

# ILUA a gem, says Colleen

**T**RADITIONAL Gidja owner and Argyle Diamond Mine employee Colleen Morgan is looking forward to working alongside many more members of her local community.

The 26-year-old said it was good to see the mine near Kununurra employing local and Indigenous people: "The community feels good. There is more opportunity to learn stuff on the mine than down in the town," she said.

Ms Morgan was one of hundreds of employees, traditional owners and special guests who celebrated with music, dancing and ceremony at the remote Kimberley mine site last month when Argyle marked the registration of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) over the area. The Argyle Participation Agreement covers 797.5 square kilometres and recognises the Miriwung and Gidja peoples as the traditional owners over the area.

The agreement also sets out plans to greatly increase the number of Indigenous employees at the mine – a process which the company has been working toward over the past two years.

National Native Title Tribunal Deputy President Fred Chaney, who facilitated the negotiation of the agreement, said the increase in local employment at Argyle was of national significance.

"Over the last two years, Argyle Diamond Mine has increased the local workforce at the mine site to 45 per cent,



Traditional Gidja owner and Argyle Diamond Mine employee Colleen Morgan.

with more than half being Indigenous people," he said.

Ms Morgan, who joined the mine site in 2003 as a clerical assistant, got her first taste of Argyle life when a tour company operated by her parents,

Wundargoodie Aboriginal Safaris, was hired to transport the traditional owners to the native title mediation meetings.

"I had already lodged an 'expression of interest' to work at Argyle and when I visited the site I applied for the clerical

assistant position," she said.

"This agreement will help Indigenous people more, especially the kids. It recognises the traditional owners – there'll be more understanding."

## Year of milestones



Australian Government

Department of Education, Science and Training

### Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Programme

Submissions for WELL funding are invited from eligible enterprises and organisations who want to provide their employees with the language and literacy skills they need for their current employment.

Funding is available for language, literacy and numeracy training integrated with vocational training to help workers meet their employment and training needs. The training must be delivered by a registered training organisation (RTO).

Employees under a contract of training (New Apprenticeship) are not eligible to participate in the WELL programme.

Application forms and information on WELL are available on the Internet at [www.dest.gov.au/ty/well](http://www.dest.gov.au/ty/well)

Applications for training projects must be submitted by 4pm on Wednesday 31st August 2005.

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**\*\*Please note:** Additional WELL funding is available for the Aged Care Sector.

[www.dest.gov.au](http://www.dest.gov.au)

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Welcome to 'Native Title and You', a new column you will find each month in the Koori Mail. Land is a matter close to every Indigenous Australian's heart, and the National Native Title Tribunal will keep readers up-to-date on the latest native title developments. Tribunal President Graeme Neate kicks off the column ...

**T**HIS year is fast becoming a year of milestones for native title, particularly when it comes to Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs).

In Queensland alone there are now more than 100 ILUAs, while the national total will reach 200 very soon.

The Northern Territory has set its own record by negotiating 31 ILUAs over 27 national parks in agreements which will provide joint management opportunities and jobs to traditional owners.

What's an ILUA? An ILUA is a voluntary agreement between native title groups and others such as governments and industry which allows practical and flexible arrangements to settle native title issues over land and water.

In the Kimberley region of Western Australia, traditional owners and industry recently



### Native Title and You

With National Native Title Tribunal President GRAEME NEATE

celebrated a far-reaching ILUA which could bring up to \$50 million in benefits to the local community through employment, trusts and royalties from Argyle diamonds.

Not all ILUAs involve

large financial benefits, but different people making use of ILUAs are finding they can meet many of their social and economic aspirations and ensure heritage and culture are protected.

The agreements themselves are broad enough to cover these things and they give everyone the security of knowing they have entered a legally binding agreement which is registered with the National Native Title Tribunal.

ILUAs can be negotiated alongside a determination of native title or they can happen outside that process.

Once agreements have been reached the parties often say that they have built important relationships in their local communities. These continue into the future and help them ensure the ILUAs continue to work.

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