

## **Gold Fields and Conquest in dispute**

**The Australian arm of South African gold mining giant Gold Fields and junior gold explorer Conquest Mining are in dispute over their joint venture in Queensland.**

Conquest has initiated a dispute resolution process with Gold Fields after rejecting the miner's request to increase its interest in the Mt Carlton gold silver-copper project in the State's north.

Conquest has also rebuffed Gold Field's call for interest in the Silver Hill gold-silver project, which is surrounded by the Mt Carlton project.

Conquest has alleged the miner has not done enough exploration at Mt Carlton under their existing agreement, which would see Gold Fields earn 51 per cent of the project subject to certain milestones.

But Gold Fields executive vice-president Australasian region Glenn Baldwin said he did not agree with Conquest's allegation.

"From our perspective, we still have sufficient time to meet the objectives of the agreement with respect to drilling," Mr Baldwin said.

He said he was confident a solution could be reached and added that partnership with Conquest was an opportunity to build on Gold Field's existing joint ventures in Australia, which remains a key part of the Johannesburg-based miner's growth plans.

Conquest said yesterday it was not surprised Gold Fields wanted an interest in Silver Hill, given recent outstanding drilling results.

But the junior explorer said maintaining 100 per cent ownership and control of Silver Hill was in the best interests of its shareholders. Gold Fields operates the St Ives and Agnew gold mines near Kambalda and Leinster in Western Australia, respectively, and has joint ventures in New South Wales and Victoria.