the chosen tool to safely support and encourage this culture"

Memberships

Key to good performance and governance, are working with and learning from experts from other organisations and industry associations. The following memberships serve to raise our ambitions and connections within our industry.

WE SUPPORT



The United Nations Global Compact is a non-binding United Nations network for businesses worldwide to implement sustainable and socially responsible policies and report on progress. Since 2021 Blackstone has been committed to the UN Global Compact corporate responsibility initiative and its principles in the areas of Human Rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.



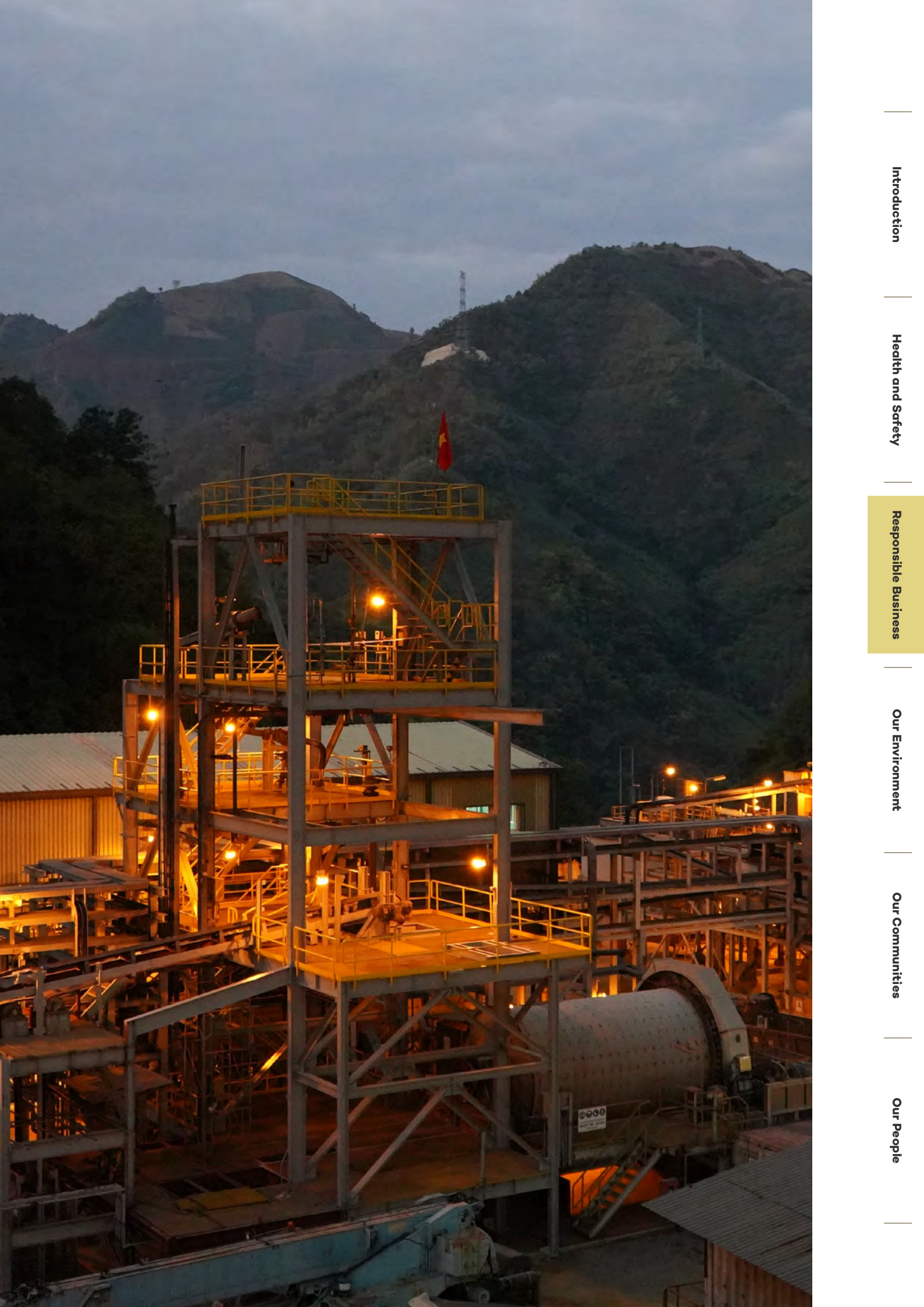
Blackstone is an early member with 20 leading global companies to accelerate the industry towards decarbonisation. The consortium is ambitious in its objective to achieve its goal of fully electrified, zero emissions and zero particulates' mines.



Blackstone is a member of the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre (FBIIRC). The FBIIRC is enabling the growth of battery industries to power Australia's future. It brings together industry, researchers, governments, and the community to ensure that Australia plays a leading role in the global battery revolution.



Blackstone is a member and sponsor of The Australian Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (AUSCHAM Vietnam). AUSCHAM Vietnam is an independent, not for profit, membership-based NGO. It does not receive any funding from the Australian Government or any of its agencies. Its revenue is generated through memberships, sponsorships, events and advertising. AUSCHAM Vietnam represents and promotes the interests of Australian businesses operating in Vietnam.



Introduction

Health and Safety

Responsible Business

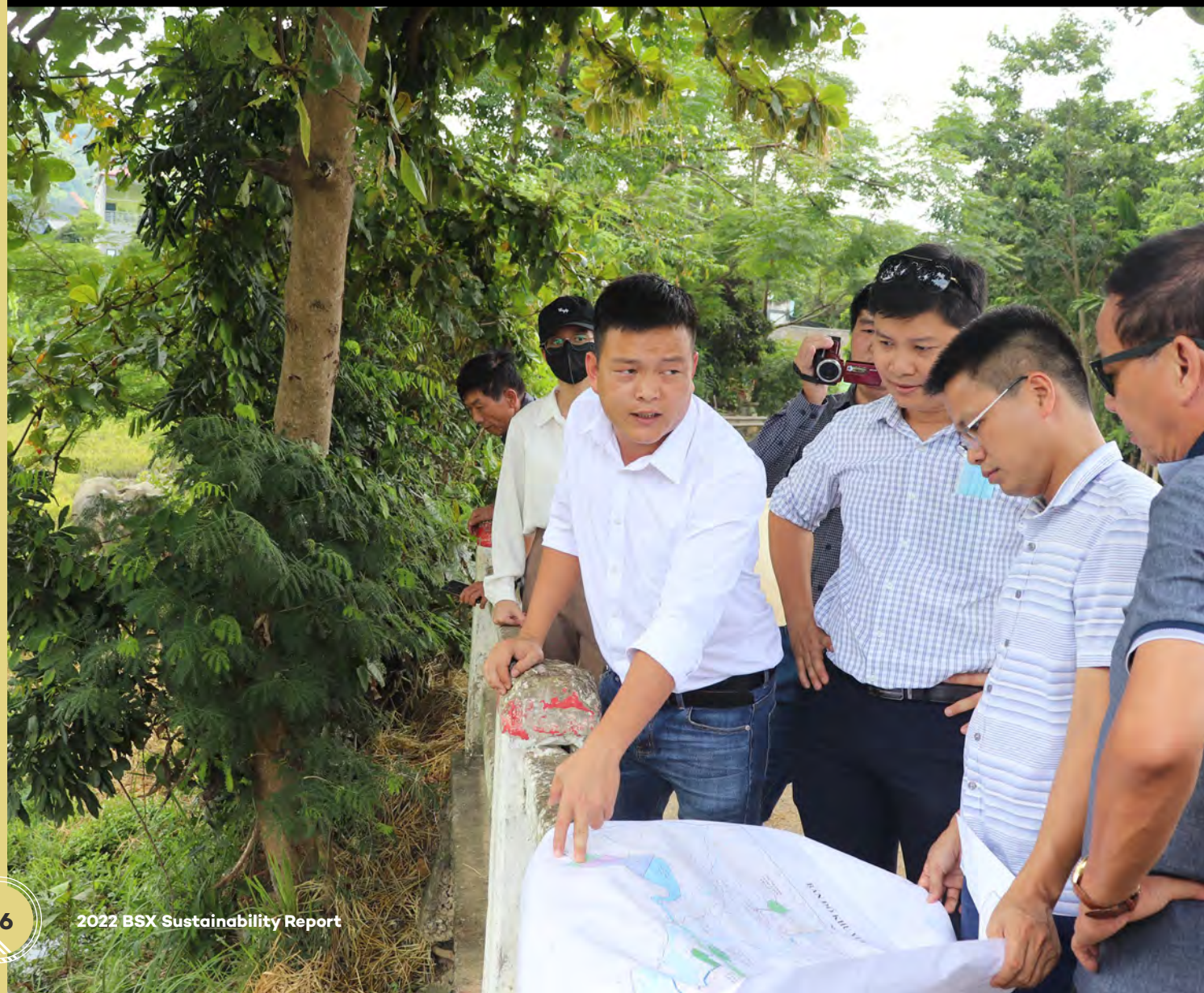
Our Environment

Our Communities

Our People

Working in Vietnam

Our major project, the Ta Khoa Project, requires a good understanding of the culture and workings of Vietnam in order to operate successfully in it. Our engagement with the Vietnamese government is a critical element to our business objectives and supporting the Vietnamese Central and Provincial government's economic objectives.



Vietnam Country Profile

- Population:** 92 million
- Adult Literacy Rate:** 95%
- Poverty Rate:** 13.5%
- Women's Representation in National Assembly:** 24.3%
- Ethnic Minorities:** 54
- Life Expectancy:** 75.7 years
- GDP USD:** \$261.921 billion
- SDG Index Ranking:** 49/165
- Corporate Tax:** 20%

Sources: World Bank, Sustainable Development Report, UNDP Vietnam; Vietnam Ministry of Planning and Investment Portal



Trade Union Recognition

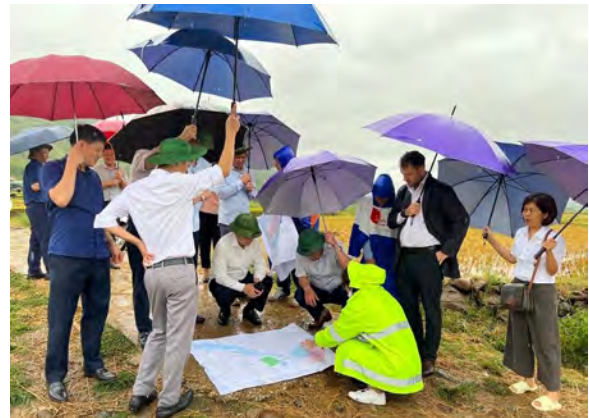
In 2022, an event organised by the Son La Association of Labor and the Son La Business Association, the Summit of Excellent Enterprises and Entrepreneurs Supporting Trade Unions saw us honoured as one of 30 excellent enterprises out of 3150 enterprises in Son La Province. These awards recognise the efforts of the Company in supporting and taking care of the welfare of more than 300 trade union members and employees of the Company as well as support to the local community.



Permitting

In Vietnam, permitting is conducted at Provincial and Central government levels. We have maintained positive working relationships with both Provincial and Central level around permitting processes.

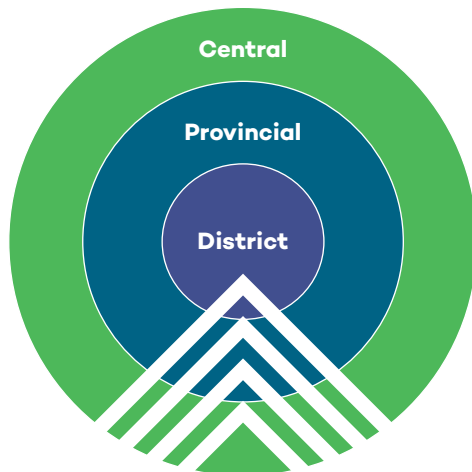
The key items for the permitting process, along with the levels of government approval required, are as follows:



District site visit for TKR location

Assessing Authorities- 3 Levels

Based on size & nature of project



Australian Government Engagement in Vietnam

In 2022, H.E. Ms. Robyn Mudie, Australian Ambassador to Vietnam visited our mine with Managing Director Scott Williamson. The Ambassador heard about how we are applying Australia's world leading modern mining and extractive technologies and quality control processes in Vietnam and also witnessed the signing of a joint statement in which Blackstone commits to sustainable mining and a deepening of their investment in nickel mining projects in Son La Province.

Blackstone's projects actively contribute to deepen our cooperation on minerals and energy - one of the key pillars of the Australia - Vietnam Enhanced Economic Engagement Strategy (EEES). In addition, Blackstone's project contributes to Vietnam and Australia's commitment to net-zero emissions made at the 2021 Conference of the Parties (COP26), given that nickel is crucial to low emissions technology, particularly to the production of batteries for the growing electric vehicle industry globally.



The Ambassador's visit

Taxation in Vietnam



Blackstone continues to seek advice from various legal and taxation firms - including the Big Four accounting firms - in relation to the highly regulated Vietnamese legal, tax, transfer pricing, customs and regulatory environment. The Company maintains good relationships with local, provincial level government authorities as well as central government representatives.

Our Environment

Blackstone seeks to protect its immediate environment and make a leading contribution to the global energy transition.



Materiality Index:

- » Net Zero Emissions and Contribution to a Circular Economy – **High** 
- » Creating a Positive Community Legacy – **High** 
- » Climate Change and Resilience – **Emerging** 

Blackstone understands and accepts the science that Climate Change presents as one of the most critical challenges facing society now, and in coming decades.

Blackstone believes it has the capacity and a responsibility to support the energy transition, through the development of battery minerals for EVs. Our view is that we can do this as clean as possible, using 'Green Nickel'[™].

Supporting the Energy Transition

Blackstone's aim is to mine nickel and produce a refined NCM811 precursor product to support the global transition to EVs and decarbonise transport. Our strategy is emerging at a time when nickel content precursor is actively sought out by car manufacturers. Our product, NCM811, is forecast to become the dominant cathode chemistry for EVs. Beyond EVs, NCM811 precursor has a range of common applications including home battery storage, airplanes, and power tools. Globally, there is increasing awareness about the impacts associated with nickel production, as well as other critical raw materials sourced for the Lithium-ion battery industry and EV sector, with end users now demanding a level traceability for all their products.

Blackstone's Life Cycle Assessment

Introduction

Life Cycle Assessment Practitioners, Minviro, were appointed by Blackstone to conduct a cradle-to-gate life cycle assessment on the production of the NCM precursor cathode active material (pCAM) at the Ta Khao Refinery in Vietnam. The study used data from prefeasibility studies (PFS) published to the market in August 2021 (Ta Khoa Refinery) and January 2022 (Ta Khoa Nickel Project).

The assessment considers project five distinct areas of operation: open pit mining, underground mining, concentrating, concentrate transport, and refining, two potential energy sources and four impact categories: global warming potential (GWP), acidification potential, water scarcity footprint, and land use transformation. GWP, measured in kgs of Carbon Dioxide equivalent for each kg of product, is the common standard and easiest way to understand our impact.

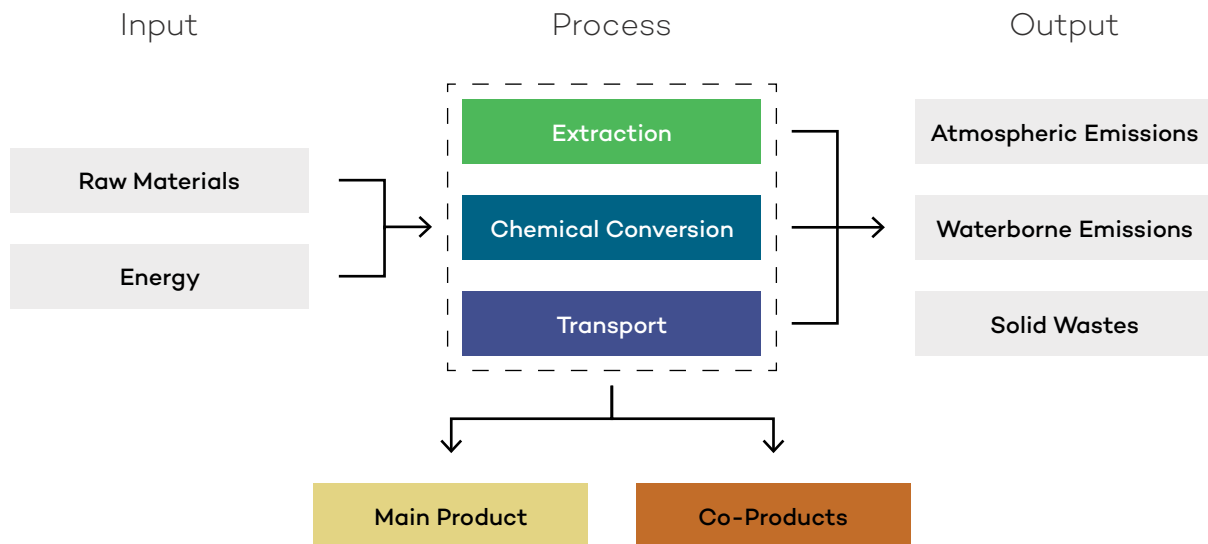
The results will be used to inform sustainability-focused decision making in design, construction, inputs and processes.

Summary of our LCA Results

Impact Category	Vietnamese Grid Electricity	Hydro Powered Electricity	Units per kg NCM811
Global Warming Potential	9.8	7.4	kg CO ₂ eq.
Water Scarcity Footprint	480	480	kg water eq.
Land Use – Biotic Production Reduction Potential	0.04	0.04	kg eq.
Land Use – Erosion Potential	0.40 kg eq.	0.40	kg eq.
Land Use – Groundwater Regeneration Reduction Potential	1.8E-2	1.8E-2	m ³ eq.
Land Use – Infiltration Reduction Potential	3.1	3.1	m ³ eq.
Land Use – Groundwater Regeneration Reduction Potential	3.2	3.2	mol eq.
Acidification Potential	0.10	0.08	mol H ⁺ eq.

What is a Life Cycle Assessment?

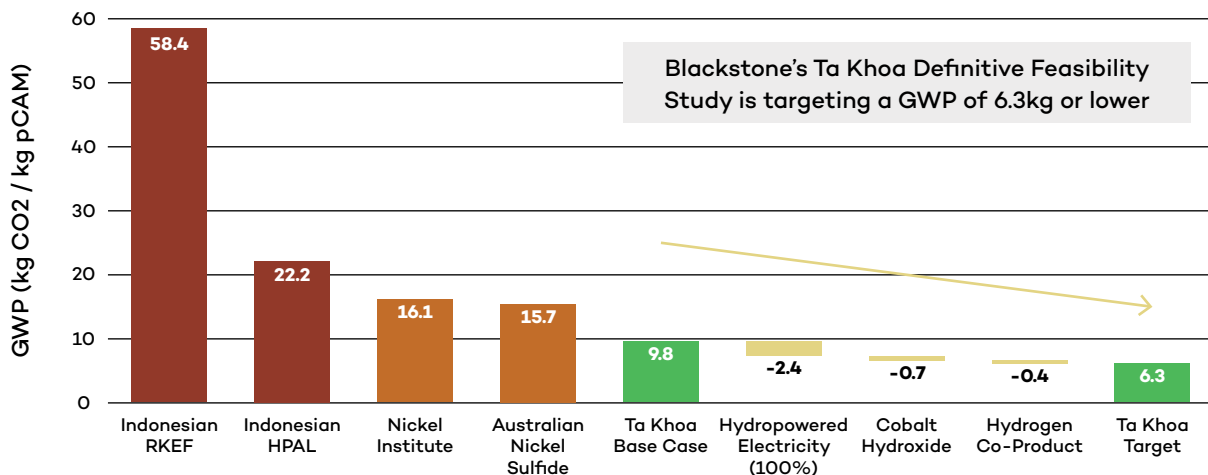
A Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is an inventory of global and local environmental impacts related to a product or process. The LCA models a range of environmental impacts, ranging from CO2 intensity to water use, following ISO 14040-14044 standards. Environmental hotspots are identified, providing insights into suitable mitigation strategies ensuring that the raw materials for the low-carbon economy are sourced at minimum environmental impact. LCA's can be carried out both for projects in development and for operations.



Blackstone has undertaken an LCA to help our team, equipment suppliers, customers and investors to understand the full life cycle environmental impact of our Ta Khoa Project, from raw material extraction to final product manufacturing. Having LCA data can help identify major impacts in our project and help to inform sustainability-focused decision making in design, construction, inputs and processes - taking into account impact categories to reduce our Scope 1, 2, and upstream Scope 3 emissions - or our environmental footprint.

Scenario analysis showed that the precursor product originating from the Ta Khoa Project has the lowest GWP compared with the different combinations of energy sources and alternative raw material sources and processing routes modelled.

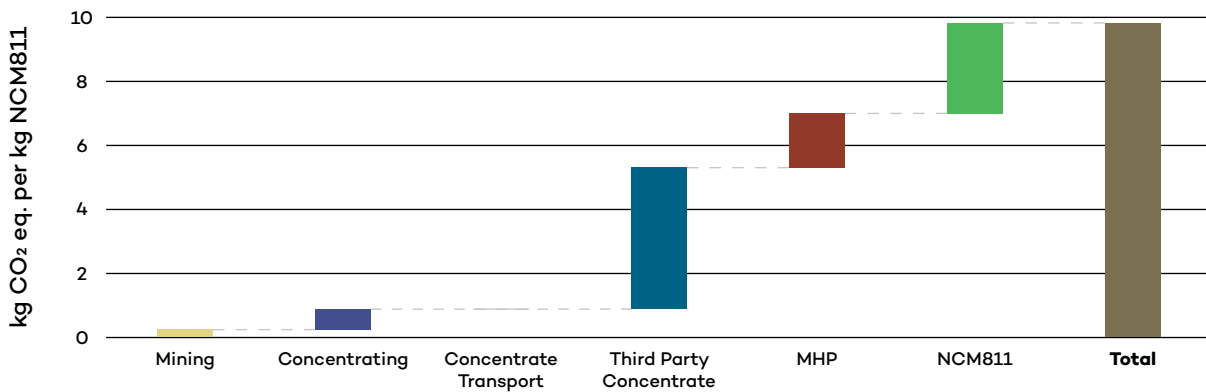
GWP Comparison



Global Warming Potential - Breakdown by Contributors

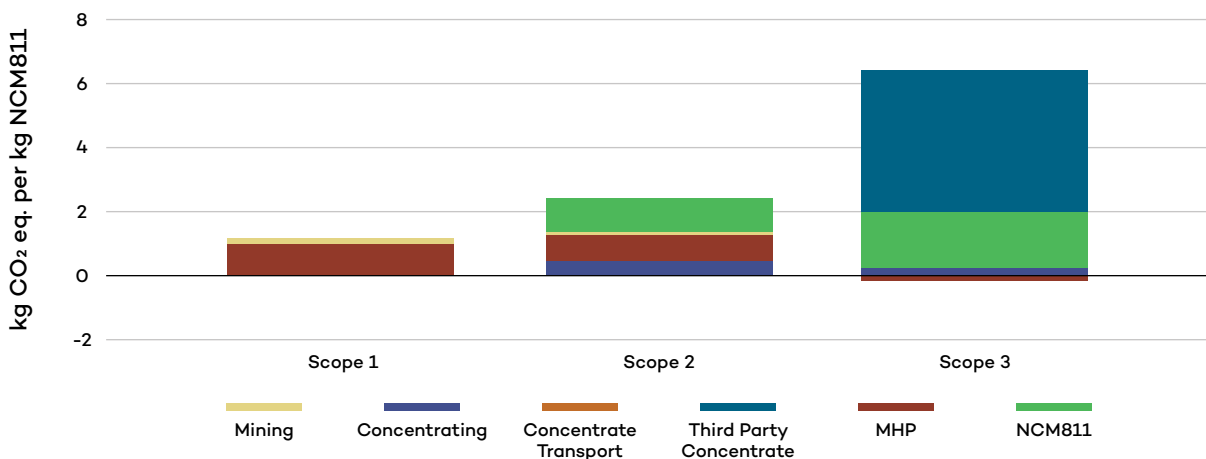
The total GWP for Ta Khoa NCM811 precursor is 9.8 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811 according to the LCA model produced by Minviro. The total GWP is presented, broken down by area of the LCA, in figure below, with the following contribution of the identified stages:

- » Open pit and underground mining contributes 0.2 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811
- » Concentrating of the ore contributes 0.7 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811
- » Transport of the concentrate contributes < 0.1 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811
- » Importing third party concentrates contributes 4.4 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811
- » Extraction of nickel and cobalt to produce MHP contributes 1.8 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811
- » Refining of MHP into NCM811 contributes 2.8 kg CO₂ eq. per kg NCM811



Global Warming Potential - Breakdown by Scope

The global warming potential broken down by scopes (1, 2 and 3) is presented in the figure below. The top contributors of scope 1 emissions are the combustion of diesel in the mining stage and from the utilisation of limestone in the MHP production stage. Electricity sourced from the Vietnamese grid, which includes a mix of coal and hydropower, is the main contributor to the scope 2 emissions. Sourcing 100% hydropower will reduce these emissions. The top contributors of scope 3 emissions are the third party nickel concentrate used in the refinery and the embodied impact of cobalt sulfate heptahydrate and manganese sulfate monohydrate used to produce the NCM811 product.





Blockchain to Measure Our Impact

Globally, there is increasing awareness about the impacts associated with nickel production, as well as other critical raw materials sourced for the Lithium-ion battery industry and EV sector, with end users now demanding a level of traceability for all their products. Blackstone's partnership with Circular will enable the Company to demonstrate compliance with sustainability metrics from mining through to the finished product. As we develop the data behind this program, we have included dynamic ESG metrics - including CO2 intensity, biodiversity impact, water use and energy mix, which will be digitised from project samples and made available for potential downstream markets. Circular and Blackstone will work together to demonstrate a reliable chain of custody, using Traceability-as-a-Service (TaaS) technology to provide the Company with the ability to communicate the ESG "passport" of its products and operations with downstream customers. Blackstone believes transparency and traceability of the vertically integrated supply chain will result in the best commercial outcomes for the Company.

Yue Jin Tay, Director of Business Development at Circular said:

"We are very pleased to partner with Blackstone on their traceability journey from their development phase through to full operations. Building traceability into the development process of a mine and a refinery allows our customers to have traceability-by-design, ready to track the provenance, CO2-equivalent and ESG performance of its products and raw materials from the very first shipment to their downstream customers."

"As Circular expands into Asia and Australia, we are excited about the possibilities this partnership brings. With the security of supply of critical minerals gaining increasing focus, helping Blackstone provide transparency for both provenance and ESG performance enables them to become a supplier of choice in the region. This also helps them and their global customers meet a range of stakeholder requirements including the EU Battery Regulations, and their financing and investment requirements, among others."



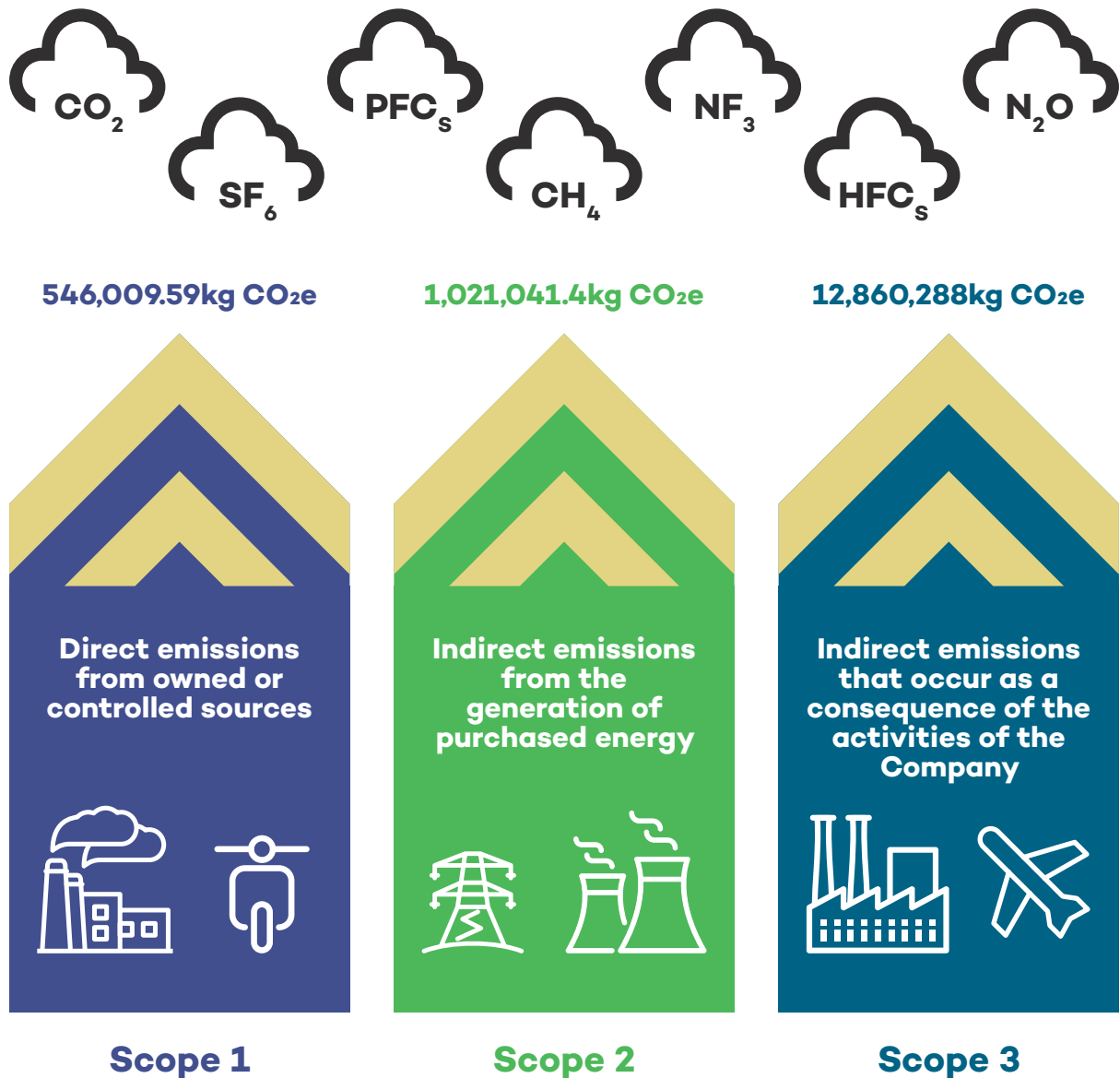
"We are very pleased to partner with Blackstone on their traceability journey from their development phase through to full operations."

**- Yue Jin Tay,
Director of Business Development**

2022 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment

To advance the understanding of our baseline emissions prior to project development, thereby enabling us to address climate related risks and identify reduction opportunities, we have continued to assess our Scope 1, 2, and 3 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions by engaging an external consultant to undertake an assessment for the first six months of 2021 and FY2022, ensuring full disclosure from January 2020 to June 2022.

Emissions are likely to increase as the development of a project progresses, therefore the inventory demonstrates the substantial growth that the Company has experienced over this period.



FY2022 results for simplification

Supporting a Circular Economy

Blackstone is committed to designing opportunities for recycling and reuse of waste or excess materials where design opportunities allow. Our refinery hosts a number of options for repurposing waste products into resources that can be reused either for the project or wider community.

We are continuing to study and the options for the following use of by-products:

- » Repurposing residue storage facilities at closure for new farmlands
- » The reuse of inert POX silica residue supplied to local landowners and brick manufacturers
- » Production of 'a' kieserite by-product as a fertiliser for community use
- » Hydrogen produced via the electrolysis of water, to then produce "green" hydrogen as by-product by abundant renewable hydroelectric power and water available at the Ta Khoa Project

CASE STUDY

Improving on-site Waste Management

After reviewing the waste management status on site through a waste audit, our Environmental Officer determined that there were significant recyclables in the overall "unresuable" waste that is shipped offsite at cost. As such, a training plan was developed to raise the awareness amongst site team members. Delivered to all site employees, the training educated our workforce on waste management approaches; on current waste management results and goals for future years; gained feedback and ideas from our workforce on how to improve our waste management processes; and formalised training plans for ongoing annual refresher training and training for new starters.



Environmental Stewardship

No environmental incidents were recorded in the first six months of 2021, and in the Financial Year 2021/2022. Two Environmental Officers have commenced in the period to support and manage our environmental programs at site.

Tailings Storage

The Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) was completed at the end of June 2015. Since construction of the TSF, completed in June 2015, the structure has been monitored against international standards by a third-party designated Engineer on Record. In addition, the on-site team undertake routine inspections using the industry standard framework. To date - there are no concerns with the design or structure of the facility and the company plans to complete the final approved lift in the coming years.

Waste and Recycling

Blackstone's Materiality Assessment revealed that developing a circular approach to resource use is a high priority for our Company. Expanding upon the data gathered from 2020 waste collection, Blackstone has continued to improve and refine its work in dealing with waste – particularly on site.

Waste Types	Waste Storage Method	Totals Reported
Organic Waste	Provided to Bac Yen Village members who use to feed their livestock (estimate: 40kg/day)	14,600 kg
Paper and Scrap Metal	Transfer to local vendor licenced to treat this type of waste in accordance with Vietnamese standards	24,700 kg
Unreusable Waste	Transportation and Treatment of domestic waste by URENCO Bac Yen:	75,550 kg
Hazardous Waste	Hazardous waste stored onsite: 2000 kg	7,400 kg
	Transportation and Treatment hazardous waste by locally owned company licenced to treat this type of waste in accordance with Vietnamese standards: 5400 kg	

Water Management

Blackstone complies with our water discharge permits in accordance with legislation. All usage permits are issued by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and follows our Environmental Management Plan.

World Environment Day

On June 5th 2022, we marked World Environment Day with a number of initiatives in support of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) theme “Only One Earth”. Blackstone delivered this event in partnership with MONRE, with several activities at the camp, the plant site, Hanoi office, and in the local Muong Khoa Commune community.

To mark the occasion, awareness banners were raised in the workplace and in the community regarding plastic waste and water leakage. Presentations were given to employees at the camp site and plant sites as well as the Hanoi office and to Muong Khoa Women’s Union members. Attendees were encouraged to take practical actions at their own home and in the local community, such as water resource protection, plastic waste reduction and electricity conservation. Metal water bottles were delivered to the Muong Khoa Women’s Union’s members with the message “Beat Plastic Pollution”.

As a practical initiative on the day, three water leaks were identified and repaired at both the camp and plant bathrooms.



“The information was very practical and had meaningful content. With increased knowledge, we can now apply it right way in our daily life and spread the key messages to the local community, where we could actively take concrete action to protect the environment”

- Lữ Thị Anh, Women’s Union Chair

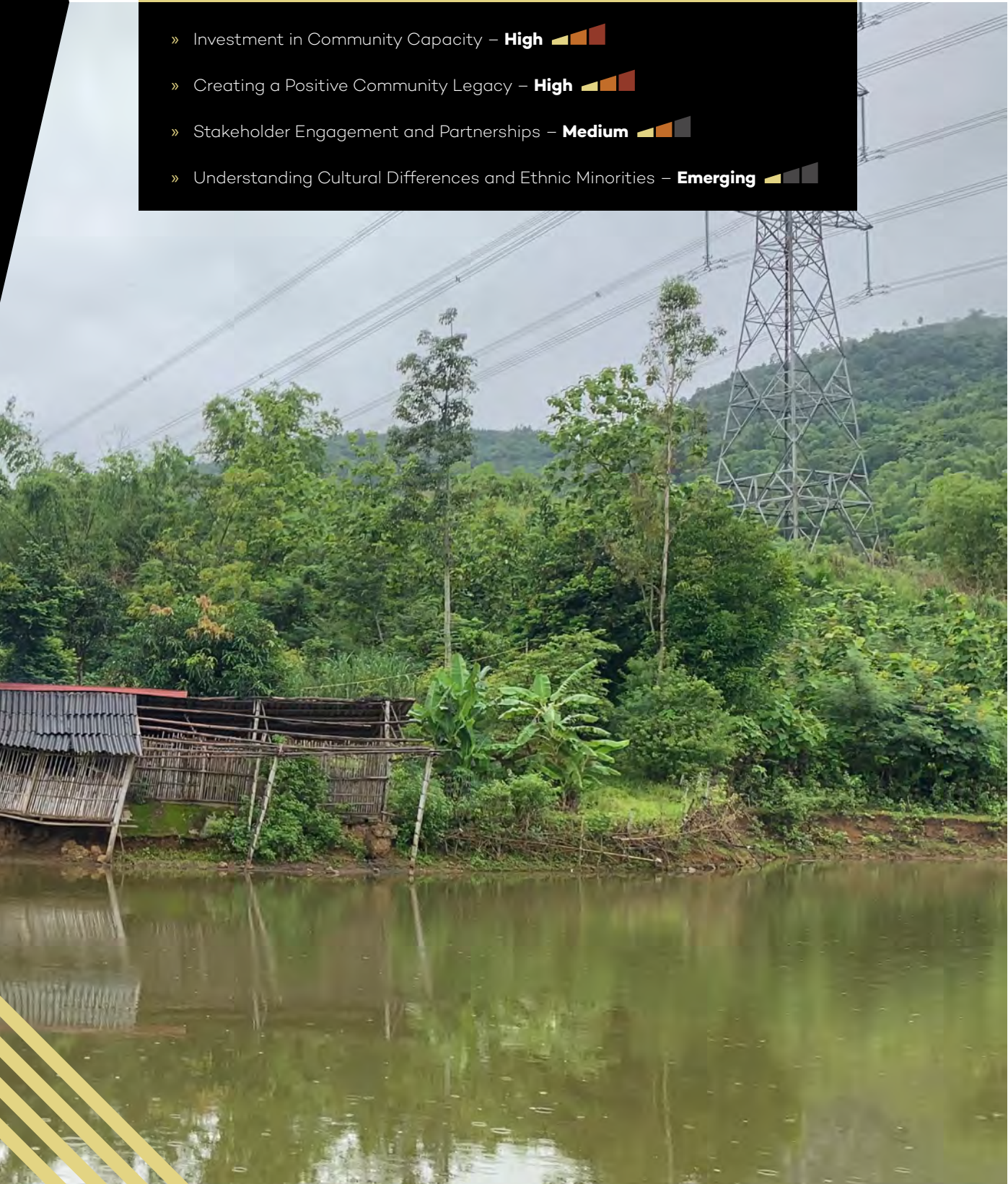
Our Communities

Blackstone knows that working closely and building strong long-term relationships with the communities where we operate is critical to the development of its projects. Our community focused activities include broad-based consultation, employing local people and buying from local business whenever we can, contributing to the development of communities near to our projects, and applying best practices for environmental protection.



Materiality Index:

- » Investment in Community Capacity – **High** 
- » Creating a Positive Community Legacy – **High** 
- » Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships – **Medium** 
- » Understanding Cultural Differences and Ethnic Minorities – **Emerging** 



Community Development

Blackstone understands it has an obligation to share the benefits amongst the communities it operates in. Working with our communities to gain - and maintain - our Social License is critical to the success of our project.

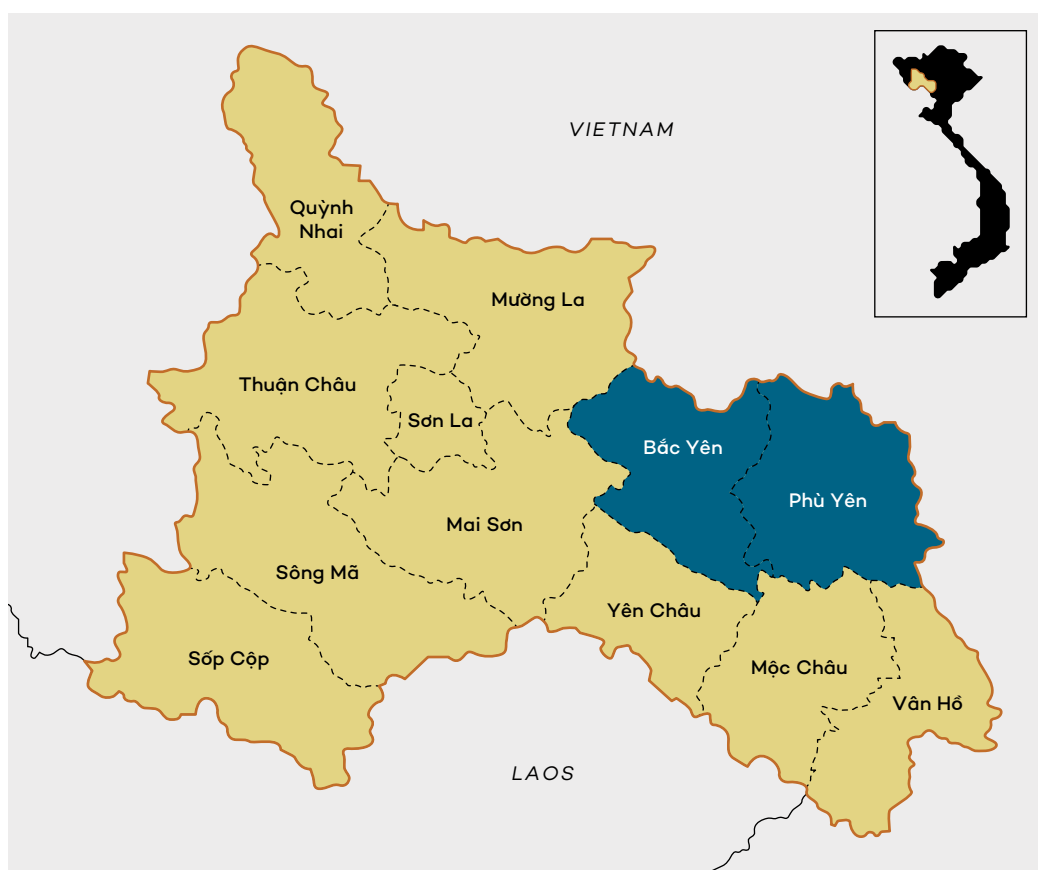
Where We Work

Vietnam's growth in its economy and as a result, a decrease in its poverty rate, has been well reported. The mine site and the adjacent refinery site are located in Son La Province; however, the facilities are located in different districts. Son La is the largest province of Vietnam and 80% of the working age population are involved in forestry or agriculture.

The Vietnamese central government classifies the Son La Province as a 'Zone 3' area, or one that is defined as possessing "Special Difficulties" in terms of its economic and social development. In particular, Son La's indicators around health, socio-economic status, and education sit lower than other areas of Vietnam.

In Canada, our projects are in British Columbia and Labrador which are on the opposite sides of the country and present different opportunities and challenges with respect to community engagement.

In the short history of Blackstone, the Company has strived to be a positive presence in communities in Vietnam and Canada. As we develop our refinery project, we are simultaneously developing and strengthening practices and guidelines to support good social performance in these areas.



Son La Province

Our Approach to Communities

Our approach to our work within our communities is guided by gaining and maintaining our Social License to ensure the future of our projects, and ultimately, our business. By building our Social License, we are able to operate without interruption and eliminate risks to the business. To ensure these benefits a series of actions is required from our Company to build community trust and our reputation within it.



Community Engagement

During this reporting period, we have sought to develop and strengthen our Social License, through community engagement programs with the intent of establishing and building respectful local relationships.

These activities have included:

Community Engagement Activities FY2022	Application		
	Corporate	Vietnam	Canada
Developed a Social Performance Standard to govern our work	✘	✘	✘
Strengthened internal processes for community engagement and investment	✘	✘	
Rolled out a Stakeholder Management System, and mentoring Vietnamese team members in its use	✘	✘	
Recruited a Vietnamese Social Performance Lead		✘	
Recruited three community team members		✘	
Developed ESIA scope of work	✘	✘	
Developed land access protocols		✘	
Memorandum Of Understanding signed with local community			✘
Implementation of Exploration Agreement with local First Nation			✘



Mai Kim Chi – Social Performance Lead, Vietnam



“It’s important for our Company to engage with the ethnic minorities and know about the customs of the Thai and Muong people so we can work together.”

This year, Blackstone has built a Communities and Social Performance Team to support our commitment to community development and engagement. Our Social Performance Lead in Vietnam, Ms Chi, explains her role and the importance of this team’s work in the initial stages of our project.

“Our Company has a strong commitment to ESG, and the Company wants to get the Social License. We are accountable to work ethically and show respectful behaviour. To achieve that, my role is to raise awareness, build relationships and support the site teams with baseline studies. For raising awareness, we will talk to the community about our ambition, behaviour and impact and benefits we will bring. We have to listen to stakeholder concerns.

We build relationships, so my role is to build relationships from the district, down to the commune and village levels. I identify key stakeholders and respond to their concerns and questions. I also support the project team and as we are an international company, we must work to international standards such as IFC standards. We must meet these international standards in partnership with Vietnamese requirements.

It’s very important that we mobilise local people into our processes and communicate with the ethnic minorities. It’s important for our Company to engage with the ethnic minorities and know about the customs of the Thai and Muong people so we can work together.”



Introduction

Health and Safety

Responsible Business

Our Environment

Our Communities

Our People

Community Development Memorandum of Understanding (Canada)

In 2021, Blackstone and Cobalt One Energy, along with several other mining companies operating in the region, signed a MOU with the Bridge River Valley Community Association (BRVCA), the Tsal'ah Development Corporation (TDC) and the Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD). While each organisation that signed the MOU has its own mandate and objectives, all signatories, including Blackstone and Cobalt One Energy, confirmed they share the following objectives in support of the community's development:

- » Enhancing relations and pursuing collaborative economic development opportunities with the St'át'imc Nation and communities
- » Creating a resilient and prosperous local economy that attracts a sustainable permanent population of people having employable skills and a desire to contribute to community life.

There are other mutual points of collaboration amongst the signatories, as time and resources permit, including:

- » Building and strengthening relationships with St'át'imc communities
- » Growing the permanent resident base in the region including families with school aged children
- » Maintaining the viability of the community school
- » Preserving and protecting cultural and heritage assets
- » Increasing the supply of long-term housing for purchase and rental

- » Improving road access to the area
- » Building and maintaining support for a successful mining industry.

On its signing, Blackstone and Cobalt One Energy Community Development Lead, Charles Daley, stated that, by signing on to the aspirational BRVCA MOU, Blackstone has further demonstrated its commitment to engaging with local communities to successfully achieve shared objectives. This MOU along with the Exploration Agreement signed with the Bridge River Indian Band in 2021 has allowed the team to lay the foundation for a Social License by nurturing strong community relationships through transparent communication and the co-management of environmental and cultural heritage resources as well as capacity building.



“Recent community event in Gold Bridge and Bratorne sponsored by Blackstone, where Laura Grizzlepaws, a traditional Bear Dancer from the St'at'imc community of Xwisten was the featured performer”



DARZIN Stakeholder Engagement Platform

In 2022, Blackstone onboarded a Stakeholder Management Software to support its efforts in maintaining good community relations. The software has formed a key part of the work activity, conducted by the on the ground team. By ensuring accurate records are maintained, it means that issues and concerns raised by stakeholders can be responded to and resolved.

“Many projects in Vietnam rely on Excel sheets to manage stakeholders’ information from our site visits and meetings with communities, which is cumbersome and very ineffective particularly in a collaborative project. When we invest in a tool such as DARZIN, we can ensure we don’t miss any issues and we can address them together”.

Phong – Senior Community Officer, Vietnam

“As the activities of the project broaden, so are the number of stakeholders at all levels. As field staff, I think it is important that we continue to use DARZIN to maintain accurate records of our community members and other stakeholders, and ensure we are vigilant in responding to their concerns.”

**- Nguyen An –
Executive Assistant, Vietnam**



Community Investment

We see our ability to invest in community capacity as being done through two distinct ways: through targeted investment projects that are developed in conjunction with community leaders; and through the procurement of goods and services from the local community and province wherever practicable.

Improving Our Approach

This year, an important element of our work, has been to develop robust processes for the assessment and deployment of community project funding and community donations. Our highest-ranking material ESG risk identified through our Materiality Assessment, was business integrity and transparency. As such, we are looking to strengthen all areas of our business activity, such as community investments through project grants and donations to ensure we have the trust of the community and our shareholders and to maintain our Social License.

Key features of the community donations and grants guidelines include:

- » Enhanced due diligence on requests to cover Blackstone's Anti-Bribery and Corruption standards
- » Alignment of project and donation requests to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- » Alignment of project and donation requests to community priorities

A future enhancement of the process will be the establishment of community panels to support internal reviews and approvals.

Community Donations and Support

On all community investment projects, we work with our local partners, Commune leadership and community members, to support and plan community projects that reduce inequalities and that represent the highest needs of the community. Wherever practicable, we supported these community initiatives by utilising local employment and suppliers.

Community Support FY2022	Detail	Approximate or In-Kind Value
Vietnam donations to local health care services	Donation of medical and office equipment to Bac Yen District General Hospital in Oct 2021	\$10,000 USD
	Donation of medical equipment to Mai Son District General Hospital in Feb 2022	\$20,000 USD
Vietnam repairs to community infrastructure	Built new 3.7 km from Ta Pung to Ta Hoc Commune and fixed 15 km road	\$16,000 USD
Canada wildfires support	Donations of firefighting equipment to Xwisten and financial donations to Lytton Community	\$5,000 CAD

Ta Pung Road Project

The completion of the Ta Pung Road Project means residents of Ta Hoc and Mai Son Communes can now share agricultural products more easily. In the past people had to travel by foot or boats - they could not travel by cars or bikes - making life very difficult for residents.

Now, both Communes enjoy that transportation of products such as corns, cassavas, bananas can occur. For those that have plant crops on high lands they can now visit them more easily. The farming of livestock such as buffaloes, cows, goats and commodity trading between Muong Khoa Commune and Ta Hoc Commune in Mai Son district are easier.



Local Procurement

As an extension of our community development work, providing local procurement opportunities is critical. Providing local businesses with the opportunity to supply goods and services provides benefits of local employment, capacity development, and reduced emissions for freight and transport for goods.

Local Procurement Spend in FY2022

Country	Area	Total USD		Examples of Spend
		FY2021 USD	FY2022 USD	
Vietnam	Muong Khoa Commune	\$40,365	\$114,419	Local foods, drinking water
	Son La Province (excluding Muong Khoa Commune and Gia Phu)	\$567,301	\$3,362,755	Groceries, tools & spare parts, office equipment, drilling consumables, electricity
	National Spend (excluding all Son La Province)	\$1,333,114	\$4,137,574	Tools & spare parts, geotechnical services, drilling consumables, office rental



Accommodating Our Team

To support the progression of the Ta Khoa Refinery, we often need our team members on the ground staying there for extended periods to conduct business. Two local guesthouses are supporting our team to stay close to site and conduct business.

Two small local businesses helping us to progress our vision are local accommodation providers, Hoàn Hải Guesthouse run by Mr Bui Danh Tuan and the Vân Khánh Guesthouse run by Ms Dinh Thi Thom. Both Mr Tuan and Ms Thom have been running their businesses for many years, however, say that the recent patronage of Blackstone has been a positive boost to their guesthouses. Mr Tuan and Ms Thom are equally hopeful that further development in the Commune will mean continued reservations for their businesses and other economic opportunities for the wider community.

Ms Thom's guesthouse is in the centre of the local town and also hosts the pharmacy run by her daughter at the front of the accommodation. She loves running the business and is confident she'll be running it "at least for another 50 years". Mr Tuan equally enjoys his role in running the Hoàn Hải Guesthouse, saying that it has many benefits for him beyond earning a living: "I enjoy socialising and meeting people from different places and having a broader point of view after meeting them. When they come here, they are my guests, but when they leave, they are my friends".



Our People

We recognise that the most positive impact we can have upon the communities we operate in, is through our employees.



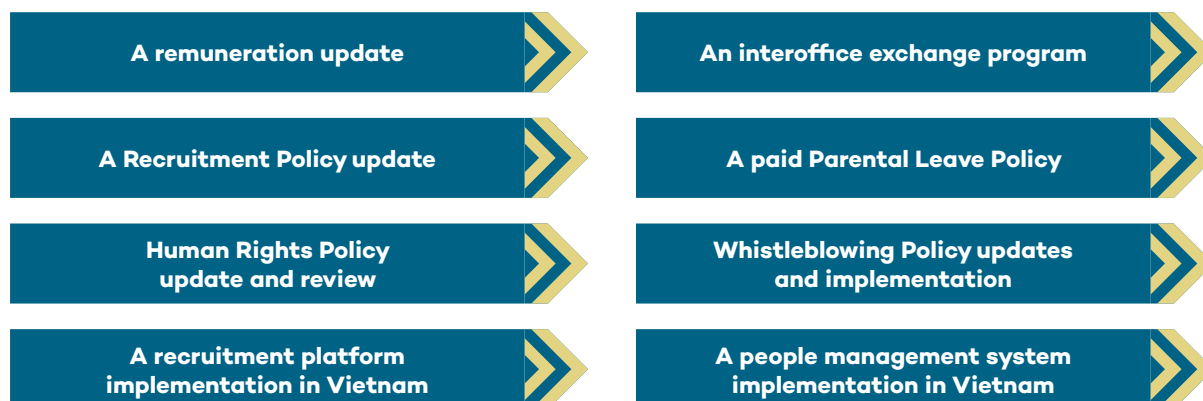
Materiality Index:

- » Investment in Community Capacity – **High**
- » Community Safety, Human Rights and Modern Slavery – **High**
- » Employee Engagement and Development – **Medium**
- » Diversity and Inclusion – **Medium**
- » Understanding Cultural Differences and Ethnic Minorities – **Medium**
- » Supply Chain Resilience – **Emerging**



Our Initiatives

Blackstone holds the view that the most important element of its business is its employees. With this in mind, initiatives were developed and implemented during the reporting period. These included:



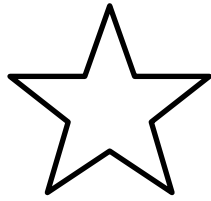
Communities and Employment

As our work continues to grow at the mine site, we are continuing to engage new and previously employed staff to support our development.

In this report period, many of our personnel were engaged to support drilling campaigns, while others were engaged to support corporate operations in Hanoi. We aim to support these workforces by not just offering casual labour contracts but increasing their skills and offering skill sets that promote livelihoods and opportunity beyond the life of our project. In Vietnam, there are 54 ethnic groups recognised across the country with Kinh people comprising the largest ethnic group nation-wide. Across Vietnam, two other minority groups are Thai (1.8% of population) and Muong (1.5% of population). Son La Province has the unique situation of hosting a larger percentage of these two ethnic minority groups. At our mine site, these ethnic minorities formed 71% of our Vietnamese workforce.

FY 2022 Employment Data	Australia	Canada	Vietnam	Total
Total number of permanent employees	25	0	117	142
Total number of casual employees	1	2	287	290
Total	26	2	404	432

The Year in Review



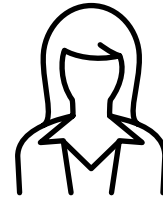
99%

of mine site roles were filled by Vietnamese nationals



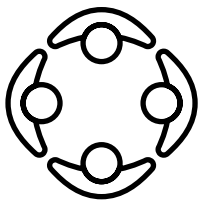
41

unskilled local workers graduated from the annual Blackstone Trainee Program



55%

of Hanoi-based supervisory / leadership roles were filled by women



286

of site based employees – permanent and casual – were from recognised ethnic minorities in Muong Khoa Commune



\$944,973 USD

in salaries were paid for permanent employees and contractors from the Muong Khoa Commune

CASE STUDY

Son La Jobs Fair

Outreach amongst our local communities is an important way to make the community aware of our project, and the opportunities it can provide. In June 2022, we were invited to participate at the Jobs Fair in Son La, alongside 20 other employers. The fair was attended by about 1000 local people and was promoted as an opportunity to consider Blackstone's project in the future.



Supporting Our Employees

One of the most significant economic and social contributions we can make within our project footprint is through the payment of salaries for our staff. In Vietnam, for full time employees, benefits as outlined in our employment handbook include:



- » Annual leave entitlements according to the type of work conditions
- » Maternity and paternity leave entitlements
- » Paid leave for other life events including an employee's marriage, their child's marriage, death in the immediate family.
- » In recognition of our projected growth, we are currently reviewing our Code of Conduct to support a best practice approach to our work
- » All employees – regardless of location – work the standard working week which is in accordance with the Vietnamese laws
- » All site-based employees are provided with clean and safe living facilities and nutritious meals
- » Personnel recruited across all sites are above 18 years of age to ensure child slavery risks are eliminated

We believe that the transparency around the working conditions of our Vietnam staff is important given the material importance of Human Rights compliance to our stakeholders. All staff have freedom of association, where employees can join trade unions or employee representative groups.

		By Gender		By Region		
		Male	Female	Vietnamese Nationals		Expat
				Community	Other Regions	
Employment Contract	Permanent	208	36	188	50	6
	Temporary	150	10	112	48	0

	By Age			By Gender		By Region			Total
	Under 30 yrs old	30-50 yrs old	Over 50 yrs old	Male	Female	National		Expat	
						Community	Other Regions		
New Hires	50	100	9	138	21	109	45	5	159
Rate of New Hires	12%	25%	2%	34%	5%	27%	11%	1%	39%
Turnover	12	20	3	29	6	17	17	1	35
Rate Turnover	3.0%	5.0%	0.7%	7.2%	1.5%	4.2%	4.2%	0.2%	8.7%

Salary Contributions

Business Locations		Permanent USD	Casual USD
 Son La Province Sites	Ta Khoa Nickel Project	722,032	1,038,945
	Ta Khoa Refinery Project	4,947	N/A
 Hanoi Office		440,976	N/A
Total Vietnam salary contributions		\$2,206,900	

PROFILE

Ms. Lu Thi Hien, Cleaner and Groundskeeper

Ms Lu Thi Hien is one of our closest neighbours to site – living 50 meters away from the camp. Ms Hien keeps busy at site as a cleaner and groundskeeper and has done so since the mine construction first started in 2007. At 62 years old, she shows no signs of slowing down; Ms Hien is helping to raise one of her grandchildren at home which keeps her very active outside of work. Before working at site, Ms Hien worked as a farmer growing cassava and corn. Now, working at site means her days are easier and she doesn't have the outlays for chemicals and seeds that she did before. She leases her land out while she works at site. Her job also means that she was able to build a new home that has enough space

for her family to live with her as well. Ms Hien takes great pride in her work each day, saying that, "I really enjoy cleaning and assisting with the site's gardens. I feel so happy when I see things well organised here".



Thành Nguyễn Văn, Site Mining Engineer

With the restart of the project at the mine site, we are also seeing a return of technical staff who had previously been engaged. This includes professionals who commenced at the mine in junior roles, and have now returned into senior technical roles. One such example is our Mining Engineer, Mr Thành. Here is his story:

“Years ago, my uncle worked in a quarry and told me I would be wise to study mining engineering, given the future demand for materials to support Vietnam’s developing economy. I took his advice and studied engineering in Hanoi, at one of the two universities in Vietnam that taught this course in mining. I first started at the mine site in 2011 as a Junior Mining Engineer. After the mine closed, I went on to work at a number of other mines in nickel and gold. With this experience, I then returned in 2021 in a more senior role, and I’m now the site Mining Engineer. There is not many other nickel deposits in Vietnam, so this mine is very important given nickel is a base metal in our economy. I see that the mine is important for this community too –

it’s difficult to find work, so the project offers opportunities to people who are normally growing corn and cassava. Some young people leave their homes here and go to provinces nearby Hanoi to find work in factories. They live away from their elderly parents and can’t go home often, so it’s better when they have jobs here. It brings a lot of jobs, and the government can get tax that helps them to develop the country more. To those young people who are returning to work on the project, I would say I think the most important thing to have at work is a good attitude. With a good attitude, anything is possible.”





Mr. Lu Van Dat and Ms. Vi Thi Bich Thao

The mine currently employs a large number of local people, many of whom are related. One example is a young, local couple, Dat and Thao, who have worked at the mine site for most of their married life. Living 1km from the mine site, Dat worked at a pharmacy and Thao was a farmer before starting to work on site. Dat now supports the camp operations, and last year was able to use his pharmacology experience in supporting patient care with International SOS, our own site health advisors.

Thao is a cook assistant at our camp kitchen and helps to prepare meals to approximately 270 workers each day. Dat and Thao have a young son, who they hope will follow in their footsteps to work in a professional field in the future and will have a career that means he won't move too far away from home. Dat learns a great deal from his colleagues, and states it is one of the best parts of his job; while Thao has loved learning about cooking and nutrition, then being able to apply these skills at home for her family.



Blackstone's Exploration Workers

Over the last 18 months Blackstone has undertaken considerable exploration activities in and around northern Vietnam. This work provided local employment opportunities for over 200 people through this period. The program was hindered by Covid-19 restrictions but with the commitment and dedication of our workers the program was successfully completed in June. To mark the occasion and to thank the workers for their commitment to safety and their hard work endeavours, a celebration was hosted at site with local dignitaries and the trade union also in attendance to show their support for the company.

Developing Our People

Training and development are an important aspect of building the capability of our team to perform at their best.

Annual Performance Reviews

A key career development pillar that Blackstone has introduced in the period has been an Annual Performance Review process. In 2021, an Annual Performance Review program was started in our Australian and Vietnam sites.

The content of the Annual Performance Review includes:

- » Opportunities to share successes and career concerns
- » Receive feedback on performance against key responsibilities of roles and company values
- » Identification of training requests and opportunities to support career development

Drilling Training Program

A key program completed in 2021, was the Annual Training Program for local, low-skilled community members. For the 2021 cohort, trainees were nominated by the local leadership representatives – the Muong Khoa People's Committee. Of the 41 participants that commenced the program, all completed the course. The program covered key areas including safety requirements, technical drilling skills and rig repairs. While the program is largely completed on the job, trainees were overseen by a supervising trainer from the Vietnamese College of Industry and Trade and representatives from Blackstone management. Upon finishing the program and passing the required competency testing, 13 personnel were then progressed as drilling or mining technicians and became full time members of the team.

Performance Reviews - Permanent Employees	FY 2022
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Percentage of total employees who received an Annual Performance Review	100%
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Inter Office Exchange Programs

As our team develops, we have started to review the training requirements needed across the Perth based corporate and Hanoi based in-country office and project sites and where on the job training can support our team members. Of particular benefit, has been the opportunity to commence an Inter Office Exchange Program to support our employee's development. Our Senior Research and Project Metallurgist, Dinh Thi Thu Hien, discusses her 2021 and 2022 Inter Office Exchange program in Perth (right).

Inter Office Exchange Program – Ms Dinh Thi Thu Hien (PhD)

"I participated in the Inter Office Exchange Program with Blackstone in 2022 for six months. In that time, I used the experience to explain to Australian teams – Blackstone team, consultants, contractors, and vendors - the Vietnamese guidelines, and standards for all written materials for project submission for approval. I've also been able to ensure specialised information is translated into Vietnamese correctly. During my office exchange in Perth, I worked on the flotation test work, evaluating experimental data, and worked with the metallurgy team to optimise the experimental flotation conditions; I also worked with the project team and ALS on Pilot Plant 1, and the review of the refinery design.

When participating in the exchange of work between the two offices, I learned a lot about the working culture, the technology of the pilot plant, the requirements according to Australian standards, and the requirements of Vietnam in the refinery. I can take knowledge back to Vietnam too: in Perth I trained in downstream processing and observed the pilot plant operations; I observed and developed safe operating procedures for refinery plants; monitored ALS data recording; and was trained in new process technology.

From this experience, I can be a bridge and help my Australian colleagues to better understand the requirements of the Vietnamese government and the working culture in Vietnam so that the Company can achieve its goals. Outside of work, I loved the city's weather, atmosphere and how the city works. The pace of life is not rushed and bustling like in Vietnam and the air is fresher!"

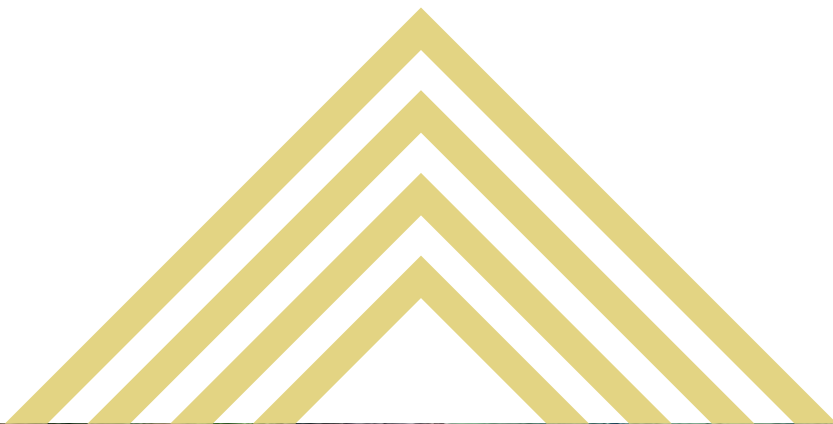


Formal Training Programs and Coaching

Blackstone employees also participated in formal training programs to support their development.

Formal external and internal training programs completed during the period included:

- » Understanding Mineral Processing for Non-Metallurgists
- » Mining for Non-Miners
- » First Aid
- » Whittle (TTOC) Tactical Theory of Constraints
- » SysCAD Online Training
- » Future Battery Industry CRC Forum
- » Agility Fundamentals
- » Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Corporate Governance
- » Australian Government and Minerals Council of Australia TNFD Workshop
- » Drafting key commercial contract and reviewing crucial terms and conditions for Non-Lawyers
- » Cyber Security Training
- » Open SAP - Built-In Analytics in SAP Business ByDesign
- » Definitiv - End of Financial Year Webinar
- » Definitiv - What's new in Payroll; Clarity with Flaherty Session 2; STP Phase 2



Diversity and Inclusion at Blackstone

As with our Board, we understand that diversity of experience and background promotes a stronger company with more creative and robust decision-making.

Blackstone has used this reporting period to develop its approach to diversity and inclusion. These initiatives have included:

- » Recruiting from a diverse pool of candidates for all positions, including Senior Management and the Board;
- » The requirement of at least one female candidate to be shortlisted for all appointments including Executive and Board positions if a suitably qualified candidate exists in the applications;
- » Setting a measurable objective even whilst we are not in the ASX 300 to consider where possible to achieve not less than 30% of Directors from each gender;
- » Reviewing succession plans to ensure an appropriate focus on diversity;
- » Identifying specific factors to take account of in recruitment and selection processes to encourage diversity;

- » Developing a broader pool of skilled and experienced Senior Management and Board candidates through workplace development programs, mentoring programs and targeted training and development;
- » Providing opportunities for employees on extended parental leave to maintain their connection with the Company;
- » Promote workplace structures that assist employees with balancing their work, family and other responsibilities effectively and assist in the development of a more diverse pool of skilled and experienced employees whilst improving performance;
- » Developing a culture which takes account of the domestic responsibilities of employees.

These strategies are not exclusive, and as we grow and review our performance annually, we expect to revise and add to these strategies.



GRI Content Index

Statement of use: Blackstone has reported the information cited in this GRI content index for the period July 2021 to June 2022 with reference to the GRI Standards.



GRI 1 Used:

» GRI 1: Foundation 2021



GRI Standard	Disclosure	Chapter
GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021	2-1 Organisational details	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-2 Entities included in the organisation's sustainability reporting	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-3 Reporting period, frequency and contact point	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-4 Restatements of information	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-5 External assurance	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-6 Activities, value chain and other business relationships	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-7 Employees	6. Our People
	2-8 Workers who are not employees	6. Our People
	2-9 Governance structure and composition	3. Responsible Business
	2-10 Nomination and selection of the highest governance body	3. Responsible Business
	2-11 Chair of the highest governance body	3. Responsible Business
	2-12 Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts	3. Responsible Business
	2-13 Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	3. Responsible Business
	2-14 Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting	3. Responsible Business
	2-15 Conflicts of interest	3. Responsible Business
	2-16 Communication of critical concerns	1. Introduction and About Us; 3. Responsible Business
	2-17 Collective knowledge of the highest governance body	3. Responsible Business
	2-18 Evaluation of the performance of the highest governance body	3. Responsible Business
	2-19 Remuneration policies	3. Responsible Business
	2-20 Process to determine remuneration	3. Responsible Business
	2-21 Annual total compensation ratio	3. Responsible Business
	2-22 Statement on sustainable development strategy	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-23 Policy commitments	3. Responsible Business
	2-24 Embedding Policy commitments	3. Responsible Business

GRI Standard	Disclosure	Chapter
GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021	2-25 Processes to remediate negative impacts	3. Responsible Business
	2-26 Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	3. Responsible Business; 5. Our Communities
	2-27 Compliance with laws and regulations	3. Responsible Business
	2-28 Membership associations	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-29 Approach to stakeholder engagement	1. Introduction and About Us
	2-30 Collective bargaining agreements	Not detailed.
GRI 3: Material Topics 2021	3-1 Process to determine material topics	1. Introduction and About Us
	3-2 List of material topics	1. Introduction and About Us
	3-3 Management of material topics	1. Introduction and About Us
GRI 305: Emissions 2016	305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	4. Our Environment
	305-2 Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	4. Our Environment
	305-3 Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	4. Our Environment
	305-4 GHG emissions intensity	Not detailed.
	305-5 Reduction of GHG emissions	Not detailed.
	305-6 Emissions of ozone-depleting substances (ODS)	Not detailed.
	305-7 Nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx), and other significant air emissions	Not detailed.
GRI 306: Waste 2020	306-1 Waste generation and significant waste-related impacts	Not detailed.
	306-2 Management of significant waste-related impacts	4. Our Environment
	306-3 Waste generated	4. Our Environment
	306-4 Waste diverted from disposal	4. Our Environment
	306-5 Waste directed to disposal	4. Our Environment

Introduction

Health and Safety

Responsible Business

Our Environment

Our Communities

Our People

GRI Standard	Disclosure	Chapter
GRI 308: Supplier Environmental Assessment 2016	308-1 New suppliers that were screened using environmental criteria	Not conducted in the reporting period.
	308-2 Negative environmental impacts in the supply chain and actions taken	Not detailed.
GRI 401: Employment 2016	401-1 New employee hires and employee turnover	6. Our People
	401-2 Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees	6. Our People
	401-3 Parental leave	6. Our People
GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016	402-1 Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	Not detailed.
GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018	403-1 Occupational Health and Safety management system	2. Health and Safety
	403-2 Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation	2. Health and Safety
	403-3 Occupational health services	2. Health and Safety
	403-4 Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational Health and Safety	2. Health and Safety
	403-5 Worker training on occupational Health and Safety	2. Health and Safety
	403-6 Promotion of worker health	2. Health and Safety
	403-7 Prevention and mitigation of occupational Health and Safety impacts directly linked by business relationships	2. Health and Safety
	403-8 Workers covered by an occupational Health and Safety management system	2. Health and Safety
	403-9 Work-related injuries	2. Health and Safety
	403-10 Work-related ill health	2. Health and Safety
GRI 404: Training and Education 2016	404-1 Average hours of training per year per employee	6. Our People - hours not collated during the reporting period - course details provided.
	404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	6. Our People; 2. Health and Safety
	404-3 Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	6. Our People

GRI Standard	Disclosure	Chapter
GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity 2016	405-1 Diversity of governance bodies and employees	3. Responsible Business; 6. Our People
	405-2 Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men	Not detailed.
GRI 413: Local Communities 2016	413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	5. Our Communities
	413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities	5. Our Communities





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