

NEWS RELEASE

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BHP BILLITON ANNOUNCES NEW STAINLESS STEEL MATERIALS PRESIDENT

BHP Billiton announced today the appointment of Jimmy Wilson as President of its Stainless Steel Materials Customer Sector Group. In this role Mr. Wilson will have responsibility for all aspects of BHP Billiton's Stainless Steel Materials businesses, including strategy, operations, and delivering growth within our strategic framework.

Mr. Wilson will replace Mr. Chris Pointon, who has announced his retirement from the company. Mr. Wilson will be located in Perth, Australia, and will join BHP Billiton's Executive Committee.

Mr. Wilson has extensive experience in the metals and mining industry and prior to this appointment was President and COO of Nickel West. In this role, he successfully managed the integration of the former WMC nickel assets into BHP Billiton. Roles held prior to this include President and COO, Samancor Chrome and General Manager Bayside Aluminium. Mr. Wilson holds a BSc Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of Natal, South Africa and has been with BHP Billiton for over 14 years.

Mr. Wilson will be replaced as President and COO for Nickel West by Marcelo Bastos. Mr. Bastos was previously President and COO, Cerro Matoso based in Colombia. He will have overall responsibility for BHP Billiton's Nickel West business and will report to Mr. Wilson. Mr. Bastos holds a Mechanical Engineering degree from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) and an MBA from Fundacao Dom Cabral (INSEAD associated). In taking up his new role, Mr. Bastos will relocate from Colombia to Perth, Australia.

Commenting on the changes, Marius Kloppers, Group President of Non-Ferrous Materials for BHP Billiton said, "Chris Pointon has done an outstanding job building our nickel business over the past nine years. The highlight was last year's completion of the acquisition of WMC and the successful integration of their nickel business into BHP Billiton. With Chris' retirement, the promotion of Jimmy and Marcelo represents the appointment of the next tier of our Stainless Steel Materials management team and indicates the depth of management talent within BHP Billiton."

The changes will be effective 1 January 2007.

Biographical details of Jimmy Wilson and Marcelo Bastos attached.

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

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BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS – JIMMY WILSON

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mr. Jimmy Wilson (44) has been appointed President of Stainless Steel Materials effective 1 January 2007.

Jimmy has extensive experience in the metals and mining industry and prior to this appointment was President and COO of Nickel West. He was appointed to this role in June 2005.

Jimmy successfully managed the integration of the former WMC nickel assets into BHP Billiton. Roles held prior to this include President and COO, Samancor Chrome and General Manager Bayside Aluminium. Jimmy holds a BSc Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of Natal, Durban, South Africa and has been with BHP Billiton for over 14 years.

Prior to the General Manager role at Bayside Jimmy held a number of operational roles. He has also worked in the gold industry in South Africa for Anglo American.

CAREER

President and COO, Nickel West, BHP Billiton 2005-2006; President, Samancor Chrome, BHP Billiton 2001-2005; General Manager, Bayside Aluminium, Billiton 1996-2001; HR Manager, Bayside, Billiton 1996-1996; Reduction Manager, Bayside Aluminium, Billiton 1995-1996; Reduction Services Manager, Bayside Aluminium, Billiton 1992-1995; Earlier Career History included the following roles Assistant Engineer, Relief Section Engineer, Maintenance Trainee for Anglo American.

PERSONAL

BSc Mechanical Engineering, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa

Government Certificate of Competency Mines and Works Act

International Consortium (Boeing, ABB, ABNAmro, BHP Billiton)

Jimmy is South African, married with two children and fluent in English and Afrikaans.



BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS – MARCELO BASTOS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mr. Marcelo Bastos (43) has been appointed President and COO for Nickel West, BHP Billiton, effective 1 January 2007 and will have overall responsibility for BHP Billiton's Nickel West business.

Marcelo was previously President and COO, Cerro Matoso and Nickel Americas for BHP Billiton, based in Colombia. Before that he was Non Ferrous Operations Director for CVRD.

Marcelo has extensive experience in the development and operations of major projects (Iron Ore, Gold, Copper and Nickel) and company management experience in the metals and mining industry in Latin America.

Marcelo holds a Mechanical Engineering degree from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) specialising in Thermal Engineering and an MBA from Fundacao Dom Cabral (INSEAD associated).

CAREER

President and COO, Nickel Americas, Cerro Matoso, BHP Billiton 2004-2006; Director Non Ferrous Operations for Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD) 2002-2004; General Manager Iron Ore, Carajas Mines Brazil 1999-2002; Production Manager of Iron Ore Plant, Caue Mine Brazil 1996-1999; Gold Operations Manager, Minas Gerais State Brazil (1994-1995); Maintenance and Operations Manager, Iron Ore, Conceicao Mine Brazil (1990-1994); Maintenance Engineer, Iron Ore, Conceicao Mine Brazil 1986-1990; Maintenance Assistant, Iron Ore, Conceicao Mine Brazil 1985-1986.

PERSONAL

Mechanical Engineering degree from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Brazil
MBA from Fundacao Dom Cabral (INSEAD associated)

Senior executive trainings in Columbia University and Kellogg Business School - USA

Marcelo is Brazilian, married and fluent in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

