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Brief: MARATHON

# Marathon keen to up the tempo

CAMERON ENGLAND

MARATHON Resources is within weeks of signing a deal with a major mining contractor, which could cut years off the development of its Mt Gee uranium deposit.

Denis Wood, who was recently appointed to oversee the Mt Gee project in the northern Flinders Ranges, said yesterday he wanted to push the project faster to ensure it came online before some other projects which were in development, especially large overseas projects.

Mr Wood, speaking at the company's AGM in Adelaide, said he wanted the development timetable, which aims for first production in mid-2011, speeded up.

"I would like to see some acceleration of the process," he said. "We are a bit short on some drilling results."

Mr Wood said despite this, the company started detailed mine planning this week and

## uranium

would have a mine plan ready by the middle of next year.

The company also aimed to have a pre-feasibility study finished by that time, he said.

Mr Wood said the shortage of skilled mining engineers and similar professionals had led to a decision to partner with a mining contractor to speed up the development of Mt Gee.

"For a young company like Marathon to go out and pick up a suite of engineers would be no small task," he said.

On the other hand, a partnership with a large contractor would "take years off our timetable" he said.

Marathon chairman Peter Williams said the company had started a drilling campaign in October, in a bid to increase the current 42.8 million tonne uranium oxide resource at Mt Gee.