

Reuters Africa

Two Glencore Singapore fuel oil traders quit-sources

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Two of three fuel oil traders in Glencore's [GLEN.UL] Singapore office have left the Swiss trading giant within two months of each other, five industry sources said on Wednesday.

The Asian fuel oil market has been depressed for the past six months, with thin margins offering little opportunity for traders.

Senior trader Wong Keng Seng, who has been with the world's largest independent commodities trading firm for eight to nine years, resigned on Tuesday, while Tan Ming Cher left about two months ago after less than two years with the firm, the sources said.

A Geneva-based Glencore spokesman declined to comment on the matter.

The Asian fuel oil market has seen a spate of movements since the middle of the year. In the past week, two other traders have resigned -- Colin Soh from Chemoil, in which Glencore acquired a controlling stake last December, and Alan Ong from Kuo Oil.

Only team leader Hon Kim Weng remains with Glencore's Singapore fuel oil trading desk, the sources said. The company is looking at internal replacements for the two traders that have left, the sources added.

"They have an army of young people in various positions such as risk, operations and back-office, and eagerly waiting for the opportunity to become traders," a source close to the firm said.

"They have selected four of them, put them through a trading course recently and will choose the best from there. It is quite rare for the company to promote from within and it has not happened in the fuel oil desk in recent times."

Hon and Wong, both formerly from oil major Shell, have worked together for around the past eight years, while Tan was hired from JPMorgan in 2008.

Glencore is a major fuel oil player in Asia, with storage capacity of 800,000-850,000 tonnes on board three floating storage facilities off southern Malaysia, similar to the market's other major players such as BP, Vitol, PetroChina and Shell.

The privately held firm, which is preparing to become a listed company after issuing a \$2.2 billion convertible bond last year, was not seen mounting any trading plays since the second quarter of this year.