



## CASE STUDY

# Driving Warehouse Efficiency in the Mining Sector with Sola Mobile

### Contributors:

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AIC is a mid-tier mining operation that overcame persistent warehouse challenges—including efficiency, stock accuracy, and cost control—by implementing Sola Mobile. The solution digitised all key warehouse processes and enabled substantial improvements in record keeping, inventory reliability, and site-wide productivity. As Ray Luff stated, Sola Mobile has driven transformation well beyond time savings.

### Project Background and Challenges

Constrained labour force and limited ability to scale headcount. Open warehouse model led to frequent stock outs and unrecorded withdrawals. Manual, paper-based processing resulted in errors and extended downtime across the site. Poor warehouse management was causing urgent supply runs, impacting maintenance, production, and company-wide efficiency.

Business-wide priority was to improve transparency, accountability, and operational control through digital transformation.

### Solution and Implementation

Sola Mobile delivered a comprehensive, end-to-end warehouse mobility solution tailored to AIC's operational needs.

The implementation included:

- **Introduction of barcode labelling** for all inventory, allowing every item movement to be easily tracked and accurately recorded. Real-time receipting, picking, issue, and stocktake workflows—digitised for mobile use and seamlessly integrated with Pronto ERP, providing instant record linkage, images, and signoffs for every transaction.
- **Print-on-demand barcode labelling** at the time and location of receipt or picking, significantly reducing admin errors and missed labels, as highlighted by Ray.
- **User-friendly mobile interfaces** allow staff to walk into the warehouse with an iPad, scan what they need, and instantly issue work orders, cost centres, or projects, eliminating manual paperwork and repetitive data entry.

- **Guided mobile picking**, with all parts for a job or asset pre-picked, packed, and barcoded for collection, drastically reducing technician wait times and stock confusion.
- **Counter “kiosk” issues and returns** via barcode scan: high transaction volumes processed simply and quickly, with the greatest positive staff feedback received for these features.
- **Integrated image capture** and instant upload: staff can photograph inventory as it is received, making item identification and dispute resolution straightforward and remote-accessible.
- **Automated stocktake support**: mobile stocktaking, cycle counting, and instant supervisor reporting, allowing all warehouse areas to be counted and reconciled efficiently saving months of admin effort compared to legacy paper-based processes.
- **Flexible user access from any location with Wi-Fi**, including satellite facilities, supporting operational resilience.
- **Weekly and cyclic stocktakes** are now routine and easy, freeing up time and ensuring “the business is able to carry on without the warehouse being a blocker.”
- **Change management**: initial staff scepticism was rapidly overcome due to usability and familiarity (“like a Bunnings warehouse”), with tailored screen improvements and processes adopted in response to user feedback.
- **Project delivered without requiring additional headcount**, enabling measurable efficiency gains with the existing small workforce.

Ray commented that these changes turned the warehouse into an operational enabler for the whole business, drove a full clean-up and reorganisation, and delivered sustained improvements in efficiency, accuracy, and site-wide service levels.



## Broader Business Benefits

- **Accuracy and Record Keeping:** Barcode labelling and mobile workflows have dramatically reduced system errors and manual entry mistakes. Every item movement is now traceable; Ray noted staff no longer “scribble on pages or walk out with stock unrecorded”—every transaction is digitally logged and visible across the site.
- **Stock Outs and Downtime:** Sola Mobile’s digital controls resulted in an immediate and sustained drop in stock outs—by Ray’s estimate, now reduced by approximately 95%. Technicians and superintendents no longer lose time chasing missing parts, and urgent supply runs have become rare exceptions rather than daily challenges.
- **Customer Efficiency:** Internal customers now spend far less time in the warehouse. Parts are pre-picked, labelled, and placed in dedicated bins for every vehicle and asset. Staff “just zap, grab, and go”—which has improved morale and fundamentally changed the perception of the warehouse from a bottleneck to a genuine service provider.
- **Audit and Compliance:** Auditors and management benefit from direct access to permanent digital records, linked images, and electronic signoffs in Pronto. The team is now able to complete and reconcile the entire warehouse stocktake in two months instead of “never managing the full count” before, and finance is “no longer tied up fixing journals or chasing missing codes.”
- **Morale and Culture:** Warehouse staff now feel empowered and valued, with Ray confirming that team morale has improved, and other departments acknowledge the warehouse as “part of the team that makes everything happen.” There is now pride in the warehouse operation, and site-wide acceptance and trust in both the system and the team supporting it.





## Long-Term ROI:

When asked if he felt like an approx \$116,000 saving on labour costs a year was close to accurate, Ray was explicit: "It's impossible to put a dollar value on the site-wide efficiency and productivity improvement" The calculated labour savings are only part of the story—the full return on investment is much larger when considering the operation-wide gains, improved accuracy, and the fact that we reorganised the entire warehouse and built a new area to support our growth."

Ray explained that the implementation of Sola Mobile not only delivered operational savings but also prompted a much-needed overhaul of the warehouse itself. The project demanded a full clean-up, reorganisation, and the development of new dedicated areas for asset bins and site logistics. With stock now catalogued and labelled, teams work more efficiently, and internal customers benefit from faster, more reliable access to materials. These wider benefits, alongside substantial labour savings, have delivered a transformative ROI that reaches well beyond the warehouse and into every part of the business:

- The warehouse transformed from being a blocker to an enabler for the entire business, no longer causing delays or impeding other teams.
- Non-warehouse staff save substantial time because they no longer spend long periods hunting for parts, waiting to pick, or dealing with inventory inaccuracies.
- Pre-picked and labelled stock, ready for collection in dedicated bins, improved efficiency not just for warehouse staff, but for maintenance, operations, and project teams.
- Cost centre, project code, and barcode integration eliminated finance rework and manual journal corrections each month.
- Organisational morale and cross-team collaboration benefitted as the warehouse ceased to be blamed for site inefficiencies.





## Client Testimonials

### Operational Transformation at AIC:

*“Sola Mobile has fundamentally changed how our warehouse team operates. It allows us to do more with a small labour force, increases stock accuracy, and gives us the record keeping and traceability we need. Stock outs are rare, rework is nearly eliminated, and the whole site is more efficient customers get parts faster and spend less time chasing inventory. We’re no longer seen as a bottleneck, but as a key part of site productivity. It’s been a true game changer for our operation.”*

— **Ray Luff, Logistics and Procurement**

**Superintendent, AIC Mines**

### Advice for Other Mining Businesses:

*“Go and get it. It will change how your warehouse operates, but you’ve got to do the whole thing. If you’re only going to use bits and pieces of it, you’ll only improve one part of your business. Do it end-to-end—receipting, issues, stocktake, the lot—and you’ll change everything.”*

— **Ray Luff, Logistics and Procurement**

**Superintendent, AIC Mines**

## Lessons and Recommendations

Success depends on starting with clean, labelled stock and robust change management as processes go digital. Rolling out in phased steps (receipting, picking, issues, stocktaking) builds confidence and facilitates continuous improvement.

Investing in intuitive, retail-style workflows drives rapid staff acceptance—even from sceptics. Full integration with Pronto is essential for end-to-end digital control and audit readiness.

Sola Mobile’s deployment at AIC demonstrates that digital transformation in mining warehouses is not only about hours saved. It’s the integration of accuracy, accountability, and efficiency—delivering substantial and lasting business value.