



## Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

# Native Title agreements need minimum standards

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Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation (YMBBMAC), together with iron ore producer Atlas Iron Limited, have called for minimum levels of compensation in native title commercial agreements.

YMBBMAC said that existing negotiation practices do not define compensation levels, resulting in uncertainty for native title groups and mining companies. Native title compensation is currently estimated to average at less than one quarter of a percent (0.25%) of overall mining profits from iron ore in WA.

Simon Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer, YMBBMAC, said standard minimum royalties would benefit all parties by reducing the amount of time spent in lengthy negotiations, allowing for accelerated development and improved land-access protocols.

Mr Hawkins said, "For native title groups, minimum levels of payment would streamline the agreement process and reduce the emotional toll of negotiations. For industry and government it will mean increased certainty in negotiations and land-access agreements."

Atlas Iron Limited, currently developing an iron ore mine in the Pilbara, is involved in negotiations with a number of native title groups. Atlas Managing Director, David Flanagan, commented;

"A standard agreement structure that provides proper engagement as well as improved land access and standard minimum royalties could deliver a watershed benefit for everyone. Mining companies with their eyes on the future are investing in preserving and enhancing Aboriginal culture now.

Right now Western Australia is filled with opportunity. The sooner we can get things moving, the sooner we can all share in the benefit of the state's mineral resources."

Potential benefits of minimum percentages for native title commercial agreements can include;

- Accelerating exploration and engagement
- Increased certainty over compensation
- Increased access to land, project development opportunities and subsequent royalty streams
- Traditional Owners becoming direct participants in the current and future resource booms
- Increased regional social infrastructure and employment opportunities

Mr Hawkins said, "Current proposals include for industry to guarantee a minimum percentage, matched by a State Government contribution. This is something we would wholly support."

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### Notes for Editors

Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation is the native title representative body for native title claims in the resource-rich Pilbara, Murchison and Gascoyne representative areas of Western Australia. The organisation has two divisions: the **Pilbara Native Title Service (PNTS)** and the **Yamatji Land and Sea Council (YLSC)**. YMBBMAC has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres and represents 24 native title claims.



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YMBBMAC provides a range of services to its members including claim and future-act representation, heritage protection services, community and economic development and natural resource management.

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