

Alcoa Australia

History

In 1957, one of Australia's most successful mining companies, WMC Limited, began exploring the bauxite in Western Australia's Darling Range. Within a year the deposits had been delineated and encouraging results prompted WMC to invite two other Australian mining companies, Broken Hill South Limited and North Broken Hill Limited, to join the venture. A new company, Western Aluminium NL, was formed to develop an integrated aluminium industry.

The undertaking however, needed enormous capital input and a background in technology not available in Australia at the time. The then Aluminum Company of America was approached, with the Australian companies offering a partnership in exchange for the necessary capital and technology support. Alcoa of Australia was formed in June 1961 and was granted a 12,619 square kilometre bauxite mining lease by the Western Australian Government.

In December 1961, ground was broken for the Kwinana Alumina Refinery near Perth and the Point Henry Aluminium Smelter and a semi-fabricating plant near Geelong in Victoria. This was an immense project at the time. The expenditure for initial production capacity was 50 per cent more than the combined market value of the three original Australian partners.

Point Henry Smelter and Kwinana Alumina Refinery came on stream in 1963, initiating what was to become the then world's biggest bauxite-alumina-aluminium industry.



J.C. Smith and
Sir Lindesay Clark
'breaking the ground' for
Point Henry Smelter (1961)

Today

With 60 years of production under our belt, we acknowledge the energy, integrity, talent and determination to succeed of the thousands of people who created Alcoa Australia as we know it today.

Our people and the communities where we operate have enjoyed enduring success and Alcoa Australia has been a significant contributor to the wealth and wellbeing of Australia.

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Timeline

1961

Jun: Alumina Refinery Agreement Act ratified by the Western Australian Government and Alcoa is granted its bauxite lease
Dec: Construction began at the Kwinana Alumina Refinery and Point Henry Aluminium Smelter

1963

Apr: First ingot is poured at Point Henry Smelter using US sourced alumina
Jul: Opening of Jarrahdale Bauxite Mine
Jul: Opening of Kwinana Alumina Refinery



1964

Feb: First export shipment of Kwinana alumina to Japan on the *Lake Sorrell*
Jul: First export shipment of aluminium ingot from Point Henry Smelter



1965

Apr: Point Henry Rolling Mill began operating

1969

Mar: Anglesea Power Station opened to supply power to Point Henry Smelter
Dec: Construction began at the Pinjarra Alumina Refinery

1972

Jan: Bauxite mining begins at Del Park
May: Pinjarra Alumina Refinery commissioned



1976

Bauxite mining begins at Huntly Bauxite Mine

Pinjarra Alumina Refinery expanded to five units



1979

Jan: Construction began at Wagerup Alumina Refinery

1980

Construction of Portland Aluminium Smelter begins but is postponed until 1982

1981

Alcoa underwrites the Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline and the Kwinana and Pinjarra refineries switch their powerhouses to clean and efficient gas



1984

Feb: Wagerup Alumina Refinery is commissioned

Bauxite mining begins at Willowdale Bauxite Mine

1986

Feb: Alcoa ships 50 millionth tonne of alumina
Oct: First aluminium produced at Portland Aluminium Smelter

CITIC becomes Alcoa's partner in Portland Aluminium Smelter (joined by Marubeni Corporation in 1992)



1988

Oct: Began operations at Hedges Gold Mine

1990

Jun: Alcoa of Australia becomes the first mining company in the world to receive a United Nations Award for Environmental Excellence



1991

Mining ends at Del Park

1995

Jul: Alcoa ships 100 millionth tonne of alumina

1996

Dec: Alcoa Kaal Australia is formed (also known as Alcoa Australia Rolled Products)



1997

Apr: Relocated corporate office from Melbourne to Perth

1998

Dec: Mining ends at Jarrahdale Bauxite Mine and rehabilitation begins



1999

Feb: Last gold pour at Hedges Gold Mine
Jun: Completed expansion at Wagerup Alumina Refinery

2000

Apr: Alcoa Inc listed on the Australian Stock Exchange

2001

Rehabilitation of Jarrahdale Bauxite Mine completed and site officially closed

2004

McCoy bauxite mine operations commissioned at Huntly

Alcoa joined Alinta Ltd and DUET to purchase the Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline

2006

Apr: First cogeneration power plant at Pinjarra Alumina Refinery commissioned
Sep: Approval granted for Wagerup Alumina Refinery expansion



2007

Pinjarra Efficiency Upgrade completed

2008

Work suspended on the proposed expansion of Wagerup Alumina Refinery (Wagerup 3) until market conditions improve

Anglesea Coal Mine celebrates 40th birthday



2009

Wagerup Alumina Refinery and Willowdale Bauxite Mine celebrate 25 years of operation

Anglesea Power Station celebrates 40th anniversary

2012

Pinjarra Alumina Refinery celebrates 40 years of operation

30 year partnership with Greening Australia celebrated

2013

Alcoa of Australia, Mining Operations, Kwinana Alumina Refinery and Point Henry Smelter celebrate 50 years of operation



2014

Aug: Point Henry Smelter closes
Nov: Wagerup Refinery celebrates 30 years of operation
Dec: Alcoa Australia Rolled Products closes Point Henry Rolling Mill and Yennora Rolling Mill and Recycling Facility

2015

Aug: Anglesea Coal Mine and Power Station close
Oct: Alcoa Worm Farm celebrates 20 years



2016

Feb: One billion tonnes of bauxite mined after 53 years of operation in Western Australia.
Apr: Bunbury Port load facility celebrates 40 years of operation
Nov: Alcoa Inc. ceases operations; Alcoa Corporation new major shareholder of Alcoa of Australia

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Timeline *continued*

2017

Jun: Australia's longest running community / business partnership between Greening Australia and Alcoa of Australia celebrates 35 years of achievement.



Oct: Alcoa Foundation grants more than \$2 million in funding for three environmental projects across the Peel-Harvey Catchment. Beneficiaries include Peel-Harvey Catchment Council, Greening Australia and The Nature Conservancy.



Nov: 70 Alcoa employees and family members walk in support of the Western Australian Pride Parade and people identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex.



2018

Feb: For the 16th consecutive year Alcoa of Australia is named an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Federal Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency.



Feb: The Swan Alcoa Landcare Program (SALP) celebrates its 20th anniversary.



2019

Apr: Alcoa Harvey Waroona Sustainability Fund celebrates 10 years.

2020

Jan: Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI) certification achieved by Huntly and Willowdale bauxite mines and Kwinana, Pinjarra and Wagerup alumina refineries.

Feb: Alcoa Australia launches first 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan, pledging to use the nationally-recognised framework to step up its efforts to build meaningful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people and the company.



Oct: Alcoa's WA employee charity PEACH (Personnel Employed at Alcoa Charity Help) celebrates 40 years. Founded in 1979, PEACH has donated more than \$4 million over this time to WA organisations providing welfare, health, family, safety and social improvement services.

2021

Aug: Peel Regional Office in Pinjarra is renamed Bindjareb Office as a way to recognise the Bindjareb community as Traditional Owners of the land on which the office is located and to reflect on their experiences through truth telling.

2022

Mar: Alcoa Australia recognised for 21st year as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality by the Federal Government's Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

Nov: Second Reconciliation Action Plan launched on Gunditjmara Country at Portland Aluminium Smelter.



Nov: Pinjarra Alumina Refinery celebrates 50 years of operation.

Dec: Alcoa and Youth Focus celebrate 10 year partnership.

2023

Jan: Alcoa Australia celebrates 60 years. Australia's aluminium industry was born in 1963 when Alcoa started mining bauxite in the Jarrahdale area and commissioned its Kwinana Alumina Refinery and Point Henry Aluminium Smelter.



Mar: Swan Alcoa Landcare Program celebrates 25 years.

May: Portland Aluminium Smelter earns the Aluminium Stewardship Initiative's (ASI) Performance Standard certification; joining all Western Australian assets which were also recertified by the ASI.