

BHP BILLITON PLC  
Form 6-K  
November 26, 2008

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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

November 25, 2008

**BHP BILLITON LIMITED**

**(ABN 49 004 028 077)**

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

**VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA**

(Jurisdiction of incorporation or organisation)

**180 LONSDALE STREET, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA**

**3000 AUSTRALIA**

(Address of principal executive offices)

**BHP BILLITON PLC**

**(REG. NO. 3196209)**

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

**ENGLAND AND WALES**

(Jurisdiction of incorporation or organisation)

**NEATHOUSE PLACE, VICTORIA, LONDON,**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

(Address of principal executive offices)

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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 [x] No

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

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25 November 2008

Number 39/08

## **BHP BILLITON APPROVES MAJOR CAPACITY EXPANSION AT WESTERN AUSTRALIA IRON ORE**

BHP Billiton today announced approval of the Rapid Growth Project 5 (RGP5) with a total capital investment of US\$4.8 billion (BHP Billiton share). This includes previously approved capital of US\$930 million.

RGP5 will increase installed capacity across our Western Australia Iron Ore operations by 50 million tonnes to 205 million tonnes per annum\* (100 per cent basis). RGP5 is expected to deliver first production in the second half of the 2011 calendar year.

The majority of production growth will come from the Yandi and Mining Area C operations. RGP5 will also deliver significant infrastructure upgrades including additional shipping berths at the Port Hedland inner harbour (Finucane Island), substantial double tracking of the company's rail system and additional crushing, screening and stockpiling facilities at Yandi.

BHP Billiton Chief Executive of Ferrous and Coal, Marcus Randolph, said that "while there is substantial uncertainty in the short term outlook, this investment decision highlights BHP Billiton's confidence that the long term outlook remains positive. The expansion also underscores our belief that high-quality West Australian iron ore with close proximity to China and the Asian markets, is an important source of supply. With our strong balance sheet, we are well positioned to invest in high-quality and low-risk projects such as RGP5".

BHP Billiton's partners in the Western Australia Iron Ore operations are Itochu Minerals & Energy of Australia Pty Ltd, Mitsui-Itochu Iron Pty Ltd and Mitsui Iron Ore Corporation Pty Ltd.

\*BHP Billiton attributable share is approximately 85%.

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found on our Internet site: [www.bhpbilliton.com](http://www.bhpbilliton.com)

Australia

**United Kingdom & South Africa**

Andre Liebenberg, Investor Relations

Tel: +44 20 7802 4131 Mobile: +44 7920 236 974

## Edgar Filing: BHP BILLITON PLC - Form 6-K

email: Andre.Liebenberg@bhpbilliton.com

Samantha Evans, Media Relations  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2898 Mobile: +61 400 693 915  
email: Samantha.Evans@bhpbilliton.com

Peter Ogden, Media Relations  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2812 Mobile: +61 428 599 190  
Email: Peter.Ogden@bhpbilliton.com

Leng Lau, Investor Relations  
Tel: +61 3 9609 4202 Mobile: +61 403 533 706  
email: Leng.Y.Lau@bhpbilliton.com

Illtud Harri, Media Relations  
Tel: +44 20 7802 4195 Mobile: +44 7920 237 246  
email: Illtud.Harri@bhpbilliton.com

### **United States**

Scott Espenshade, Investor Relations  
Tel: +1 713 599 6431 Mobile: +1 713 208 8565  
email: Scott.Espenshade@bhpbilliton.com

Ruban Yogarajah, Media Relations  
Tel: US +1 713 966 2907 or UK +44 20 7802 4033  
Mobile: UK +44 7827 082 022  
email: [Ruban.Yogarajah@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Ruban.Yogarajah@bhpbilliton.com)

### **BHP Billiton Limited ABN 49 004 028 077**

Registered in Australia  
Registered Office: Level 27, 180 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000  
Telephone +61 1300 554 757 Facsimile +61 3 9609 3015

### **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**

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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 Limited and BHP Billiton Plc

Date: 25 November 2008

By: Jane McAloon

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Name: Jane McAloon  
Title: Group Company Secretary