



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 11 November 2008

GIOA commits \$60,000 to sustainable Indigenous skills study

The Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance (GIOA) has today committed \$60,000 to undertake a study designed to create sustainable employment outcomes for Indigenous people in the Mid West and Murchison region.

Once completed, the study will provide important data on numbers of Indigenous people in the various sub-regions of the Mid West-Murchison interested in working in the resources industry, their preferred jobs, level of skill and job preparedness.

This information will be used to develop appropriate training and support programs to optimise the employment of local Indigenous people in the Mid West mining industry.

The study has been initiated by the Mid West Mining and Aboriginal Economic Development Partnership (MWMAEDP), of which the GIOA is a member. The group includes Indigenous organisations, government agencies and mining companies within the Mid West/Murchison region.

According to GIOA CEO Rob Jefferies, the study is one of the first steps in ensuring the iron ore industry is able to provide sustainable employment opportunities to Indigenous people.

"Alliance member companies have a genuine interest in offering employment to people in the region they're working in," Mr Jefferies said.

"Unemployment within the Indigenous community is unacceptably high, with almost 50% of the Mid West Region's 3077 registered unemployed being Aboriginal people, despite the fact that less than 10% of the population of the Mid West are Indigenous. The development of significant new mining projects in the region creates an opportunity for good employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in the Mid West," he said.

"The purpose of this study is to collect key data which will assist in planning and progressing the delivery of jobs for these people."

Mr Jefferies said the study also has the potential to help the skills shortage in the mining industry. "We are planning for an industry with a life in excess of 40 years in the Mid West region and this is just one strategy being implemented to deliver sustainable outcomes for both the community and industry in this region", he added.

“The increasing tightness in the labour market has resulted in the emergence and increased severity of shortages in a number of occupations. For a viable economy, the region must have enough appropriately skilled workers capable of meeting demand.”

**Source: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations*

Media contacts:

Rob Jefferies
GIOA Chief Executive Officer
Tel: 08 9964 7923
Mob: 0407 447 923

Bill MacKenzie
GIOA Chairman & Asia Iron CEO
Tel: 08 9216 2600

Warrick Hazeldine
Purple Communications
Tel: 08 9485 1254
Mob: 0417 944 616

About the Alliance:

The Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance (Alliance) has a membership of eight iron ore mining companies which are at various stages of exploration and development of mines in the Mid West. These companies are:

- Mount Gibson Iron Limited
- Midwest Corporation Limited
- Crosslands Resources Ltd
- Gindalbie Metals Ltd
- Golden West Resources Limited
- Royal Resources Limited
- Asia Iron Limited
- Atlas Iron Limited

The member companies that make up the Alliance are committed to developing and operating in a sustainable manner in their endeavour to establish a world class iron ore industry in the Mid West/Murchison Region of Western Australia.

Further details of the companies and their projects is available on the Alliance’s website at www.gioa.com.au.