

Cronimet

New sales record in 2007

The Cronimet Group 2007 fiscal year went very well for the family-led Karlsruhe-based company. It achieved a new sales record in the company's history over the past fiscal year.

With an annual tonnage of 1.056m tonnes the Cro-

nimet Group achieved sales of Euro3.2 billion (US\$4.7 billion) compared with Euro3.067 billion/US\$ 4.046 billion in 2006. This increase in sales was achieved despite weak stainless steel activity and globally lower stainless steel production.

The number of employees across the Group increased to 4,180 (2006: 4,052).

In Italy and Turkey new recycling operations were opened.

The Armenian Zangezur Copper and Molybdenum Combine AG (ZCMC), in which Cronimet Mining GmbH has a majority holding, also registered outstanding development in fiscal year 2007 and a very satisfactory result.

For fiscal year 2008, Cronimet anticipates, following a very positive start, continuing satisfactory across-the-group development of the four business areas of Trading & Distribution, Recycling, Production, and Services.

BHP Billiton has announced that, as a result of a deterioration of the Kalgoorlie Nickel Smelter furnace in Western Australia, it would bring forward the furnace rebuild.

Planning and preparation for a major rebuild of the furnace has been in progress for the past two years. The rebuild was planned to occur later in the next financial year, however an assessment of the furnace condition has determined the rebuild must take place now to

ensure the ongoing safety of the workplace. The duration of the rebuild is estimated to be around four months.

The Kalgoorlie Nickel Smelter normally produces around 100,000 tpy of nickel-in-matte that is both the feedstock for the Kwinana Nickel Refinery and exported to international customers. The estimated impact on sales in the 2009 financial year is expected to be around 25,000 tonnes of contained nickel units, plus 3,000 tonnes of contained

BHP Billiton

Furnace rebuild at Kalgoorlie

nickel units in the 2008 financial year.

As a result of the furnace rebuild the Kwinana Nickel Refinery will be forced to shut down for the duration of the rebuild. The shutdown commenced in mid-June. BHP Billiton's Nickel West operations

are endeavouring to continue concentrate production.

As a consequence of the furnace rebuild, BHP Billiton is reallocating gas to the Worsley Alumina Refinery.



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