

West Pilbara iron ore project moves ahead

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AQUILA Resources' West Pilbara iron ore joint venture development has received a boost with the \$A4 billion project being granted major project facilitation status by the federal government.

The MPFS means the development of the project will now benefit from a timely and efficient federal approvals process.

This status has been granted through to the end of December 2013 by which time all major project milestones are expected to have been achieved.

The project – managed by Australian Premium Iron, an equal joint venture between Aquila and private group AMCI – has a measured, indicated and inferred resource of 742 million tonnes.



Aquila said it had received strong support from the iron ore market with 31 memorandums of understanding signed with Chinese, Japanese and Korean steel mills to investigate the performance of the West Pilbara product in their respective sinter plants.

A definitive feasibility study for the first stage of the project based on the production of at least 30 million tonnes per annum of direct shipping ore, using a newly constructed 280km dedicated rail connection from the mine to Anketell Point as well as port facilities at that site, is due this quarter.

"The company considers this is a very positive development for the project which will assist the company's endeavours in bringing its iron ore project into production," Aquila executive chairman Tony Poli.

The facilitation service is provided to the project through the federal Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Anthony Albanese said the project would create up to 4000 construction jobs and 1000 ongoing positions, and generate annual export earnings in the order of \$2 billion.

The news comes after Aquila submitted a public environmental review for the port section of the proposed Anketell port and rail project to WA's Environmental Protection Authority in April.

Shares in Aquila closed at \$8.83.

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