

## **Mirarr Reject Land Council Brokering Mine**

**NLC CEO's Comments Jeopardise Relationships**

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*The Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation issues the following written statement regarding media reports of the NLC's purported push for more uranium mines in the NT.*

The traditional Aboriginal owners of country upon which the Ranger and Jabiluka uranium deposits are located, the Mirarr, are stunned to learn that the CEO of the Northern Land Council has reportedly announced that he intends to push uranium mining.

Senior Mirarr traditional owner, Yvonne Margarula, said today "Under the Land Rights Act, we expect our Land Council to be working to protect our interests and representing us. Norman Fry hasn't spoken to any of the Mirarr and has no idea what is going on out on our country or what is going on between us and the mining company."

The system of land rights in the Northern Territory depends on all stakeholders being confident that Land Councils faithfully represent the views and wishes of the traditional Aboriginal owners of land on whose behalf they speak.

The Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) believes that the mining industry should be just as concerned as traditional owners are that the NLC is openly prepared to push an agenda of its own. There is nothing in the Land Rights Act that authorises the Land Council to be 'pushing for more uranium mines' or inserting itself as an un-invited broker in matters in which they have so far made no useful contribution.

The Mirarr have reached a long term care and maintenance agreement with Energy Resources Australia despite the history of disappointment with the Northern Land Council's handling of both the Ranger and Jabiluka mining projects.

The Mirarr, through GAC, intend to honour the terms of the agreements that exist with ERA. There is no role for the NLC CEO in relation to the Jabiluka deposit and his reported comments have embarrassed and jeopardised the interests of the parties that are actually involved.

In the opinion of the Mirarr, the Northern Land Council has failed as a representative in the past so it is fanciful for them to suggest that they are anyone's 'broker'.

Contact: GAC Executive Officer 0418823356