Scan to view SRE animation video



Smelter Refinery Expansion Project

Since 1988, BHP's Olympic Dam Smelter has treated copper sourced from local orebodies before exporting the refined product to local and international customers. BHP is now seeking regulatory approval to expand the smelter and refinery capacity at Olympic Dam which is a core component of BHP's copper growth plans in South Australia.

Global copper demand is projected to grow 70 per cent by 2050 and Copper SA has a generational opportunity to significantly grow copper production - delivering more of the metal the world needs.

It is BHP's ambition to build a globally significant mine-to- metal copper province in South Australia, bringing together the Olympic Dam underground mine and the more recently acquired Prominent Hill and Carrapateena mines. The Antaka exploration project may also be a future source of copper in the region. The proposed Olympic Dam Smelter Refinery Expansion Project (SRE Project) supports this ambition by increasing the copper smelting and refining capacity at Olympic Dam. The SRE Project will also enable efficient processing of the different types of ore body found in the region.

The SRE Project will expand smelting and refinery capacity to support an increase in copper production to approximately 500 thousand tonnes per annum and potentially up to 650 thousand tonnes per annum. The SRE Project will deliver a sustainable, highly productive, and more resilient smelting and refining process that will enable the Olympic Dam copper growth pathway and deliver reliable and predictable production outcomes to realise regional opportunities.

The Olympic Dam smelter currently treats high grade copper concentrates through a single smelter process. This single smelter process has suited the copper resource located in the northern area of the mine. Mining activity has gradually moved south to a different part of the ore body where the copper resource contains more sulphur and this requires a different processing method.

Key elements of this project are:

- The development of a two-stage smelting process involving a new primary smelting furnace and the utilisation of the existing furnace.
- Expanded refining facilities to produce cathode copper, gold, and silver.

The SRE project will require new facilities, infrastructure, and services, and the upgrade, removal and/or relocation of existing facilities and services at the processing site.

Assessment Process

The SRE Project was declared an Impact Assessed Development via Section 108(1)(C) of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act (2016) (SA) in August 2024. The declaration reflects the nature, scale and significance of the SRE Project to South Australia. To meet the requirements of an impact assessed development, the Assessment Requirements for the SRE Project EIS, dated September 2025, were published by the Department for Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) on the PlanSA website on the 5th November 2025. BHP has developed an EIS in accordance with these requirements, the EIS was submitted to Government on 6 September 2026.