

BHP BILLITON LTD  
Form 6-K  
July 26, 2013

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# SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, DC 20549

## FORM 6-K

### REPORT OF FOREIGN PRIVATE ISSUER

Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16 of

the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

July 25, 2013

<u>Commission File Number</u>	<u>Translation of registrant's name into English; Address of principal executive offices</u>
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	BHP Billiton Limited (ABN 49 004 028 077) 180 LONSDALE STREET, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA 3000 AUSTRALIA
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-	BHP Billiton Plc (REG. NO. 3196209) NEATHOUSE PLACE, VICTORIA, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM
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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

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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): 82-

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NEWS RELEASE

Release Time:  
IMMEDIATE

Date:  
25 July 2013

Number:  
17/13

#### BHP BILLITON APPROVES ESCONDIDA WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

BHP Billiton today approved an investment of US\$1,972 million (BHP Billiton share) to sustain operations at Escondida in Chile, by constructing a new 2,500 litre per second sea-water desalination facility.

The project will ensure continued water supply to Escondida, as water use increases upon completion of the 152,000 tonne per day OGP1 copper concentrator.

Construction of the new desalination facility will commence in July 2013 and will include the development of two pipelines, four high pressure pump stations, a reservoir at the mine site and high voltage infrastructure to support the system. The new facility will be commissioned in 2017.

BHP Billiton Copper President, Peter Beaven, said: "Securing a sustainable water supply in the Atacama Desert is a major priority for all Chilean copper producers, so the approval of the Escondida Water Supply project is a significant milestone for our business. The new desalination facility will minimise our reliance on the region's aquifers, which will help us to meet our environmental commitments and enable us to achieve our long-term business strategy."

Escondida is located 3,100 meters above sea level, 170km South-East of the City of Antofagasta. It is owned by BHP Billiton (57.5%), Rio Tinto (30.0%), JECO Corporation (10.0%) and JECO 2 Ltd (2.5%). BHP Billiton operates the Escondida mine.

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

Media Relations

Australia  
Gabrielle Notley  
Tel: +61 3 9609 3830

Mobile: +61 477 325 803  
email: Gabrielle.Notley@bhpbilliton.com

Fiona Hadley  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2211  
Mobile: +61 427 777 908  
email: Fiona.Hadley@bhpbilliton.com

Eleanor Nichols  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2360  
Mobile: +61 407 064 748  
email: Eleanor.Nichols@bhpbilliton.com

United Kingdom  
Ruban Yogarajah  
Tel: +44 20 7802 4033  
Mobile: +44 7827 082 022  
email: Ruban.Yogarajah@bhpbilliton.com

Jennifer White  
Tel: +44 20 7802 7462  
Mobile: +44 7827 253 764  
email: Jennifer.White@bhpbilliton.com

Americas  
Jaryl Strong Tel: +1 713 499 5548  
Mobile: +1 281 222 6627  
email: Jaryl.Strong@bhpbilliton.com

#### Investor Relations

Australia  
James Agar  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2222  
Mobile: +61 467 807 064  
email: James.Agar@bhpbilliton.com

Andrew Gunn  
Tel: +61 3 9609 3575  
Mobile: +61 402 087 354  
email: Andrew.Gunn@bhpbilliton.com

United Kingdom and South Africa  
Tara Dines  
Tel : +44 20 7802 7113  
Mobile : +44 7825 342 232  
Email : Tara.Dines@bhpbilliton.com

Americas  
James Agar  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2222

Mobile: +61 467 807 064  
email: James.Agar@bhpbilliton.com

Matt Chism  
Tel: +1 71 359 96158  
Mobile: +1 281 782 2238  
email: Matt.E.Chism@bhpbilliton.com

BHP Billiton Limited  
ABN 49 004 028 077  
Registered in Australia  
Registered Office:  
180 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia  
Tel +61 1300 55 4757  
Fax +61 3 9609 3015

BHP Billiton Plc  
Registration number 3196209  
Registered in England and Wales  
Registered Office:  
Neathouse Place  
London SW1V 1BH United Kingdom  
Tel +44 20 7802 4000  
Fax +44 20 7802 4111

Members of the BHP Billiton Group which 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.

Date : July 25, 2013

BHP Billiton Limited (ABN 49 004 028 077) BHP Billiton  
Plc (REG. NO. 3196209)

By: /s/ Jane McAloon  
Name: Jane McAloon  
Title: Group Company Secretary