

Native Title in the News May 2007

Date	State	Subject	Summary	Source
May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Call for native title review</b>	Minter Ellison partner Ewan Vickery has called for the <i>Native Title Act 1993</i> to be reviewed for the benefit of the oil and gas sectors. 'From an industry perspective, one way to improve the process could be to introduce an optional national 'boiler plate' contract, just as exists for the construction and property industries,' he said.	<i>Mining Chronicle</i> , (National, May 2007), 12.
May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Howard awakens to Indigenous workers</b>	Prime Minister John Howard recently urged Australia's top 100 businesses to work harder at employing Indigenous workers. The Minerals Council of Australia replied that it has been working alongside Indigenous Australians for more than a decade, but welcomed the encouragement anyway. 'It does not hurt for added emphasis' Minerals Council chief Mitch Hooke said. The Minerals Council of Australia said it 'had been working alongside Indigenous Australians for more than a decade but welcomed the encouragement from Prime Minister John Howard. Chief Mitch Hooke said that 'it does not hurt for added emphasis'. Labour's Indigenous spokeswoman Jenny Macklin said 'its great to see so many businesses increasing the number of Indigenous people they employ.'	<i>Mining Chronicle</i> , (National, May 2007), 15; 'Howard awakens to Indigenous workers' <i>Mining Chronicle</i> (National, May 2007), 15.
May 2007	SA	<b>New boost for SA search</b>	South Australia's Mineral Resources Development Minister, Paul Holloway, has announced the award of two new petroleum exploration licences, taking the total area of South Australia's petroleum exploration to more than 155,000 square kilometres. The announcement follows land access agreements being reached between the exploration companies and the native title claimants.	<i>Oil &amp; Gas Australia</i> , (National, May 2007), 4.

Native Title in the News May 2007

May 2007	QLD	<b>Expectations high for new acreage release</b>	The Queensland Government is releasing some 150,000 square kilometres of land for competitive tendering for petroleum exploration. 'There will be two separate calls for tenders, which have been grouped according to those that will be and those that will not be required to undertake a native title process,' Qld Minister for Mines and Energy Geoff Wilson said.	<i>Oil &amp; Gas Australia</i> , (National, May 2007), 4.
May 2007	WA	<b>Oil Basins to dance with Selene</b>	Melbourne-based Oil Basins has further strengthened its ties with David Archibald's unlisted Backreef Oil. The moves mean Oil Basins has the option of funding 100 per cent of the drilling of Blina Back Reef-1 and 33 per cent of Selene-1. According to Backreef, the permit is at an advanced stage of native title discussions with the Kimberley Land Council and subject to satisfactory finalisation of regulatory approvals, the Selene-1 exploration wildcat well could be drilled later this year.	<i>Oil &amp; Gas Australia</i> , (National, May 2007), 8.
May 2007	QLD	<b>Signing ceremony in Western Kangoulu</b>	On 17 March 2007, Ensham Resources signed a significant Cultural Heritage Management Plan with the Western Kangoulu peoples, the Indigenous traditional owners of the areas covered by Ensham's mining leases north of the Nogoia River. Both parties affirmed their aims of protecting and preserving cultural heritage associated with the earlier Aboriginal history of the mine site.	<i>Mining Chronicle</i> , (National, May 2007), 68.
1 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Native Title legislation passed</b>	The native title reforms have been passed under the <i>Native Title Amendment Act 2007</i> by the federal parliament. The key components of the legislation 'relate to the resolution of claims, native title representative bodies, prescribed bodies corporate and the provision of funding to respondents in native title claims'.	<i>Law Institute Journal</i> (National, May 2007), 16.

Native Title in the News May 2007

1 May 2007	NT	<b>Native Title - Exclusive Possession - Intertidal Zone</b>	In <i>Gumana v Northern Territory</i> the full court considered 'whether there could be possession of inter-tidal land' and concluded that the 'grant of native title in respect of the inter-tidal land prevented the operation of the <i>Fisheries Act 1978</i> (NT) to authorise fishing licenses'.	<i>Law Society Journal</i> (May 2007), 87.
1 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Game technology restores virtual heritage</b>	Computer gaming technology may become useful to 'mining companies and property holders wrestling with native title requirements to document traditional cultural heritage'. A computer simulation called Virtual Warren, developed by an Indigenous multimedia company Cyberdreaming, has the potential to 'capture knowledge about lands used for farming or mining and aid in the native title negotiation process between commercial enterprises and traditional owners'. The technology has been developed using a modified version of GarageGames' Torque Game Engine and the Digital Songlines toolkit. The company is currently working with one developer to see whether the technology can be used to fulfil native title obligations.	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , (Sydney, 1 May 2007), 22.
1 May 2007	QLD	<b>Changes could curb councils</b>	Local councils 'will struggle to carry out routine health and safety work if proposed amendments to the Native Title Act go ahead'. Under the amendments councils will need to 'give native title holders at least 28 days notice' for low impact work which includes 'everything from tree lopping to the spraying of weeds'. Greg Hoffman from the Local Government Association of Queensland said that 'local government would be severely hamstrung from carrying out routine work'.	<i>Courier Mail</i> (Brisbane, 1 May 2007), 8.

Native Title in the News May 2007

1 May 2007	SA	<b>New boost for SA search</b>	South Australia's Mineral Resources Development Minister Paul Hollowway 'has announced the award of two new petroleum exploration licences' which will increase the total area under exploration in SA to 155 000 square kilometres. This announcement follows the agreement between Adelaide Energy and the native title claimants, the Yandruwandha/Yawarrawarrka people'.	<i>Oil and Gas Australia</i> (National, May 2007), 4.
1 May 2007	SA	<b>Red heart blue sky</b>	Frontier Exploration in Australia has become more appealing 'because exploration technology has vastly improved, enabling locations and de-risking of potential prospects and targets in little known areas'. However in 'geographically isolated areas..the lack of infrastructure and poor access scan be a deterrent and pose big problems'. There is also the 'skills shortage to contend with, as well as costly exercise of moving rigs and Native title issues that can often take months of negotiations'.	<i>Petroleum</i> (National, 28 May 2007), 28.
1 May 2007	NT	<b>Expectations high for new acreage release</b>	Thirty four new 'offshore exploration areas have been released by the Commonwealth Government across six basins off the coasts of the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Victoria and within the Ashmore Cartier area'. Queensland Minister for Mines and Evert Geoff Wilson said that '41 news areas would be available for exploration under the two separate calls for tenders covering the under explored Advale and Georgina Basins in central and western Queensland. Mr Wilson said that 'there will be two separate calls for tenders which have been grouped according to those that will be and those that will not be required to undertake a native title process'.	<i>Oil and Gas Australia</i> (National, May 2007), 4.

Native Title in the News May 2007

<p>1 May 2007</p>	<p>NT</p>	<p><b>Traditional skills to protect iconic biodiversity Area</b></p>	<p>The Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) has been declared and will 'receive resources from the federal Department of the Environment for land protection and skills training with the Wulain Rangers managing the country'. This is the largest IPA in the Northern Territory covering an area of 40 000 square kilometre. The IPA was launched in Lajamau by Federal Family and Community Services Minister Nigel Scullion who said 'there were positive aspects of the IPA that went beyond caring for country'.</p>	<p><i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 1 May 2007), 4.</p>
<p>1 May 2007</p>	<p>NT</p>	<p><b>Mine approval 'invalid'</b></p>	<p>A 'legal victory by Aboriginal traditional owners has thrown into doubt plans by international mining giant Xstrata for a \$110 million expansion'. Last year, Xstrata 'gained Northern Territory government approval to transform the McArthur River Mine from an underground to open cut mine'. The Northern Territory Supreme Court ruled that the approval process was invalid by failing to 'follow the proper procedures under the Mines Management Act'.</p>	<p><i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 1 May 2007), 41; <i>Coffs Coast Advocate</i> (Coffs Harbour, 1 May 2007), 8; 'Mine Approval Overturned' <i>Australian Financial Review</i> (National, 1 May 2007), 4; 'Mining Giant Suffers Blow' <i>Bendigo Advertiser</i> (Bendigo, 1 May 2007), 14; <i>Toowoomba Chronicle</i> (Toowoomba, 1 May 2007), 16; <i>Daily Examiner</i> (Grafton, 1 May 2007), 10; <i>Daily Mercury</i> (Mackay, 1 May 2007), 10; <i>Daily News</i> (Warwick, 1 May 2007), 12; 'No to zinc mine plan' <i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sydney, 1 May 2007); <i>Fraser</i></p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

				<p><i>Coast Chronicle</i> (Hervey, 1 May 2007), 16; <i>Gladstone Observer</i> (Gladstone, 1 May 2007), 12; <i>Gympie Times</i> (Gympie, 1 May 2007), 6; 'Court Sinks Mine' <i>Illawarra Mercury</i> (Wollongong, 1 May 2007), 9; <i>Morning Bulletin</i> (Rockhampton, 1 May 2007), 18; <i>News Mail</i> (Bundaberg, 1 May 2007), 12; <i>Northern Star</i> (Lismore, 1 May 2007), 22; 'Court overturns zinc mine bid' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 1 May 2007), 2; 'Xstrata back in court over \$110m McArthur mine' <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> (1 May 2007), 30;</p>
2 May 2007	NSW	<b>Land Claim Successful</b>	The Dorrigo Plateau Aboriginal Land Council has 'been successful in a land claim over a parcel of vacant Crown Land' which has 'caused Councillors to seek clarification over access'.	<i>Don Dorrigo Gazette</i> (2 May 2007), 1.

Native Title in the News May 2007

<p>3 May 2007</p>	<p>NT</p>	<p><b>Native title win over historic land</b></p>	<p>The Yungngora people have 'scored a historic native title win' over the Noonkanbah in the Kimberley Region which is the site of 'violent clashes between police and protestors over drilling oil at the Noonkanbah sacred site'. The consent determination 'follows a history of confrontation from the 1970s over the use of 1811 square kilometres of land which has attracted mining and pastoral activity'. Noonkanbah Community Chairman Dickey Cox said 'it puts the struggles that we have gone through in the past when the government and miners tried to override our people and our culture for the sake of the so-called public good'. Under the agreement, 'non-exclusive rights have been agreed over two areas of crown land, a stick route and an aerodrome. This means that native title holders can visit, camp, erect shelters. take fauna and flora and other natural resources such as ocre, stones, soils wood and resin for non-commercial purposes and protect significant sites'.</p>	<p><i>National Indigenous Times</i>, (National, 3 May 2007), 3; 'Noonkanbah victory' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 9 May 2007), 7; 'Noonkanbah traditional owners recognised' <i>Halls Creek Herald</i> (Western Australia, 8 May 2007), 5; 'Noonkanbah land triumph' <i>Broome Advertiser</i> (3 May 2007), 8.</p>
<p>8 May 2007</p>	<p>AUSTRALIA</p>	<p><b>A better future for Indigenous Australians</b></p>	<p>The Australian government 'will provide \$47.6 million over the next four years to contract Indigenous Australians to deliver environmental services in remote and regional Australia'. In an announcement made by the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Malcolm Turnbull, 'Indigenous Australians will be engaged through the new initiative to work on the Government's environment priorities - from protection of threatened species, control of feral pests and weeds and protection of wetlands and sea country to conservation of national heritage sites'. The initiative will be combined with 'funding support from the Department of Employment Project and build on Community Development Employment Projects'.</p>	<p><i>Media Release Minister for the Environment and Water Resources</i> (National, 8 May 2007), 25.</p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

8 May 2007	NT	<b>Excellent Adventure</b>	Bill Heffernan has convinced Lachlan Murdoch and Noel Pearson to join him in 'transforming the north of Australia...into Asia's food and water bowl. Australia will be transformed into a major water exporter by harvesting monsoonal rains'. The project aims to 'guarantee Australia's water, agricultural and exporting future'. According to Mr Heffernan, 'somewhere between 4 million and 600 million people in northern China are going to run out of water [and that] there's going to have to be some drastic reconfiguration of the use of water'. He also said that plan 'will change the fortunes of Aborigines who are "sitting on one of the world's largest undeveloped resources"'.  	<i>Bulletin with Newsweek</i> (National, 8 May 2007), 27; 'Murdoch in task force' <i>Daily Telegraph</i> (Sydney, 2 May 2007), 11; 'Top end water boost' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 2 May 2007), 10; 'Murdoch, Pearson taskforce' <i>Courier Mail</i> (Brisbane, 2 May 2007), 2.
8 May 2007	NT	<b>Minister slams Govt 'disrespect'</b>	Barbara McCarthy has 'lashed out at her Government colleagues for overturning her brother's court victory before the community could hold a funeral'. Ms McCarthy told the 7:30 report that she crossed the floor because the 'government was rushing through the legislation to re-open the McArthur River Mine'. She said that 'it was the lowest form of disrespect against Indigenous people in this country.	<i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 8 May 2007), 4.
9 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Chance to fund Native Title bodies 'missed'</b>	The federal budget 'missed a chance to add much needed resourcing to Native Title bodies - which would help speed up the approvals process for the mining industry'. In its pre-budget submission, the Mineral's Council of Australia (MCA) advocated for 'performance-based resourcing for Native Title Representative Bodies to better negotiate outcomes for the industry and Aborigines over new resource projects'. MCA Chief Executive Mitchell Hooke said that 'it was the only missing ingredient on what he termed a responsible budget for the resources industry'. Mr Hooke also said that 'in	<i>The Australian</i> (National, 9 May 2007), 28; 'Native title woes stifle Rio Tinto' <i>Australian Financial Review</i> (National, 9 May, 2007), 10; 'Industry welcomes budget initiatives' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i>

Native Title in the News May 2007

			striving to meet increasing global demand, the industry faces the absolute limits of supply capacity - in export corridors, human resources and skills shortages, regulatory systems governing land access and use, social and physical infrastructure in regional communities and the overactivity of the native title system'. Rio Tinto iron ore chief executive Sam Walsh said that the lack of government funding for native title negotiations was 'as big as the skills shortage'.	(Kalgoorlie, 10 May 2007), 11.
9 May 2007	NT	<b>NT mine anger</b>	The Northern Territory Government has 'passed a Bill to override the effects of last week's supreme court ruling that the Government's approval process for expansion of the Territory's [McArthur River Project] was flawed'. The Amendments that have been made to the McArthur River Project Agreement Ratification Act will 'allow types of mining at the McArthur River Mine near Borroloola and 'relevant traditional owners or anyone else from launching legal action to prevent the expansion'. The parliament has 'quickly rushed through legislation to side step the ruling, despite the protests of two Independents and three Indigenous MLAs'. The NT Bar Association President Jon Tippett said 'there were still environmental concerns before the court which can no longer be considered because of this law'.	<i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 9 May 2007), 1; 'NT lawyers cane McArthur 'deal" <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 15 May 2007), 6.
9 May 2007	QLD	<b>New ILUA for Mer</b>	John Toshie Kris from the Torres Strait Regional Authority has congratulated the traditional owners of Mer Island who have recently negotiated an ILUA with Ergon Energy. This is the 33rd ILUA in the Torres Strait Region and will allow Ergon Energy to lease a part of the land in Mer where a new power station and power lines will be built. This will 'enhance the Mer Community's electricity supply providing greater access and improved essential services to the island's people'.	<i>Torres News</i> (Thursday Island, 9 May 2007), 5.

Native Title in the News May 2007

9 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>ATSIC Program Axed</b>	The Government 'plans to scrap the Indigenous Community Housing and Infrastructure Program and replace it with a program which will focus on land tenure reform, mainstream public housing and private home ownership'. This coincides with the 'Government's drive to shift Indigenous affairs towards private ownership and individual responsibility and away from cooperative programs'.	<i>Canberra Times</i> (Canberra, 9 May 2007), 25.
9 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Local elders silenced</b>	Queensland Indigenous leaders are 'being stopped from making claims of native title by Aboriginal people with little or no established link to a tribe or its land'. Queensland Labor PM Andrew McNamara said that 'loopholes in Federal Government laws are allowing the elders to be removed from title negotiations in an emerging practice labelled as 'claim swapping'. The laws 'give some groups a lucrative income for advising the private sector and government agencies on culturally sensitive sites'.	<i>Courier Mail</i> (Brisbane, 9 May 2007), 10.
9 May 2007	WA	<b>Councils to litigate over cattle station charity</b>	The Town of Port Hedland 'has joined the fight to overturn a State Administrative Tribunal decision giving an Aboriginal cattle station charity status'. The decision will exempt the Noonkanbah Station from rates due on the property. Town of Port Hedland Chief Executive Chris Adams said that 'he was concerned the decision might set a precedent'.	<i>North West Telegraph</i> (South Hedland, 9 May, 2007), 2.
9 May 2007	NT	<b>Illegal fishing fears in protected areas</b>	Fishing permits will come into force at the start of June following the Federal Court ruling in favour of Aboriginal people in the Blue Mud Bay Case.	

Native Title in the News May 2007

<p>9 May 2007</p>	<p>WA</p>	<p><b>Wongatha findings concerns</b></p>	<p>The Goldfields Land and Sea Council has warned that 'a chaotic situation is looming with development project approvals and protection of Aboriginal heritage in the north east Goldfields unless the State Government intervenes to ensure commonsense and consistency amongst Government agencies'. Executive Director Brian Wyatt said that 'if it isn't, the mining sector, government and Aboriginal people will all be burdened with unnecessary delays and higher costs'. The follows the Wongatha decision handed down by Justice Lindgren which dismissed the claim but said 'native title probably did exist in the area for individuals and much smaller groups'. Deputy Premier Eric Ripper has said that 'Justice Lindgren's decision has presented some challenges but we are working to resolve them'. Mt Ripper said that 'soon after the Wongatha claim was removed from the National Native Title Tribunal Register of claims, the State Government instigated a meeting with the Goldfields Land and Sea Council to explore options and to develop an ordered approach to possible new claims'. He said that 'the State Government wanted to avoid the filing of multiple claims over the relevant area and to prevent, where possible, any further litigation in the area'.</p>	<p><i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 9 May 2007), 34; 'Government leadership sought on title' <i>Business News</i> (Perth, 10 May 2007), 9; 'Ripper: native title claims not in chaos' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 1 May 2007), 3.</p>
<p>9 May 2007</p>	<p>QLD</p>	<p><b>Wake up, Cape told</b></p>	<p>Attempts by the Queensland Government to enact the Wild Rivers legislation has 'triggered an attempt by traditional owners to 'grab hold' of the environmental agenda on Cape York'. Noel Pearson head of the Cape York Institute said that 'his concern about the Government's Wild Rivers legislation was that it affected native title rights and potentially 'locked away' future economic opportunities.' Mr Pearson said that 'the protection of these rivers needs to take into account that you cannot discriminate, you cannot just set aside our existing rights, you cannot not take account of future opportunities for our people and others that use these rivers'.</p>	<p><i>Koori Mail</i>, (National, 9 May 2007), 11.</p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

9 May 2007	QLD	<b>Gurang executive position</b>	The Gurang Land Council (Aboriginal Corporation) is 'currently seeking an executive officer to assist Indigenous people with land interests under the Native Title Act'. The land council is located in Bundaberg.	<i>News Mail</i> (Bundaberg, 9 May 2007), 4.
10 May 2007	WA	<b>Circling sacred ground</b>	The development of the Browse self in the Kimberley 'would elevate Australia to become the world's second biggest supplier of LNG'. One of the biggest issues is whether the Western Australian Government will allow the construction of a gas plant in the area. Deputy Premier Eric Ripper said that the 'government supports LNG processing in the Kimberley'. Major companies interested in the region include Shell, Chervon, BP, BHP Billiton, Santos, ENI and Total. Mr Ripper said 'the companies are expressing some urgency to get decisions on these matters...but they cannot only go ahead with the informed consent of Aboriginal people and with the substantial participation in the developments. We think it will provide much needed income and training for Indigenous people and others in the West Kimberley'. Kimberley Land Council Executive Director Wayne Bergman said that he was 'furious that the native title future act, under which proponents of exploration or mining activity must consult with registered Aboriginal claimants was sidestepped by INPEX' which had begun geo-technical drilling at the Maret Islands.	<i>The Australian</i> (National, 10 May 2007), 14.
10 May 2007	WA	<b>Miner puts case for gas jobs</b>	INPEX 'claims that up to 4000 jobs could be created in the Kimberley during the construction of a processing plant for Browse Basin gas'. External Affairs Manager Sean Kildare said that 'the time frame for this project is tight...we are looking at by the end of 2008, a native title agreement with Unguu, all of the environmental approvals from both the Commonwealth and State Agencies are achieved and we have commenced our production license'. Mr Kildare said that the 'Kimberley community would benefit from the	<i>Broome Advertiser</i> (Broome, 10 May 2007), 4.

Native Title in the News May 2007

			construction of the gas plant'.	
10 May 2007	NSW	<b>Land Council Candidate</b>	Robert Carroll, a 'former Narrandera man' will stand as a candidate for the upcoming Land Council elections in NSW. Mr Carol said that 'Local Aboriginal Land Councils need to immediately refocus and concentrate on carrying out their original objectives'. He said that the 'over the past 24 years Land Councils had become preoccupied with trying and in many cases failing to properly manage Aboriginal Housing'.	<i>Narrandera Argus</i> (Narrandera, 10 May 2007), 8.
10 May 2007	SA	<b>Exploring for jobs</b>	The Maralinga Tjarutja community may benefit from minerals exploration. The MT corporation, which manages the community is looking to access road and track construction in traditional lands. The aim of the project is to 'provide permanent employment opportunities for members of the community'. MT General Manager Bob Ramsey said 'the corporation had agreements in place with three exploration companies and is negotiating with another two which will see it as preferred contractor for roads construction and other works associated with the search for oil and minerals'	<i>West Coast Sentinel</i> (Ceduna, 10 May 2007), 1.
12 May 2007	NSW	<b>White shoes shuffle off black land</b>	Indigenous people will vote 'for a state council to manage more than \$1 billion in Aboriginal owned land in NSW'. The new system will 'now be safe from the "white shoe brigade: developers' according to the NSW Land Rights Act Registrar Stephen Wright. Mr Wright said that 'the largest issue we have had to deal with is developers coming in with wads of cash and the Local Aboriginal Land Council reacting to them'. Since the enactment of the Land Rights Act in 1983 'land claims have climbed from 9000 to 15 000 in the past year meaning a potential windfall in benefits for Indigenous people if the land can be fairly developed and distributed'. Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Paul Lynch 'said it was vital as many eligible people as possible cast their vote in May 19' and that the 'State Government supported the return of a	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , (Sydney, 12 May 2007), 10; 'Council resumes peak role' <i>Daily Liberal</i> (Dubbo, 16 May 2007), 5; 'Aborigines vote for new land council' <i>Border Mail</i> (Albury - Wodonga, 18 May 2007), 15; 'Indigenous Australians urged to use their voice' <i>Great Lakes Advocate</i>

Native Title in the News May 2007

			democratically elected leadership'.	(Forster, 9 May 2007), 4; 'NSW to get back in the black with 9 new pollies' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 17 May 2007), 3.
12 May 2007	WA	<b>Rio ends lull of Kintyre</b>	Rio Tinto has 'taken a crucial step towards developing its Kintyre uranium deposit in Western Australia, less than a fortnight after the Labor Party reversed its opposition to new uranium mines'. The company has started a pre-feasibility study which will be used to develop a 'resource estimate'. The company has the support of the local Aboriginal community even though the Premier Alan Carpenter has 'vowed that no new mine will be built on his watch'.	<i>Herald Sun</i> (Melbourne, 12 May 2007), 93.
12 May 2007	WA	<b>Chaney: too many lawyers</b>	Former Aboriginal Affairs Minister Fred Chaney has said that native title 'needs a lot more planners and a lot less lawyers.' Mr Chaney said that 'you can relatively easily make determinations on native title in places where there's nobody living. Unfortunately this does not provide an economic way forward'. Mr Chaney 'laid a transparent map of settled native title claims atop maps of Australia's population centres and water resources. He said 'authorities fight to the death to ensure the use relates only to traditional use [and] the closer you are to human activity, the less imagination we have shown'.	<i>Perth Voice</i> (Perth, 12 May 2007), 5.

Native Title in the News May 2007

<p>13 May 2007</p>	<p>NT</p>	<p><b>Historic week as grog banned and Tiwis lease land</b></p>	<p>The Mantiyupwi traditional owners of Tiwi island have 'agreed to lease their land to the Federal Government for 99 years'. Under the agreement they will receive 'a \$5 million upfront payment, 25 new houses, repairs to dozens of derelict dwellings, and major upgrades to sports and health facilities'. The agreement also creates the opportunity for home ownership. The 'move allows the land to be subleased for commercial business development under the Federal Government's controversial changes to the Land Rights Act'. Some traditional owners 'who accepted a 99 year lease...thought they were signing for a benefit payment'.</p>	<p><i>Sunday Territorian</i> (Darwin, 13 May, 2007), 19; 'Confusion on Tiwi land deal' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 12 May 2007), 14; 'Home, sweet home for Mavis' <i>Weekend Australian</i> (National, 12 May 2007), 7; 'Islanders divided as land leasing plan goes through' <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> (Sydney, 18 May 2007), 7; 'Breakthrough agreement on Aboriginal Land in the NT' <i>Media Release, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</i> (National, 9 May 2007), 47.</p>
<p>14 May 2007</p>	<p>VIC</p>	<p><b>Homegrown solution fits the bill</b></p>	<p>Mining company Newmont has been tailoring its entrance test for Aboriginal people from remote tribes. Indigenous people represent 20 per cent of the workforce in the Tanami mining operations. David Ross Director of the Central Land Council said that Newmont was a 'good corporate citizen' and 'absolute leader in engaging the local community. The company's approach has 'recognised that ignoring the local communities on the Tanami mining grounds could ultimately</p>	<p><i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 14 May 2007), 3.</p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

			end it operations'.	
14 May 2007	WA	<b>GLSA executive for UN forum</b>	The Goldfields Land and Sea Council executive Director Brian Wyatt will 'represent the National Native Title Council at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues'. The main purpose of the conference is to 'allow delegates from organisations for Indigenous people to respond to their Government's report to the Economic and Social council of the UN'.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 14 May 2007), 5.
15 May 2007	QLD	<b>Coalroc supports program</b>	Indigenous people are benefiting from partnerships between industry, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, private trainers and job opportunities. In particular, Coalroc has formed a company called Dugine Mine Services which is part owners by Coalroc Contractor's Pty Ltd and the BBKY traditional owners. The company is 'primarily employs Indigenous people .	<i>Daily Mercury</i> (Mackay, 15 May 2007), 15.
15 May 2007	WA	<b>Pilbara boom at risk from shortages</b>	The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia has called for 'the establishment of a state government working group to tackle logistical problems in the Pilbara' to address the 'Chronic labour and accommodation shortages in the booming Pilbara' which may put 'major development and prospects at risk'.	<i>Australian</i> (National, 16 May 2007), 36.
17 May 2007	NSW	<b>Bold native title claim: Elder Aims to stop project</b>	An Aboriginal elder is planning to resubmit an outstanding native title claim on Killalea in order to protect a burial ground from development. The presence of the burial site 'means the developers preparing a development application for a tourist resort would have to apply to the Department of Environment and Conservation for a Section 90 permit to destroy Aboriginal objects'. This is separate from the native title claim but can also affect the development application.	<i>Illawarra Mercury</i> (Wollongong, 17 may 2007), 6; 'Elder dusts off Killalea native title claim' <i>Wollongong Advertiser</i> (Wollongong, 23 May 2007), 5.

Native Title in the News May 2007

18 May 2007	NSW	<b>Coastal land sales to kill native title</b>	Indigenous activists are saying that a 'state government policy to encourage the development of coastal land will hit Aboriginal people hardest'. They argue that 'it is not only public spaces in places such as Coffs Harbour and Shellharbour that will be lost to fund infrastructure projects but Aboriginal land rights and hundreds of sacred sites'. The director general of the land's department Warwick Watkin said that 'he had instructed his staff to seek development options for coastal crown land' but Bundjalung man Robert Corow said that the Government's planning regime was 'extinguishing native title by the back door'.	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , (Sydney, 18 May 2007), 7.
21 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Implications of land rights reform for Indigenous health</b>	In August 2006, the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment Bill 2006 introduced a system of 99-year leases over Indigenous townships. Although the Commonwealth claims that entry into the scheme is voluntary, the experience of Wadeye and Tiwi Island communities reveal a lack of consultation and the coercion of community acceptance. This leasing scheme is potentially detrimental to Indigenous health, as research indicates that an important determinant of Indigenous health is whether Indigenous groups retain genuine ownership and control over their traditional lands. Consequently, if existing land rights legislation is to be amended, it should be for the purpose of enhancing the decision-making powers of traditional owners.	<i>Medical Journal of Australia</i> , (National, 21 May 2007), 534.

Native Title in the News May 2007

<p>22 May 2007</p>	<p>NT</p>	<p><b>Land Council extends fishing permit amnesty</b></p>	<p>The Northern Land Council has extended the amnesty period for anglers to fish in tidal zone without a fishing permit for two months. After the end of the amnesty period, 'permits will be require to fishing in waters affected by the tide and adjoining Aboriginal land'. This follows a Federal Court decision in March that the area of the Blue Mud Bay Claim were the 'exclusive property of the Aboriginal landowners and that the Fisheries Act NT had not application in these waters'. NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry said 'the scheme is free and subject to one specific exemption, the interim recreational license will commence on the date on which the application is made and be valid until two months after the...decision'. A spokesman from the Amateur Fishermen's Association said that 'it's all well and good for the Federal Court to decide a fine point of law and declare the NT Fisheries Act null and void in these waters but when the law is wrong it needs to be fixed.'</p>	<p><i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 8 May 2007), 4; 'Illegal fishing fear in protected areas' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 9 May 2007), 9.</p>
<p>23 May 2007</p>	<p>NATIONAL</p>	<p><b>Land link to good health</b></p>	<p>Researchers from Charles Darwin University (CDU), the Northern Land Council and the Menzies School of Health Research have discovered that Indigenous people who continue to take part in traditional land and sea management lead healthier, happier lives. 'The expansion of natural and cultural resource management activities in remote Indigenous communities would deliver a healthier environment, sustainable economic development opportunities and also has the potential to deliver significant economic savings in health care expenditure,' CDU's Dr Garnett said. A recent report by the World Health Organisation found that Aboriginal life expectancy is almost 20 years less than other Australians.</p>	<p><i>Koori Mail</i>, (National, 23 May 2007), 40.</p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

23 May 2007	QLD	<b>Cairns to host native title gathering</b>	<p>The eighth annual National Native Title Conference 'Tides of Native Title' will be hosted by the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people in Cairns from 6-8 June 2007. The focus of discussion will be on the ebb and flow of native title law, policy and practice since the Mabo High Court decision 15 years ago. The conference will also look at self-reliance, sustainable land and water management and cultural, economic and community development through native title. The Conference is the primary Indigenous land conference in Australia each year, attracting more than 500 delegates.</p>	<p><i>Koori Mail</i>, (National, 23 May 2007), 41; 'Celebrating 15 years since Mabo' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (17 May 2007), 42.</p>
25 May 2007	NT	<b>ERA shares' decline gathers pace</b>	<p>The share price of Rio Tinto's uranium subsidiary, Energy Resources of Australia, has fallen sharply in the wake of a dispute with the traditional owners of the Jabiluka uranium deposit in the Northern Territory. Rio's energy chief executive Preston Chiaro pre-empted the mine's reopening by suggesting that development approval could be received in the 'near-term future'. The Mirarr people issued a statement that their approval is 'not forthcoming'. Jabiluka is one of the world's richest undeveloped uranium deposits. However, despite a potential royalty flow of more than 5 per cent of net revenue, the Mirarr people have made it clear that their ultimate goal is the return of their traditional lands for inclusion in the neighbouring Kakadu National Park. The pro-nuclear Northern Land Council (NLC) plans to broker a meeting between Rio Tinto and the Mirarr Indigenous owners of Jabiluka, reviving hopes of reopening the \$50 billion uranium deposit in the Kakadu National Park. NLC chairman John Daly said that Aboriginal people wanted and were ready to do business on their land, including uranium mining. 'We need an economy out here so our kids can get something out of it,' he said. The NLC also formally nominated Aboriginal land near Tennant Creek to be developed as Australia's first national nuclear waste dump. The \$12 million deal would see the Ngapa traditional owners</p>	<p><i>Age</i> (Melbourne, 25 May 2007), 5; 'Mine a royalty bonanza' <i>Age</i>, (Melbourne, 31 May 2007), 3; 'Jabiluka may still be goer: land council' <i>Age</i>, (Melbourne, 29 May 2007), 3; 'Jabiluka talks urged in push to reopen mine' <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>, (Sydney, 29 May 2007), 4; 'NLC seeks talks on Kakadu uranium' <i>West Australian</i>, (Perth, 29 May 2007), 36; 'Owner lashes out over Jabiluka bid' <i>Age</i>, (Melbourne, 31 May 2007), 3; 'NLC uranium stance queried' <i>Northern</i></p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

			give up their land for 200 years.	<i>Territory News</i> , (Darwin, 31 May 2007), 11.
25 May 2007	QLD	<b>Merge plan includes Aboriginal councils</b>	Local Government Reform Commission chairman Bob Longland has announced that the Commission could amalgamate some or all of Queensland's 32 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils with neighbouring councils. Aboriginal councils that could face amalgamation with neighbouring shires under the reforms include Palm Island, Lockhart River, Cherbourg, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Mapoon, Pormuraaw, Woorabinda, Yarrabah, Doomadgee, Injino, Napranum and Wujal Wujal. However, Mr Longland also said that the Commission has not yet made a decision, and that 'land issues have their cultural roots, many of which would be difficult to unravel'. If an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander council was abolished, the state would have to establish an organisation to hold the land in trust.	<i>Courier Mail</i> , (Brisbane, 25 May 2007), 8.
25 May 2007	NSW	<b>Cromelin wins vote</b>	Craig Cromelin from Murrin Bridge, near Lake Cargelligo, has been elected as a state representative for the NSW Aboriginal Land Council in the Wiradjuri/Murray region.	<i>Daily Advertiser</i> , (Wagga Wagga, 25 May 2007), 4.
25 May 2007	NSW	<b>The fight goes on: Long walk to original justice</b>	More than 5,000 out of 16,000 registered voters participated in the recent NSW Aboriginal Land Council election, a result commensurate with voluntary voting systems around the world. The vote is particularly significant because it marks the return of an elected leadership after 3½ years of administration. 'NSWALC supports a statewide network of 121 Local Aboriginal Land Councils' said NSW Aboriginal Land Council CEO Geoff Scott. 'The land council network oversees an Aboriginal-owned land estate of more than 616,460ha with an unimproved capital value of more than \$2 billion.' However, Mr Scott also emphasised that 'land rights	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> , (Sydney, 25 May 2007), 29; 'Back in business NSW finally has an elected voice again' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> , (Malua Bay NSW, 31 May 2007), 3.

Native Title in the News May 2007

			alone cannot solve the deep-seated and complex disadvantages facing Aboriginal people. Working with government and most importantly, business, we must innovate to generate economic activity and deliver the socio-economic outcomes which have mostly eluded Aboriginal people to date'.	
25 May 2007	NT	<b>Brough accused of pressuring camps to accept deal</b>	Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough has been accused of bullying town camps in Alice Springs after the Tangentyere Council rejected a \$60 million funding offer. The offer required the Council to sublease its land to the Northern Territory Government for 99 years. The Council said that they were not given time to properly consider its implications. In addition, they said that the offer did not guarantee the \$60 million funding, and involved no proper negotiation process, no compensation and no protection for sacred sites. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Tom Calma said that similar complaints have been raised in other communities, such as Tiwi and Hopevale. Despite initial threats that the funding would be re-allocated unless accepted, Mr Brough now says that negotiations with the camps will continue.	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , (Sydney, 25 May 2007), 2; 'NT govt factored over Tiwi: CLP' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> , (Malua Bay NSW, 31 May 2007), 8.
25 May 2007	QLD	<b>NRW keeps track of state land</b>	The Department of Natural Resources and Water handles native title claims on behalf of the Queensland government. Its policy is to work with all affected groups to encourage the settlement of claims through mediation rather than litigation. At present, nearly 150 Indigenous Land Use Agreements have been registered in Queensland - more than half of the total agreements registered across Australia. More than 193,000 hectares of land were granted to traditional owners in North Queensland during 2006. The NRW has also set up a cultural heritage database to inform landholders of the existence of cultural heritage on their land and encourage consultation and negotiation with traditional owners. It lists	<i>North Queensland Register</i> , (Townsville, 25 May 2007), 23-4.

Native Title in the News May 2007

			approximately 21,000 entries collected over the past 80 years.	
25 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>The real meaning of native title in Australia</b>	The Federal Government's announcement of proposed changes to the native title process 'that favour mediation and dispute resolution over litigation which all parties acknowledge is time and cost intensive'. The Australian Journal of Mining Vickie Smiles said that the 'delays in the resolution of native title claims are more deeply embedded in the process than the level of the Government's proposed changes'. Ms Smiles also said that 'the culture that has grown out of native title seems to be more mutually effective than the Native Title Act itself. That is the kind of agreements between mining bodies and Aboriginal groups that by pass the native title system and produce real benefits for local communities'.	<i>Australian Journal of Mining (National, 25 March 2007), 23.</i>
25 May 2007	SA	<b>Native Title Talks Continue</b>	A successful negotiation meeting between the First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee Native Title Management Committee, local Government, Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement (ALRM) and State Government representatives was held on 10-11 May at Barmera.	<i>Lakelander, (South Australia, 25 May 2007), 8.</i>
28 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Labor's slur on the people of Nguuu</b>	Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Mal Brough slammed Federal Labor Senator Trish Crossin over her suggestion in Senate Estimates that Tiwi Islander's had been bribed to accept an historic land agreement. 'This was a disgraceful line of questioning which implies that Traditional Owners of Nguuu are not capable of determining their own future. It questions the intelligence and character of the Traditional Owners of Nguuu,' Mr Brough said. 'The Traditional Owners of Nguuu have agreed to enter into a lease arrangement which will allow people, both TO's and historical residents, to buy their own homes, own and run their own businesses and work towards economic	<i>Media Release, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (National, 28 May 2007), 49.</i>

Native Title in the News May 2007

			independence. The deal will also help attract business and investment to the region, in turn creating jobs and help build a sustainable future.'	
29 May 2007	QLD	<b>Indigenous workers cash in on mining boom</b>	<p>A report by the Minerals Industry Indigenous Employment Research Project found that the mining industry has boosted its Indigenous workforce to 8 per cent, with some companies planning to increase numbers further over coming years. This is a dramatic increase from 1.9 percent in 2001 and 4.6 percent in 2002. According to the report, key factors driving companies to employ Indigenous Australians include social and demographic changes, predicted Indigenous population growth and skills shortages. Vocational and Further Education Minister Andrew Robb said the time is right for more Indigenous employment in the mining sector.</p>	<p><i>Cairns Post</i>, (Cairns, 29 May 2007), 16; 'Indigenous workforce increasing' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i>, (Kalgoorlie, 29 May 2007), 7; 'Mining industry more Indigenous staff' <i>Adelaide Advertiser</i>, (Adelaide, 29 May 2007), 16; 'Mines increase Indigenous employment' <i>Australian Financial Review</i>, (National, 29 May 2007), 8.</p>
29 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Apology paves way for future</b>	<p>Prime Minister John Howard and Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd spoke at the 40th anniversary of the 1967 referendum on Indigenous Australians. While both conceded that more needs to be done to address the disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, the tone of the two addresses were subtly different. Mr Howard said that symbolic gestures don't count for much if they are 'accompanied by grinding poverty, overcrowding, poor health, community violence and alienation'. In contrast, Mr Rudd recognised that symbols are important and committed a Labor government to 'saying sorry'.</p>	<p><i>Daily Telegraph</i>, (Sydney, 29 May 2007), 17; 'Emotions run high on referendum anniversary' <i>Barrier Daily Truth</i>, (Broken Hill NSW, 28 May 2007), 1.</p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

29 May 2007	NT	<b>99-year Tiwi Islands lease 'not in place'</b>	On May 9, Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough issued a media release proclaiming the signing of Australia's first 99-year lease. 'I am delighted that Nguuu is the first community to take advantage of 99-year leasing,' he said. However, the Tiwi Land Council has now told a Senate committee that no 99-year lease is in place. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, but it is not legally binding in the way a lease would have been. 'Mal Brough ... has given people the impression that 99-year leases are now in place on the Tiwi Islands,' Opposition Indigenous affairs spokeswoman Jenny Macklin said. 'And that's just not the case.'	<i>Northern Territory News, (Darwin, 29 May 2007), 4.</i>
29 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>AAT deputy president reappointed</b>	Howard William Olney QC has been reappointed as a part-time Deputy President of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, Attorney-General Philip Ruddock announced today. Mr Olney has been a part-time Deputy President of the Tribunal since 15 June 2005 and was a Presidential Member of the Tribunal from 1988 until 2003. Mr Olney is also the Aboriginal Land Commissioner in the Northern Territory, and an Acting Judge of the Northern Territory Supreme Court.	<i>Media Release, Attorney-General (National, 29 May 2007), 15.</i>
30 May 2007	NT	<b>Larrakia Corporation development opportunity</b>	The Larrakia Development Corporation is 'applying to take on the development of the new Palmerston suburb'. The development project is 'estimated to be worth about \$70 million, will go towards relieving the land shortage in the Darwin-Palmerston region'. It is anticipated that the government will 'reserve some lots for low income earners and first home buyers'.	<i>Northern Territory News (Darwin, 20 May 2007), 20.</i>

Native Title in the News May 2007

30 May 2007	WA	<b>Remote court sitting to end long wait for Pilbara native title rights</b>	<p>The Ngarla people's native title rights has been recognised over 10 806 square kilometres of land and water in the Pilbara. A consent determination will be delivered by the Federal Court between the Ngarla community, the State Government, pastoralists and mining companies. The determination 'grants the Ngarla people non-exclusive rights to camp, hunt and fish on the land, engage in rituals and ceremonies, gather and use resources except for minerals, protect areas of cultural significance and make decisions about the use of the land in accordance with traditional law. Ngarla elder Charlie Coppin said that the 'determination was the most significant native title advance made by the community and he hoped the decision would benefit future generations.'</p>	<p><i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 30 May 2007), 10; 'Land title' <i>Adelaide Advertiser</i>, (Adelaide, 31 May 2007), 11; 'Title deals struck' <i>Northern Territory News</i>, (Darwin, 31 May 2007), 15; 'Ngarla native title determination' <i>Media Release, Attorney-General</i> (National, 31 May 2007), 43.</p>
30 May 2007	NATIONAL	<b>What youth want</b>	<p>Approaching National Reconciliation Week, a survey by the Australian Democrats has found that 68 percent of young Australians want the Government to enter into a treaty with Indigenous Australians. 'Youth Poll 2007 has found young, Australians feel very strongly about the Government entering into a treaty with Indigenous Australians,' Senator for South Australia Natasha Stott Despoja said.</p>	<p><i>Augusta Margaret River Mail</i>, (Augusta WA, 30 May 2007), 7.</p>

Native Title in the News May 2007

30 May 2007	QLD	<b>Chalco signs deal with Wik people</b>	Plans for the proposed bauxite mine at Aurukun on Cape York have passed another milestone after the signing of a land-use agreement with the local Wik and Wik Way people. The deal with the Indigenous landowners will reap job and business development opportunities and \$60 million in royalties. The agreement is the first of its type in Queensland.	<i>Bowen Independent</i> , (Bowen QLD, 30 May 2007), 5; 'Bauxite mine for Cape York moves a step closer' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> , (Malua Bay NSW, 31 May 2007), 7; 'Mine boon for Aurukun' <i>Tablelands Advertiser</i> , (Mareeba QLD, 30 May 2007), 11; 'Signing paves way for Chinese bauxite mining project in Qld' <i>Western Cape Bulletin</i> , (Weipa QLD, 30 May 2007), 1.
30 May 2007	VIC	<b>Gunditj Mirring to be Aboriginal custodians</b>	The Aboriginal Heritage Act came into effect on Monday, with the Gunditj Mirring Native title-holders expected to be the registered Aboriginal party for the Glenelg Shire to the east of the Glenelg River. Native title holder spokesman Damein Bell said that their status means they are now recognised as the Aboriginal custodians of crown land in the region, and will also automatically be the group to be consulted when new developments occur which may impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.	<i>Portland Observer</i> , (Portland VIC, 30 May 2007), 5.
31 May 2007	NT	<b>Aboriginals will be losers in nuke deal: Greens</b>	Indigenous people would be the losers in a proposed deal allowing a nuclear waste dump on their land in the Northern Territory, Greens senator Christine Milne said. Senator Milne also questioned the adequacy of the consultation process. 'They took away procedural fairness by preventing traditional owners from taking action in the courts to appeal any	<i>National Indigenous Times</i> , (Malua Bay NSW, 31 May 2007), 5; 'Waste dump is thin edge of nuclear wedge' Newcastle

Native Title in the News May 2007

			decision.' Senator Milne added that long-lived intermediate nuclear waste was harmful for 250,000 years and the \$12 million compensation package equated to a paltry \$48 a year for the traditional owners.	Herald, (Newcastle NSW, 2 June 2007), 19.
--	--	--	---	---