

Raleigh gold mine 'a goer'

By Kevin Andrusiak

CONSTRUCTION workers have been given the green light to move in and start building the long awaited \$50 million Raleigh Underground gold mine just outside Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

The new mine, a joint venture between the international gold producing giant Placer Dome Asia Pacific and junior explorers Rand Mining and Tribune Resources, is expected to employ about 90 people when commissioned next year.

Placer Dome said the mine will give up

about 500,000 ounces of gold over the next seven years.

According to the company's Kalgoorlie West mine general manager Adam Wright, the mine will form part of the backbone for the Canadian company's gold exploration and production in the Kalgoorlie West region.

"This project is a goer," Mr Wright said. "It will be a significant mine for Placer Dome in Western Australia." But it has not all been smooth sailing for Raleigh.

Mine development had been stalled

because of milling negotiations when Placer, which will have a 51 per cent stake in the Raleigh project, announced last year it would close its Kundana Mill.

The underground mine will be neighbours with Placer Dome's soon-to-close Kundana Mine which will have its flame extinguished before the end of the year.

Kundana, which opened in 1993, has managed to produce more than 1.4 million ounces of gold in a history which defied initial expectations.

Mr Wright said about 40 people will be made redundant because of the closure at

Kundana and because of unfortunate timing, those workers probably would not pick up jobs at Raleigh. "Unfortunately we can't just transfer the workers between Kundana and Raleigh because there will be about a six month difference," Mr Wright said.

"Hopefully we will be able to track some of the workforce over though.

"These guys have the narrow vein skill set we need at Raleigh."

Rand Mining director Anton Billis said Placer Dome were the preferred operators for the mine which potentially the first of many in the resource rich Kundana region.