

July 28, 2017

Press Release

Sumitomo Metal Mining Co., Ltd.

Increased Production of Cathode Material (Lithium Nickel Oxide) for Rechargeable Batteries

Sumitomo Metal Mining Co., Ltd. (SMM) has decided to make additional investments to increase the capacity of its production facilities for lithium nickel oxide, a cathode material for rechargeable batteries, in response to increasing demand for such batteries in automobiles.

As the number of electrically powered automobiles increases against the backdrop of strengthening global environmental regulations, market expectations are increasing for the development and provision of high performance rechargeable batteries to enable long distance driving. Lithium nickel oxide produced by SMM is expected to see a further increase in demand as a prominent material in this area.

SMM has been expanding production of its cathode material for rechargeable batteries (high-performance lithium nickel oxide) that it developed jointly with Panasonic Corporation (hereinafter "Panasonic"), and given Panasonic's expansion of lithium ion rechargeable battery production the decision has been made to increase production capacity through expansion of the lithium nickel oxide facility equipped Isoura Plant (Niihama, Ehime prefecture). The corresponding investment will total approximately four billion yen, and work to increase capacity is slated to be completed in June 2018. As a result of this increase, SMM's monthly production capacity for lithium nickel oxide will rise from the 3,550 tons of the facilities currently under construction (as per the plan for increase unveiled on October 26, 2016) to 4,550 tons.

In addition to its strength derived from end-to-end handling of nickel, from smelting of the raw material to advanced materials manufacturing, SMM is working for even higher levels of performance in cathode materials, which is essential for an increase in rechargeable battery capacity, as well as the levels of safety and security required for use in automobiles, and construction of a setup for stable manufacturing and supply.

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