

13th October 2021

Successful Stage II Trial of Collar Keeper® System

Highlights

- Collar Keeper® System (CKS) successfully trialed in a typical hard rock mining environment
- CKS apparatus easily retrofitted to an existing modern track drill rig
- CKS process increased drilling rate by more than 20% over conventional drilling methods in typical hard rock environment with improved blast hole quality
- Stage III testing planned for December 2021, targeting commercialisation in the current financial year

Specialist mining services provider Aquirian Limited (**ASX: AQN**) ('Aquirian' or the 'Company') is pleased to announce that it has successfully completed the Stage II prototype trial of its Collar Keeper® System (patent pending).

The Stage II prototype unit was deployed on an existing drill rig operating in a hard rock gold mining environment in the mid-west of Western Australia. The trial successfully tested fitment to existing drill rigs and delivered marked improvements to drilling rates and drill hole quality.

Drilling rates were improved by approximately two minutes per drill hole on a 5m blast bench during testing, which equates to an improvement of more than 20% over conventional drill methods. Further benefit in time savings as compared to a traditional collar piping process is expected to be realised during Stage III testing in December 2021.



Fig 1. Collar Keeper manually inserted into guide tube



Fig 2. Collar Keeper remains after guide tube removal

The prototype testing was conducted over numerous blast holes, testing system functionality and speed of deployment. Fig 1. (above) demonstrates the Collar Keeper being manually

inserted through the CKS guide tube to depth (~1.8m). Fig 2. demonstrates the CKS guide tube removal leaving the Collar Keeper® in place in the drill hole in preparation for the explosives loading process (prior to later removal and re-use of the Collar Keeper®).

Aquirian Managing Director, David Kelly said: *“We are excited by the successful trial of our Stage II prototype last week. The system can be quickly and easily retrofitted to existing drill rigs and the improvements to drilling rates and blast hole quality exceeded our expectations. We will continue trialling the Collar Keeper® System in alternate conditions with the aim of commercialisation over the current financial year.”*

About the Collar Keeper® System

The Collar Keeper® System (patent pending) is a combination of Aquirian-developed, retrofittable drilling apparatus combined with its existing Collar Keeper® product to improve blasthole quality control across the mining industry. This technology represents an exciting step change in managing blast hole quality and is targeted to provide a unique solution to a range of different blasting environments with global applications.

The initial focus for the technology will be on mines operating in Western Australia with smaller diameter holes in challenging ground conditions, where high-cost collar piping is traditionally used. The traditional method of collar piping has not changed in over 40 years and introduces significant hazards as well as cost, time and quality issues, and poor blast outcomes for clients. In addition, the poor blasting outcomes lead to further downstream costs in load and haul, and the processing of mined material. The current development focus will target approximately 200 operating drill rigs in WA alone, pending the commercialisation of the technology intended for FY22.

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This announcement has been approved for release by the Managing Director of the Company

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About Aquirian

Aquirian is an emerging specialist mining services company providing people, equipment and innovative products that support mining clients across their operations.

The Company has a strong national and international presence with reputable, in-house capabilities and, through its extensive, in-depth relationships built up over many years of working in mining services locally and globally, it has attracted and maintained a long-term, tier-one client base. It provides specialised People Services (training, labour, recruitment) under the **Modular Training** and **TBS Workforce** brands, and Mining Services (equipment leasing, drill and blast products) under the **TBS Mining Solutions** and **MagLok** brands to the mining and resources, and civil and defence sectors in Australia and internationally.