

Taxation

UK resident individuals' shareholdings in Rio Tinto plc Taxation of dividends

Dividends carry a tax credit equal to one ninth of the dividend. Individuals who are liable to income tax at the basic rate will have no further tax to pay. Higher rate tax payers are liable to tax on UK dividends at 32.5 per cent, which after taking account of the tax credit produces an effective tax liability of 25 per cent of the dividend received. Additional rate tax payers are liable to tax on UK dividends at 42.5 per cent until 5 April 2013 and 37.5 per cent thereafter, which after taking account of the tax credit produces an effective tax liability of 36.1 per cent of any dividend received up to 5 April 2013 and 30.5 per cent thereafter.

Dividend reinvestment plan (DRP)

The taxation effect of participation in the DRP will depend on individual circumstances. Shareholders will generally be liable to tax on dividends reinvested in the DRP on the same basis as if they had received the cash and arranged the investment. The dividend should, therefore, be included in the annual tax return.

The shares acquired should be added to shareholdings at the date and at the net cost shown on the share purchase advice. The actual cost of the shares for Rio Tinto plc shareholders, including the stamp duty/stamp duty reserve tax and broker's commission, will form the base cost for capital gains tax purposes.

Capital gains tax

Shareholders who have any queries on capital gains tax issues are advised to consult their financial adviser.

Details of relevant events since 31 March 1982 and adjusted values for Rio Tinto plc securities as at that date are available on the Group's website.

Australian resident individuals' shareholdings in Rio Tinto Limited

Taxation of dividends

The basis of the Australian dividend imputation system is that when Australian resident shareholders receive dividends from Rio Tinto Limited they may be entitled to a credit for the Australian tax paid by the Group in respect of that income, depending on the tax status of the shareholder.

The application of the system results in the Australian tax paid by the Group being allocated to shareholders by way of franking credits attaching to the dividends they receive. Such dividends are known as franked dividends. A dividend may be partly or fully franked. The current Rio Tinto Limited dividend is fully franked and the franking credits attached to the dividend are shown in the distribution statement provided to shareholders.

The extent to which a company can frank a dividend depends on the credit balance in its franking account. Credits to this account can arise in a number of ways, including when a company pays company tax or receives a franked dividend from another company. The dividend is required to be included in a resident individual shareholder's assessable income. In addition, an amount equal to the franking credit attached to the franked dividend is also included in the assessable income of the resident individual, who may then be entitled to a rebate of tax equal to the franking credit amount included in their income. Should the franking credits exceed the tax due, the excess is refunded to the resident individual.

The effect of the dividend imputation system on non-resident shareholders is that, to the extent that the dividend is franked, no Australian tax will be payable and there is an exemption from dividend withholding tax.

A withholding tax is normally levied at the rate of 15 per cent when unfranked dividends are paid to non-resident shareholders residing in a country with which Australia has a taxation treaty. Most Western countries have a taxation treaty with Australia. A rate of 30 per cent applies to countries where there is no taxation treaty.

Since 1988, all dividends paid by Rio Tinto Limited have been fully franked. It is the Group's policy to pay fully franked dividends whenever possible. The boards expect Rio Tinto Limited to be able to pay fully franked dividends for the foreseeable future.

Dividend reinvestment plan (DRP)

Shareholders will generally be liable for tax on dividends reinvested in the DRP on the same basis as if they had received the cash and arranged the investment. The dividend should therefore be included in the annual tax return as assessable income.

The shares acquired should be added to the shareholding at the date of acquisition at the actual cost of the shares, which is the amount of the dividend applied by the shareholder to acquire shares and any incidental costs associated with the acquisition will form part of the cost base or reduced cost base of the shares for capital gains tax purposes.

Capital gains tax

The Australian capital gains tax legislation is complex. If shareholders have acquired shares after 19 September 1985 they may be subject to capital gains tax on the disposal of those shares.

Generally, disposal of shares held on capital account would give rise to a capital gain or loss. A capital gain arises when the proceeds on disposal are greater than the cost base of shares. A capital loss arises when the proceeds on sale are less than the cost base or reduced cost base. Where a capital gain arises on shares held for at least 12 months, individual, trust and superannuation fund shareholders may be eligible for a capital gains tax discount.

Shareholders are advised to seek the advice of an independent taxation consultant on any possible capital gains tax exposure.

US residents

The following is a summary of the principal UK tax, Australian tax and US Federal income tax consequences of the ownership of Rio Tinto plc ADSs, Rio Tinto plc shares and Rio Tinto Limited shares, "the Group's ADSs and shares" by a US holder as defined below. It is not intended to be a comprehensive description of all the tax considerations that are relevant to all classes of taxpayer. Future changes in legislation may affect the tax consequences of the ownership of the Group's ADSs and shares.

It is based in part on representations by the Group's depositary bank as depositary for the ADRs evidencing the ADSs and assumes that each obligation in the deposit agreements will be performed in accordance with its terms.

You are a US holder if you are a beneficial owner of the Group's ADSs and shares and you are: a citizen or resident of the US; a domestic corporation; an estate whose income is subject to US federal income tax regardless of its source; or a trust if a US court can exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more US persons are authorised to control all substantial decisions of the trust.

This section applies to US holders only if shares or ADSs are held as capital assets for tax purposes. This section does not apply to shareholders who are members of a special class of holders subject to special rules, including a dealer in securities, a trader in securities who elects to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for securities holdings, a tax exempt organisation, a life insurance company, a person liable for alternative minimum tax, a person that actually or constructively owns ten per cent or more of Rio Tinto's voting stock, a person that holds shares or ADSs as part of a straddle or a hedging or conversion transaction, or a person whose functional currency is not the US dollar.

This section is based on the US Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), its legislative history, existing and proposed regulations, published rulings and court decisions, and on the convention between the US and UK, and the convention between the US and Australia which may affect the tax consequences of the ownership of the Group's ADSs and shares. These laws and conventions are subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis.

Shareholder information continued

For the purposes of the Conventions and of the Code, US holders of ADSs are treated as the owners of the underlying shares.

The summary describes the treatment applicable under the conventions in force at the date of this report.

UK taxation of shareholdings in Rio Tinto plc Taxation of dividends

US holders are not liable to UK withholding tax on dividends paid by Rio Tinto plc. Dividends carry a tax credit equal to one ninth of the net dividend, or ten per cent of the net dividend plus the tax credit. The tax credit is not repayable to US holders.

Capital gains

A US holder will not normally be liable to UK tax on capital gains realised on the disposition of Rio Tinto plc ADSs or shares unless the holder carries on a trade, profession or vocation in the UK through a permanent establishment in the UK and the ADSs or shares have been used for the purposes of the trade, profession or vocation or are acquired, held or used for the purposes of such a permanent establishment.

Inheritance tax

Under the UK Estate Tax Treaty, a US holder, who is domiciled in the US and is not a national of the UK, will not be subject to UK inheritance tax upon the holder's death or on a transfer during the holder's lifetime unless the ADSs and shares form part of the business property of a permanent establishment in the UK or pertain to a fixed base situated in the UK used in the performance of independent personal services. In the exceptional case where ADSs or shares are subject both to UK inheritance tax and to US Federal gift or estate tax, the UK Estate Tax Treaty generally provides for tax payments to be relieved in accordance with the priority rules set out in the Treaty.

Stamp duty and stamp duty reserve tax

Transfers of Rio Tinto plc ADSs will not be subject to UK stamp duty provided that the transfer instrument is not executed in, and at all times remains outside, the UK. Electronic "paperless" purchases of Rio Tinto plc shares are subject to stamp duty reserve tax (SDRT) at a rate of 0.5 per cent (rounded to the nearest penny). Purchases of Rio Tinto plc shares using a stock transfer form are subject to Stamp Duty at a rate of 0.5 per cent on transactions over £1,000 (rounded up to the nearest £5). Conversions of Rio Tinto plc shares into Rio Tinto plc ADSs will be subject to additional Stamp Duty or SDRT at a rate of 1.5 per cent on all transfers to the depositary or its nominee.

Australian taxation of shareholdings in Rio Tinto Limited Taxation of dividends

US holders are not normally liable to Australian withholding tax on dividends paid by Rio Tinto Limited because such dividends are normally fully franked under the Australian dividend imputation system, meaning that they are paid out of income that has borne Australian income tax. Any unfranked dividends would suffer Australian withholding tax which under the Australian income tax convention is limited to 15 per cent of the gross dividend.

Capital gains

US holders are not normally subject to any Australian tax on the disposal of Rio Tinto Limited ADSs or shares unless they have been used in carrying on a trade or business wholly or partly through a permanent establishment in Australia, or the gain is in the nature of income sourced in Australia.

Gift, estate and inheritance tax

Australia does not impose any gift, estate or inheritance taxes in relation to gifts of shares or upon the death of a shareholder.

Stamp duty

An issue or transfer of Rio Tinto Limited shares does not require the payment of Australian stamp duty.

US federal income tax

In general, taking into account the earlier assumptions that each obligation of the Deposit Agreement and any related agreement will be performed according to its terms, for US federal income tax purposes, if you hold ADRs evidencing ADSs, you will be treated as the owner of the shares represented by those ADRs. Exchanges of shares for ADRs, and ADRs for shares, generally will not be subject to US federal income tax.

Taxation of dividends

Under the US federal income tax laws, and subject to the Passive Foreign Investment Company, or PFIC, Rules discussed below, if you are a US holder, the gross amount of any dividend the Group pays out of its current or accumulated earnings and profits (as determined for US federal income tax purposes) is subject to US federal income taxation.

If you are a non-corporate US holder, dividends paid to you in taxable years beginning after 31 December 2012 will be taxed at ordinary income rates on dividends.

You must include any Australian tax withheld from the dividend payment in this gross amount even though you do not in fact receive it. The dividend is taxable to you when you, in the case of shares, or the depositary, in the case of ADSs, receive the dividend, actually or constructively. The dividend will not be eligible for the dividends-received deduction generally allowed to US corporations in respect of dividends received from other US corporations. The amount of the dividend distribution that you must include in your income as a US holder will be the US dollar value of the non-US dollar payments made, determined at the spot UK pound/US dollar rate (in the case of Rio Tinto plc) or the spot Australian dollar/US dollar rate (in the case of Rio Tinto Limited) on the date the dividend distribution is includible in your income, regardless of whether the payment is in fact converted into US dollars. Generally, any gain or loss resulting from currency exchange fluctuations during the period from the date you include the dividend payment in income to the date you convert the payment into US dollars will be treated as ordinary income or loss and will not be eligible for the special tax rate applicable to qualified dividend income. The gain or loss generally will be income or loss from sources within the US for foreign tax credit limitation purposes. Distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits, as determined for US federal income tax purposes, will be treated as a non-taxable return of capital to the extent of your basis in the shares or ADSs and thereafter as capital gain.

Subject to certain limitations, any Australian tax withheld in accordance with the Australia/United States Tax Treaty and paid over to Australia will be creditable or deductible against your US federal income tax liability. Special rules apply in determining the foreign tax credit limitation with respect to dividends that are subject to the maximum 20 per cent tax rate beginning after 31 December 2012.

For foreign tax credit purposes, dividends will generally be income from sources outside the US and will, depending on your circumstances, generally be either "passive" or "general" income which, in either case, is treated separately from other types of income for purposes of computing the foreign tax credit allowable to you.

Taxation of capital gains

Subject to the PFIC rules discussed below, if you are a US holder and you sell or otherwise dispose of the Group's ADSs or shares, you will recognise capital gain or loss for US federal income tax purposes equal to the difference between the US dollar value of the amount that you realise and your tax basis, determined in US dollars, in your shares or ADSs. Capital gain of a non-corporate US holder is generally taxed at preferential rates where the holder has a holding period greater than one year. The gain or loss will generally be income or loss from sources within the US for foreign tax credit limitation purposes.

Passive Foreign Investment Company (PFIC) Rules

We believe that the Group’s shares or ADSs should not be treated as stock of PFIC for US federal income tax purposes, but this conclusion is a factual determination that is made annually and thus may be subject to change. If we were to be treated as a PFIC, unless the shares or ADSs are “marketable stock” and a US holder elects to be taxed annually on a mark-to-market basis with respect to the shares or ADSs, gain realised on the sale or other disposition of the shares or ADSs would in general not be treated as capital gain. Instead, if you are a US holder, you would be treated as if you had realised such gain and certain “excess distributions” ratably over your holding period for the shares or ADSs and would be taxed at the highest tax rate in effect for each such year to which the gain was allocated, together with an interest charge in respect of the tax attributable to each such year. In addition, dividends that you receive from us will not be eligible for the special tax rates applicable to qualified dividend income if we are a PFIC either in the taxable year of the distribution or the preceding taxable year, but instead will be taxable at rates applicable to ordinary income.

Documents on display

Rio Tinto is subject to the Securities and Exchange Commission reporting requirements for foreign companies. A Form 20-F, which corresponds with the Form 10-K for US public companies, was filed with the SEC on 15 March 2013. Rio Tinto’s Form 20-F and other filings can be viewed on the Rio Tinto website as well as the SEC website at www.sec.gov. ADR holders may also read without charge and copy at prescribed rates any document filed at the public reference facilities of the SEC’s principal office at 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549, US. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference facilities.

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Group income statement

Years ended 31 December

	Note	2012 US\$m	2011 US\$m	2010 US\$m
Continuing operations				
Consolidated sales revenue	2	50,967	60,537	55,171
Net operating costs (excluding items shown separately)	4	(37,536)	(36,260)	(35,262)
Impairment charges less reversals	6	(13,953)	(9,174)	(982)
Gains and losses on consolidation and disposal of interests in businesses	2, 38	845	185	753
Exploration and evaluation costs	13	(1,970)	(1,437)	(594)
Profits on disposal of interests in undeveloped projects	13	494	89	522
Operating (loss)/profit		(1,153)	13,940	19,608
Share of profit after tax of equity accounted units	7	1,034	704	1,101
Impairment after tax of investments in equity accounted units	6	(2,457)	(592)	-
(Loss)/profit before finance items and taxation		(2,576)	14,052	20,709
Finance items				
Net exchange gains/(losses) on external debt and intragroup balances	25	497	(154)	529
Net gains on derivatives not qualifying for hedge accounting		87	51	162
Finance income	8	116	115	163
Finance costs	8	(276)	(497)	(778)
Amortisation of discount		(416)	(353)	(294)
		8	(838)	(218)
(Loss)/profit before taxation		(2,568)	13,214	20,491
Taxation	9	(429)	(6,439)	(5,296)
(Loss)/profit from continuing operations		(2,997)	6,775	15,195
Discontinued operations				
Loss after tax from discontinued operations	2	(7)	(10)	(97)
(Loss)/profit for the year		(3,004)	6,765	15,098
- attributable to non-controlling interests		(14)	939	860
- attributable to owners of Rio Tinto (net (losses)/earnings)		(2,990)	5,826	14,238
Basic (loss)/earnings per share				
(Loss)/profit from continuing operations	10	(161.3c)	303.5c	731.0c
Loss from discontinued operations	10	(0.4c)	(0.5c)	(4.9c)
(Loss)/profit for the year	10	(161.7c)	303.0c	726.1c
Diluted (loss)/earnings per share				
(Loss)/profit from continuing operations	10	(161.3c)	301.5c	726.7c
Loss from discontinued operations	10	(0.4c)	(0.5c)	(4.9c)
(Loss)/profit for the year	10	(161.7c)	301.0c	721.8c

The notes on pages 146 to 215 are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.