



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Mount Isa, 11 December 2007**

### **QUEENSLAND HEALTH ANNOUNCES COMPLETION OF BLOOD LEAD TESTING CAMPAIGN IN MOUNT ISA**

Xstrata Mount Isa Mines expects Queensland Health's completion of its 'Get Bled for Lead' campaign will be just the first stage of a long term initiative by key community stakeholders to further improve community health in Mount Isa.

Chief Operating Officer Xstrata Copper North Queensland, Steve de Kruijff, said the company had not waited until the end of testing to improve lead management at its operations and has been working closely with key community stakeholders to develop future initiatives. However, he indicated it would be important to obtain the full results and analysis of the testing program of 400 children aged 1-4 years before definitive, long term action could be taken.

"The full report will identify the priorities Queensland Health, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Mount Isa City Council, Xstrata Mount Isa Mines and other community stakeholders need to act on in order to sustainably reduce lead levels in Mount Isa," Mr de Kruijff said.

"The reality is that lead is literally part of the foundations of our community and we all have a responsibility to ensure we manage our exposure to this naturally occurring mineral in our homes, gardens, workplaces and environment.

"For our part, the health of the Mount Isa community is something Xstrata takes very seriously and we welcome any future recommendations by Queensland Health regarding the ongoing monitoring and reporting of children's lead levels in Mount Isa."

Mr de Kruijff said further action on lead management would be considered once Queensland Health's full report of the 'Get Bled for Lead Campaign' is released, and as part of a series of initiatives being planned by key community stakeholders in consultation with State Member of Parliament, Mrs Betty Kiernan, MP and Mayor Cr Ron McCullough.

"We will take the appropriate actions required to effectively manage and improve the environmental performance of our lead mining and processing activities in Mount Isa," he said.

"It must be remembered that we live in one of the most naturally occurring mineral-rich provinces in the world, and it is important our community is aware of simple everyday things they can do to help manage the risks associated with lead.

"This includes keeping the house clean and as free from dust as possible, always washing our hands before eating and drinking, maintaining a balanced diet, and monitoring children's outdoor play."

During 2007, Xstrata Mount Isa Mines has continued to make significant investments in improving its policies, procedures, and monitoring and management of lead emissions from its mining and processing operations in Mount Isa. This action is part of a continuous improvement program that includes:

- rigorous monitoring of water and air quality within EPA license limits for emissions standards
- major investments in new plant and technology to reduce emissions from smelting operations
- a review of infrastructure, policies and internal procedures to support stronger enforcement of 'clean in, clean out' practices for all lead risk employees and contractors, their uniforms and vehicles in order to reduce occupational risks and the risk of lead being taken into the community
- the commissioning of University of Queensland's Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation in late 2006, and world renowned toxicologist Professor Barry Noller, to undertake a landmark study – *Whole of Emissions Study into Land, Water and Air* – to assess the major sources of non-natural forms of lead in the Mount Isa community, whether these are associated with mine operations, and the potential risk to human and ecological health
- the release of a *Whole of Emissions Study Community Briefing Paper* detailing the results of Phase 1 – Emissions to Land
- completing the second Community Perceptions Survey of the Mount Isa environment and air emissions, as recommended by the Panel Assessment Study in 2000, and committing to publicly releasing the results in early 2008
- committing to remediate a section of the Leichhardt River, which will commence following the 2008 wet season, to help manage and reduce lead in the river system caused by historical mining practices and erosion; and
- the remediation of large tracts of land and properties adjoining site operations, known as the 'Greenbelt'.

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#### **ABOUT XSTRATA PLC**

Xstrata is a global diversified mining group, listed on the London and Swiss Stock Exchanges, with its headquarters in Zug, Switzerland. Xstrata's businesses maintain a meaningful position in seven major international commodity markets: copper, coking coal, thermal coal, ferrochrome, nickel, vanadium and zinc, with additional exposures to platinum group metals, gold, cobalt, lead and silver, recycling facilities and a suite of global technology products, many of which are industry leaders. The Group's operations and projects span 18 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Germany, New Caledonia, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania, the USA and the UK. Xstrata employs approximately 50,000 people, including contractors.

#### **ABOUT XSTRATA ZINC**

Headquartered in Madrid, Spain, Xstrata Zinc is one of the world's largest producers of zinc and one of the commodity business units within the major global diversified mining group Xstrata plc. Xstrata's zinc and lead operations and exploration projects are located in Australia, Canada, Germany, Peru, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Xstrata Zinc's operations in Spain comprise the San Juan de Nieva zinc smelter and the Arnao zinc semis plant in Asturias, and the Hinojedo roasting plant in Cantabria.

In Australia, operations comprise the Mount Isa, George Fisher underground and Black Star open cut zinc lead mines, zinc lead concentrator, lead smelter and Bowen Coke Works in north Queensland; 75% of the Lady Loretta zinc lead deposit in north-west Queensland; the McArthur River open pit zinc lead mine, processing and port operations in the Northern Territory; and 50% of the Lennard Shelf underground zinc lead mine and processing operations in Western Australia.

In Canada, operations and exploration projects include the Brunswick zinc-lead mine and lead smelter in New Brunswick; 25% of the CEZ zinc smelter near Montreal; and the Perseverance zinc deposit in Quebec.

Xstrata Zinc also operates the Nordenham zinc smelter in northern Germany; the Northfleet lead refinery in the United Kingdom; and owns 33.75% of the Antamina mine in Peru.

Around half of all zinc currently consumed is used for galvanizing steel, which is an environmentally friendly method of protecting steel against corrosion. Zinc also finds application in the manufacture of die-cast alloys, brass and the production of zinc oxides and chemicals.

#### **ABOUT XSTRATA COPPER**

Headquartered in Brisbane, Xstrata Copper is one of the commodity business units within the major global diversified mining group Xstrata plc. Its operations and projects span eight countries: Australia, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Canada, the USA, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. Its operations are administered by five separate divisions, based close to the mining operations, namely the North Queensland, Alumbraera, North Chile, Southern Peru and Canada divisions. It also has a recycling business (Xstrata Recycling) with plants in the United States and offices in Canada and Asia.

Xstrata Copper is the fourth largest global copper producer with annual managed production of over one million tonnes.