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NEWS RELEASE

Increase in Production Capacity for High-Purity Tantalum Pentoxide

— Expanded demand for LT single crystal used in SAW filter, increased
production capacity by 2.3 times the current capacity —

Mitsui Mining & Smelting Co., Ltd. (President: Keiji Nishida; “Mitsui Kinzoku,” hereafter) is pleased to announce that it has decided to increase the production capacity of its high-purity tantalum pentoxide by 2.3 times the current capacity.

Mitsui Kinzoku’s high-purity tantalum pentoxide (composition formula: Ta_2O_5) has a purity of more than 99.99% with a stable quality. Therefore, it is highly valued as raw material for LT (lithium tantalite*1) single crystal used in a SAW filter (*2).

In recent years, since the demand for mobile devices, such as smartphones, and the number of SAW filters installed in one such device for high-speed and large-capacity data communication have been increasing, the demand for high-purity tantalum pentoxide, the main raw material in a LT single crystal, has also been rising.

In light of such a demand trend, Mitsui Kinzoku will increase the production capacity of Miike Rare Metals Plant (Omuta City, Fukuoka Prefecture), which is a production facility for high-purity tantalum pentoxide, by 2.3 times the current capacity, or 25 tons month. The capital investment totals 2.3 billion yen with a plan to complete the increase in capacity in August 2017.

Mitsui Kinzoku will maintain stable quality and adequate supply for current customers. At the same time, the company will actively respond to increased demand as it pursues improved technological responses and development capabilities alongside close coordination with customers under its slogan of Taking full advantage of Material Intelligence.

[Inquiries]

Investor Relations and Corporate Communications Department, Corporate Planning & Control Sector
Mitsui Mining & Smelting Co., Ltd.

Email: PR@mitsui-kinzoku.co.jp



High-purity tantalum pentoxide

(Note)

*1 LT (lithium tantalate)

... Lithium tantalite (composition formula: LiTaO_3) is used as a non-linear optical material, a piezoelectric element, and a surface acoustic wave element. When used as an element, because a single crystal of lithium tantalite is required, high-purity tantalum pentoxide is necessary as raw material.

*2 SAW filter

... SAW is abbreviation of Surface Acoustic Wave; an electronic part formed with a thin film of piezoelectric body and interdigitated array electrode on the substrate that has a function to extract electric signals with certain frequency using surface acoustic waves.