

Latest news

General Update

In 2008 Astron sold its China Zirconium business and infrastructure to Imerys. Subsequent to this disposal Astron has proceeded to consolidate its remaining business, rebuild its infrastructure and to review its strategic direction. These have been its main objectives in the 2009 financial year.

Earlier this year DMS received Commonwealth Government environmental approval to mine and process fine grade mineral sands for the Donald Mineral Sands project.

As a result of the global financial crisis and structural changes in the market, Astron is revising and completing the feasibility studies of the Donald Project. After the completion of updated feasibility studies, the next stage in the development will be the completion of the definitive engineering compilation and the setting up of a trial mining site as part of the Donald project, the location yet to be decided. This will generate feedstock to be utilised in trials and allow confirmation of test work. In line with this, the development of the Mining License and Work Plan will commence.

Work in China continues on the downstream processing of the Donald mine products via the Zirconium oxychloride and Zirpaque processes.

Environment Effects Statement Update

As the EES has received conditional approval, no work is occurring in relation to the EES.

A set of conditions which DMS must adhere to during mining, along with the Minister's decision, can be found at the link below:

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/DSE/nrenpl.nsf/Link-View/8D83A6C763373B58CA2572F90011271992FBC7C133A6F520CA2572DA007FAB8B>

To obtain full approval, and full project works to commence, a work plan and mining license still need to be obtained. For these to be approved by the State, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required. This work is planned as the next phase in the project's development.



DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, MR SIMON PETERS, SHOWING A CHINESE DELEGATION AROUND THE TEST PIT IN AUGUST.

Supporting Communities

DMS is committed to supporting the local community and welcomes requests for sponsorship. These should be submitted in writing to the DMS Minyip office.



Astron's Balance Sheet

As at 30TH June 2009, the group has \$169 million of cash on the balance sheet. During the year cash was utilised to, inter alia, pay a dividend of 10 cents per share to shareholders, final settlement of the liability in respect of the sale to Imerys, re-purchase Astron shares and the planned construction of the mineral separation plant.

What Is Astron, now the Imerys deal is complete?

Astron Limited (Astron) is the group holding company.

Astron has three wholly owned operating subsidiaries, namely: Donald Mineral Sands Pty Limited (Donald); Yingkou Mineral Resources Company Limited (Resources) and Astron Titanium [Yingkou] Company Limited (Titanium). Donald holds the Donald Mineral Sands mining project. Resources and Titanium are Astron's Chinese operating companies.

Astron maintains a strong research and development capability. Work continued on the development of zircon, ilmenite, rutile and related products. These processes could provide significant potential for new business opportunities. Astron has continued it's feasibility work on it's processes for the cost effective production of titanium metal.

Currently, drawings for the furnace designs and the new technology flowcharts are being completed. In China Astron are in the process of completing environmental approval applications for a plant for the manufacture of titanium dioxide (TiO₂). The TiO₂ pigment project will be first in China to use overseas technologies. Astron are also planning to construct a mineral separation plant to separate heavy mineral concentrate into titanium, zircon and other materials.

Community Involvement

DMS are not planning any formal engagements in the near future. Our office is open to the public Monday—Friday, 10-2pm. Anyone wanting further information should not hesitate to contact Ruth, Emma or Simon.

Astron Website

Astron's new website is up and running! To learn more about Astron see www.astronlimited.com.

Feedback form

Donald Mineral Sands (DMS) welcomes feedback from the community and invites you to complete this feedback form and post it to PO Box 49, Minyip, 3392 or drop into our Minyip office at 69-71 Main Street.

Where did you obtain a copy of this newsletter?

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Did you obtain any new information from this newsletter?

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What additional information regarding the project do you think should be included in future newsletters?

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