

Native Title in the News April 2007

Date	State	Subject	Summary	Source
1 April 2007	QLD	<b>\$2.8bn aluminium deal with China</b>	The Queensland Government has signed a \$2.8bn deal with the Aluminium Corporation of China (Chalco) giving it the 'right to mine the Aurukun bauxite resource on Cape York Peninsula'. Acting Premier Anna Bligh said that 'China is an economic powerhouse that is shaping the world economy and this agreement is an enormous vote of confidence in our ability to meet their booming demand for resources'. The Queensland Government is providing \$300m in funding for infrastructure and Chalco is 'now in the final stages of reaching an agreement with the Wik Aboriginal people of the Aurukun region'.	<i>Mining Chronicle</i> (National, April 2007), 74.
3 April 2007	QLD	<b>Rough Passage</b>	A gala function attended by Queensland Premier Peter Beattie was interrupted by protestors from the Kowanyama and Staaten Rover who opposed the Wild Rivers legislation affecting the 'scores of creeks and rivers systems that form the lifeblood' of the Gulf of Carpentaria and Cape York. The protestors said that their elders were 'more and more worried about the takeover of [their] homelands by the Wilderness Society because they made an election deal with the Queensland Government'. They said that 'neither the Wilderness Society nor the government asked the Koko Berra people or other Aboriginal communities of the cape what [their] views were on the wild rivers laws'. The protestors were concerned that almost of all the land affected by the legislation was Indigenous although many communities had not been consulted. Natural Resources and Water Minister Craig Wallace said that '[I]ndigenous communities had nothing to gear from the laws'. The laws will not affect native title because it was a Federal Act that can override state law nor will they stop traditional owners from hunting and gathering. However they laws will lock up catchment areas from development. The Cape's Indigenous and agricultural groups and councils have 'joined forces to oppose the controversial laws, fearing they will destroy the economic and social development of the remote region'.	<i>The Australian</i> (National, 3 April 2007), 11; 'State buoys up wild rivers laws' <i>Cooktown local news</i> (Cooktown, 4 April 2007), 9; 'Community consultation on Wild Rivers Act imminent' <i>Western Cape Bulletin</i> (Weipa, 4 April 2007), 11; 'Cape York' <i>Cairns Post</i> (Cairns, 16 April 2007), 4.

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<p>3 April 2007</p>	<p>VIC</p>	<p><b>Native title rights awarded</b></p>	<p>The Gunditjmara people have been 'granted native title rights and interests over 140 000 hectares of land' covering an area from the South Australian border into Western Victoria. In his draft reasons for the judgment Justice North said 'the evidence has included tangible evidence of the development of fishing technology including the existence of fish traps and remains of house sites, suggesting a long standing connection with the country'. Justice North said that 'buy doing justice to the Gunditjmara people, the State, the Commonwealth and the other respondents have taken a step to right past wrongs [forming] a basis for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians'. Under the Federal Court determination, the Gunditjmara people will have non-exclusive rights and interests to 'more than 2000 parcels of vacant Crown land and waters including part of the Glenelg River and areas of national parks and reserves'. The Gunditj Mirring traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation will hold the land on trust for the Gunditjmara people. National Native Title Tribunal member Gaye Sculthorpe said that the result 'was a great win for the Gunditjmara people who were able to provide the necessary evidence to support their native title claim'. The initial claim was lodged in 1996 in 'response to notices the Victorian Government published, signalling its intention to grant exploration licenses and allow development of a gas transmission pipeline'. This is the 100th Native title determination to be registered in Australia.</p>	<p><i>Border Watch</i> (Mt Gambier, 3 April 2007), 7; 'Title granted: eleven year struggle ends for Gunditjmara' <i>Hamilton Spectator</i> (Hamilton 3 April 2007), 1; 'Gunditjmara granted title' <i>Portland Observer</i> (Portland, 2 April 2007), 1; 'Gunditjmara win Vic native title fight' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 5 April 2007), 4; 'The fighting Gunditjmara win native title rights' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 5 April 2007), 24; 'What is the claim all about?' <i>Hamilton Spectator</i> (Hamilton, 14 April 2007), 6; 'Gunditjmara win native title battle' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 11 April 2007), 9.</p>
<p>4 April 2007</p>	<p>VIC</p>	<p><b>Housing site 'sacred'</b></p>	<p>The Bunurong Land Council has said that the development of the Botanic Ridge estate could 'destroy up to 19 significant sites'. The sites were unearthed during work on the Casey Council approved Leederville development. The Bunurong land Council's senior cultural officer Stephen Comptom said that artefacts such as tools and spearheads were discovered Mr Compton said that 'his council wrote to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs when the sites were exposed asking they be protected'.</p>	<p><i>Cranbourne Leader</i> (Melbourne, 4 April, 2007), 1.</p>

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5 April 2007	QLD	<b>Bowen Basin included in petrol search</b>	The Queensland Government is releasing 150 000 sq km of land for tendering for petroleum exploration. Minister for Mines and Energy Geoff Wilson said that there will be 41 areas 'available for petroleum exploration' where applicants will not be required to undertake a native title process'.	<i>Daily Mercury</i> (Mackay, 5 April 2007), 23.
5 April 2007	NT	<b>TOs fight McArthur mine plan</b>	Traditional owners have 'begun legal action against the Northern Territory government over the controversial expansion of the territory's largest zinc mine'. Under the project Swiss mining giant Xstrata and its subsidiary McArthur River Mining will convert the underground mine from an underground to open cut mine. However Tim Robertson, lawyer for the traditional owners said that the government 'failed to follow relevant procedures under the Mines Management Act'. Mr Robertson said that 'the minister must consider whether to impose a condition relating to the outcomes of environmental assessment process and if the minister fails to turn his or his mind to that consideration, then in our respectful submission there is a legal error'. He said that 'after the decision was made (by the NT Environment minister) to recommend against approving that process, if the proponent comes back to the government and says we want a second bite of the cherry...you just can't wind back the process of consideration'.	<i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 5 April 2007), 5.

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5 April 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Native title amendments will undermine process: Labor</b>	The Labor Party has said that 'changes aimed at speeding up native title claims and encouraging more claims to be settled out of courts will just undermine the process'. The changes will give additional powers to the National Native Title Tribunal and see non-Indigenous law firms participate as representative bodies in native title claims. Greens senator Rachel Siewert said that the 'bill is a retrogressive piece of legislation that does not seek to progress the issue of native title'. Senator Siewert also said that 'the National Native Title Tribunal has become increasingly bureaucratic and particularly ineffective particularly in its mediation role'.	<i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 5 April 2007), 4.
5 April 2007	QLD	<b>Keppel land transfer</b>	A tenth of the Great Keppel Island has been returned to traditional owners, the Woppaburra people. The land covers 170 ha of the island and is now under the control of the Woppaburra Land Trust. This is the 58th land transfer under Queensland's Aboriginal Land Act. Queensland Deputy Premier Anna Bligh said: 'this handover returns to [the Woppaburra people] a place of spiritual significance and is another step along the path to reconciliation'. Natural Resource Minister Craig Wallace said that 'the deed of grant to the Woppaburra Land Trust was the second in the Rockhampton region this year under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991.	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sydney, 5 April 2007), 15; 'Woppaburra people celebrate their land' <i>Morning Bulletin</i> (Rockhampton, 10 April 2007), 15; 'Celebrations over Woppaburra land' <i>Capricorn Coast Mirror</i> (Yeppoon, 11 April 2007), 3; 'Woppaburra win back Keppel land' <i>Koori mail</i> (National, 11 April 2007), 8.
5 April 2007	WA	<b>Native title agreement</b>	The Pastoralists and Graziers' Association (PGA) has 'applauded the Eastern Garuma consent determination as a positive way forward for future Aboriginal access negotiations on WA pastoral leases'. The claim covers an area of 8000 sq km in the Pilbara region. PGA President Sandy McTaggart said 'ratification of the ILUA by the Federal Court this month was proof that native title parties could achieve results outside the court system by deal with the claim in a legal rather than a political environment'. Mr McTaggart said that the 'access agreement for Coolawanyag Station was negotiated by independent legal firms for both sides'. He said that 'key aspects included the agreement of claimants on issues such as accepting their own insurance liabilities while on the property and not opposing future tenure upgrades for the owners.' PGA policy director Dr Henry Esbenshade said that 'it was the...time	<i>Farm Weekly</i> (Western Australia, 5 April 2007), 154.

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			public liability insurance had been part of an agreement and that an ILUA has been linked to a consent determination'. Negotiations over access to larger area have been stalled with Kim Parsons, lessee of Coolawanyag Station explaining that 'negotiations are currently breaking down due to [Pilbara Native Title Service's] requests falling outside the Native Title framework'.	
5 April 2007	NT	<b>Fight for fishing rights</b>	The Northern Territory's peak Aboriginal organisation is 'scrambling to devise a painless permit system' that allows anglers to continue fishing after the Federal Court's controversial Blue Mud Bay land rights ruling which 'legal experts believe...[will give] Aborigines exclusive ownership of the inter-tidal zone - the shoreline between the high and low tide mark'. The case was 'originally mounted by the Northern Land Council 10 years ago'. Chief Executive Norman Fry said that 'the unexpected Court ruling would mean compensation of traditional owners, not the end of commercial enterprises'.	<i>North Queensland Register</i> (Townsville, 5 April 2007), 10.
5 April 2007	VIC	<b>Milestone Agreement</b>	An official agreement between GWMWater and Indigenous land owners 'will ensure that cultural heritage is maintained and monitored during construction of the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline'. The agreement incorporates a range of initiatives 'which means the rights of the Barengi Gadjin people and their traditional land will be protected'. Barengi Gadjin Land Council chairperson Nancy Harrison said that 'it was vital that everyone involved in the pipeline project worked together and took native title and cultural heritage values into account'. This is the first major agreement between an external body and traditional owners in Victoria since the Wotjobaluk agreement.	<i>Wimmera Mail Times</i> (Horsham, 5 April 2007), 5; 'Pipeline agreement reached' <i>Dimboola Banner</i> (Dimboola, 11 April 2007), 2; 'Agreements with leaders' <i>Hopetown and Mallee Pioneer</i> (Hopetown, 12 April 2007), 2; 'Pipeline agreement with traditional owners' <i>North Central News</i> (St Arnaud, 18 April 2007), 8; 'Pipeline Agreement applauded' <i>Warracknabeal Herald</i> (Warracknabeal, 17 April 2007), 3.

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7 April 2007	NT	<b>Appeal lost</b>	<p>The Larrakia people have 'lost their appeal against a failed bid for native title recognition, in Australia's first case involving a large part of a capital city'. The Federal Court dismissed the appeal and found that 'the Larrakia had not maintained a continuous observance of traditional laws and customs'. The Northern Land Council which represented the Larrakia 'immediately sought to appeal the ruling despite the fact the claim was rigorously contested by the Northern Territory government and the Darwin City Council'. The NLC said that the judgment 'failed to deal with the concept of a "body of people united by a notion of custom"'. Northern Territory Attorney General Syd Stirling said the ruling 'gave the people of Darwin a sense of certainty while the legal profession were given some clarity "around this emerging body of law"'. The claim was 'raised by the Larrakia people 11 years ago and covered 250 pockets of crown land, mostly on the outskirts, including reserves and beaches down to the low-water mark'.</p>	<p><i>Launceston Examiner</i> (Launceston, 7 April 2007), 14; 'Appeal fails' <i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 6 April 2007), 10; 'Native Title Bid Fails' <i>Ballarat Courier</i> (Ballarat, 6 April 2007), 12; 'Aborigines lose claim for Darwin' <i>Barrier Daily Truth</i> (Broken Hill, 6 April 2007), 10; 'Larrakia Darwin appeal bid lost' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 6 April 2007), 2; 'Challenge rejected' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 11 April 2007), 3.</p>
10 April 2007	WA	<b>Smaller native title claims are wanted</b>	<p>The Goldfields Land and Sea Council has requested that the State Government 'allow new smaller claims lodged in the wake of the Federal Court's dismissal of the Wongatha native title claim to bypass the Court's trial system'. Executive Director Brian Wyatt said that 'before Wongatha, Aboriginal people had a right to negotiate before a tenement was granted. ..it was a bureaucratic process but at least there was a process'. Mr Wyatt said that 'the Wongatha decision has left a gaping hole in heritage protection and the hole needs patching quickly. ..if it isn't the mining sector, government and Aboriginal people will all be burdened with unnecessary delays'. He had 'written to the State Government asking that new claims be settled through a fast tracked consent determination process'. Justice Lindgren had dismissed a combined application but 'left open the way for groups or individuals to reapply with multiple smaller claims'.</p>	<p><i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 10 April 2007), 3; 'Pleas for native title claims to be fast tracked' <i>Golden Mail</i> (Kalgoorlie, 13 April 2007), 4; 'Goldfields native title process 'in chaos' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 30 April 2007), 5; 'Native title claims fall into chaos' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 30 April 2007), 3; 'Goldfields native title process 'in chaos' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 20 April 2007), 5.</p>

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<p>10 April 2007</p>	<p>WA</p>	<p><b>Miners lash out at WA red tape</b></p>	<p>The WA mining industry has said that 'the industry was tied up in red tape five years after a Government review made 56 recommendations on how to streamline approvals'. They said that the 'backlog of mining and exploration licenses, mostly caused by native title and heritage issues, was holding up exploration and threatened to stall the mining boom underpinning WA's growth'. This position has been supported by a research conducted by the Fraser Institute, an Independent Canadian economic and social research group and reports by the WA Chamber of Minerals and Energy and Ernst and Young. Association of Mining and Exploration Executive Justin Walawski said that 'companies have been paying rentals to the Government for...land and have not been able to get access even though they are legally entitled to it'.</p>	<p><i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 10 April 2007), 4; 'Miners lash out as red tape creates log jam' <i>Pilbara News</i> (Pilbara, 18 April 2007), 8.</p>
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<p>12 April 2007</p>	<p>QLD</p>	<p><b>Traditional owners historic victory</b></p>	<p>Fifteen Indigenous Land Use Agreements will give the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people 'either ownership or joint management of about 230 000 ha of land in north Queensland'. Mostly world heritage rainforest including parts of the Daintree have been handed back to traditional owners and brings an end to 'one of the most complex and drawn out native title claims in Queensland's history'. About 64 000ha of the land has been designated as Aboriginal freehold land and will be used for conservation and 16 500ha will be set aside for residential and economic use. The agreement was signed at the Wujal Wujal; community near Cooktown by elders from the Kuku Yalanji people and premier Peter Beattie. Elder Hazel Douglas said that 'its sad that so many people died while this was being negotiated - they never got to see their land returned to their control...but [the Yalanji saw] this as a new beginning and a chance for the Yalanji and the European people's to live in peace'. Ms Douglas said that 'now w-e have control we can look at ways to bring jobs and property to this area'. Cape York Land Council chairman Michael Ross said 'the agreement ended a protracted legal fight by the Kuku Yalanji people for control of their land'.</p>	<p><i>The Australian</i> (National, 12 April 2007), 6; 'Aboriginal owners get land back' <i>Ballarat Courier</i> (Ballarat, 12 April 2007), 16; 'New dawn in land deal' <i>Townsville Bulletin</i> (Townsville, 12 April 2007), 11; 'Huge land parcel handed over to Aboriginal owners' <i>MX (Melbourne)</i> (Melbourne, 11 April 2007), 2; 'Land handed over in historic agreement' <i>Cairns Post</i> (Cairns, 14 April 2007), 11; 'State returns land to traditional owners' <i>Rural Weekly inset</i> (Toowoomba, 13 April 2007), 1; 'Nation's biggest native title deal signed at Wujal' <i>Cooktown Local News</i> (Cooktown, 11 April 2007), 3; 'Emotional scenes at Cape land deal announcement' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 19 April 2007), 13; 'Historic Pact on Land Management' <i>North Queensland Register</i> (Townsville, 19 April 2007), 7; 'Map reveals new Aboriginal land' <i>Port Douglas &amp; Mossman Gazette</i> (Port Douglas, 19 April 2007), 4; 'Premier and Eastern Kuku Yalanji people celebrate Land Agreement' <i>Western Cape Bulletin</i> (Weipa, 18 April 2007), 3; 'This land is theirs...all 230 000 hectares' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 25 April 2007), 8.</p>
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13 April 2007	WA	<b>Support sought for appeal</b>	Councils in Western Australia are 'being asked to support a Supreme Court appeal by the Shire of Derby/West Kimberley over the rating of pastoral land managed by Aboriginal corporations'. According to the Local Government Association, the State Administrative Tribunal upheld 'a claim from a North West Indigenous group to be exempt from council rates'. The exemption was based on the fact that the 'whole of the land was being used exclusively for a charitable purposes'. However, a circular to the councils stated that 'the land is run as a pastoral station and the council deemed the property rateable as it believed a pastoral station was not a charitable purpose'.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 13 April 2007), 3.
13 April 2007	NT	<b>Muddy waters for fishing</b>	The Northern Territory Government has confirmed that permits will be required to fish in tidal waters following the Blue Mud Bay land rights decision. Attorney General Syd Stirling said that 'interim entry permits doubling as fishing licenses were actually required from March 2, the date of the [Blue Mud Bay] decision by the Federal Court granting tidal property rights to Aboriginal people'. The Northern Land Council has agreed that permits will be backdated to 2 March so that recreational anglers will not be breaking the law. Mr Stirling's office said that 'the Blue Mud Bay case created enormous uncertainty' and that the 'Territory government disagrees with [the] ruling and is seeking leave to appeal in the High Court'.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 13 April 2007), 3.
14 April 2007	NSW	<b>Claims dismissed</b>	Wiraduri elders have 'moved to distance themselves from the actions of a group of environmental protestors, who temporarily halted operations at Barrick Gold's Lake Cowal mine over the Easter weekend. In an official statement, Percy Knight the CEO of the Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation said 'traditional owners of Wiradjuri country...object to interference by outsiders in their business'.	<i>Forbes Advocate</i> (Forbes, 14 April 2007), 3.

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<p>14 April 2007</p>	<p>WA</p>	<p><b>Labouring to find staff</b></p>	<p>Mining companies have developed a 'serious interest in employing as many local indigenous workers as they can find'. SAMPEG chairman Mr Ian Gould said 'there is nothing all that altruistic about the movement to employ local Aboriginals - the miners need them because with WA, SA and Queensland booming, there was a real shortage of experienced or well trained workers' and 'Aboriginal people were keen to get involved because they saw it as a chance to get a real job on country'. Escalating wages has lead Oxiana to 'introduce pre-employment training...offering long term unemployed people a six-month training course through TAFE and then a job at the company's mine'. Rio Tinto is also recruiting Indigenous workers to fill jobs as fly in and fly out workers. Rio Tinto iron ore human resources manager, Rick Briant, said that 'Broome also has extensive employment programs running so that's why we work in conjunction with the CDEP's there to make sure that people , when they're ready for work, have an opportunity to take jobs with us'. Recently, Prime Minister John Howard has urged Australia's top 100 businesses to increase Indigenous employment. The Minerals Council said that 'it been working alongside Indigenous Australians for more than a decade but welcomed the encouragement from Mr Howard'. Chief executive Mitch Hooke said that 'it does not hurt for extra encouragement from Mr Howard'.</p>	<p><i>Independent Weekly</i> (Adelaide, 14 April 2007), 16; 'PM push for indigenous workers' <i>Burnie Advocate</i> (Burnie, 17 April 2007), 12; 'Aboriginal Business' <i>The Australian</i> (National, 17 April 2007), 13; 'Employ blacks, PM tells business' <i>Canberra Times</i> (Canberra, 17 April 2007), 2; 'Rio increases indigenous jobs' <i>Kimberley Echo</i> (Kununurra, 12 April 2007), 8; 'Job creation key to Indigenous policy' <i>Mining Chronicle</i> (National, April 2007), 77; 'Century's unique partners' <i>North West Star</i> (Mount Isa, 20 April 2007), 17; see also 'Cost blowouts looms at Rio's Argyle mine' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 28 April 2007), 70.</p>
<p>16 April 2007</p>	<p>VIC</p>	<p><b>Minerals license</b></p>	<p>The Minister for Energy and Resources Peter Batchelor has 'announced new exploration licenses for mineral exploration in the Benambra and Walhalla Woods Point areas'. This announcement follows the 'highest ever recorded quarterly level of mineral exploration expenditure'. Flinders Resources P/L Sedimentary Holdings Ltd, Goldstar Resources NL and Alan Marlow 'have been awarded priority to explore for minerals in the Walhalla-Woods Point area'. The successful companies will be granted licenses on the completion of Native Title processes.</p>	<p><i>Bairnsdale Advertiser</i> (Bairnsdale, 16 April 2007), 19.</p>

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16 April 2007	NSW	<b>Aboriginal oppose dam</b>	A proposal to dam the Clarence River could potentially affect the livelihoods of 4000 Aboriginal people. The Federal Government's plans to 'divert water in the river from NSW to drought stricken southeast Queensland has been opposed by members of the Githabul people whose joint ownership of the land was recognised in a native title agreement'. Traditional owner Trevor Close said that 'Githabul elders had not been consulted prior to the decision to publicly release the proposal which was outlined in a report prepared by the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation'. Mr Close said that damming the River at Duck Creek would 'have a catastrophic effect on the 13 communities who relied on it as a source of food and water'.	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sydney, 16 April 2007), 9; 'Dam would 'wipe out 4000 Aborigines' <i>Gold Coast Bulletin</i> (Gold Coast, 16 April 2007), 5; 'Govt river diversion damned' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 16 April 2007), 9; 'Let our river run its natural course' <i>Sunday Telegraph</i> (Sydney, 22 April 2007), 44.
17 April 2007	SA	<b>Two new petroleum licences</b>	The State Government has released 'two new petroleum exploration licenses, taking the area of the state under exploration to more than 155 000 sq km.' There is a license over the Cooper Basin and the Arrowine Basin. These licenses were granted following 'land access agreements reached between exploration companies and native title claimants'.	<i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> , (Adelaide, 17 April 2007), 32.
17 April 2007	WA	<b>Hearing on native title</b>	The full bench of the Federal Court has 'begun hearing an appeal by the West Australian and Federal Governments against the granting of native title over Perth'. In September 2006 the court 'upheld the Indigenous Noongar people's native title claim over more than 6000sq km of Perth and its surrounds'. Both the Federal and State governments are arguing that the decision was 'inconsistent with previous native title rulings'. Ken Petit lawyer for the State of Western Australia said that 'there is no evidence that the people of the South West of WA had an identity as a distinct group. People in the claim area in 1829 did not think of themselves as the same or unified in any other sense'. But South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council chief executive Glen Kelly said that 'the appeal went far beyond the clarification of the laws by questioning the Noongar's people's connection with the land'. NNTT president Graeme Neate said that 'it is clear from recent judgments that in some parts of Australia, groups of Aboriginal people will find it difficult, if not	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sydney, 17 April 2007), 12; 'Link disputed in Perth native title appeal' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 17 April 2007), 10; 'Native title claim 'face big hurdles' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 20 April 2007), 8; 'Federal Court Begins Perth native title case' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 19 April 2007), 13; 'Court hears Perth native title appeal' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 25 April 2007), 12.

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			impossible to demonstrate that their relationship to their traditional country meets the standard for a determination that native title exists'. This means that 'the only hope many indigenous Australians have of seeing their land rights recognised is a private company or government agreeing to give them some rights or privileges in relation to their land'.	
19 April 2007	NT	<b>Deadline for lease holders</b>	Aboriginal people have been given a month to 'hand over their Crown land leases in town camps in Alice Springs or miss out on \$50 million in federal funding'. Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough wrote to Tangentyere Council chief William Tilmouth saying 'I am frustrated that after so long that there has been no actual physical progress made to relieve conditions in the town camps'. However Lingiari Member Warren Snowden said that 'like the Minister they just want to see improvements in town camps and a better life for their kids, but they understand making lease arrangements a prerequisite for funding is nothing but blackmail'. Federal Minister for Community Services Nigel Scullion has 'defended Mr Brough'.	<i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 19 April 2007), 4; 'More to camps deal than meets the eye' <i>Alice Springs News</i> (Alice Springs, 19 April 2007), 7.
19 April 2007	WA	<b>Historical land returned to Indigenous community</b>	Community leaders 'attended a ceremony at Lake Pleasant View to see the ownership of land returned' which has been bought under the Indigenous Land Corporation's new Cultural Acquisition program. The land will be managed by the Albany Heritage Reference Group Aboriginal Corporation. Department of Indigenous Affairs regional manager Anthony Galante said that: 'its a real significant milestone because its effectively the handing back of land to Aboriginal care and control'. There's been a long term Aboriginal connection as demonstrated by archaeological evidence that dates back between 7000 and 12000 years'. The Albany Heritage Reference Group Aboriginal Corporation is required to produce a management plan for the property and once it has been endorsed by the ILC the land will be transferred to the reference group.	<i>Albany Advertiser</i> (Albany, 19 April 2007), 4.

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19 April 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Aboriginal leaders question govt home ownership push</b>	The Government's 'push to introduce private home ownership to remote Aboriginal communities has been questioned'. Olga Haven from the Northern Land Council said 'there are some really complex issues surrounding home ownership and this move to freehold title or 99 year leases'. Ms Haven said 'when you're talking about a group of people who are already impoverished, who don't have the capacity to meet the basic needs in life, it begs the question to the degree of affordability'. Aboriginal Leader Pat Dodson said 'if you take Indigenous communities on the basis that they have a communal people with extended families, with mutual obligations, we have a life that is quite different to Western people'.	<i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 19 April 2007), 6.
23 April 2007	VIC	<b>Legal boost for Aboriginal sites</b>	Developers will now be 'forced to consider culturally sensitive sites before getting permission to disturb land under state laws to be introduced next month'. They will be required to 'complete cultural heritage plans before getting planning permission for projects including commercial subdivisions, wind farms, roads warehouse and factories'. Under current legislation, Aboriginal heritage is not dealt with until the construction stage. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gavin Jennings said that 'the new rules would give developers clarity over responsibility for uncovering or damaging sensitive sites'.	<i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 23 April 2007), 4.
23 April 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Mining boom 'classic case of colonisation'</b>	Prominent Aboriginal Academic Marcia Langton has 'compared Australia's commodities boom to the 19th century colonisation of Africa and accused the nation's political leaders of ignoring evidence based solutions to the plight of Aboriginal people in favour of political 'grandstanding'. Ms Langton said that 'traditional owners are being left behind...[with] so little of that money...going back into the community...its a classic case of colonisation...like Africa in the 19th century, when all the wealth was extracted out for the people of Manchester and London while the people in Africa went poor'.	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> (Sydney, 23 April 2007), 6.

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24 April 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Aborigines losing responsibility for the land</b>	Young Australian of the Year Tania Major has criticised the government for 'focusing exclusively on social and economic empowerment in Aboriginal communities while removing the right of indigenous people to 'take responsibility for culture and land'. Ms Major said that 'Indigenous people were being refused the right of joint management of national parks and funding to set up regional land management organisations'. She said that 'although government and other stakeholders and the public were pushing Indigenous people to take responsibility for re-building healthy communities, governments were damaging the strongest pillar of responsibility - "our connection to land"'.	<i>The Australian</i> (National, 24 April 2007), 2.
24 April 2007	NSW	<b>Protecting Biddon's cultural heritage</b>	Local Indigenous TAFE students have recorded over '50 Aboriginal sites in the Biddon State Conservation Area in a project aimed at improving cultural heritage protection'. The initiative was developed by the UAMBI CDEP, TAFE NSW, Gilgandra Local Aboriginal Lands Council and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). DEC Community Partnership facilitator Bob Sutherland said 'the project had wide ranging benefits for cultural heritage protection'.	<i>Gilgandra Weekly</i> (Gilgandra, 24 April 2007), 3,
25 April 2007	NATIONAL	<b>PBC Meeting was a First</b>	Corporations representing successful; native title claimants met in Australia for the first time. Prescribed bodies corporate 'came together to Canberra to discuss aspirations for their native title lands, their communities and their future generations'. Many of the PBC members were from remote locations throughout Australia. AIATSIS Native Title Research Director Dr Lisa Strelein said 'the purpose of the meeting was to gather dispersed PBC members to gain information and influence the development of key government policies and programs that affect native title land'.	<i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 25 April 2007), 18.

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25 April 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Native title changes now a reality</b>	The Native Title Amendment Act 2007 has been through the final stages of Royal Assent and will become legislation. One of the major changes will affect the registration test for native title claims. Under the new laws, the native title registrar will be required to reapply the registration test to native title applications. National Native Title Registrar, Chris Doepel said that the 'tribunal will work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative bodies to try to contact the relevant claimants' and where 'claimants are unrepresented, the Tribunal will make every effort to contact them through native title networks'.	<i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 25 April 2007), 22.
27 April 2007	NSW	<b>Native title twist at Chinderah marina</b>	The Federal Court is expected to decide on an application but Tweed Aborigines Russel and Corowa and Jackie MacDonald are 'seeking to prevent the extinguishing of native title over the Tweed River bed at Chinderah'. There is a marina that is currently proposed for the site which cannot be built until the NSW Lands Department can grant leases over the river bed.	<i>Daily News</i> (Tweed Heads, 27 April 2007), 2.
28 April 2007	SA	<b>Land ruling</b>	The Yungngora people have 'been recognised as the native title holders of the historic Noonkanbah pastoral lease in WA's north in a Federal Court determination'. This means that they will 'have the exclusive right to possess and occupy most of the land on the station, west of Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley ranges. They will also gain non-exclusive rights over two areas of Crown land on the station.' The community made international headlines in 1980 when its residents and supporters protested against attempts by a mining company to drill for oil on a sacred site. Noonkanbah elder Dickey Cox 'spearheaded a protest by hundreds of Aboriginal men and trade union and church representatives who blockaded entry to a goanna dreaming site where miners wanted to drill for oil'. Mr Cos said that the 'determination ensured that his people would be consulted over all future mining activity on their land'. Steve Hawke who acted as the Yungngora's media adviser and who wrote a book about the experience said 'it was something incredibly precious to	<i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> , (Adelaide, 24 April 2007), 11; 'A win for land rights' <i>Bendigo Advertiser</i> (Bendigo, 27 April 2007), 14; <i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 28 April 2007), 11; 'Dreams turn real in native title win over Noonkanbah' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 28 April 2007), 7; 'A glimmer of hope for reconciliation' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 28 April 2007), 8; 'Justice in the bush' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 28 April 2007), 9; 'Noonkanbah title win' <i>Border Mail</i> (28 April 2007), 26; 'Aussie watch' <i>Daily Mercury</i> (Mackay, Tweed Heads 28 April

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			<p>them and they didn't want to lose it...They were determined to maintain this new life and (to protect) the sacred places'.</p>	<p>2007), 24, 12; 'Perth' <i>Daily News</i> (Warwick, 28 April 2007), 13; 'Perth' <i>Fraser Coast Chronicle</i> (Hervey, 28 April 2007), 10; <i>Gladstone Observer</i> (Gladstone, 28 April 2007), 16; <i>Gympie Times</i> (Gympie, 28 April 2007), 16; <i>Morning Bulletin</i> (Rockhampton, 28 April 2007), 35; <i>Northern Star</i> (Lismore, 28 April 2007), 66; <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 28 April 2007), 16; <i>Queensland Times</i> (Ipswich, 28 April 2007), 32; 'Historic Native Title Win' <i>Warrnambool Standard</i> (Warrnambool, 28 April 2007), 4; 'Tribe's win in land title fight' <i>Weekend Australian</i> (National, 28 April 2007), 8; 'Win for tribe in title fight that lit Wik, fired up Mabo' <i>Weekend Australian</i> (National, 28 April 2007), 8; 'Divisions of Noonkanbah gave way to hope for a better future' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 29 April 2007), 10; 'Dreams turn real in native title win over Noonkanbah' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 28 April 2007), 7; 'Glimmer of hope for reconciliation' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 28 April 2007), 8; 'Justice in the Bush' <i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 28 April 2007), 9; 'Noonkanbah title win' <i>Border Mail</i> (Albury, 28 April 2007), 26; <i>Daily Mercury</i> (Mackay, 28 April 2007), 24; <i>Daily News</i> (Warwick, 28 April 2007), 13; <i>Daily</i></p>
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28 April 2007	SA	<b>Mining lease: blockage goes on</b>	A blockade from Indigenous traditional owners of a mining lease in Yumbarra National Park has continued with Kokatha Mula representatives saying that 'as traditional owners they have a right to prevent Illuka Resources undertaking mining in the area'. The Kokatha Mula has also 'launched an international appeal for support to prevent mining in the area and the plan by Illuka to remove six gigalitres of underground water each year'.	<i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 28 April 2007), 48.
28 April 2007	WA	<b>Crowded field for Ord Farming plan</b>	A 'field of agribusiness, property development and infrastructure groups [are] vying for the chance to expand the Ord River Irrigation Area'. The area covers '16 000 ha of new irrigation country stretching to the Northern Territory border'. The settlement of the native title agreement with the Miriuwung Gajerrong people 'cleared one big hurdle to the first major expansion of the scheme since a dam was put in the river more than 30 years ago upstream from Kununurra forming ...Lake Argyle'.	<i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 28 April 2007), 71.
30 April 2007	QLD	<b>Laramide poised to explore area</b>	The Canadian group Laramide Resources which holds the exploration permits 400km north-west of Mount Isa is 'ready to start the discussions to bring the deposit to reality'. Laramide chief executive Marc Henderson said that 'the scoping study will allow us to evaluate the economic potential of Westmoreland and should provide a development path forward for the project when the necessary policy changes are made in Queensland to permit uranium mining'. Mr Henderson also said that 'our development will ensure that the indigenous people of the area will be given the opportunity for meaningful employment and training in all aspects of our operations'.	<i>North West Star</i> (Mount Isa, 30 April 2007), 10.