Ken Vowles
Minister for Primary Industry and Resources

Celebrating the remarkable life of a great Territorian

18 January 2017

Ken Vowles, Minister for Primary Industry and Resources, today represented the Chief Minister, Michael Gunner, at the memorial service of senior Yolngu leader Dr Gumana at Gangan Homeland in Arnhem Land.

Minister Vowles makes the following statement:

“Today I am attending the Memorial Service of a great Territorian, Dr Gumana.

“Dr Gumana made a lasting contribution to cross cultural understanding of Yolngu history, values and culture. He was a treasure and I express my deep condolences to his grieving family, friends and countrymen.

“Dr Gumana was a key participant in many nation-changing events in which Yolngu people presented their historical, moral and legal obligations as inherited custodians of their lands and seas.

“Dr Gumana was the only surviving painter of the famous Yirrkala Church Panels, a historic statement of Aboriginal custodianship in Arnhem Land.

"He was an interpreter and advisor assisting the Supreme Court in considering the history making land claims of the Yolngu people.

“A special and lasting legacy will be Dr Gumana’s life long advocacy for homelands living.

“He was a particularly strong voice for the homelands movement, publishing a profound statement of the rights of the Yolngu to stay connected to their country.

“It was right that Dr Gumana was able to pass away at his home land here in Gangan.” Mr Vowles said.

MEDIA CONTACT: Sheena Dunne 0427 687 079