

Acknowledgements

The research reported in this monograph was conducted with financial support from the Australian Research Council (ARC Linkage Project No. LP0211898) and from RioTinto and the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) as our Industry Partners. The project's original title was 'Indigenous community organisations and miners: Partnering sustainable regional development?' and it is the question mark at the title's end that animated this project from the outset.

The project was CAEPR's first ARC Linkage Project and was undertaken by a small team of researchers between 2002 and 2007. It began in mid 2002 when David Martin, a Research Fellow at CAEPR, was recruited as part time Senior Research Associate and we recruited Sarah Holcombe an anthropologist from the Northern Land Council as Research Associate. In late 2002 we were joined by two doctoral students: Katherine Trebeck, a graduate from the University of Melbourne, and Benedict Scambary, senior anthropologist also from the Northern Land Council. These four people formed the core of the project team that undertook much of the research reported here. John Taylor was a Associate Investigator and Robert Levitus was also a part-time Research Associate for a short time after completing his PhD 'Sacredness and Consultation: An Interpretation of the Coronation Hill Dispute' at CAEPR in 2003. We thank this team for the terrific collegiality we all enjoyed while the project was under way especially evident at very crisp workshops we held with Rio Tinto and during the process of completing their chapters for this monograph.

Completing this monograph has taken a little longer than initially envisaged in part because elements of the project were completed at different times since late 2005 when Katherine Trebeck submitted her PhD thesis; and partly because members of the team dispersed to a diversity of jobs and locations. To some extent this has not been a significant issue because a number of other publications emanating from the research have been in the public domain for some time (see Key Publications at monograph end). Interestingly, the completion of this monograph is occurring after the global financial crisis of late 2008 and after the mining boom that was at its peak during the years of this project. We do not believe that the economic downturn has significantly affected any of the research findings reported here except perhaps to counsel caution to those who might see Indigenous engagement in mining as the solution to underdevelopment in remote communities.

Our research project focused on three sites and the team owes a considerable debt of gratitude to the Aboriginal people who gave so generously of their time and opinions, whether as mining company employees, agreement beneficiaries, or members of the communities in the mine hinterlands. Bruce Harvey from Rio

Tinto and John Nieuwenhuysen from CEDA who were our Partner Investigators brought considerable experience and insight to the project provided during annual workshops that were generously sponsored by Rio Tinto and through supervision and advice to doctoral students. We would like to thank them both for their ongoing encouragement and support of the project and to thank John for agreeing to write the foreword to this monograph. Personnel associated with the mining companies at each of the project locations—the then Century Zinc Limited at the Century Mine site, Hamersley Iron in the Pilbara, Energy Resources Australia at the Ranger Uranium Mine, and Rio Tinto at the Jabiluka prospect—provided invaluable information and assistance. Special mention should be made of the help given by staff of Hamersley’s Aboriginal Training and Liaison Unit in Dampier.

Special thanks to Hilary Bek who provided editorial assistance and managed the monograph production process; to two external referees who provided very useful feedback; to Gillian Cosgrove for maps and proofreading; to Hannah Bulloch and Kirrily Jordan for comments; to Katherine May for proofreading; and to the team at ANU E Press who expertly produced the monograph with their characteristic efficiency.

Jon Altman
David Martin
CAEPR
June 2009