Bushfire Sympathies

The President, Executive Committee and members of Australia ICOMOS offer their support and sympathy for the victims of the recent bushfires in many parts of Australia.

Burrup Peninsula Decision Circumvents Native Title Tribunal

The following is a media statement by the Acting Premier of Western Australia, Mr Eric Ripper released on 16 January 2003.

The Western Australian Government, industry and all native title parties have defied the odds and reached an historic settlement that will secure the Pilbara region's future as the economic powerhouse of the nation.

Speaking in Karratha, Acting Premier Eric Ripper said the agreement - signed this morning - was the most comprehensive settlement involving native title and development anywhere in Australia.

"Jobs and Western Australia's future economic growth hinge on the billions of dollars of industrial developments proposed for the Burrup industrial estate, but the rights of traditional owners have also been protected," Mr Ripper said.

The agreement also resolved native title issues over other key areas of the Pilbara, including the proposed Maitland industrial estate, and allowed for residential and light industrial expansion around Karratha.

The Acting Premier said the agreement gave indigenous people an economic future, and protected heritage and environmental values of the region.

"All three registered native title claimant groups have now signed up to the agreement, which delivers long-term economic and social benefits to the local indigenous people," he said.

The agreement gave the residents of Karratha planning certainty for the first time in several years.
Mr Ripper said National Native Title Tribunal member Bardy McFarlane assisted in mediating the agreement. The agreement meant an imminent tribunal arbitration ruling on the development application would now not be delivered.

The Acting Premier, who is Minister responsible for native title, said the agreement allowed for the establishment of a conservation reserve over more than 60 per cent of the Burrup Peninsula which would, for the first time, ensure proper management of the environmental and heritage values of the area.

Hearson Cove would also be reserved for recreational purposes, and public access to Conzinc Bay would be addressed in the development of a management plan for the conservation reserve.

Mr Ripper said two of the registered claimants groups, the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi and Yaburara Mardudhunera, had signed the agreement late last year and the third and final group, the Wong-goo-tt-Oo, had signed the agreement in Karratha this morning.

"This agreement demonstrates the merit of the Government's approach," he said.

"A credible, fair and comprehensive package was put forward and ultimately, it has won the support of all parties."

Mr Ripper said the Government's package, with a total value of more than $15million, would deliver the traditional owners education and training opportunities and a stake in future land developments.

"The agreement balances the environmental, heritage and recreational values of the Burrup peninsula with the importance of this region to Western Australia's economic development and prosperity," he said.

While the claimants' native title applications were yet to be settled, the agreement met the aspirations of local Aboriginal communities for land justice by providing:

an important role in the management of the northern Burrup peninsula through the co-managed conservation reserve;

a key role in heritage protection through heritage surveys of the industrial land; and financial benefit from industrial development through ongoing rental payments from companies.

The native title claimant groups have agreed that the benefits they receive under the agreement will constitute full settlement of any native title compensation entitlement they may have as a result of the establishment of the industrial estates.

The financial benefits provided to the native title claim groups will be held in trust until they can be transferred to an approved body corporate so that the funds can be managed for the benefit of those communities.

Details of the agreement can be read here: http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/media/media.nsf
In response Robin Chapple MLC and member for the Mining and Pastoral Region released the following statement on 17 January 2003

Yesterday’s announcement by the Western Australian Government that industrial development on the Burrup Peninsula would go ahead has sent a chilling message to local and international campaigners fighting to preserve the heritage province for all time.

The Government has admitted that it is considering nominating the Burrup for World Heritage Listing now that industrial sacrifice zones have been established at Hearson Cove, Withnall East and along associated infrastructure corridors.

“The Government has finally become dimly aware of the value of the site, on the same day they sign off on an agreement to wreck a substantial part of it,” Mr Chapple said.

“It is now quite clear that in Western Australia, Aboriginal heritage is fine as long as it doesn’t get in the way. We will be happy to exploit Indigenous culture and iconography until such time as a conflict arises with heavy industry. Then we send in the bulldozers.”

Mr Chapple reiterated his call for an overhaul of Aboriginal Heritage and Native Title Legislation. “Somewhere along the line, the legal right of a sovereign people to decide what happens on their land has been converted into a right to be ‘consulted’ and eventually paid out. In practice, this leads to the kind of coercive practices we have seen on the Burrup. ‘Negotiation’ has become a one-way path to a predetermined outcome set by the Government of Charles Court in the late 1960s.”

Mr Chapple has predicted that the national and international outcry over the well-publicised risks to the rock art province will intensify, not diminish, as a result of the announcement. “Over the next few months the Government is going to have to show the international community what their commitment to Aboriginal heritage actually looks like in the real world. And I think if we let them get away with it, it’s going to look very ugly indeed.”

Call for Tenders

The National Trust of Australia is calling for tenders for consultancy services for the implementation of the Interpretation Works for the Luisini Winery Project. The brief will be available on the Australia ICOMOS (http://www.icomos.org.australia)

Divestment of Portsea Defence Land (VIC) by the Department of Defence

Log onto <http://www.pb.com.au/>www.pb.com.au to see the draft plan for the Portsea Defence Land and Quarantine Station, which has been released for public comment. The community draft plan was produced by 28 community representatives of the Community Reference Group (CRG) in consultation with planners from Parsons Brinckerhoff, representing the Department of Defence. The negotiations took place over nine meetings over the last six months, and the final document is a result of extremely hard work after drawn-out and difficult interaction between PB and community representatives. The Portsea Defence Land Community Master Planning
Project, produced by PB and six representatives of the CRG working group, is now being exhibited and submissions must be forwarded to Parsons Brinckerhoff by January 31st.

Read the Draft Plan on the internet and write a short submission showing your support for this plan to Parsons Brinckerhoff PO Box 7209 Melbourne 3004.

The key issues of the Plan are

- no private residential subdivision
- the land kept in its entirety in public ownership
- sensitive use of heritage precinct and buildings
- preservation of sense of place -- remoteness, wildness and coastal landscape character

The Dept of Defence and the Vic State Labour Government are at a stalemate regarding the disposal of the land, and public pressure is the key to the outcome of this process. If the Federal and State politicians know that the community has responded with supportive submissions for the Plan, the terms of the Plan have a real chance of becoming a reality, keeping all of Point Nepean in public ownership for perpetuity.

The document runs to 150 pages so it is recommend to read the Introduction and Executive Summary.

Ursula de Jong, Portsea Defence Land Master Planning Project -- Community Reference Group


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Weekly Website Focus
Quito Eterno

Eternal Quito is a project of the Historical Center Corporation of Quito, a non-profit organization, that since 1998 has developed specialized projects which aim to rescue and preserve the traditions of the city. The Historical Center of Quito was named a World Heritage Site in 1978.

http://www.ecuapymes.com/quitoeterno/engweb.htm

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Employment Openings
details of the following jobs will be listed on the Australia ICOMOS website as of this evening:

1) Heritage Professional in Oman
2) Collection Management Officer (NSW)
3) Heritage Consultant (Vic)
4) Associate or Assistant Professor of Architecture (Graduate Program in
If you would like to suggest an event, story, course etc for the Australia ICOMOS E-Mail News or submit an article, send an e-mail to the Australia ICOMOS Secretariat at: austicomos@deakin.edu.au

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