

Months in Review

September - October

Compiled by Kristyn Glanville

7.9.11 – It was Indigenous Literacy Day, seeking to redress the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous literacy rates.

21.9.11 – The Wajarri Yamatji Native Title holders of land at Weld Range in Western Australia have successfully challenged the granting of mining licences on their traditional laws in the Native Title Tribunal.

22.9.11 – Aboriginal Actor David Gulpilil plead guilty to charges relating to an assault on his wife. He received a 12 month sentence, suspended after 5 months in jail.

22.9.11 – Groups of Traditional owners in North Queensland have agreed to suspend indefinitely the hunting of dugong and turtles. Whilst empowered to hunt under the *Native Title Act*, they have agreed to stop hunting, following floods damaging the numbers and food supply of the animals.

28.9.11 - Andrew Bolt's article claiming that Indigenous Australians with white skin claim Aboriginality in order to make political and personal gains is found to have breached the *Racial Discrimination Act* in Federal Court. The Federal Court has since ordered the *Herald Sun* publish a corrective notice alongside Bolt's regular column.

28.9.11 - WA Auditor General Colin Murphy reported to Parliament regarding the poor compliance by mining companies with conditions attached to their licences. He accused the Department of Indigenous Affairs of failing to monitor and ensure protection of Aboriginal heritage sites, stating that some may have been lost or damaged as a result.

28.9.11 – Carol Martin, the first Aboriginal woman elected to Australian Parliament, has announced she will be leaving Western Australia Parliament. Her

announcement comes amid racial vilification of traditional land owners at the site of the proposed LNG hub at James Point Price.

30.8.11 – A marine park has been proposed by the NT Government at Eighty Mile Beach, located between Port Hedland and Broome. The proposed park would cover 209,000 hectares. The Management plan would include provision for the 'maintenance of Aboriginal culture and heritage'.

5.10.11 - A prisoner transport guard pleaded guilty to charges relating to the death of Aboriginal elder, Mr Ward. The defendant received a fine of \$11,000. This comes amid criticism of the fine of \$9,000 by the co-accused in September.

7.10.11 – The treatment of female Aboriginal prisoners in Bandyup Women's Prison in Western Australia was criticised by the Inspector of Custodial Services, Neil Morgan. The report highlighted that the government could potentially be challenged under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (WA). The report found that lack of privacy, lack of services and mental illness were all serious issues being under-addressed at present.

17.10.11 - Julia Gillard states that the government will 'consider[r] respectfully' the Torres Strait's request for self-government, by becoming a territory.

20.10.11 – The WA government has announced a 'Student Attendance and Mobility Tracking system' in order to better monitor the school attendance of students reported as 'missing' from School. The scheme will mostly track Indigenous students, seeking to identify whether those students reported as missing have entered the school system in Northern Territory and South Australia