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TANAMI MINE

Deep Gold in a Far Country

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Tanami Gold Mine

DEEP GOLD IN A FAR COUNTRY

How Newmont's Tanami mine is writing Australia's next great underground story

RESEARCH BY JOSEPH PHILIPS

If you take the long road north-west from Alice Springs, the land stretches out into heat mirage and red-gold dust. The highway gives way to corrugations and silence, and then—after hours—the desert reveals a city that isn't on any tourist map. Towers and conveyors puncture the sky; a headframe throws a geometric shadow in the late light. Beneath it all, 1.6 kilometres down, a deep underground world hums.

This is Tanami. Not a camp, not a project, but a place. It has its own rhythm: buses at dawn from Twin Hills Village, radios crackling through the afternoon, the steady thrum of the mill through the night. On the surface, it is remote. Below, it is precise.

"Tanami fits our Tier 1 strategy because we have a mine life that extends for decades," says Justin De Meillon, General Manager of Newmont Tanami. "And once the expansion projects are completed, we'll produce at a rate of over half a million ounces per year." He doesn't say it as a slogan; he says it the way people here talk—plainly, with the certainty that comes from doing the hard parts over and over.

Tier 1 strategy because we have a mine life that extends for decades," says Justin De Meillon, General Manager of Newmont Tanami. "And once the expansion projects are completed, we'll produce at a rate of over half a million ounces per year.

ELPHINSTONE E15 TILT TRAY

Purpose Built for Underground.

With a maximum payload of 13,000 kilograms, the New Purpose Built E15 Tilt Tray is compliant to all relevant ISO and Australian standards, including AS5400 for Tow Trucks and offers a flexible and safe transport solution with tilt and sliding tray operated by a Wi-Fi remote control. The 6785 mm x 2500 mm tray has a 15° loading approach angle and features a class-leading 12.5-tonne planetary drive winch, a robust steel plate floor bordered by multiple tie-down points, lashing rail, four container locks (ISO 10' pattern), and the provision for optional ratchet load binders. **Scan the QR Code to find out more.**

ELPHINSTONE
AUSTRALIAN MADE

ELPHINSTONE: A CORNERSTONE IN MINING INNOVATION

Built on a passion for mining, and a commitment to deliver value to its customers, it's no surprise Elphinstone has led the way in machinery innovation for over half a century.

The Elphinstone name is synonymous with the mining industry, designing and manufacturing specialised equipment for both underground and surface operations for over 50 years.

From underground mining support vehicles to off-highway extended-distance haul trucks and mine extraction equipment, the company is also a well-established Caterpillar OEM Solutions customer.

With machines operating in over 25 countries across six continents, Elphinstone continues to strengthen its capabilities and expand its presence in the mining industry sector.

A PASSION FOR MINING

It was in 1975, when Dale was modifying Cat surface mining equipment for underground mining applications out of his father's shed in Burnie, Tasmania, that Dale B Elphinstone Pty Ltd was established.

The sale of the company's first underground machine, the Elphinstone 79C (a modified Caterpillar 769C), soon followed in 1976 and 1977, respectively, with innovation quickly expanding beyond expectations.

After pioneering a series of underground support vehicles, Elphinstone's first purpose-built underground dump trucks, the AD13 and AD17, entered the market during the early 1980s.

An economic downturn followed in the mid-1980s, with mining companies deciding to reduce their tunnel size which would require smaller machines with equal capacity.

Elphinstone's first purpose-built underground dump trucks were the AD13 (pictured), and Ad17.

The original fully designed and manufactured Elphinstone R1500 LHD, Machine #1, is now part of Dale's collection.

In 1986 Elphinstone rose to the challenge and in just seven months produced and sold its first fully designed and manufactured load haul dump loader (LHD), the R1500.

The following year, Elphinstone sold its first R1500 overseas to Freeport McMoRan's Henderson mine in the USA.

Dale recalls, "Someone said to me, 'You realise that your machine price is double your competition', and I said back to him, 'I had no idea what the price of our competition was, because we sell the value of our product and what it will do for you'," he said.

Elphinstone replaced 36 of the competitions' loaders at Henderson with 10 Elphinstone R1500 LHD loaders.

INNOVATION, GROWTH, PHILANTHROPY

New developments followed with the release of the R2800 LHD (1988), the R1700 LHD and AD40 dump truck (1991), and the first R2900 LHD in 1994, delivering more than 200 LHDs globally by the end of that year.

The company's success drew the attention of Caterpillar, and the two parties established a 50/50 joint venture in 1995, creating the business known as Caterpillar Elphinstone Pty Ltd.

Caterpillar later purchased the remaining 50 per cent of the business replacing the Elphinstone name with the Caterpillar trademark.

After the sale of its underground mining business to Caterpillar, Elphinstone accelerated its philanthropic efforts.

Initiatives included a 50 percent contribution towards the purchase of an MRI scanner, the purchase of a linear accelerator, local university scholarships for aspiring radiographers, and a partnership with the State Government to establish a state-of-the-art, regional cancer treatment facility in Burnie, Tasmania.

In 2010, Caterpillar advised of its intention to relocate its underground mining manufacturing operations to Rayong, Thailand.

To retain the employment of skilled employees and local supply chain, Elphinstone worked with Caterpillar to "buy back" its brand and in 2016 launched a new range of specialised underground hard rock support vehicles.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

In his own words, Dale would say "one person doesn't do very much" and attributes the Group's 50-year success to its valued team of people.

Since re-entering the market in 2016, Elphinstone has designed and developed more than 20 underground support vehicle configurations which include both centre- and front-mounted three-person cabs hosting several utilities, such as concrete agitators, delivery trucks, scissor lifts, water cannons and tilt trays.

"The company will continue to invest in electrification projects driven by our customer's applications, requirements and appetite for decarbonisation." Elphinstone global sales and marketing manager Tim Mitchell told BE Infrastructure.

To this day, the Elphinstone brand is recognised as a pioneer of underground mining heavy vehicle solutions.

The Elphinstone E15 Series includes an E15 Delivery truck featuring various deck and crane options.

The latest addition to Newmont's Tanami operations support fleet, the new Elphinstone E15 Tilt Tray.

ELPHINSTONE AND NEWMONT

Since re-establishing its business in 2016, Elphinstone has developed strong relationships with world-renowned global mining customers.

The valued relationship between Newmont and Elphinstone began in 2018 with the sale of 3 Elphinstone WR810 Scissor Lifts into Newmont's Cerro Negro operations in Argentina.

Then in 2019, the same operation purchased a WR810 Fuel & Lube which has just logged over 22,000 hours. Additionally, the site purchased 2 WR810 6m3 Agitators and UG20K underground grader. In 2023 an order for a second UG20K was received followed by a WR810 Lube truck in 2024.

Meanwhile, Elphinstone's support vehicle range began to draw interest from other Newmont's Australian operations.

In 2019, Newmont's Cadia operations in NSW (formerly Newcrest) took delivery of 4 WR820 10m3 Agitators, and another 3 in 2024. Recently Cadia placed orders for 4 E15 machines.

In the Northern territory, Newmont Tanami purchased a WR820 10m3 Agitator and E10 Water Cannon which piqued interest in Elphinstone's range of highly configurable, class-leading E15 support vehicles. In 2024 they purchased an E15 Delivery [Flat Deck] and have just received a new E15 Tilt Tray, and MED360 mine extraction device on-site.

www.elphinstone.com

TE2 will be the deepest production shaft of any mine in Australia

From The Granites to the modern mine

Long before there were headframes, there were prospectors. The Granites district has seen a century of hopeful picks, but the modern story began in the 1980s with a mill at The Granites and, later, the discovery of the high-grade Callie orebody—an underground anchor that would make the desert relevant to global gold. Newmont's acquisition cemented the direction: decline access, disciplined underground methods, a processing plant that treated reliability as a virtue.

Years later, the mine's language evolved. Callie made room for Orion—the dominant producer today—flanked by Federation and Liberator like the tines of a trident. The veins are many and often narrow, but together they add up to something powerful: consistent, high-grade tonnes at depth. Tanami became a quiet statement of what Australia does well: patient engineering, steady production, and an appetite for hard ground.

A shaft that changes the conversation

Stand at the base of Tanami's new headframe and you feel both the scale and the intent. The Tanami Expansion 2 (TE2) project isn't just another capital line; it changes how the mine breathes. A 1.46-kilometre vertical production shaft—destined to be Australia's deepest—replaces long, hot decline hauls with fast, efficient skip hoisting. What used to be a three-hour truck cycle becomes a couple of minutes on a hoist designed to move 3.8 million tonnes a year.

AUSTRALIAN WINCH & HAULAGE CO. PTY LTD

SPECIALISTS IN WINCHES, WINDERS & HEAVY ENGINEERING – AUSTRALIAN FAMILY OWNED, SINCE 1974

Australian Winch & Haulage Co. Pty Ltd (AWH) is a specialist winch, winder and heavy engineering company based in Smithfield, Western Sydney. From our 7,800 m workshop we design, build, hire and overhaul hoisting equipment for mining, tunnelling, marine, offshore and defence projects.

When you're sinking a shaft, cutting a tunnel, running a dredge or holding a vessel on station, the hoisting system can't fail. AWH combines practical engineering, a workshop set up for heavy gear and a large winch and winder hire fleet to keep projects moving and within spec. We're not a general machine shop: everything centres on winches, winders, power units and the steelwork around them – man-riding and kibble winders, dredge winches, headframes, reelers and sheaves. Our project managers, engineers, equipment managers, fitters and machinists know both workshop and site, so we take responsibility for the full hoisting package, not just loose components.

Over the years AWH has supported many major operations, including shaft sinking and upgrades with friction, emergency egress and kibble winders; underground gold and base-metal mines such as Ernest Henry, Cadia, Olympic Dam and Tanami; and marine, defence and offshore projects using constant-tension dredge winches, mooring, mine-sweeping, anchor-handling and luffing winches with dedicated power units.

Tanami Expansion 2 – Koepe hoisting for a remote gold mine

A recent key project is Tanami Expansion 2 (TE2) for Newmont Mining Services, where AWH manufactured and supplied Koepe winder skips and a personnel cage for the remote underground gold operation. The work drew on our full capability – detailed mechanical and structural design, heavy fabrication and machining in Smithfield, shop testing under our ISO 9001 quality system and the supply of critical spares for long-term operation. TE2 shows how AWH approaches hoisting in Australian conditions: start with the duty, engineer the equipment around it, keep as much as possible under one roof and stay involved from design through to testing and site support, so there is one party responsible for the hoisting system end to end.

AWH IN-HOUSE TECHNICAL SKILLS ARE COMPLIMENTED BY MANY YEARS OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

WE EXCEL AT THESE SERVICES

WINCH & WINDER HIRE

- Shaft and kibble winders
- Man-riders and service winches
- Constant-tension and mooring winches
- Power units, control cabins and ancillary equipment

Available for short- and long-term projects in mining, tunnelling, marine and offshore environments.

PROJECT HOISTING SYSTEMS

- Complete hoisting packages – winch or winder, headframe, sheaves an power units
- Temporary and permanent shaft equipment
- Emergency egress systems
- Engineering, fabrication, assembly, testing and commissioning support

MANUFACTURING & HEAVY FABRICATION

- Design and manufacture of winches and winders
- Headframes, reelers, sheaves and custom steelwork
- Very large fabrications, including Sub-Arc welding
- Overhead crane capacity up to 60t for heavy assemblies.

EQUIPMENT OVERHAULS, REBUILDS & UPGRADES

- Strip, inspect and rebuild existingwinches and winders
- Brake, drive and control system upgrades
- Life-extension and compliance modifications
- Dynamic testing of winches up to 100 t

WORKSHOP SERVICES

- Large-capacity lathes, vertical and horizontal borers
- Heat treatment – stress relieving and normalising
- Grit blasting and large enclosed paint booth
- Electrical cabinet construction and fault-finding

THESE CAPABILITIES ALLOW AWH TO KEEP CRITICAL PROJECT EQUIPMENT IN SERVICE AND PERFORMING AS DESIGNED.

WHERE WE WORK

- Underground and surface mining
- Shaft sinking and tunnelling
- Dredging and marine construction
- Offshore oil & gas and mooring systems
- Defence and naval support
- Heavy civil and infrastructure projects

CAPABILITY & COMPLIANCE

- ISO 9001:2015 certified quality management system
- Fabrication in accordance with MDG41, DNV, Lloyd's, ABS, MIL and AS 1418 requirements
- Accredited and qualified welders to AS 1554
- 7,800 m factory plus 1,000 m office and stores in Smithfield, NSW
- Large overhead crane coverage and heavy machining capacity

Planning a shaft, tunnel, dredging or offshore project?

Talk to the winch and winder specialists first.

AUSTRALIAN WINCH & HAULAGE CO. PTY LTD
227 Woodpark Road, Smithfield,
Sydney NSW 2164, Australia
Tel: +61 (0)2 9725 2772
Email: sales@auswinch.com.au

"The aim is simple," says Grant Brinkmann, Area Manager for Shaft and Surface Construction. "Increase production and lower costs." He points to the 90-plus-metre headframe. "When complete, TE2 will be the deepest production shaft of any mine in Australia—and this headframe is one of the highest structures in the Territory." There's pride in that, but also relief: the ventilation will work better; the heat load eases; the bottlenecks unclench.

Underground, the expansion adds a mechanised crushing system so ore meets the skip as crushed rock, ready to fly. On the surface, the mill—already a 24-hour instrument—is tuned to catch the new cadence without missing a beat.

The craft of precision at depth

There is a romance to the desert; there is none in aligning a six-metre winder drum to millimetric tolerances a mile below. That's craft. RUC Cementation—part of Murray & Roberts—has carried the shaft sinking, lining and equipping through the desert's moods: heat, dust, sudden storms. Above, Yenem Engineering and GR Engineering Services worked the geometry of steel and concrete so the headframe mirrors the winder's needs, not the other way around. PHE Group threaded cables, panels and sensors through a logic that will seem simple only when it is finished. Redpath Mining brought the discipline at the shaft bottom—the place where the theory meets the cage. And Australian Winch & Haulage did the quiet lifting, the controlled pulls, the brake and drum installations that make commissioning feel inevitable.

The hoist itself carries the two signatures that matter: ABB's 6-metre Koepe friction winder for ore and a personnel winder that moves crews with ease, both tied into SIL-rated controls and the kind of automation you don't notice until it saves a day. Regenerative braking. Battery-backed stability. Remote diagnostics that predict, not react.

“Every component weighs tonnes, and our tolerances are measured in millimetres,” a project engineer says, running a finger along a drawing. “You don’t get second chances at this depth.”

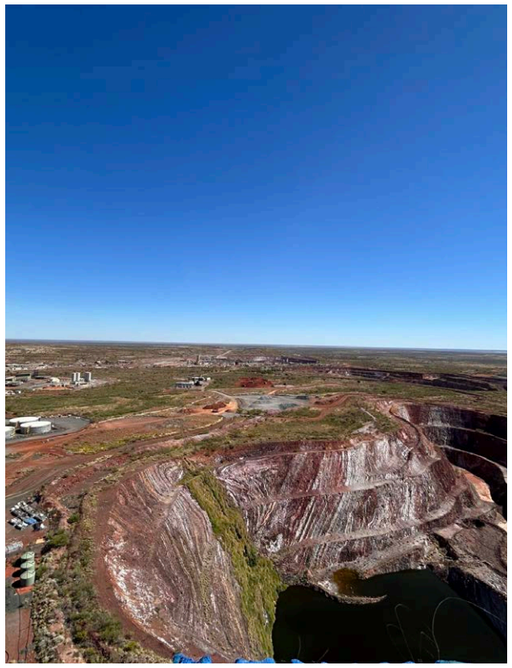
The art of keeping an underground alive

People who haven’t been underground think the challenge is rock. People who have know the challenge is air. At Tanami’s depths, the rock carries its own heat; the air must compete. So, in parallel with shaft steel and hoist motors, the mine has built a ventilation and cooling system with serious muscle—big primary fans, dozens of clever secondaries and chillers that make the difference between “possible” and “safe.” The shaft won’t just move ore; it will help the mine breathe better.

Above, another system watches the whole orchestra. Minestar—a fleet and operations platform—has trimmed the radio traffic and grown the visibility. “We have far more visibility underground now,” says Rochelle Patamore, who helped implement it. “We can see where equipment is, predict arrival times, and deal with delays before they ripple. It lets the control room think about improvement, not just input.”

What a supply chain looks like when it’s working

Lists don’t do justice to what’s been built here, but the names matter. RUC Cementation at the shaft; ABB for hoists and controls; Valmec for early utilities; NRW/Golding on civils and foundations; GRES and Yenem for structural design and erection; PHE for E&I integration; Redpath for bottoming and test hoists; thyssenkrupp for the underground gyratory crusher; Australian Winch & Haulage for mechanical handling; and dozens more local specialists who rarely make the press but do the day-on-day.



The desert doesn’t forgive poor coordination. Newmont’s team has leaned on packages that make sense, ICN Gateway pathways that open doors to local firms, and a commissioning schedule that treats risk like an engineering problem, not an inevitability. The result is less a “project” than a network of teams doing what they do best, in sequence, with respect for the whole.

A mine of people

It’s easy to tell this as a machine story. It isn’t. At 4:45 a.m., the first buses pull away from Twin Hills. Suzanne Burke—once a real estate agent, now an underground haulage supervisor—does the safety brief the same way every day: calm, direct, specific. “You work hard down here,” she says later, “but when you go home, you switch off. That balance keeps you sane.” She loves the mentoring: turning truckies into trainers, watching careers climb out of the decline.

For the Warlpiri communities of Yuendumu and Lajamanu, “mine” often meant “elsewhere.” Not here. The Yapa Crew—Newmont’s on-the-job training pathway—has drawn people from the nearest communities into proper roles: machines, environmental work, trades. Mia Leklatna speaks for many. “It’s pretty good,” she says, smiling. “I feel like I’m making them proud. My brothers and sisters look up to me now.” There are statistics—more Indigenous employment every year, more local procurement—but it’s the faces that stick.

A desert code for ESG

The letters have become shorthand—ESG—but in a place like this they read as common sense. Paste backfill returns much of the mill’s leftovers to the stopes, cutting the surface footprint. Water is managed like the precious desert resource it is. The Tanami Gas Pipeline replaced long diesel trains with cleaner, steadier power and an emissions profile that moves the needle in the right direction. The shaft and hoists will reduce underground diesel haulage further; you can hear the ventilation engineers quietly cheering.

Community isn’t a side programme. The mine sits on Aboriginal freehold land, and the relationship with the Central Desert Aboriginal Lands Trust is baked into every planning conversation. Jobs, business opportunities, sealed roads, the small things and the big ones—this is the long work of making sure the mine’s success shows up in people’s lives beyond the front gate.

“The project will improve ore transportation, increase processing capacity, lower our carbon output, and extend the mine’s life beyond 2040,” says Justin De Meillon. It sounds like a performance plan; it is also a promise that the mine intends to be a good neighbour for a long time.

The approval of our second expansion project at Tanami will further improve costs and extend the life of this world-class mine in a core Newmont jurisdiction,” says Tom Palmer, Newmont’s President and CEO

Why Tanami matters to Newmont - and to the market

There’s a practical answer: the mine is core to Newmont’s Australian portfolio and a material contributor to global production. There’s a strategic one: in a world where gold remains an anchor for uncertain times, reliable ounces from good jurisdictions are worth more than their weight. Tanami is both—reliable and right-sited.

“The approval of our second expansion project at Tanami will further improve costs and extend the life of this world-class mine in a core Newmont jurisdiction,” says Tom Palmer, Newmont’s President and CEO. It isn’t just corporate positioning—post-expansion, Tanami joins that short global list of underground operations capable of more than half a million ounces a year from a single system, and it does it with the kind of cost base you earn, not inherit.

The last miles to commissioning

Nobody here underestimates the distance between “almost” and “done.” There are still alignments to check, systems to prove, the long ladder of commissioning steps to climb. The plan is disciplined: mechanical completion of the hoist systems, staged commissioning that treats the shaft like the critical path it is, then a ramp-up that lets the plant and pit talk to each other without shouting.

“TE2 secures Tanami’s future as a long-life, low-cost producer,” says Tom Palmer, “and provides a platform for future exploration and growth.” Below the current levels, the geologists are already chasing the next pages of Orion and its neighbours. There’s confidence underground: the ore doesn’t read press releases, but it does respond to patient drilling.

The multiplier in a far place

You can see the mine’s economy in the obvious ways—jobs, flights, fuel, food contracts. But the real multiplier is subtler: the welders who become supervisors, the trainers who go home with stories their kids can believe, the local businesses that move from one-off contracts to standing orders. Each on-site role creates others—aviation, logistics, maintenance, hospitality—across a region that has learned to make a living at the far end of the map.

And then there are the legacies that don’t fit on a balance sheet. Sealed roads that outlast mine schedules. A headframe that becomes a landmark. Skills people take to the next job, or bring back to the community. In a country that mines well, Tanami is a case study in how to do it with respect for land and people—and with ambition that doesn’t shout.

What success will look like

When the first ore rises on the new hoist, success won’t sound like trumpets. It will sound like a winder humming at speed and a control room that’s quiet because the systems work. It will look like a production graph that climbs and a cost line that bends. It will be a supervisor’s calm voice in a prestart, a Yapa Crew graduate swapping a trainee badge for a permanent one, a contractor winning a second package because the first was done right.

“Deepest production shaft in Australia,” Brinkmann says, almost to himself. Then, with the same understatement that runs through the place: “Built to last.”

In the meantime, the desert waits and the mine moves to its own metronome. Buses at dawn. Radios all afternoon. Mill at night. The kind of rhythm that builds a future one precise step at a time.

Partners in the making (selected)

While Business Excellence is not a directory, it is fair to acknowledge the breadth of

craft behind TE2: RUC Cementation (shaft sinking, lining and equipping), ABB (mine-hoist systems and controls), Valmec (early utilities and mechanical works), NRW/Golding (civils and foundations), GR Engineering Services and Yenem Engineering (structural and headframe engineering), PHE Group (electrical and instrumentation integration), Redpath Mining (shaft bottoming and test hoisting), thyssenkrupp Industrial Solutions (primary underground crusher), and Australian Winch & Haulage Co (auxiliary winches and mechanical handling). Each did their part so that the whole could sing.

And there are many more—across every discipline that keeps a deep mine alive in the desert: underground development and ground support; drilling and blasting; ventilation and refrigeration; materials handling and conveyors; power generation and high-voltage reticulation; process control, comms, and IT; water, dewatering, and tailings/paste-fill; geotech, survey, and QA; fabrication and machining; explosives and consumables; roadworks and freight logistics; aviation and bus operations; fuel and lubricants; waste and recycling; emergency response and medical; camp operations (catering, housekeeping, laundry); PPE and industrial supply; heritage, environmental, and rehabilitation services; training, apprenticeships, and RTO partners; security; and a meaningful cadre of Indigenous-owned enterprises delivering earthworks, services, and cultural advisory.

Much of this ecosystem has been engaged through structured work packages and local procurement pathways (including ICN), giving regional SMEs and Indigenous businesses a durable stake in TE2’s success—proof that a project of this scale is never just steel and schedules, but a community of specialists moving in time.

The Last Word

What happens next at Tanami is not a question of whether the gold is there — it is — but how far Newmont and its partners can stretch the boundary of possibility. The Tanami Expansion 2 (TE2) project is already redefining what remote mining looks like, not only in engineering but in mindset.

Once the new shaft is commissioned, Tanami will step into a rare global league: underground mines capable of producing over half a million ounces a year at grades that still make geologists raise an eyebrow. Yet, for Newmont, TE2 is as much about longevity as tonnage — about ensuring the mine remains a living, breathing asset long after today's teams have moved on.

The project opens the door to new orebodies at depth — Orion's deeper limbs, Federation's

extensions, Liberator's lateral reach — each promising a new chapter in the desert's geology. Exploration continues quietly below the known levels, guided by smarter data and sharper modelling, while above ground, Tanami is becoming a template for next-generation remote mining operations: automation layered with human skill, technology tempered by local wisdom.

There's a sense among the leadership team that Tanami is evolving from mine to model — a benchmark in what sustainable underground operations can be. The energy efficiency measures, the Indigenous training pathways, the digital hoisting systems and predictive maintenance — these are not footnotes but signals of an industry learning to think in decades, not quarters.

Executives across the mining world will be watching how Newmont integrates these layers: how a $2.3 billion investment turns into a multi-decade advantage; how collaboration among global OEMs and local contractors reshapes performance; and how the mine's success filters through to regional development, education, and infrastructure across the Northern Territory.

What began as a bold logistical challenge — "Can you mine this deep, this far from anywhere?" — is quietly becoming one of Australia's great industrial case studies in resilience, precision, and respect for place. Tanami is proof that even in the most extreme settings, engineering excellence and human intent can coexist beautifully.

"Since acquiring Tanami in 2002, it has become central to our long-term strategy," says Justin De Meillon, General Manager.
That's the measured voice of a manager. But the desert version is simpler: keep your promises; do the next thing right; let the work speak.

And out here — in the red heart of Australia, where the horizon is a straight line and the light never lies — it does.

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