

Hi-tech hunt for TC gold

Erin Jones

THE world's most powerful ground penetrating system will be used to search for gold and copper deposits in Tennant Creek.

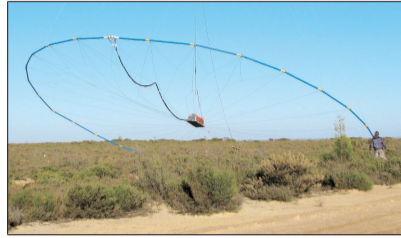
Emmerson Resources Limited is using the time-domain electromagnetic (TEM) geophysical system to search new sites for large deposits.

The historic Warrego site has produced 1.5 million ounces of gold and 180,000 tonnes of copper, but it is mostly mined out.

ERL managing director Rob Bills said the new system was like a huge electro magnetic metal detector.

He said: "It induces an electrical current in the ground."

"The large deposits at Tennant Creek, such as Warrego and Gecko conduct electricity, whereas the barren rocks do not, thus we expect to see electro-



A helicopter (left) lowers the time-domain electromagnetic (TEM) geophysical system into position

magnetic anomalies associated with new deposits that have been blind to previous exploration.

"We need to move to new technology to find things that haven't been found before."

"If there is a big deposit at the Warrego site then we will find it up to 500m in depth."

Mr Bills said about 2000-lined kilometres would be searched in the next five to six weeks and ERL would spend about \$7 million

in exploration in Tennant Creek this year.

The survey is funded by Ivanhoe Australia Limited and its parent company in Canada is joining the search for deposits. It is a \$28 million joint venture.

Mr Bills said they are quite confident of finding new deposits of gold and copper.

He said: "Tennant Creek is a world-class field. It is famous in gold field ranks around the world in terms of the grade of deposit."

"The higher the content of gold the better. Tennant Creek has a very high content."

"Because the grade is so high they have a small footprint, so it is fairly difficult to find. It is why we are taking this new technology approach."

Emmerson Resources Limited only has an exploration licence but if it does mine the site, it will use its mill in Tennant Creek.

Mr Bills said: "We would process it locally. It would not be a big hurdle for us to get into production."

The mining company will begin drilling on other projects in the area this year, and whether it drills the site for gold or copper will be determined by data from the TEM.

Mr Bills said the exploration project had a very low impact on the environment.