
Atlantic Copper ups Huelva smelter output by up to 15pct

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Reuters reported that Spain's Atlantic Copper has raised production at its Huelva smelter by 10% to 15% since the beginning of August.

A company official said that the increase would raise the smelter's output to 300,000 tonnes per year of copper anodes and was due to improvements in efficiency and using more oxygen in the furnace. Encouraged by higher prices, some metal producers have started to reverse earlier cutbacks and project delays, prompted around mid 2008 by plunging demand.

The official added that Atlantic Copper was selling all the sulphuric acid produced by the smelter, despite a leading client closing a plant in the southwestern port of Huelva.

The official said that Atlantic had invested EUR 20 million in the past 2 years in extending port facilities to handle acid.

In 2008, Atlantic Copper said that it sold about 300,000 tonnes of sulphuric acid a year on the spot market which it hoped to raise to 500,000 per year in 2009 and 2010. Some copper and zinc smelters were forced to cut their output earlier this year because they ran out of space to store hazardous sulphuric acid in the face of poor demand for the by product.

(Sourced from Reuters)

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