

# Contractors on local mission

› *Taylor Amonini*



Binbirri's George Todd and Kevin Eckerman are keen to get under way.

Environmental rejuvenation and community engagement are the two key goals in the first contract in BHP's WA Local Buying Program.

Port Hedland's Binbirri Contracting has been contracted to revegetate BHP mining areas of Jimblebar, Mining Area C and Mount Whaleback under the program, which launched in September.

Director Kevin Eckerman said while the new contract was a good financial step for any organisation, it was more than that for the 100 per cent Aboriginal owned and operated organisation.

"To us it's more than just the dollar, we have a passion for it," he said. "We've seen with land use agreements and mining companies wanting to support (our people) so it means everything to us because we want our younger generation to come see what we're doing and become a part of it."

While earthmoving and revegetation is the core of Binbirri's operations, Mr Eckerman said the team actively tried to engage the local Aboriginal community in their everyday activities as well as recruiting young people as apprentices and workers.

"With most people living in the community among our people, we find a high percentage of people want to work but just don't know how to go about it and we see

ourselves as a tool to utilise that," he said. "As a business we invest back into our people, if we do make a quid we see it to be important to spent it back on our young people by providing training.

"By taking those young people out at an early age, they're making money for themselves and they start to get an understanding of work and business. But it also steers them in the right direction, out of trouble and into work and something productive."

Targeting small businesses with fewer than 20 full-time equivalent employees, the BHP WA Local Buyign Program is an extension of the pilot program implemented in Queensland and New South Wales.

BHP has contracted C-Res, a cost-neutral entity, to provide suppliers with an online platform through which they can interact with people from procurement at BHP directly, and will allow them to keep their supplier information up to date.

C-Res will also have a team of advisers based in the Pilbara to work with suppliers and community partners to provide support with the new program as well as offer development and training programs, funded by BHP.

C-Res program manager Debbie Porter said meeting the company was an exciting extension of the program and she was excited to see where it went.

"The guys (at Binbirri Contracting) are so innovative and passionate, to see them talk about their plans is very heart-warming," she said. "We're seeing great opportunities rolling through with lots of diversity and the good thing is BHP pay us very quickly and we're the company that pays the contractors

— there's no waiting around with 21-day payment terms."

To become involved, companies can visit [www.c-res.com.au](http://www.c-res.com.au) or email [info@c-res.com.au](mailto:info@c-res.com.au).