

# Simply the Best Economic Metrics



Company Profile by As at 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024

## **COMPANY OVERVIEW / KEY PROJECTS**

Firebird Metals Ltd (ASX:FRB) is a mineral resource company based in Australia focused on the development of two key manganese projects to meet the growing demand of high purity manganese sulphate monohydrate (MnSO<sub>4</sub> or HPMSM) for Lithium Manganese Iron Phosphate (LMFP) batteries: a processing facility fed by Oakover concentrate and/or thirdparty manganese concentrate in China where resides both the expertise and most of the demand for HPMSM and a mine and treatment plant at Oakover in Australia to potentially complement the feed source of the processing facility and/or feed the alloys market.

## KEY ELEMENTS OF STRATEGY

The key elements of FRB strategy are as follows:

- Develop a processing facility in China to meet the growing demand of a high purity manganese sulphate monohydrate (MnSO<sub>4</sub> or HPMSM) for LMFP batteries. The facility will be fed by Oakover concentrate and/or third-party manganese concentrate from overseas.
- 2. LMFP is forecast to become the dominant cathode for EV batteries. Adding manganese to LFP batteries makes them safer, cheaper and provides more range.
  - LMFP has a higher thermal run-away temperature than nickel-based batteries.
     LMFP are ~30% cheaper than nickel-based batteries. No
    - expensive metals such as cobalt or nickel contained.
  - LMFP energy density is 15-20% higher than LFP, due to Mn higher voltage.
- 3. Progress development studies and permitting at the Oakover manganese project, Western Australia.

## **KEY OUTCOMES IF SUCCESSFUL**

- Significant player in the manganese market destined to LMFP batteries and EV manufacturers.
  - Supplier of the silica -manganese alloy market

#### CORPORATE OVERVIEW (AUD)

Shares	142.4 million ordinary fully paid shares				
Options	8.00m options @ \$0.30, expiring 18 Mar 2024				
&	9.25m options @ \$0.30, expiring 2 Dec 2024				
Performance	12.0m options @ \$1.00, exp. 30 Nov 2026				
Rights	12.5m options @ \$0.30, exp. 6 Dec 2028				
-	12.5m options @ \$0.40, exp. 6 Dec 2028				
	2.2m performance rights				
Share Price	\$0.125 (as at 19 Mar 2024)				
Market Cap.	\$17.8 million				
Cash	\$7 million (as at 31 Dec 2023)				
	⇒ Tight capital structure				
	➡ Well-funded for 2024 development programs				
	➡ Low enterprise value of only \$10.4 million				





## HUNAN HPMSM PROJECT BENCHMARKING





Compared to its peers, Firebird Metals and its Hunan High Purity Mangenese Sulphate Monohydate (HPMSM) project accumulate a number of enviable characteristics:

- Lowest capital expenditure
- Lowest capital intensity
- Life of project not limited by a mineral resource
- Lowest operating cost
- Highest profitability index (NPV/Capex) with the
- Lowest HPMSM price assumption
- Best expertise in Li-ion batteries and in particular LFP and LMFP batteries
- Largest market at its doorstep
- ⇒ Firebird Metals is extremely well positioned to take advantage of the booming market for LMFP batteries.

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# TERRA STUDIO

MANGANESE USES in BATTERIES

<ul> <li>Manganese has a long history of use as a cathode material for batteries in the form of Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide (EMD) and natural ore in the form of manganese dioxide MnO<sub>2</sub>.</li> <li>Current production market sizes are 482,000 t in 2023 in China and 107,000 t for the rest of the world.</li> <li>⇒ Proven benefit of Mn use in batteries</li> <li>⇒ China by far dominates the market</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Manganese is used in Li-ion batteries, including Nickel-Cobalt-Manganese (NCM), Lithium-Manganese Oxide (LMO) and Lithium-Manganese -Iron-Phosphate (LMFP) batteries.</li> <li>Due to its significant benefits, the use of LMFP cathode mix is set for massive growth.</li> <li>Size and growth of LMFP market is potentially the largest in the medium to long term.</li> <li>Manganese is abundant and relatively inexpensive compared to nickel and cobalt</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Na-ion batteries have lower energy density.</li> <li>Na-ion batteries contain around 30% Mn.</li> <li>⇒ Smaller market, but adding to the demand</li> </ul>



HPMSM and HPEMM demand forecast (source: JMS March 2024)

## LMFP FUTURE CATHODE FOR EV BATTERIES

	E CATHODE FOR EV BATTERIES
Market Dominance	<ul> <li>LFP batteries is currently the world's most used Liion cathode material for EV batteries.</li> <li>The three critical key considerations for battery manufacturers when assessing and developing a cathode mix is safety, cost and capacity:         <ul> <li>LMFP maintains LFP safety advantages over nickel-based batteries with a higher-thermal run-away temperature.</li> <li>LMFP is cheaper than LFP and 30% cheaper than nickel-based batteries.</li> <li>LMFP increased energy density by 15-20%</li> </ul> </li> <li>Adding high purity manganese sulphate (MnSO<sub>4</sub>) to LFP created LMFP, which delivers significant operational and safety benefits</li> </ul>
Forecasts	<ul> <li>Soochow Securities forecast LMFP will replace 50% of LFP batteries by 2030.</li> <li>Caitong Securities forecast blending LMFP with nickel-based batteries in China to reach 30% of all nickel-based cathodes being manufactured by 2030.</li> <li>Benchmark Mineral Intelligence estimate growth in HPMSM demand up to 5.3 mt by 2040. A massive increase from 135,000 tonnes in 2020.</li> </ul>
Strategy	<ul> <li>⇒ Firebird LMFP battery strategy is perfectly timed.</li> <li>⇒ Firebird is well-positioned to deliver HPMSM into this rapidly growing market</li> </ul>

#### **EV MANUFACTURERS using LMFP CATHODES** エミらしる Some of the largest EV manufacturers are using LMFP batteries. BATTERY GRADE MnSO<sub>4</sub> SCOPING STUDY Location Hunan province, China • Key reagents such as sulfuric acid and steam in close proximity to the plant location Customers in Hunan province and surrounding provinces ⇒ Best expertise worldwide ➡ Close to suppliers and customers ⇒ Largest LMFP, NCM and EV markets Plant 72,000 tonnes per annum of battery grade Capacity manganese sulphate equivalent producing: o 50,000 tpa HPMSM o 10,000 tpa Manganese Tetra Oxide $(Mn_3O_4)$ → Affordable start-up size ➡ Potential expansion through plant replication ⇒ Final product options according to market demand Financials HPMSM price assumption US\$1,419/t Capex US\$82.4 million Opex of US\$659/t NPV at 8% discount rate US\$331 million • IRR 47% before tax • Payback in less than 2 years . Average annual EBITDA of US\$48.3 million • ⇒ Low price assumption (see benchmarking) ➡ Excellent operating margin (53%) ⇒ Relatively modest capex (see benchmarking) ⇒ Excellent profitability index (NPV/Capex of 4x) BATTERY GRADE MnSO<sub>4</sub> DEVELOPMENT Expertise Mr Zhou Qiyun, appointed COO & Technology Mr Zhou Qiyun has developed technology (some • IP protected and already commercialised) to improve the end-product quality and the energy saving through the crystallisation process. ⇒ Best expertise worldwide Site • Chinese subsidiary registered: Hunan Firebird Battery Technology Co Ltd Sulphate plant location selected in the Jinshi High ٠ Tech Industries Development Zone ⇒ Likely fast permitting process ⇒ Potential expansion through plant replication Design Advanced and commercialised crystallisation technology secured. Pilot plant designed and construction complete. Samples of MnSO<sub>4</sub> and Mn<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> to be sent to potential customers and off-take parties. ⇒ On-going development momentum Financing • On-going discussions with potential customers and off-takers as well as Chinese banks Partner Strategic cooperation agreement signed with China National Chemistry Southern Construction and Investment Co Ltd ➡ Potential fast-tracked development



Peter Allen, Managing Director peter@firebirdmetals.com.au

www.firebirdmetals.com.au



#### BOARD & MANAGEMENT

Evan Cranston - Chairman

Mr. Cranston is an experienced mining executive, with a background in corporate and mining law.

Peter Allen – Managing Director

- Mr Allen is a mining executive with more than 20 years' experience in marketing manganese products, lithium and a range of other commodities.
- Wei Li Finance Director
- Mr Li is a Chartered Accountant with extensive experience in the mineral resource industry. Mr Li managed a private base metals exploration company in the Northern Territory and assisted in the successful development of a A\$150 million Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide plant in Hunan, China. Mr Li mother tongue is Mandarin.

Ashley Pattison – Non-Executive Director

Mr Pattison has over 20 years' experience in the mineral resources sector from both a corporate finance and operational perspective.

Brett Grosvenor – Non-Executive Director

Mt Grosvenor is an experienced mining executive, with over 25 years' experience in the mining and energy industries.





## OAKOVER MANGANESE ORE PROJECT

CAROVER MANGANESE ORE PROJECT							
Location	•		Western Australia 600km from Port Hedland (world's largest bulk export port)				
Geology •		Near-surface (mostly within 20m of surface), gently dipping (less than 10 degrees) to west south west The manganese mineralisation occurs as multiple seams or bands of varying thickness within a highly weathered shale					
Metallurgy •		Test work demonstrated 30-32% Mn concentrate product achievable Hydrometallurgy test work demonstrated Battery Grade MnSO4 product achievable anomalies that have not been drill tested to date.					
Mineral Resource Estimate (March 2023, 7% Mn cut-off)							
Category	Tonr	nes	Mn	Fe	SiO2	AI2O3	P
Indicated	105.78		10.1	8.9	39.2	9.8	0.10
Inferred	70.87		9.6	8	36.5	9.5	0.09
Total	176.65		9.9	8.6	38.1	9.7	0.10
Concentrate Scoping Study (Aug. 2023)		•	Mining inventory of 71.5 Mt (99.2% indicated) Low mine strip ratio of 0.45:1 Treatment plant capacity 4 mtpa				

- Life of mine 18 years
- Conventional processing using ore sorting, crushing, scrubbing and Dense Media Separation (DMS) recovery
- ~1.2 million tonnes per annum of 30-32% Mn concentrate
- Capex A\$123 million
- ⇒ Project life is long enough to integrate renewable energies and battery storage into the energy mix and allowing up to 100% renewable power usage.
- ⇒ Low grade, bulk mining projects can deliver long life, low cost, low risk mining operations appreciated by majors and mid-caps or can be a company maker



MANUANLSL	MARKET
Production	<ul> <li>South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Ghana and Gabon are major producing countries of global manganese ore.</li> <li>Manganese ore is predominantly mined in the form of carbonate, semi-carbonate or an oxide.</li> <li>Three manganese concentrate based on grade:         <ul> <li>High grade &gt;44% Mn</li> <li>Medium grade between 30% and 44% Mn</li> <li>Low grade &lt;30% Mn</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Consumption	<ul> <li>China is the largest importer of manganese ore and concentrates and is also the largest producer of manganese alloys. According to International Manganese Institute, China imported more than ~30 million tonnes of manganese ore in 2022.</li> <li>Manganese ore is smelted into a manganese alloy, with the main types of manganese alloys being:         <ul> <li>Silicomanganese (SiMn) – Most common alloy consumed and is used principally in the production of construction steels, such as long steels products like rebar.</li> <li>High Carbon ferromanganese (HCFeMn) – Used manufacturing and consumer appliances.</li> <li>Refined Alloys being Medium Carbon (MCFeMn) and Low Carbon ferromanganese (LCFeMn) – used mainly in higher-quality steels sector where impurities need to be closely controlled.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Market fit	<ul> <li>⇒ Oakover concentrate is expected to be very suitable as feed stock in the production of SiMn.</li> <li>⇒ SiMn is the largest manganese alloy market.</li> </ul>
OTHER PROJE	ICTS
Hill 616, Western Australia Wandanya, Western Australia	<ul> <li>35km south of Oakover</li> <li>57.5 Mt @ 12.2% Mn inferred Mineral Resource</li> <li>Similar Geology to Oakover</li> <li>50km SW of world class Woodie Woodie manganese mine</li> <li>Exploration focused.</li> <li>High-grade mineralisation with Direct Shipping Ore potential</li> <li>Bock chip results up to 65% Mn and 55% Mn</li> </ul>