

## **Hill Blunders Jabiluka Sacred Site Process- Mirrar Withdraw Application**

**12 October 1999**

The Mirrar people have withdrawn their application under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act in relation to the Boyweg-Almudj Sacred Site Complex.

The decision was made after the Minister for Environment and Heritage, Senator Robert Hill, refused to address Mirrar concerns over the appointment of Mr Bardy McFarlane to report on the impact of the Jabiluka Project on the sacred sites.

Mr McFarlane currently acts for a number of mining companies and is a partner in the legal firm which discredited the sacred sites of the Ngarrindjeri during the Hindmarsh Island case.

The Mirrar had formally requested Senator Hill to appoint a mediator under section 13 of the Act but the Minister has refused to even reply to the Mirrar request.

The Mirrar are also very concerned that the process of assessment was to centre on written assessments given that Mirrar culture is recorded orally.

The Mirrar will now explore other avenues to secure permanent protection for the site complex.

In the meantime, all construction activity at Jabiluka has stopped indefinitely. ERA are unable to proceed with the Jabiluka Project because the Mirrar have withheld legal consent for Jabiluka ore to be processed at ERA's Ranger mine.

For more information contact Jacqui Katona or Mathew Fagan on (0417) 814470 or (08) 89792200.