

Kalgoorlie Miner

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HD Tiger seeks new stripes
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Privately owned Blue Tiger **Mining** is shopping around for a joint venture partner for its historic Burbanks **gold** project near Coolgardie.

Managing director Noel Wemyss confirmed Blue Tiger, the only **gold** miner in the Coolgardie region in the wake of last year's closure of Focus Minerals' **operations**, had been in talks with mid-tier companies about a tie-up.

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The prize is the high-grade Birthday Gift underground mine at Burbanks, 9km south of Coolgardie in what was the highest producing **mining** centre in WA in 1900.

Mr Wemyss described the untapped potential as "enormous" given development at Birthday Gift is still shallow, reaching 140m below surface and the deepest exploration drill hole sunk is 380m.

The third-generation miner hopes to secure a joint venture deal before November.

"This is the last mine operating in Coolgardie, which was the heart of Australia's **gold mining** industry a century ago," he said.

"It's still the same rich dirt — this could be a way to return some life to Coolgardie **mining** because everyone's left.

"We are keen to open it up for new parties — serious miners who want to do it long-term and make some money."

Mr Wemyss declined to name companies, citing confidentiality agreements, but likely players in the market would be La Mancha Resources, Norton **Gold** Fields and Metals X.

The mine is less than 1km from Ramelius Resources' Burbanks mill, but it is no secret Ramelius' focus is bringing the Vivien underground mine into production near Leinster.

Chinese-controlled Norton shapes as the logical choice after its recent move into the Coolgardie region with its \$28 **million** takeover of Bullabulling **Gold**.

La Mancha — privately owned by Egyptian **billionaire** Naguib Sawiris — could be interested if it is looking for future **ore** sources besides its Frog's Leg and White Foil mines.

Metals X could be a suitor after doing toll treatment deals with Blue Tiger at its Jubilee mill and Northern Star Resources cannot be discounted after buying up nearly \$200 **million** worth of assets across WA this year.

Blue Tiger acquired Birthday Gift in a \$2 **million** deal with the Peter Bartlett-backed Barra Resources in August 2013.

Barra spent **millions** developing an underground decline, which sent the **company** to the wall and forced its **sale**.

The historical Birthday Gift shaft produced 180,000 ounces at 27.4g/t. The narrow vein structure is mined in a similar style to Silver Lake Resources' Daisy Milano complex, which is suited to air-leg techniques.

Blue Tiger has mined 8272oz at 4.5g/t under a tribute **mining** arrangement from 2008 to 2009 and since taking ownership last November.

Mr Wemyss, who managed the Bullant **gold** mine for Barrick **Gold**, said Birthday Gift was "very similar to Bullant".

"It has got to the point where it needs someone bigger to get involved if it is going to reach its full potential," he said.

"There is a need for high-grade dirt to feed the mills out there right now so there is a market."

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