

Government of Western Australia
Media Statement



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State Government backs heritage values of Dampier Archipelago

21/06/07

State Development Minister Eric Ripper gave the following brief Ministerial Statement in Parliament today.

**Deputy Premier
Minister for State Development
Treasurer Eric Ripper**

Parliamentary statement on the proposed National Heritage listing of the Dampier Archipelago/Burrup Peninsula

This Government has long supported the significant heritage values of the Dampier Archipelago. These have been recognised in the various planning strategies prepared by the State over the past decade.

In January 2003 we signed the landmark Burrup and Maitland Industrial Estates Agreement with the area's three Aboriginal native title claimant groups. The Agreement provides a range of benefits for the Aboriginal people of that area. Indeed, approximately 4900ha or about 55 per cent of the land area north of Burrup Road is to be vested in the Aboriginal people. This comprises about 30 per cent of the Burrup Peninsula from Searipple Passage in the limit of the Dampier Salt leases in the West.

I am pleased to say that under this Agreement, \$4.5million was transferred to the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation last July.

I understand that the next two weeks the Federal Minister for Environment and Water Resources, the Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, will make an announcement regarding National Heritage listing for the Dampier Archipelago and Burrup Peninsula.

Areas of the Dampier Archipelago and the Burrup Peninsular will be included on the Heritage list because of its remarkable engravings, and concentration of standing stones, stone circles and arrangements.

The State Government welcomes the inclusion of this important heritage area on the list. It demonstrates the uniqueness of this site, and offers the additional protection available under Commonwealth laws.

The National Heritage List lists places of outstanding heritage significance to Australia. The places on the List reflect our collective history as a nation. Recently the Sydney Opera House was placed on the list, and the proposed inclusion of the Dampier Archipelago and the Burrup Peninsula attests to the significance of our unique environment and Indigenous Art.

The region is also one of Australia's most important industrial areas. It is rich in natural gas, iron ore and a range of other minerals and provides a safe harbour, access to deep water and existing infrastructure. We have sought to balance the rights of indigenous groups, interests of industry and heritage values in the 2003 Agreement.

We strongly believe that it is possible for industry and heritage to coexist in the Dampier Archipelago.

In order to ensure that this balance is maintained, the Government has established a Taskforce to address the key legislative, environmental and management regimes that underpin a bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth. I chair a Ministerial Committee that oversees the development of the bilateral agreement.

A Bilateral Agreement and Management Arrangement that protects the important heritage values of the region while allowing the State to manage the approvals process for major projects is currently being developed. It will be released for public comment.

In addition an Indigenous Heritage Management Plan is also being developed to protect the heritage values of the entire Dampier Archipelago.

It offers a multi-user approach to managing the Indigenous cultural heritage of the Dampier Archipelago and will provide a way forward to proactively manage the area in accordance with identified national heritage values.

Heritage surveys over future industrial land are also being undertaken in conjunction with the local Indigenous groups. Inventory studies of the remainder of the area are under consideration. The Burrup Rock Art Monitoring Committee and the CSIRO continue to monitor the status of the rock art.

This Government has an outstanding record in maintaining heritage.

The State Government welcomes the Federal Government's National Heritage listing decision for this important region, and looks forward to working collaboratively with the Commonwealth Government, the local Indigenous community and industry to manage an area of great significance to all Australians.

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