

April 2005

Native Title Applications in Queensland

The Aboriginal Land Act 1991 (Qld) and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 (Qld) administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines are being reviewed to align with federal native title legislation and State Indigenous policy because the context in which the Acts were originally drafted have significantly changed. The comprehensive review will make recommendations concerning their future use, operation and application.

Murri Views, April 05. N.D Apr 05.

Native Title agreement for Tanami

The signing of a native title agreement between the Tjurabalan people and Tanami Gold mining company over almost 26,000 km will pave the way for a new mining development of the Coyote Gold project, 200km south-east of Halls Creek in northern Western Australia. The mining operation will cost \$20 million to develop and could commence as soon as early 2006. The agreement also includes a commitment by Tanami Gold to create employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Business News, pg 20. 28-Apr-05.

High hopes for quick ending to native title claim

Metals exploratory company Malachite Resources is attempting to negotiate a native title claim with the New England Aboriginal group in order to progress its Conrad Silver project, 20km south of Inverell. A meeting will take place soon in Tingha to hopefully finalise the agreement.

Northern Daily Leader, pg 5. 28-Apr-05.

Native title decision soon

A Federal court decision in relation to the long-running Wongatha native title claim is expected in May 05. The claim which has been ongoing for more than a decade encompasses more than 160,000 sq km of land in the Goldfields region. Goldfields Land and Sea Council executive director Brian Wyatt expressed disappointment in

how long an outcome has taken. He also mentioned that it could have been resolved in a way which supported both the claimants and industrial needs.

Kalgoorlie Miner, pg 5. 23-Apr-05.

Yamatji responds to elder's claims

Yamatji Land and Sea Council have refuted Gurrmayinhwonga elder Gladys Walker's claims in the Pilbara News that the council's working party processes removed the rights and interests of native title claimants, and were in conflict with Aboriginal law and customs with the concept benefiting the State Government and mining companies by expediting the decision-making process. The Yamatji Land and Sea Council said the working group members which are nominated and authorised by the members of the underlying native title group have proved effective and successful thus far.

Pilbara News, pg 3. 20-Apr-05.

Native title claim

The Federal Government has received a native title application from the Ngarlawangga people over land earmarked for development by Hope Downs, an iron ore mining company, about 50 km west of Newman in Western Australia. Working Group member Diane Limerick said although this was only the first step, it was a great moment in history for the Ngarlawangga people.

North West Telegraph, pg 4. 20-Apr-05.

Treatment plant options considered

The Calliope Shire Council in Queensland agreed at its last meeting that compulsory acquisition of native title land may be the only option available to establish its own water treatment plant. Council CEO Graeme Kanofski mentioned the other option was to seek surrender of the site through an ILUA, however this process is not preferred as it is expected to take considerably longer. The State Government has offered to grant the council freehold title over the site once native title issues are resolved.

Gladstone Observer, pg 3. 19-Apr-05.

Native Title acclaim

Ian Watson represented the Darug People from coastal NSW in a co-management agreement with Baulkham Hills Shire Council over the 300 hectare Bidjigal Reserve dispelling their previous native title claim. The Reserve which combines Darling Mills State Forest and Excelsior Reserve runs along Darling Mills Creek, reaching into Northmead, Castle Hill and West Pennant Hills.

Hills News, pg 13. 19-Apr-05

Report shows agreements are the way forward

National Native Title Tribunal President Graeme Neate has welcomed the release of the Native Title Report 2004 prepared by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner of HREOC. The report is currently being tabled in Parliament. The report supports negotiated outcomes to Indigenous land issues, a whole of government approach to resolving disputes over land and water and the recognition for the need for sustainable and enduring agreements between parties to avoid long and costly disputes.

National Native Title Tribunal Media Release, pg 5, 08-Apr-05.

Native title in the spotlight

The Federal Government recently proposed putting all legal services provided by native title bodies up for competitive tender. This decision comes amid concerns from mining companies that underfunding of native title representative bodies (NTRB) adversely affects the claim including the quality of legal service provided. Central Land Council Director David Ross said the tendering of NTRBs would fragment communities, lead to confusion and overlapping claims.

Australian Financial Review, pg 36, 08-Apr-05.

Council in Kurna talks

Tea Tree Gully, Salisbury, Playford, Port Adelaide Enfield and Gawler Councils have formed a representative committee to conduct ILUA negotiations with the Kurna People. The claim which does not affect freehold property, takes in Crown Land from Port Pirie to Yankalilla. Peter Leue from Tea Tree Gully Council said joining with other councils to negotiate with the Kurna people was the best way to handle the claim. Kurna-Yerta Heritage Board Chair Lynette Crocker welcomed the approach and hoped any agreement reached by the parties was broader than the issue of land use and ownership.

Leader Messenger, pg 9. 06-Apr-05.

Native title claimants overlooked in Uranium deals

The Australian Democrat Party have called on the Federal Government to ensure the rights of native title claimants are not overlooked if a takeover of WMC resources occurs. Senator Lyn Allison leader of the Democrat Party said there is currently a native title claim pending in the area by the Kokatha and Bangarla peoples over Roxby Downs, including the location of the Olympic Dam mine. On top of this, WMC Resources applied to the court to bring the trial hearing date forward, with the first hearing expected to be as soon as 15 April.

Australian Democrats Press Release, pg 15, 04-Apr-05.

Seafood industry angry about paying to fish

The Northern Territory Seafood Industry Council has expressed concern about traditional owners offering fishing access to sacred sites in exchange for money. The Council's CEO Ian Smith said several professional fishermen had been approached by representatives of the Northern Land Council with this offer. This access relates to areas in the Blue Mud Bay claim off the eastern coast of Arnhem Land.

ABC Online: Message Stick, 01-Apr-05.

Minara faces \$20m Aboriginal legal claim

Nickel miner Minara Resources is facing a \$20 million legal claim from the Wongatha people for breach of

agreement when the company was known as Anaconda Nickel and Andrew Forrest as the then CEO. The Wongatha people and five signatories are seeking damages and compensation as they claim Minara breached its obligations under an ancillary agreement in July 1998 to make payments to the Wongatha Trust.

West Australian, pg 38, 01-Apr-05.