

10 September 2008

## **BMA completes the New Saraji acquisition**

BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) has today announced that it has completed the previously announced 100 percent acquisition of the New Saraji Project from New Hope Corporation Limited for a cash consideration of A\$2.45 billion.

As a result of the completion of the acquisition, the Project will now be known as Saraji East.

Saraji East is an undeveloped metallurgical coal resource located adjacent to BMA's Saraji Mine near Dysart.

The purchase comprises Mining Lease Application (MLA) 70383 and Exploration Permit for Coal (EPC) 837 and a port user contract entitlement of 10 million tonnes per annum of capacity at Abbot Point Coal Terminal as it is expanded.

BMA Chief Executive Officer, Marcelo Bastos, said this acquisition was consistent with BMA's growth strategy, focused on delivering value from long life, high quality coal resources.

"Based on drilling results to date, the Saraji East project has extensive high quality metallurgical coal inferred resources. Subject to the results of a further resource exploration and evaluation program to be undertaken by BMA, Saraji East has the potential to be developed into a large scale, high quality metallurgical coal operation," Mr Bastos said.

"We will commence this exploration program immediately," he said

"Saraji East could also potentially deliver significant synergies due to its proximity to BMA's existing Saraji Mine.

"The metallurgical coal market is strong and has a very promising future. BMA is therefore looking to build on its position within the Bowen Basin and in the metallurgical coal market to generate benefits for our owners, customers, employees and stakeholders," Mr Bastos said.

### **Background information**

New Hope's total Coal Resources estimate (New Hope Analysts Briefing 27 March 2008) for New Saraji is 690 million tonnes (156 million tonnes Indicated Resources and 534 million tonnes Inferred Resources).

BMA is a joint venture coking coal outfit in which Mitsubishi Corporation holds 50% interest through its subsidiary Mitsubishi Development Pty Ltd (Headquarters: Sydney Australia). The remaining 50% interest is held by BHP Billiton.