



MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

MEDIA STATEMENT

Attention: News Editor/Chief of Staff

27/6/06

Training for Indigenous land managers gets a boost.

Agriculture and Food Minister Kim Chance today announced a landmark partnership agreement that would see \$500,000 injected into training Indigenous land managers in Western Australia over the next two years.

"It is a significant initiative aimed at fostering greater sustainability of Indigenous-run stations, farms and other agricultural enterprises in WA," Mr Chance said.

The FarmBiz and Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) initiative builds further on the Kimberley and Pilbara Indigenous Management Scheme and the new opportunities for tropical and pastoral agriculture program.

Skilling is one of the major strategic aims of the agricultural and pastoral projects which the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia manages to engage greater Indigenous participation in WA's primary industries.

Both AAA FarmBis and the ILC have agreed to contribute \$250,000 each to fund training that will help Indigenous land and property managers improve their business management and strategic planning skills.

"The FarmBis program will employ a full-time networker and experienced staff who will be able to deliver training programs appropriate for Indigenous people in WA," Mr Chance said.

AAA FarmBis is a joint Australian and WA Government program which provides grants to help primary producers and land managers improve their business management and technical production skills. Since 1997, the program has provided nearly 40,200 training grants to more than 20,000 participants in WA.

The ILC is a Commonwealth statutory authority that assists Indigenous Australians acquire land and manage Indigenous-held land in a sustainable way to provide cultural, social, economic or environmental benefits for themselves and future generations.

Perth-based ILC chairperson Shirley McPherson said the partnership with FarmBis in WA followed the recent major boost in Federal Government funding to support Indigenous leadership development and improve corporate governance support for Indigenous bodies.

“Previous training courses run with the support of FarmBis such as ‘Indigenous grazing for profit’ in Kununurra have been highly successful but more was needed,” Ms McPherson said.

“The ILC believes there is an urgent need to strengthen the capacity of Indigenous people and organisations to manage their own affairs and plan for the future, especially in relation to Indigenous-owned land.”

Mr Chance said that the FarmBis program in WA was a positive step forward to creating better training opportunities for Indigenous land managers.

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