



FEI's New MLA 600F High Speed Automated Mineralogy Analyzer Enables Rapid Optimization of Mineral Processing Operations

Faster analysis turn around from once a week to once per shift of feed and waste streams allows more frequent process adjustments to maximize metal recovery and economic return

HILLSBORO, Ore., Sep 03, 2008 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- FEI Company (Nasdaq: FEIC), a leading provider of high-resolution imaging and analysis systems, today released the MLA 600F system, a high-speed automated mineralogy analyzer used in the mining industry to optimize the performance of mineral processing operations. The new MLA 600F reduces sample turnaround time from days to hours, allowing operators to increase metal recovery by responding faster and more frequently to changes in feed and waste stream mineralogy. The new system was developed in cooperation with FEI's partner, JKTech, based in Australia, and mining giant and automated mineralogy pioneer, Anglo Platinum, Ltd., based in South Africa.

"Anglo Research, sponsored by Anglo Platinum, currently operates the largest number of scanning electron microscope-based mineralogical instruments in the world," said Dr. Robert Schouwstra, head of mineralogical research at Anglo Research. "Knowledge of the complex mineralogy and liberation characteristics of the plant feed helps Anglo Platinum operate the plant more efficiently. The faster the analytical turnaround, the quicker we can respond to changes in feed mineralogy, with obvious benefit. The speed improvements of the MLA 600F significantly reduce the analysis component of our total turnaround time and provide critical leverage for our efforts to reduce the other major components, sample preparation and transport time. The new MLA 600F is an important step toward our ultimate aim of implementing high-speed, automated mineralogy at the operational sites."

"Faster analysis translates directly into economic benefits for our customers," said Paul Scagnetti, general manager and vice president of FEI's Industry Market Division. "In this application, it allows the optimization frequency to increase from once a week to as often as once per shift, permitting operators to respond more quickly to changes in feed properties and, ultimately, to maintain process performance closer to optimal values for maximum economic returns."

The MLA 600F uses a scanning electron microscope equipped with a field emission gun (FEG) and multiple high-speed energy dispersive X-ray spectrometers (EDS) to automatically acquire image and composition information from a large number of samples—typically polished sections of particulates from mineral processing operations and drill core, or lump materials from exploration. Specialized software from FEI's partner and mineral analysis leader, JKTech, uses the data to acquire and measure characteristics such as mineral type and distribution, grain size, liberation and association—essential properties of the ore that must be accommodated in mineral processing to achieve maximum metal recovery. The ability of the MLA 600F system to reduce sample turnaround time from days to hours derives from both hardware and software enhancements. Principal among them are faster, higher quality imaging provided by the high brightness FEG, and high-speed data acquisition and analysis enabled by efficient sampling, fast automation and streamlined analytical design.

About FEI Company

FEI (Nasdaq: FEIC) is the world leader in pioneering technologies and applications that deliver imaging solutions for 3D characterization, analysis and modification/prototyping with resolutions down to the sub-Angstrom level. Our customers, working in advanced research and manufacturing, are supported by field-experienced applications specialists. They have open access to FEI's prestigious global user network so they can succeed in accelerating nanoscale discovery and contribute to better living through new product commercialization. FEI's NanoPorts in North America, Europe and Asia provide centers of technical excellence where our world-class community of customers and specialists collaborate on the ongoing development of new ideas and innovative solutions. FEI has sales and service operations in more than 50 countries around the world. More information can be found at: www.fei.com.

FEI Safe Harbor Statement

This press release contains forward-looking statements about the benefits of a new mineralogy analyzer product. Factors that could affect these forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, the failure of the product or technology to perform as expected and achieve anticipated results, unexpected technical problems, unanticipated difficulties in collaboration with our software partner and completion of final engineering and product introduction. Please also refer to the company's Form 10-K, Forms 10-Q, Forms 8-K and other filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission for additional information on these factors and other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements. FEI assumes no duty to update any forward-looking statements.

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