



Ord-East Kimberley Expansion Project

19 April 2010

Delivering Indigenous Benefits

FACT SHEET

One of the driving forces for the Ord-East Kimberley Expansion Project is the improvement of the financial and social well being of the local Indigenous community by providing education and training, employment and direct ownership opportunities.

The high level of welfare dependency in the East Kimberley is a current concern. The age profile of the population suggests a substantially greater problem in coming years if something is not done to improve Indigenous employment.

The Ord-East Kimberley Expansion Project is not simply about delivering an increase in economic activity in the region. It is also about providing opportunities for the most severely disadvantaged in the East Kimberley Region.

The Ord Final Agreement

The Western Australian Government has partnered with the traditional owners of the land, the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people. The partnership is based on the Ord Final Agreement (OFA), which was executed on 6 October 2005 as a framework for the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people to receive a \$57 million compensation package. The package compensates for the surrender of native title over 65,000 hectares of East Kimberley land, and for the environmental and social impact of the Ord Stage 1 Project.

Under the OFA, the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people will receive areas of land in and around the proposed agricultural regions and communities, as well as funds for the establishment and management of the MG

Corporation to act on behalf of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people.



Premier, Colin Barnett; traditional owner, Carol Hapke; Parliamentary Secretary for Western and Northern Australia, Gary Gray; Regional Development; Lands, Minister Brendon Grylls.

The benefits of the OFA extend to the community as a whole by:

- allowing for economic development by resolving native title and clarifying the status of heritage protection in those areas identified for agricultural and infrastructure development;
- expanding the region's economic base;
- increasing jobs and wealth for the community from the development of the land;
- providing community benefits and increased wealth through the improved participation of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people in the local economy;
- the expansion of Kununurra;
- the establishment of parks for conservation, recreation and tourism; and,
- the protection of the environment and cultural heritage of the region.

The Aboriginal Development Package

The OFA also provides for an Aboriginal Development Package (ADP) which enables the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people to participate in the project as employees and in businesses. The ADP provides for skills enhancement and in doing so, forms the basis for major opportunities, particularly for young people, to develop skills and to participate in the mainstream economy of the region. The Miriuwung and Gajerrong leaders recognise the ADP as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for their people to break out of a cycle of social disadvantage and welfare dependence.



Participants in the plant operator training program working on the construction of the workers' accommodation village in Kununurra.

The Office of Native Title has developed the ADP in close consultation with the MG Corporation, other Western Australian Government agencies, Commonwealth Government agencies, training providers, and Aboriginal trust organisations located in Kununurra. A Heads of Agreement for the ADP is available from the project website.

The ADP draws on the principles that were established in the OFA. The range of benefits focus on achieving outcomes for the Miriuwung and Gajerrong people in employment, training, participation in tendering for goods and services and the development of business capacity.

Some of the broader elements of the package include:

- the creation of funds that can be used to supplement existing training programs, address barriers to employment and reward achievement by employees and employers;
- the introduction of intensive mentoring arrangements to support employees, their families and employers to achieve sustained employment outcomes;
- providing Miriuwung and Gajerrong people and other Indigenous businesses with opportunities to tender for goods and services; and,
- supporting the development of Miriuwung and Gajerrong businesses.

Specific elements which have been achieved include:

- an audit of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong population to determine their skills, work experience and employment aspirations, which will then be matched to suitable employment in the region;
- training of plant operators;
- six new staff employed at MG Corporation to assist with ADP implementation;
- mentoring and life skills development; and,
- assessment of business opportunities.

More information

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