



Eastern Guruma Pty Ltd

**Joint press release by NRW and Eastern Guruma Pty Ltd**

**NRW and Traditional Owners Joint Venture Wins Rio Tinto's Western Turner Syncline Project in the Pilbara**

**Perth: 18 December 2009**

**The NRW and Eastern Guruma Joint Venture has today been awarded Rio Tinto's \$200 million Western Turner Syncline (WTS) Project for the design, development and operation of an iron ore mine and road haulage services.**

This Contract represents NRW's largest mining operation in Western Australia and will be undertaken as a joint venture with the traditional landowners of the lease, the Eastern Guruma people.

The Western Turner Syncline Section 10 deposit is located in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, approximately 25 kilometres northwest of Tom Price, an existing Rio Tinto mining operation. The development of the Section 10 deposit will provide additional feed for the Tom Price processing plant.

"This significant mining contract is the culmination of months of hard work and dedication. It symbolises a step in the right direction towards our overall strategic plan of strengthening our mining portfolio," said Willie Rooney, Managing Director of NRW's Civil & Mining Division. The upcoming works will also complement NRW's current mining projects at Tom Price, Hope Downs, OM Holding's Bootu Creek manganese mine, and FMG's Christmas Creek iron ore mine in the Pilbara, Western Australia.

The newly awarded Project involves the engineering design and development of site infrastructure, mining of the Section 10 iron ore deposit, ore haulage and lay down at Tom Price via a purpose-built 15.5 kilometre-long road. The road construction, establishment and pre-strip is expected to take four months, with ore haulage and mining to be undertaken over an expected three and a half years.

An important factor in NRW's success in the competitive tendering environment, according to Greg Lilleyman, Rio Tinto's Managing Director, Pilbara Mine Operations, was its Indigenous Employment and Training Program, coupled with the clearly accountable pledge of increasing Indigenous opportunities and development through the JV with Eastern Guruma.

"At the end of the first year of the contract we anticipate there being 25 percent Indigenous involvement, rising over the course of the Contract with the goal of reaching 50 percent by the completion of the Contract," said Mark Shiosaki, Indigenous Employment and Development Manager for NRW. "This strong target affirms NRW's and Rio Tinto's underlying commitment to the Traditional Landowners of this lease — the Eastern Guruma people — and the Indigenous people of Western Australia."

Eastern Guruma Director, Sue Boyd, welcomed the decision to award to the Joint Venture stating, "It is encouraging and rewarding to see companies embracing the need to partner with traditional landowners in the development of our country. Our relationship with NRW is built on trust and our shared vision for developing the skills and increasing the contract opportunities for Traditional Landowners to develop long term sustainable business entities."

The NRW-Eastern Guruma Joint Venture is not the first of its kind undertaken by NRW. Another Rio Tinto Project, the construction of two 25-metre diameter tunnels and replacement river embankment along the Pannawonica rail line, also demonstrated NRW's commitment to partnering with Indigenous Australian groups. NRW's Joint Venture with NYFL — a Roebourne-based Indigenous company representing the traditional owners from Pannawonica to Roebourne — met the extremely critical time period to deliver the project and provided additional support for the NRW-Eastern Guruma Joint Venture.

Work on the Western Turner Syncline project will commence in January 2010.

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