

## **MEDIA RELEASE - GINGIRANA CONSENT DETERMINATION OF NATIVE TITLE**

On 7 December 2017, the Federal Court convened at Kumarina Roadhouse, approximately 160kms south of the town of Newman in Western Australia to recognise the native title rights and interests of the Gingirana people. Justice Michael Barker handed down the determination recognising exclusive and non-exclusive native title rights and interests to an area of approximately 12,154 square kilometres.

The claim area is located in the western perimeter of the Little Sandy Desert, south of Newman and northwest of Wiluna in Western Australia. The eastern third of the claim is a remote environment which consists mostly of unallocated Crown land, the remaining area is mostly pastoral country and includes part of the Rabbit Proof Fence which runs through the claim from north to south. The Gingirana people are members of the Western Desert Cultural Bloc (WDCB), their claim area is the western most outpost of the WDCB.

In 2015 the Federal Court heard on country evidence given directly by a number of the Gingirana elders. The direct evidence given by the elders at significant sites within the claim area contributed to the outcome of a consent determination

The Gingirana application in its original form was filed on 9 May 2003. On 30 November 2005, the Gingirana #2 claim was filed which was contiguous with the original claim but additionally included the Kumarina pastoral lease. On 10 March 2006 Gingirana #2 was combined with the original claim, it met the conditions of the registration test on 13 April 2006.

The consent determination recognises areas where the right of possession, occupation, use and enjoyment to the exclusion of all others exists and other areas where non-exclusive rights exist over pastoral leases.

It was a day of celebration and much emotion demonstrated by native title holder Mr Stan Hill, who stood in front of the Judge, the State and the newly recognised native title holders and said: "I give my thanks to the old people of the past we now feel free to walk the land again to know that we have our rights recognised. I feel butterflies, this is very big for us we stuck to our guns and we are all so proud to be here"

People rolled up their swags and left the day knowing that they have been recognised as native title holders for time immemorial.

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