

Native Title in the News February 2007

Date	State	Subject	Summary	Source
1 February 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Fraud squad studies Defence land deal</b>	The Department of Defence has been 'snared in a fraud investigation after allegations that \$1.5 million of taxpayer funds disappeared in an Aboriginal Land Use Agreement'. The original agreement involved the department in a bid to negotiate land access at Twofold Bay. Warren Mundine, Chief Executive of NSW Native Title Services said 'the NSW Native Title Service was hired to negotiate the agreement in 2002 but was unexpectedly sacked shortly before the deal was due to be signed between native title claimants and the federal officials representing the Department.'	<i>The Australian</i> (National, 1 February 2007), 2.
2 February 2007	VIC	<b>Native title claim area split in two</b>	The long running Gunditjmarra land claim has been split in two. A 'strip of land from Dunkel in the north to the east of the original claim area, and as far west as Macarthur and to the seas in the south will go into mediation with the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust'. This part of the claim will be heard in September 2008. The majority of the claimed land will be heard on March 30.	<i>Portland Observer</i> (Portland, 2 February 2007), 5.
6 February 2007	WA	<b>Program offers industry skills</b>	Members of the Yamatji Native Title Group 'will have the chance to be trained and work in the mining industry thanks to a new partnership' with Mid West Iron Ore junior Midwest Corporation.	Program offers industry skills' <i>Geraldton Guardian</i> (Geraldton, 5 February 2007), 2.

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<p>6 February 2007</p>	<p>WA</p>	<p><b>WA claims dismissed</b></p>	<p>Justice Kevin Lindgren has dismissed eight overlapping claims including the Wongatha claim covering 160 000 sq kilometres in the West Australian Goldfields. He ruled that the 'eight groups did not all have a similar cultural attachment to all the land, although they recognised reach other's claim to an area'. Justice Lindgren said that it was not permissible for groups to be formed and to 'bring group claims in respect of a group since the group is not rooted in traditional (pre sovereignty) laws and customs'. However he left the 'door open for future claims in a different form, saying he believed some native title did exist, although it would probably be limited to individuals or a smaller group.' The judgment has 'caused consternation among Aboriginal government and commercial parties which have been seeking clarity on the vast expanses of mineral rich Spinifex country north of Kalgoorlie'. The conflicting claims has lead to the unified Wongatha claim involving '100 court sitting days, 97 volumes of applications and 400 interested parties'. Goldfields Land and Sea Council executive director Brian Wyatt representing the Wongatha claimants said that 'they were disappointed because they had worked tirelessly to simplify and merge overlapping claims at the request of the National Native Title Tribunal'. In handing down his decision Justice Lindgren commented on the "unsatisfactory state of affairs in the native title area' and that the process was reliant on 'the histories of each claimant and penalised Goldfields claimants who could not prove the existence of indigenous laws and customs.'</p>	<p><i>The Age</i> (Melbourne, 6 February 2007), 4; 'Wongatha devastated by federal court ruling' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (Malua Bay NSW, 8 February 2007), 8; 'Failure of land title bid will start war' <i>The Australian</i> (National, 6 February 2007), 6; 'Claim dismissed' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 6 February 2007), 3; 'Goldfield claim doomed by native title system, says judge' <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> (Sydney, 6 February 2007), 6; 'Set back for Aboriginals as judge throws out native title claim' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 6 February 2007), 11; 'Native Title uncertainty' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie 7 February 2007), 6; 'Native title tribunal hits back over judge's attack' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 7 February 2007), 18; 'Native Title Uncertainty' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie 7 February</p>
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				2007), 1; 'Native title uncertainty must be remedied' <i>West Australian</i> (Perth, 7 February 2007); 'Decision 'unjust and puzzling' <i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 10 February 2007), 28; 'Native title claim dismissed in Federal Court sitting Kalgoorlie-Boulder' <i>Golden Mail</i> (Kalgoorlie, 9 February 2007), 4; 'Native title claim dismissed' <i>Esperance Express</i> (Esperance, 8 February 2007), 7; 'Title ruling means more uncertainty' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 14 February 2007), 6.
7 February 2007	QLD	<b>Cape loses gas project</b>	The Cape York Land Council has 'refused to accept that the decade old plans for a gas pipeline from Papua New Guinea will be scrapped within weeks'. Project managers Oil Search said 'other options to develop PNG's gas fields were more attractive'. Chairman Michael Ross said 'we got 14 tribes along the pipeline route to sign an Indigenous Land Use Agreement'. Cooke Shire Mayor said 'the loss of the pipeline was a blow to the Cape's economy'.	<i>Cooktown Local News</i> (Cooktown, 7 February 2007), 5.

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7 February 2007	WA	<b>No boom times for Aborigines in North West</b>	Greens Senator for Western Australia Rachel Siewert said that 'poverty existed side by side in the North West with some of the most lucrative industrial projects in the world'. Senator Siewert's comments came after the study of Indigenous Land Use Agreements. She noted that 'no other members of the community are asked to sell out their cultural heritage in exchange for the kind of basic services the rest of us take for granted'.	<i>Northern Guardian</i> (Carnarvon, 7 February 2007), 8.
8 February 2007	QLD	<b>Protestors to swoop on Premier over river bill</b>	Queensland Premier Peter Beattie will face a 'hostile reception' at a meeting with Aboriginal and agricultural groups concerning the Wild Rivers legislation. The Government was 'accused of arrogantly pushing through the legislation "to appease conservation groups at the expense of local land holders"'. Mayor of the Hopevale Aboriginal community, Greg Mc Lean said 'the Government [is] stripping away any possibility of local Indigenous people developing self-sustaining businesses'. However Natural Resources and Water Minister Craig Wallace said that 'there has been adequate consultation'.	<i>The Australian</i> (National, 8 February 2007), 26.
8 February 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Native title review</b>	In a public hearing held in Sydney the views of Queensland land holders were heard before an inquiry. John Sewert, AgForce native title spokesperson said he 'addressed the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee on January 30 in his role with the National Farmers Federation Native Title Taskforce'. Mr Sewert said that there was a 'need for the Native Title Act to require more detailed information to be provided by claimants as part of the claimant application'.	<i>Queensland Country Life</i> (Queensland, 8 February, 2007).

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8 February 2007	NSW	<b>Byron Bay Indigenous Land Use Agreements</b>	The Bundjalung people of Byron Bay have signed two Indigenous Land Use Agreements. This builds on an earlier agreement reached with the New South Wales Government in 2001 under which the Arakwal National Park was created. The original native title claims (initially lodged in 1995) of the Bundjalung People of Byron bay triggered negotiations over the area . The agreement covers 245 hectares of Crown Land around Byron Bay and the northern coast of New South Wales and includes provisions for land transfers, co management of National Parks in the area as well as employment and training.	National Native Title Tribunal <i>Media Release</i> , (National, 8 February 2007).
8 February 2007	WA	<b>Land agreements amongst best</b>	Professor Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh 'said the Kimberley was amongst the best in terms of land use agreements'. Professor O'Faircheallaigh 'praised a strong Indigenous community and groups like the Kimberley Land Council which could provide support for those facing interest from mining companies'. He said 'if you are a small community or you are a small Aboriginal group and are having to deal on your own with government or with mining companies, it's a pretty difficult job.'	<i>Land Agreements amongst the best</i> (Kununarra, 8 February 2007), 13; 'Title war of words' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 14 February 2007), 8.
8 February 2007	QLD	<b>Native Title on Woodgate land?</b>	Woodgate beach is a part of a native title claim. The 'Isis Shire Council has agreed to handle all Native Title issues in relation to the property and has written to the Gurang Land Council as the representative aboriginal body seeking its view'. The Council is 'hopeful of securing up to a 50% discount on the purchase price of the premium ocean front land'. Council CEO Steve Johnston said 'the matter would progress to the Federal Court for determination and once a decision was made on ownership rights the issues of compensation, if necessary, would be addressed.'	<i>Isis Town &amp; Country Newspaper</i> , (Childers, 8 February 2007).
9 February 2007	QLD	<b>Deals and litigation</b>	Jupiter's Limited has completed the 'finalisation of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with two native title groups on the Gold Coast to facilitate development of the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre.'	<i>Lawyers Weekly</i> (National, 9 December 2007), 37.

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12 February 2007	VIC	<b>Aboriginal groups urged to attend heritage workshop</b>	The Aboriginal Heritage Council held an information session chaired by Ricky Mullet. Mr Mullet said that 'registered Aboriginal parties were being established as part of the implementation of the new <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> which would provide better protection for Victoria's Indigenous Cultural Heritage.' He said that the bodies will 'be involved in evaluating cultural heritage management plans for certain types of activities in identified places, advising on permit applications, entering into cultural heritage agreements and negotiating the repatriation of Aboriginal human remains'.	<i>Sunraysia Daily</i> (Mildura, 12 February 2007), 3; 'Groups to play important role' <i>Riverine Herald</i> (Echuca, 12 February 2007), 6; 'Heritage council in city tomorrow' <i>Swan Hill Guardian</i> (Swan Hill, 12 February 2007), 4.
13 February 2007	WA	<b>Native title groups yet to decide on next step</b>	The native title groups of the Wongatha native title claim are 'struggling to reach consensus on whether to appeal the dismissal of the Wongatha native title claim'. Goldfields Land and Sea Council director Brian Wyatt said that the groups will meet to 'get some sort of indication whether or not the groups want to appeal the decision and the best way to proceed'. The claim was lodged in 1999 and covers 160 000 sq km and 'includes Spinifex desert, pastoral stations and gold and nickel mines and was originally covered by 23 separate claims'.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 13 February 2007), 3; 'Title claim hits snag' <i>Geraldton Guardian</i> (Geraldton, 16 February 2007).
14 February 2007	NSW	<b>Land Rights Act changes praised</b>	Amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 'has introduced a greater degree of rigour and discipline into the Aboriginal Lands Council (ALC) system,'. NSWALC Chief Executive Geoff Scott said that 'the State land rights system has changed significantly as a result of the amendments'. The amendments have 'paved the way for a state council election in May' and 'there will now be nine councillors cut from 13'.	<i>Daily Advertiser</i> (Wagga Wagga, 14 February 2007), 7.
14 February 2007	NT	<b>Property rights stoush</b>	Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough said 'he was disappointed that Queensland Premier Peter Beattie would not meet him on Friday to discuss land tenure for Aboriginal communities'. Mr Brough said 'people in many remote communities were denied individual property rights and should have the same opportunities as other Australians to own their own homes and businesses'. He said	<i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 14 February 2007), 14; 'Brough pushes Beattie to advance Aboriginal Land Tenure' <i>Townsville</i>

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			that 'amendments to the Northern Territory's Land Rights Act could serve as a possible model'.	<i>Bulletin</i> (Townsville, 14 February 2007), 4; 'Beattie refuses talks on land tenure: Brough' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (National, 22 February 2007), 3.
15 February 2007	WA	<b>Council's new manager optimistic</b>	Russel Simpson has been appointed as the new regional manager of Yamatji Land and Sea Council after working with ATSIC and as the Geraldton regional manager for the Department of Indigenous Affairs.	<i>Mid West Times</i> (Geraldton, 15 February 2007), 13.
15 February 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Claims may be sped up</b>	The <i>Native Title Amendment Act 2006</i> has been approved by the House of Representatives and 'aims to speed up native title procedures and encourages claims to be settled out of court'. Attorney General Phillip Ruddock told parliament that 'the native title system is currently mired by bureaucracy and needs a considered and practical approach from the Government to resolve native title claims effectively expeditiously and fairly'. Under the new changes the 'National Native Title Tribunal will be given the greater power to compel parties to attend mediation conferences and produce documents and to inquire into central issues in native title claims'. Independent MP Peter Andren has said that the new tribunal powers were 'totally inappropriate for an administrative body and will in fact increase cost and delays because only the Federal Court has the power to enforce orders and make them effective'. Labour criticised the lack of consultation in the process.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 15 February 2007), 6; 'Faster title claims' <i>Northern Daily Leader</i> (Tamworth, 15 February 2007); 'Government push for 'faster' native title' <i>National Indigenous Times</i> (Malua Bay, 22 February 2007), 6.

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15 February 2007	NT	<b>Martin's 20 secret park deals under Native Title Act</b>	The Northern Territory Government has 'entered into 20 secret agreements under the Native Title Act about national parks in Central Australia'. The Government is 'refusing to disclose who the various native title owners are and what deals the Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) contain. There has been a 'long standing request by the NT Government for the scheduling of some or all of the parks in [Central Australia] under the Federal Aboriginal Land Rights Act, turning the parks into Aboriginal inalienable freehold' although this has not been complied with by the Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough.	<i>Alice Springs News</i> (Alice Springs, 15 February 2007), 1.
15 February 2007	NSW	<b>Historic Day for the Bundjalung</b>	The Bundjalung people have signed two land use agreements covering 245 hectares of Crown land and the Broken Head Caravan Park. Under the Byron Bay and Ti Tree Lake Indigenous Land Use Agreements '124 hectares will be added as new national parks and formal recognition will be given to the cultural significance and traditional ownership of these areas'. Premier Morris Iemma said 'the Bundjalung People have always been associated with these land and today they have been properly recognised through these agreements'. The area will be co managed with the local Aboriginal people with a Majority Aboriginal Committee.	<i>Byron Shire Echo</i> (Byron Bay, 13 February 2007), 1; 'Bundjalung land deal welcomed' <i>Byron Bay News</i> (Byron Bay, 15 February 2007), 3; 'Bundjalung people in Byron Bay land victory' <i>Koori Mail</i> (National, 14 February 2007), 29.
16 February 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Land owners 'sidelined'</b>	Warren Snowdon has said that the 'proposed changes to native title legislation will sideline the rights of traditional Aboriginal land owners and further complicate the administrative process'. In particular he noted that 'introducing fixed term periods of recognition is not in the interests of speedy or fair resolution of claims'	<i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 16 February 2007), 5.

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16 February 2007	WA	<b>Title claim hits snag</b>	The Wongatha native title claimants will 'request more time before Judge Kevin Lindren orders the registration of the decision he handed down two weeks ago dismissing their claim'. The Federal Court 'will be asked to grant an extension of the standard 21 day appeal period to 60 days and also an extension of the 14 day delay in notifying the tribunal's registrar of the judgment'. Goldfields Land and Sea Council Director Brian Wyatt said 'we believe the requested extensions are reasonable under the circumstances...consulting with Aboriginal people across 160 000 sq km of remote country is logistically difficult and takes time'.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 16 February 2007), 7.
17 February 2007	QLD	<b>Native title compo sought</b>	The Dingaal people are seeking compensation for the loss of native title rights over land in Cape York after the Queensland Government granted leases over Cape Flattery to the Ports Corporation of Queensland and the Cape Flattery Silica Mine. If the Federal Court decides in the groups favour then it will be the first successful claim of its kind in Australia.	<i>Ballarat Courier</i> (Ballarat, 17 February 2007), 20; 'Cape native title claim' <i>Cairns Post</i> (Cairns, 17 February 2007), 17; 'Clan seeks native title compo over peninsula mine deal' <i>Courier Mail</i> (Brisbane, 17 February 2007), 25; 'Native title compensation claim could be a landmark case' <i>Daily Advertiser</i> (Wagga Wagga, 17 February 2007), 20; 'Cape York Title claim' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 17 February 2007), 29.

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17 February 2007	SA	<b>Native land mining deal</b>	<p>A conjunctive Indigenous Land Use Agreement has been signed by the State Government, the South Australia Chamber of Mines and the Yandruwandha and Yawarrawarrka people. The agreement includes jobs and royalties from oil and gas exploration and production projects. The State Government said 'this is an excellent outcome that manifests trust in the processes that protect native title and enable upstream petroleum operations in SA'. The agreement follows on from a land rights deal signed in 2001 which had established a right to negotiate. Barry Goldstein, Director of Petroleum and Geothermal in the Primary Industries and Resources Department said that the 'deal would save companies time and hundreds and thousands of dollars in legal fees'. Parry Agius from the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement said that 'what you see here is a leadership group of the Aboriginal community in SA taking the initiative to settle their issues in something that is vital to the state's growth'. Similar negotiations are expected with the Dieri and the Wangkangurru-Yarluyandi native title groups.</p>	<p><i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 17 February 2007), 2; 'Mining accord on native title' <i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 17 February 2007), 81.</p>
18 February 2007	NSW	<b>Aboriginal land deal 'dead in the water'</b>	<p>The Macquarie Bank's Macquarie Indigenous Development Fund designed to 'create a series of funds to split the profits from development of Indigenous land with individual land councils' has 'failed to announce one project for the fund'. There are currently 120 Aboriginal land councils in NSW that 'control huge tracts of valuable property'. An 'insider' said that the project was 'dead on the water'. Metropolitan Land Council Chairman Rob Welsh said 'individual land councils were deeply insulted that the bank had announced the proposal without discussing it with them first'.</p>	<p><i>Sun Herald</i> (Sydney, 18 February 2007), 25.</p>
19 February 2007	SA	<b>Proposal is 'nail in the coffin of Murray'</b>	<p>Indigenous groups and environmental organisations are protesting against the proposed weir at Wellington. Ngarrindjeri Native Title Management Committee chair Matt Rigney read a statement saying: 'we do not support any proposal to build a weir on our traditional lands...the river, lakes and Coorong [are] a living breathing body and any proposal to slow down or stop the flow of blood to our body would be catastrophic'.</p>	<p><i>Adelaide Advertiser</i> (Adelaide, 19 February 2007), 7.</p>

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19 February 2007	NT	<b>Cultural centre talks hope</b>	The Development of a Larrakia Cultural Centre may begin depending on negotiations for a site. Larrakia Development Corporation Chief Executive Greg Constantine said that the 'Larrakia were looking for a site that better suited their needs [and] in conjunction with the Northern Land Council negotiations were taking place with Planning Minister Delia Lawrie'.	<i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 19 February 2007), 3.
20 February 2007	NSW	<b>Striking Accord: NSW Signs off on a landmark Aboriginal pack</b>	NSW Premier Morris Iemma has signed a land use agreement with the elders of the Bundjalung nation 'the culmination of a 14 year native title claim which the premier now hails as a model of its kind'. The first part of the Arakawl National Park was signed over in 2001 and has won a merit award from the World Parks Congress. The new agreements includes an 'extension of the park, an Aboriginal Area including sacred sites and freehold to a profitable caravan park, will provide further employment, training and conservation'.	<i>Bulletin with Newsweek</i> (National, 20 February 2007), 10.
20 February 2007	WA	<b>GLSC's new champion</b>	The Goldfields Land and Sea Council has elected Brian Champion Jr as its new Chairman after Dio Meredith was removed after failing to meet the requirement of having lived in the region for more than six months. Between 2002 - 2005 he was the chairman of the former ATSIC Mulgaa Mallee Regional Council and is the current manager of the local Emotional and Social Wellbeing centre.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie 20 February 2007); 'New Chair for land council' <i>Goldfields Express</i> (Kalgoorlie, 23 February 2007), 5.
20 February 2007	WA	<b>Meeting on native title claims</b>	Local residents interested in learning about the effect of native title claims in the Swan Valley are being encouraged to attend a meeting at the Carilley Estate Winery. Speakers include members of the National Native Title Tribunal.	<i>Midland Reporter</i> (Perth 20 February 2007), 19.
20 February 2007	SA	<b>Fishers meet on native title issues</b>	A 'native title update for commercial fishers and the aquaculture industry' was held in Port Lincoln. Native title matters are 'currently being negotiated between the Nauo and Barngarla people, the State Government and the commercial fishing and aquaculture industry'. This is a part of a 'move to create an Indigenous Land Use Agreement for Eyre Peninsula'.	<i>Port Lincoln Times</i> (Port Lincoln, SA 20 February 2007), 3; 'Indigenous Land Use Meeting' <i>Port Lincoln Times</i> (Port Lincoln 22 February

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				2007), 9.
21 February 2007	NATIONAL	<b>Land use deals have downside</b>	Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough has said that 'he wanted improvements in agreements between private sector interests and indigenous groups'. Mr Brough said that he was having discussions with the Minerals Council but noted that 'it is [also] the other side of the equation...where the money is going to, who is benefiting from it and why isn't it being put to better use in improving the lives of Aboriginal Australians'. His comments come after the five year study by Griffith University academic Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh.	<i>North West Star</i> (Mount Isa, 21 February 2007), 6.
21 February 2007	WA	<b>Rock art decision looms</b>	Federal Heritage Minister Malcolm Turnbull is 'set to decide the fate of the entire Burrup Peninsula'. Mineral Policy Institute director Robin Chapple said the 'Federal Government considered the rock art from a heritage standpoint but failed to recognise its indigenous significance'. Mr Chappel said: 'this as always a fundamental mistake because if they (the Federal and State Governments) had recognised that Indigenous people have rights too then it would never have got to this'. In a statement released by the Ngarluma Aboriginal Corporation Chairman Jill Churnside, she said that 'her people had not been consulted by Woodside bosses about their heritage and environmental concerns relating to Pluto'.	<i>Pilbara News</i> (Pilbara, 21 February 2007), 7.

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21 February 2007	QLD	<b>Aborigines in new Tooloom gold rush</b>	Malachite Resources NL has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Githabul People in order to access the Tooloom mine. The MOU includes provisions to preserve and protect Indigenous cultural heritage, minimise the impact of its operations on the land, seek to fill vacancies with members of the Githabul community where possible and provide training to enhance the skills of employees. If gold is found in the mine, a more comprehensive agreement will be negotiate to 'recognise cultural heritage native title rights and a basis of providing further economic benefits to the Githabuls'.	<i>Fassifern Guardian</i> (Boonah, 21 February 2007), 5.
23 February 2007	NSW	<b>Protecting Koori heritage</b>	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria is working with Pacific Hydro and the Gunditjmarra Native Title Group to protect Aboriginal heritage at the wind farm development in cape Bridgewater. A spokesperson from the Premier's department said that a cultural heritage management agreement has been agreed on.	<i>Portland Observer</i> (Portland, 23 February 2007), 3.
23 February 2007	NT	<b>Nuke dump fears</b>	Traditional owners of Muckaty will meet in Tennant Creek to 'decide whether or not they are in favour of allowing the Northern Land Council to nominate their land as a possible site for a nuclear waste repository'. Diane Stokes, a Yapayapa family group member 'believed that several traditional owners have been excluded from meetings to date' and that 'many of the traditional owners were against locating a nuclear facility on Muckaty'. Ms Stokes said 'we are here to care take the land for future generations so we have to make sensible and responsible decisions'. She said that 'at a meeting in Darwin late last year, NLC Chairman John Daly assured us that Muckaty would not be nominated as a possible site without our consent'. A petition will be 'delivered in the next sittings of the House of Representatives and the Senate' and state that 'should the NLC nominate Muckaty as a site for the waste facility it would be without the consent of traditional owners'.	<i>Tennant and District Times</i> (Tennant Creek, 23 February 2007), 1; 'N-waste dump: owners decide' <i>Northern Territory News</i> (Darwin, 23 February 2007), 2.

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23 February 2007	NSW	<b>Changes to Land Council boundaries</b>	The electoral boundaries of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council has been redrawn in the 'lead up' to the May elections. Previously, 'NSW was divided into 13 electoral regions, but the passing of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (ALRA) Amendment Bill through NSW Parliament has seen this reduced to nine'. Peter Smith of the Tumut Local Aboriginal Land Council said the 're-division is intended to simplify the councils running and coincides with several changes to its administration'. However the re-division also creates problems with voter enrolments.	<i>Tumut and Adelong Times</i> (Tumut, 23 February 2007), 4.
24 February 2007	WA	<b>Mines Department to be focus of review</b>	The Mines Department will be under review which Resources Minister Francis Logan said will be 'looking at the operations and determining if there's a smarter way to do it'. Mr Logan said that there are 'complaints about the delay in the processing of mining applications' which was 'caused by Native title agreements, environmental approvals and the backlog at DoIR'.	<i>Kalgoorlie Miner</i> (Kalgoorlie, 24 February 2007), 5.
26 February 2007	NT	<b>Legal action over mine</b>	The Northern Land Council (NLC) has 'mounted a legal challenge against the Northern Territory Government 'on behalf of traditional Aboriginal landowners'. It 'claims the Government should not have approved an application by Xstrata to divert the McArthur River' and is taking legal action against Senator Campbell who 'signed off on the project'.	<i>North West Star</i> (Mount Isa, 26 February 2007), 7.
26 February 2007	NSW	<b>Claim of bias on Tweed project</b>	The head of the Tweed Byron Aboriginal Land Council, Russell Logan, has 'accused the State Government of giving favourable consideration to major developers he claims are donors to the Labor Party'. In a letter to the Premier Morris Iemma, Lands Minister Tony Kelly and Tweed MP Neville Newell, he points out that a number of groups are 'planning a submission to the Independent Commission Against Corruption about the Lot 490 tendering process'. Mr Logan said it 'appeared consultation with the Aboriginal Community would occur only after the successful tenderer has been decided'.	<i>Northern Star</i> (Lismore, 26 February 2007), 9.

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27 February 2007	NSW	<b>Moment of history, but not for Premier</b>	The Githabul people of northern NSW get 'joint management control of World Heritage Listed national parks after securing the biggest native title deal struck on Australia's eastern seaboard'. The claim covers parts of the Githabul nation and includes more than 6000 sq kilometres of land. The Githabul nation straddles the boarder with Queensland but the 'Queensland Government has refused to grant native title to land on the northern side including Mount Lindsay which makes up 15 per cent of the area claimed'. Spokesman Trevor Close said that 'of 300 known Githabul descendents about 200 lived on the Queensland side'.	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , (Sydney, 27 February 2007), 7; 'Githabul people to receive heartland without heart' <i>Australian</i> (National, 28 February 2007), 3; 'Githabul People to benefit from indigenous land use agreement' <i>Media Release, National Native Title Tribunal</i> , (National 28 February 2007).
28 February 2007	QLD	<b>Traditional fishing used to 'rape river'</b>	Fish caught in the Fitzroy River has been sold illegally in Rockhampton by 'people abusing laws for traditional land owners'. The Darumbal people had their fishing rights recognised since the Yasso court ruling in March 2006 which 'which set the precedent for Indigenous people to catch fish using traditional methods'. Traditional Owner Lester Adams said that 'what is happening is disrespectful' and said that 'maybe there needs to be amendments to Native Title Law so only Darumbal people can fish this way'.	<i>Morning Bulletin</i> (Rockhampton, 28 February 2007), 6.
28 February 2007	WA	<b>Newman High gets boost from three way partnership</b>	Newman Senior High has entered a new three year partnership with the Department of Education and Training and BHP Billiton and mining equipment provider Westrac. The partnership is aimed at supporting literacy and numeracy among indigenous Martu children. Newman Senior High Principal Michael Morgan said that 'the program is focused on providing enriched relevant learning that will encourage the Martu students to attend school and actively participate in learning'.	<i>North West Telegraph</i> (South Hedland, 28 February 2007), 3.

