

NEWS RELEASE

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SALE OF RICHARDS BAY MINERALS FOR US\$1.91 BILLION

BHP Billiton has completed the sale of its 37 per cent non-operated interest in Richards Bay Minerals (RBM) to Rio Tinto.

As part of the restructuring of RBM in 2009, BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto concluded an option agreement that made provision for BHP Billiton to sell its interest in RBM to Rio Tinto pursuant to an agreed valuation process. BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto announced on 1 February 2012 that this option had been exercised and that completion of the transaction was conditional upon the fulfilment of customary regulatory approvals, all of which have now been met.

Pursuant to the prescribed valuation process, BHP Billiton has sold its entire interest in RBM for US\$1.91 billion before adjustments. The divestment reflects the company's commitment to a simpler, more scalable upstream portfolio.

RBM is a South African mineral sands mining and smelting operation and the leading producer of chloride titanium dioxide feedstock. Prior to completion of the sale, BHP Billiton held a 37 per cent equity stake in RBM with equity partners Rio Tinto (37 per cent), Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) parties (24 per cent) and employees (2 per cent). Rio Tinto manages the operation and is responsible for the marketing of RBM's products.

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

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