

BHP BILLITON PLC
Form 6-K
February 01, 2006

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 6-K

REPORT OF FOREIGN PRIVATE ISSUER
PURSUANT TO RULE 13a-16 OR 15d-16
UNDER THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

December 1

9, 2005

BHP Billiton

Plc

(Translation of registrant's name into English) Neathouse Place London SW1V 1BH United Kingdom
(Address of principal executive office)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F: Form 20-F Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(1):

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(7):

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the information contained in this Form is also thereby furnishing the information to the Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934: Yes No

If "Yes" is marked, indicate below the file number assigned to the registrant in connection with Rule 12g3-2(b): n/a

19 December 2005
Number 51/05

BHP BILLITON APPROVES ALUMAR REFINERY EXPANSION

BHP Billiton today announced approval of the Alumar Alumina Refinery expansion project in Brazil. The project will increase annual alumina production capacity by 2 million tonnes to 3.5 million tonnes per annum (100% basis), at a cost of US\$518 million (BHP Billiton share). Commissioning is expected to be completed in mid calendar year 2008, and ramp up to steady state production will take place in subsequent months.

BHP Billiton's President Aluminium, Alex Vanselow, said: "This expansion is consistent with our strategy of focused investment in high quality and low cost alumina capacity. The expansion enhances BHP Billiton's long alumina position, enabling us to meet increasing market demand for alumina."

The expansion project will include upgrades to the existing production unit and duplication of the upgraded line.

BHP Billiton has a 36% interest in the Alumar Refinery, the remaining interest is held by Alcoa affiliates 54% (operator) and Alcan 10%.

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found on our Internet site: www.bhpbilliton.com

Australia

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BHP Billiton Limited ABN 49 004 028 077

Registered in Australia
Registered Office: Level 27, 180 Lonsdale Street Melbourne Victoria
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BHP Billiton Plc Registration number 3196209

Registered in England and Wales
Registered Office: Neathouse Place London SW1V 1BH United
Kingdom
Telephone +44 20 7802 4000 Facsimile +44 20 7802 4111

The BHP Billiton Group is headquartered in Australia

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

BHP Billiton Plc

Date: 19 December 2005

By: Karen Wood

Name: Karen Wood

Title: Company Secretary