

BHP BILLITON LTD
Form 6-K
February 24, 2010

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, DC 20549

FORM 6-K

REPORT OF FOREIGN PRIVATE ISSUER

Pursuant to Rule 13a-16 or 15d-16 of

the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

February 24, 2010

| Commission File Number | Translation of registrant's name into English; Address of principal executive offices |
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| | BHP Billiton Limited (ABN 49 004 028 077) 180 LONSDALE STREET, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA 3000 AUSTRALIA |
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| - | BHP Billiton Plc (REG. NO. 3196209) NEATHOUSE PLACE, VICTORIA, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM |
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Indicate by check mark whether the registrant files or will

file annual reports under cover of Form 20-F or Form 40-F.

Form 20-F Form 40-F

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(1):

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is submitting the Form 6-K in paper as permitted by Regulation S-T Rule 101(b)(7):

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant by furnishing the

information contained in this form is also thereby furnishing the

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information to the Commission pursuant to Rule 12g3-2(b) under the
Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Yes No

If "Yes" is marked, indicate below the file number assigned to the
registrant in connection with Rule 12g3-2(b): 82-.

NEWS RELEASE

Release Time IMMEDIATE

Date 24 February 2010

Number 08/10

CHAIRMAN SUCCESSION DATE

The BHP Billiton Board today announced that Mr Don Argus AC will retire as Chairman and a Non-executive Director on 30 March 2010. As previously announced, Non-executive Director, Jac Nasser AO, will assume the role of Chairman of BHP Billiton from that date.

Mr Nasser said, "The Board wishes to pay special tribute to the immense contribution Don Argus has made to BHP Billiton over many years of dedicated service. In the thirteen years since he joined the BHP Board, and particularly over his ten years as Chairman, Don has led BHP Billiton to the distinctive leadership role in its sector.

"Don will be remembered for being instrumental in transforming and truly internationalising BHP through the merger with Billiton to become BHP Billiton, the world's largest diversified resources dual listed company. Shareholders, employees and, in fact, all stakeholders with an interest in this business have benefited from his Chairmanship. He introduced leading corporate governance practices, an active approach to institutional and retail shareholder engagement and built a multi skilled and diversified Board supported by a first class management team. This has seen an increase in market capitalisation of BHP Billiton from US\$31 billion in 2001 to US\$190 billion today, operating 100 assets in over 25 countries."

Mr Argus said, "I want to sincerely thank our shareholders for their support. It has always been my underpinning principle to respect shareholders as the owners of the company, as it is to them I have been accountable for the governance and performance of BHP Billiton. It has been an outstanding highlight in my life, and an extraordinary privilege, to serve as Chairman."

From 30 March 2010, Mr Nasser will discontinue executive management responsibilities with One Equity Partners, the private equity arm of JP Morgan, and continue in an advisory and non-executive role. He will also remain a Director on British Sky Broadcasting Plc and a member of the International Advisory Council of Allianz AG.

"The succession process has facilitated a seamless transition. My priority commitment will be the Chairmanship of BHP Billiton duly recognising the challenges of a dual listed company structure and the requirements to represent the interests of all shareholders in our key markets," Mr Nasser concluded.

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found on our Internet site: www.bhpbilliton.com

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BHP Billiton Limited ABN 49 004 028 077

Registered in Australia

Registered Office: 180 Lonsdale Street

Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia

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BHP Billiton Plc Registration number 3196209

Registered in England and Wales

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Members of the BHP Billiton group which is headquartered in Australia

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SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

Date : February 24, 2010

BHP Billiton Limited (ABN 49 004 028 077)

By: /s/ Jane McAloon
Name: Jane McAloon
Title: Group Company Secretary