

NEWS RELEASE

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BHP BILLITON APPROVES WORSLEY ALUMINA DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL PROJECTS

BHP Billiton today announced the approval of the US\$192 million (US\$165 million BHP Billiton share) Worsley Alumina Development Capital Projects (DCP) in Australia.

DCP is designed to take advantage of latent capacity in the plant through a series of 28 packages of work. These include additions to the precipitation circuit, additional bauxite residue washing and disposal facilities plus utilities and electrical infrastructure upgrades.

The result will be an increase in alumina production of 250,000 tonnes per annum (215,000 tonnes per annum BHP Billiton share) to a capacity of 3.5 million tonnes per annum (3.01 million tonnes per annum BHP Billiton share). Commissioning and completion of DCP is expected by the first quarter of calendar year 2006 with the resulting production ramp-up to be achieved by the end of the second quarter of calendar year 2006.

President Aluminium, Alex Vanselow said: "The project is a rapid response to meet the strong and growing demand for alumina. The DCP offers attractive economic returns and a solid platform for future expansions at Worsley."

Forward-looking statements

This release contains forward-looking statements about BHP Billiton's development and capital expenditure plans and future production. Words such as "will," "is expected to," "is estimated to" and similar expressions are intended to identify such forward-looking statements. The statements are based on management's current expectations, estimates and projections; are not guarantees of future performance; and are subject to certain risks, uncertainties and other factors, some of which are beyond BHP Billiton's control and are difficult to predict. Certain factors that could cause actual results to differ materially are discussed in the sections entitled "Risk Factors" and "Operating and Financial Review and Prospects - General factors affecting our operating results" included in our annual report on Form 20-F for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2003, which we filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission. You should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date of this release. Unless legally required, BHP Billiton undertakes no obligation to update publicly any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found on our Internet site: <http://www.bhpbilliton.com>

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