



YMAC responds to State Government briefing on Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill

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Following the State Government's 18 August presentation on latest amendments to the coming *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill*, Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation's (YMAC) position on the Bill remains the same – YMAC still does not support the Bill and urges the Government to make time to negotiate with Traditional Owners, whose cultural heritage is impacted by this legislation.

Government has not yet provided the bill in its entirety to the Aboriginal community.

YMAC Co-Chair Yamatji Region, Mr Peter Windie said it was disappointing to see how little information was made available today to show how - in practice - heritage will be able to be protected by the owners of Australia's Cultural Heritage in Western Australia.

"The Bill requires a giant leap of faith that people who want to carry out activities will be prepared to reach agreements with Traditional Owners to avoid damaging our cultural heritage.

"We fail to see how this Bill can deliver on the statement quoted by the State that *'This legislation will better protect Aboriginal heritage in Western Australia, place Aboriginal people at the centre of our heritage protection regime and deliver better decision-making in land use proposals for stakeholders, industry and the community.'*

"Under this current draft, if the Minister decides destruction of heritage can occur, it will. A key concern for us is the lack of appeal or review available when the Minister makes the final decision on the destruction of heritage."

Sites of great significance globally continue to be harmed or destroyed every day. YMAC has long advocated for stronger protections for cultural heritage and a more equitable position for Traditional Owners in agreement-making.

YMAC is focused on events it is coordinating in its representative regions to give Aboriginal people the chance to collectively address their concerns about their cultural heritage. These are the Annual Yule River Bush Meeting in the Pilbara on 25 and 26 August, and Yamatji On-Country in Carnarvon on 13 and 14 October.



Yamatji Marlpa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



All quotes to be attributed to Mr Peter Windie, Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation Co-Chair Yamatji Region.

About Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is the Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) for what are described as the Pilbara (Marlpa) and Geraldton (Yamatji) regions of Western Australia. YMAC is run by an Aboriginal Board of Directors, representing several native title groups, each of whom has their own language, culture, traditions and protocols. YMAC provides a range of services, including native title claim and future act representation, heritage services, executive office, community, economic development assistance, and natural resource management support.

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