

Media Release

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WA INDIGENOUS DEFENCE SERVICES STEPS UP

WA Indigenous Defence Services has demonstrated the Indigenous business sector's capacity to deliver on large-scale defence projects and claim millions of dollars in Government procurement targets.

Perth Indigenous business owner Gerry Matera officially launched WA Indigenous Defence Services last night to create WA's largest Indigenous defence services business.

The company was recently established on the back of an identified need for a strong and resilient indigenous presence in the defence sector, together with Government and private sector initiatives to encourage Indigenous economic activity.

Mr Matera said the new business would act as a single point account and project manager to drive growth in his already strong 250-person team across his construction, energy, security and food businesses.

It has recently been awarded contracts for maintenance & security services across three (3) defence projects in WA.

Matera said despite the best of intentions, many of the initiatives in the WA Defence sector have fallen flat largely due to Australian's perception of the indigenous workforce and the availability of strong Indigenous businesses to take on large projects.

Launching WA Indigenous Defence Services signals a new era for the Australian defence industry here in WA and gives larger companies a sound and reliable vehicle to meet their own reconciliation targets.

Matera's construction company Marawar was named National Supplier of the Year at Supply Nations Suppliers Diversity Awards for a second time. Matera said "The company now operates in a construction tier that enables it to complete alongside industry heavyweights for project and infrastructure works"

WA Indigenous Defence Services has successfully evolved in an environment where there is a growing adoption of reconciliation action plans (RAPs) in the business community and a genuine desire from Government to encourage increased engagement with Aboriginal businesses.

Mr Matera said it is a great time for Aboriginal companies to build capacity throughout the business sector and create workplace environments that will enable their workforce to shine.

"With the completion of many large-scale projects under our belt, we believe we have clearly demonstrated how much can be achieved. We have always remained true to our vision, values and purpose and it is great that the business community is now starting to embrace us as an effective means to meet their social responsibility and procurement targets.

"The stage is set for other businesses to do the same."

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