

Explorer shoots for maiden resource next year

By Rebecca Le May

MAWSON WEST LTD has been encouraged by drilling undertaken at its Kapulo copper project straddling the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia, with results from the first two diamond holes confirming copper mineralisation identified by previous explorers in the 1950s and 1970s.

WIDTHS AND GRADES are consistent with the previous results from the northern extremities of the deposit, with a peak assay of 4.5% copper.

So far, seven diamond holes have been completed, including those into the higher grade main zone of Kapulo.

Towards late July, samples were in transit to laboratories.

The initial holes had to be drilled at the northern extremities of the deposit due to a small artisanal village – which has since been relocated – being on the optimum location for the main mineralised zone.

Previous work by Falconbridge and Belgian geologists implied that the project hosts about 50,000 tonnes of contained copper at high grades, which Mawson aims to convert to a maiden JORC-compliant resource by the second quarter of 2008.

The Kapulo project, which spans 5,500 square kilometres, is a joint venture with fellow Perth-based firm Anvil Mining Ltd and is situated 130 km north east of Anvil's operating, high grade, copper-silver Dikulushi mine.

Mawson can earn a 65% stake in Kapulo by spending US\$4 million over four years.

Its managing director David Frances said the company would continue pattern drilling until a resource was defined.

Drilling access

"The first holes weren't where we'd like them ... basically because of access – we don't have a dozer in there at the moment," Frances explained.

"We had a rig ready and wanted to start drilling, so we put it wherever we could put it in.

"We will have a dozer by the end of August, so we can start doing a bit of site preparation rather than having 30 guys with picks and shovels trying to prepare drill sites on the side of a hill.

"It's a bit easier with a dozer and we can start drilling where we really want to instead



▲ Drilling at Kapulo.

of where we can actually physically place the rig."

Despite not starting on the optimum part of the orebody, the mineralised zones encountered to date – 33 metres and 27m in two holes – have been quite wide.

Better intersections included 8m at 2.1% copper (including 1m at 3% copper) from 86m, 10m at 1.7% (including 1m at 4.5%) from 106m and 2m at 2% from 120m.

"It's telling us that it is probably a little more robust than we would have thought," Frances suggested.

"We've started our regional geochemistry as well, which is moving up and down the Kapulo fault zone at 400m spaced lines, and we're already getting a bit of encouragement from that.

"It's just visual as we haven't got any numbers back from that yet, but the guys have found some old workings and some malachite and other stuff around."

Social development

Frances added the company had been collaborating with international medical and humanitarian aid organisation Medicines Sans Frontiers (also known as Doctors Without Borders), witnessing the fantastic work done by the volunteer group in the region.

"They do all the health and AIDS education etc around the area," he observed.

"We've been dealing quite closely with them in screening all of our guys and the artisanal guys there, educating the mine workers and in the local villages.

"It's fantastic from a social perspective and we hope to continue that.

"AIDS is rampant but the education involves free condoms, talking about unprotected sex and STDs.

"There's plenty for them to do.

"The biggest thing in the Congo is malnutrition, especially in the North Kivu provinces, where it's probably the highest (rate) in the world, purely because of all the fighting.

"People just can't get in to supply aid – it's too dangerous."

As part of its joint venture with Anvil, Mawson will take part in social development programs in the region, with 10% of net profit to go into a trust fund for this purpose.

"This is to be spent on the local community.

"Obviously, we're not in production yet but once we are, that rule will be applied," Frances said.

"It's working – Anvil has just spent a lot of money on a water program at Pweto, the first articulated water supply that Pweto has had.

"Last year, they had a huge outbreak of cholera that actually closed the border for two months, so that's probably going to be a thing of the past when this water program is finished."

Mawson is also involved in the 112 sq km Golden Mile South gold project situated 4 km south east of the Kalgoorlie Super Pit in Western Australia.

St Barbara Ltd is earning a 70% interest in Golden Mile South and has commenced a 10,000m aircore drilling campaign at the project.

Mawson had about \$3.5 million in the bank towards the end of July.