

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

THE MINING INDUSTRY AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



ARGYLE DIAMOND MINE

The Argyle Diamond Mine is a member of the Rio Tinto group of companies. Argyle Diamonds is located on the traditional land of the Mirriuwung and Gija people. Argyle recognises local Aboriginal peoples' cultural and historical ties to the land and this translates to an agreement to work with them to manage land in a responsible manner.

ARGYLE AIMS TO CONDUCT BUSINESS:

- in an environment of mutual respect
- through pro-active engagement with Aboriginal communities
- working in partnership with Traditional Owners to achieve long lasting and sustainable benefits
- by respecting Aboriginal traditional associations with the land and waters inside and outside Argyle's tenements and
- by learning about and honouring the social and cultural values of the surrounding Aboriginal communities.

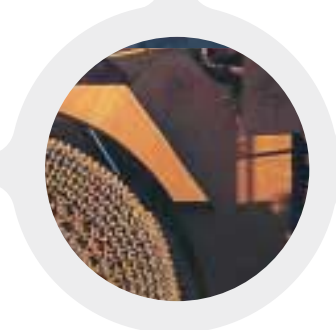
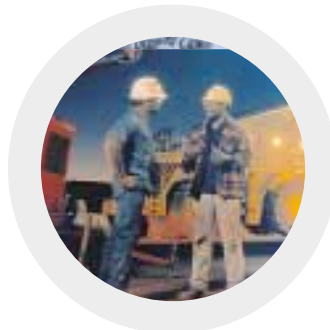
AGREEMENT BETWEEN ARGYLE, TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND LOCAL ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

In 2001, Argyle committed to renew its relationship with local Aboriginal communities and commenced a comprehensive process of consultation with Traditional Owners, leading to a new agreement. In September, 2004, after three years in the making, Mirriuwung, Gidga, Malignin and Woolah Traditional Owners, Argyle and the Kimberley Land

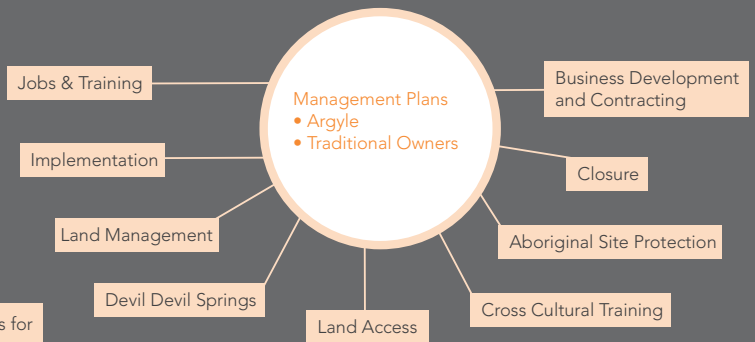
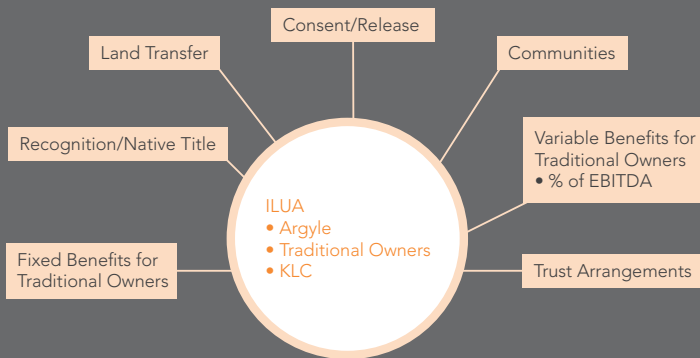
Council signed the Argyle Participation Agreement (APA). The Agreement was registered as an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) under the *Native Title Act in April 2005*.

The APA represents a reconciled relationship between the parties, and is a comprehensive and legally constituted form agreement. It is based on a shared vision for regional development, including Traditional Owner ceremonial responsibilities associated with the mine lease area and their approval for the mine to proceed underground. Benefits to Traditional Owners, to be governed through community controlled trust structures, provide for present day and post-mine programs in, amongst other things, health, education and culture. The APAs management plans cover:

- Aboriginal site protection and a heritage clearance methodology
- Employment and training programs for greater direct Aboriginal participation in the mine
- Business development opportunities associated with the mine



ARGYLE PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT



- Cross cultural training for all mine employees and contractors
- Traditional Owner access to non operational areas of the mine lease
- Annual Traditional Owner land management inspection of country and water
- Traditional Owner participation in planning eventual closure and decommissioning options
- Implementation arrangements, and
- A specific management plan for Devil Devil Springs, a heritage site of high significance that has been affected by mine activities.

Significantly, the APA benefits extend beyond local Traditional Owners into the broader East Kimberley, a critical component of Argyle’s localisation program and its contribution to sustainable regional development. The diagram below depicts the elements of the APA that fall into the ILUA and those which fall into a suite of legally binding, but capable of amendment, management plans.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

As part of the APA, Argyle has a strong commitment to Indigenous employment and developed tailored selection methodologies that resulted in an increase from 4.6% Indigenous employment in 2000 to 26% in April 2008 (Figure 1).

Furthermore, Argyle has set a target of 40% Aboriginal employment by 2010, relative to a 5% industry wide rate employment for Aboriginal people.

The key elements of Argyle’s Aboriginal employment strategy are:

- work readiness programs, inclusive of: relationship development, individual mentoring, school-based enrichment programs and rigorous feedback to unsuccessful applicants;
- recruitment systems involving: face to face application processes, four day assessment workshops, drug and alcohol mentoring and individual case management;
- retention systems, involving: individual training plans, assignment of workplace mentors, and life skills and family support.

CONCLUSION

Any replication of the approach taken by Argyle will depend upon context. There has perhaps been a stronger imperative – as well as a greater opportunity – for Argyle to re-focus its approach to community relations than has been the case for some other mining operations. Nonetheless, the case study is a good example of what is possible and helps to illustrate the new direction now being taken by leading mining companies.

CONTACT DETAILS

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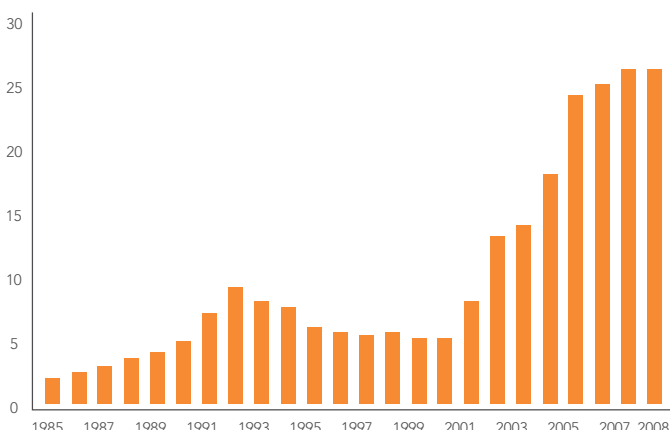


Figure 1: Aboriginal % of Argyle Workforce