

Iron ore Pilbara media visit

15 - 18 January 2008



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Rail operations

Richard Cohen
General manager rail operations – Iron ore

17 January 2008

One of the largest privately owned railways in Australia



Source: Rio Tinto

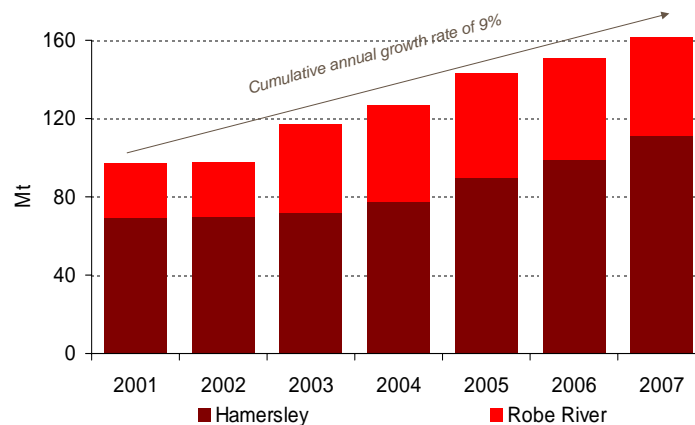
- Integral part of product blending from multiple mines
- 1,200 kilometres of track
- Backbone (170km) of network already dual tracked
- All trains are operated by one driver only
- Average cycle time is approximately 35-36 hours
- Trial of automatic train technology is well advanced

Integral part of the production network



- Rail is the key to the logistics chain
- Ore is railed from nine rail load-outs to five dumpers
 - Three dumpers at Dampier
 - Two dumpers at Cape Lambert
- The current schedule is
 - Pooled fleet: 17 - 20 trains per day
 - Mesa J: 5 - 7 trains per day
- A 220mtpa rate is:
 - 0.6mt per day or 4.2mt per week
 - 28 trains per day
 - Finish unloading a train every 50 minutes
 - Train movement every 25 minutes

Increase in tonnes railed in line with expansions



Source: Rio Tinto

Rolling stock

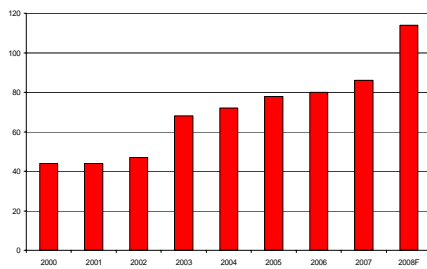


- Gross mass of each train:
 - Pooled Fleet System 29,800 tonnes
 - Mesa J System 20,000 tonnes
- Each train is up to 2.4km long
- Trains consist of:
 - 2 GE Dash 9 locomotives hauling 230 ore cars, bankers used at Paraburdoo, Yandi & West Angelas (pooled fleet)
 - 3 GE Dash 9 locomotives hauling 150 ore cars (Robe Mesa J)

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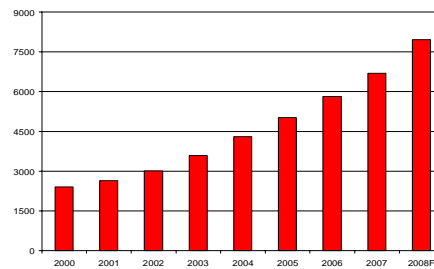
Investment in rolling stock and rail efficiency

Number of locomotives



Source: Rio Tinto

Number of ore cars



Source: Rio Tinto

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Continuous communications - Signalling system



- Approximately 800km of mainline track is signalled with Integrated Control Signalling System featuring:
 - In cab signal indications
 - Continuous update of driver's limit of authority
 - Train location and route data transmitted to train from track transponders
 - Automatic train protection for full speed and limit of authority supervision
 - Computer based train control system with real time train scheduling capability

Continuous communications - Train control system



- Located at the 7 Mile yard facility
- Responsible for:
 - Approximately 120 trains per week
 - Servicing ten mines
 - Approximately 1,200 kilometres of track
- Allows the train controller to issue commands:
 - Switch or point movement
 - Limit of authority changes
- Receive confirmation the command has been received and actioned all within one second
- Commands are sent via a microwave / radio or fibre optic system to vital signalling equipment along the rail network.

Construction activity



Automated train operations (ATO) – concept into reality

- Leading edge technology for heavy haul and freight rail
 - Two years of Research & Development
 - Automatic control system will be an extension of the existing advanced signalling systems
- Trials well progressed:
 - Simulator ✓
 - Segregated test track ✓
 - Short train on main line ✓
 - Full train on main line In progress – more than 70 successful runs
- If the trials are successful, automated trains will be progressively introduced
- ATO will support further expansion and help manage skills shortage
- Decision expected to be made by April 2008

Summary

- Operating a significantly larger network – distance, length of track, fleet, manning, volume of material and frequency of train movements
- Operating a world-class system
- Enabled by excellent communication networks and technology
- Asset management practices adding value
 - Impacts costs, safety and environmental performance
- Trialling new initiatives regarding automation and remote operation