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East Tennant drilling program delivers the goods

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Drill results released yesterday reveal the MinEx CRC National Drilling Initiative's East Tennant campaign of 10 stratigraphic holes has been a stunning success.

Preliminary assessment of results has confirmed initial pre-drilling concepts about the mineral potential of the region, with the highlight being lowlevel copper and possibly gold mineralisation in the fourth hole in the program, sited within a 4 sq.km MinEx CRC permit, EL 32363. The hole is located about 40km northeast of the Barkly Roadhouse. The MinEx CRC permit sits within EL 32293, held by Inca Minerals.



Geoscience Australia's Leader of Undercover Geology and Stratigraphic Drilling, Anthony Schofield, told Precompetitive Review the drill results had

enhanced the prospectivity model for the East Tennant region by producing direct evidence of an active mineral system.

"We set out to achieve two things – establish the regional geological framework and provide the evidence base for the presence of mineral systems.

"We have achieved great results with the regional geology. We will need to wait for the geochronology and other datasets, but we are very confident we have found the right stratigraphy with the potential to host one or more of the 1850 Ma-aged mineral systems that are so prospective in Tennant Creek and the Northern Australian Craton.

"The really ground-breaking result here is direct evidence that all these different geological ingredients have come together in such a way that has resulted in some mineralisation. We're pretty stoked with that result," Anthony said.

He said the program's fourth hole (NDIBK04), which sits on a linear magnetic trend and a major fault, had always looked like it could be a sweet spot, where all the ideas from structural interpretation, airborne EM, broadband MT and hematite-magnetite modelling came together.

"But in saying that, I want to emphasise we were looking for evidence of a mineral system to prove a concept. We were not trying to find a mineral deposit and were not targeting at a prospect scale. This data is now in the hands of explorers to take up and inform their own exploration strategies."

NDIBK04 intersected copper mineralisation in basement under 166 metres of cover. The presence of arsenopyrite also suggests gold potential, but specific values of copper and gold will need to wait for assays.

From about 248 metres to 256 metres, NDIBK04 intersected a pyrite-chalcopyrite-arsenopyrite-sulphide assemblage, with values of up to 0.6% copper. This is based on portable XRF readings, taken at one-metre intervals. Sulphides occur throughout much of the hole and likely continue beyond the end of hole. Frustratingly, rain meant the drill rig had to pull out of the location. The photo shows a pyrite-chalcopyrite-arsenopyrite vein assemblage at 251 metres.

Explorers can access the geological logs, downhole geophysics, geochemistry core tray photos and other drill hole data from Geoscience Australia's new Borehole Completion Report tool in the Geoscience Australia portal (https://portal.ga.gov.au/restore/a470530b-89d3-4712-8968-f0c89bc3453b) and the MinEx CRC NDI portal (https://portal.ga.gov.au/restore/e79aa994-bf41-4bec-887c-acade92b81a3).

The National Drilling Initiative, conducted by MinEx CRC, will now turn its focus to the Delamerian in South Australia

MinEx CRC Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Bailey, said the first NDI campaign was drilled largely with conventional technology, but it also served as a platform to test IMDEX's downhole geophysics logging tool and the latest pXRF equipment from Olympus.

"The NDI is a testing bed for technology as well as opening up exploration under cover, and that will really become evident with the second campaign in South Australia, which is using the RoXplorer coiled tube rig."

He said the East Tennant campaign had its challenges, including COVID-19 restrictions, but the program was completed within a 100-day schedule and all the holes were a geological success.





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