

# AFRICA

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"It is very hard to walk away from this, the richest mine in the world, without having turned over every stone.

With the new aircraft, "we'd like to see a five-times improvement over the existing system" says Hatch. And it all comes down to the slower speed, less noise and virtually no vibration.

"That's our goal. And the longer we have it, the further we can tweak it to effect improvements. It is very early days, but we already

have a four times improvement wrapped up," said Hatch

The man now in charge of the project is Brad Pitts, who co-ordinates the efforts of all the parties involved.

Pitts is a seasoned geoscientist who has worked in some of the hardest destinations Africa has to offer – including Conakry in Guinea and Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He shares Hatch's enthusiasm for the project and believes results are going to be good.

Pitts arranged a non-operational flight for

**Paydirt** at Jwaneng, a fairly remarkable experience. It is almost eerily quiet in the craft's gondola, which has been stripped down to bare essentials to comply with payload requirements.

Despite its size, it is unusually agile with a floaty feel to it ... more like a boat than an aircraft.

– Barry Avery



Joerg Straub at the controls while overflying Jwaneng