

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEWS RELEASE**

BHP Billiton EKATI Diamond Mine Welcomes New Asset President

24 September 2012

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada - BHP Billiton has announced the appointment of Giles Hellyer to the position of Asset President EKATI. Giles will be transitioning to this position from Adelaide, Australia, in early October.

Giles has been the Vice President, Health, Safety, Environment and Community (HSEC) for Uranium in BHP Billiton for the last two years and prior to that, the Vice President Services for Olympic Dam for the previous four years. Giles has been with BHP Billiton since 1984 in a variety of roles in Australia and Chile. Giles holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering Degree (Hon) from Swinburne University of Melbourne.

Tim Cutt, President of BHP Billiton Diamonds & Specialty Products, congratulates Giles on his appointment and welcomes him, his wife Gaylene and children Sophia, Amelia and Victoria to Canada.

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BHP Billiton's EKATI Diamond Mine is located approximately 310 kilometers northeast of Yellowknife and 200 kilometers south of the Arctic Circle and is Canada's first surface and underground diamond mine.

EKATI has produced on average almost three million carats per year of rough diamonds over the last five years. The grade of ore we process fluctuates from year to year, resulting in variations in carats produced. In addition, the proportion of our production consisting of high-value carats (larger and/or higher-quality stones) and low-value carats (smaller and/or lower-quality stones) fluctuates from year to year. EKATI has a reserve life of three years.

Annual sales from EKATI (100 per cent terms) represented approximately two per cent of current world rough diamond supply by weight and approximately six per cent by value in FY2012. We sell most of our rough diamonds to international diamond buyers through our Antwerp sales office.