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BBA Takes Out Outstanding Tradeswoman, Operator or Technician Award for Second Year at Tasmanian Women in Resources Awards

A fully qualified hairdresser before starting her career 10 years ago at Bell Bay Aluminium, Alana Phegan became the first female process controller on site when she was promoted in 2011.

Last night at Parliament House in Hobart, Alana was presented with the Outstanding Tasmanian Tradeswoman Operator or Technician at the fourth annual Tasmanian Women in Resources Awards.

The awards recognise and celebrate the contributions and achievements of women in the Tasmanian mining and resources sector.

Alana Phegan said: "I was certainly not expecting to win this award; however, it is a great honour for me to be recognised in this way. It hasn't always been easy for me and I have faced a number of challenges over the past 10 years but my determination has paid off. I would like to share this recognition with my husband Leigh, my family and my work colleagues."

Alana Phegan may be small in stature but she has always wanted to achieve big things. Alana left school in Year 11. She successfully completed a hairdressing apprenticeship with a local George Town salon where she worked for eight years. She quickly became independent, reliable and self-motivated.

In 2007, after the salon was sold and her work hours reduced, Alana applied for a process operator's position at Bell Bay Aluminium. Promoted five years later to process controller, the first female process controller on site, Alana's commitment to mentoring women and encouraging other women to seek out careers at Bell Bay is impressive.

"I have encouraged other women to work at Bell Bay Aluminium. A lot of women that I speak to, including my friends, think the work is physically challenging and not for them. I am determined to dispel that myth as I thought much the same before I started work here," she said.

"It's not just about contributing to the attraction and retention of women in this sector, it's also about ensuring the next generation, and women such as my daughter, believe that no role is beyond them and they can be successful at whatever they choose to do."

Alana's role in the carbon department at Bell Bay Aluminium incorporates elements of the operator role that she started in, but as a process controller her role is now far more technical. She plans and schedules the work of the day, monitors the performance of the baking furnace and the movement of the anode blocks through the process. Alana is the only female member in her team of 11.

“In terms of my career at Bell Bay, I think my greatest achievements are still to come. Over the past 12 months my leader has offered me the opportunity to lead the team on a number of occasions. I have aspirations to become a crew leader so my plan is to work toward achieving that goal and equipping myself with the necessary skills and experience,” said Alana

General Manager Ray Mostogl congratulated Alana on winning the State award.

“This award is a wonderful achievement and reflects the commitment and leadership shown by Alana in her role at Bell Bay. I also congratulate our three other finalists; Margaret Richmond, Monica Henry and Mary-Ann Seen on their achievements as finalists. All four women reflect the strength of the entire team at the smelter and our belief that the long-term sustainability of our sector relies on attracting and retaining skilled people from diverse backgrounds,” Ray said.

Alana will represent Tasmania in the category of Outstanding Australian Tradeswoman, Operator or Technician at the 2017 National Women in Resources Awards to be hosted by the Tasmanian Minerals and Energy Council in Launceston on Thursday 31 August 2017.

For further media interviews or information, please contact:

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