



Miners, MPs honour Congo crash victims

PETER KLINGER

Leaders of WA's mining community joined some of the State's most senior politicians yesterday to commemorate four Sundance Resources directors who lost their lives when their plane crashed in Congo's jungle last month.

Premier Colin Barnett and Mines Minister Norman Moore led a bipartisan team of State and Federal politicians, including Eric Ripper, Alannah MacTier, Alan Eggleston and Julie Bishop, at a memorial service at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre attended by about 1500 mourners.

The miners were led by Rio Tinto Iron Ore boss Sam Walsh, Fortescue Metals Group director Graeme Rowley, Atlas Iron managing director David Flanagan, Mindax head Greg Bromley, Sandfire Resources chief executive Karl Simich and industry veterans Nick Giorgetta and Mal

Randall.

Multiplex heir Tim Roberts, whose father was a mentor to the late Sundance managing director Don Lewis, was one of many prominent members of the Perth business community to also attend the service, alongside corporate lawyer Craig Readhead, Macquarie Capital Advisers director Michael Ashforth, Leighton Holdings senior executive Craig Laslett, who read a eulogy about former colleague John Jones, WA Liberal Party president Barry Court and former Yilgarn Infrastructure boss John Saunders.

Western Areas managing director Julian Hanna, who delivered the eulogy for his close friend and colleague Craig Oliver, was joined by most of the nickel miner's senior executives.

The 90-minute service was arranged by the Association of Mining and Exploration Compa-

nies. Gindalbie Metals boss Garret Dixon, who read a eulogy about his former chairman Geoff Wedlock, was joined by his chief financial officer David Southam.

Notable absentees were Sundance's de facto directors George Jones and Michael Blakiston, who have travelled to Congo's capital Brazzaville to accompany the crash victims' bodies home.

Sundance is still hopeful the bodies of the crash victims — six of the 11 were Australians, including Queenslander Ken Talbot and New South Welshman John Carr-Gregg — will arrive back by the weekend.

The Congolese Government continues its formal investigation into the crash amid widespread suggestions pilot error and a sudden change in weather conditions were to blame for the plane plunging into a mountain.



Tribute: Mourners at the Sundance memorial service for Geoff Wedlock, Don Lewis, John Jones and Craig Oliver. Pictures: Tony Asliby, Mogens Johansen



In memory: Alannah MacTiernan and Eric Ripper



Video message: George Jones



Rio Tinto Iron Ore: Sam Walsh



Atlas Iron: David Flanagan

