



McArthur River traditional owner Jack Green

McArthur River Mine Management Plan must be made public

In response to the second Independent Monitor's report released in November on the McArthur River Mine, the Northern Land Council (NLC) has called on the Northern Territory Government to amend its Mine Management Act so that Mine Management Plans are made public documents.

NLC Chief Executive Kim Hill said that McArthur River Mine (MRM) operates in virtual secrecy because Mine Management Plans are secret documents between mining companies and the NT Government.

"The NT Government must make the MRM Mine Management Plan a public document because neither Aboriginal Traditional Owners nor the general public knows whether MRM is actually complying as stipulated in their Mine Management plan," he said.

"We all have a right to know what's going on. We need

transparency in this process not a closed door – this report raises important issues of compliance, or the lack thereof!

"The reporting period was October 2007 to September 2008 so the information is now 14-months old; where has this report been for all this time? MRM was given this report on 10 September 2009 and we are only now finding out about it.

"And now the next Independent Monitor's report is not due until September next year! This is far too late for any of us to know whether MRM is complying with its

Mine Management Plan because it's secret," said Mr Hill.

"Consistently Traditional Owners, and others, have raised concerns about environmental damage to the McArthur River and surrounding environs and its incumbent on the NT Government and MRM to provide us with certainty that these concerns are being thoroughly addressed which currently does not happen.

"I reiterate - the first step in this process is to make Mine Management Plans public documents and ensure reporting on a timely basis."

Warlpiri spend royalties on community projects



The new Kurra WETT committee meet at the Central Land Council in October this year. The committee allocated \$650,000 to spend on community development projects

A Central Australian mining royalty association is leading the way in community development.

A new committee set up by the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation has just approved \$650,000 for community development projects for Warlpiri people.

The new committee, which makes decision making easier and simpler, will meet twice a year to discuss and approve funds for use by the Warlpiri Education and Training Trust (WETT).

Previously, Kurra would make these decisions during their royalty distribution meetings

The Warlpiri Education and Training Trust, (WETT) was set up in 2004 by Warlpiri traditional owners with additional royalties from Newmont's gold mining operations in the Tanami.

The Central Land Council administers the Trust on Kurra's behalf.

WETT money is used on education and training projects in Warlpiri communities to create a better future for Warlpiri people.

It is already in partnership with World Vision to deliver early childhood programs in some Warlpiri communities.

Some of the main decisions that were made by the Kurra committee at the October meeting were:

- o \$40,704 for the Central Desert Shire to establish and look after a training room at Willowra. This money will help to buy com-

puters, furniture and other equipment, and will also pay for training for Aboriginal community members in Willowra in 2010.

- o \$80,000 (\$2,500 for each student) to help Warlpiri students going to boarding school at Yirara, Kormilda and Worawa (Victoria) colleges to buy things they need for school and do extra curricular activities like excursions during 2010.

- o \$37,500 (\$2,500 for each student) to help Warlpiri students at schools outside the Warlpiri communities or boarding schools to buy things they need for school and participate in activities like school excursions during 2010.

- o \$200,000 (\$2,500 for each student) for secondary students at schools in the Warlpiri communities to go on excursions in 2010.

- o \$290,657 for Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education to operate and manage a new Nyirripi Learning Community Centre in 2010.

- o \$112,100 from money already given to World Vision Australia to be used to help pay for a governance support worker and a mentor for Warlpiri Early Childhood Care and Development workers as part of the WETT Early Childhood Program.

Some of these projects have been funded by WETT before and some of them are new, like the Nyirripi Learning Community Centre Coordinator position and the Willowra training room.