



Outstanding record for producer

ONE COMPANY WHICH could be considered a tad unlucky not to have received this year's Digger of the Year Award is Mincor Resources NL.

The Perth-based nickel producer, which has emerged as the Kambalda nickel king in the wake of the now gone WMC, enjoyed another bumper 12 months leading up to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder conference.

During F2006 it processed almost 600,000 tonnes of ore to produce some 16,000t of nickel concentrate.

Furthermore, the company found its way onto the Standard & Poor's/ASX 200 Index, which is universally recognised as the benchmark for the Australian equities market.

Mincor boss David Moore told conference delegates that 80% of the company's efforts went towards growing its nickel business with a very simple business plan which "we have been pursuing quite vigorously".

"Essentially we want to achieve what I call a critical mass in the Kambalda nickel district," he said.

"We want to gain ownership or a critical mass at Kambalda – a productive and exploration capacity at Kambalda – which will allow us to produce at a sustainable ongoing rate of around 20,000 tonnes of metal per annum."

Strengths

While Moore was confident the mid-tier miner could easily achieve this target by 2009 (based on both the company's current and evolving operations), he highlighted that Mincor's strength was its ability to consistently increase its mineral resources.

"The fact is that we have not only continually replaced, but also added to our mineral resource base year upon year, even as we have mined nickel and even as we have ramped up our production," he noted.

"We started mining with about 50,000t in metal resources ... and at the end of March (2007) we have 106,000t, and that's after mining 82,000t of nickel metal.

"(So) you can see that year upon year our published mineral resource statement has

increased the amount of nickel metal that we have got.

"And that reflects again the capacity of that Kambalda district to keep on finding, to keep on generating new nickel orebodies and to reward aggressive exploration with new discoveries."

Outside of the WA nickel capital, Mincor has exploration projects in other parts of Australia, including Tottenham in New South Wales (copper and gold), Georgina in the Northern Territory (zinc, lead, silver and uranium) and Round Hill/Hazelwood in Tasmania (copper, zinc and gold).

"I guess our hope is that one or more of these projects will make a discovery that will provide the seed to germinate a new commodity division for Mincor and a new area to grow in – a new commodity area to focus on going forward," Moore said.

All things being equal, Mincor will no doubt be a strong contender for the digger gong at the 2008 D&D forum.



▲ David Moore