



**MOUNT ISA
MINES**

MEDIA RELEASE

Mount Isa Mines turns 85

Mount Isa, 19 January 2009

Today marks the 85th anniversary of the establishment of Mount Isa Mines.

This milestone represents the beginnings of commerce and the building blocks of a strong, vibrant and connected community in Mount Isa.

It was while travelling from Duchess to Camooweal in February 1923 that prospector, John Campbell Miles, discovered the mineral-rich region that became Mount Isa, one of Australia's great mining communities.

Steve de Kruijff, Chief Operating Officer Xstrata Copper North Queensland, said the establishment of Mount Isa Mines Ltd in 1924 harnessed the region's mining potential, and although the company weathered 30 years of struggle for its very survival, it grew to become the cornerstone of Queensland's economic growth.

"Over the last 85 years Mount Isa Mines has played an important role in the economic growth of Queensland," Mr de Kruijff said.

"From spearheading the revitalisation of the State's railways, to becoming Australia's largest single creator of export income in the 1950s, this mine and this community share a rich history we should be very proud of," he said.

"From its humble beginnings as a digger's camp of 300 in 1924, the Mount Isa of today is a thriving city of more than 23,000 and the administrative, commercial and industrial centre of north west Queensland.

"Xstrata Mount Isa Mines is proud to be a part of the history of the region and looks forward to celebrating this milestone with the Mount Isa community over the coming year."

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Notes to the Editor

ABOUT XSTRATA PLC

Xstrata is a global diversified mining group, listed on the London and Swiss Stock Exchanges, with its headquarters in Zug, Switzerland. Xstrata's businesses maintain a meaningful position in seven major international commodity markets: copper, coking coal, thermal coal, ferrochrome, nickel, vanadium and zinc, with a growing platinum group metals business, additional exposures to gold, cobalt, lead and silver, recycling facilities and a suite of global technology products, many of which are industry leaders. The Group's operations and projects span 18 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Germany, New Caledonia, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania, the USA and the UK.

ABOUT XSTRATA COPPER

Headquartered in Brisbane, Xstrata Copper is one of the commodity business units within the major global diversified mining group Xstrata plc. Its operations and projects span eight countries: Australia, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Canada, the USA, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea. Its operations are administered by five separate divisions, based close to the mining operations, namely the North Queensland, Alumbra, North Chile, Southern Peru and Canada divisions. It also has a recycling business (Xstrata Recycling) with plants in the United States and offices in Canada and Asia.

Xstrata Copper is the fourth largest global copper producer with annual attributable production capacity of over one million tonnes.

ABOUT XSTRATA ZINC

Headquartered in Madrid, Spain, Xstrata Zinc is one of the world's largest producers of zinc and one of the commodity business units within the major global diversified mining group Xstrata plc. Xstrata's zinc and lead operations and exploration projects are located in Australia, Canada, Germany, Peru, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Xstrata Zinc's operations in Spain comprise the San Juan de Nieva zinc smelter and the Arnao zinc semis plant in Asturias, and the Hinojedo roasting plant in Cantabria.

In Australia, assets comprise: the Mount Isa, George Fisher underground, Handlebar Hill open cut and Black Star open cut zinc-lead mines, zinc-lead concentrator, lead smelter and Bowen Coke Works in north Queensland; the McArthur River open pit zinc-lead mine, processing and port operations in the Northern Territory; and 75% of the Lady Loretta zinc-lead deposit in north-west Queensland.

In Canada, operations and exploration projects include the Brunswick zinc-lead mine and lead smelter in New Brunswick; 25% of the CEZ zinc smelter near Montreal; and the Perseverance zinc deposit in Quebec.

Xstrata Zinc also operates the Nordenham zinc smelter in northern Germany; the Northfleet lead refinery in the United Kingdom; and owns 33.75% of the Antamina mine in Peru.

Around half of all zinc currently consumed is used for galvanizing steel, which is an environmentally friendly method of protecting steel against corrosion. Zinc also finds application in the manufacture of die-cast alloys, brass and the production of zinc oxides and chemicals.