

# NEWS RELEASE

**Release Time** IMMEDIATE

**Date** 22 April 2015

## **DIVERSITY A SOURCE OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

Workforce diversity and inclusion in the resources industry is even more important in challenging times and can be a source of competitive advantage, says BHP Billiton's Head of Group Investments and Value Management, Vanessa Torres.

Ms Torres delivered a speech at the Women in Energy and Resources Leadership Summit in Perth today, alongside female colleagues from the resources and energy industries, who celebrated the strong contribution female leaders make to their workplaces.

Reflecting on her own career in the mining industry and the important business benefit that flows from employees who are diverse thinkers, Ms Torres shared the lessons of her two decade career in the mining industry.

"I have been fortunate to experience the many facets of the mining business over two decades, as well as a few commodity price cycles," she said.

"One thing that I've learned is that business performance and strategy is what distinguishes companies like BHP Billiton, an industry leader founded 130 years ago."

Ms Torres went on to say that in the current environment which is full of uncertainties and opportunities, diversity is vital in creating shareholder value.

"The best ideas come from people who think differently and work collaboratively. Diversity of thought is the ultimate objective which can only be achieved in an inclusive environment where everyone feels their ideas are valued and can speak up," she said.

"Diversity of thought results in higher performance and therefore shareholder value."

BHP Billiton has prioritised diversity and inclusion as one of the Company's key strategic objectives, which translates into a number of initiatives:

- Assessment of data to support the business case for diversity, as BHP Billiton's 2013 Employee Perception Survey showed that increased inclusion correlates with increased performance;
- Establishment of Inclusion and Diversity councils throughout the organisation;
- Deployment of unconscious bias training in large scale, which has already started with its Group Management Committee and will be ultimately delivered to all leaders and employees;
- Indigenous representation targets throughout the business;
- Identifying qualified women in succession plans for key leadership roles as well as piloting senior executive female sponsorship program;
- Company-wide female retention and recruitment targets for each financial year, including a focus on recruiting female Graduates;

- And, finally, by establishing inclusion and diversity as KPIs in the scorecards of all leaders across the company.

In concluding, Ms Torres said diversity and inclusion can only be achieved with good leadership.

“I do believe that being a good leader is the best thing we can do, one by one, to change hearts and minds in the workplace to help our organisations to become more inclusive.”

Ms Vanessa Torres is BHP Billiton’s Head of Investments and Value Management, based in Melbourne. A chemical engineer by training, Ms Torres joined BHP Billiton almost eight years ago in the Nickel West business and has been in Melbourne for the past four years. Prior to joining BHP Billiton, she worked for 16 years in North and South America in projects, business development and strategy. She was born in Brazil, in an area home to the Country’s mining and steel industry.

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

## **Media Relations**

### **Australia**

Emily Perry  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2800 Mobile: +61 477 325 803  
email: [Emily.Perry@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Emily.Perry@bhpbilliton.com)

Paul Hitchins  
Tel: + 61 3 9609 2592 Mobile: + 61 419 315 001  
email: [Paul.Hitchins@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Paul.Hitchins@bhpbilliton.com)

Eleanor Nichols  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2360 Mobile: +61 407 064 748  
email: [Eleanor.Nichols@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Eleanor.Nichols@bhpbilliton.com)

### **United Kingdom**

Ruban Yogarajah  
Tel: +44 20 7802 4033 Mobile: +44 7827 082 022  
email: [Ruban.Yogarajah@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Ruban.Yogarajah@bhpbilliton.com)

Jennifer White  
Tel: +44 20 7802 7462 Mobile: +44 7827 253 764  
email: [Jennifer.White@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Jennifer.White@bhpbilliton.com)

### **Americas**

Ruban Yogarajah  
Tel: +44 20 7802 4033 Mobile: +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 16, 171 Collins Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia  
Tel +61 1300 55 4757 Fax +61 3 9609 3015

## **Investor Relations**

### **Australia**

Tara Dines  
Tel: +61 3 9609 2222 Mobile: +61 499 249 005  
email: [Tara.Dines@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Tara.Dines@bhpbilliton.com)

Andrew Gunn  
Tel: +61 3 9609 3575 Mobile: +61 402 087 354  
email: [Andrew.Gunn@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Andrew.Gunn@bhpbilliton.com)

### **United Kingdom and South Africa**

Jonathan Price  
Tel: +44 20 7802 4131 Mobile: +44 7990 527 726  
email: [Jonathan.H.Price@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Jonathan.H.Price@bhpbilliton.com)

Dean Simon  
Tel: +44 20 7802 7461 Mobile: +44 7717 511 193  
email: [Dean.Simon@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Dean.Simon@bhpbilliton.com)

### **Americas**

James Agar  
Tel: +1 212 310 1421 Mobile: +1 347 882 3011  
email: [James.Agar@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:James.Agar@bhpbilliton.com)

Joseph Suarez  
Tel: +1 212 310 1422 Mobile: +1 646 400 3803  
email: [Joseph.Suarez@bhpbilliton.com](mailto:Joseph.Suarez@bhpbilliton.com)

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

Members of the BHP Billiton Group which is headquartered in Australia