

Australian Corporations Act – summary of ASIC relief

Pursuant to section 340 of the Corporations Act 2001 ('Corporations Act'), the Australian Securities and Investments Commission issued an order dated 27 January 2006 (as amended on 22 December 2006) that granted relief to Rio Tinto Limited from certain requirements of the Corporations Act in relation to the Company's financial statements and associated reports. The order essentially continues the relief that has applied to Rio Tinto Limited since the formation of the Group's Dual Listed Companies ('DLC') structure in 1995. The order applied to Rio Tinto Limited's financial reporting obligations for financial years and half-years ending between 31 December 2005 and 31 December 2009 (inclusive).

In essence, instead of being required under the Corporations Act to prepare consolidated financial statements covering only itself and its controlled entities, the order allows Rio Tinto Limited to prepare consolidated financial statements in which it, Rio Tinto plc and their respective controlled entities are treated as a single economic entity. In addition, those consolidated financial statements are to be prepared:

- in accordance with the principles and requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union ('EU IFRS') rather than the Australian equivalents of International Financial Reporting Standards ('AIFRS') (except for one limited instance in the case of any concise report), and in accordance with United Kingdom financial reporting obligations generally;
- on the basis that the transitional provisions of International Financial Reporting Standard 1 'First-time Adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards' should be applied using the combined financial statements previously prepared for Rio Tinto Limited, Rio Tinto plc and their respective controlled entities under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in the United Kingdom, under which the DLC merger between Rio Tinto Limited and Rio Tinto plc was accounted for using 'merger', rather than 'acquisition', accounting (reflecting that neither Rio Tinto Limited nor Rio Tinto plc was acquired by, or is controlled by, the other, and meaning that the existing carrying amounts, rather than fair values, of assets and liabilities at the time of the DLC merger were used to measure those assets and liabilities at formation);
- on the basis that Rio Tinto Limited and Rio Tinto plc are a single company (with their respective shareholders being the shareholders in that single company); and
- with a reconciliation, from EU IFRS to AIFRS, of the following amounts: consolidated profit for the financial year, total consolidated recognised income for the financial year and total consolidated equity at the end of the financial year (see page 5).

Those consolidated financial statements must also be audited in accordance with relevant United Kingdom requirements. Rio Tinto Limited must also prepare a directors' report which satisfies the

content requirements of the Corporations Act (applied on the basis that the consolidated entity for those purposes is the Group), except that the order allows Rio Tinto Limited to prepare a separate Remuneration report that is merely cross-referenced in the directors' report, instead of including in the Directors' report the Remuneration report otherwise required by the Corporations Act. The separate Remuneration report (see pages 103 to 117) must include all the information required to be included in a remuneration report under the Corporations Act, as well as the information required by AIFRS (namely, AASB 124 'Related Party Disclosures') dealing with compensation of directors and executives who are 'key management personnel', and certain other disclosures.

Rio Tinto Limited is also required to comply generally with the lodgement and distribution requirements of the Corporations Act (including timing requirements) in relation to those consolidated financial statements (including any concise financial statements), the auditor's report and the directors' report. The separate Remuneration report is also required to be lodged with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission at the same time as the consolidated financial statements, and Rio Tinto Limited must not distribute or make available the Remuneration report without the consolidated financial statements and directors' report. At the Company's AGM, it is required to allow shareholders to vote on a non binding resolution to adopt the Remuneration report, on the same basis as would otherwise be required for a Remuneration report under the Corporations Act.

Rio Tinto Limited is not required to prepare separate consolidated financial statements solely for it and its controlled entities. Rio Tinto Limited is required to prepare and lodge parent entity financial statements for itself in respect of each relevant financial year, in accordance with the principles and requirements of AIFRS (other than in respect of key management personnel compensation disclosures under AASB 124, which as noted above are instead incorporated into the separate Remuneration report), and to have those statements audited. Those financial statements are not required to be laid before the Company's AGM or distributed to shareholders as a matter of course.

However, Rio Tinto Limited must:

- include in the consolidated financial statements for the Group, as a note, Rio Tinto Limited's parent entity balance sheet, income statement, statement of changes in equity and statement of cashflows, prepared in accordance with AIFRS; and
- make available the full parent entity financial statements free of charge to shareholders on request, and also include a copy of them on the Company's website.

The parent entity financial statements are available for download from the Rio Tinto website at www.riotinto.com. Shareholders may also request a copy free of charge by contacting the Rio Tinto Limited company secretary.