

GUNDJEIHMI

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Media Statement

May 13, 2020

Land Rights Act changes key to future of Jabiru

Jabiru's traditional owners, the Mirarr, welcome the introduction today in the federal parliament of vital legislation to secure the town's future. Once passed, the amendments to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act* will pave the way for Jabiru to transition from a former mining town to an Indigenous-led tourism and services town.

The Mirarr are working towards a vibrant post-mining future for the Kakadu region and have long campaigned to have Jabiru returned to local control. The Commonwealth has made important amendments in this bill to make township leasing more effective and are to be congratulated.

"The town of Jabiru, built four decades ago to support the Ranger uranium mine, is on the cusp of an exciting post-mining future. There are exciting construction and development projects planned for Jabiru which will significantly boost the national and NT economic recovery post COVID-19," said Justin O'Brien, CEO of Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation which represents the Mirarr.

Work to prepare for Jabiru's transition is continuing locally via the joint operation between Gundjeihmi and the Northern Territory government at Jabiru Kabolkmakmen Limited. This work has been continuing even as the COVID-19 emergency unfolds.

The introduction of these amendments is a crucial step for the town and region. The option of a community entity means traditional owners now have the flexibility to take urgent steps to re-assure the community and secure the town's future.

"Mirarr will continue to work to protect the interests of the entire community and to explore new opportunities with other traditional owners, the Commonwealth and Territory governments and Energy Resources of Australia to transition Kakadu to truly realise its potential as an iconic cultural destination," Mr O'Brien said.

"The introduction of this bill has been a long time coming. We congratulate the government on ensuring these important amendments are made as a priority despite the current interruptions to parliament.

"Mirarr and Gundjeihmi wish to thank the many people in government and community who have supported the traditional owners through the difficult times and hope to welcome them as visitors in the exciting times ahead," Mr O'Brien concluded.

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