



MEDIA RELEASE

A JOINT MEDIA RELEASE FROM YMBBMAC AND FORTESCUE

Wednesday, October 12, 2005

NATIVE TITLE AGREEMENT REACHED WITH FORTESCUE

Australia's resources boom has taken on a new complexion with the signing of Land Access agreements between traditional owners from three native title claim groups from the Pilbara region of Western Australia and Fortescue Metals Group ("Fortescue").

The agreements between Fortescue and the Kariyarra, Nyiyaparli and Palyku people means that the company has received native title consents and can continue on its path to begin its iron-ore mining project.

The agreements create immediate and life-of-project benefits for the traditional owners, including financial compensation for the groups. As an example, part of the compensation will comprise an amount that would annually fund a number of traditional owners in vocational training on the project as part of Fortescue's Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC).

"It is good that this agreement also gives traditional owners more employment and training options," said Kerry Robinson of the Kariyarra people. "We are happy that the company may give traditional owners the chance to work in their own country."

Fortescue Chief Executive Officer Andrew Forrest also welcomed the agreements, saying it was a positive result for all parties.

"The signing of these Land Access Agreements is a significant step forward for the Aboriginal claimant groups within our project area and will lead to greatly improved community and employment opportunities for them over the life of the Fortescue project.

We are also committed to working closely with the Aboriginal people to protect and preserve their cultural heritage,” said Mr Forrest.

“For Fortescue the signing of these agreements also ensures that our ‘Pilbara Iron Ore and Infrastructure’ Project can move ahead on its rapid development timetable with the full support and co-operation of the Pilbara native title groups. “

Gladys Milroy of the Palyku people said: “We have signed this agreement in good faith and look forward to a long term beneficial and open relationship with Fortescue.”

The agreement negotiations were overseen by the Pilbara Native Title Service (PNTS), the native title representative body acting for the Kariyarra, Nyiyaparli and Palyku claim groups and the Pilbara operation of the Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation (YMBBMAC).

These agreements mean ‘whole of claim’ land access for Fortescue has been reached over the area within Kariyarra, Nyiyaparli and Palyku claims, stretching from the port at Port Hedland to an area south east of Tom Price and covering Fortescue’s ‘Pilbara Iron Ore and Infrastructure’ mine, rail and port project. Additionally, it will also allow Fortescue to have limited areas of freehold within the claim areas that will be used for accommodation for its staff and contractors.

“Making sure that our culture and heritage is looked after is very important to us as traditional owners,” said Raymond Drage of the Nyiyaparli people. “This deal includes a number of provisions that should help us protect our country and our culture now and for coming generations.”

This announcement also comes following public variance in August about an agreement between Nyiyaparli and Fortescue. This new Nyiyaparli Land Access agreement replaces the previous agreement.

YMBBMAC Executive Director Simon Hawkins said: “The new agreements have now resolved the issues in a mutually beneficial way.”

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Notes to editors:

- For more information regarding the Fortescue announcement, please refer to the joint YMBBMAC-Fortescue announcement on the Australian Stock Exchange website www.asx.com.au
- The claim areas can be viewed more clearly at: http://www.nntt.gov.au/publications/data/files/Pilbara_NTCA_Schedule.pdf
- YMBBMAC is a native title representative body which represents the traditional owners of the Yamatji (Murchison and Gascoyne) and Pilbara regions of Western Australia. In the Yamatji region it operates as the Yamatji Land and Sea Council and in the Pilbara as the Pilbara Native Title Service.
- YMBBMAC has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres - around 21 times the size of Switzerland.
- The organisation represents 30 native title claims across the Yamatji and Pilbara regions.
- YMBBMAC has a fundamental aim to avoid litigation and use negotiation wherever possible. By pursuing this policy, it has become a clear illustration of the success that native title representative bodies can achieve for the communities they represent.

For further information, contact:

Marjorie Syddall, Public Relations & Communications Specialist

Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation

Telephone: (08) 9268 7014

Switchboard: (08) 9268 7000

Mobile: 0407 645 646

Email: msyddall@yamatji.org.au