

# ENVIRONMENT AND THE COMMUNITY

*Our team are doing a fantastic job of environmental best practice, demonstrating community engagement and social responsibility to providing positive win-win outcomes for the people we interact with. This achievement has been recognised throughout the Pilbara region."*

*David Flanagan, Managing Director*

With a strong devotion to investment in people, the community and project development, Atlas has endeavoured to set new standards of environmental best practice, community engagement and social responsibility leaving a lasting positive footprint within the areas it operates. During the past year, Atlas has entered into two unique Native Title agreements, to progress access to developing mining centres within the Pilbara region of Western Australia.

In addition to the construction and operation of the Pardoo DSO mine Atlas has also undertaken high level environmental impact assessments covering the two subsequent DSO projects at Wodgina and Abydos. It has involved multiple Aboriginal Heritage surveys, detailed flora and vegetation studies, terrestrial and subterranean fauna surveys, along with impact determination assessments to provide for ongoing and sustainable operations.

## ENVIRONMENT

In a year of growth in Atlas' environment and land access activities, Atlas has successfully negotiated the state approval regime for the Pardoo DSO Project, developed and implemented compliance procedures, and completed various impact assessments for new mining and exploration projects. Through the engagement and coordination of respected specialist consultants, Atlas successfully completed the Public Environmental Review (PER) assessment and provided effective and achievable Project Environmental Management Plans for the on-going operations. (Hotlink to announcement on environmental approval: [www.atlasiron2009ar.com](http://www.atlasiron2009ar.com))

Over the past twelve months Atlas has built on the standards, legislations, procedures and systems to identify, assess and manage environmental risk in the areas in which it operates.

Throughout 2009, Atlas has successfully built on its reputation as a responsible proponent within the exploration/mining industry. Atlas has further enhanced its reputation with the ongoing and strategic engagement of indigenous groups, government departments, non-government organisations, land holders, and key stakeholders to ensure all aspects of its activities exceed the legal and social obligations, and are undertaken in a meaningful and sustainable manner. One of the beneficiaries of this engagement is the NorthWest Iron Ore Alliance community fund.

Atlas is an Australian-owned mineral exploration and mining company which prides itself on its commitment to principles of environmental and social responsibility. In accordance with this Environmental and Social Policy, the following operational-specific objectives have been established which represent Atlas' commitment:

1. Atlas will operate an Integrated Management System (IMS), which accurately defines the environmental and social aspects and impacts of what we do, and build what we learn from this knowledge into clear and concise operational systems, to thus minimise the risk to the environment and the community.
2. Atlas will employ, to the extent practicable, the principles of pollution prevention, efficient resource use and waste minimisation in all of our activities.
3. Atlas will set environmental improvement targets based on established criteria and annually report our environmental performance publicly.
4. Atlas will develop a mine completion and rehabilitation plan that addresses regulatory requirements, risk minimisation, potential future land use and stakeholder issues.
5. Atlas will identify, report, and remediate environmental incidents, and employ changes that reduce the likelihood and/or consequence of occurrences.
6. Atlas will actively promote environmental awareness and training among all employees and contractors.
7. Atlas will respect cultural and heritage values and facilitate cross-cultural awareness.
8. Atlas will anticipate and respond to community concerns, aspirations and values regarding our activities and foster open dialogue with employees, contractors and the community.
9. Atlas will strive for continual improvement in environmental and social awareness, and our performance.
10. Atlas will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements as a minimum operating condition.
11. Atlas will allocate sufficient resources to ensure these objectives can be achieved.

By implementing this policy Atlas believes it will:

- Ensure that environmental obligations and considerations form an integral part of our business planning and decision-making processes.
- Comply with applicable environmental laws and aspire to higher standards within our business.
- Promote a culture of responsible environmental management within the organisation.
- Protect the natural environment, indigenous and social surroundings.
- Continually improve our environmental performance.
- Comply with applicable environmental laws and aspire to higher standards within our business.
- Communicate openly, effectively and transparently with all stakeholders on environmental matters.
- Engage the community in environmental initiatives aligned with our business values.

Atlas' Environmental and Social Policy is based on the recognition that all our activities have impact on the environment. Since it is not possible to eliminate such impact, the Atlas policy is to engineer and conduct operations with the objective of achieving best practice so that adverse effects on the environment and any surrounding community are either avoided or kept to an acceptable level.

### COMMUNITY

*"Atlas' excellent long-term relationship with the Njama people and the Pilbara Native Title Service helped facilitate engagement on key aspects of this agreement quickly. Atlas came to the negotiating table respecting for the Njama people's rights to culture and country. Atlas' willingness to make a good offer and its commitment to following the correct process insured that a well considered agreement was finalised very quickly."*

*Simon Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer, Pilbara Native Title Service, on the Njama Native Title agreement with Atlas*

Throughout 2009 Atlas has worked with a number of stakeholders, the community and government to establish and maintain better outcomes in the areas it operates. To this end, Atlas held 18 meetings with local community groups and other stakeholders during the year. Atlas has embarked upon a number of incentive programs to promote indigenous business enterprise and partnering throughout both the mining and exploration activities. Atlas is committed to providing outcomes for communities that are sustainable

and can leave a positive footprint. Atlas is constantly looking for win-win outcomes that will promote and enhance Atlas' social licence to operate.

Atlas houses a number of its team and their families in Port Hedland which has allowed them to contribute to the local community. All of the Atlas staff and contractors are encouraged to discover the social, cultural and environmental opportunities available to them within the local community, so they can become active participants within the community.

Also during the year, Atlas has further enhanced strong relationships with the indigenous stakeholders and their representatives in Western Australia. This has been achieved by engagement, transparency of discussion and willingness to listen to the various groups. Accordingly, Atlas' Indigenous Peoples Policy reflects this commitment to foster new and strengthen existing relationships with the communities. Njama Traditional Owner Rodney Monaghan said that the Njama community was happy that the Njama Native Title agreement with Atlas managed to balance the protection of their country and culture with commercial realities and opportunities. "This agreement recognises the importance of our culture and country, but still shows that Njama people are serious and fair with their commercial negotiations," said Mr Monaghan.

Atlas is committed to employing indigenous peoples and during the year has employed indigenous persons from the Ngarla, Njama and Kariyarra Peoples, being the three native title land holders where Atlas is operating.

Atlas is proud of the relationship it has established with the indigenous stakeholders and their legal representatives in the Pilbara region. Accordingly, Atlas' Indigenous Peoples Policy reflects the commitment to foster new, and strengthen existing, relationships with the communities we co-exist with.

Atlas is committed to being recognised as a leader in the field of indigenous relations and in partnership with the indigenous people on whose land it operates, will deliver:

- Economic opportunity in its exploration and mining activities.
- Culturally and Environmentally sensitive outcomes.
- Leading by example is consistent with our values.
- Promote sustainable commercial relationships with indigenous peoples.
- Continue to develop and increase its indigenous workforce.
- Maintain partnership with the indigenous community to develop sustainable economic business opportunities wherever appropriate.
- Seek to generally improve the wellbeing of indigenous people in its operating areas.
- Operate within existing environmental constraints and respect the indigenous relationship to the land.



- Encourage other companies, with which we interact, to engage with native title groups.
- Forge new and maintain existing relationships with the indigenous communities with which it operates; and
- Deliver cross cultural awareness training to its workforce.
- Encouraging staff to be involved in the community. Atlas Managing Director recently joined the board of Youth Focus Inc, a charity whose objective is the prevention of youth suicide and self harm.
- Implementing and communicating high occupational health, hygiene and safety standards. Implementing effective training and appropriate high quality safety equipment.
- Meeting or exceeding all relevant legislative and statutory obligations.
- Continuous review and improvement of our safety management systems.
- Ensuring all our contractors manage health and safety in line with this policy.
- Supporting and engaging injured workers to return to work as soon as medically fit.
- Providing a workplace free of drugs, supported by a holistic and open approach; and
- Managing the impact on fitness for work of fatigue, stress, physical well being and medical issues.

Our vision is to establish a culture within Atlas where there is no harm to people or the environment.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Atlas' core values and operational strategy has placed the Company ahead of its peers, and paved the way for unprecedented growth opportunities.

By adopting Atlas' values, its environmental and social policies, and sustainable management systems, the Company has proven it can better manage the risks associated with the business, whilst creating opportunities, reducing costs, and attracting the best people to our company. This is a unique asset that sets Atlas apart from its industry peers, and adds to our ability to attract and retain high calibre personnel.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

*"The Atlas vision is to set new standards of safety and health management. To do this while starting our first mine is a challenge, but our team is up to the task, improving performance and standardising safety management systems across the organisation."*

*David Flanagan, Managing Director*

At Atlas we care about the health and safety of all of our employees, contractors and visitors to our sites. Atlas is committed to providing an environment where everyone is protected. This is achieved through:

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE

Atlas continues to strive for an incident-free work place and the safety and health of our employees and contractors is paramount. During the course of the financial year Atlas continued to invest in the development of integrated occupational health and safety management systems, with the focus being on integration across the organisation inclusive of exploration, resource development and the mining disciplines.

Of particular note has been the safety leadership demonstrated by the Pilbara Operations team. They have worked closely with our lead contractors to demonstrate and establish a safe work culture that is having a marked impact on overall safety performance. Having set a tone at Pardoo the team is well placed to facilitate equivalent performance at the soon to be established Wodgina mine site.