



**Yamatji Marlpa**  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

## **Western Australian wins NAIDOC's Elder of the Year**

**Media Release: 13 July 2009**

Mrs Doris Eaton, Aboriginal Elder of the Nyamal people of the North East Pilbara, and Co-Chairperson of Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation was announced Female Elder of the Year at Friday night's NAIDOC Awards in Brisbane.

The annual awards recognise the outstanding contributions that Indigenous Australians make to improve the lives of Indigenous people in their communities and beyond, or to promote Indigenous issues in the wider community, or the excellence they've shown in their chosen field.

Mrs Eaton was recognised for her cultural leadership and work with Aboriginal communities in the Pilbara. She has been involved in health programs for Aboriginal women and children, care for the elderly, native title issues and was the first woman elected as Co-Chair of Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation. She continues to educate herself about non-Indigenous culture and is currently studying at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education in Darwin.



Mrs Eaton is respected for her significant cultural role as an Aboriginal Law woman across the Pilbara and is the matriarch for five generations of her own family. On receiving the award, she stated that her driving force is to ensure that younger generations learn strong culture and law from their Elders.

"Preserving culture is important to keep traditions strong and makes sure the next generation has a sense of identity. Elders need to teach the youth their language, dreaming stories and cultural practices. First learn your own culture and then you can be strong enough to move between the two worlds, to marry Aboriginal and mainstream cultures together.

I'm honoured to receive the award, it's a good feeling. We need to keep learning and sharing and encouraging each other to move forward."

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### **About Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation**

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is the native title representative body for native

title claims in the resource-rich Pilbara, Murchison and Gascoyne areas of Western Australia.

The organisation has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres and represents over 25 native title claims, all with their own language, culture and traditions.

YMAC is run by an Aboriginal Board and 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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