

Rio Tinto to resume operations at Richards Bay Minerals

30 December 2019

Rio Tinto has today started the process of resuming operations at Richards Bay Minerals (RBM) in South Africa. This follows discussions led by the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Sihle Zikalala, involving all stakeholders focused on securing stability in order to address the issues in the community and provide the stable environment necessary for RBM to resume operations.

A phased restart is now in progress across the operation, with RBM expected to return to full operations in early January, leading to regular production in early 2020. Rio Tinto is contacting customers who were advised of a force majeure in their supply that this has now been lifted. Rio Tinto will review the restart of the Zulti South project after normalisation of operations at RBM.

Bold Baatar, chief executive, Energy & Minerals said “The safety and security of our people is always our first priority and we are pleased that we will now be able to get back to work creating value for our people, our communities, South Africa and RBM’s shareholders.

“I would like to thank the Government of South Africa and the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal for their support and assistance in getting us to a position where we can restart operations at RBM. I would also acknowledge the work of community leaders and the police over the previous few weeks.”

As previously advised, titanium dioxide slag production for 2019 is now expected to be at the bottom end of 2019 guidance of between 1.2 and 1.4 million tonnes.

Contacts

media.enquiries@riotinto.com
riotinto.com



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Media Relations, United Kingdom

Illtud Harri
M +44 7920 503 600

David Outhwaite
T +44 20 7781 1623
M +44 7787 597 493

Media Relations, Americas

Matthew Klar
T +1 514 608 4429

Media Relations, Asia

Grant Donald
T +65 6679 9290
M +65 9722 6028

Media Relations, Australia

Jonathan Rose
T +61 3 9283 3088
M +61 447 028 913

Matt Chambers
T +61 3 9283 3087
M +61 433 525 739

Jesse Riseborough
T +61 8 6211 6013
M +61 436 653 412

Investor Relations, United Kingdom

Menno Sanderse
T: +44 20 7781 1517
M: +44 7825 195 178

David Ovington
T +44 20 7781 2051
M +44 7920 010 978

Investor Relations, Australia

Natalie Worley
T +61 3 9283 3063
M +61 409 210 462

Amar Jambaa
T +61 3 9283 3627
M +61 472 865 948

Group Company Secretary

Steve Allen

Rio Tinto plc

6 St James's Square
London SW1Y 4AD
United Kingdom
T +44 20 7781 2000
Registered in England
No. 719885

Joint Company Secretary

Tim Paine

Rio Tinto Limited

Level 7, 360 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000
Australia
T +61 3 9283 3333
Registered in Australia
ABN 96 004 458 404

This announcement is authorised for release to the market by Rio Tinto's Group Company Secretary.