



# Media Release

## Senator the Hon Amanda Vanstone

Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs  
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs

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### **PM Award for Indigenous project in the Kimberley**

A project that assists 10 Indigenous-owned cattle stations in the Kimberley has received a 2005 Prime Minister's Award for Excellence at a ceremony in Canberra last night.

An initiative of the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and the Department of Agriculture Western Australia, the project was recognised for its ability to improve management practices and the profitability of properties.

Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs Amanda Vanstone congratulated the ILC and Department of Agriculture Western Australia for their involvement in a project that has led to a better quality of life for Indigenous communities in Western Australia's Kimberley region.

"The ILC is displaying leadership in initiating whole-of-government approaches to developing economic opportunities in Indigenous communities," Minister Vanstone said.

"I also congratulate the Indigenous landholders and commend their commitment to this project."

The project, which has been in place for two-and-a-half years, has a strong emphasis on developing the management and technical skills of Indigenous enterprise directors, managers and workers. It funds two Indigenous Pastoral Management Trainees and the 10 stations employ 35 full-time Indigenous people, which increases to 65 during cattle musters.

Recently extended for a further five years, key objectives of the project include:

- Increasing the number and quality of cattle turned off for sale;
- Improving animal husbandry practices and herd productivity;
- Enhancing governance and business management practices on each property; and
- Improving profitability and sustainability.

The ILC and Department of Agriculture Western Australia have, to date, provided \$250,000 each annually and will each provide up to \$500,000 per annum over the period 2005 – 2010.

ILC Chairperson, Ms Shirley McPherson said she was delighted to see a turnaround in the level of professionalism in the management of these Indigenous-owned pastoral stations.

"The efforts of the landholders in recognising the potential of these properties and the skills needed to operate them are a credit to all involved," Ms McPherson said.

"It should encourage other Indigenous pastoral properties in the region to join this innovative and successful program. This is one of a number of joint programs the ILC has initiated with State and Territory Governments for the benefit of Indigenous people."

This project has been recognised previously, when in November 2004 it won the Western Australian Premier's Overall Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management, while the Department of Agriculture Western Australia was congratulated by the United Nations in March 2004 for its work in relation to Indigenous people.

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