



## Media release

### Land rehabilitation project at QAL

5 April 2018

Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) have recently partnered with University Queensland (UQ) to undertake research around rehabilitation of the QAL Red Mud Dam.

QAL's Red Mud Dam covers approximately 1000 hectares. The dam is currently being used as a storage facility of red mud for the Gladstone Alumina refinery. When this dam is no longer in use QAL will aim to rehabilitate this land back to a self-sustaining ecosystem.

Although this will be a long term project, QAL has committed to taking a proactive approach towards identifying and understand how rehabilitation is best implemented at the site and what types of vegetation are conditioned to withstand the elements of Red Mud and blend in with the native vegetation in the area.

Manager of Health, Safety and Environment Trent Scherer said; "Research is being undertaken all over the world to find out how sites can close and rehabilitate their red mud dams in a cost effective, yet environmentally sustainable way. This is the first saltwater neutralised Red Mud Dam rehabilitation trial that will be undertaken so the research is very exciting.

"Our primary objectives for the UQ study is to find out a way to turn the Red Mud into a type of soil like medium that plants can grow in and then identify what types of plant species can grow and complete life cycles in this environment.

"Additionally we are trying to source a way to substitute the use of top soils with available local waste streams such as ash from QAL's coal fired boilers, the NRG power station or green waste from the community."

QAL has currently set aside 2 hectares to start the revegetation trials which will be based around the findings of the laboratory trial at UQ.

Associate Professor Longbin Huang of The University of Queensland's (UQ's) said; "If these technologies prove successful, it could transform the way refineries are able to manage these red mud dams by turning them back into useable land and significantly improve economic and ecological sustainability of the Aluminium industry in Australia."

QAL started this project in 2017 with laboratory trials at UQ. Further field trials will commence later this year. The current expected life for QAL is another 60 years of operation.

-ENDS-

**Picture 1:** QAL's Red Mud Facility





QUEENSLAND ALUMINA LIMITED



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