

# Media Release



## Unique Land Access Agreement

**PERTH, 23 December 2011:** Fortescue Metals Group (Fortescue) is proud to announce the signing of a unique land access agreement with the Njamal People for the North Star project.

The agreement signifies a new phase of collaboration between Aboriginal groups and mining companies in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, responding to Aboriginal people's desire for self-determination, the opportunity to build their own businesses and develop training and jobs.

Under the production sharing agreement, a joint venture will be created between the Njamal Native Title holders and Fortescue to run a mining operation on an ore body adjacent to the main North Star mine.

In exchange for certainty of tenure for the land covered by Fortescue's North Star and Glacier Valley (subject to a JV with a third party) magnetite projects, the Njamal People will become co-owners and joint operators of a separate magnetite mine.

"We look forward to developing more of this unique style of agreement alongside our commitments to Aboriginal training and employment within our own projects," Chairman Andrew Forrest said.

"At the signing on Tuesday there was a high level of optimism between the Njamal elders and our team. There is a great deal of respect between the two groups and I was proud and excited to be part of signing this groundbreaking agreement."

The agreement, originally proposed by the Njamal People, comes at the end of almost four years of negotiation.

"Self-determination, business opportunities, training and employment are the keys to ending the Indigenous disparity and that's what will flow from this unique agreement," Fortescue Chief Executive Office Nev Power said.

The Njamal People said the agreement provided commercial opportunities and a base for economic self-determination as well as putting in place exclusion zones to protect sites of cultural importance.

"Culture comes first for us. The old Njamal People who have left us who worked hard to get us here would be proud of this agreement. This agreement is our future for the next generation," Njamal elder Doris Eaton said.

Fortescue's North Star magnetite project is located just 100 kilometres south of Fortescue's Herb Elliott port facility at Port Hedland and approximately 25 kilometres east of Fortescue's rail line. Total Resources at North Star (100 per cent Fortescue) and Glacier Valley (JV with Baosteel) are 2.5 billion tonnes.

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**Photos of the signing ceremony available on request**