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Macmahon keeps it local and delivers Tropicana's first mining fleet

Part of Macmahon's first mining fleet on its way to Tropicana.

After 32 years with Macmahon Holdings, including 22 years as its transport and logistics manager, Steve Vicary has had the challenging task of mobilising a multi-million dollar mining fleet to the remote Tropicana gold mine in Western Australia.

Macmahon was awarded the 10-year mining contract to develop the gold project, worth an estimated \$900 million, for the Tropicana Joint Venture, which is 70%-owned and managed by AngloGold Ashanti Australia Ltd (AGAA) and Independence Group NL (30%).

The project is located 330 kilometres east-north-east of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

A veteran of the transport game, Vicary is the first to admit the equipment rollout has had its fair share of challenges.

The initial fleet comprised five Cat 793 dump trucks, three Cat 785C dump trucks, one Cat 6040 excavator, two CAT D10T dozers, one Cat D6T dozer, one Cat 992G loader, one Cat 966H loader, one Cat 773 service truck, one Cat 777F water cart, one Cat 988 tyre handler, one Cat 16H and one 16M grader, one Cat CH74 roller and one Cat 854 wheel dozer. In September a Cat 24M grader and Cat MD6240 drill were added to the fleet.

A further nine dump trucks will start arriving in January next year, with full delivery expected to be completed by July.



The equipment contract integrated a number of unique aspects. The first was mobilising the machines from yards close to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder depot of WesTrac, the Australian supplier of all Caterpillar equipment.

This was a first not only for the Goldfields city but for WesTrac itself, with each truck's specifications tailored to Tropicana's mining system – MineStar – and designed to have fully autonomous capabilities, including in-built safety software, radar technology and backward facing cameras.

These changes have provided a number of additional features including collision detection systems and engine data software, enabling data to be uploaded as satellite feed and downloaded via the internet for analysis at Caterpillar's head office in the US.