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Rio Tinto Energy America (RTEA) Arranges for Buses that Provide Significant Improvements in Safety and Efficiency

Gillette, Wyoming- Rio Tinto Energy America (RTEA) is pleased to announce the first 3 of 10 new Coach America buses, specially purchased and equipped with seat belts for RTEA, are now transporting employees more safely to the Antelope and Jacobs Ranch Mines. The rest are planned to be put into service later in the week.

“Safety is paramount at RTEA,” Vice President of Operations Gary Rivenes said. “We continuously evaluate employee risks and ways to reduce or eliminate those risks. The finalized arrangement for these special buses culminates a three-year extensive effort by RTEA to provide buses equipped with 3-point passenger seat belts to ensure greater travel safety for our employees. This illustrates our commitment to reducing risk and to going the extra mile for our employees.”

RTEA began using the special 2009 passenger buses on November 10, 2008, marking the first time in Wyoming, and likely for the entire US, that large passenger buses equipped with factory-installed 3-point seat belts have transported coal mining personnel. RTEA is paying a substantial extra expense for the services of these buses to ensure safer travel conditions for our employees.

“RTEA’s core value is employee safety,” Health and Safety Director Don Vissat said. “Even though buses with factory-installed 3-point seat belts were not initially available, RTEA would not

be dissuaded from this significant way to address the risks of bus travel on state highways, especially Highway 59.”

“We searched far and wide for more than a year to find a U.S. bus manufacturer that could supply factory-installed seats with 3-point seat belts, but found none,” Don Vissat added. “We kept expanding that search and eventually located the necessary seats and accompanying designed belts - but they were in Europe. We worked with Coach America to have those seats and belts shipped to the U.S. and installed on 10 new passenger buses acquired for exclusive services to RTEA.”

Traffic incidents on Highway 59 are an issue, especially in the winter. This is illustrated in the recently published Environmental Assessment for stretches of the highway. “Once we found a way to make it happen we worked diligently to secure the services of the buses with the seat belts before the onset of hard winter,” Don Vissat said. “I’m very happy that we have accomplished that goal and these safer buses are now transporting RTEA employees.”

“As part of our safety culture, seat belt use is mandatory on all RTEA mine sites to help ensure everyone goes home safely to their families every day,” Gary Rivenes said. “Use of seat belts on the new buses will be required for the very same reasons.”

The Rio Tinto Group is a world leader in finding, extracting and processing the earth’s mineral resources. RTEA specializes in the production of low sulfur, sub-bituminous coal, and operates five coal mines located in Wyoming, Montana and Colorado. With a combined operational workforce of more than 2,400 employees, and with the help of hundreds of contractors and suppliers, the company provides fuel to its energy company customers who generate nearly six percent of the nation’s electricity.

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