

RIO BOOSTS PATERSON PROVINCE DRILLING SPEND

Exploration / Development > Discovery

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Rio Tinto has bolstered the 2021 exploration budget for the Citadel joint venture in the Paterson Province from \$A13.8 million to \$24.5 million.

Rio has sole-funded more than \$25 million of work on the project under a 2015 farm-in agreement and has increased its stake from 51% to 65%.

For 2021, an additional 6000-7000m of drilling is planned, for 19,000m in total, focused on the Calibre and Magnum deposits.

Two reverse circulation rigs and one diamond rig are already at work, with a second diamond rig to arrive later this month.

A gradient array induced polarisation geophysical survey will also begin this month.

"The recent increase in the Citadel JV's 2021 budget is a testament to the joint venture's strong belief in the potential of this project," Antipa managing director Roger Mason said.

"The 2021 program will be the largest yet and we look forward to continuing to advance the high potential Calibre and Magnum resources, as well as test numerous greenfield targets."

Citadel already hosts resources of 63.8 million tonnes at 0.8 grams per tonne gold and 0.2% copper for 1.6 million ounces of gold and 127,000 tonnes of copper.

The Calibre resource is due to be updated during the current quarter.

Citadel is just 5km east of Rio's Winu discovery, which has a resource of 503Mt at 0.35% copper, 0.27gpt gold and 2.15gpt silver for 1.8Mt of copper, 4.4Moz of gold and 35Moz of silver.

Rio has delayed first production from Winu by a year to 2024, but is still likely to ramp up drilling and early development work this year.

Antipa now has until the end of April to decide whether to contribute its 35% of Citadel expenditure.

If the company chooses not to contribute its share, Rio can earn a further 10% by spending another \$35 million within three years.

Antipa also has Paterson Province joint ventures with Newcrest Mining, which holds 9.9% of the company, and IGO, which holds 4.9%.

The three JVs are potentially worth \$150 million in cumulative free-carried exploration to Antipa.

The company also has 144sq.km of 100%-owned ground in the region, which is surrounded by its IGO JV ground.

Antipa shares jumped more than 80% last Wednesday after it reported "Havieron-style" gold hits at its WACA and Minyari deposits.

Results included 5.35m at 12.35 grams per tonne gold and 0.06% copper from 311.6m, including 1m at 65.4gpt gold and 0.25% copper.

The ground is 54km along strike from Newcrest and Greatland Gold's Havieron development project and 35km from Newcrest's Telfer mine.

Antipa had \$7.7 million cash at the end of March.

Shares in the company jumped another 10.4% today to 5.3c, a six-month high. It takes the company's market value through \$130 million.