



News release...

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Major Expansion of Hamersley Iron's Dampier Port and Yandicoogina Mine

Rio Tinto has approved the expansion of Hamersley Iron's (Rio Tinto 100 per cent) Dampier port and Yandicoogina mine in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. Total investment will be US\$920 million.

The port expansion will increase iron ore capacity from 74 million tonnes per annum to 116 million tonnes per annum. The Yandicoogina mine will increase output to 36 million tonnes per annum. Capacity is around 20 million tonnes per annum although a current project to increase output to 24 million tonnes per annum is nearing completion.

Rio Tinto's decision to expand iron ore capacity in the Pilbara is a significant step in ensuring its ability to meet the needs of customers and the strong growth in demand for iron ore in China.

Construction on both projects is scheduled to begin later this month, subject to environmental, heritage and other approvals. The Yandicoogina mine expansion is expected to be commissioned in early 2005. Completion of the port expansion is scheduled for late 2005, with progressive commissioning from early 2005.

Studies are progressing into providing additional rail, power and other infrastructure to complement the new port and mine requirements. Studies into further new mine capacity to meet future growth in demand are also advanced.

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