

Illegal Drilling on Aboriginal Site must be Stopped

Media Statement

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Ngalia Heritage Research Council chairperson Kado Muir of Leonora has written to the two State Government departments responsible for Mining, (Department of Industry and Resources) and Aboriginal Heritage protection (Department of Indigenous Affairs) to investigate illegal drilling by a local mining company (St Barbara Mines) on two Aboriginal sites near Leonora, Western Australia.

" This company is drilling on previously recorded Aboriginal sites. We are very concerned that the company has not done the right thing by consulting with local custodians for these sites and has obviously acted illegally by entering upon these sites and started drilling. They can't be allowed to get away with it, the State government must act immediately and prosecute this company." said Mr Muir.

The two sites in question have been previously recorded with the Department of Indigenous Affairs register of Aboriginal sites, and must be afforded **all protection** under the laws of Western Australia. Details of the sites are set out below:

Aboriginal Sites Register; Site Id 17587

This site is located approximately five kilometers north of Leonora near the former Sons of Gwalia Kailis project. It consists of two white quartz hills on tenement number M37/46. There is currently a drill rig working at this location.

Aboriginal Sites Register; Site Id 1737

This site is associated with the Mt Leonora site and is located approximately 800 meters from the Leonora District Hospital, within the town boundaries. There are currently two drill rigs drilling on two locations in the area around which tenements number M37/251, M37/622, M37/549 and P37/6564 intersect, we are not sure which of these tenements is subject to the work.

It is important for miners and anyone impacting on Aboriginal sites to consult with the Aboriginal custodians on the nature of the impact and then it is the law under the Aboriginal Heritage Act in Western Australia to get permission from the government to do any ground disturbing activities on Aboriginal sites. If companies breach this law they could face prosecution and possible forfeiture of their mining tenement.

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