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HWE Mining awarded \$344 million contract at Rio Tinto's Mesa A iron ore operation, WA

HWE Mining, a wholly owned subsidiary of Leighton Contractors Pty Limited, has been awarded a \$344 million contract to provide mine development services at Rio Tinto's Mesa A iron ore operation, located 50 kilometres from Pannawonica in Western Australia's Pilbara region.

The project is the first major contract to be awarded by Rio Tinto Iron Ore to HWE Mining. It will see HWE Mining design and construct the ore handling and train loading plant, as well as associated mine infrastructure. In addition, HWE Mining will carry out pre-strip work to establish the Mesa A operation by late 2009.

Peter McMorrow, Managing Director of Leighton Contractors, said that the project would be led by HWE Mining and would utilise the multi-disciplinary expertise of Leighton Contractors' mining, construction and industrial divisions.

"The Mesa A project is a key operation for Rio Tinto Iron Ore and will provide Leighton Contractors with an opportunity to demonstrate the depth of expertise within our mining, construction and industrial network," Mr McMorrow said.

Craig Laslett, Executive General Manager of Leighton Contractors' Mining Division, said HWE Mining was well placed to lead the company's first major mine development project with Rio Tinto Iron Ore.

"HWE Mining's experience with the design, construction and set-up of iron ore mining operations in Western Australia's Pilbara region is particularly well suited to the requirements of the Mesa A project," Mr Laslett said.



“This project will provide HWE Mining with a strong platform from which we look forward to building a highly successful partnership with Rio Tinto Iron Ore,” Mr Laslett said.

On completion of the mine development program in late 2009, the Mesa A mine will be operated by Rio Tinto and is expected to produce 25 million tonnes of iron ore per year.

Leighton Contractors is one of Australia’s leading construction, mining, services and telecommunications groups with over \$8 billion of work in hand, employing more than 7,500 people across Australia and New Zealand.

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