



**Australian Government**  

---

**Indigenous Land Corporation**

**NEWS EDITORS PLEASE NOTE: EMBARGOED TO 1 p.m., FRIDAY 15 OCTOBER 2010**

## **Tourism and jobs the winners as Indigenous Land Corporation buys Ayers Rock Resort**

National and international tourist icon Ayers Rock Resort at Yulara will be purchased by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) for \$300 million.

The ILC has exchanged contracts to acquire the entire Resort, including all hotels and accommodation, associated infrastructure, the airport and workers village, in an arrangement with Wana Ungkuntja (WU), which represents Indigenous business interests in the nearby communities of Mutijulu, Imanpa and Docker River.

ILC Chairperson Shirley McPherson said the purchase of the Resort from the GPT Group was a positive opportunity for Australian tourism and Indigenous economic development.

“The ILC Board is delighted that WU, which operates the Anangu Tours business, will acquire an interest in the Resort and will be an integral partner in its running and development,” Ms McPherson said.

“The Resort represents a unique and probably the biggest opportunity to advance the training and employment of Indigenous people in the Australian tourism and hospitality industries.

“There is a great opportunity to increase the current limited Indigenous employment at the Resort, which has a workforce of 670 people.

“By 2015, 200 Indigenous people will be employed at the Resort and this will climb to 340, more than 50% of total employees, by the end of 2018,” she said.

The ILC will establish a National Indigenous Tourism Training Academy at Yulara, with 200 people in training each year from 2013.

Over the next five years 500 Indigenous trainees are expected to graduate from the Training Academy, with graduates gaining employment at the Resort and in other jobs in the tourism and hospitality industries across Australia.

One of the first priorities will be to re-establish training facilities and accommodation and, in this regard, there will be a close working relationship with the Sydney-based National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), with the object of establishing a campus of the NCIE at the Resort.

The acquisition will lead to the return of 104,000ha of culturally significant freehold land to Traditional Owners, and the arrangement with WU will see Anangu playing a continuing role in resort operation and management.

“Traditional Owners already play a key role in the management of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and this has helped to protect and enhance the very things that visitors come to see,” Ms McPherson said.

“The acquisition of the Resort is a turning point for Indigenous economic development in Central Australia where tourism and hospitality are key areas for Indigenous employment growth. It will also be a catalyst for a surge in Indigenous tourism across Australia”.

“The provision of a memorable cultural and environmental tourism experience at Uluru and Kata-Tjuta will continue to be the primary focus, but the Resort will increasingly provide badly-needed Indigenous jobs and industry-accredited training”, she said.

Wana Ungkuntja Chairperson Mrs Margaret Smith said the ILC acquisition of the Resort would not only provide training opportunities and employment for Indigenous people – it would also pave the way for a more complete cultural experience for International and Australian visitors.

“Anangu have been watching the Resort for 30 years. When the Resort was built we thought that there would be lots of training and jobs for us,” Mrs Smith said.

“We want our young ones to have good jobs on their own country. We want visitors to meet Anangu and learn about Tjukupa – traditional Anangu law and culture.

“We think that the ILC will be a good partner to work with because we want the same things – to share our culture with visitors in the proper way, and proper training that leads to good jobs.

“The Resort purchase is also important to Nyangatjatjara College, an Indigenous secondary college based at Yulara. Students will be able to do real training and get real jobs.

“The National Indigenous Tourism Training Academy will give our young ones the chance to get real training and jobs and we look forward to strong partnerships between the Resort and other Indigenous groups in Central Australia,” she said.

All external borrowings to support the acquisition are forecast to be paid off after seven years of operation and all internal funding by the end of year 10.

As part of the acquisition, the ILC will take over GPT’s *Voyages* platform which administers the Resort’s tourist booking and management functions.

The ILC wishes to acknowledge GPT’s co-operation during its extensive due diligence process.

**For further information contact:**

Eric Roberts  
Manager Public Affairs  
Indigenous Land Corporation  
Mobile: 0417 818482