



Northern Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

Alcan expansion offers landowners a fresh start

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NLC Chief Executive Norman Fry said today that the proposed expansion of Alcan Gove's operations promised to provide new opportunities for traditional Aboriginal land owners as well as other Indigenous stakeholders in the Gove region.

"It is important to remember that the original struggle by Aboriginal landowners against the mine's development during the 1960s and early 1970s led directly to the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976," Mr Fry said.

"While the Act has provided legal protection for Aboriginal peoples' land rights throughout the Northern Territory since it was enacted in 1977, it remains a fact that there has never been a formal agreement between the Gove mine's operators and the Aboriginal people on whose land the mine was built more than 30 years ago."

"I therefore welcome Alcan's promise to consult with traditional landowners and other Indigenous stakeholders during the feasibility study process, with the understanding that this consultation will lead to the implementation of a formal agreement ahead of any mine expansion."

Such an agreement would commit Alcan to targets for Indigenous employment and training, the protection of sacred sites, environmental safeguards, ongoing support for Aboriginal enterprise development and a formalisation of existing arrangements between the company and Aboriginal organisations in the Gove area.

Mr Fry said discussions between the NLC and Alcan had already commenced and were being conducted in a positive manner by both sides.