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Industry news : July 2007

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Steel operations resume after floods

Molten metal being prepared for casting
Photo Copyright: Getty Images

A number of steel operations in Sheffield were affected by recent flooding, caused by the torrential rain in late June. Outokumpo's Thin Strip Steel operations, based in Meadowhall and Stockbridge, and Sheffield Forgemasters plant were flooded, halting production. Thin Strip Steel produces stainless steel products in coil form and Sheffield Forgemasters produce a broad range of forged and cast steel products. Both companies are hoping to have all their plants in full production shortly.

Source : Metal Bulletin Monday 16th July

http://www.sheffieldforgemasters.com/news/2007/07/forgemasters-urge-flood-action-as-operations-near-full-production

Aluminium smelting to continue in Fortwilliam

The mining gaint Rio Tinto, who are currently negotiating a takeover bid of Alcan, the global aluminium manufactures, have reassured the employees at Alcan's smelter, based in Fortwilliam, that their jobs should be safe once the deal has been finalised. This smelter

began operations in 1929 and was the third to be opened by the British Aluminium Company Ltd which later merged with Alcan UK in 1982. The highland location is preferred due to the availability of cheaper power from hydroelectric sources.

Source : Oban Times, published 20th July 2007

http://www.obantimes.co.uk/news/categoryfront.php/id/30/Fort_William.html

Lochaline silica sand underground mine set to close

Lochaline mine, in the Lochaber area of Scotland , is likely to close down at the end of the year according to its operators, Tarmac Ltd. The operation currently produces around 100 000 tonnes of silica sand, approximately one fifth of all Scottish production, for various industrial applications but primarily for use in the glass making industry. The company quote rising costs and cheaper foreign sources as reasons for the proposed closure. It is suggested, however, there is a remote chance that a new operator may take over the mine.

Source : Oban Times, http://www.obantimes.co.uk

Anglesey Mining secures further funding

Parys Mountain Open Pit
Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

Anglesey Mining plc has announced plans to raise up to £1100 000 before expenses by way of a private placing of new ordinary shares on the London Stock Exchange. The company, which last offered its shares in 2006, are looking at the feasibility of developing the historically important Parys Mountain zinc-copper deposit in North Wales . This news follows positive results from the White Rock Zone, part of the larger Parys Mountain deposit, confirming the potential of this zone as a stand-alone project.

Source : http://www.angleseymining.co.uk/

Prosecution decision imminent for tailing breach

Glebe Mines, operators of Britain 's only fluorspar producer based at Cavendish Mill, may face prosecution following the tailings dam breach in January. The Environment Agency said a decision on whether to prosecute the mining company responsible for the dam failure was expected within weeks. In late January, after prolonged heavy rain, water and silt flooded the Derbyshire village of Stoney Middleton , following a breach of the non-mineral working tailings dam. The company has since been carrying out remedial works in the area following consultation with the local residents.

Source : http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/cornwall/6907184.stm

Mine heritage site on risk list

Listed sites at a former Cornish tin mine have been placed on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk Register. Buildings housing important artefacts from the South Crofty mine are not secure and face the threat of vandalism, according to English Heritage. The Buildings at Risk Register collates all the information on grade I and II listed buildings known to English Heritage to be 'at risk' through neglect and decay, or which are vulnerable to become so. The list is published annually.

Source : http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/cornwall/6913384.stm

QPA concerned with White Paper proposals

Hard rock quarry in the UK
Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

The Quarry Products Association (QPA) has expressed concern over proposals in a new White Paper, Planning for a Sustainable Future published in May 2007. The QPA explains that in the White Paper, there are proposals that could see costs for planning applications rise by at least 40%. In the case of larger sites, this could exceed 100% if plans to remove the current £50 000 cap are approved. Furthermore QPA highlights that the cost for planning appeals could also rise.

Source : http://www.qpa.org/07-release014.htm

Scottish Executive concerns over Ofgem's proposed charges

Wind Turbine
Photo Copyright: BGS©NERC

Ofgem, the UK electricity generator, is proposing a new charging structure for connecting to the national grid. This would see higher charges applied to power generators located further away from population centres. Both the Scottish Executive and Scottish Renewables have expressed misgivings over the new charges, suggesting it would actively work against the development of renewable energy resources in Scotland . However, Ofgem responded by stating the proposals would cut the amount of electricity lost as heat as it travelled along cables saving £15 million per year and 150 000 tonnes in carbon emissions.

Source : http://news.scotsman.com/scotland.cfm?id=1170522007