

## Sentiment is becoming neutral, so better stock selection is needed

### *Pendulum swinging from global to national interests*

The week started on a good note but it started to run out of puff at the back end when the Dow reacted adversely to suggestions of four interest rate rises in 2018, and calls by Trump for a 25% tariff on steel and aluminium imports into the USA. While free trade advocates are against the tariffs, there is no doubt that Trump has a mandate to do what is necessary to protect US jobs. His electorate has no interest in promoting world trade at the expense of the domestic economy. It is a winding back of the clock to a time when national interests were more important than global interests. It is consistent with the sentiment expressed in the Brexit vote and the pendulum swinging the other way.

### *Fading correlation between the Dow and the All Ords*

So far this year we have had a mighty surge in January, followed by a pullback that accelerated into a serious correction, and then some sort of an incomplete recovery. The negatives in the market are emanating more from the USA, with the Dow performing worse than our All Ords and other markets. The volatility we are seeing in the US markets are consistent with what might turn out to be a drawn-out long term topping formation, but time will tell. The Australian market hasn't experienced the same long term bull market that seemed to be going on forever in the USA, so we could be in for a period of lesser correlation between movements of the Dow and the All Ords.

The Dow fell by 10.35% at the trough of the February correction, and on the 2 March it was still down 7.9% from the record high of 26,616 seen on 26th January. Our All Ords only fell by 5% from its high of 9 January, and as of yesterday it was only down 3.5% from that peak. Thus its volatility has only been half of that of the Dow. There is a message here.

As modest as these movements may have been in the big picture, they have been enough to take the steam out of our mining market for a while. The number of stocks under chart coverage in uptrend is moving very close to equilibrium i.e. 35% in uptrend and 31% in downtrend.

The charts of a number of stocks that were previously testing uptrends deteriorated further, confirming that they are now in downtrends. Overall sentiment is becoming neutral, so you will have to be better at stock selection if you want to make money in the short term. You can't rely on the background trend.

### *Who knows about inflation? Not many*

How many market participants have had any experience of inflation-affected markets? (Zimbabweans, you can stand aside). It is an important question as it is a blank page for most people. How will people adjust their investment strategies when, not if, inflation makes a comeback? What will be the early signs of inflation taking hold again?

Why will inflation return? Back in Economics 1 at the ANU, we were taught that the best way to ensure low interest rates in the future is to have high interest rates today. The inverse is true. Low interest rates today lead to higher interest rates later. The only uncertainty is the timing.

A sound reason why we will have inflation again is the need to erode the level of indebtedness in the world. I was asked if the current high levels of debt (government and consumer debt) caused me concern. My response was that the debt per se is not necessarily a problem, as we have been warned about the debt levels for decades and despite the warnings, the wheels keep turning. However, complacency is no solution to whatever threats come with high debt levels. The real concern comes when the authorities decide to do something about the debt. History shows us that the best way to dispense with debt is to allow it to be eroded by inflation and negative real interest rates (as opposed to negative nominal interest rates). This amounts to a transfer of wealth from creditors to debtors through the destruction of the value of debts owed to creditors.

The most likely cause of inflation will be cost push, with wages being the most militant form of cost increases. This is facilitated by low unemployment levels. In the USA, the jobless rate is at a 17 year low, with the current rate of 4.1% being significantly lower than the 10% levels back in 2009, when Obama came into power. This rate can't fall much lower without igniting the push for higher wages.

For many years the world has benefitted from the commoditisation of manufacturing in China and the consequential reduction in the selling prices for many consumer products. It was a wonderful time while it lasted, but we are now seeing increasing labour cost in China, which will flow through to the rest of the world. Some manufacturing facilities can be moved to lower cost countries, but not the majority. Thus, we need to look to Chinese wage rates as well as US figures to see how these put pressure under cost structures.

### *Draig Resources is drilling out a new discovery*

We last mentioned Draig resources (DRG) in August 2017, when the share price was 5.9¢ and the market capitalisation was only \$15m. This week the price is 20¢ and the market capitalisation is \$72m (undiluted). Two placements have been undertaken; \$3.3m in August, at 5¢ a share, and \$5m at 20¢, in November. There is good reason for the much higher share price; it is drilling out a new discovery.

The story back in August was all about drilling deep holes to test for offset depth extensions of the previously very profitable Bellevue gold mine mineralisation. However, the geologists were distracted by something a bit shallower and more readily accessible.

Historical wisdom said that gold mineralisation didn't really extend to the west of the Highway Fault, notwithstanding earlier holes that returned assays of 1.6m at 53 gpt, 1m at 108 gpt, 3m at 11.4 gpt and 3m at 21 gpt. They were skinny, but very good grade. DRM thought that it was worth going back to the west of the Fault to give it a proper test. Luckily for Draig, it came up with immediate success and similar intercepts.

The Tribune Lode is similar to the Bellevue Lode with visible gold in quartz veins and sulphides within a massive pyrrhotite zone, and it demonstrates similar widths. Some of the recent intercepts have been 7m at 27 gpt, 5m at 16 gpt, 12m at 12 gpt and 15m at 5.8 gpt.

Recognising this as a new discovery, Draig has quickly undertaken a resource drill-out program comprising 5,000m of RC and core drilling, mostly on 80m x 40m spacing, but with some closer spaced areas. This should be sufficient for an inferred resource calculation by the middle of 2018. The drill program is about 50% complete, as we write.

Looking at the dimensions, we can see a minimum strike length of 500m. The widths seem to average 2-5m, which is typical of the regional style, though it obviously pinches and swells outside these widths. We can reasonably assume a 3m mining width and a vertical depth of 300m. These parameters could accommodate a resource of 1-1.5 Mt. Depending on how you want to treat high grades and cut-offs, you could assume a head grade of 8 gpt. That would give you a gold resource of around 250-300,000 oz, which would be enough to kick-off a mining operation. There might be a starter open pit with a decline accessing underground ore positions.

For Draig to go from zero to 250,000 oz in less than 12 months would be a good performance, but this is only the beginning. Demonstration of good mineralisation to the west of the Highway Fault is quite a breakthrough, opening up all sorts of possibilities. Tribune could go much deeper, with strike extensions that could add to the potential resource. Who knows what else is to the west of the Fault.

Draig is yet to test the offset extension to the Bellevue Lode, which was its original objective. It will hit this target in April, drilling three holes to vertical depths of 500-700m, at a program cost of \$750,000. (Government grants will pay one third of this amount). Maybe this drilling will be successful, giving the company the flexibility of multiple ore positions, but we need to see the drill results. Notwithstanding the success or failure of this program, the results at Tribune look like they will underwrite the future of the Company. Hence, there has been good reason for the strong share price.

*Disclosure: Far East Capital assisted Draig with the capital raising in August 2017, but it did not receive any fees.*

### **Highlands Pacific - asset rich cobalt producer**

HIG recently announced its maiden JORC resource for the Olgal prospect, on its Star Mountains exploration licence in PNG, but the market hasn't taken much notice of it yet. It should.

The Minerals Resource is 210 Mt at 0.4% Cu and 0.4 gpt Au, giving 840,000 tonnes of copper and 2.9 Moz of gold, using a 0.3 % cut-off grade. This Inferred resource is based on 23 diamond drill holes. Its surface dimensions are 900m

x 600m, to a depth of 800m. Open pit and block caving mining methods are being considered. A conventional flotation treatment process is thought appropriate given the typical fine grained disseminated chalcopyrite with local minor bornite mineralogy.

Olgal is located in the PNG highlands, 20 km NE of Ok Tedi, so there might be some benefits from nearby infrastructure in what would otherwise be a very remote location. It was first drilled by Kennecott in 1972, but left dormant until 2009, when another 14 holes were drilled. HIG spent \$25m from 2009 to 2013. In 2014, Anglo American paid \$10m and spent a further \$25m, which included drilling seven holes at Olgal. Irrespective of any success, Anglo withdrew from the joint venture, giving HIG 100% interest in the Star Mountains licences again. The market seemed to view this as a negative, but that would be a short-sighted view.

HIG is what I call an institutional-grade spec stock. It is what institutions can play with as a punt, without the normal risks that come with the racey end of town. Its market capitalisation is around \$75m. It had cash of \$8.7m as at 31/12/18. It also has a 20% interest in the Frieda River copper gold project in PNG, where the Nena sulphide mineral resource is 52 Mt at 2.13% Cu and 0.63 gpt Au (Measured and Indicated) and the gold cap is 20 Mt at 1.32 gpt Au and 0.06% Cu (Measured and Indicated). Frieda River itself has a Proved and Probable ore reserve of 686 Mt at 0.5% Cu and 0.28 gpt Au. Add in the Olgal resource and you can see that there is an amazing exposure to copper and gold resources for a company capitalised at < \$100m. This gives great leverage to the copper price.

On the production front, HIG is one of the very few ASX-listed stocks producing cobalt, through its 8.56% interest in the Ramu nickel project in PNG, which is producing 32,000 tpa of nickel and 3,300 tpa of cobalt in a cement product. Commissioning commenced in 2012, it took a few years to settle down (which is common for laterite nickel mines). The mine still has a 35 year life ahead of it with a mineral resource of 124 Mt at 1% and 0.1% Co.

Ramu achieved a net cash flow of US\$49m for the December quarter in 2017, paving the way for HIG to receive its first distribution at the end of Q1 in 2018. Up until now the equity share of the cash flow has been used to repaying funding from the mine development, but an inflection point has now been reached whereby cash will start coming back. The first cheque is expected to be \$1m, with another \$5m coming from 2018 earnings, based on recent prices of nickel and cobalt.

There is still a debt of US\$115m owing, to which most of HIG's cash flow will be directed. In 2018, it expects to repay \$18m of the anticipated \$23m share of cash surplus. From 2019, 100% of its share will be used to repay debt until the loan balance falls to US\$53m (less the 2017 and 2018 repayments). Once the debt is repaid HIG's equity jumps to 11.3%, and there is an option to move to 20%, at a calculated cost.

All this sounds a bit messy, but the main point is that the debt will be repaid in a relatively short space of time given the good commodity prices being received. At current economics, this would give an annual cash surplus of around \$30m p.a. There is plenty of upside here, when you throw in the copper and gold assets. Sure, its not a typical

spec stock, but that will make it more palatable to institutions. It will be re-rated.

*Disclosure: Interests associated with the author owns shares in Highlands Pacific.*

**Egan Street Resources ticks most of the boxes**

During the week we saw Egan Street Resources (EGA) for the first time. This company’s main project is the Rothsay gold mine in WA, previously mined by Metana Minerals, to a depth of 142m, with head grades of 7-11 gpt.

EGA IPO’d in September 2016, with a \$6m raising. The latest JORC resource is 880,000 t at 10.9 gpt for 307,000 oz, converting to a production target of 200,000 oz at a grade of 7 gpt. It seems to have made adequate allowance for dilution.

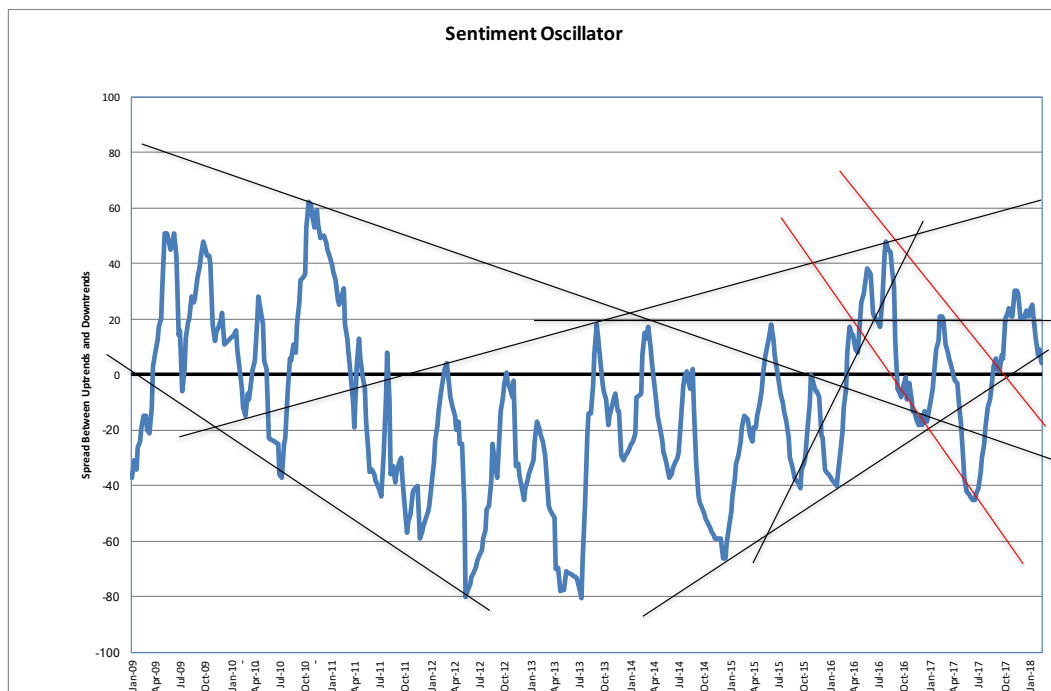
A PFS has calculated numbers for a 200,000 tpa plant with capex of \$23m and working capital of \$9m, to produce 200,000 oz over five years, with AISC of \$1,020/oz. However, this is changing to numbers of 350,000 tpa for 65,000 oz p.a. in an optimised DFS. This study contemplates access via two 1:7, 5 x 5.5m declines 450m apart, with ore drives 2.5m x 3m.

EGA believes it can dewater the mine and complete the rehabilitation of the existing decline in a three month time frame, to give quick access to the first ore stopes. There are some remnant ore positions not included in the resource statement that could be accessed early; believed to be 30,000 t at 15 gpt.

The orebody is generally 0.7-0.8m wide with a 70° dip. The minimum stoping width will be 1.4m, with long hole open stoping delivering an expected head grade of 6-7 gpt.

On first impressions EGA seems a worthwhile company with strong technical management. Rothsay was a good mine back in the heydays of Metana, and could quickly be the same for Egan.

While cash is low at \$1m, there are 48 mill. options coming up for exercise this month, at 25¢. Some major shareholders are exercising theirs early, with the balance to be underwritten by Paterson and Taylor Collison. The \$12m from the conversion could place the Company in a strong position to be able to negotiate a gold related finance package. We have added EGA to our chart coverage as a prospective gold producer in WA, with merit. Far East Capital intends to sub-underwrite some options. Readers may wish to do the same.



**Sentiment Indicator:** Sentiment softened further over the week with 35% (37%) of the charts in uptrend and 31% (28%) in downtrend on Friday’s close. The supporting tend line is being breached.

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## Detailed Chart Comments

NB. Only the bold comments have been updated. Comments in grey type are from previous weeks and will be less relevant.

Indices	Code	Trend Comment	
All Ordinaries	XAO	good bounce followed by a pullback	
Metals and Mining	XMM	consolidating	
Energy	XEJ	short term lower	
Stocks	Code	Trend Comment (updated comments in bold)	Main Interest
ABM Resources	ABU	testing steepest downtrend	gold
Aeon Metals	AML	correcting from new high	copper + cobalt
Alacer Gold	AQG	holding uptrend	gold – production
Alkane Resources	ALK	down after hitting LT resistance	gold, zirconia
Acacia Resources	AJC	Sideways at the bottom	coal
Aguia Resources	AGR	testing downtrend	phosphate
Alicanto Minerals	AQI	down	gold exploration
Allegiance Coal	AHQ	on support line	coal
Alliance Resources	AGS	resuming uptrend	gold exploration
Altech Chemicals	ATC	holding on support line	industrial minerals - synthetic sapphire
Anova Metals	AWV	falling again	gold
Antipa Minerals	AZY	<b>new low</b>	gold
Apollo Consolidated	AOP	breached uptrend line	gold exploration
Archer Exploration	AXE	<b>down</b>	magnesite, graphite
Argent Minerals	ARD	still in downtrend	polymetallic
Aurelia Metals	AMI	punched through resistance	gold + base metals
AusTin	ANW	testing uptrend	tin, cobalt
Australian Bauxite	ABX	continuing in downtrend	bauxite
Australian Potash	APC	wedge forming	potash
Australian Mines	AUZ	breached short term downtrend	cobalt/nickel
Australian Vanadium	AVL	correcting lower	vanadium
Avanco Resources	AVB	downtrend	copper
Azure Minerals	AZS	down	silver
BHP	BHP	strong bounce	diversified
Base Resources	BSE	weakening	mineral sands
Bathurst Resources	BRL	new high	coal
Battery Minerals	BAT	correcting lower	graphite
BBX Minerals	BBX	holding uptrend	gold
Beach Energy	BPT	new high	oil and gas
Beadell Resources	BDR	<b>another new low</b>	gold
Berkeley Energia	BKY	uptrend breached	uranium
Berkut Minerals	BMT	spiked to new high, then heavy fall	cobalt
Blackham Resources	BLK	new low	gold
Blackstone Minerals	BSX	breached downtrend	gold, cobalt
Broken Hill Prospect.	BPL	testing uptrend	minerals sands, cobalt
Buru Energy	BRU	pullback	oil
Cardinal Resources	CDV	testing short term downtrend	gold exploration
Cassini Resources	CZI	rising	nickel/Cu expl.
Celsius Resources	CLA	downtrend	copper/cobalt
Chalice Gold	CHN	on support line	gold
Cobalt Blue	COB	pullback	cobalt
Comet Resources	CRL	breached uptrend	graphite/graphene
Consolidated Zinc	CZL	continuing weakness	zinc
Corizon Mining	CZN	testing downtrend	cobalt
Crusader Resources	CAS	new low	gold/iron ore
Dacian Gold	DCN	rallying	gold exploration

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Danakali	DNK		sideways under resistance line	potash
Doray Minerals	DRM		testing new uptrend	gold
Draig Resources	DRG		testing uptrend	gold
Eden Innovations	EDE		down	carbon nanotubes in concrete
Egan Street Resources	EGA		sideways	gold
Emerald Resource	EMR		gently down	gold
Evolution Mining	EVN		new high	gold
Excelsior Gold	EXG		slump, testing uptrend	gold
Finders Resources	FND		sideways through support line	copper
FAR	FAR		sideways	oil/gas
First Cobalt	FCC		breached steepest downtrend	cobalt
First Graphene	FGR		strong rise	graphite
Frontier Diamonds	FDX		down after IPO	diamonds
Fortescue Metals	FMG		wedge forming	iron ore
Galaxy Resources	GXY		new downtrend	lithium
Galilee Energy	GLL		strong rise	oil and gas, CBM
Gascoyne Resources	GCY		testing steeper downtrend	gold
Global Geoscience	GSC		new high	lithium
Gold Road	GOR		new high	gold exploration
Golden Rim	GMR		down	gold exploration
Graphex Mining	GPX		breaching downtrend	graphite
Heron Resources	HRR		testing downtrend	zinc
Highfield Resources	HFR		long term downtrend	potash
Highlands Pacific	HIG		breached uptrend	copper, nickel
Hillgrove Resources	HGO		sideways	copper
Iluka Resources	ILU		surged higher	mineral sands
Image Resources	IMA		down	mineral sands
Independence Group	IGO		rallied to new high	gold, nickel
Jervois Mining	JVR		downtrend	nickel/cobalt
Karoo Gas	KAR		testing new uptrend	gas
Kasbah Resources	KAS		still in LT downtrend	tin
Kibaran Resources	KNL		new low	graphite
Kin Mining	KIN		down heavily	gold
Legend Mining	LEG		falling to support line	exploration
Lepidico	LPD		back to near highs	lithium
Lithium Australia	LIT		breached uptrend	lithium
Lucapa Diamond	LOM		forming a base	diamonds
Macphersons Res.	MRP		downtrend being tested	silver
Marmota	MEU		down	gold exploration
MetalsX	MLX		breached uptrend, then a rally	tin, nickel
Metro Mining	MMI		at highs	bauxite
Mincor Resources	MCR		breached uptrend	nickel
Mineral Deposits	MDL		uptrend steepening	mineral sands
Myanmar Minerals	MYL		testing downtrend	zinc
MZI Resources	MZI		testing downtrend	mineral sands
Northern Cobalt	N27		breached downtrend	cobalt
Northern Minerals	NTU		down again	REE
Northern Star Res.	NST		new high	gold
NTM Gold	NTM		sideways	gold
Oceana Gold	OGC		testing downtrend	gold
Oklo Resources	OKU		in a rising wedge	gold expl.
OreCorp	ORR		breached recent uptrend	gold development
Orinoco Gold	OGX		steep uptrend	gold development
Orocobre	ORE		looks like it wants to go down	lithium

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Oz Minerals	OZL		continuing in uptrend	copper
Pacific American Coal	PAK		back in uptrend	coal, graphene
Pantoro	PNR		new high	gold
Panoramic Res	PAN		on support line	nickel
Peel Mining	PEX		surge to new high, then pullback	copper
Peninsula Energy	PEN		back in downtrend	uranium
Perseus Mining	PRU		breached downtrend	gold
Pilbara Minerals	PLS		breached uptrend	lithium/tantalum
PNX Metals	PNX		sideways	gold, silver, zinc
Red River Resources	RVR		holding longer term uptrend	zinc
Regis Resources	RRL		testing uptrend	gold
Resolute Mining	RSG		rallying off lows	gold
RIO	RIO		back to highs	diversified
Salt Lake Potash	SO4		less steep downtrend	potash
Saracen Minerals	SAR		testing uptrend	gold
St Barbara	SBM		strong	gold
Sandfire Resources	SFR		rising	copper
Santana Minerals	SMI		new low	silver
Santos	STO		correcting lower	oil/gas
Sheffield Resources	SFX		sideways	mineral sands
Silver Lake Resources	SLR		breached downtrend	gold
Sino Gas & Energy	SEH		confirming uptrend	gas
Southern Gold	SAU		drifting lower	gold
Stanmore Coal	SMR		rising	coal
Sundance Energy	SEA		slump	oil/gas
Syrah Resources	SYR		rallying a little	graphite
Talga Resources	TLG		breaching resistance line	graphene
Tanami Gold	TAM		down	gold
Tempo Australia	TPP		testing downtrend	mining services
Tiger Realm	TIG		spiked higher, off lows	coal
Torian Resources	TNR		testing downtrend	gold expl'n
Triton Minerals	TON		uptrend being tested	graphite
Troy Resources	TRY		back in downtrend	gold
Tyranna Resources	TYX		breached steepest downtrend	gold exploration
Vango Mining	VAN		testing downtrend	gold
Vector Resources	VEC		trend line holding	gold
Vimy Resources	VMY		sideways through uptrend	uranium
West African Resources	WAF		uptrend	gold
Westwits	WWI		sideways	gold exploration/development
Western Areas	WSA		rallying	nickel
White Rock Minerals	WRM		new low	silver
Whitehaven Coal	WHC		gently higher	coal
WPG Resources	WPG		up	gold
Wolf Minerals	WLF		new low	tungsten
Totals	35%	50	Uptrend	
	31%	45	Downtrend	
		143	Total	

### Guides to Chart Interpretations

- Charts usually go pass from one trend (up or down) into the other via a period of indecision and uncertainty during which the trend can either recover or change. This period is signified by the orange colour. The orange represent both the greatest risk and greatest reward possibilities.
- Once a chart is in confirmed up or downtrends it is not uncommon for 10-20% of that trend to have already transpired.
- There are trends within trends. The focus of this chart review is the immediate trend that affects the sentiment i.e. it can be a downtrend within a long-term uptrend.

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- Not every chart warrants a new comment every week. The new comments are in bold type. Grey type comments may be dated.
- Individual charts provide a single view. It is valuable to look at charts of other companies in similar commodities, and the overall sentiment is also very valuable. Not many stocks can swim against the tide.
- We periodically add or delete charts, some times for obscure reasons. If a chart consistent gives poor signals or is very erratic, we may delete it. Sometimes we add a chart because we want to see what all the fuss is about. We do have a preference for charting stocks that we cover in our research as well.
- Errors and omissions may occur from time to time, especially in fast moving markets.

Amber Lights in Tables: Just a reminder if when the amber light is used in the table – it is when the charts are ambiguous or when there is a change of trend taking place. If a chart is breaching a downtrend it can either be a positive sign or a trap. Only once it has done more work can it be confirmed as a new uptrend. Maybe it is a new uptrend (or conversely a new downtrend); the risk takers can decide to jump on board early (or sell). They will maximise their profits (or minimise their losses if indeed it is the start of the new uptrend (downtrend). More risk-averse investors should wait a little longer, being prepared to give up some of the gains in return for greater certainty.

### Weightings of Sectors Represented in the Company Charts

Sector	No. of Companies	Weighting
Gold	34	23.8%
Gold Exploration	15	10.5%
Copper	10	7.0%
Coal	8	5.6%
Oil/Gas	8	5.6%
Graphite	8	5.6%
Mineral Sands	7	4.9%
Cobalt	7	4.9%
Zinc	6	4.2%
Lithium	6	4.2%
Silver	5	3.5%
Nickel	5	3.5%
Potash/Phosphate	5	3.5%
Uranium	3	2.1%
Bauxite	2	1.4%
Tin	3	2.1%
Diamonds	3	2.1%
Iron Ore	1	0.7%
Other	7	
Total	143	

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