

24 January 2024

DECEMBER 2023 QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES REPORT

Key production and financial outcomes¹

	Units	Quarter on Quarter			Half on Half		
		Sep Q FY24	Dec Q FY24	(%)	H1 FY23	H1 FY24	(%)
Production	kt	144.2	176.0	22	309.3	320.2	4
Sales	kt	146.4	159.9	9	286.9	306.3	7
Realised price²	US\$/t	2,240	1,113 ³	(50)	4,993	1,645	(67)
Revenue	A\$M	493	264	(46)	2,180	757	(65)
Unit operating cost (FOB)⁴	\$A/t	747	639	(14)	595	691	16
	\$US/t	489	416	(15)	399	451	13
Unit operating cost (CIF)⁵	A\$/t	1,004	805	(20)	1,136	900	(21)
	US\$/t	658	523	(20)	761	587	(23)
Cash balance	A\$M	3,041	2,144	(29)	2,226	2,144	(4)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Strong operational performance with production to plan of 176.0 thousand tonnes (**kt**) spodumene concentrate in the three-month period ended 31 December 2023 (**December Quarter**).
- Sales of spodumene concentrate totalled 159.9 kt. The average estimated realised price for spodumene concentrate was US\$1,113/dry metric tonnes³ (**dmt**) (CIF China) on a SC5.2 basis. On an SC6.0 equivalent basis, the average estimated sales price was US\$1,280/dmt (CIF China).
- Revenue declined 46% to \$264M compared to the September Quarter 2023 (**prior Quarter**), reflecting a 50% decline in average realised price partly offset by a 9% increase in sales volume.
- Unit operating cost (FOB) decreased by 14% to \$639/t compared to the prior Quarter, primarily driven by higher sales volume supported by increased production volume.
- Ending cash balance of \$2,144M with positive cash margin from operations of \$176M but a decline in cash of \$897M mostly comprising tax payments of \$758M (of which \$693M related to the prior FY23 period). The ending cash balance was largely flat compared to the prior corresponding period ended 31 December 2022.
- P680 Expansion Project (**P680 Project**) Crushing and Ore Sorting Facility structural, mechanical, piping and electrical works construction contract awarded to Primero Group Limited (**Primero**)⁶. Fabrication and installation work remains on schedule and budget.
- P1000 Expansion Project (**P1000 Project**) concrete construction contract awarded to Whittens Group (**Whittens**). The delivery of the P1000 Project is tracking to plan for schedule and budget.
- Pilgangoora Operation Power Strategy released which is expected to materially reduce power related emissions intensity and unit costs over time.
- Ceremony held to officially open the POSCO Pilbara Minerals' JV chemical plant in South Korea.
- Subsequent to end of the December Quarter, the existing offtake agreement with the Company's long-standing chemical partner Ganfeng, was expanded to materially increase short and medium term supply of spodumene concentrate.

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1. SUSTAINABILITY

1.1 Health and Safety

Pilbara Minerals Limited (**Pilbara Minerals, Company** or the **Group**) reported two recordable injuries during the December Quarter with the rolling 12-month Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate (**TRIFR**) decreasing to 3.35 from 3.99 in the prior Quarter.

Quality safety interactions⁷ achieved for the December Quarter equated to 2.0 completed per 1,000 hours worked, trending above target of 1.0 and 1.82 for the prior Quarter.

1.2 Power Strategy

Pilbara Minerals released its medium-term Power Strategy which, if fully deployed, is expected to reduce power-related emissions intensity⁸ (tCO₂-e/MWh) by up to 80% by 2030⁹, compared to 2023 financial year (**FY23**) baseline intensity levels. This initiative is aligned with Pilbara Minerals' strategic ambition to become a sustainable battery materials producer, as well as driving ongoing operational cost savings.

The phased Power Strategy is set to support Pilbara Minerals' commitment to achieving net zero scope 1 and scope 2 emissions in the decade commencing 2040 and positions the Company for a sustainable, cost-effective future¹⁰.

1.3 Community

Twelve community programs and projects, with a focus on improving education and community resilience in the Pilbara region, have received financial support through the Company's recent annual community grants program. This funding will support initiatives like the development of new infrastructure and learning programs in Port Hedland primary and secondary schools, a youth mindfulness program, and the delivery of a project that records the stories and language of Aboriginal Elders in Port Hedland.

1.4 2023 Modern Slavery Statement

Pilbara Minerals published its 2023 Modern Slavery Statement, underscoring the Company's commitment to addressing modern slavery risks within its operations and supply chains. The 2023 Modern Slavery Statement outlines key initiatives undertaken to date which include strengthened supplier assessment processes, the commencement of implementation of a new vendor management system, employee training to increase awareness and development of a three-year modern slavery prevention action plan.

2. OPERATIONS AND SALES

2.1 Production

Pilbara Minerals recorded a 5% increase in total material mined (**TMM**) compared to the prior Quarter, following the continued positive trend of increased material movements.

The growth in TMM supported a 15% increase in ore mined of 1,619 k wet metric tonnes (**wmt**) in the December Quarter, compared to 1,411 k wmt in the prior Quarter. Productivity improvements continue to yield positive results driving efficiencies across operations.

Spodumene concentrate production volumes from the Pilgangoora Operation increased 22% to 176.0 kt in the December Quarter compared to 144.2 kt in the prior Quarter. This was achieved through improved processing plant availability with one less shut down in the December Quarter compared to the prior Quarter. The Company also saw the benefit of higher throughput enabled by the ramp-up of the Primary Rejection Facility associated with the P680 Project in the December month.

Lithium processing recoveries for the December Quarter were 65.9% across the combined operation, compared to 66.6% in the prior quarter. Recoveries were partly impacted by the P680 Primary Rejection Facility commissioning and ramp-up, and variations in ore feed mineralogy. Plant recoveries are expected to improve in the second half of FY24.

2.2 Sales

Sales volume totaled 159.9 kt of spodumene concentrate in the December Quarter with an average grade of product shipped being ~SC5.2% Li₂O.

Sales of tantalite concentrate resumed in the December Quarter with approximately 19,128 lb sold¹¹.

Subsequent to the end of the December Quarter, Pilbara Minerals executed an amendment to its existing offtake agreement with Ganfeng Lithium Group Co Ltd and its subsidiary, resulting in a total allocation of up to 310 ktpa of spodumene concentrate over a period of three calendar years (CY24, CY25 and CY26). Consistent with the existing pricing methodology in the agreement, all spodumene concentrate volumes will be sold based on the prevailing market price.

2.3 Unit Operating Costs

Unit operating costs on a FOB basis (excluding freight and royalties) declined by 14% to \$639/t compared to the prior Quarter and unit operating costs on a CIF basis declined by 20% to \$805/t. Unit cost reductions were underpinned by higher sales volumes that were enabled by increased production volume. Higher production volume was supported by higher throughput (with one less shut down in the Quarter) and the ramp-up of the P680 Primary Rejection Facility in December. The decline in unit cost from the September Quarter to the December Quarter partially demonstrates the unit cost benefits from increased production capacity.

2.4 Pricing

The estimated realised sales price for spodumene concentrate in the December Quarter was US\$1,113/dmt³ (CIF China and based on ~SC5.2% product grade) down 50% on the prior Quarter. On an SC6.0 equivalent basis, the average estimated sales price for spodumene concentrate was US\$1,280/dmt (CIF China). Pricing for the December Quarter was influenced by the majority of sales being shipped in the month of December due to congestion at Port Hedland port during the months of October and November.

Market pricing for spodumene concentrate and lithium chemicals is expected to remain volatile in the near-term given uncertain macroeconomic conditions and closely managed inventories within the supply chain. The long-term outlook remains positive with an expected structural deficit of lithium materials supply relative to expected demand for lithium-based products such as electric vehicles and battery energy storage.

3. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

3.1 P680 Project

Construction works were progressed during the December Quarter for the remaining scope of the P680 Project, being the Crushing and Ore Sorting Facility, which remains on schedule and budget.

Primary Rejection Facility

All outstanding items associated with the Primary Rejection Facility were completed on schedule and on budget, and the assets successfully handed over to Pilbara Minerals' Operations team.

Crushing and Ore Sorting Facility

Civil and concrete works associated with the Crushing and Ore Sorting Facility were completed and the structural, mechanical, piping, electrical and instrumentation installation contract for the facility was awarded to Primero.

The majority of long-lead orders including the ore sorting units and the crushing components have either been delivered to the Pilgangoora Operation or are being stored in Western Australia awaiting delivery to site. Steel fabrication progressed to plan with deliveries to the Pilgangoora Operation, and installation of structural steel and mechanical equipment commencing in the Quarter.

Commissioning of the new Crushing and Ore Sorting Facility remains on target for the June Quarter FY24 with ramp-up scheduled during the September Quarter FY25.

3.2 P1000 Project

The P1000 Project, which will increase annual nameplate production run rate to approximately 1Mtpa¹², continues to progress to schedule and budget with first ore targeted for the March Quarter FY25.

Highlights for the December Quarter included:

- Detailed design completed to support construction and fabrication packages. Remaining engineering deliverables are due for completion in the March Quarter FY24.
- Bulk earthworks were progressed to plan with completion forecast in the March Quarter FY24.
- The concrete construction contract was awarded to Whittens which mobilised to the Pilgangoora Operation in the December Quarter with completion forecast in the June Quarter FY24.
- Steel fabrication and modularising contract was awarded to Austruct.

3.3 Mid-Stream Demonstration Plant Project

The Mid-Stream Demonstration Plant Project (**Demonstration Plant Project**) continued to progress to schedule and budget with detailed design, completion of bulk earthworks and the award of long-lead items progressed during the Quarter.

The Demonstration Plant Project aims to validate the benefits of producing a valued-added enriched lithium product using Calix's patented electric kiln technology. The processing path being explored has the potential to reduce transport volumes, transport costs and carbon emission intensity (if powered by renewable energy). The Demonstration Plant Project is partially funded with \$20M from an Australian Government Modern Manufacturing Initiative (**MMI**) grant. The Demonstration Plant Project is on schedule to achieve first lithium salt production in the June Quarter FY25.

3.4 Downstream Joint Venture with POSCO

During the December Quarter, major construction works continued and commissioning activities commenced at the POSCO Pilbara Lithium Solution Co Ltd (**PPLS**) 43 ktpa Lithium Hydroxide Monohydrate Chemical Facility (**Chemical Facility**) in Gwangyang, South Korea.

POSCO Holdings and the PPLS JV recognised the opening of the Chemical Facility with a ceremony that was held at the end of November. The ceremony represented a significant milestone for Pilbara Minerals as its strategy to participate in downstream lithium chemicals production comes to fruition. Commissioning of Train 1 is expected to be materially completed during the March Quarter FY24 with ramp-up to full capacity estimated within 18 months from the completion of commissioning. During the Quarter, PPLS prioritised commissioning and ramp-up of Train 1. The commissioning of Train 2 is now expected during the second half of the 2024 calendar year.

Concurrent with the ramp-up, battery chemicals produced by chemical converters need to be certified by lithium cathode customers, over a 6-12 month period and before commercial quantities can be purchased. PPLS is expecting to achieve certification by up to five cathode customers (battery cell manufacturers). Certification by the first battery cell manufacturer is expected to occur during FY25. PPLS will sell uncertified lithium hydroxide to other chemical converters and traders until PPLS product has been certified.

PPLS has increased the Chemical Facility total funding requirement inclusive of capital cost estimate, by US\$95M from up to US\$800M to up to US\$895M (inclusive of US\$65M contingency)¹³. Pilbara Minerals' 18% attributable share of this increase is US\$17M. The increase is fully funded by additional short-term (12-month) debt facilities of KRW200B (~ US\$150M) that were established during the December Quarter. The new debt facilities are provided by Woori Bank and The Korean Development Bank and are non-recourse to Pilbara Minerals.

The increased capital cost estimate is due to design changes, higher inflation and adverse foreign exchange movements on foreign equipment purchases, with some offsetting benefit from reduced engineering costs.



Figure 1: The PPLS LHM facility as at 17 January 2024.

3.5 Other Studies

The pre-feasibility study to explore further expansion of production capacity beyond 1 Mtpa at the Pilgangoora Operation was progressed during the December Quarter and is on schedule to be released in the June Quarter FY24.

4. EXPLORATION AND GEOLOGY

4.1 Pilgangoora and Regional

Reverse circulation (**RC**) and diamond drilling programs continued within the Pilgangoora Operation's mine corridor during the December Quarter with a total of 11,953m (including 1,939m drill core) completed. Significant intervals of pegmatite mineralisation were intercepted to the north and south east of the Central Pit.

Surface geochemistry and geological mapping programs were also undertaken on several of Pilbara Minerals' regional exploration licences in the December Quarter. A total of 1,025 samples were collected and are currently with laboratories and awaiting analysis.

5. CORPORATE

5.1 Cash

As at 31 December 2023, the Company recorded a cash balance of \$2,144M, a decline of \$897M compared to the prior Quarter. The previously announced FY23 income tax payment was the primary driver of the reduction in cash with total tax payments of \$758M in the Quarter, of which \$693M related to the FY23 income tax payment and \$65M related to FY24.

The Quarter recorded \$367M in receipts from customers and \$5M of other operating cash inflows offset by \$191M of payments for operating costs and \$758M of income tax payments as noted above. This resulted in a net cash outflow from operating activities of \$577M.

Investing activities saw total capex spend of \$222M that included growth capital expenditure related to the P680 and P1000 Projects of ~\$120M, new projects and enhancements of ~\$24M, capitalised mine development costs of ~\$32M and sustaining capex of ~\$26M. There were other one-off investing cash flows of ~\$98M (including share purchases and a stamp duty payment on the Altura acquisition). Finally, the Quarter saw cash flows from financing activities and foreign exchange impacts of -\$0.2M.

Even with the December Quarter's lower spodumene prices relative to prior quarters, the Group remained strongly cash flow positive pre growth capex and financing cash flows. Cash margin from operations (defined as receipts from customers less payments for operating costs) was \$176M during the Quarter. In addition, cash margin from operations less capitalised mine developments costs and sustaining capex was ~\$118M for the Quarter.

5.2 Preserving Balance Sheet Strength through Prioritised Investment

Outlook

The long-term outlook for lithium remains strong based on compounding growth in EV production and other energy storage applications. However, as with many emerging sectors, the industry has seen pricing volatility including periods of lower pricing. With a low unit-cost structure and strong balance sheet position, Pilbara Minerals is uniquely placed relative to many of its competitors in the lithium sector to withstand and capitalise on a period of lower prices that could rationalise the market. With increasing production capacity, the Group is also uniquely positioned to take advantage of an improvement in market conditions when the pricing cycle turns.

Investment Strategy

With confidence in the long-term outlook, the Group is continuing with its previously announced strategy of prioritising investment in expanding production through the P680 and P1000 Projects. This will yield both increased production capacity and result in scale benefits such as reduced unit costs to strengthen the profitability of the operation.

Investment in the P680 and P1000 Projects is fully funded from existing cash reserves. With a low unit-cost structure and a \$2,144M cash balance as at 31 December 2023, the Group is able to fund its P680 and P1000 expansion plans and maintain multiple years of cash runway at sustained lower spodumene prices. The Group has, and will continue to, run scenario analysis to ensure that its operation is optimised, and its balance sheet is as strong as possible.

Cost and Capital Investment Review

As outlined above, the strength of the Group's balance sheet is a significant competitive advantage. The Group is focused on preserving that advantage, where possible, through rationalising non-essential spend that does not impact on expansion or further improve unit operating costs.

In this regard, the Group has increased its focus on unit-cost efficiency and conducted a review of capital spend. Based on this review, the Group is decreasing its FY24 capital expenditure guidance from \$875M-\$975M to a new range of \$820M-\$875M, with a number of non-essential new projects and enhancements deferred. This represents a reduction of \$100M at the top end of the range and \$55M at the bottom end of the range. This reduction in capital expenditure is not expected to impact timing of the P680 or P1000 Projects which remain on schedule. All other FY24 guidance is reaffirmed.

H1 FY24 Dividend Payment

In order to further preserve the Group's balance sheet position while it continues to invest in the P680 and P1000 Projects, it is unlikely that a dividend will be paid for the half-year ended 31 December 2023 (**H1 FY24**). Excess cash flow for H1 FY24 would imply a total dividend payment of ~\$70-110M based on a 20-30% dividend payout ratio range. The Pilbara Minerals Board will make a final determination on the H1 FY24 dividend payment and announce it with the H1 FY24 results.

5.3 Downstream partnering initiative

Pilbara Minerals continued to progress the strategic downstream partnering process during the December Quarter with outcomes expected to be released in the March Quarter FY24.

5.4 Board and Executive changes

During the December Quarter, Pilbara Minerals announced that Non-Executive Chair, Mr Anthony Kiernan AM, will retire from the Board effective 31 January 2024. Following an international search, Ms Kathleen Conlon has been appointed as Non-Executive Director, effective from 1 January 2024, and will subsequently assume the role of Chair of Pilbara Minerals upon Mr Kiernan's retirement.

Pilbara Minerals also announced that senior executive Mr Alex Eastwood would step down as Chief Commercial and Legal Officer and Company Secretary effective 24 November 2023, after more than seven years with the Company.

5.5 Quarterly Investor, Analyst and Media Webcast

Access the quarterly investor, analyst and media webcast today at 7.00am (AWST) / 10.00am (AEDT):

- Retail shareholders and investors – [Webcast link](#)
- Analysts, brokers, fund managers and media – [Teleconference link](#)

Release authorised by Dale Henderson, Pilbara Minerals Limited's Managing Director and CEO.

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About Pilbara Minerals

Pilbara Minerals is the leading ASX-listed lithium company, owning 100% of the world's largest, independent hard-rock lithium operation. Located in Western Australia's resource rich Pilbara region, the Pilgangoora Operation produces spodumene and tantalite concentrates. The significant scale and quality of the operation has attracted a consortium of high quality, global partners including Ganfeng Lithium, General Lithium, POSCO, and Yibin Tianyi.

Important Information

This announcement may contain some references to forecasts, estimates, assumptions and other forward-looking statements. Although the Company believes that its expectations, estimates and forecast outcomes are based on reasonable assumptions, it can give no assurance that they will be achieved. They may be affected by a variety of variables and changes in underlying assumptions that are subject to risk factors associated with the nature of the business, which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed herein.

Guidance as to production, unit costs and capital expenditure is based on assumptions, budgets and estimates existing at the time of assessment which may change over time impacting the accuracy of those estimates. These estimates are developed in the context of an uncertain operating environment including in respect of inflationary macroeconomic conditions, incomplete engineering and uncertainties surrounding the risks associated with mining and project development including the construction, commissioning and ramp up of P680 and P1000 which may delay or impact production and have a flow on effect on sales. Actual results may therefore vary significantly depending on these risks and the timing required to address them. All information is provided as an indicative guide to assist sophisticated investors with modelling of the Company. It should not be relied upon as a predictor of future performance.

Information in this announcement regarding production targets and expansions in nameplate capacity of the Pilgan Plant in respect of the P680 and P1000 projects are underpinned by the Company's existing Ore Reserves that have been prepared by a Competent Person in accordance with the JORC Code (2012 Edition) and were released by the Company to ASX on 24 August 2023. The relevant proportions of proven Ore Reserves and probable Ore Reserves are 9% proved Ore Reserves and 91% probable Ore Reserves. The Company confirms it is not aware of any new information or data that materially affects the information included in that release or report and that all material assumptions and technical parameters underpinning the Ore Reserves estimates continue to apply and have not materially changed.

All references to dollars (\$) and cents in this announcement are to Australian dollars, unless otherwise stated.

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Appendix

Physicals summary

Total Ore Mined and Processed	UNITS	Mar Q FY23	June Q FY23	Sep Q FY24	Dec Q FY24	H1 FY23	H1 FY24
Ore mined	wmt	1,225,563	1,271,150	1,411,017	1,618,748	2,538,284	3,029,765
Waste material	wmt	6,572,687	7,311,878	7,741,062	7,965,907	12,901,285	15,706,969
Total material mined	wmt	7,798,250	8,583,028	9,152,078	9,584,655	15,439,569	18,736,733
Average Li ₂ O grade mined	%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%
Ore processed	dmt	846,949	893,500	852,148	982,028	1,704,892	1,834,176

Total Production and Shipments	UNITS	Mar Q FY23	June Q FY23	Sep Q FY24	Dec Q FY24	H1 FY23	H1 FY24
Spodumene concentrate produced	dmt	148,131	162,761	144,184	175,969	309,256	320,153
Spodumene concentrate shipped	dmt	144,312	176,314	146,354	159,897	286,876	306,250
Tantalite concentrate produced	lb	8,575	7,224	8,496	15,392	34,943	23,888
Tantalite concentrate shipped	lb	-920 ¹⁴	-	-	19,128¹⁵	24,548	19,128
Spodumene concentrate grade produced	%	5.3%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%
Lithia recoveries	%	66.4%	69.6%	66.6%	65.90%	68.3%	66.2%

End notes

¹ All financial information is unaudited and may be subject to change in the final audited financial statements.

² The table below shows the SC6.0 CIF China equivalent price, adjusted pro-rata for an assumed SC6.0 lithia content, compared to the realised price (CIF China) in each period with corresponding lithia content.

	Units	Sep Q FY24	Dec Q FY24	(%)
SC6.0 CIF China	US\$/t	2,553	1,280	(50)
Realised Price CIF China	US\$/t	2,240	1,113	(50)
Lithia Content	%	~5.3%	~5.2%	(2)

³ Average estimated realised price for ~5.2% Li₂O grade (SC5.2 CIF China) as at 11 January 2024. This includes approximately 73 kdm³ shipped in December which reflects reference pricing data up to 11 January 2024, and is subject to final adjustment to take into account reference pricing data up to 31 January 2024. The final adjusted price may be higher or lower than the estimated realised price based on future price movements.

⁴ Unit operating cost (FOB Port Hedland excluding freight and royalties) includes mining, processing, transport, port charges, and site based general and administration costs and is net of any tantalite by-product credits. It is calculated on an incurred basis (including accruals), and includes inventory movements, and credits for capitalised deferred mine waste development cost, and it excludes depreciation of fixed assets and right of use leases, and amortisation of deferred stripping.

⁵ Unit operating cost (CIF China) includes the unit operating costs (FOB Port Hedland excluding freight and royalties) plus freight and royalty costs. Royalty costs include a 5% state government royalty on the FOB selling price, a 1% native title royalty on the FOB selling price, and a 5% private royalty on the FOB selling price which is only applied to a part of the resource/reserve acquired following the Altura Lithium Operation acquisition.

⁶ Primero Group Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of NRW Holdings.

⁷ Quality safety interactions are a measure of leadership safety conversations and provide a lead indicator for the promotion of a strong safety culture.

⁸ Emissions intensity refers to tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent per megawatt hour (tCO₂-e/MWh). Total power related emissions increase over time with the expansion of Pilgangoora Operations.

⁹ Power-related emissions intensity reductions of up to 80% compared to FY23 are targets only and assume that the Company will implement the 3 staged power strategy as detailed in its ASX release dated 21 December 2023 "Pilbara Minerals' Power Strategy to Reduce Emissions Intensity and Costs". Stage 3 assumes and is dependent on renewable wind power generation and associated grid infrastructure being developed and becoming available to the Pilgangoora Operation from third parties by 2030.

¹⁰ Unlocking the full potential of the Power Strategy's contribution to the Company's net zero ambition will rely on advancements in infrastructure, technology and economics, particularly with respect to emissions-free firming solutions.

¹¹ Tantalite sales are subject to final adjustment.

¹² Based on 5.7% lithia concentrate grade. Actual production achieved in any year will depend on the actual concentrate grade and mined grade and is variable over the mine plan.

¹³ The Chemical Facility total funding requirement inclusive of capital expenditure was expected to be approximately US\$750M – US\$800M (Refer to the ASX release dated 11 April 2022 "Update on Downstream Joint Venture with POSCO") and is now expected to be US\$830M to US\$895M, consisting of a base estimate of US\$830M and contingency of US\$65M. The net increase from US\$800M to the US\$830M base estimate (exclusive of contingency) represents an underlying cost increase of US\$115M, partially offset by a foreign exchange translation benefit of US\$85M (KRW:USD 1,200 at 11 April 2022 versus 1,323 at 31 December 2023).

¹⁴ This is an adjustment on the March 2023 quarter's total shipped quantity. No tantalite was shipped in the March 2023 Quarter, the June 2023 Quarter or the September 2023 Quarter.

¹⁵ Tantalite sales are subject to final adjustment.