

BHP BILLITON LTD
Form 6-K
August 10, 2011

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

August 09, 2011

<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-

NEWS RELEASE

Release Time:
IMMEDIATE

Date:
9 August 2011

Number:
23/11

BHP BILLITON TO ACQUIRE HWE MINING SUBSIDIARIES

BHP Billiton has signed a Heads of Agreement with Leighton Holdings to acquire the HWE Mining subsidiaries that provide contract mining services to its Western Australia Iron Ore operations. The Heads of Agreement relates to the mining equipment, people and related assets that service the Area C, Yandi and Orebody 23/25 operations. These operations collectively account for almost 70 per cent of Western Australia Iron Ore's total material movement. The purchase price is US\$735 million (A\$705 million), subject to working capital adjustments.

BHP Billiton President Iron Ore, Ian Ashby said: "While this move to an owner-operator model will remove a layer of complexity and costs from our business, the real focus of this proposed transaction is the work force. Transitioning to owner operator in this way, rather than by replacing contractors through direct recruitment, is a lower risk strategy as it would be challenging to replace the highly skilled and long serving HWE employees in the current environment."

The proposed acquisition is consistent with BHP Billiton's previously stated intention to move the Western Australia Iron Ore business from contract mining to owner-operator mining. Subject to due diligence, definitive agreements and relevant internal and regulatory approvals, the transaction is expected to close during the fourth quarter of calendar year 2011.

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found at: www.bhpbilliton.com

Media Relations

Australia

Samantha Stevens
Tel: +61 3 9609 2898 Mobile: +61 400 693 915
email: Samantha.Stevens@bhpbilliton.com

Kelly Quirke

Tel: +61 3 9609 2896 Mobile: +61 429 966 312

email: Kelly.Quirke@bhpbilliton.com

Fiona Martin

Tel: +61 3 9609 2211 Mobile: +61 427 777 908

email: Fiona.Martin2@bhpbilliton.com

United Kingdom and Americas

Ruban Yogarajah

Tel: US +1 713 966 2907 or UK +44 20 7802 4033

Mobile: UK +44 7827 082 022

email: Ruban.Yogarajah@bhpbilliton.com

Investor Relations

Australia

Andrew Gunn

Tel: +61 3 9609 3575 Mobile: +61 439 558 454

email: Andrew.Gunn@bhpbilliton.com

United Kingdom and South Africa

Brendan Harris

Tel: +44 20 7802 4131

Mobile: +44 7990 527 726

email: Brendan.Harris@bhpbilliton.com

Americas

Scott Espenshade

Tel: +1 713 599 6431 Mobile: +1 713 208 8565

email: Scott.Espenshade@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

SIGNATURES

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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 : August 09, 2011

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