



OFFICIAL OPENING OF PILGANGOORA LITHIUM-TANTALUM PROJECT MARKS MAJOR MILESTONE FOR PILBARA MINERALS

Western Australia's Minister for Mines and Petroleum officially opens world-class lithium project, marking another key step in Pilbara Minerals' journey to become a globally significant lithium and tantalum raw materials supplier.

Pilbara Minerals Limited (ASX: PLS) ("Pilbara Minerals" or "the Company") today celebrated a major milestone in its rapid emergence as a substantial new global lithium producer with the official opening of the Pilgangoora Lithium-Tantalum Project ("Pilgangoora Project") by Western Australia's Minister for Mines and Petroleum, the Honourable Bill Johnston MLA.

The official opening ceremony was held on site at the Pilgangoora Project, located approximately 120km south of Port Hedland in Western Australia. The opening was also attended by the Federal Minister for Environment and Member for Durack, the Honourable Melissa Price MP; Traditional Owners, the Njama! People; project and offtake partners; and employees.

The official opening comes just over four years to the day since Pilbara Minerals' first drill hole which was followed by an intense program of resource drilling, feasibility studies, approvals, financing and construction of the operation, with first shipment of product recently achieved in October 2018. This rapid project delivery timeline represents one of Australia's fastest and most efficient major lithium developments of recent times.

Stage 1 of the Pilgangoora Project comprises a 2Mtpa mining and processing operation to deliver life-of-mine (LOM) production of 330,000tpa of 6% spodumene concentrate (lithium) and 300,000lbspa (pounds per annum) of tantalite concentrate (tantalum).

During the construction phase, the Pilgangoora Project's workforce peaked at over 800 people, with its current operational workforce now approximately 200 people.

The Stage 1 operation continues to go from strength to strength, with first concentrates produced in June 2018 and the first product shipment leaving Port Hedland on 2 October 2018, and with the second shipment following shortly thereafter. Both product shipments exceeded customer specification requirements which was an outstanding result considering the commissioning and early ramp up phase of the plant.

Given the Pilgangoora Project's scale, demonstrated product quality and expected low-cost of operations, the Pilbara Minerals' Board recently resolved to progress the Stage 2 expansion to 5Mtpa, which will grow spodumene concentrate production to over 800,000tpa.

100% of the Pilgangoora Project's production under both the Stage 1 operation and recently approved Stage 2 expansion is underpinned by binding offtake agreements with leading, experienced global offtake partners General Lithium, Ganfeng Lithium, POSCO and Great Wall Motor Company.

Pilbara Minerals' Managing Director and CEO, Ken Brinsden, said the official opening provided an important opportunity to acknowledge the many people who had contributed to Pilbara Minerals' success.

"This is a very proud day for Pilbara Minerals, and I would like to pay tribute to everyone who has helped us through our journey from explorer to producer," he said.

"Every milestone achieved from exploration through to production and first shipment since we completed our first drill hole back in November 2014 is a testament to our great people and project partners."

“The significant upfront investment we made in building the resource base and in designing and engineering all aspects of the Pilgangoora Project to the highest possible standards has allowed us to complete the construction phase and move seamlessly into commissioning and ramp-up with remarkably few delays or hiccups for a project of this scale and complexity.”

“I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Njamal People, whose support has been invaluable in moving the Pilgangoora Project through development and into production. We look forward to working closely with you for many, many years to come.

“To the Pilbara Minerals’ team, thank you. Without your commitment and passion Pilbara Minerals would not be here today and on the cusp of becoming one of the world’s largest and lowest cost producers of high-quality lithium raw materials.

“I would also like to thank our offtake partners, General Lithium Corporation, Ganfeng Lithium, POSCO and Great Wall Motor Company, and our other key strategic partners, for the faith they have placed in Pilbara Minerals and our ability to become a key part of their global supply chains as they move to rapidly scale-up their lithium-ion battery supply chains. We share their optimistic view of the transformational changes occurring in the global energy storage and transportation industries and we look forward to working closely with them for many decades to come.

“Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Australian Federal and Western Australian State Governments and thank them for their support and assistance, particularly for the significant investment from the Australian Government’s Clean Energy Finance Corporation. The Pilgangoora Project will provide vital lithium raw materials for the development of emerging clean energy technologies to help underpin the increasing transition to renewable energy sources, and we are very grateful for their ongoing support,” Mr Brinsden continued.

“Pilbara Minerals has now well and truly arrived as a new global lithium producer. We are all firmly of the view that our journey is only just beginning.”

On the opening, the Western Australian Mines and Petroleum, the Honourable Bill Johnston MLA, said:

“On behalf of the McGowan Government, I congratulate Pilbara Minerals, and its employees and contractors, on the opening of Pilgangoora – a world-class lithium project.

“It was only four years ago when Pilbara Minerals’ drilled its first hole and the project has quickly evolved, becoming one of Australia’s fastest lithium developments.”

About Pilbara Minerals

Pilbara Minerals (Pilbara Minerals – ASX: PLS) is a mining and exploration company listed on the ASX, specialising in the exploration, development and production of lithium and tantalum bearing minerals. Pilbara Minerals owns 100% of the world class Pilgangoora Lithium-Tantalum project which is one of the world's premier lithium development projects. Pilgangoora is also one of the largest pegmatite hosted tantalite resources in the world and Pilbara Minerals proposes to produce tantalite as a by-product of its spodumene production.

About lithium

Lithium is a soft silvery white metal which is highly reactive and does not occur in nature in its elemental form. It has the highest electrochemical potential of all metals, a key property in its role in lithium-ion batteries. In nature it occurs as compounds within hard rock deposits and salt brines. Lithium and its chemical compounds have a wide range of industrial applications resulting in numerous chemical and technical uses. A key growth area is its use in lithium batteries as a power source for a wide range of applications including consumer electronics, power station-domestic-industrial storage, electric vehicles, power tools and almost every application where electricity is currently supplied by fossil fuels.

About tantalum

The tantalum market is boutique in size with total global demand of approximately 1,700 tonnes of tantalum metal per year. Tantalum is primarily used in the electronics industry in the manufacture of capacitors for high-end applications like telecommunications and data storage. It is also used in semi-conductors, engine turbine blades and medical implants. As well as providing ductility, toughness, corrosion resistance, thermal conductivity and heat resistance to various other applications.

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