



**ASX/MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT**

**9<sup>TH</sup> December 2008**

## **WILUNA PLANT COMMISSIONING**

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Apex Minerals NL (**ASX: AXM**) is pleased to provide an update on the status of plant commissioning and production at its Wiluna Gold Mine.

All circuits in the Wiluna plant have now been commissioned. Minor gold smelting has been undertaken and will continue this week with the first gold pour from concentrate currently in the BIOX® circuit now expected in the week commencing 15 December.

This delay in gold production was primarily caused by minor control faults in electrical components providing power to the Mill 2 grinding circuit. However, the time required to locate and remedy these faults exceeded expectations and diverted resources from other commissioning tasks.

### **Processing**

The crushing circuit was commissioned at the end of October and processing using the Mill 1 circuit commenced on 22 November. Gold in the BIOX® circuit at the end of November was just over 2,000 ounces. The Mill 2 circuit was commissioned on 5 December and this is approximately one week later than expected at the time of Apex's AGM.

The delay in commissioning the Mill 2 circuit reduced the amount of feed delivered to the flotation circuit and this reduced the amount of concentrate entering the BIOX® circuit in the last week of November and the first week of December.

However, the gold in circuit and new material from both milling circuits is now passing through the flotation and BIOX® circuits and is expected to result in gold production in the week commencing 15 December. Unlike conventional gold circuits there is a retention time of 7 to 10 days within the BIOX®, Counter Current Decantation ("CCD") and Carbon-in-Leach ("CIL") circuits at Wiluna.

Gold recovery through the flotation circuit at this early stage is encouraging having averaged 87% for November and reaching as high as 91%. Bacterial activity levels and oxidation in the BIOX® circuit are as expected. The CIL, elution and gold room circuits downstream of the BIOX® circuit are ready to receive feed.

### **Mining**

Ore mined in November from the East Pit open cut was 90,000 tonnes at 4.47 g/t Au with total open pit ore mined to the end of November being 180,000 tonnes at 4.15 g/t Au.

Underground mining activity in November comprised the completion of production drilling of the Calais 625mRL South stope block and the development of accesses and ore drives on other levels in Calais. Development has focussed on accessing the next stopes on Calais 625mRL North and Central blocks and the 750mRL North block.

The majority of operating underground development conducted to date has been in waste, however, underground ore production in November from strike driving on ore totalled 9,200 tonnes at 5.32 g/t Au and underground ore mined to date totals 12,000t at 5.27 g/t Au.

Open pit and underground production to the end of November combined with pre-existing Run-of-Mine stocks of 43,450 tonnes at 2.93 g/t Au totalled 235,000 tonnes @ 3.98 g/t Au for approximately 30,000 ounces of gold contained.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Ashley', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Mark Ashley**  
**Managing Director**

**Contact Glenn Jardine:      Mobile +61 (0)411 557 654      Office +61 (0)8 6311 5555**