



## **Closure of Martu Ngurra** **to all non-essential or approved people**

The Board of Directors of the Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation (WDLAC) is taking action to help protect Martu and other people living in communities on Martu Ngurra and in Martu-majority communities across the Pilbara.

The WA Government has declared a State of Emergency and a public health emergency as a result of the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service (PAMS) has advised that Martu people, and especially the treasured Elders of the Martu community, must take urgent action to protect themselves from this health emergency. This includes 'social isolation'. WDLAC is working with State and Local Government agencies, and other Martu organisations, to assist Martu people to stay healthy.

WDLAC is exercising the native title rights it holds on behalf of Martu people.

Martu native title rights are 'exclusive possession' rights, a legal right to possess, occupy, use and enjoy the land and waters of the determination area. Martu rights are specifically set out in law, and include the right to:

- live on Martu traditional lands
- make decisions about the use and enjoyment of their traditional lands
- control other people's access to and activities on traditional lands and waters

Martu are the traditional owners of their lands and hold these rights as against all other people.

WDLAC is exercising those rights and has determined that, as of 17 March 2020:

1. only Martu traditional owners and their families, employees of approved Martu companies and officers of a Government agency exercising lawful rights of access or service, are permitted to travel anywhere on Martu lands, whether on a road or track or across country
2. no other person may travel to any place on Martu country, without the written permission of WDLAC
3. no other person may travel to any on-country communities, without the written permission of WDLAC and the community offices in Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji



4. all permits shall require the person, Government agency or company, to comply with the specific provisions required by the permit, including but not only, the setting out of the details of the personnel travelling on country, where the people propose to travel from/to, how long the people will be on country and the purpose for the travel/visit
5. the Canning Stock Route, the Talawana Track east of the Balfour Downs station entry, Telfer Road east of the Woodie Woodie Road, and Kiwirrkurra Road east of Kunawarritji (Well 33), are closed to all travellers, other than those holding a permit issued by WDLAC after 17 March 2020, or operating within the terms of a pre-existing agreement with WDLAC
6. the Nyungumarta Highway south of the Rio 'Winu' project is closed to all travellers, other than those holding a permit issued by WDLAC after 17 March 2020, or operating within the terms of a pre-existing agreement with WDLAC

Any person requiring a permit, or asserting that they do not require a permit because of an existing permit or lawful reason or other right of access, should write to WDLAC setting out the basis for their request or asserted right (by letter to the attention of the CEO, WDLAC Level 3, 130 Royal St, East Perth WA 6004 or by email to: [admin@wdlac.com.au](mailto:admin@wdlac.com.au))

This order is made by the Board of Directors of the Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation on 17 March 2020 and remains in place until revoked by the Corporation or by a law of the State or Commonwealth.

**A breach of this order is trespass and will be prosecuted.**

Melvin Farmer  
Chairperson

Tony McRae  
Chief Executive Officer

17 March 2020