



17 SEP, 2020

## Diggers & mining find a way through

Kalgoorlie Miner, Kalgoorlie

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**PAUL EVERINGHAM**

Next month will mark my third Diggers and Dealers conference since I took on the chief executive position at the Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA.

The fact the conference is going ahead at all says a lot about the mining and resources sector and the people who work in it.

Less than six months ago West Australians couldn't gather in groups of more than two, were unable to travel freely between regions in the State and couldn't have a dine-in meal in a restaurant or a drink in a pub.

The Victorian experience shows the need for continued vigilance but as a community we are in a lot better position than many people might have feared in March and April.

Which brings me back to mining and resources — and Diggers.

Through attention to detail, innovation, a focus on health and safety and the character of its people, and the support of the State Government, the sector has been able to operate at close to full capacity during the pandemic.

It's taken a willingness to change and, in many cases, personal sacrifice.

But the results are there for everyone to see, with both Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and WA Treasurer Ben Wyatt highlighting the huge boost mining had provided to troubled economies.

Diggers and Dealers was originally scheduled for August. When COVID-19 ruled that out, the temptation could have been to give up on 2020 and start planning for 2021. Instead organisers have done what our sector always does and found a way to make things happen.

It will be a different looking Diggers, minus the international contingent and with the likelihood some presenters will be dialled in via video conference.

But the forum will still showcase the very best mining and resources has to offer and, in the form of Premier Mark McGowan, a keynote speaker who will command attention.

**Paul Everingham is chief executive of the Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA**



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