Peko-EZ Munmarlary Northern Territory Exploration History.

Compiled mainly by David Barnett, Solicitor, when a Peko-Wallsend in-house legal advisor and Geoffrey Sherrington, when a Geopeko Manager of Special Projects/Geochemist.

The following history is in approximate chronolog­ical order from July, 1967 to December, 1984. It is divid­ed roughly into calendar years, each preceded by a summary of con­tained paragraphs, marked in brown text. This remake by OCR was done in late May 2016.

**HISTORY OF EVENTS.**

(Note: Related corporations such as Peko-Wa1lsend Ltd., Peko Mines Ltd., Peko-Wallsend Operations Ltd. are here referred to as "Peko" for descriptive purposes. The Electrolytic Zinc Company of Australasia Ltd. and corpor­ations with variants to that name are referred to as "EZ".)

**1967**

**Para . 1, 2. Gondwana Joint Venture formed by Peko-EZ.**

**1968**

**Para. 3. Geopeko application for AP2076**

**1969**

**Para. 3. AP2076 replaced by AP2362.**

**AP2362 granted for 5 years.**

**Para. 4. Radiometric anomaly found - Ranger One.**

1. On 31st July, 1967, Peko and EZ entered into a Joint Venture Agreement known as the Gondwana Joint ­ Venture. The purpose of the Joint Venture was to explore for and to develop minerals in a large area of northern Austral­ia, which included the above-mentioned area of reference in the Alligator Rivers Region. Exploration was to be conducted by Peko's exploration company Geopeko Limited ("Geopeko") and tenements applied for and granted to Geopeko were applied for and held by Geopeko in trust for Peko and EZ in equal shares.

2. At that time, the Mining Ordinance 1939 (N.T.) was applicable for tenement applications and grants.

3. On 8th July, 1968, Geopeko applied for Authority to Prospect 2076 ("AP2076") over an area of 188 square miles (48700 hectares) in the western Munmarlary part of the area of reference. On 13th May, 1969, this application was  
withdrawn by Geopeko in favour of an application lodged by it on 15th May, 1969 for AP2362 of area 1,117 square miles (290,000 hectares). AP2362 was granted on 24th September, 1969 for the period then commencing and ending on 23rd September, 1970. The AP included part of the Woolwonga Aboriginal Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary.

4. In October, 1969 Geopeko was notified of the pre­sence   
of radiometrica1ly anomalous ground within the area of AP2362 and a ground party investigated the same. Mineral Lease (ML) tenure was subsequently applied for over this area which now forms part of what became known as the Ranger Project Area.

**1970.**

**Para. 5. Exploration proceeds.**

**Renewal of AP2362 applied for**

**1971.**

**Para. 6. APs converted to ELs.**

**Para. 7. AP2362 expired. ELs 219, 220 applied for.**

5. During the year ending 23rd September, 1970, quite apart from the work on the Project Area, work commenced on the balance of the land the subject of AP2362 (which covered a substantial portion of the area of reference of this ­ document). In due course application for renewal of AP2362 was made, as were applications for further APs 2607 and 2671.

6. In August 1971, a further renewal of AP2362 was applied for, as were applications for Exploration Licence ("EL") tenure to replace all existing APs. This was be­cause of an anticipated amendment to the Mining Ordinance that required a change in tenure from AP to EL and which was to become law on 4th October, 1971. The end result of the application for renewal was the renewal of AP2362 for the period ending on 31st December, 1971.

7. In October/November of 1971 the Northern Territory Government, as a further result of new exploration tenement provisions, advised Geopeko that AP2362 would need to be halved to form ELs of the correct size. ELs 219 and 220  
were therefore applied for, to replace AP2362. On 31st December, 1971, AP2362 expired, without the immediate grant of ELs 219 and 220. This condition was of concern to Geopeko who had a normal expectation of ­continuity of tenure to protect past investment and future prospectivity.

**1972.**

**Para. 8. March, 1972, ELs 219, 220 granted. Back dated to 1st January, 1972.**

**Para. 9. Cannon Hill declared Wildlife Sanc­tuary.**

**Para. 10. ALP gained Federal Government.**

**Para. 11. ELs 219, 220 expired with renewals pending.**

1. In March, 1972 the Northern Territory Government advised Geopeko that ELs 219 and 220 would be granted and on 17th April, 1972 these were formally granted and backdated to 1st January, 1972.
2. On 26th June, 1972 the Cannon Hill area was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary by the Administrator of the Northern Territory pursuant to the N.T. Wildlife Conser­vation and Control Ordinance 1962-69.
3. During December, 1972 the Australian Labor Party was elected to Federal office. For some time thereafter uncertainty prevailed as to this Government's intention with regard to exploration for and mining, of uranium.
4. The EL periods for ELS 219 and 220 expired on 31st December, 1972 but, in the then terms of the Northern Territory Mining Ordinance, the ELs remained in force pend­ing their renewal or revocation by the N.T. Administration. The lack of (hitherto customary) prompt decision making on this matter by Government caused great uncertainty to Peko-EZ in their programme, which was planned over the 5-year  
   life of the ELs. The outstanding ELs were not renewed until December, 1973.

**1973.**

**Para.**

**12. EL application 727 frozen because of Aboriginal land.**

1. **Woodward J. appointed for land rights study.**
2. **3 MLs applied for at Ranger 4.**
3. **Woodward's first report in July.  
   Assurances from R.F.X. Connor.**
4. **ML applications Rangers 4, 19, 23, 24,  
   29, 30, 33, 34, 44, 50.**
5. **ELs 219, 220 renewed in December, one year late.**
6. **ELs 219, 220 halved in area.**
7. **Patterson promises.**
8. **Promising results at Ranger 34 foregone.**
9. **Negative exploration - Ranger 14.**
10. **ELs 219, 220 renewed for calendar year 1974.**
11. A shift of policy in relation to exploration on aboriginal land was indicated when in February of 1973, the Northern Territory Government "froze" a Geopeko application for another EL, EL727, since its area was partly within an  
    aboriginal reserve.(This EL was not in the reference area; it was at Waterhouse River.).
12. On 8th February, 1973 the Federal Government appointed Woodward J. to inquire into and report upon the appropriate means of establishing land rights for   
    Aborigines. In particular, his terms of reference included that he report upon arrangements for the vesting of title to land in the Northern Territory already reserved for use by   
    Aborigines and to report on the desirability of procedures to enable groups of Aborigines outside those reserves to claim traditional lands and to consider the effect such a grant of rights would have on existing mining rights. With the exception of the Woolwonga Aboriginal Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary, the land the subject of this document was not re­served for Aboriginal use.
13. On 18th June, 1973 three mineral leases (MLs) were applied for at Ranger 4, where some uranium mineralisation had been intersected. The Ranger 4 prospect was within EL219, whose application for renewal had been expected to be  
    processed six months previously. The ML form of tenure was customarily used when the surrounding EL was extinguished for whatever reason.
14. Woodward J made his first report in July, 1973. The possible interface of Aboriginal land rights and mining interests in certain areas became apparent. However, the Federal Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr. R.F.X. Connor) informed Peko that the Labor Administration would not deny the respective discoverers of uranium in any areas, subject to the terms of reference of the Woodward committee, proper rights under the northern Territory Mining Ordinance for their ultimate development.
15. In October through to December, 1973, a leasing programme was undertaken and MLs were applied for at Rangers 4, 19, 23, 24, 29, 30, 33, 34, 44 and 50. The "Ranger"  
    designation was used for prospects evolving from work on ELs, in this instance on ELs 219 and 220. (Ranger 19 is now within the Ranger Project Area.)
16. In explanation for applications for MLs, under the  
    terms of the Mining Ordinance ELs were valid for 5 years as  
    follows:-
17. Over the first two years, over the whole of the Licence area.

(b) At the start of each of the next three years,  
50% of the area was to be relinquished,  
having regard to the boundary requirements of  
the Ordinance.

(c) At the end of the fifth year, all of the Licence *area* was to be relinquished, leaving areas still held pursuant to a choice of MLs,  
special mineral leases (SML) or other ­designated forms of tenure. The EL holder had an exclusive right to apply for such further tenure.

1. The original area of AP2362 had been converted to ELs 219 and 220 on 1st January, 1972. It followed that after 31st December, 1973, the area of each EL had to be  
   reduced by 50% with further reductions to follow after 31st December, 1974 and 31st December, 1975, with expiry on 31st December, 1976.
2. Hence it was customary to apply for other forms of mining tenements over prospective zones within an area of an EL which was about to be reduced or expire.
3. On 28th November, 1973 all sixteen pending ML applications over Ranger 34 were formally withdrawn at the request of the Department of the Northern Territory. Also, that portion of EL220 falling within the gazetted Wildlife Sanctuary (N.T. Government Gazette, 9th August, 1972) which was subsequently to become Kakadu National Park Stage 1, was relinquished on 31st December, 1973 as part of the 50% re­duction of the EL, again at the request of the Department of the Northern Territory. The relinquishment of these par­ticular parts of land was undertaken following an assurance given by the Commonwealth of Australia which had authorised Dr. Rex Patterson, then Federal Minister for the Northern Territory, to promise Peko/EZ appropriate tenure under the provisions of the Parks and Wildlife Act. A copy of the letter from Dr. Patterson to Geopeko forms Appendix 1 to this document.

21. The relinquished part of EL220 included the pros­pect Ranger 34 at which only one diamond drill hole was able to be completed. It intersected very high values of copper and appreciable silver. Upon execution of the promises in Dr. Patterson's letter, Geopeko will plan the appropriate programme to reveal whether the indications from the sole drill hole support the presence of an economic ore deposit.

22. In December, 1973 the Ranger 14 area received   
exploration attention. This was because (apart from its mineral indications) the Northern Territory Government had advised Geopeko that if any part of the Woolwonga Aboriginal  
Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary was to be included in areas under application for EL219 in 1974, then the EL219 application as a whole would not be renewed. Events of this nature led Geopeko to a phase of "negative exploration" whereby attention was focused on areas intended for reduction/relinquishment rather than on areas which so far had shown the most favourable prospectivity. This phase was not undertaken by preference of Geopeko.

23. On 14th December, 1973 ELs 219 and 220 were offic­ially renewed for the year passed. It was not normal or expected by Geopeko that renewal applications would be de­cided upon a year later than the due date. On 20th Decem­ber, 1973 the process was regularised by the official renew­al of ELs 219 and 220 for the coming year, 1st January 1974 to 31st December, 1974.

**1974.**

**Para.**

1. **Mining Warden recommends grant of ML  
   applications.**
2. **Woodward's second report.  
   Exploration "freeze" commences.**
3. **Aboriginal Land (NT) Bill introduced,  
   later withdrawn.**
4. **Atomic Energy (Prescribed Substances)  
   Regulations introduced.  
   Regulations disallowed by Senate.**
5. **Minimal exploration, of "negative" type.**
6. **Ten MLs granted, Rangers 2, 4, 50.**
7. **ML applications Rangers 28, 55, 59.**
8. **"Lodge Agreement" signed.  
   Government participation in   
   exploration/mining.**
9. **ELs 219, 220 renewed for further year.**
10. The latter renewal excluded the areas at Cannon Hill, Woolwonga and an area near Ranger One, these being the subject of the letter from Dr. Patterson.
11. In April, 1974, the Mining Warden at Darwin (Mr. Ward) recommended the grant of all MLs applied for in late 1973 (see paragraph 16), over-ruling all objections raised.  
    In the normal course of events, these applications would have proceeded to grant in a period of some months at the most. They have not yet been granted, some ten years  
    later.
12. On 3rd May, 1974 Woodward J. made his second and final report. He recommended that no further alienation of vacant Crown land take place in the Northern Territory until 31st December, 1975. This recommendation was accepted by the then Federal Government which introduced what has become known as the "freeze". It was designed to prevent further alien­ation of land which might be claimed by Aborigines. Whether by accident or purpose this *freeze* applied to both unalienated Crown Land and, at least in the case of Pastoral Leases at Mudginberri and Munmarlary (which overlapped with ELs 219 and 220), alienated Crown land also. As instituted, the freeze prevented the issue of exploration or mining tenements over certain land and in certain respects it continues to this day, although its ostensible purpose has long passed.

27. Consequent upon Woodward J's. reports, a Bill titled the Aboriginal Land (Northern Territory) Bill, one effect of which would be to grant land to Aborigines in the  
Northern Territory, was introduced into the Commonwealth  
Parliament. When introducing that Bill, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs said "the Bill preserves existing interests in Aboriginal land - for example, the special purpose and mining leases on the Gove Peninsula and Groote Eylandt - and the existing operations of the companies con­cerned will not be affected". The Bill was withdrawn by a subsequent Government.

28. In the opening months of 1974 Geopeko's exploration activity declined in the face of Federal Government activity and uncertainty. On 29th March, 1974, it enacted the Atomic Energy (Prescribed Substances) Regulations. The effect of these Regulations was that, subject to the discretionary power of the Minister to grant a licence, Peko and EZ were deprived of the right to work, acquire, produce, treat, possess, use or dispose of, within the Northern Territory, any of the minerals specified in the Schedule to  
the Regulations. Those minerals included uranium. In short, had these Regulations become effective, Peko and EZ may have been deprived, without entitlement to compensation, of any right to extract uranium ores from its mining interests in the Northern Territory. Some six months later, these Regulations were disallowed in the Senate, but in the interim work on the Alligator Rivers region was carried on at minimum levels.

1. On 18th May, 1974, the Australian Labor Government was returned to office. Uncertainty over its uranium policy continued, with the effect that Geopeko's  
   exploration in the Alligator Rivers region was both “negative" and minimal. Just sufficient money was spent to meet commitments and it was spent mainly to define those areas intended for scheduled area reductions. By September, 1974, there was very little exploration activity, pending resolution of several issues.
2. On 7th October, 1974, ML313A (Ranger 2) and MLs 311A and 312A (Ranger 4) were granted. On 4th November, 1974 MLs 543A-546A, 562A-564A (Ranger 50) were granted. These were the first ML grants outside the Ranger Project Area and within the discussion area of this report. They have an importance in principle, establishing that grant of some MLs has been made to Geopeko, in land which subsequently has been proclaimed as Kakadu National Park, Stage Two.

31. In December, 1974, MLs were applied for at Ranger 28, Ranger 55 and Ranger 59. These were recommended for grant by the Warden in January-February, 1975. Rights (N.T.) Act 1976 became effective for some aspects of tenure applications. (See paragraph 47). They are examples, but not the only ones of Lease applications made before June 4th, 1976, the date at which the Aboriginal Land.

1. On 30th October, 1974 the "Lodge Agreement" was signed concerning Ranger 1 and on 31st October, 1974 the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy tabled a statement in Parliament outlining the Australian Government's programme for the development of uranium resources in the N.T. Broadly, this indicated that pursuant to the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act, the Australian Atomic Energy Commission would participate, as agent of the Australian Govern­ment, in the mining and treatment of uranium located in the N.T. However, companies that had been exploring there  
   were given cause for optimism to proceed with their exploration under permission to continue exploration on their existing ELs. The implication was that if such   
   exploration were successful, they could look forward to entering into an agreement similar to that between the Commonwealth Government and Peko/EZ as in the Lodge Agreement.
2. In mid-December, 1974, ELs 219 and 220 were renewed by the Northern Territory Mines Branch for the 1975 calendar year. In this year, the EL area was about one quarter of the original.

**1975.**

**Para.**

1. **Mining Warden recommends grant of MLs at Rangers 55, 57, 58, 59.**
2. **National Parks and Wildlife Conser­vation  
   Act 1975 passed.**
3. **Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry commenced.**
4. **Minimal "negative" exploration continued.**
5. **Memorandum of Understanding signed.**
6. **Renewals made for 1976 for ELs 219, 220.**
7. **Change in Federal Government to Liberal/National Coalition.**
8. In February-March of 1975, the Mining Warden at Darwin recommended grant of MLs applied for at Rangers 55, 57, 58 and 59.
9. On 13th March, 1975 the Commonwealth's National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975 was assented to.
10. On 16th July, 1975 the commissioning of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry (the "Fox Report") was form­ally gazetted. The hearings consumed time and funds of exploration personnel.
11. In the 1975 year, exploration work continued in the "negative exploration" phase at a minimal rate to satisfy expenditure requirements. Pending the completion of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry, the future of uranium exploration in the Northern Territory was uncertain.
12. On 28th October, 1975 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Commonwealth Government and Peko/EZ to clarify the Lodge Agreement. Implementation of the Memorandum was made contingent on the Fox Report and the Government's decisions thereon; and on the outcome of any claims by Aborigines under the Aboriginal Land (Northern Territory) Bill 1975 which was then before Parliament.

39. On 28th November, 1975 applications were made for renewal of ELs 219 and 220 for the final year ending 31st December, 1976.

40. A change in Federal Government took place in November, 1975. The new conservative Government reserved its position on matters of uranium exploration in the N.T. until the issue of the Fox Report.

**1976.**

1. **New applications made, ELs 219, 220 for calendar year 1976.**
2. **Peko/EZ resolve to have a major ­ exploration year.**
3. **Mining Warden recommends ML grants at Rangers 4, 27, 53, 54, 63.**
4. **First report of Ranger Uranium ­ Environmental Inquiry.**
5. **Significant mineralisation intersected at Ranger 68.**
6. **Large leasing programme.**
7. **Aboriginal Land Rights (N.T.) Act 1976 becomes law. "Freeze" on exploration  
   continued.**
8. **ELs 219, 220 ended their 5-year terms.**

41. In January, 1976 applications for renewal of EL219 were rejected for technical reasons and amended applications were made. Also in that month, objections were lodged against the ML applications made in 1975.

42. In early 1976 Peko and EZ decided to mount a major exploration effort on the remaining area (now one-eighth of the original) of ELs 219 and 220.

43. The Mining Warden recommended the grant of MLs at Rangers 4, 27, 53, 54 and 63. These were applied for in 1975 and recommended in August, 1976.

44. On 28th October, 1976 the first report of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry was published.

45. On 27th November, 1976 significant uranium ­ mineralisation was intersected at the Ranger 68 prospect, within EL219.

46. In October to December, 1976 an intensive leasing programme took place for securing tenure over encouraging prospects after expiry of ELs 219 and 220, in accordance with normal exploration procedure. MLs were applied for at Rangers 4, 7, 31, 32, 48, 52, 61, 64, 65, 66, 69, 70 and within the Barote area.

1. On 12th December, the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 ("The Land Rights Act") was passed to become law on 26th January, 1977. The Act   
   provided, inter alia, that application for MLs or other interests in Aboriginal land only had the protection of the Act against Aboriginal "veto" and if they were applied for before 4th June, 1976. None of the land the subject of Geopeko applications was Aboriginal land. However, because of the "freeze" instituted by Government (see paragraph 26) the relevant MLs have not yet been granted.
2. On 31st December, 1976, ELs 219 and 220 expired. From January to May of 1977 no exploration work took place, pending release of the second Fox Report, which was publish­ed on 17th May, 1977.

**1977.**

**Para.**

**48. Second Report of Ranger Uranium Envir­onmental Inquiry.**

**49. Scout drilling on ML applications, Barote area.**

**50. Announcement "Uranium: Australia's Decision.”**

**Further drilling, Rangers 4 and 68.**

**Exploration to be allowed to continue.**

**51. Mining Warden recommends grant of several hundred ML applications.**

**Prime Minister requests freeze to continue.**

49. In May-June, 1977 a minor scout drilling programme  
took place in the Barote area.

50. On 25th August, 1977 the Commonwealth Government  
announced Australia's uranium mining decision. Thereafter  
some exploration occurred until December, 1977 with Govern­ment   
permission, mainly further drilling at Rangers 4 and 68  
which were covered by ML applications. However, in respect  
of the land under application the Commonwealth Government  
had indicated in the publication Uranium: Australia's  
Decision, "....In that area to be declared in the subsequent  
stage of the National Park, exploration will be permitted in  
the meantime under strictly controlled conditions to be  
supervised by the Departments of National Resources,  
Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Territory and Environmental  
Housing and Community Development." (J.D. Anthony) To  
date, in December, 1984, the necessary control procedures  
have not been finalised.

51. On 14th March, 1978 the Mining Warden at Darwin  
recommended granting of the several hundred MLs applied for  
during the 1976 pegging. Those applications and others  
before them were within the Alligator Rivers Stage II land  
claim. However, those applications for MLs, despite being  
previously on an extant Pastoral Lease and so incapable of  
alienating land for the purposes of the Land Rights Act,  
have not been granted as of December, 1984. The Secretary

of the Department of Mines and Energy in Darwin advised Geopeko that, following the Prime Minister's advice, "...the Government will direct the Administrator to defer granting titles in the Uranium Province until the control procedures have been finalised and Aboriginal land claims over land to be claimed have been determined. Accordingly, the situation remains as one where consideration of appli­cations is being held in abeyance pending resolution of associated matters."

**1978.**

**Mineral exploration ceased in January.**

**First hearings, Alligator Rivers Land Claim.**

**Commonwealth acquisition of Munmarlary and Mudginberri.**

**Commonwealth acquisition of Goodparla and Gimbat.**

**Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act passed.**

**Areas proposed for listing by Australian Heritage Commission.**

1. Exploration outside of the Ranger Project Area was suspended in the area of reference from January, 1978 on­wards, as a result of events described above.
2. On 31st March, 1978 hearings commenced before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner on the Alligator Rivers land claim. The area claimed was described in Schedule 1 of the Aboriginal Land Rights (N.T.) Act 1976.
3. By Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S113 of 23rd June, 1978, the Commonwealth gave notice of its resumption of Pastoral Leases 737 and 739 (Munmarlary and Mudginberri Stations) by compulsory acquisition under the Lands Acquisition Act 1955.
4. By Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S116 of 29th June, 1978, the Commonwealth gave notice of its acquisition of the fee simple interest in the land comprising Pastoral Leases 737 (Munmarlary), 739 (Mudginberri), 668 (Gimbat) and  
   612 (Goodparla). The acquisition of this 19,857 square kilometres was under section 70 of the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978. The area corresponded to the  
   three stages of Kakadu National Park as planned.
5. On 22nd June, 1978 the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978 was assented to for the purposes of its sections 1, 2 and 70, which bear upon the above paragraph 55. The remaining provisions commenced on 1st July, 1978. Among other effects, the Act confused the status of mineral tenements and applications made before it in the area of reference of this report. Ownership of uranium was reserved to the Crown in the right of the Commonwealth and certain Commonwealth legislation applied to uranium mining in the Northern Territory.
6. On 19th December, 1978, the Australian Heritage Commission proposed to list on the Register of the National Estate, certain areas of land in the eastern part of the  
   area of reference of this report. This was done under section 23 of the Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975.

**1979.**

**Para.**

1. **Kakadu (Stage I) National Park proclaimed.**
2. **Plan of Management, Kakadu Park.**

58. Stage I of Kakadu National Park was proclaimed by Government Gazette S61 of 5th April, 1979. This area of about 5700 square kilometres included portions  
of the former ELs 219 and 220 which were withdrawn from activity at the request of the Commonwealth according to events of the Patterson letter (paragraph 20). Under the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975, explor­ation and mining were permitted in such a Park according to stipulated conditions.

59. A Plan of Management for Kakadu National Park, Stage 1, was implemented for five years commencing late 1980. Section 56 of that plan dealt with the conditions  
under which the Governor-General may approve exploration and mining.

**1980.**

**Para.**

1. **Energy Resources of Australia buys Ranger project Area interests.**
2. **Alligator Rivers Stage II land claim heard.**
3. On 17th September, 1980 Peko/EZ and the Common­wealth Government sold their interests in the Ranger Project Area to Energy Resources of Australia Ltd. Peko and EZ then held about 60% of the capital of that company. The action was an indirect expression of the desire of the then Government not to participate in mineral exploration in the region.
4. The Alligator Rivers Stage II Aboriginal land claim was heard over the period October 1980-March 1981. The Aboriginal Land Commissioner released his report on 2nd July, 1981, for consideration by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

**1981.**

**Para.**

**61. Aboriginal Land Commissioner recommends on Alligator Rivers Stage II.**

**1982.**

**62. Minister for Aboriginal Affairs decides on grant, part of Alligator Rivers Stage II.**

**63. Peko/EZ areas deferred from decision of Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.**

**65. Mining Act 1980 (N.T.) commenced.**

1. On 8th March, 1982, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, P. Baume, announced his decision on the Stage II land claim. He accepted the Commissioner's recommendation that two areas be granted to an Aboriginal Land Trust.  
   However he deferred his decision on nine blocks of land the subject of Peko/EZ ML applications within the area to be granted, saying "he was not in a position to make a decision on those blocks as they may be affected by an application now before the High Court concerning the notion of detriment under the Land Rights Act." The land recommended for grant by the Commissioner was about 7% of the area claimed, but this 7% specifically surrounded the Ranger 68 mineralised prospect and generally  
   surrounded part of the Barote area which Geopeko judged to have high mineral potential, as evidenced by the large num­ber of ML applications previously made. The Ranger prospects affected in part or in whole were 4, 35, 57, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68 and 72.
2. On 13th May, 1981 land in the region, other than that the subject of granted MLs or outstanding ML applications, was declared a Reservation from Occupation under section 147A of the Mining Act, by the Northern Territory  
   Government.
3. A Bill for an Act, the Mining Act 1980, was intro­duced by the Northern Territory Government as provided for by the Commonwealth's Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978. This Act was assented to on 15th April, 1982.

**1983.**

**Para.**

1. **ALP gains Federal office.**
2. **Minister for Aboriginal Affairs  
   decides on remaining areas of Stage II  
   claim.**
3. **Toohey J reviews Land Rights Act.**

66. On 5th March, 1983, the Australian Labor Party was elected to Federal Office.

1. On 15th March, 1983, the new Minister for Aborigin­al Affairs announced his intention to grant title to an Aboriginal Land Trust of those parts of the Stage II land  
   claim withheld from decision by the Minister in the previous Government (paragraph 62).
2. On 2nd December, 1983, Toohey J submitted to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs a review of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act since known as ‘Seven Years On’.

**1984.**

**Para.**

1. **Kakadu Park (Stage II) gazetted.**
2. **Peko/EZ Federal Court case on detri­ment.**
3. **N.T. Mines Dept. surveys effect of Land Rights Act.**
4. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
   Islander Heritage (Interim Protection) Act passed.**
5. **Plan of Management, Kakadu Park Stage  
   II, commenced.**
6. **No exploration agreement reached with  
   Northern Land Council.**
7. **Transfer of title to Aboriginal Land  
   intended but not effected.**
8. **World Heritage Listing, Kakadu Nation­  
   al Park Stage I.**
9. On 28th February, 1984, Kakadu National Park Stage II was proclaimed by Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S74. The combined area of Kakadu National Park, Stages I and II, covered all of the previous EL tenure held by Peko/EZ in the area of reference of this document. Whereas the gazettal of Stage I contained specific exclusions of granted mineral tenure, the Stage II gazettal contained no such specific  
   exclusions.(Stage II comprised the remaining land in the area of reference, apart from Stage I and some exclusions).
10. On 4-6th April, 1984 before Beaumont J of the ­ Federal Court, Peko/EZ sought a decision on whether the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, in deciding to grant land   
    (paragraph 67) had taken into account the detriment to Peko/EZ of such action. Beaumont J gave judgement against Peko/EZ the following month.
11. In May, 1984 the Northern Territory Department of Mines and Energy surveyed exploration companies in the N.T. on the subject of delays to mineral exploration resulting from the Land Rights Act. It found that the Act had caused  
    a substantial reduction in exploration activity.

72. In mid-1984 the Commonwealth enacted the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Interim Protection Act 1984.

1. On 22nd May, 1984 the Director of National Parks and Wildlife announced his intention to prepare a Plan of Management for Kakadu (Stage II) National Park. This plan was in preparation as of December, 1984.
2. In mid-1984, Kakadu National Park Stage I was given  
   World Heritage Listing.
3. On several occasions to 1984, Peko/EZ attempted to reach an agreement with the Northern Land Council on mineral exploration in the region. As of December, 1984 no agree­ment had been reached.
4. As of December, 1984, title to Aboriginal land had been given to Land Trusts in Kakadu (Stage I) National Park and in the Jabiluka and Ranger Project Areas. Parts of  
   Kakadu (Stage II) National Park were the subject of Ministerial intention to grant title to Land Trusts. The remainder of Kakadu (Stage II) had been claimed, heard, and  
   recommended against becoming Aboriginal land.
5. On 4th December, 1984, the Aboriginal Land Commissioner advised of an application to make claim to Aboriginal land in the vicinity of the South Alligator River, an area previously heard and rejected.

**(Editorial note: There was a compilation continuing for some years after this, but it has been lost during retrenchment and takeover operations).**

APPENDIX 1.

COPY OF LETTER DATED 21st DECEMBER, 1973.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

MINISTER FOR THE NORTHERN

TERRITORY, Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

CONFIDENTIAL 21st December, 1973.

Dear Mr. Elliston,

I refer to your applications for renewal of Exploration Licences Nos. 219 and 220. These applications relate to areas that extend into the area proposed as a national park in the Alligator Rivers region.

I wish to confirm the advice given on my behalf by the Secretary of the Department of the Northern Territory, to your company's representatives during recent discussions in Darwin. The Government is not opposed to renewal of the licences to 31 December, 1974, in respect of so much of the areas applied for as lies outside the boundary of the pro­posed park. It is opposed to renewal of the licenses in respect of any area that lies within the boundary of the proposed park.

It is the intention of the Government, at the February 1974 sittings of the Northern Territory Legislative Council, to introduce new legislation providing for the creation of nat­ional parks in the Northern Territory, and for the issue of rights under that legislation to allow prospecting to be carried out within those national parks under suitable conditions.

I am authorised by the Government to assure you that, if your applications for renewal of licences are approved only in respect of areas outside the boundary of the proposed park, you will, upon commencement of the new legislation, be issued with fresh licences under that legislation in respect of the areas within the park boundary to which your current renewal applications relate.

Please be assured that my officers will be available to dis­cuss any matter of concern to you.

Yours sincerely,

signed (REX PATTERSON).

Mr. J. N. Elliston, Deputy Director, Geopeko Ltd., P.O. Box R211, ROYAL EXCHANGE

N.S.W. 2000.

**(Editorial note: As of May 2016, despite the gravity of officialdom, not one of the many and diverse promises was kept. Geopeko was deprived of all exploration interests correctly granted under existing law. This was done in near-secret by groups of left wing bureaucrats, headed internationally towards the aim of the United Nations Agenda 21 and its aim of a New World Order. Uranium, important for energy, was like coal, systematically white-anted towards insolvency in favour of ‘renewable energy’ whose owners and operators are comparatively naïve and easier to manipulate under the central control agenda. GHS, May 2016).**