



Export heralds success

Boost as bauxite sets sail

HAYDEN SMITH

hayden.smith@news.com.au

FAR North bauxite mining has taken a big step forward.

For the first time a company, other than resources giant Rio Tinto, has exported the mineral from Western Cape York.

Green Coast Resources successfully launched its first bauxite shipment from Hey Point, just south of Weipa.

The barge facility will be the same one used by Metallica Minerals Ltd when its Urquhart Bauxite project begins production, tipped for the first half of next year.

It comes 53 years after Rio Tinto started bauxite mining at Weipa, 820km northwest of Cairns.

Metallica chief executive Simon Slesarewich congratulated Green Coast Resources – an Australian-based company – on the milestone.

“The ability to transship bauxite into ocean-going export vessels using the Hey Point barge loading facility validates Metallica’s decision to choose the low-capital cost and established facilities at Hey Point as its logistics solution for Urquhart Bauxite,” he said.

“The established and now tested infrastructure delivers a real solution to export markets for bauxite product from our project.”

With the State Government deciding Metallica did not need to complete an environ-

mental impact statement for its Urquhart project, Mr Sle-

sarewich was confident the project would ramp up in earnest “immediately” after the next wet season.

Anticipation is also growing for Rio Tinto’s \$2.6 billion Amrun bauxite project, being built between Aurukun and Weipa. The permanent accommodation village is under con-

struction with the main access road set to be completed by the end of this year.

Rio Tinto’s latest quarterly results show bauxite production at Weipa has jumped 5 per cent from the same period last year.

Despite the resources sector downturn, Australian bauxite remains in high demand overseas.

Weipa Town Authority chairman Michael Rowland said the Amrun project – in conjunction with the Peninsula Development Rd upgrades – “guaranteed” the mining town’s long-term future.

“Together they are helping shape Weipa’s future,” he told the *Cairns Post*.

“Amrun offers great opportunities for the community and also for the people of Aurukun.

“Sealing the road could also be a game changer and open up most of the region.”

In the meantime Bauxite

Hills owner Metro Mining will make an offer to buy all the shares of Cape York’s Skardon River Bauxite Project proponent, Gulf Alumina.

Metro currently has a 39.3 per cent share in Gulf Alumina, which has also been in the sights of the ASX-listed Moly Mines.



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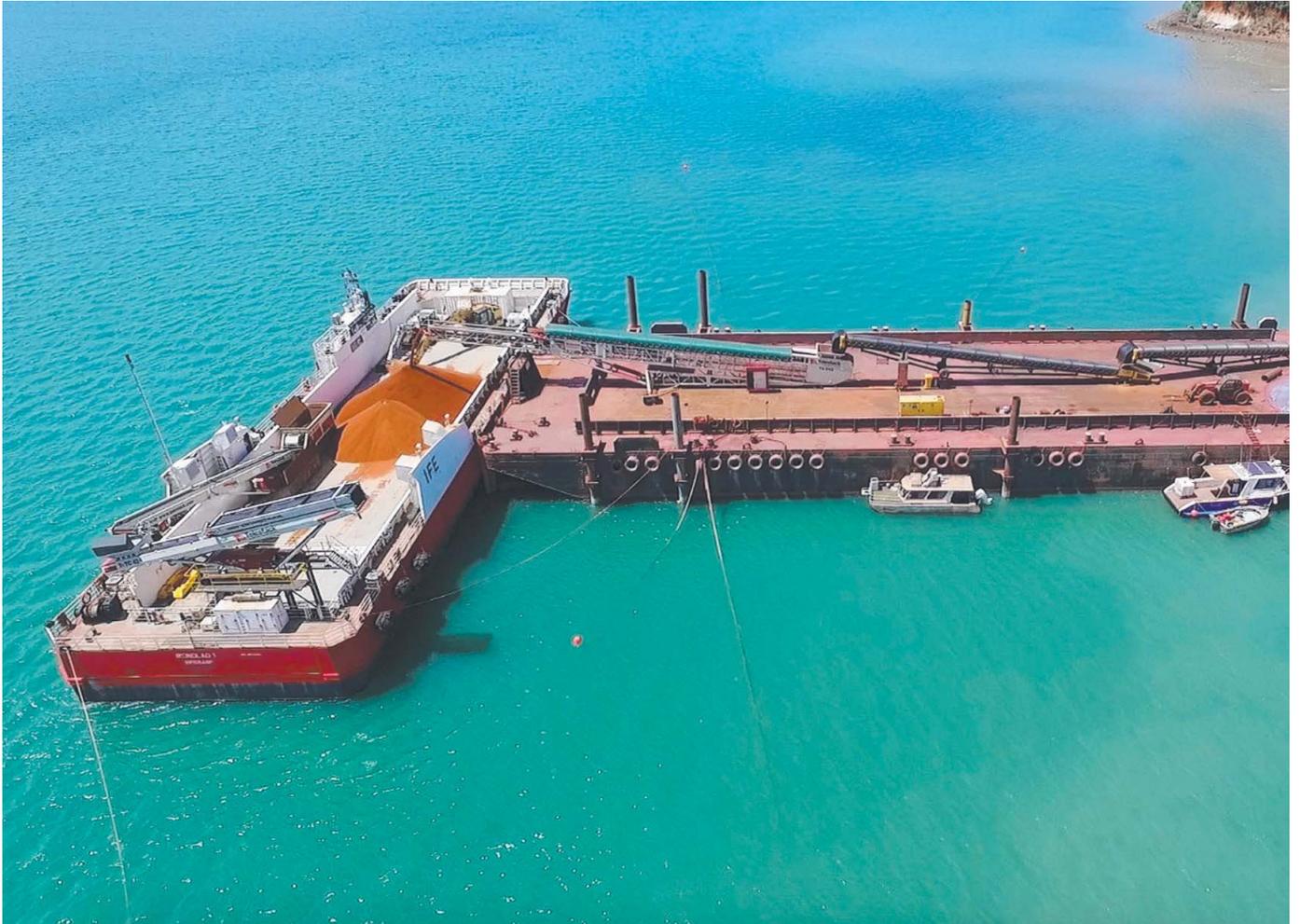
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BRIEF METALLICA INDEX 1

PAGE 2 of 2



LOADING UP: An aerial shot of a bauxite loading barge at Hey Point near Weipa, which has been chosen for use by Green Coast Resources, as well as Metallica Minerals.