

Koppamurra Pilot Processing Underway

written by Raj Shah | August 11, 2026

First industry partner to use ANSTO's purpose-built, clay-hosted rare earth pilot processing plant

August 11, 2026 ([Source](#)) – Highlights

- Commissioning complete: the new pilot plant at ANSTO's critical minerals facility has been successfully commissioned, with ~1 tonne of Koppamurra ore.
- Pilot processing underway: approximately 30 tonnes of Koppamurra ore is now being processed, with the program targeting completion of 4 cycles of 8 columns to validate AR3's full processing flowsheet at pilot scale.
- First product samples in train: initial production of Koppamurra's high purity Mixed Rare Earth Oxide will provide sufficient volumes of product to be shared with prospective customers and offtake partners – a key step in commercialising Koppamurra.
- Continuous pilot operation: the pilot plant will generate the technical data and process validation to advance toward a bankable feasibility study to support Koppamurra's development timeline.
- Engage with this announcement via [AR3 Investor Hub here](#).

Australian Rare Earths Limited (ASX: AR3 or the Company) is pleased to provide an update on its pilot-scale processing program at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation's (ANSTO) critical minerals processing facilities in Sydney.

The facilities were officially opened in May 2026 by the Hon. Madeleine King MP, Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, with support from the Australian Critical Minerals Research and Development Hub. AR3 is the first industry partner to use the purpose-built, clay-hosted rare earth pilot processing plant – reflecting confidence in Koppamurra's readiness for its next stage of development and providing AR3 with a low-cost pathway to generate the technical data required to advance toward a bankable feasibility study.

Following successful commissioning, the Company has commenced pilot processing of approximately 30 tonnes of material from its Koppamurra Rare Earths Project.

“Commissioning is complete and Koppamurra ore is now being processed through a continuously operating pilot circuit – a genuine step up from laboratory-scale testwork. We are now generating engineering data and product samples for direct evaluation by potential customers and offtake partners. With our first bulk Mixed Rare Earth Oxide sample expected in late September 2026, this program is delivering exactly what we need to finalise Koppamurra's process design and drive toward a bankable, investment-ready outcome.”

Travis Beinke, Managing Director and CEO, Australian Rare Earths Limited

Pilot Processing Program

The commissioning phase was successfully completed 31 July 2026, confirming the design basis for key operating parameters including agglomerate preparation, irrigation flow rates and lixiviant makeup requirements. Importantly, commissioning also validated column loading and irrigation approach, demonstrating that the pilot plant design and operating configuration are performing as intended.

The commissioning phase included:

- Production of 940kg of on specification agglomerates.
- Seamless loading of the columns.
- Irrigation at above design rates with no degradation of flow.
- Rare earth recovery in line with expectations.

The pilot program involves processing through a continuous pilot-scale circuit designed to validate the full flowsheet for the ionic clay-hosted mineralisation at Koppamurra. Key elements include:

- Completion of 4 cycles of the 8 x 4 metre columns to recover rare earths from the ore.
- Liquor produced from each cycle will undergo processing to produce a mixed rare earth oxide via an oxalate precipitate route. This step will generate detailed product specifications and samples for sharing with potential customers and offtake partners.
- Continuous operation of the pilot plant, generating engineering design data, process optimisation insights and product samples.

This work builds on prior successful metallurgical testwork, including high-purity Mixed Rare Earth Oxide (MREO) pathways demonstrated via oxalate precipitation, and aligns with the Company's Pre-Feasibility Study (PFS).



Figure 1 ANSTO column leach piloting facility

Timing

- Batch processing and initial product samples: the first bulk Mixed Rare Earth Oxide sample is expected to be produced in late September 2026 and made available for customer analytical review. Additional product samples will be produced during the following months as the pilot continues.
- Expected completion of heap leach operations: heap leaching activities are expected to be completed by December 2026.

The pilot program supports AR3's strategy to systematically de-

risk Koppamurra, reduce future capital and execution risk, and accelerate engagement with strategic partners seeking secure, Australian-sourced rare earth products rich in magnet and heavy rare earth elements.

The Company will provide further updates as key pilot processing milestones are achieved.

The announcement has been authorised for release by the Board of Australian Rare Earths Limited.

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About Australian Rare Earths Limited

Australian Rare Earths (AR3) is a diversified critical minerals company, strategically positioned to meet the growing global demand for uranium and rare earth elements:

AR3's Koppamurra Rare Earths Project in South Australia and Victoria is a significant deposit of light and heavy rare earths, now underpinned by a Pre-Feasibility Study and maiden Ore Reserve, and supported by the Australian Government through a \$5 million grant to accelerate development. AR3 is progressing toward a Definitive Feasibility Study and pilot-scale demonstration production at ANSTO's Sydney facility, solidifying its role as a potential new source of new supply to diversify

global rare earth feedstocks for the clean energy transition.

AR3's large ~8,000 km² Overland Uranium Project in South Australia shows strong uranium discovery potential, with drilling also identifying a new niobium–rare earth carbonatite exploration target.

With strategic projects as well as strong government support, AR3 is well placed to capitalise on significant growth in the critical minerals market.

Competent Persons Statements

The information in this report that relates to metallurgical results is based on information compiled by Australian Rare Earths Limited and reviewed by Mr. James Davidson who is the principal Metallurgist of Rendement and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (AusIMM). Mr. Davidson has sufficient experience that is relevant to the metallurgical testing which was undertaken to qualify as a Competent Person as defined in the 2012 edition of the "Australasian Code for Reporting of Exploration Results, Mineral Resources and Ore Reserves". Mr. Davidson consents to the inclusion in this report of the matters based on this information in the form and context in which it appears