



# Yilgarn iron hunters unite

■ John Phaceas

ASPIRING iron ore miners in virtually every corner of the state now have a collective voice to promote their cause, following the formation of the Yilgarn Iron Producers Association last week.

YIPA will be the state's fourth iron ore lobby organisation after the Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance, North West Iron Ore Alliance and Magnetite Network, reflecting the difficulties faced by individual iron ore juniors in breaking into the capital-intensive sector.

YIPA, chaired by Mindax Resources managing director Greg Bromley, represents 10 iron ore companies with leases in the eastern Wheatbelt and northern Goldfields, an area with the potential to host more than 10 billion tonnes of magnetite and a billion tonnes of hematite ore.

Critically, many of those potential resources are in relatively close proximity to an existing railway connected to an operating iron ore port at Esperance.

Mr Bromley said the establishment of YIPA would better enable Yilgarn miners to capitalise on that advantage, especially by providing more certainty for infrastructure providers interested in undertaking the necessary

upgrades of the existing transport network.

"This is about being able to engage as a group, rather than as individuals," Mr Bromley said. "That's the big attraction for both the infrastructure providers and for those who have joined the group."

Mr Bromley said YIPA had also received strong support from key regional bodies such as the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission.

Aside from Cliffs and Mindax, YIPA's members include: Mineral Resources; Cashmere Iron; Fairstar Resources; Golden West Resources; Legacy Iron; Hawthorne Resources; Macarthur Minerals; and Transit Holdings.

Surprisingly, two of the region's more notable companies – Brian Gilbertson-led Jupiter Mines and Nathan McMahon's Cazaly Resources – are not YIPA members.

Cazaly has already arranged to export ore from its Parker Range mine via Kwinana, while Mr Gilbertson told *WA Business News* he believed joining YIPA now would be premature given Jupiter was still in the process of proving up resources at its Mt Ida project. That was on track to occur by year's end, he said.