



Yamatji Marlpa ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

WA Native Title Excerpt from 'The Miners'

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Simon Hawkins and YMAC Co-Chair Mrs Doris Eaton. From *The Miners*

Yamatji Marlpa's CEO Simon Hawkins was featured in the recently-published *The Miners – Stories from the industry that drives modern Australia*, by Barry Avery.

"The 1992 event that has become known as the Mabo Decision changed the landscape of mining and exploration in Australia forever. This was a landmark High Court ruling that recognised the legal concept of Native Title for the first time, rejecting the previously held doctrine of terra nullius. It gave the Indigenous traditional owners certain legal rights to their land.

Hawkins explains that recognition of Native Title does not give a veto over mining or development, as traditional owners cannot stop mining from going ahead. What it does

give these groups is a right to negotiate, allowing development to go ahead while claims are being resolved. 'This gives traditional owners a seat at the table – to have a say about how mining will unfold on their country,' he says.

'When I started as chief executive in 2003, the mining boom was ramping up and companies which previously had poor relationships with Aboriginal people were now knocking on our door. Within my first few weeks on the job, Rio Tinto said it wanted to do a comprehensive agreement in the Pilbara. By 2004, the boom really hit; iron ore projections were enormous and industry was clamouring to get agreements in place...'

Read the full excerpt here: <http://ymac.org.au/read-ymacs-excerpt-from-the-miners/>

The Miners is available at www.theminers.net.au with proceeds going to the Starlight Foundation.

About Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is the native title representative body for native title claims in the Pilbara, Murchison and Gascoyne areas of Western Australia. The organisation has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres and represents over 20 native title claims, all with their own language, culture and traditions.

YMAC is a not-for-profit organisation, 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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