



**MOUNT ISA
MINES**

MEDIA RELEASE

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PHASE ONE (LAND) REPORT OF MOUNT ISA LEAD PATHWAYS STUDY RELEASED

Mount Isa, 8 July 2009

Xstrata Mount Isa Mines today released the *Lead Pathways Study* Phase One (Land) report at its community information session in Mount Isa.

The report has been prepared by the University of Queensland's Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation (CMLR), in collaboration with the National Research Centre for Environmental Toxicology (EnTox), following a comprehensive peer review process.

Associate Professor Barry Noller (CMLR) who heads the *Lead Pathways Study* said the Phase One investigations had focused on areas known to have been previously impacted by historical mine sediments including the Leichhardt River and surrounding area.

"Our investigations have confirmed that the risk to human health from historical mine sediments within the Leichhardt River area is low," he said.

Even though the CMLR identified the potential risk to human health to be minimal in its preliminary findings released publicly in late 2007, Xstrata Mount Isa Mines undertook further remediation works of the Leichhardt River in mid-2008.

Chief Operating Officer, Xstrata Copper North Queensland, Steve de Kruijff, said Xstrata commissioned the *Lead Pathways Study* and undertook further remediation works as part of its ongoing commitment to the health and safety of the Mount Isa community.

"While the preliminary findings indicated that there was a low risk to human health we made the decision to undertake further remediation works of the Leichhardt River, at a cost of around \$1.5 million," Mr de Kruijff said.

"More than 120,000 tonnes of material was removed from the area and safely disposed of on the Xstrata Mount Isa Mines lease.

"The study is ongoing and we will continue to conduct sampling of the area after each wet season until 2011 and further remediation work will be undertaken if required.

"We are committed to this study and we will act on the CMLR's recommendations and continue to keep the Mount Isa community informed of the study's progress."

The CMLR will continue to assess potential pathways of lead into the Mount Isa community and any associated risk to human and ecological health through Phases Two (Air) and Three (Water).

"As part of Phase Two we are investigating potential sources of dust in the community, their signatures in terms of lead make-up and any potential risk to human health," Associate Professor Noller said.

"Samples are being analysed using cutting-edge synchrotron technology, located in Japan, and we are currently collecting additional samples from within the community and from the mine site for further testing in late 2009.

"We are also investigating the water quality of the Leichhardt River and its tributaries and we are currently analysing samples collected prior to, during, and post the 2008/09 wet season.

"The *Lead Pathways Study* is a comprehensive and highly complex research program and we are pleased to be undertaking such an exciting project.

"The successful application of these innovative technologies for human and environmental risk assessment purposes has significant implications for the scientific community and the mining industry as a valuable risk assessment tool."

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ABOUT THE LEAD PATHWAYS STUDY

The *Lead Pathways Study* is a comprehensive research program being undertaken by the University of Queensland's Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation (CMLR), in collaboration with the National Research Centre of Environmental Toxicology.

Commissioned by Xstrata Mount Isa Mines in late 2006, the independent study is assessing potential pathways of lead into the Mount Isa community and any associated risk to human and ecological health.

The study is being undertaken in three phases – land, air and water - and all three phases will be independently peer reviewed.

The *Lead Pathways Study* Phase One (Land) scientific report and summary report are available online at <http://www.xstrata.com/operation/mountisa/publications/>

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 a growing platinum group metals business, additional exposures to 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 19 countries.

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, Minera Alumbrera, 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 attributable production capacity of over one million tonnes.

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.