

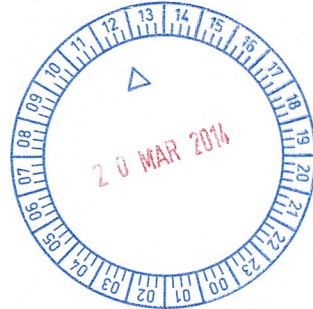


GOLDFIELDS LAND AND SEA COUNCIL

Aboriginal Corporation (Representative Body)

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18 March 2014

Lauren Mesiti
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Public Committee
Legislative Council
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Ms Mesiti

INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS

I refer to your letter to Ms Diane Logan providing a copy of the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry into Recreational Hunting Systems, and on behalf of the Goldfields Land and Sea Council (GLSC) welcome the opportunity to provide comments.

The proposal that recreational hunting be used as a means of controlling pest animals on public lands is problematic for native title parties as it will impact on their native title rights and interests, as public or Crown land is where native title predominantly exists. In particular the right to practice traditional law and custom, and the right to exclude others from land where exclusive possession native title exists, will be affected by the proposal.

When a native title claim is lodged with the Federal Court and registered by the National Native Title Tribunal, the native title claimants are afforded certain rights. These range from the right to be consulted, to the right to negotiate, depending on the act being undertaken. As a result of this, any proposal for recreational hunting will require some form of interaction between native title rights and that any right to be proposed to be provided to a recreational hunter.

As native title parties will have the right to practice traditional law and custom, including the right to hunt and camp, on land where native title exists there will be significant safety issues for native title parties if recreational hunting were to occur. Any proposal for recreational hunting will necessitate strict notification of hunting and control of hunters to prevent injury to native title holders, and damage to areas that may contain sites of cultural significance, through unfettered access to these areas.

Furthermore, in other jurisdictions where recreational hunting exists, it has proven to have limited efficacy as a method of feral animal control for a variety of reasons:

- ground shooting is not an effective means of feral animal control;
- unless hunters are able to kill more feral animals that can be replaced each year, the population is not reduced; and
- research in NSW indicates that recreational hunters as a group are not highly skilled, creating animal welfare issues.

Should you have any queries regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me at hans.bokelund@glc.com.au or on 08 9091 1661.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H Bokelund', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hans Bokelund
Chief Executive Officer