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SACOME welcomes staged approach to positioning SA as global copper leader

The South Australian Chamber of Mines & Energy welcomes BHP's staged approach to positioning South Australia as a leading copper jurisdiction.

Yesterday's gazettal of BHP's plans to upgrade the current Olympic Dam copper smelter to a two-stage smelter, as well as expand its refining capacity, is the first step in a considered regulatory process.

One of only two copper smelters in Australia, this expansion has the potential to double South Australia's copper production by the mid-2030s.

The two-stage smelter will better match the combined asset mineralogy from the Olympic Dam, Carrapateena, Prominent Hill and potentially Oak Dam deposits.

This strategy supports the ambitions outlined in the [State Prosperity Project](#).

The State and Federal Governments' methodical regulatory approach to ensuring that BHP's strategy for the smelter and refinery expansion becomes a reality is critical for not only the success of the state, but the nation.

There are now several steps that need to be undertaken to advance this project, including an Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) determination, development of Terms of Reference, and the preparation of an environmental impact assessment.

SACOME welcomes this gazettal as a significant milestone in BHP's proposed smelter and refinery expansion, bringing South Australia a step closer to becoming a globally significant copper province.

Quotes attributable to Rebecca Knol, CEO SACOME:

"The State Prosperity Project has provided a framework for strategic development that enables value-add to South Australia's already impressive resource endowment.

The gazettal is a significant milestone in BHP's proposed smelter and refinery expansion, which aims to position SA as a leading global copper jurisdiction."

"South Australia was known as 'The Copper Kingdom' in the 1840s when copper was first discovered. Today's copper renaissance is crucial to our everyday lives and to our energy transition. From EVs and charging stations to mobile devices and life-saving healthcare, copper is fueling our lives and our Net Zero ambitions."

See SACOME's ResourcefulSA Copper feature [here](#)

Media Contact:

Rebecca Knol, CEO SACOME, 0409 012 007

About SACOME

The [South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy](#) is the leading industry association representing companies with interests and connections to the South Australian resources and energy sector.