

PRESS RELEASE

4th February 2011

TUNGSTEN - A HARD METAL TO REPLACE

A new guide to tungsten has been published by the British Geological Survey (BGS) on its www.MineralsUK.com website. Tungsten is highly valued because of its hardness and heat resistance and the UK has the potential to become a significant global supplier of this critical metal.

As commodity prices rise and access to some raw materials becomes more difficult, a small group of so-called 'critical metals' is causing particular concern. Amongst the metals on this critical list, tungsten is one of the most widely used and, because of its unique properties and its vital role in the manufacture of cutting tools and drills, is literally hard to replace.



Tungsten-bearing vein, Carrock Fell mine, Cumbria BGS©NERC

The newly-published Tungsten Commodity Profile from the BGS provides a concise, authoritative and easy to understand guide to the origins, production and trade of this important metal. The profile highlights the current domination of global tungsten production by China, although it also describes the potential of the UK to become a major supplier. The tungsten deposit at Hemerdon in Devon is one of the largest in the world.

“Our profile on tungsten is the latest in a much-respected series from the BGS on critical metals, including rare earths, platinum and nickel. Our aim is to enhance UK and European security of supply of the vital raw materials by using them to help inform government, industry and the wider community” said Andrew Bloodworth, Head of Minerals and Waste at the BGS.

The Tungsten profile is available here: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/downloads/start.cfm?id=1981>

Ends



For further details or to arrange media interviews please contact:

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Notes for Editors

The following is available for interview:

- Andrew Bloodworth, Head of Minerals and Waste, British Geological Survey

For additional information go to: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/mineralsuk/home.html>

Photographs are available from our ftp server:

ftp://ftp.bgs.ac.uk/pubload/cjmi/Tungsten_Profile/

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Courtesy of the British Geological Survey (BGS©NERC)

The British Geological Survey

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is the nation's principal supplier of objective, impartial and up-to-date geological expertise and information for decision making for governmental, commercial and individual users. The BGS maintains and develops the nation's understanding of its geology to improve policy making, enhance national wealth and reduce risk. It also collaborates with the national and international scientific community in carrying out research in strategic areas, including energy and natural resources, our vulnerability to environmental change and hazards, and our general knowledge of the Earth system. More about the BGS can be found at www.bgs.ac.uk.