

# **Sublevel Caving A Narrow Vein Mine – Pajingo’s Case Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Pajingo gold operation in Queensland is approximately 55 km south of Charters Towers and 134 km south-west of Townsville. The gold deposit was discovered on the northern end of the Drummond Basin in 1983 and first open pit production began in 1986.

Mining progressed underground in the 1990’s and gold production peaked in the early 2000’s as the main Vera/Nancy lodes were extracted, producing 330k oz in 2003 (a record at the time). More recently, as Ore Reserves and grade have diminished, the mine has had to develop innovative mining practices to maximise recovery of the remaining Mineral Resource. This has included a modified sublevel caving method against previously mined/backfilled zones. The method has been coined modified sublevel shrinkage (MSLS). Full scale trials of the new mining method have been successfully completed. This has allowed the site to reevaluate the Mineral Resource and include areas into the Ore Reserve that were once deemed sterilised, adding significant value to the operation and extending its life-of-mine.

This paper describes the first of two large scale MSLS trials and key operational learnings from it.