

NEWS RELEASE

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APPIN AREA 9 PROJECT APPROVAL

BHP Billiton today approved investment of US\$845 million to sustain operations at Illawarra Coal, in southern New South Wales, Australia by establishing a replacement mining area at the Appin Mine.

The replacement area will have a production capacity of 3.5 million tonnes per year of metallurgical coal and will sustain Illawarra Coal's production capacity at 9 million tonnes per year. Appin Area 9 will be operational in 2016 and will replace production at the West Cliff Mine. The project includes roadway development, new ventilation infrastructure, new and reconfigured conveyors and other mine services.

The development has received all necessary regulatory approvals.

BHP Billiton Metallurgical Coal President, Hubie van Dalsen, said: "The investment sustains Illawarra Coal's production rates and recognises the value of its high quality metallurgical coal resources.

"It is also good news for local jobs and the economy in the region."

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found at: www.bhpbilliton.com.

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