



AIATSIS

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES

Native Title Research Unit

GPO BOX 553
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Phone 06 246 1153 or 246 1158
Fax 06 249 1046
E-mail: ntru@aiatsis.gov.au

NATIVE TITLE NEWSLETTER

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NATIVE TITLE IN THE NEWS DECEMBER 1997 - JANUARY 1998

(Note: Where an item also appears in other newspapers, etc, an asterisk () will be used. People are invited to contact the Native Title Research Unit at AIATSIS if they want the additional references. As usual, NTRU will try to provide people with copies of particular newspaper articles on request.)*

Ad = Advertiser (SA)

Age = The Age

Aus = Australian

CM = Courier Mail (QLD)

CP = Cairns Post

CT = Canberra Times

DT = Daily Telegraph

Fin R = Financial Review

HS = Herald Sun (VIC)

KM = Kalgoorlie Miner

LE = Launceston Examiner

Mer = Hobart Mercury

NTN = Northern Territory News

Rep = The Republican

SC = Sunshine Coast Sunday

SMH = Sydney Morning Herald

ST = Sunday Telegraph

Tel M = Telegraph Mirror (NSW)

WA = West Australian

WAus = Weekend Australian

APPLICATIONS

ACT

Ngunawal [NNTT Ref#AC97/1]

The National Native Title Tribunal has accepted a native title application over a large area of the ACT for consideration. The claim excludes residential areas but covers areas such as the Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. (*Aus*, 16 Dec, p2) Residents of

Canberra affected by the application were invited by the NNTT to register their interest. (*CT, 16 Jan, p5*)

New South Wales

Gumbangirri People [NNTT Ref#NC97/34]

An application has been lodged with the NNTT by the Gumbangirri people for areas covering the New England Tablelands. The application has not yet been accepted. (*Bellinger Courier-Sun, 23 Dec, p1, 3*)

Yeagl, Bundgalung and Gumbaynggirr peoples [NNTT Ref#NC96/38]

The Yeagl, Bundgalung and Gumbaynggirr peoples' application for native title over the waters of the Clarence River, which was accepted for mediation on 21 August 1997, has been amended to exclude any ocean waters. The application was submitted in response to a Section 29 Notice and is intended to protect the rock reef at the mouth of the river, known as Dirrangun, from excavation by the Department of Land and Water Conservation. (*Daily Examiner – Grafton, 12 Jan, p 1, 3*)

Victoria

Dja Dja Wrung [NNTT Ref#VC97/18]

The Dja Dja Wrung people have lodged a native title application over a 185ha site near Bendigo in response to a commercial application for a license over the Crown land. The application specifies right to land, waters and resources. (*HS, 11 Dec, p15*)

Queensland

Hopevale, Warra People [NNTT Ref#QC96/15]

An agreement for a permanent mediated settlement of native title was ratified in Cairns. Representatives of 13 traditional clan groups lodged a native title application over a 100,000ha around the Hopevale area, about 160km north of Cairns. (*CM, 8 Dec, p2*)* The Queensland Government has consented to the native title determination, which acknowledges the rights of industry and commercial land users. (*Fin R, 8 Dec, p3*)*

Wakka Wakka Jinda [NNTT Ref#QC97/60]

Gayndah Mi Mi Waka Waka descendents have disputed the Wakka Wakka Jinda claim over areas of the Gayndah shire and surrounding areas. Both groups wanted to assure the Ganydah community that they did not want to take over the land but wanted to have access to land to look after sites of significance. (*Central and North Burnett Times, 15 Jan, p1*)

Kudjala (Gudjala) and Jirandali (and/or Mitjumba) people [NNTT Ref#QC98/1]

The Inland Land Council, on Behalf of the Kudjala and Jirandali peoples, has lodged a native title application over two northwest Queensland national parks – White Mountains and Great Basalt Wall. The application does not include any freehold or residential land. (*CM, 17 Jan, p.6*) The Dalrymple Shire announced that it will not go ahead with a proposed eco-tourism venture in White Mountains National Park because of the native title application. (*Northern Miner, 20 Jan, p3*)

Western Australia

Nanda [NNTT Ref# WC94/7] [NNTT Ref#WC96/111]

Two groups of Aboriginal people contesting for native title over an area between Kalbarri and Shark Bay have agreed to form a single claim over about 31,000sq km, encompassing

Murchison House pastoral station, Kalbarri National Park and extending 12 nautical miles into the sea. (*WAus, 16 Dec, p11*)

Northern Territory

Croker Island [NNTT Ref#DC94/6]

Justice Howard Olney is hearing the application by Aboriginal traditional owners from seven clans to the seas around Croker and adjacent Islands. The application, over about 2000sq km of waters in both Territory and Federal jurisdictions, is also over the sea bed, subsoil, all living organisms in the water and a column of air above the water. (*NTN, 2 Dec, p6*)

South Australia

Eringa [NNTT Ref#SC96/3]

The public notification period has begun for the Eringa application over pastoral leases and the Witjira National Park, totaling 25,444 sq. km, near the SA-NT border. The application was officially accepted by the NNTT in February 1997. (*Ad, 15 Jan, p29*)

MINING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

National

In a new community based approach, mining company WMC has restructured its policy on Indigenous issues by devolving management authority directly to business units affected by native title. (*Aus, 16 Jan, p. 23*)

New South Wales

Successful native title negotiations between Aboriginal people and the AGL facilitated a \$55 million gas pipeline in central western NSW. Representatives of the Aboriginal people stated this agreement highlights the workability of the *Native Title Act*. The agreement also creates employment opportunities for Wiradjuri and Wongaibon people who will be hired to ensure the protection of their cultural artifacts and sites on the pipeline route. (*SMH, 15 Dec, p7*)

Western Australia

Anaconda Nickel has reportedly excised areas from their Murrin Murrin project site after disputes with the Bibila Lungutjarra and Goolburhunoo peoples over the agreement reached last year. (*WA, 20 Jan, p9*)* The Henry Walker Group has secured the contract for the Murrin Murrin project, from Anaconda and Glencore. Henry Walker will enter a joint venture with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation. The CDC plans to divest its stake in the joint venture to the Aboriginal people of the Murrin Murrin region. (*FinR, 28 Jan, p20*)

Mineral Commodities' White Foil project near Kalgoorlie hopes to resolve native title issues to allow production early next year. One of the two leases over the gold deposit is currently subject to three native title applications, the other, ten. (*Aus, 26 Jan, p32*)

Queensland

The Mitakoodi – Juhnjar people have challenged the validity of the Ernest Henry copper gold mine in Queensland in the Federal Court. They claim the leases for the mine granted by the Queensland Government is not valid, as it did not follow the processes of the *Native Title Act*. (*Aus, 2 Dec, p9*) The validity of more than 500 Queensland mining leases issued between January 1994 and December 1996 could be called into question if the injunction is granted. (*CM, 3 Dec, p2*)*