



**Yamatji Marlpa**  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

## **Native Title Railway Agreement to Protect Rock Art**

**29 September 2010**

Palyku native title claimants and Hancock Prospecting have announced an agreement over the company's proposed heavy haulage rail line to connect their Roy Hill project with Port Hedland.

The agreement provides financial and non-financial benefits, including payments to be used for protecting and managing the cultural heritage values relating to the Woodstock Abydos Reserve, one of the richest rock art centres in the world.

"In the negotiations, we made it clear that we don't want any of our special places to be disturbed," said Terry Jaffrey, a Palyku elder. "Hancock has agreed to avoid all sacred sites, and to provide funds to protect the Woodstock Abydos heritage listed area."

The agreement also specifies a portion of the financial benefits to be used for an employment, training and education program and a Health and Elderly Support Fund. These programs are in addition to Hancock's commitment to implement a Pilbara Indigenous Employment policy, and provide contracting preferences for Pilbara Indigenous companies.

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation's Acting CEO, Peter (Nyaparu) Jeffries, said of the agreement, "Woodstock Abydos reserve has immense national and international significance. Hancock Prospecting has recognised this by committing to protect its heritage value and the environment throughout the course of their works connected with the railway. These provisions, along with the programs for Indigenous employment and training, will mean that future generations of Palyku people can have their cultural heritage protected and a greater participation in the Pilbara economy."

"To us it's a very important place," said Jaffrey. "I spent most of my time over the last decade dealing with mining companies, looking after it, and I'll keep on looking after it. That's why we have to work with Hancock to make sure they don't disturb anything. It's very important to me and to our children's children."

This agreement with the Palyku people is the latest to be signed by Hancock over its rail corridor, which will affect several native title claims.

---

### **About Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation**

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is the native title representative body for native title claims in the resource-rich Pilbara, Murchison and Gascoyne representative areas of Western Australia.

The organisation has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres and represents over 25 native title claims, all with their own language, culture and traditions.

YMAC is run by an Aboriginal Board and provides a range of services to its members including claim and future-act representation, heritage protection services, community and economic development and natural resource management.

---

**For further information, high res-images and interviews contact:**

Amy Cargill, Communications Specialist

P 08 9268 7014 | M 0407 645 646 | [acargill@ymac.org.au](mailto:acargill@ymac.org.au) | [www.yamatji.org.au](http://www.yamatji.org.au)