

Rio Tinto and Edify Energy sign landmark solar and battery agreement for Rio Tinto's Gladstone operations

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[Rio Tinto](#) and Edify Energy have signed two new solar and battery hybrid services agreements (HSAs) to increase the supply of reliable, competitively priced electricity to Rio Tinto's Gladstone aluminium operations in Queensland.

Under the agreements, Rio Tinto will purchase 90% of the power and battery storage capacity generated by the Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap Solar Power Stations for 20 years. Edify Energy will build, own, and operate the projects, with construction due to begin in late 2025 and targeting completion in 2028.

Located in Central Queensland, the adjacent Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap Solar Power Stations, will together feature 600MWac¹ of solar and 600MW / 2,400MWh of battery storage.

Rio Tinto Chief Executive, Australia, Kellie Parker said: "These agreements are integral to repowering our Gladstone aluminium operations with affordable, reliable and lower carbon energy for decades to come.

"For the first time, we have integrated crucial battery storage in our efforts to make the Boyne aluminium smelter globally cost-competitive, as traditional energy sources become more expensive.

"We continue to investigate further renewable energy investments to repower our Gladstone aluminium operations."

Edify Energy Chief Executive, John Cole, acknowledged the importance of this new services agreement in providing clean, reliable and cost-effective electricity to energy consumers.

"The Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap Solar Power Stations deliver the latest in solar, battery and inverter technology to support Australia's power needs.

"This collaboration is an important commitment to supporting the sustainable future of Australia's industrial sector. We are proud to advance Rio Tinto's goals to repower its Gladstone operations and to play a role in the transition to a low-carbon economy."

When combined with the 2.2GW of renewable wind and solar PPAs Rio Tinto announced for its Gladstone operations in 2024, the Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap agreements help secure a total of 2.7GW² of future wind and solar energy in Queensland.

Together, the four contracted projects are expected to supply 80% of Boyne smelter's annual average electricity demand, reducing the smelter's scope 1 and 2 emissions by 70%³, or 5.6Mt of carbon dioxide equivalent per year. This is the equivalent of removing about 2 million internal combustion engine cars from the road.

Rio Tinto's 90% share of the Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap battery system capacity amounts to 2,160MWh, which will provide about 30% of the firming required to repower the Boyne smelter with renewable energy. It will store green energy for reliable use during peak demand periods or low solar output, which will improve stability and resilience of Queensland's power network.

Rio Tinto's integrated aluminium production chain in Queensland is a significant economic driver for the state and Australia, directly employing over 4500 people and supporting thousands more livelihoods. The company's operations in Gladstone alone account for more than 3000 jobs, with 1000 of those at the Boyne smelter.

Rio Tinto's three production assets in the Gladstone region are the Boyne aluminium smelter, the Yarwun alumina refinery and the Queensland alumina refinery.

Further information on the Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap Power Station is available [here](#).

¹ The solar farm will have 720MWp (megawatt peak) of installed solar panels - the theoretical maximum potential output- and will deliver 600MWac (megawatts alternating current) of usable power to the grid.

² This comprises of the following contracted renewable energy projects: 1.1GW of Windlab's proposed 1.4GW Bungaban wind project, 1.1GW from European Energy's proposed Upper Calliope solar farm and 540MW from Edify Energy's combined 600MW Smoky Creek & Guthrie's Gap Solar Power Stations.

³ 5.6Mt CO2e and 70% reduction are on a 100% managed basis.

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Contact

Please direct all enquiries to media.enquiries@riotinto.com

Media Relations,
United Kingdom
David Outhwaite
M +44 7787 597 493

Media Relations,
Australia
Matt Chambers
M +61 433 525 739
Michelle Lee
M +61 458 609 322
Rachel Pupazzoni
M +61 438 875 469

Media Relations,
Canada
Simon Letendre
M +1 514 796 4973
Malika Cherry
M +1 418 592 7293
Vanessa Damha
M +1 514 715 2152

Media Relations,
US
Jesse Riseborough
M +1 202 394 9480

Investor Relations,
United Kingdom
Rachel Arellano
M: +44 7584 609 644
David Ovington

M +44 7920 010 978
Laura Brooks
M +44 7826 942 797
Weiwei Hu
M +44 7825 907 230

Investor Relations,
Australia
Tom Gallop
M +61 439 353 948
Amar Jambaa
M +61 472 865 948

[Rio Tinto Plc](#)
6 St James's Square
London SW1Y 4AD
United Kingdom
T +44 20 7781 2000
Registered in England
No. 719885

[Rio Tinto Ltd.](#)
Level 43, 120 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000
Australia
T +61 3 9283 3333
Registered in Australia
ABN 96 004 458 404

riotinto.com

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