

# GUNDJEIHMI

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



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**Media Statement – 24 January 2013**

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## **Ranger uranium mine agreement updated**

The Mirarr traditional Aboriginal owners of the Ranger uranium mine area welcome the settlement today of the long-running renegotiation of the 1978 Ranger mining agreement. The execution today of a number of agreements and associated correspondence between the Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC), the Australian Government, miner Energy Resources of Australia (ERA) and the Northern Land Council signals the formal conclusion of a 14-year process of renegotiation.

Importantly, the agreements cover existing operations on the Ranger Project Area. They do not deal with future mining beyond the existing Ranger Authority or underground mining at the so-called Ranger 3 Deeps deposit beneath Pit 3.

The senior traditional owner of the Mirarr clan, Ms Yvonne Margarula, welcomed the end of negotiations about the original Ranger mine. "We Mirarr are happy that today, after so long, we have a fairer agreement for mining at Ranger," she said. "My father never agreed to Ranger. Our right to stop the mine was taken away by the government. It is good that after all these years we have a better agreement for Mirarr. This will help all Bininj [Aboriginal people] in the region."

The agreements, among other things, establish a new social trust to provide socioeconomic initiatives to the region, and provide greater Mirarr input into Ranger's operation via a new relationship committee.

The finalisation of talks comes just two months after the ending of mining at Ranger Pit 3. Last week ERA applied to the Australian Government to mine uranium at Ranger 3 Deeps, converting the current exploration tunnel to an operational mine. A decision has yet to be made.

The executive officer of the GAC, Justin O'Brien said, "These agreements update the provisions of the original and unfair agreement imposed on the Mirarr in 1978. Almost immediately after its signing the NLC sought to overturn that agreement, which led to 13 years of litigation. The renegotiation of that 35-year old agreement has taken 14 years and comes in the twilight years of Ranger's current operation," he said. "The agreements do, however, provide the Mirarr and others with firmer and fairer footing upon which to tackle the social disadvantage of Aboriginal people across the region. The agreements also formally underscore the improving relationship between the traditional landowners, the mining company and government."

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Further information: Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation on 08 8979 2200