

NEWS RELEASE

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BHP BILLITON HOSTS INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE AWARDS

Tonight at its global headquarters in Melbourne, BHP Billiton hosted Reconciliation Australia's 2014 Indigenous Governance Awards, celebrating excellence in governance and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of these prestigious Awards.

A gala dinner was attended by finalists from communities across Australia, and included the Hon. Tony Abbott MP, Prime Minister of Australia, and Indigenous leaders Mick Dodson and Leah Armstrong. Professor Dodson is the Chair of the Indigenous Governance Awards and Ms Armstrong is the Chief Executive Officer of Reconciliation Australia.

BHP Billiton President - Corporate Affairs, Tony Cudmore, congratulated the 2014 winners:

- The Waltja Tjutanku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation (NT) from Alice Springs, for Best-Run Aboriginal Corporation; and
- Swan Hill's The Marruk Project (VIC) winning Best Project.

"BHP Billiton has been proud to support the Indigenous Governance Awards since they began in 2005 and I congratulate this year's winners," Mr Cudmore said.

"Our company has operations in Australia and around the world. Many of these are located on or near traditional Indigenous lands, which makes our relationship with those communities especially important.

"We aim to make a positive contribution through programs to improve health, education, environment and cultural outcomes wherever we operate. But fostering good governance is arguably the most effective way we can deliver support – because of the strong link between good governance and economic empowerment.

"Informed, transparent decision-making builds confidence in organisations and their leadership. In turn, this creates communities that are healthier, more prosperous and sustainable.

"It is this goal of 'Sustainability' that resonates so strongly with us. It is the first value of our Company Charter and it underpins everything we do."

Mr Cudmore said the Awards also identify and celebrate achievements in good governance.

“Importantly, they also recognise that governance is challenging. But through sharing our experiences, we can continue to learn from each other and multiply the success that is so evident through these Awards,” he said.

The Waltja Tjutangku Palyapayi Aboriginal Corporation is an initiative of the Central Australian communities’ strong female leaders, addressing needs such as disability support care and emergency relief. It is based in Alice Springs.

The Marruk Project in Swan Hill, Victoria, uses performing arts to strengthen culture and create opportunities for elders, young people, artists and cultural leaders to get to know each other by sharing their histories.

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