



NEWS RELEASE

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Worsley expansion milestone

Major construction is under way on Worsley Alumina's Efficiency and Growth expansion project with the drilling of foundation piles in the past week for significant new facilities at its refinery near Collie.

A ceremony to mark the milestone was held at the refinery today (September 16). About 15 invited guests attended including local government and South West Development Commission representatives, members of the refinery's Community Liaison Committee and neighbours.

The A\$2.5 billion expansion is one of the single biggest industrial investments in Western Australia's South-West region. It will lift Worsley's annual alumina production from 3.5 to 4.6 million tonnes per annum and provide opportunities to improve the energy and water efficiency of the operation.

Worsley Alumina's General Manager Julius Matthys said the highest priority for the project was to complete construction safely.

"We want to make sure that everyone who works on this project comes to work and then returns home without injury. For us, the goal of Zero Harm is real," Mr Matthys said.

The expansion was approved by Worsley Alumina's joint venture partners - BHP Billiton (86%), Japan Alumina Associates (Australia) (10%) and Sojitz Alumina (4%) – in May and commissioning is scheduled in 2011.

Worsley's refinery and Bunbury Port facilities will be expanded and upgraded to the tune of A\$2 billion and A\$500 million will be spent on new mining infrastructure near Boddington.

Another A\$500 million will be spent on a new multi-fuel cogeneration plant, which will be able to burn coal and biomass. It will be owned by Griffin Energy, which will export surplus power to the State grid, and operated and maintained by Worsley, which will use the steam produced.

Worsley E&G Project
PO Box 344
Ph: (08) 9734 9610
Fax: (08) 9734 9699

Mr Matthys said the expansion would cement Worsley's reputation as one of the world's most efficient alumina refineries with a long history of delivering production growth.

When Worsley began operations in 1984 it produced one million tonnes of alumina a year. Other expansion projects and efficiencies over the past 24 years have increased annual production to 3.5 million tonnes in 2006-07.

Mr Matthys said the construction project would create significant local employment and business opportunities. About 4000 jobs would be created over the life of the project with a peak workforce of around 1700 expected late next year.

Already more than 300 people have been employed on the project at the Worsley refinery and Boddington Bauxite Mine. An employment services office has opened in Bunbury and another is set to open in Collie.

More than three million construction man-hours will be worked over the life of the project.

More than 40,000 cubic metres of concrete will be poured, enough to fill 40 Olympic swimming pools; 13,000 tonnes of structural steel will be used, 125km of piping will be laid, and a million metres of electrical cabling will be used.

Today's ceremony was held on the site where Australia's deepest and largest continuous flight auger pile was achieved in the past week.

Contractor Frankpile drilled the 33.5m deep and 1.05m wide pile when setting the foundations for a new deep cone washer – a large settling tank used during the refining process.

Similar piling work will continue at the refinery into next year.

Media inquiries to:

Andy van Dijk

External Relations Manager

PH: 08 9734 9237 Mob: 0409 204 242

Suellen Jerrard

Community Relations Officer

Worsley E&G Expansion Project

PH: 08 9734 9608 Mob: 0417 949 817



Worsley E&G Project
PO Box 344
Ph: (08) 9734 9610
Fax: (08) 9734 9699