

# GST deal is close: Treasury secretary

■ Gareth Costa

A "lasting solution" to WA's GST allocation is possible, according to secretary to the Treasury Philip Gaetjens.

Mr Gaetjens told a Perth audience yesterday that although he could not go into details, he was confident that when he next met his State and Territory counterparts and the Federal Treasurer they would be able to reach a deal.

The agreement would "change the benchmark and set an in-system relativity floor to prevent any future outliers in the equalisation process".

Then treasurer Scott Morrison in July proposed an overhaul to the GST system that would set a floor of 70¢ in the dollar for WA's allocation without penalising other States. A 75¢ floor for all States and Territories would be introduced in 2024-25.

Mr Gaetjens attended a Reserve Bank board meeting in Perth yesterday. Giving the Bate-man Lecture at the UWA Public Policy Institute, he acknowledged the important contribution of WA's mining sector in provid-

# POZ to bid for abandoned diamond mine

■ Stuart McKinnon

POZ Minerals will bid for the mothballed Ellendale diamond mine in the Kimberley, which it has said could potentially transform the company.

The Jim Richards-led Kimberley diamond explorer said yesterday it would express an interest in securing the asset, renowned for its fancy yellow diamonds.

Ellendale last operated three years ago under the since-collapsed Kimberley Diamonds, which closed the operation in 2015, leaving 100 workers jobless and a \$28 million environmental clean-up bill.

Liquidators sold off plant, equipment and machinery at Ellendale and then quit the failed operation, leaving it in the hands of the WA Government.

The Government has called for expressions of interest in the mine by November 30. A decision is expected early next year.

A Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety panel will evaluate submissions before a formal decision by Mines and Petroleum Minister Bill Johnston. POZ, which holds the adjoining Blina diamond project, says Ellendale

would offer big commercial advantages and synergies. "POZ has already negotiated a mining agreement with the local Bunuba traditional owners over the adjacent Blina project which has resulted in granted mining leases," the company said in a statement yesterday.

"The company is very well placed to do the same for the Ellendale diamond mine."  
POZ shed 0.1¢ to 7.3¢.

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