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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF  
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER STUDIES  
NATIVE TITLE RESEARCH UNIT

## NATIVE TITLE IN THE NEWS

FEBRUARY 2015

DATE	STATE	SUBJECT	SUMMARY	SOURCE
28/02/2015	NSW	Feud between Aboriginal groups reignites over Deerubbin land	A long-standing feud has reached boiling point in Sydney's west between Aboriginal groups over claims of identity. The Darug tribe says its culture is being erased by the local land council in what is one of the fiercest inter-Aboriginal disputes in the state. The recognised claimant for land title in the region, the Deerubbin council, believes there is no clear evidence that descendants from the Darug tribe exist and has rejected Darug membership applications.	<a href="#">The Sydney Morning Herald</a> , Australia, 28 February 2015
27/02/2015	NSW	Githabul Nation Aboriginal Corporation no longer under administration	The Githabul Nation Aboriginal Corporation is once again under local administration after being placed under special administration last July. The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations said they have now adopted a new board structure to ensure all families are fairly represented.	<a href="#">ABC News</a> , Australia, 27 February 2015
27/02/2015	WA	Pastor in court	Wongatha man Pastor Geoffrey Stokes appeared in Kalgoorlie Magistrate's Court yesterday in relation to the October confrontation, where he is alleged to have fired a shot from a hunting rifle over the heads of miners gathered near Mt Margaret Hill after finding "mining action" at the site. Defence counsel Greg Wildie told the court that while the case appeared "deceptively simple", it had developed a political edge, and the defence needed further time to prepare because of the complex tribal and land matters it involved.	<a href="#">The West Australian – regional</a> , Australia, 27 February 2015

25/03/2015	WA	Seeing Red over quarry extension	The Swan Valley Nyungah Community is distraught that an historic campsite was recently removed from the State's Register of Aboriginal Sites. Now the campsite is deregistered, multinational construction giant Hanson Heidelberg Cement Group can expand its quarry at Red Hill, without needing a section 18 approval: an application for ministerial consent to "excavate, destroy, damage, conceal or in some way alter" an Aboriginal heritage site.	<a href="#">In my community</a> , Australia, 25 February 2015
25/02/2015	Australia	Indigenous involvement needs policy development: Minerals Council	According to a new monograph authored by Professor Marcia Langton entitled 'From Conflict to Cooperation', the minerals sector in Australia contributes \$3 billion in native title related payments each year. Langton identified the expansion in relations, from the necessity of land-access agreements to industry-led employment programs, and increasing investment in procurement from indigenous businesses.	<a href="#">The Australian – National Affairs</a> , Australia, 25 February 2015 <a href="#">Mining Australia</a> , Australia, 26 February 2015
20/02/2015	Australia	Minister Scullion: Expert Group Appointed to Indigenous Land Inquiry	Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion, has invited an Expert Indigenous Working Group to guide the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) investigation into Indigenous land administration and use. The Minister said the group will work with the Commonwealth, state and territory governments on the investigation and ensure that policy directions and proposals are developed with the involvement of Indigenous stakeholders.	<a href="#">Indigenous.gov.au</a> , Australia, 20 February 2015
20/02/2015	WA	Colin Barnett turned down invitation to meet Aboriginal land councils	One day before telling parliament he would consult with Aboriginal people closely, the Western Australian premier, Colin Barnett, turned down an invitation to meet Aboriginal land councils about a government proposal to close up to 150 of the state's remote communities.	<a href="#">The Guardian</a> , Australia, 20 February 2015
20/02/2015	WA	Abolish Aboriginal body: Wyatt	Shadow Aboriginal affairs minister Ben Wyatt has said the Department of Aboriginal Affairs should be abolished because it cannot properly advocate for Aboriginal West Australians. Mr Wyatt also called for an overhaul of the Aboriginal Lands Trust, which was set up before native title was recognised by the courts and holds 10 per cent of WA's land mass, on which 10,000 Aboriginal people live. Mr Collier said while the Trust was old, calling for its abolition without a review of what was working and what was not would be foolhardy.	<a href="#">The West Australian</a> , Australia, 20 February 2015
20/02/2015	WA	Aboriginal group launches firm	Leading Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberly have established a wholly owned law firm, known as KRED Legal, which hopes to retain more of the legal fees and expertise associated with native title within the Kimberly region.	<a href="#">The Australian – Business Review</a> , Australia, 20 February 2015 <a href="#">Lawyers weekly</a> , Australia, 26 February 2015

19/02/2015	WA	Indigenous ranger training program kicks off for Ngadju nation in Western Australia	19 indigenous rangers from the Ngadju nation in Western Australia have begun their first training program to help conserve country after four years of planning. The course certifies participants in courses such as first aid, chemical handling, invasive weeds identification, fire mitigation, and Mallee fowl preservation. It is the first training of its kind for the Ngadju people who received native title determination late last year and links in with the remote jobs community program.	<a href="#">ABC Rural</a> , Australia, 19 February 2015
18/02/2015	WA	Ngarluma Aboriginal Corp legal bill \$1.5m over two years	The chief executive of one of the Pilbara's biggest Aboriginal corporations, Ngarluma Aboriginal Corporation, is on extended leave amid a forensic audit into the group's finances and allegations of excessive spending and poor governance. The corporation has received tens of millions of dollars a year from native title deals in the Pilbara, including a \$25 million upfront payment from mining giant Rio Tinto in 2011, but there are claims the windfall has been grossly mismanaged.	<a href="#">The Australian – National Affairs</a> , Australia, 18 February 2015
18/02/2015	WA	'Class action' to take on State Government over heritage changes	Yesterday, the Aboriginal Heritage Alliance held a rally outside the offices of Western Australia's Department of Aboriginal Affairs. They were small in numbers but heavy with high profile individuals. They oppose the State Government's proposed amendments to the Aboriginal Heritage Act which appear to water down heritage listing in favour arguably of mining interests.	<a href="#">The Stringer</a> , Australia, 18 February 2015
18/02/2015	Australia	Native title reforms to escape dependency	The Human Rights Commissioner, Tim Wilson is calling for reforms to native title. He wants less red tape, flexible ownership structures and business models that allow indigenous land owners to raise equity. Mr Wilson and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda will hold a forum this year to review and suggest reforms to native title.	<a href="#">9 News</a> , Australia, 18 February 2015 <a href="#">The Conversation</a> , Australia, 18 February 2015 <a href="#">The Sydney Morning Herald</a> , Australia, 18 February 2015 <a href="#">The Australian</a> , Australia, 19 February 2015
17/02/2015	TSI	Minister Scullion: Increased commercial fishing opportunities for Torres Strait	With the purchase of the last non-Indigenous commercial fishing licence, Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people have achieved 100 per cent ownership of the commercial Bêche-de-mer Fishery in the Torres Strait. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, Senator Richard Colbeck has said "This is now the second commercial fishery in the Torres Strait to be completely owned by the traditional owners and is an important step forward to achieve a commercially viable fishing industry for Torres Strait communities."	<a href="#">Indigenous.gov.au</a> , Australia, 17 February 2015 <a href="#">The Fish Site</a> , England, 16 February 2015
17/02/2015	WA	Two native title claim groups vote in favour of billion-dollar settlement	The second of six authorisation meetings was held in Busselton on the weekend. The meeting had a similar result to the first meeting, 65 per cent of members voted to accept the \$1.3 billion settlement offer.	<a href="#">ABC News</a> , Australia, 17 February 2015 <a href="#">The Stringer</a> , Australia, 21 February 2015

17/02/2015	WA	WA's new-look Aboriginal heritage policy and the assessment of sacred sites: When is an Aboriginal sacred site not a sacred site?	On 27 November 2014, the last day of year's parliamentary sittings, the Barnett government introduced the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Amendment Bill 2014</i> . On the same day, an Aboriginal heritage test case opened in the WA Supreme Court. Eddie Mabo's former barrister, Greg McIntyre SC, argued on behalf of Aboriginal custodian Diana Robinson that WA's Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) had wrongly removed an Aboriginal site at Port Hedland Harbour from the DAA site register. According to the DAA's advice from the State Solicitor's Office (SSO), there must be evidence of "religious activity" at an Aboriginal sacred site for it to qualify for DAA registration.	<a href="#">The monthly</a> , Australia, 17 February 2015
17/02/2015	NSW	Dispute over native title rights ahead of ruling	According to a respected Ngiyampaa elder Dr Beryl Carmichael, the Barkindji people heading the 1997 native title claim had no right to claim areas they have as the external borders within the claim impinged on her own people's land. She plans to meet with the Ngiyampaa people to discuss their position ahead of an expected court ruling in June.	<a href="#">Barrier Daily Truth</a> , Australia, 17 February 2015
14/02/2015	QLD	Annastacia Palaszczuk: projects linked to LNP donors on new premier's desk	The federal environment minister has decided to postpone decisions on approvals due to the prospect of a different future for contentious Queensland projects under a state Labor government.	<a href="#">The Guardian</a> , Australia, 14 February 2015
13/02/2015	NT	Inpex to explore onshore in NT	Chief Minister Adam Giles announced that Japanese oil and gas exploration company Inpex has been granted a permit for a 4000 square kilometre block of acreage in the Beetaloo sub-basin. The five-year project will be given the final go-ahead once Inpex advertise for objections, complete and register all legislative requirements, and negotiate to reach agreement with Native Title holders.	<a href="#">Yahoo 7 Finance</a> , Australia, 13 February 2015 <a href="#">Rigzone</a> , Australia, 16 February 2015 <a href="#">Pipeliner</a> , Australia, 16 February 2015
13/02/2015	NT	Borrooloola woman died at funeral after requests for ambulance refused, elder says	An elderly Indigenous woman died at a funeral in the remote NT town of Borrooloola after requests for an ambulance were refused. This inadequate access to health services is an issue for many native title holders who live on country.	<a href="#">ABC News</a> , Australia, 13 February 2015
13/02/2015	WA	Native Title settlement due	The State Government's multi-million-dollar settlement package has caused a lot of controversy since it was announced in 2012 by Premier Colin Barnett. The second vote will be decided from 10am on 14 February at Georgina Molloy Anglican School.	<a href="#">The West Australian</a> , Australia, 13 February 2015
12/02/2015	QLD	Council a respondent to Native Title applications	The Douglas Shire Council has joined Native Title applications lodged by the Yirrganydji (Irukandji) People and Cape York United People as a respondent. The claim covers 79,412 square kilometers of land and waters between Port Douglas and Wangetti.	<a href="#">Newspost</a> , Australia, 12 February 2015

12/02/2015	SA	Monax signs farm-in agreement at Woomera area	Monax mining has signed an agreement with fellow-listed Maximus Resources over four tenements within the Woomera prohibited area, in South Australia. Monax Alliance has already completed a successful Aboriginal heritage clearance survey in the area, while Maximus has signed a native title agreement allowing access for drilling at the Oliffes Dam target.	<a href="#">Mining Weekly</a> , Australia, 12 February 2015
12/02/2015	Australia	2015 National NAIDOC Week theme announced	The focus and theme for this year's National NAIDOC Week celebrations is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique and timeless connection to land. The theme – We all Stand on Sacred Ground: Learn, Respect and Celebrate – highlights Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' strong spiritual and cultural connection to land and sea.	<a href="#">Indigenous.gov.au</a> , Australia, 12 February 2015
13/02/2015	NT	Land Council Boss Unleashes On Nigel Scullion Over Land Rights Assault	Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Land Council, Joe Morrison, used a national address to savage Indigenous affairs minister Nigel Scullion's attempts to water down land rights in the Territory, saying attacks on the legislation was "in the DNA of the CLP".	<a href="#">New matilda</a> , Australia, 13 February 2015
12/02/2015	QLD	Dugong poachers face fines of up to \$1 million; funding approved for threatened animals like bandicoots and quolls	Traditional owners have welcomed the new laws passed in the Senate by the Federal Government to have hunting fines increased to up to \$1 million in Commonwealth marine areas.	<a href="#">ABC News</a> , Australia, 12 February 2015 <a href="#">ABC News, PM</a> , Australia, 12 February 2015 <a href="#">Newsport</a> , Australia, 13 February 2015 <a href="#">English News</a> , China, 13 February 2015
11/02/2015	WA	Alliance formed to fight government's proposed Aboriginal Heritage Amendments	The Aboriginal Heritage Action Alliance, an Indigenous group formed with support from former federal politicians, senior archaeologists and anthropologists, held its first meeting on 9 <sup>th</sup> February to discuss a united opposition to the State government's proposed Aboriginal Heritage Amendment Act. WA Greens Member for the Mining and Pastoral Region Robin Chapple MLC was the only standing politician to attend the meeting.	<a href="#">Robin Chapple MLC</a> , Australia, 11 February 2015
11/02/2015	NSW	Barkindji native title claim 'probably the largest in NSW'	A June date has been set for the determination of the Barkindji people's native title claim. The claim is among the biggest in the state covering more than 128,000 square kilometers.	<a href="#">ABC News</a> , Australia, 11 February 2015

5/02/2015	QLD	Brisbane Native Title claim rejected	The Federal Court has handed down a determination that native title has been extinguished over a large tract of the greater Brisbane region. This decision rejected claims made by two native title claim groups, the Yugara/Yagarapul People and the Turrbal People. It more broadly determined that native title does not exist over this highly urbanised region.	<a href="#">Westender</a> , Australia, 5 February 2015
4/02/2015	WA	Native title settlement an Australian first	Close to 300 Noongar people in the Bunbury area voted to accept an Australian-first \$1 billion native title settlement. The Bunbury vote was the first of six elections which will decide whether the South West's Noongar people accept the State Government settlement or take the native title claim to the courts.	<a href="#">Yahoo 7 News</a> , Australia, 4 February 2015 <a href="#">The Stringer</a> , Australia, 7 February 2015
3/02/2015	SA	Barngarla native title claim decision welcomed	On Thursday 22 January, Justice John Mansfield handed down the decision to grant native title over large areas of the Eyre Peninsula. The claim area includes 44,500 square kilometres, and encompassing the coast between Port Augusta and Port Lincoln and the surrounding land and seas. The local Barngarla people although happy with the decision to grant native title are disappointed that Port Augusta was not included.	<a href="#">The Transcontinental – Port Augusta</a> , Australia, 3 February 2015

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