

Alpha HPA's Qld hub for new generation alumina set to take off

By **GLEN NORRIS**, SENIOR BUSINESS REPORTER
12:00AM SEPTEMBER 16, 2021 •  NO COMMENTS

The Queensland industrial city of Gladstone could become an advanced manufacturing hub for a highly pure form of alumina ideal for use in lithium batteries and hi-tech optics.

ASX-listed Alpha HPA said it was on track to start commercial production of high purity alumina from next year in Gladstone with a \$300m plant set to come online by 2024.

Alpha received State Government planning approval for the project, which will employ 120 workers, earlier this year. Alpha this week joined the Australian Aluminium Council diversifying the peak body's representation to include high purity alumina for the first time.

Alumina has traditionally been supplied to the smelting industry at purities of more than 99 per cent but high purity alumina has a purity of 99.99 per cent.

Because of its extreme hardness, thermal conductivity and chemical stability, high purity alumina is used to make safer and longer-lasting lithium-ion batteries, synthetic sapphire for LED lighting and high technology optics. The Asia Pacific high purity alumina market is expected to be valued at around \$4.23bn by 2027.

[Gladstone has long been a major manufacturing base for traditional forms of the metal and is home to Boyne Smelters, the second-largest aluminium smelter in Australia. The proposed plant will be on a 9.2ha site in the Gladstone State Development Area \(SDA\) adjacent to Orica's chemical plant, with which Alpha has a supply agreement.](#)

Alpha HPA managing director Rimas Kairaitis said high-purity alumina would play an increasingly important role in the renewables economy. Alpha HPA has operated a Brisbane demonstration plant since July 2019.

[“We are developing our first project in Gladstone alongside some of the world’s largest manufacturers of metallurgical grade alumina,” said Mr Kairaitis.](#)

[“Our high purity technology offers a fantastic showcase into the role of aluminium products in energy transition and decarbonisation.”](#)

Australian Aluminium Council executive director Marghanita Johnson said the applications for high purity alumina in low carbon markets was growing, making it a critical mineral of the future. “Aluminium oxide, better known as alumina, has been produced in Australia for more than 50 years,” said Ms Johnson. “High purity alumina takes alumina into applications in a new world of technologies with strong growth opportunities in a decarbonising world.”

Alpha HPA said commercial production from Gladstone was scheduled to commence from August 2022. The re-shoring of critical manufacturing to the US and European Union, particularly semiconductors and lithium batteries, was expected to lift demand for the metal.

High purity alumina has been identified in the Federal Government’s national manufacturing priority road map as providing opportunities for more advanced onshore processing.

Earlier this year, FYI Resources was granted major project status for its \$269 million high purity alumina project in Kwinana, Western Australia. The project includes the development and operation of a mine and processing plant to produce high-purity alumina for export.

GLEN NORRIS, SENIOR BUSINESS REPORTER

Glen Norris has worked in London, Hong Kong and Tokyo with stints on The Asian Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg and South China Morning Post.



More stories on this topic

- [Sunbather breaks silence after stabbing](#)
- [Bring it on! Broncos would relish expansion rivalry.](#)
- [‘Why do this?’: Anna’s vaccine call slammed](#)

Topics

[Brisbane](#)