

14th September 2021

A response from Rio Tinto to the *Aboriginal employment outcomes at Argyle Diamond Mine: Survey of current and former employees*

In 2020 Rio Tinto's Argyle Diamond Mine (Argyle) engaged the University of Queensland's Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining to conduct research into past and current Aboriginal employees and trainees' experiences at Argyle. At the time the research was conducted Argyle was preparing for the closure of the mine which completed final ore extraction in November 2020.

Aboriginal training and employment had been an integral component of Argyle's human resource strategy and regional development objectives since the mid-1980s when the mine began. The signing of the Argyle Participation Agreement with Traditional Owners in 2004 set tangible targets for local Aboriginal employment and training opportunities at Argyle. Learning from the experiences at Argyle and sharing of knowledge and practice is important for other Rio Tinto operations and the mining industry in general. Argyle will use this research to inform planning with Traditional Owners for the smooth transition for the East Kimberly region following the closure of the mine.

The report provided several recommendations which have been progressed in the time since the research project was undertaken. An update as at September 2021 follows, and Argyle will continue to work in partnership with Traditional Owners and other stakeholders during the closure phases.

1. Continue supporting traineeships and apprenticeships for local Aboriginal people

To support the closure rehabilitation and decommissioning phase of closure (2021 to 2024) Argyle ran a closure competency traineeship for local Aboriginal people. The pilot phase of this program finished in July 2021 with six individuals successfully completing a work ready program and four of those taking up roles with businesses undertaking the rehabilitation and decommissioning works. Additionally, a Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management was run by Kimberley Group Training from November 2019 to May 2021 for five local Aboriginal trainees. All five have now moved into full time Argyle Closure land management roles and are known as the Argyle Rangers.

2. Support current Aboriginal employees transition to other employment

Aboriginal employees who were working at Argyle in the period leading up to closure were provided with the opportunity to transition into other roles within Rio Tinto. In addition, others have taken up roles with the major contractors undertaking the rehabilitation and decommissioning works. Goorng Jimbila Contracting, a local Aboriginal business has been awarded approximately 22% of the major closure contracts. Other local Aboriginal businesses are also undertaking closure work directly for Rio Tinto or as sub-contractors to the other major contractors.

3. Re-hire former employees at other Rio Tinto operations

As part of our Life After Argyle program employees were given the option to be redeployed at other Rio Tinto operations. Of approximately 450 employees who were impacted by the closure, 117 former Argyle employees were redeployed to other Rio Tinto operations including Argyle Closure. This number represents an approximate 95% redeployment rate based on the number of employees who indicated redeployment as their preference.

4. Support Aboriginal employment in rehabilitation and monitoring post-closure

The five Argyle Rangers will continue as Rio Tinto employees through the rehabilitation and decommissioning phase at Argyle (anticipated end-2024). Argyle Closure will also support the establishment of a land management program with an Aboriginal business or corporation which can continue to undertake the monitoring and maintenance activities post rehabilitation until the eventual lease relinquishment in approximately 2035.

5. Share lessons and findings from this report with other Rio Tinto operations

We will continue to share this research report and present the findings to other operations. Beyond sharing with operations that are also preparing for closure, we will also share the learnings with new growth projects and operations to embed the learnings early in their work practices.

We thank all participants of this research for their time and valuable contributions. We also thank the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining for undertaking this important research and contributing to the overall body of knowledge in this area. We trust the findings and learnings will be a useful resource for other mining operations nearing the end of production, as well as for undertaking life of asset planning.

Yours sincerely,



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