

RIO TINTO

IRON ORE

News release...

4 September 2007

President Hu Jintao visits pioneering HIs melt plant

The President of the People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, has visited Rio Tinto's HIs melt plant in Kwinana, south of Perth, as part of his historic state visit to Western Australia.

The President visited the HIs melt facility and witnessed hot-metal operations at first hand from inside the plant. The visit was hosted by Rio Tinto Chief Executive, Sam Walsh, and the Managing Director of HIs melt, Stephan Weber.

President Hu was the third, and most senior, leader from the People's Republic of China to visit HIs melt in as many years, following the visits of Chairman Wu Bangguo (May 2005) and Premier Wen Jiabao (April 2006).

HIs melt uses revolutionary technology to produce high-quality liquid iron from iron ore fines (and steel-plant wastes) and non-coking coals. Compared to traditional iron-making methods, HIs melt offers significant capital and operating cost savings, and has major environmental benefits.

HIs melt's potential significance for China is clear, as future developments of the technology will allow for increased productivity and flexibility, as well as provide reductions of between 20 and potentially up to 90 percent in Greenhouse gas emissions associated with iron-making.

China has been at the forefront of international interest in the HIs melt technology, which is 100% owned by Rio Tinto. Two licences have been signed in China and there are advanced discussions with a number of other steelmakers around the globe.

The Kwinana plant, the world's first commercial facility to operate on the new technology, is two years through its three-year ramp-up to full capacity, and has already reached 80% of its design production. A final adjustment to plant configuration in 2008 will allow it to reach name-plate capacity of 800,000 tonnes per annum.

For further information, please contact:

Gervase Greene

Media & Communications Manager

Rio Tinto

T: 61 8 9327 2975, M: 0408 098 572