



Yamatji Marlpa ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

No confidence in the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

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During a two day on-Country bush meeting, over 350 Aboriginal Traditional Owners, elders and community members passed a resolution of no confidence in the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Peter Collier following his lack of interest in Aboriginal affairs in Western Australia.

The group passed a further resolution around the Regional Services Reform unit's roadmap, which focuses on the State government's blueprint for Aboriginal communities.

Simon Hawkins, CEO of Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation says the message from Traditional Owners around the State was loud and clear.

"Aboriginal people in WA are fed up with Minister Collier's blatant disrespect for their culture, heritage and traditions.

"Aboriginal people want the people who are in control of their heritage to be held accountable.

"Traditional Owners want answers, and they want to be included in the decisions that will ultimately affect their way of life," says Mr Hawkins.

Doris Eaton, co-chair of Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation and respected Njamal elder urged the crowd to unite and speak with one voice.

"It's about looking after our community, our next generation and our heritage. We need together as one Aboriginal people. We need to fight. We have to come together as a nation, as one cultural nation.

"It saddens me that this year our minister who holds our future did not attend. This is the third year we've come together at Yule River, and we come together as one, as human beings. But he has no respect for us," says Mrs Eaton.

The two resolutions were passed unanimously by the group, and were handed to Terry Redman, Minister for Regional Development to take back to Parliament. The on-Country bush meeting was held at Yule River near Port Hedland on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 September 2016.

RESOLUTIONS

Aboriginal Heritage Act Amendment Bill

1. Yule River passed a no confidence motion in the minister of Aboriginal Affairs Peter Collier;
2. We call for a full independent enquiry in the DAA and ACMC in regards to their de-registration of sites and their interpretation of the AHA in consideration of their importance and significance.

Further resolutions added on Day 2:

3. That the government of Western Australia conduct a public enquiry into the form of Aboriginal Heritage legislation and the administration of Aboriginal heritage protection which will most effectively protect Aboriginal heritage in accordance with traditional law and custom;
4. That the enquiry comprehensively confers with and involves Aboriginal people of the state of Western Australia in determining how heritage is best protected;
5. The terms of reference of the enquiry to be determined in consultation with Aboriginal people of the state of Western Australia;
6. That a public report be made with the results of the enquiry.

Regional Services Reform Roadmap

Resolution:

The Community demands a commitment from the State Government's Regional Services Reform Unit ensuring:

1. That Aboriginal people be front and centre in designing and implementing regional and remote service reforms;
2. That the State Government acknowledge the significant contribution Aboriginal Corporations make each year in the form of funding, infrastructure and service delivery and involve them directly in decision-making about services reforms;
3. That both State and Commonwealth Governments be more transparent and accountable as to the existing spend on Aboriginal services in regional and remote communities;
4. That at the Ministerial level, the Hon Peter Collier, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and chair of the Aboriginal Affairs Cabinet Sub-Committee be more responsive and accountable for the impact on Aboriginal people in the region.

About Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is the native title representative body for native title claims in the Pilbara, Murchison and Gascoyne areas of Western Australia. The organisation has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres and represents over 20 native title claims, all with their own language, culture and traditions.

YMAC is a not-for-profit organisation, 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.

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